Course Syllabus

Overview

Inland lakes are complex ecosystems and are affected by both the people that live near them as well as the water that drains into them. Michigan alone is blessed with over 11,000 inland lakes and each one provides a unique recreational, scenic, and environmental benefit. The Introduction to Lakes Online course will explore the many dimensions of inland lakes—including riparian rights, shorelines, ecology, aquatic plants, citizen involvement, and much more. The course is designed for anyone with an interest in lakes including lakefront homeowners and environmental professionals.

Course Content

Introduction to Lakes Online consists of six units. Each unit includes prerecorded video lectures, facilitated discussion forums, exploratory activities, and a quiz. Most of the course content is shared through video lectures, featuring water resource experts from Michigan State University Extension. All lecture videos are prerecorded and are close captioned. The discussion forums serve as an opportunity to engage with classmates and the course instructors. There are no right or wrong answers - forums are simply a place to share perspectives and pose questions. The quizzes are short, concise, and related to content in the videos, discussion forum, and activities. The course also includes three pre-scheduled live Ask-an-Expert webinars, featuring course instructors and outside experts on unit topics.

What to expect

Access to the course will be provided on a week-by-week, unit-by-unit basis with each new unit opening on Tuesday at 8:00 AM eastern. Each week a new unit will become available. You will not have access to all units at once. Your access to proceeding units will be based on completion of the previous unit's quiz. The quizzes are made up of 10 multiple choice and true/false questions. Once a unit is available to view, it will remain open. You can work on coursework at any time, the course site will be available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. It is expected that you will complete all course work for the assigned unit per week. Each unit will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

The goal of this course is to become more familiar with inland lakes and to learn from the instructors, as well as from other classmates. It is recommended that you review and respond to other participant discussion forum submissions.

Ask-an-Expert webinars

The course includes three live Ask-an-Expert webinars. During the webinar participants can type questions to a panel of course instructors and outside experts and the panel will answer the questions verbally. These webinars are hosted every other week during the course. Participation is encouraged, but optional. The webinars are recorded and posted to the course website.

Course Requirements

To receive an electronic certificate of completion you must receive an 80% or higher on all six unit quizzes. Note that you will have the ability to retake quizzes. It is expected that you will watch all video lectures and complete the activities. You do not have to take part in the Ask-an-Expert webinars however your participation is encouraged.

Technology Requirements

The course will have links to other websites and documents, some of which are in PDF format. It is recommended that you have the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader installed on your computer. The webinars use Zoom, a free video conferencing service. Instructions on how to download and use Zoom can be found on the course website.

Course Instructors

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- Ph.D., Fisheries and Wildlife (Limnology), Michigan State University