

FALL 2009 PROJECT UPDATES



MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS

The mission of the Michigan Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils is to enhance and facilitate political advocacy, networking, and capacity building to strengthen RC&D Councils in the state of Michigan.

Upper Peninsula
*Resource Conservation
and Development Council*



Conservation
Resource Alliance
COORDINATING SENSIBLE
STEWARDSHIP OF THE LAND



Huron Pines

Conserving the Forests, Lakes and Streams of Northeast Michigan

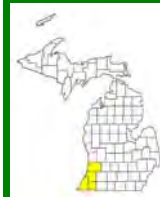
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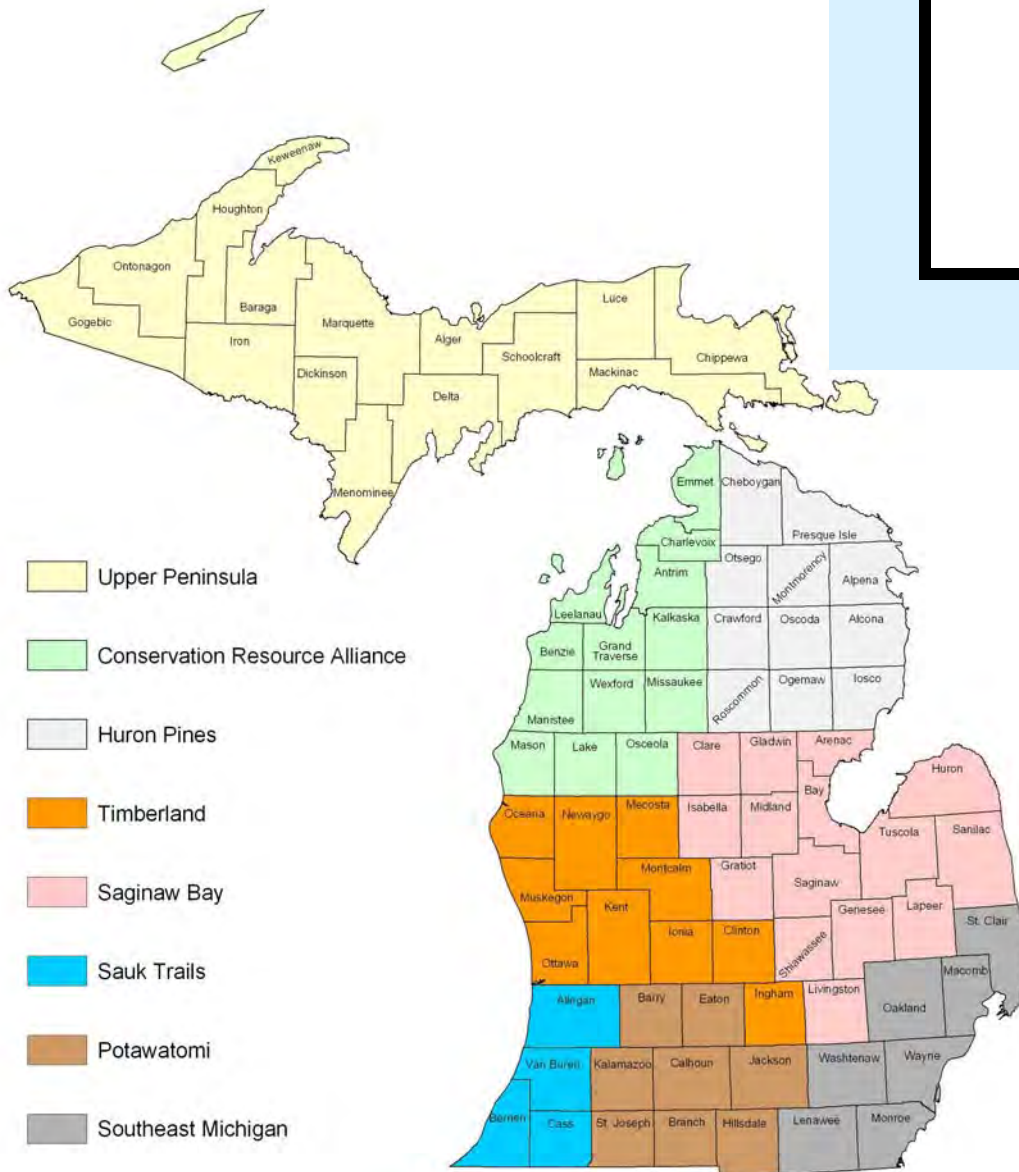
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MICHIGAN'S RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS

**MAKING
THINGS
HAPPEN**



**WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE
LAND CONSERVATION, WATER MANAGEMENT,
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, AND LAND MANAGEMENT
FOR THE PEOPLE OF MICHIGAN**

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November 2009

Chippewa East Mackinac Conservation District Completes the Meridian Road Project

In early 2007, the Chippewa/East Mackinac Conservation District began work on the Les Cheneaux Watershed Implementation Project. The Les Cheneaux watershed is located in the northwest corner of Lake Huron and consists of a 36-island archipelago characterized by an intricate complex of channels, shallow bays, and rock-studded peninsulas. The quality of life and the economy of the entire region are dependent on a healthy watershed. The Les Cheneaux Watershed Council and the Chippewa East Mackinac Conservation have joined forces through the Les Cheneaux Watershed Project to restore threatened water quality, create awareness of how to protect it, and put in motion a plan to guarantee the nature-based livelihood of the community and its visitors.



The project is funded by a grant under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act and by local match consisting of volunteer time, donations, local agency dollars, etc. The federally-funded program consisted of a number of watershed protection projects to be completed over the course of three years – 2007 through 2009. One of the recent protection measures to be implemented in the watershed was the replacement of three deteriorated culverts at the Pearson Creek crossing of Meridian Road in Cedarville.

