



Lake Etiquette, General Boating and Wake Surfing Guidelines – Updated June 02, 2026

As summer unfolds and our lake becomes a focal point of activity, it's crucial that we all take a moment to prioritize safety and respect for each other. Whether you're a fisherman, pontoon boater, jet skier, water skier, wake boarder, kayaker, paddleboarder, wake surfer or anyone else using the water, politeness, courtesy and mutual respect ensures everyone enjoys their time on the water.

General Lake Etiquette Guidelines and Basic Michigan Boating Rules:

1. **Music Levels:** Keep noise to a considerate level, especially in the early morning and late evening. Being mindful of noise levels creates mutual respect and contributes to a friendly environment for all.
2. **"No-Wake":** Beware of and abide by the "No-Wake" zones at the north end of the lake (the entrance to pine creek and all through pine creek).
3. **Environmental:** Dispose of trash responsibly, if you see something in the water, please remove it, it may be a hazard to others.
4. **Counter-Clockwise:** Traffic flows in a counterclockwise direction.
5. **Full Boating Handbook:** <https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/things-to-do/boating/rules-and-regs>
6. **Speed Limits:** Maximum speed 55 m.p.h. in all water unless otherwise regulated
7. **Proper Distances:**
 - a) To maintain a proper distance when you are operating on the waters of the state, at greater than "slow, no wake speed," the vessel or persons being towed must not be within 100 feet of: A shoreline, any moored or anchored vessel, a dock or raft, any marked swimming area or person(s) in the water.
 - b) Do not closely follow a boat that is towing a person(s), maintain a minimum distance of at least 200'.
8. **Safety**
 - a) **Personal Floatation Devices (PFD's):** All vessels must be equipped with a properly fitting personal flotation device (PFD), such as a life jacket, for each person on board or being towed.
 - b) **Fire Extinguisher:** All vessels, including PWC, are required to have a Type B fire extinguisher.
 - c) **Take the Course:** We encourage everyone to take the online Michigan boater safety course as refresher, it never hurts to brush up on the boating laws. <https://www.boat-ed.com/michigan>
 - d) **Spotter:** A spotter is always required when towing someone, including PWC's.

Wake Surfing Etiquette and Guidelines for Rainbow Lake:

1. **Follow the Route:** See the route map as part of this document; the surf route is just designed to stay in the deeper water and also giving other boaters a safe route around you at the starting and or stopping areas which are wider spots.
2. **Stay in the Middle:** Within the designated surf route, please safely use the middle of the lake. This is designed to have the waves dissipate as much as possible before they hit the shore. If it is too busy to stay towards the center of the lake then it is not the time to go surfing. Try a different day or time.
3. **No Turns:** No turning the boat while in the act of surfing. Surf the designated route, if someone falls, pick them up and resume in the same direction you were traveling. Run the same route direction and then when you are at the end of the route stop, allow waves to settle and check on lake traffic as it may be time to switch activities. This will allow you to switch people and again try to limit the amount of people surfing consecutively.



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4. **Same Direction and Minimize repeated passes:** Avoid repeat passes through a certain area. Try to run the entire route in the same direction, so the waves will have time to dissipate prior to running right back over the same area. When you start in a direction, stay going in that direction until you are done or reach the end of the designated surf route, then stop and provide an adequate buffer period allow waves to settle before restarting.
5. **Consecutive Runs:** Limit consecutive runs. If you have a couple people that want to surf, have them go before the lake gets busy, generally speaking mid morning time frame, and then others will have to wait until a different time of day or different day to limit constant running.
6. **Remove ballast:** As soon as you are done wake surfing, remove the ballast from your boat before resuming boating.
7. **Holiday Weekends (Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day):** These are by far the busiest and most congested times on our **waterways and the lake is at its capacity, therefore we ask that you minimize or completely avoid** wake surfing on these holiday weekends, especially **after 12:00 PM**. We ask out of respect for other boaters and people using the lake, regardless of the time of day, that if the lake getting busy and congested at any time, that you power down and discontinue wake surfing.
8. **Non-Holiday Weekends and Peak Boating Hours:** Generally speaking, most non-holiday weekends are not as busy as holiday weekends, however they can be busy, and we ask out of respect for other boaters that if you see the lake getting busy and congested, especially in the afternoon or early evening, follow the Holiday weekend guidelines above. Starting to wake surf in the afternoon is discouraged as that is when the lake gets the busiest.
9. **Be Mindful of Others:** Always maintain a safe distance from beaches, swimmers, kayakers, and paddle boarders. The wake from surfing boats under ballast, affects smaller watercraft and others on the lake. If you see these activities while surfing, please power down and avoid surfing.

