

## **New Access Rules for the Caledonia Sewage Ponds**

Following a lengthy series of meetings with the village of Caledonia, Caledonia Twp., and the contracting firm that operates Caledonia Wastewater (IAI), we have partially regained access to bird the lagoons but **BY PRIVATE APPOINTMENT ONLY**. Anybody wanting to bird the site must call site manager Josh Mannard at (616) 889-7937 to set up an appointment, and if you do not have an appointment do not attempt to access the site or it will risk the limited access we all now have. Staff are now required to be on site in order to allow visitors in, and they have unpredictable schedules. If staff have to leave the site for any reason birders will be asked to leave.

There are no waivers or sign in sheets to sign, and birders who have set up their appointment can park at fence where it abuts the north lagoon and walk in from there. **Do not drive the lagoons**. When you are on site, please make every effort to self-police the birding community and other visitors on site, helping make sure everyone knows the current access rules, and alerting Josh Mannard or myself ([caleb.putnam@gmail.com](mailto:caleb.putnam@gmail.com)) about any bad behavior, vandals, etc. There have been multiple incidents of vandalism in the past year. There is a planned construction project which will again shut off birder access that is slated to begin this coming November, so hopefully we will retain this access through Sept/Oct when the birding is best.

For birders who cannot visit during normal work hours, Josh indicated that he is more likely to be able to accommodate after-hours birding on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and every third weekend or so. Monday, Wednesday and Friday he tends to leave by mid-afternoon. So, the more advance warning you can provide Josh, and the more formal the appointment, the better. And he is very receptive to formal field trips which can be set up in advance.