The culverts were in disrepair, the concrete headwall on the west side of Meridian Road was collapsing into the creek, and the wooden retaining wall on the north stream bank was failing.



The project included replacing the existing culverts with one concrete box culvert and repair/restoration of the stream bank east of the crossing. The conservation district partnered with the Mackinac County Road Commission and Clark Township. After the old culverts and road base were removed, the base for the new culverts was shaped and leveled. Limestone was used as the new base material for the culvert. The new concrete box culvert was installed in pieces and then work was begun to stabilize the embankment on the northeast side of the culvert.



Information and photos for this article were provided by the Chippewa East Mackinac Conservation District.

Our Mission: To foster partnerships among diverse stakeholders that support a healthy environment and economy for the Upper Peninsula.

Project BURN-UP Holds Biomass Harvest Demonstrations



Fifty people attended a harvest demonstration on property owned by Michigan Technological University near the Ford Center in Alberta.

Project BURN-UP (Biomass Utilization and Restoration Network for the Upper Peninsula) recently presented two biomass harvesting demonstrations. Area loggers, foresters, landowners and others were able to view several different types of equipment at work on two different sites, and also heard from speakers regarding current issues on woody biomass. On September 15, approximately 30 people viewed a chipping operation on a mixed hardwood site near Manistique, where Zellar Excavating was grinding whole trees for use as hog fuel at the NewPage paper mill in Escanaba. A Bandit grinder equipped with a blower to more efficiently fill the trailer was being used to process the trees. The audience was able to view the features of the grinder, as well as a Ponsse Double-Bunk trailer that can compress woody debris and haul it to a grinder more efficiently.



The demonstration in Manistique was sponsored by The Forestland Group.

The September 16th demonstration was sponsored by The School of Forest Resources & Environmental Sciences at Michigan Technological University, on a jack pine site near the Ford Center in Alberta. The site was being logged by Jim Carey Logging and Excavating. The demonstration featured a thinning operation designed to thin a dense stand of jack pine in order to allow the remaining trees to reach merchantable size. A harvester was being used to thin the stand to about 300 trees per acre, with the removed trees ground for hog fuel. The audience of over 50 people was able to learn about the silvicultural objectives of the harvest as well as viewing the various types of equipment in operation.



An employee of Jim Carey Logging rakes the processed biomass material which was being loaded for transport.

Following lunch on both days, presentations were given by a representative of John Deere about the equipment available for biomass harvesting, and personnel from Michigan Technological University who presented information regarding biomass feedstock inventory and use of biomass harvesting to accomplish silvicultural objectives. A roundtable discussion at the end of the day allowed attendees to direct questions to equipment manufacturers and operators regarding biomass harvesting.

At left: Zellar Excavating was processing whole trees utilizing a Bandit grinder equipped with a blower to fill the trailer more efficiently.

Our Vision: The Upper Peninsula Resource Conservation & Development Council will promote the conservation of the natural resources of the Upper Peninsula for the benefit of its current and future residents. The Council will strive for a balance between the management of natural resources to protect the environment, and the implementation of economic development activities in order to sustain the economy of the region. We will identify resource conservation and land use issues, and work with local communities to address these concerns.



OUR REGION: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Lake, Leelanau, Manistee, Mason, Missaukee, Osceola, and Wexford Counties

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Chairman: Dan Hubbell



November 2009



**Early Growth Forest
Important for
Wildlife**

A wildlife habitat improvement project that involves cutting trees in Emmet County could help grow the number of American woodcock and other species of animals living there. The work is being done at Maple River Farm near Pellston. It's part of the Conservation Resource Alliance's (CRA) Wild Link Program, which helps landowners improve wildlife habitat on their property.



Biologists have put a rotational alder cutting plan in place at Maple River Farm to help regenerate Early Successional Forest Habitat (ESFH). "The point of the project is to make conditions right for alder to regenerate so it doesn't get outcompeted by other species," said Eric Ellis, CRA Biologist. "Once alder is lost it's very difficult to get it back," he said.

Species including American woodcock and Golden-winged warblers use ESHF to nest and raise their young. "They need it to survive," said Ellis. Numbers of both species have declined steadily since the 1970's. That decline is blamed on habitat loss.

The work at Maple River Farm involves clear cutting seventy foot wide strips of alder. Four years later the adjacent seventy foot strip is cut. That pattern continues for twenty years until the first strip is cut again to start a new rotation. "We want to create different age classes of alder," said Ellis. "We're not saying old growth forest is bad, but young growth is equally important," he said. The DNR estimates fifty-six percent of the ESHF in Michigan is on private land. That's why CRA is working with property owners to manage alder and aspen stands. "Without cutting the only way to get ESHF back is to have a catastrophic wildfire or tornado," said Ellis. "If you don't cut you not only lose the trees, you lose all the animals that need them," he said. The rotational alder cutting program at Maple River farm started in 2005. Since then national and international woodcock experts have visited the site to see how it's being managed. "We want to have a diversity of habitat to have a maximum diversity of wildlife," said Ellis.

The Wild Link program has received financial support from the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation, the Frey Foundation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In the past two years CRA has also started similar rotational cutting programs at other sites in Northwest Lower Michigan.

This article by Dan Boss originally appeared in the Petoskey News-Review (August 1, 2009).

Visit our Website to learn more: www.rivercare.org



The River Care Program is designed to maintain the aesthetic and economic value of northern Michigan streams. How? By connecting people - interest groups, landowners, developers, and government agencies - anyone who can help and who will benefit from clean water and healthy watersheds.

Iron Ore Creek to be Improved

Iron Ore Creek is a small creek on Beaver Island in Southern Peaine Township of Charlevoix County. This little cold water creek has a severe road/stream crossing problem site located near its outlet to Lake Michigan that blocks fish migration from Lake Michigan into the creek. A combination of four culverts ranging from 2' to 6' in width, comprise the crossing structure. The culverts are inadequately sized and their placement is poorly designed. Excessive erosion of the embankments and lack of fish passage are severe problems at the Iron Ore Creek site.



