

WINTER 2010 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



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Huron Pines

Conserving the Forests, Lakes and Streams of Northeast Michigan

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Winter 2010

Eastern Upper Peninsula Forms Cooperative Weed Management Area

Invasive plants have negative impacts on our environment, economy, and human health. Agriculture, fishing, hunting, recreation, property values, and the quality and integrity of natural areas are all affected by the presence of invasive plants. For the past three years, the UP RC&D Council has been assisting the three eastern-most counties in the UP (Mackinac, Chippewa and Luce) to find ways to prevent the spread of invasive species in that region and control the invasive plants that have already become established. And so it was with great enthusiasm that a group of thirteen individuals, representing nine organizations, came together to do something about invasive plants in the eastern UP. On January 21, 2010, with a shared interest in becoming organized, the group explored the possibility of forming a Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) for Chippewa, Mackinac, and Luce Counties.

What is a CWMA? CWMA's are local organizations that integrate all invasive plant management resources across jurisdictional boundaries in order to benefit entire communities. This is a new approach to invasive plant management that was developed in the western states to combat common invasive problems. Local citizens, landowners, and not-for-profit groups joined together with city, county, state, tribal and federal officials to create CWMA's. Informal partnerships can accomplish great things, but the formal agreement created during the formation of a Cooperative Weed Management Area establishes a long-term relationship that won't disappear after a joint project is completed.

Garlic mustard (pictured at right) has been identified as an invasive species that occurs in some parts of the UP, including the eastern counties. This plant poses a severe threat to native plants and animals in forest communities in much of the eastern and midwestern U.S. Many native wildflowers that complete their life cycles in the springtime (e.g., spring beauty, wild ginger, bloodroot, Dutchman's breeches, hepatica, toothworts, and trilliums) occur in the same habitat as garlic mustard.

Once introduced to an area, garlic mustard outcompetes native plants by aggressively monopolizing light, moisture, nutrients, soil and space. Wildlife species that depend on these early plants for their foliage, pollen, nectar, fruits, seeds and roots, are deprived of these essential food sources when garlic mustard replaces them. There are some studies that indicate that garlic mustard also suppresses germination of hardwood tree seedlings, which could have devastating consequences for the forest industry.



Hiawatha National Forest botanist, Kirk Piehler, announced during the meeting that the new CWMA has an excellent chance of acquiring \$100,000 over the next two years to begin to control invasive plants on the eastern end of the UP. Funds can be used for education and awareness, prevention, early detection and rapid response, monitoring, and integrated pest management.

The next meeting of the group will be on Wednesday, March 10, 2010 at the USDA Service Center in Sault Ste Marie at 1:00 pm. The Chippewa/East Mackinac Conservation District is hosting the meeting. The group plans to review a draft Memorandum of Understanding, for a Steering Team, and possibly begin discussion on the formation of an Annual Operating Plan. The group hopes to expand and include even more organizations and agencies. Anyone who has an interest in the control of invasive plants on public and private land is invited to attend.

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

Erosion Control at Christmas Motorsports Track Completed

For some years, the 27-acre Kolbus Racetrack Site in Christmas, Michigan has been a favorite recreation area for dirt bike enthusiasts. Unfortunately, each spring, melting snow and surface spring flow collected in the depression of the racetrack oval. During particularly heavy snow years, rapid spring thaws washed large quantities of sediment off of the site and down a ravine which drains into the headwaters of the east branch of Gangeau Creek, then into Furnace (Carr) Lake. The runoff overburdened culverts, washed out a county road, and caused visible sediment plumes that discolored the entire surface of Furnace Lake and extended several miles into Lake Superior. The sloping, sandy site had been entirely denuded of trees and vegetation and stripped of topsoil when the track was constructed; hence, not much of anything remained to slow water velocity.



Aerial view of Christmas Motorsports Racetrack

Alger Conservation District's Munising Bay Watershed Restoration Project, funded by a \$325,000 three-year grant from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's Clean Michigan Initiative, cited the critically-eroding Kolbus Racetrack as a top priority. Among other projects, the grant included funds to stabilize the site. Multiple best management practices, including shaping of eroded and gullied slopes, spreading topsoil and fertilizing to optimum specification, native seeding using erosion blanket on bare or steep slopes, vegetated swales,

riprap ditch checks, retention ponds, and other erosion control practices were planned to halt the rampant erosion.



