



MEMORANDUM
DOUGLAS HARBOR AUTHORITY
March 17, 2026 at 11:00am

TO: Douglas Harbor Authority

FROM: Jenny Pearson, Project Manager

SUBJECT: 2026 Harbor Treatment Update

For the past 5 years the City of Douglas has contracted with Aquatic Doctors Lake Management of Grand Rapids in an effort to control the invasive species rapidly spreading over Wade's Bayou and the Douglas Harbor. Invasive aquatic species such as Eurasian milfoil, duck weed, and coon-tail were unsightly and made boating recreation extremely difficult. The treatment applications achieved great results and the City received a considerable amount of positive feedback. Controlling invasive aquatic species benefits the community as a whole and improves water quality, encourages establishment of natural aquatic species, improves recreational value of the harbor, and draws visitors to the community.

Aquatic Doctors Lake Management felt it was a very successful year, and the overall water quality showed noticeable improvement. The river/bayou looked excellent, confirming that we are moving in the right direction. In alignment with these positive outcomes, the City achieved a 12.12% cost savings in 2025 compared to 2024. This reduction not only reflects financial efficiency but also serves as tangible evidence that the program is delivering measurable results. The 2025 growing season presented significant challenges, including drought-like conditions, low water levels, and sustained heat and sunlight. These factors contributed to aggressive weed blooms across many Michigan water bodies. Despite these obstacles, we were able to maintain strong results while also reducing costs. They were very pleased with the progress made and hope the Harbor Authority and City Council share in that satisfaction. The plan is to continue with the current program, as we are optimistic that it will yield further environmental improvements and additional cost savings over time. While outcomes are always influenced by weather and natural conditions, Aquatic Doctors Lake Management is confident we are on the right path and recommend continuing our current course.

With the 2026 summer season approaching, the intent is to treat the harbor once again. The proposed treatment area will be the waterfront areas from Schultz Park to the Union Street boat launch. While the municipality does not own the waters of the lake, the City may serve as a coordinator for activities that impact the quality of the harbor.

Treatment dates will be tentatively scheduled for June and July. Authorization letters will be mailed when the treatment dates are finalized to residents adjacent to the treatment area, as well as a treatment notice to all residents within a 300ft reach of the waterfront.