CRA will be working with the Charlevoix County Road Commission, the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Beaver Island Association, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and Grand Traverse Band of Chippewa and Ottawa Indians to replace the crossing with a structure more conducive to fish passage and erosion control. Site recommendations include installing a recessed, elliptical culvert 72" wide and up to 80' long to properly accommodate the stream channel. This would open up fish passage to approximately 1.5 miles of Iron Ore Creek. Funding Assistance from the Charlevoix County Community Foundation will help complete this project.

New Bridge Benefits Jordan River Restoration

The Conservation Resource Alliance (CRA) hosted a site showing and celebration of the recently completed timber deck bridge over the Green River located on the Green River Road in Antrim County. The Green River is an important cold water tributary to the Jordan River, one of Michigan's premier trout streams and the State's first designated Natural River. Though the Green River has excellent water quality and winds through a heavily forested corridor, the stream does have some problems. The road crossing at Green River Road was one such problem. This site was comprised of three old, corroded culverts in various sizes up to 36" in diameter. The culverts were undersized for this 20' wide stream and caused pool formation, embankment erosion, channel constriction, streambed scouring, and fish passage problems. CRA worked with project partners to design and build an 18' wide timber deck with concrete abutments on spread footings to accommodate the artesian springs found in the immediate project area. The new bridge allows for a natural stream bottom and completely reconnects the upstream and downstream portions of the Green River.

Work on the Green River Dam is part of a larger, ongoing restoration effort in the Jordan River watershed. Currently, CRA and the Friends of the Jordan River work cooperatively with agency partners, land conservancies, and other conservation groups to prioritize and implement improvement projects within the Jordan River system. Removal of the old dam at the Green River Trout Farm and the timber bridge constructed on Pinney Bridge Road below the dam are recent examples of these efforts.

Total costs for the new bridge were \$161,500 with funding provided by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, USDA's Conservation Innovation Grant program, and CRA's River Care Fund, which is made possible with contributions from individuals, private and corporate donors such as the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, DTE Energy Foundation, the Oleson Foundation, the Frey Foundation, Charlevoix County Community Foundation, Michael Dow, Nestle Ice Mountain.

The Conservation Resource Alliance is a private, not-for-profit organization based in Traverse City, Michigan, dedicated to maintaining the natural beauty and ecosystems of our land while simultaneously nurturing the economic vitality of northern Michigan.



Huron Pines

Conserving the Forests, Lakes and Streams of Northeast Michigan

Michigan Resource Conservation & Development Partner Report

Fall 2009

Huron Pines Highlights

- **Huron Pines is celebrating the power of volunteers**— why our organization has been able to have an impact on the conservation of our resources. With our new 11/11 volunteer program, we'll be able to use that power to complete projects in every county in our service area.
- **Huron Pines AmeriCorps begins year three**— starting with nine full-time members serving at conservation organizations around Northeast Michigan and a summer invasive species SWAT team, the program aims to have an even bigger impact in 2010.
- **Muskegon River habitat survey complete**— Huron Pines staff recently completed a survey of fish habitat on the Muskegon River, which will help the MDNR make decisions about what stretches of stream to target for future restoration projects.
- **Road/stream crossing work continues**— engineering work is now underway on the seven sites in Alcona County, with construction scheduled to begin in 2010.

Huron Pines is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and an equal opportunity provider working to conserve the forests, lakes and streams of Northeast Michigan. We bring partners together to take a hands-on approach to conservation problems. Our vision is that through active leadership and coordination of conservation projects, Huron Pines makes the region a better place to live, work and enjoy.



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River Restoration News

The Au Sable River is more than 2,300 steps closer to a completely restored trout fishery. To date, **our crew has exceeded the goal of 2,300 trees** in the mainstream under a Michigan DNR grant. They used chainsaws and a winch to place trees along the riverbanks at crucial sites where either habitat had been lost due to tree removal during early 1900s logging or where erosion control was needed. Helicopter work was completed in September upstream of Alcona Pond on USDA Forest Service land. Although work for this season is winding down, the crew will be placing trees in the South Branch Au Sable (through funding from Anglers of the Au Sable and ORVIS) as long as weather permits and will move on to the East Branch in 2010.



Restoration Crew leader Ken Reed secures a tree on an Au Sable riverbank.

The Large Woody Debris (LWD) project received help from multiple volunteer groups. Volunteers of all ages added trees to the river during multiple projects and learned about the many benefits for our rivers that LWD provides. Greg Prosen, Director of the Youth Conservation School, stated in a letter that the fish they saw during their work “brings to them wide eyed amazement and a real time appreciation for the value and need of woody debris habitat in the Au Sable watershed.”

Watching Rivers' Health

To know what types of enhancement work are needed on a river, we first need to know the condition of the habitat and water quality.

Through the state Michigan Clean Water Corps (MiCorps) program, Huron Pines received funding to monitor the Pine River system near Oscoda. After successfully starting that project, we have received funding to expand the program to other rivers in our service area, starting with the Upper Manistee. Each spring and fall, volunteers from the Pine River-Van Etten Lake Watershed Coalition and Trout Unlimited collect macroinvertebrates, identify them and report back to the state to help give a better picture of the habitat quality in the rivers.

Huron Pines AmeriCorps member Kristin Thomas spearheaded Michigan Trout Unlimited's volunteer monitoring program by assigning each chapter a river to monitor, organizing trainings and monitoring events and creating a volunteer handbook. Kristin's work will help Trout Unlimited Chapters to monitor stretches of Michigan Rivers and share data with Huron Pines to foster projects that further improve water quality.



Kristin Thomas separates macroinvertebrates during a river sampling event.