To summarize if you have a boat full of people that want to surf all day this lake may not be for you. Have a couple people surf and then go tubing, skiing, wakeboarding or whatever; just limit the consecutive runs of SURFING.

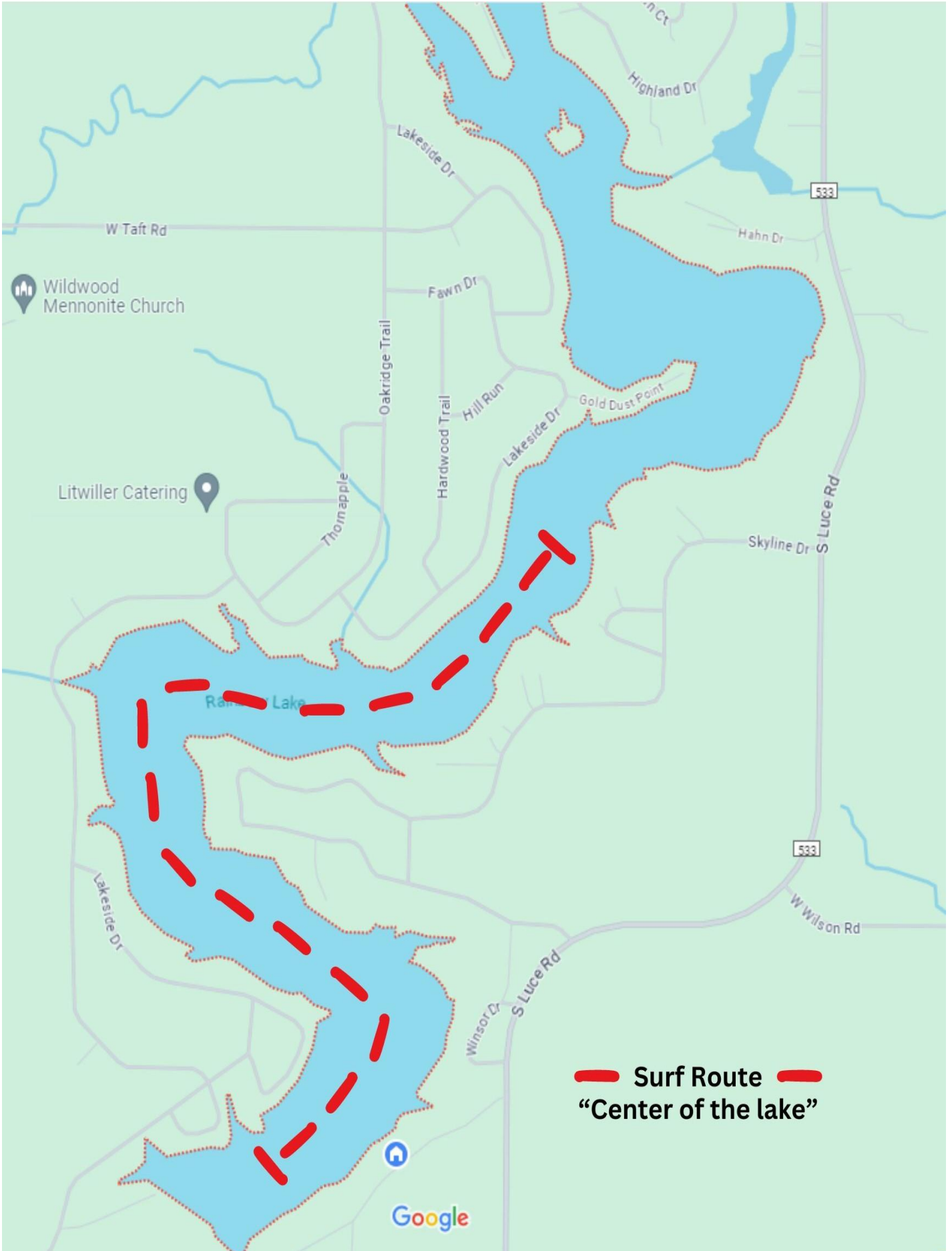
By following these basic guidelines, educating each other and promoting mutual respect, we can maintain a safe and enjoyable lake for everyone in our community. Our lake is not just a body of water; it's a shared space where we come together to relax, restore, and connect with nature and each other. Our lake community is diverse, with different interests, backgrounds, and lifestyles. Embracing diversity improves our collective experience. As we enjoy the summer months ahead, let's keep these principles of neighborliness, respect and kindness close to heart.

Cheers to a safe and fun-filled season on our beautiful lake! Thank you for being part of this wonderful lake community. May this summer will be filled with warmth, friendship, and shared moments by the water's edge.

Sincerely and on Behalf of the Rainbow Lakes Maintenance Corporation Board



Rainbow Lakes Maintenance Corporation



— Surf Route —
“Center of the lake”