Alger Conservation District board member, Hampton Waring, inspects site following remediation

Engineering firm Mead & Hunt drew up a site plan which was approved by the MDEQ. Construction at the track began in early June, 2008. Grading and shaping were completed first and the old culverts at the outlets of the old ponds were removed. Temporary erosion control (silt fence) was placed below the old outlets. Two weirs were installed and riprap laid over geotextile at the weirs' inlets and outlets. 5400 cubic yards of topsoil was spread over the site, around the detention ponds and on the old road and parking areas.

Construction was complicated and delayed by several high-volume rain events over the course of summer 2008 and, later, by questions about the quality of construction practices. Finally, however, the issues were resolved. A new contractor, Seaberg Contracting of Munising, was hired in fall 2009 to repair and complete construction, reshaping slopes and swales, repositioning riprap ditch checks, and revegetating bare areas with seed, fertilizer, and mulch blanket.

Alger Conservation District Watershed Manager Liz Coyne, who oversaw the project, and other District staff, board members, and partners are optimistic that the erosion control provided by this restoration will prevent further degradation of the coldwater fishery downstream of the track.

This article was written by Teri Grout, Alger Conservation District Administrator, with photos provided by Liz Coyne.

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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Winter 2010



Wheeler Creek Dam Removal

In 1867 a local citizen named John Wheeler built a dam on what came to be known as Wheeler Creek. Though there were a couple of fires at the dam site, the structure was repeatedly rebuilt over the years and has kept Wheeler Creek from freely flowing into the Manistee River ever since. In October of 2009, CRA worked with partners to remove Wheeler Creek Dam. The concrete spillway was breaking apart, the stop logs were in poor condition, and the risk of failure was looming for the 20 foot high dam.

The dam removal process has not been without challenges. Over 140 years worth of accumulated sediment and debris had collected in the ponds behind the dam, and with the highway and Manistee River immediately downstream of the dam we lacked an ideal sand trap site. CRA contracted with Wade Trim and Molon Excavating to engineer and complete the dam removal project. The ponds were drawn down and the dam gradually removed in October and November. The stream continues to cut down to its natural streambed to accommodate for the 20' of fall through the old impoundment area. It's no wonder that John Wheeler

thought this a good location to harness the energy of a steep, fast flowing stream to power his sawmill.

The project will last another 2 years with restoration work through the impoundment area and downstream, and monitoring of stream changes at the site. Project partners and funders have included MDNR Fisheries Division, MDEQ, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, Michigan Department of Transportation, and Kanouse Outdoor Restoration.



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

Silver Creek Fish Passage

The Silver Creek road crossing at State Road, located approximately 400 yards upstream from the confluence of Silver Creek and the Pine River, blocked all fish passage from the Pine into Silver Creek, a cold-water tributary and nursery stream for rainbow, brown, and brook trout. Because the site poses no transportation problems, the replacement of the structure was a low priority for the local road commission, particularly in the present economic times. The primary objective of this project was to establish fish passage upstream into Silver Creek from the Pine River by removing a perched culvert and installing a bottomless arch structure. This project is a great example of how local watershed partnership models can function to come to consensus on appropriate BMPs, obtain funding for implementation, and carry out large scale restoration projects. Funding was provided by the following partners: USDA Forest Service, MDNR Fisheries, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Forest Foundation, USDA-NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant, CRA River Care, and funding in part from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 administered through the Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife Service.



This past fall CRA enlisted the help of David Mifsud of Herpetological Resource and Management to review our Wild Link and River Care management practices and make suggestions on how they may be improved to benefit herps (reptiles and amphibians). The initial step taken in the project was visiting Wild Link and River Care restoration sites to discuss how the projects were implemented and to view the results. A final draft of David's management suggestions will be ready for use in early 2010 and should provide valuable guidelines for planning future restoration efforts.



Amphibians, like this leopard frog, will benefit from a recent review of CRA management practices.

This past fall was also a busy time for Wild Link plan writers Eric Ellis and Jeff Breuker of Martell Forestry Inc. Four plans were completed and delivered to private landowners in Emmet, Mason, and Antrim counties covering roughly 1420 acres of regionally important wildlife corridors. These plans will guide property owners in managing their land for better wildlife habitat, water quality and sustainable timber resources. In 2010 CRA anticipates helping these, and many other Wild Link landowners, complete on-the-ground management projects outlined in their management plans.

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

Winter 2010

Welcome Huron Pines AmeriCorps Members

This year, Huron Pines is hosting two AmeriCorps members at our office in Grayling. Neil Sauter, who participated as a member in 2009 at Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy, is serving with us as a stream specialist and helping with our small dams program. Liz Padalino is also serving as a stream specialist, providing GIS mapping help and assisting with the invasive species program.