Invasive Species: Cleaning Up Our Shorelines

In 2009, the Huron Pines Invasive Species Program got underway with the Campaign to End Phragmites. Organized by AmeriCorps member Tim Engelhardt, the Campaign focused on the Lake Huron shoreline in Iosco and Alcona counties. Early detection and rapid response to this growing problem is imperative, especially on private lands that aren't currently being managed. Private landowners were offered a cost-share opportunity to help offset the costs of removing invasive phragmites, a tall grass that is threatening shorelines and wetlands throughout the state.

So far, volunteers have treated six properties between Harrisville and Oscoda, bringing the total length of shoreline restored to over 1,000 feet. Because phragmites is so hardy, it is necessary to use herbicides for complete eradication. With the supervision of Huron Pines staff, volunteers have learned how to "hand-swipe" plants with a dyed herbicide mixture, reducing spills and contact with native plants, animals and the water. (Note: a DEQ permit is required for this process).

Volunteers have also made a difference with early detection of invasives—local residents and interest groups have attended trainings and begun monitoring phragmites in their area as well as recruited their friends and neighbors to join the program for next year.



Volunteer Paul Bruce uses the "hand swipe" method to kill phragmites on a coastal Lake Huron property.

Increasing Habitat Through Planning

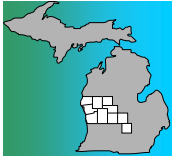
After developing the four-year strategic plan for the Pigeon River Habitat Initiative in 2008, four focus areas for the project were addressed in 2009: land use planning, landowner stewardship, land protection and sustainability. Through presentations to Pigeon River Country area townships and the Otsego and Cheboygan County Planning Commissions, our project committee was asked to provide recommendations for the Otsego County master plan. Volunteers helped to establish a rapport between the PRHI and local units of government by organizing and conducting presentations and providing their natural resources expertise in making planning recommendations.

While the Huron Pines Habitat Specialist conducted site visits, providing land management expertise and help with wildlife plantings, staff from HeadWaters Land Conservancy and Little Traverse Conservancy worked to encourage land protection through easements. In addition, volunteers helped this effort by overseeing the creation of a GIS (computer mapping) database to help prioritize parcels and target those landowners who can make the biggest difference in connecting habitat in the Pigeon River Country buffer lands.

A recent result of this project is the \$300,000 in additional funding (over the next 5 years) that has been allocated for the Cheboygan River Watershed from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This money is available for private landowners through programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program and provides cost-share opportunities for a wide variety of conservation practices. The success of the PRHI project was highlighted in the proposal and used to leverage the funding for the area. A key strategy will be to work more closely with NRCS to promote cost sharing for management plans and forest land enhancement projects. Efforts are already under way to work with landowners and help initiate forest land enhancement projects and take advantage of the increased funding opportunities.

Habitat Specialist Eric Nelson discusses food plot options with a landowner.





TIMBERLAND

TIMBERLAND RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA COUNCIL, INC.

Serving Clinton, Ingham, Ionia, Kent, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana & Ottawa Counties

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November 2009

Timberland Project of the Month

The Little Muskegon River flows through parts of Mecosta, Montcalm and Newaygo Counties where it joins the Muskegon River at Croton Pond. The soils in the valley of the Little Muskegon River are mainly sand and stream bank erosion is a major problem. Comparing aerial photos from 35 to 40 years ago and today shows that nearly 30 acres of sediment have filled part of the Croton Pond with eight to ten feet of sediment. In 2008 Timberland started a project to stabilize some of this stream bank. A project of over 300 feet in length was completed using grants and private funds. There is much more to be completed, the scope of this project could take twenty years to complete. In 2009 a group of individuals completed the removal of nearly 3000 cubic yards of sediment to allow boating access to and from the pond to the river, as well as improve fish spawning and other recreation benefits. Twenty-three private donors contributed nearly \$50,000 to complete this project. It took over 5 years to acquire the necessary permits from Federal, State, County and Township units of government, and to raise the private funds to complete the project.



This sediment removal project was completed using a hydraulic backhoe with a 60 foot boom. All of the sediment was hauled from the dredging site directly to an approved receiving area.



Due to the confined work space, with homes, trees and yards being the site for the excavator, this was time consuming and somewhat expensive. Phase 1 was to remove trees so the backhoe could fill trucks to haul away the spoil. Phase 2 was the excavating of the spoil. Phase 3 was leveling and reshaping the river bank area and yards and phase 4 was to reseed and stabilize the entire disturbed area.

Along part of this river bank there is a need for bank stabilization, which is planned to be completed yet this fall. Nearly 300 feet of riverbank has been slowly sliding into the river over many years and not only will these measures reduce the sediment moving into the water but they will also protect a roadway.

(Continued on next page)



This year's project was completed with private funds donated by concerned citizens, with donations ranging from \$100 to \$10,000. Future plans include additional stream bank stabilization and the possibility of the purchase of a small suction dredge to maintain this area and have available to others with similar projects.



This project is proof that if you have a good cause and you are willing to spend the time to inform people, most people want very much to protect our natural resources.

2010 Grand River Expedition

Timberland will be assisting the 2010 Grand River Expedition next year. Every ten years this group sponsors a canoe trip the entire length of the Grand River. This will be the third such trip. Goals of the Expedition include documenting the recreation,

economic and environmental benefits that the Grand River Watershed provides to the region. We will celebrate the river by exposing the general public and key decision makers to the river's values and opportunities. There will be many chances for the area citizens to ask questions, share concerns and explore opportunities for improving the river's quality. Participants will compare data collected in 2010 with information from previous expeditions.

The results will lead to greater understanding, appreciation and stewardship of the Grand River, enhancing its recreational use and economic impact. This expedition is open to anyone or if you would like to contribute toward the cost of this project, the contact person is Mr. Doug Carter, Expedition Chair at 517-627-7690.

