

# ELK RAPIDS NEWS

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The amphibious boat, fitted with retractable tracks, can crawl out of the water onto any type of terrain. Courtesy photos

## Amphibious boat crawls into marina's showroom



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The Iguana Yacht parked outside Elk Rapids Marina. PHOTO BY *klw*

If you see a boat easing its way on tank-like tracks down to the launch at the end of Bridge Street in Elk Rapids and driving directly onto the Elk River, it's not a James Bond movie in the making. It's an Iguana Yachts amphibious boat, the newest addition to the fleet of watercraft for sale at the Elk Rapids Marina.

"This boat solves a very specific problem, if you live on Lake Michigan with waterfront property and a million-dollar view but can't have a dock," said marina sales manager John Conrad, "Iguana is the solution. You can drive it up onto your beach and store it safely."

That happens by way of the retractable tracks that enable the Iguana to crawl out of the water onto any type of terrain including flat or inclined pavement, soft sand, grass, mud, or rocky beaches, and back in again. Its land speed tops out at about 5 mph, but in the water the powerful boat reaches nearly ten times that.

Conrad said the target market is actually property owners on any of the Great Lakes, as Iguana Yachts has

granted the Elk Rapids Marina an exclusive dealership for the entire region. With the boating industry facing multiple challenges including manufacturing interruptions and delivery delays, marina owners Susie and Lewis Cooper have been exploring options to diversify their inventory.

"They are real forward thinkers," Conrad said. "They're trying to change the face of the Elk Rapids Marina in so many ways, to better the business with these unique boats while still offering existing popular boat lines and even more unique boats to come in the future."

Iguana Yachts amphibious watercraft are manufactured in Normandy, France. A variety of models meet diverse price points and purposes including personal water sports and recreation, search and rescue/evacuation, shuttle services, and yacht tenders. The Elk Rapids Marina has acquired the Iguana X100, a 31-foot fiberglass and carbon fiber boat with twin Mercury 225 horsepower outboard motors. It's primarily a display

model, but Conrad said it will be seen on area waters soon as staff and potential buyers take it for test drives.

"It's one of the more entry-level models," he noted, "and, we felt, the one most applicable to the Great Lakes."

Entry-level, in the world of amphibious boats, hovers around \$450,000. While that takes the X100 off the shopping list of the average boat enthusiast, Conrad expects the Iguana line to attract interest and draw attention to the Elk Rapids Marina and community. He encourages anyone who's curious about the amphibious craft, whether or not they're interested in a potential purchase, to stop by and check it out.

"We had it parked outside on a sunny day recently, and everyone was stopping by," he said. "People are truly amazed. We never imagined this level of community enthusiasm. It's really encouraging!"

For more information, contact John Conrad at 231-264-9500, stop by the Elk Rapids Marina at 118 Bridge Street, or visit [www.elkrapidsmarina.com](http://www.elkrapidsmarina.com).

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