

**ADVANTAGES AND/OR DISADVANTAGES OF ESTABLISHING
NORMAL (LEGAL) LAKE LEVELS UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF
PART 307, INLAND LAKE LEVELS, OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES
AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT,
1994 PA 451, AS AMENDED**

The advantages and/or disadvantages of establishing normal (legal) lake levels varies from lake to lake. Legal levels have been established on over 300 lakes in Michigan for a variety of reasons. The particular advantages and/or disadvantages many times differ for lakes having existing lake level control structures from those that do not. Normally, the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages.

Some of the more common advantages and/or disadvantages are as follows:

Advantages

- I. Provide for stabilized water levels to protect property values and the lake environment.
- II. Maximize recreational benefits.
- III. Provide for a winter drawdown level to
 - A. Minimize shoreline ice damage.
 - B. Minimize erosion damage during periods of high water in the fall and spring.
 - C. Minimize flooding by providing a cushion against high water, particularly in the spring.
 - D. Control of some aquatic weeds.
- IV. Maximize fisheries, wildlife and aesthetic values.
- V. Place responsibility of maintaining the desired lake level(s) in the hands of the County Board of Commissioners, the County Drain Commissioner, or other authority designated by the County Board.
- VI. Provide a means whereby all benefited property owners and political subdivisions share in the cost of maintaining the necessary lake level control facilities.
- VII. Liabilities for accidents at the control structure may be insured by the County at a lower cost.
- VIII. The cost of repairs and maintenance at the control structure may be spread over a period of years and is tax deductible for Federal Returns, if the tax payer itemizes.

Disadvantages

- I. Costs are incurred in establishing normal (legal) levels; i.e. costs of studies and surveys, court costs, cost of preparing assessment roll and noticing, cost of acquiring, constructing, operation and maintaining the control structures necessary for maintaining the legally established level(s). These costs are normally passed along to the benefited property owners by special assessment.
- II. Length of time to get a legal level(s) established can be long, (one year or more).
- III. Stabilizing lake levels can have an adverse impact on pike spawning, if flooding of marshes on the lake fringe is reduced or eliminated during pike spawning periods.