2009 Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of Timberland RC&D was held October 21 2009. This was the first annual meeting held under the revised by-laws that were approved in February. Under the new by laws the election of not more than eleven directors was completed. Those running to become a director must be a dues paying member of the RC&D or a representative of a group, governmental unit, or business that is a member. Eleven directors were elected and will represent the ten county area.

The guest speaker for the meeting was Corky Overmyer. Mr. Overmyer was part of a group from western Michigan that visited New Zealand on an environmental and sustainable tour of that country. In New Zealand the governing unit's boundaries are laid out by watersheds. All the major decision-making in the country is done at the lowest possible level affected. This is truly a grass roots type of government. New Zealand boasts that it is the most self-sustaining country in the world. New Zealand is very conscious of the importance of conserving and enhancing its natural resources.

- Land Use • Agriculture •
- Sustainable Development •
- Recreation & Tourism •
- Conservation, Protection, & Wise Use Of Natural Resources •
- Water Quality •

With public input from local citizens, interested organizations, and governments, the Timberland RC&D's mission is to provide regional leadership and assistance for area citizens cooperating to conserve, enhance, improve, properly develop and sensibly use our natural and human resources. The Timberland RC&D Area Council is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Visit our website to learn more:

Timberlandrcd.org



Saginaw Bay RC&D Area Inc.

Serving Arenac, Bay, Clare, Genesee, Gladwin, Gratiot, Huron, Isabella, Lapeer, Livingston, Midland, Saginaw, Sanilac, Shiawassee, & Tuscola.

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Chairman: Bob Luce

November 2009

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

One of the most ambitious environmental restoration efforts ever proposed for the Great Lakes appears imminent following the emergence from a House-Senate conference committee of legislation providing \$475 million for a comprehensive Great Lakes restoration and protection initiative.

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) was proposed by President Barack Obama in his 2010 budget to focus on the most critical environmental concerns facing the Great Lakes, including invasive species, toxic sediments, nonpoint source pollutants and wildlife habitat loss. Following passage by the House at \$475 million funding level sought by President Obama, the measure was approved by the Senate at \$400 million. A conference committee announced agreement yesterday on \$475 million to support the first year of the Initiative. The legislation now goes back to both houses of Congress for final approval and then to the President to be signed into law.

A Multi-Year Action Plan for the GLRI, prepared by the U.S. EPA, guides how the funding will be allocated and how progress will be monitored. According to the Action Plan, the Initiative "will use outcome-oriented performance goals and measures to target the most significant problems and track progress in addressing them." While U.S. EPA will lead the overall effort, it will enter into agreements to transfer more than half of the funding to other federal agencies. The \$475 million budget includes some \$250 million to be awarded through grants and project agreements to states, cities, tribes, and nongovernmental groups.

For more information check out the website at:
www.epa.gov/greatlakes/glri

IN THE NEWS

George Randall Retires from Board Services

*The quality of work and reputation of Saginaw Bay RC&D Council was greatly enhanced due to the years of dedicated volunteer service provided by
George Randall.*

The Board and Staff wish George the best in his recent retirement from Chair of the Saginaw Bay RC&D.

Thank you for all your hard work and dedication.

Saginaw Bay RC&D 19th Annual Meeting

It's almost that time to be thinking about the 19th Annual Meeting of the Saginaw Bay RC&D. The date will be Thursday, February 25, 2010. More details will follow in the next few months!!

2010 North Central RC&D Conference **(April 11 - 14, 2010)**

The 2010 North Central Conference will be held at Atwood Lake Resort & Conference Center, April 11-14, 2010. The theme is "RC&D, Partnering for Sustainability." Speakers and tours will focus on topics and training that address the myriad aspects of sustainability - for strong Councils and Partnerships as well as Sustainable Energy and other Environmental Projects. Success stories will focus on how RC&D assistance can make a project more sustainable, and therefore, more successful.

For More Information: Contact Traci Aquara, Program Administrator, Heart of Ohio RC&D Council, 557 Sunbury Road, Delaware, OH 43015, (740) 368-5979, ext. 112.

Project Update Corner

Chesaning Dam

A recently completed project in Chesaning has opened nearly 75 miles of the Shiawassee River to fish spawning habitat. In particular walleye and great lakes sturgeon have been targeted for natural reproduction in the Saginaw Bay Watershed. Funding from the State of Michigan, Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) and local groups helped create a series of 8 rock fish “ramps” (which allow fish to pass through this area and access historically important spawning areas above Chesaning) and allowed the Chesaning Showboat to once again float. The previous dam failed 2 years ago.



Working on the Chesaning Dam

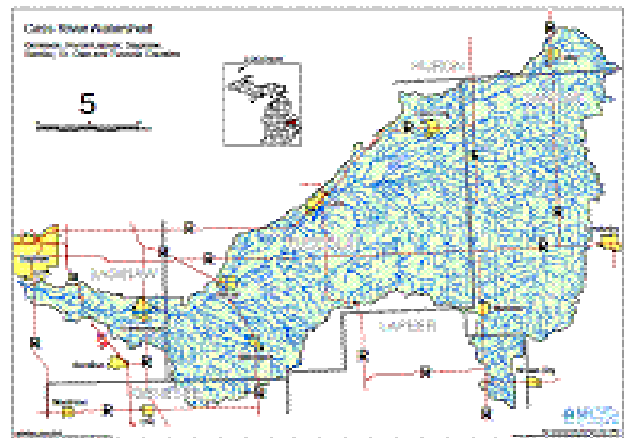


Aerial view of the Chesaning Dam after work was completed

319 Planning Grant for the Cass River Watershed

The Saginaw Bay RC&D recently submitted a 319 planning grant for the Cass River Watershed which touches portions of Huron, Tuscola, Saginaw, Sanilac, Lapeer, and Genesee Counties. The goal of this project is to develop a coordinated and comprehensive watershed management plan that addresses the Upper Cass River, Middle Cass River, and Lower Cass River Sub-basins and meets EPA Section 319 requirements. This will be done by completing physical inventories of all TMDL water bodies and other priority sub watersheds.

