

To the Editor:

Imagine the surprise of the Three Lakes Association volunteers studying the Golden Brown Algae blooms in Torch and other nearby lakes, when we encountered the article on page 17 A of the August 13, 2015 issue of the Antrim Review. We were not contacted by the paper for any input into the published article and we find that the article does, no doubt innocently, misrepresent what we are doing and trying to accomplish. The purpose of this communication is to offer more accurate information on our project.

Golden Brown Algae, that orange-y stuff people are seeing more of on the lake floor in the shallow near-shore areas of Torch Lake as well as other nearby lakes, has been with us in small quantities for a long time. In the past few years, however, the amount and extent of distribution around the lakes, have gotten a lot of people's attention. People are asking what it is, why it is there, whether it is harmful, and what to do about it.

The Three Lakes Association (TLA), in collaboration with scientists from Michigan State University (Drs. R. Jan Stevenson and Sherry Martin), University of Michigan (Dr. Rex Lowe), and University of Colorado (Dr. Pat Kociolek), have undertaken a pilot study to explore the possible association of phosphorus and nitrogen nutrients in groundwater entering the lake with the locations and composition of the algae. Excess nutrients in groundwater are among the possible causes of the algae proliferation. Other ways excess nutrients could be stimulating algae growth exist and include, among others, surface water runoff, drainage ditches, dust particles precipitating with rainwater or carried in the air, and biologically diverse interactions between various life forms. The current TLA study is addressing only one issue, that being the impact of groundwater nutrients on the algae proliferation.

We find it truly astonishing that the Antrim Review article includes in its title a presumptive cause of the algae proliferation that is neither the focus of our study nor, so far as we are aware, demonstrated by any existing set of data. We welcome interest in the algae issue, any suggestions people may have, volunteer participation, and financial support. Thanks for your interest and any help you may have to offer. We can be reached on our web site, 3lakes.com or on Facebook and we'd love to hear from you.

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