

 **Shafer and Freeman Lakes**
Environmental Conservation Corporation

P.O. Box 372 · 514 S. Railroad St. · Monticello, IN 47960 · 574-583-9784 · info@sflecc.com

November 8, 2024

Association License Holders-

At the October 17th, 2024 Board Meeting, the Shafer & Freeman Lakes Environmental Conservation Corporation (SFLECC) Board voted to approve new Shorefront License fees for all license holders for 2025. It is imperative that the SFLECC is able to carry on with its efforts to keep the lakes clean and accessible. Over the past few years, numerous challenges have arisen, making it nearly impossible for SFLECC to continue to operate at current levels. The SFLECC Board looked for other ways, but ultimately found increasing license fees was the only viable option.

Challenges that have contributed to this change:

- **Innkeepers Tax Fund** - The SFLECC receives funds to help with dredging expenses from the local White County Innkeepers Tax fund, which has continued to dwindle over the last several years.
- **Dredging Grants** - When SFLECC started the dredging operation over 30 years ago, it received state and federal grants. Those grants no longer exist.
- **Lake Levels** - The SFLECC had to spend a large amount of its reserves to fight for water levels.
- **Invasive Aquatic Vegetation** - Unforeseen costs to treat Eurasian Milfoil.
- **Outdated Equipment** - SFLECC has the same dredging equipment it started with over 30 years ago. We have been fortunate to have staff that can do many of the repairs on the large equipment, which has saved us thousands of dollars. However, we have reached the time where we need to replace and improve what we have and, unfortunately, this comes at a cost. We will also need to get back on Lake Freeman to get some dredging done, which has resulted in SFLECC putting together a barge to handle these jobs, instead of contracting them out to other companies.
- **New Employees** - There is a great amount of unseen work that is constantly being done, including maintaining multiple silt retention ponds, all kinds of equipment repairs, pulling pipe and fusing it, bathymetric studies etc. Because we want to continue to improve, two employees have been added over the last year who are in the dredging training process for the next few years. With the new crew, SFLECC is fortunate to have the expertise of boat motor repair, licensed diving, large machine operator, and environmental education. We are always striving to save costs wherever possible.

With all this being said, we wanted to get this letter out to Association License holders so you can review your own dues well before the 2025 season begins. Effective March 1, 2025, Annual Association License fees for Lake Shafer and Lake Freeman will be:

License Fee: \$150/user

SFLECC will continue to do its due diligence to apply for grants when and if they become available. Unforeseen circumstances that are not necessarily in day-to-day business operations will continue to be addressed as they arise, always keeping the betterment of Lake Shafer & Freeman in mind. Thank you for your support in keeping the lakes the best assets to our community!



Gabrielle Haygood
SFLECC Executive Director



Carrie Woodruff
SFLECC Board President