The planning project is intended to build on and expand on-going local efforts to improve the Cass River Watershed. A steering committee will be formed to involve all political jurisdictions, agencies, and the general public in developing this plan. Information gathered from the Rapid Watershed Assessment will provide a framework for initial prioritization. Field assessment of priority areas and sub watersheds will be accomplished with assistance of Conservation District staff; while Spicer Group will complete a hydraulic and hydrologic assessments and associated pollutant loading calculations; U of M Flint's Center for Applied Environmental Research will create a list of potential Conservation Areas and development of Information and Education programs.



Our Vision: Enhance Quality of Life in the Saginaw Bay Watershed by Maintaining a Sustainable Natural Resource Base for Future Generations.



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RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

"OVER 30 YEARS OF HELPING OUR COMMUNITIES DEVELOP & CONSERVE THEIR RESOURCES"

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November 2009

Mid-America Trails and Greenways Conference, Kalamazoo, MI

October 25-28, 2009

Article by Jim Coury

The Mid-America Trails and Greenways conference is an extremely successful regional Trailway/ Greenway Conference covering the eight states in the Midwest Region of the United States - held annually in a different state. This year it was Michigan's turn to host this event. Over 320 people attended. Field trips started Sunday, October 25, 2009 with Conference topics presented over the next three days. There were over 30 major sponsoring organizations giving between \$300 and \$3000 of sponsoring gifts. The total donations from sponsors were over \$42,000.



A section of the Kalamazoo Valley River Trail where the trail meets Drake Road

Sponsors included each state DNRs, DOTs, Michigan Trail and Greenway Alliance (MTGA), SMART, Potawatomi RC&D Council, Sauk Trails RC&D Council, Friends of the Kal-Haven Trail, Friends of the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail, as well as the National Park Service, and the Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC).

Topics covered ranged from how to start trail planning, funding, O&M, partners, and managing trails. Seventy-one excellent speakers spoke on a variety of topics.

The Kalamazoo River Valley Trail was named the state's project of the year by the Mid-American Trails & Greenways Conference, which is meeting in Kalamazoo. Tuesday's award "was recognition for all the hard work that the volunteers put into the project," said Kalamazoo County Parks Director David Rachowicz. Toni Thompson, president of Friends of the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail, accepted the award at the conference.

The 35-mile Kalamazoo River Valley Trail, which officials estimate will be completed in 2013, will connect to the Kal-Haven Trail to the west, the Battle Creek Linear Park to the east and the Portage Bicentennial Park Trail to the south.

Land Conservation
Water Management
Community Development
Land Management

The Sauk Trails Resource Conservation and Development Council's mission is to assist communities in the four county area to develop, utilize and conserve the natural resources of the area and to insure a sound resource base for the future. The Sauk Trails RC&D is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Visit our website at
www.sauktrailsrcd.org

Meet Sauk Trails RC&D Council Members

Meet Bob Wooley. Bob is a lifelong Coloma resident who is in his sixth term on the Berrien County Board of Commissioners, representing District 1. Bob is a former Mayor of the City of Coloma and served over 20 years as a Commissioner of the City of Coloma. Bob is the Director of the North Berrien Senior Center located in Coloma, MI. He has served on the Sauk Trails RC&D Council for 4 years. He and his wife have two grown sons.



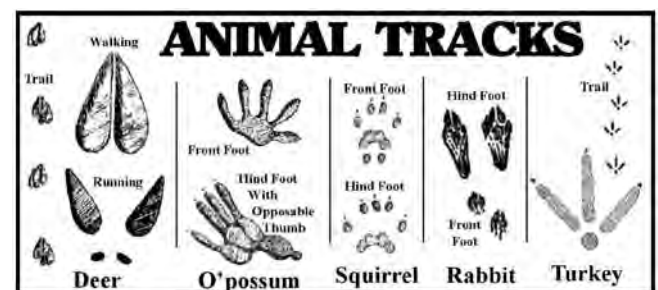
Sauk Trails RC&D Council current activities...

- Deerhead Park, Sodus Twp, Berrien Co. Work on Phase 2 of project. Replacing public outlook decking on the St. Joseph River
- Completing the NARC&DC's Circle of Diamonds Standards of Excellence Program
- Pipestone Creek Soil Bioengineering Project

Educational Identification Signs for Cass County Parks and Recreation

Sauk Trails RC&D Council is sponsoring educational identification signs for the Dr. T.K. Lawless Park in Newberg Township and Fred Russ Forest Park in Volinia Township located in Cass County. Scott Wyman, Director of Cass County Parks and Recreation Department said the purpose of the signage is to enrich a park visitors' experience by providing an educational tool that explains the different natural resources found at the parks and expanding their knowledge of the out of doors.

These signs will explain the different plants, wildlife and ecosystems found at both parks.





POTAWATOMI

RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

We bring people, places, and projects together!

Serving Barry, Eaton, Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Jackson, St. Joseph, Branch and Hillsdale Counties

Potawatomi Resource Conservation & Development Council
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JULY-AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2009

RC&D: Getting Things Done!

Fiscal Year 2009 has been a very rewarding, successful, and productive year for the Potawatomi Resource Conservation & Development Council (RC&D) and Staff. Perhaps the biggest news of 2009 is that Potawatomi Resource Conservation & Development Council has completed our 2010-2014 Area Plan.

