

MILL POND CURRENT CONDITIONS

AESTHETIC & RECREATION VALUE



Mill Pond is a focal point of Davisburg; it is a valued resource and important part of the town's history.

The pond is scenic from within Mill Pond Park and visitors enjoy views of the water and wildlife. The aesthetic from the roadway and downtown is not ideal due to the chain-link fence, road guardrail, and downstream dam armoring.

The fishing dock sees a fair amount of use, however interest in swimming in the pond has declined significantly. Due to limited use and other water quality issues, the Springfield Township Park Commission decided to close the swim beach and begin the process of restoring the shoreline in 2018.



INVASIVE & NUISANCE WATERFOWL



Nuisance geese and non-native swans occupy the pond and leave a mess on the beach, creating a maintenance challenge and contributing to elevated levels of E. coli in the pond.

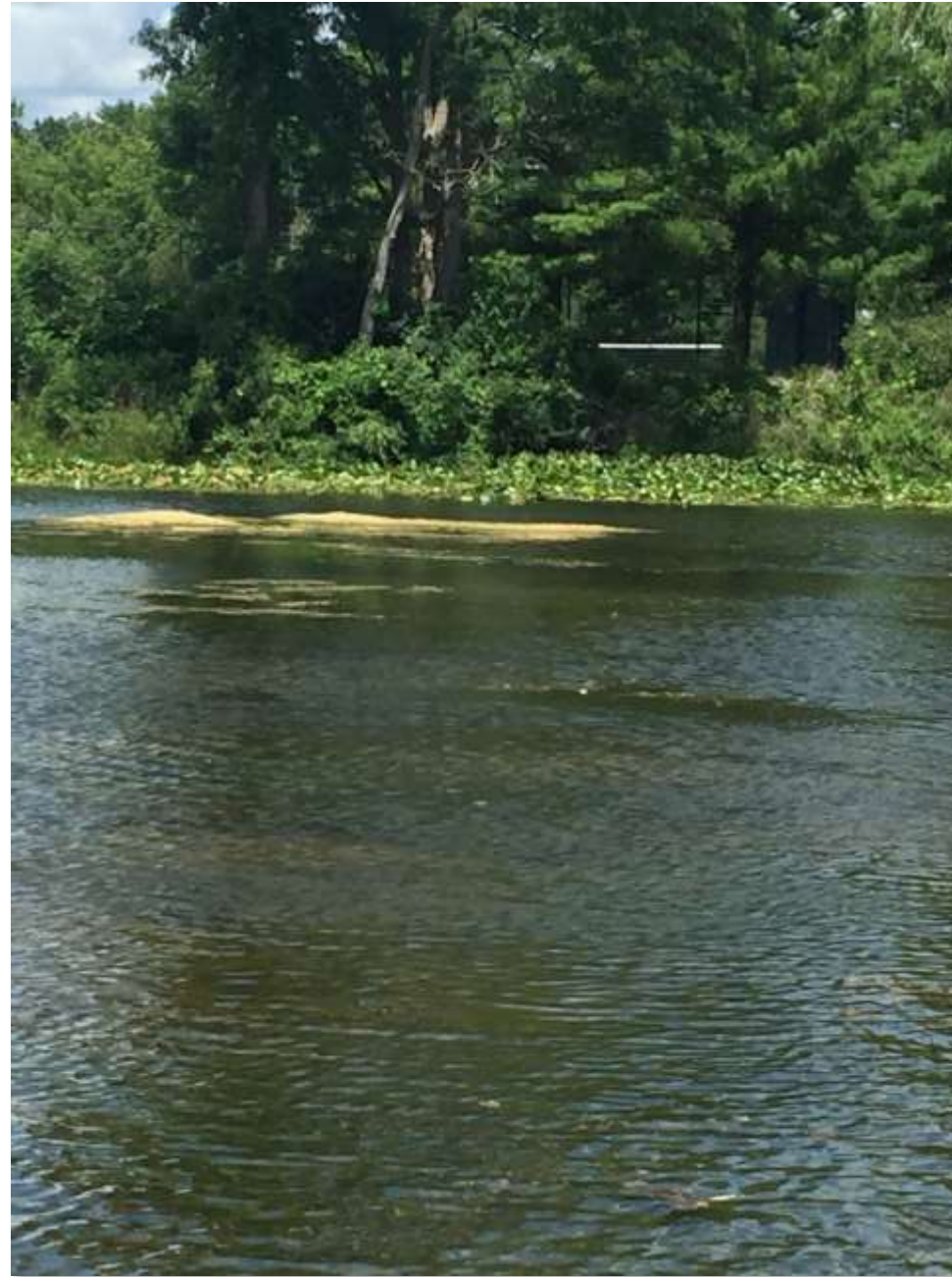
When the beach was busy with swimmers, the activity helped keep away nuisance waterfowl. Interest in swimming at Mill Pond has declined significantly over the past 10-15 years but maintenance costs have not. In recent years, nest management activities and constant raking was not enough to control the issue.



Mute swans may look pretty, but they are aggressive and destroy habitat. These non-native swans eat 4 to 8 pounds of plants per day, are known to attack people, and are aggressive toward other waterfowl, even chasing native swans and ducks from their nests.



AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES



Mill Pond is infested with several aquatic invasive species including a plant-like algae called starry stonewort. This algae negatively affects the waterway by forming dense mats that inhibit water recreation, overtaking habitat and outcompeting native species thereby reducing diversity. Starry stonewort does not provide functional food or habitat for native animals and, because it spreads rapidly and is easily fragmented, it poses a threat to the fen habitat in the Shiawassee Basin Preserve, just downstream of Mill Pond Dam. Despite ongoing and costly treatments to manage the pond, invasive species continue to dominate the waters.

WATER QUALITY & SEDIMENT BUILD-UP



In general, small dams tend to have negative ecological effects on a river system. Water quality is negatively impacted due to low oxygen conditions, nutrient and sediment build-up, and proliferation of invasive species.

The MDEQ performed a sediment volume and sampling survey of Mill Pond in June 2018 and calculated that there is more than 84,700 cubic yards of soft sediment that has built-up in the impoundment.

Due to sediment build-up, low oxygen, nuisance and invasive waterfowl, and the infestation of aquatic invasive species, the water quality of Mill Pond is poor and declining.