LOCAL NEEDS...LOCAL ACTION:

Potawatomi RC&D is committed to bringing local people and local organizations together to identify resource concerns and opportunities and to seek solutions to these issues, without sacrificing economic growth or environmental quality. Potawatomi RC&D provides a unique regional framework for locally directed action and cooperation aimed at solving problems identified by the people who are experiencing them first hand. We engage local energy, input and resources to address vitally important and complex issues such as, but not limited to; Land Use and Agriculture; Sustainable Economic Development; Recreation & Tourism; Conservation/Protection/Wise Use of Natural Resources and Water Quality. Other goals include flood plain management, improved water quality, expanded wetland protection and restoration, more tree planting, sound forest management, improved wildlife habitat, and conservation education.

BY THE NUMBERS: In 2009 the Potawatomi RC&D Council, working in partnership with USDA-NRCS, local Conservation Districts, local County Boards of Commissioners, project sponsors, and interested public, has helped to plan and implement over 35 projects. In 2009 the Council and its Staff have assisted on grants and projects totaling over 3.0 million dollars. The leverage for the Potawatomi RC&D is 20:1. In 2009 Potawatomi RC&D provided over \$15,000.00 in scholarships and funding for a wide diversity of events, workshops and groups.

NAWCA Grant Recipient:

Potawatomi Resource Conservation & Development Council, along with a host of partners, was recently awarded a North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant to conserve wetland habitat in the SE Lake Michigan Watershed. Ducks Unlimited will administer the grant and project partners will acquire, restore, or enhance approximately 2,000 acres of emergent, forested, and scrub-shrub wetlands and adjacent uplands within the project boundaries. "NAWCA grants are a crucial funding source for conservation partnerships such as this one," said Michael Sertle, Ducks Unlimited regional biologist. "As a result of this funding opportunity, we will be able to cooperatively conserve critical wetland habitat for the benefit of waterfowl and other migratory birds." The NAWCA partnership is a diverse group that includes, Ducks Unlimited, Potawatomi Resource Conservation & Development, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, Michigan Nature Association, Boy Scouts of America, R.T. Groos LLC, Ft. Custer Training Center, U.S. Forest Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to receive matching and non-matching funds to leverage these NAWCA funds. Approximately \$2 million in matching and non-matching partner funds and \$989,000 in NAWCA grant funds will protect, restore, and enhance emergent and forested wetland habitat critical to waterfowl in SW Michigan. Many of the functions and values of these former wetlands have the potential to be restored by plugging drainage ditches and creating low head embankments. Conservation projects are expected to take place over the next four years with projects beginning in the summer of 2010.

- Land Use • Agriculture
- Sustainable Development •
- Recreation & Tourism •

With public input from local citizens, interested organizations, and governments, the Potawatomi RC&D's mission is to assist local communities and the public to improve their standard of living and achieve sustainable economic development through the sound utilization, conservation, and/or protection of our area's natural resources. The Potawatomi RC&D is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

- Conservation, Protection, & Wise Use Of Natural Resources •
- Water Quality •

Watershed Management Program–319 Clean Water

Grants & Planning Activities: In 2009, there are several active 319 grants in the Potawatomi RC&D service area. The council provides planning and implementation Technical Assistance. Most are in the implementation phase whereby the BMPs identified in the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (CWMP) are being implemented. Others are in the planning phase to identify land and water problems impacting water quality in area watersheds and developing the CWMP that will be used in the future to address non-point pollution concerns. Conservation Districts and Potawatomi RC&D, along with other partners, helped to plan, write, and achieve grant funding or assist on these programs from EPA via the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) for each of these 319 grants. These grants are approximately \$135,000 per year (\$500,000 for FY 2009) and enable the watershed partners (usually Conservation Districts) to employ Watershed Coordinators to help direct the conservation implementation for each program. Active 319 Implantation Grants include; Rice Creek Watershed (Calhoun CD); Rocky River Watershed (St. Joseph CD); Upper Grand River Watershed –Phase II (Jackson CD). Active Planning Grants and activities include: Thornapple River (Barry CD); Crooked & Pigeon Creeks (Calhoun CD) Brand new 319 Planning Grant Applications include: the Prairie River (Branch CD); Crooked Creek (Calhoun CD); and the Lower Upper Grand River (Eaton CD); St. Joseph River AWEP Technical assistance. Brand new 319 Implementation Grant Applications include: Hodunk-Messenger Chain of Lakes Watershed (Branch CD)



Photo by ASTI Environmental

8th Annual Marshall River Clean Up & Conservation

Day: Potawatomi Resource Conservation & Development Council provided a sponsorship for the VERY successful 8th Annual Marshall River Clean Up & Conservation Day held on Saturday, October 3, 2009. The mayor of Marshall, Bruce Smith officially opened the event and the volunteers were off to their assigned tasks. In 3 hours, on crisp fall morning, over 200 volunteers and 30 event coordinators planted 30 trees, created a new area of nature trails at Brooks Sanctuary, cleaned up our river banks and parks along the Kalamazoo River, provided maintenance and care to our Native Plant Demonstration Plot, and conducted Water Quality Monitoring. Volunteers including Eaton Employees, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Olivet College Students, Marshall Students and teachers rolled up their sleeves, put on waders, pitched in, and had a ton of fun making Marshall, and Calhoun County, a better place to live.



Our future is in great hands!

The sponsorship awarded by Potawatomi RC&D provided financial assistance that helped cover the cost of trees planted, and lunch and t-shirts for the volunteers. Project sponsors included; City of Marshall DPW & Electric Departments; Marshall Area Conservation Committee, Baird, Potawatomi Resource Conservation & Development Council; Phil Martin & Michael McNeil, Joseph Campbell Company, C & C Landfill/Republic Services, Growing Point Pet Center, Trout Unlimited, Marshall Animal Care, and the City of Marshall. The events organizing group, Marshall Area Conservation Committee is a (501c3 non-profit) group of citizen volunteers whose mission is to preserve, protect and enhance Marshall's natural resources. **That's what RC&D is all about!!**

- Land Use • Agriculture
- Sustainable Development •
- Recreation & Tourism •

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**Southeast Michigan
Resource Conservation
& Development Council**



Serving Lenawee, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw, & Wayne Counties

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Web: www.semircd.org
Chairman: Morse Brown

November 2009

URBANWOOD EVENTS SHOW OFF LOCAL BUSINESSES

Unbelievably, the discarded trees from southeastern Michigan's cities could provide wood flooring to more than 2,300 homes each year. The Urbanwood Project is a unique network of sawmills and tree care companies that



work to reclaim this valuable resource. The group salvages logs left behind from tree care work to create high-quality, custom lumber and flooring. Two recent events were held to make local customers

more aware about these companies' innovative services.

Recycle Ann Arbor's new ReArt Gallery featured *Urban Wood Finished Works* throughout the month of October. Local woodworkers displayed a variety of art and furniture pieces including lamps, statues, tables, cutting boards, and musical instruments made from salvaged wood.

Local architects and other green building professionals attended the Urbanwood Tour on November 10, 2009, to meet the members of the Urbanwood Project, see a running sawmill, and view spectacular Urbanwood flooring in residential and commercial buildings. This successful event allowed wood users to learn more about the sustainable products that are made right in our region.

The Urbanwood Project began as a cooperative program between the Southeast Michigan RC&D Council and Recycle Ann Arbor in 2005. To see available products, learn more about the participating businesses, or join the mailing list, please visit <http://urbanwood.org>.

COUNCIL SEEKS PROPOSALS FOR WOOD USE DEMONSTRATION SITE

The Southeast Michigan RC&D Council is currently accepting proposals for communities interested in serving as a pilot facility for a large-scale urban wood utilization demonstration. The project will use an interested county, city, or public recreation area in southeastern Michigan as a central wood use destination and training location, with benefits intended to extend to a wide range of local industries and communities. The project aims to increase the skills and job opportunities for city and private arborists, land managers, and members of the primary hardwood industry by finding better uses for urban wood resources. Additionally, this program looks to reduce wood disposal burdens and foster partnerships between cities and the wood industry.

The community selected for this demonstration program will not receive a cash grant award, but instead will receive a package of technical assistance and services worth approximately \$90,000. At least \$50,000 in matching contribution (from in-kind services or other sources) is required. To view the complete application details and request for proposals, visit: <http://www.semircd.org/ash/news/demosite2010>.

**Resource Protection
Economic Development
Conservation**
Making things happen.

The Southeast Michigan Resource Conservation and Development Council's mission is to help the people of Southeast Michigan take better care of their natural resources; better utilize the services of local, state, and federal agencies; and improve their community's economy, environment, and quality of life. The Southeast Michigan RC&D is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Visit our website
to learn more:**
www.semircd.org

COUNCIL WORK FEATURED AT PROMINENT GREEN EVENTS

Through a grant from the Council, the Ann Arbor District Library used reclaimed ash trees in the building of their new Traverwood Branch which won a 2009 design award from the Michigan Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. The building was also featured in the film *Up from Ashes*, one of eleven films chosen for the 2009 Greenbuild Film Festival. Hosted by the U.S. Green Building Council, this year's Greenbuild expo and conference drew nearly 30,000 visitors to Phoenix, AZ. The complete *Up from Ashes* documentary can be viewed online at: <http://www.aadl.org/upfromashes>. The library was also one of three featured buildings in October's issue of *Architect Magazine*. The story and photo slideshow are available on the magazine's website at: <http://www.architectmagazine.com/community-projects/traverwood-branch-library.aspx>.



Photo: Justin Maconochie for Architect Magazine

The Southeast Michigan RC&D also presented information on *Finding Value in Urban Trees* at the recent *Dollars and Sense of Going Green* conference in Schaumburg, IL. The conference, organized by Purdue University and *Wood & Wood Products* magazine, addressed best environmental practices for the wood products industry.

Michigan State University, Ohio State University, and Purdue University are launching a new joint effort to provide up-to-date education on issues related to the emerald ash borer outbreak. This project, *Emerald Ash Borer University*, is a series of free webinars that provide the latest information on fighting this invasive pest. Staff from the Southeast Michigan RC&D Council will present strategies for the *Utilization of Ash in the Wake of EAB* on February 4, 2010. For more information, please visit: http://www.emeraldashborer.info/eab_university.cfm.



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BIOMASS STUDIES SHOW POTENTIAL FOR TWO LOCAL SITES

As part of the Council's Michigan Wood Energy program, biomass feasibility studies were recently completed in facilities owned by the U.S. Army and the City of Ann Arbor. RDA Engineering's study for the U.S. Army's Detroit Arsenal in Warren showed particularly favorable outcomes for converting to wood energy. The results showed that a wood system could result in over \$3.5 million of cost savings at the Detroit Arsenal over a fifteen-year period with no up-front cost to the Army, while using a renewable fuel and virtually eliminating the carbon dioxide emissions from the base. Additionally, the proposed wood-fired system would create two full-time jobs for future operations and source its fuel from local wood waste sources in the Detroit area. For more details, please view the full report at: <http://semircd.org/ash/news/DetroitArsenalBiomass.pdf>. The City of Ann Arbor's energy assessment for the Farmer's Market and Cobblestone Barn is available at: <http://semircd.org/ash/news/AnnArborBiomass.pdf>.

SEE MORE FROM THE SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN RC&D COUNCIL

Visit our websites for more about how reclaimed dead trees can create jobs and produce sustainable energy:



<http://semircd.org/ash>



<http://urbanwood.org>



<http://michiganwoodenergy.org>

Funding for the Council's wood utilization projects comes from the USDA Forest Service Wood Education and Resource Center and from the USDA Federal State Marketing Improvement Program. Additional technical support is provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

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