The Huron Pines AmeriCorps program is already hard at work on another successful year of service. Welcome to all our new members serving at the following sites:

- Abigail Ertel, HeadWaters Land Conservancy
- Liz Padalino, Huron Pines
- Neil Sauter, Huron Pines
- Cari Sebright, Michigan Trout Unlimited
- Anne Negro, Michigan Sea Grant
- Jessica Kane, Otsego County Conservation District
- Steve Gates, Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary
- Ashley Marquardt, Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary

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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Huron Pines Annual Meeting

Making her first public presentation since being named Director of the newly created Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Rebecca Humphries spoke February 6th at the Annual Meeting of Huron Pines. Director Humphries spoke about challenges facing Michigan's conservation future and fielded questions from the 130 conservation and community leaders from across northern Michigan.

U.S. Forest Service Biologist Robert Stuber also presented at the meeting, talking to the group about the watershed planning process and opportunities to improve water quality through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Huron Pines used the meeting to unveil the new interactive "River Model," which simulates river processes and is an effective teaching tool for showing the results of human impacts on river systems. Project staff also did a presentation for the group that highlighted many of the hands-on conservation projects from the past year and highlighted the important role that project partners, funders and volunteers all play. Visit our website to see video demonstrations of the river model and other online resources.

Award Season at Huron Pines

Each year at our annual meeting, we take some time to recognize partners and volunteers for their exemplary efforts in furthering conservation in Northeast Michigan.

The Huron Pines Award—Bob Andrus
Bob has worked to restore the Au Sable River for over 30 years, partnering with Huron Pines as the leader of the Au Sable River Watershed Restoration Committee.

O.B. Eustis Organization Award—Pine River -Van Etten Lake Watershed Coalition

The leadership and key members of this coalition have been active through the years in conducting water quality monitoring, volunteer projects, outreach and education activities and implementing major tasks in the PRVEL watershed plan.

O.B. Eustis Individual Award—Brenda Archambo

Brenda spearheaded the creation of the local chapter of Sturgeon for Tomorrow over 10 years ago. She is passionate about protecting sturgeon and has partnered extensively with Huron Pines and others to restore habitat for this threatened fish.



Restoration Project Manager Patrick Ertel leads a river model demonstration.



Bob Andrus was the recipient of the Huron Pines Award at our annual meeting.



Huron Pines staff and volunteers study the effects of a road/stream crossing on a stream.

Coordinating Our Project Efforts

Our work could not be successful with the funding sources brought to the table by our agency partners. However, almost no funding is without strings: every dollar we get in agency funding needs to be matched in some percentage by other funding, whether a grant or a donation. So, part of our job at Huron Pines is not only to coordinate partner efforts on a project, but also to coordinate funding and match sources. Our contributing members are our most important source of match on any and many projects—cash easily fits what are typically very strict requirements for match sources.

We are often approached by an agency (or other) partner who has a source of money for a certain type of project that needs to be spent pretty quickly. Now we need two things in order to utilize this funding: 1) the quick answer as to what specific project would be the best candidate to receive this funding, and 2) the matching funds in order to qualify for the grant.

complete throughout our service area. The list contains regional and watershed-based projects with all of the information needed for a grant proposal. To look at this “mega list” of projects and the grants we are currently pursuing, visit www.huronpines.org or call us at (989) 344-0753 ext. 21 to request a hard copy.

To increase the odds of obtaining grants for conservation in Northeast Michigan, particularly large grants with multiple partners or short deadlines, we have created a prioritized “mega list” of projects that we would like to

11/11 Volunteer Program for 2010

Huron Pines is trying something new in 2010. We want to use the power of our volunteers to reach every county in our service area and help our volunteers have a greater impact for conservation. Rather than waiting for people to contact us with ideas, we’ve chosen 11 volunteer projects that will benefit our 11 Northeast Michigan counties in different ways while letting volunteers experience all the types of conservation projects we offer:

May 15—Montmorency County—Twin Lakes Greenbelt

May 29 —Crawford County—Manistee River Monitoring

June 10—Presque Isle County—Silver Creek

June 26—Otsego County—North Branch Ford Fix-Up

July 9—Cheboygan County—Pigeon River Habitat Initiative

July 24—Oscoda County—Van Luven Rd Erosion Site

August 2—Roscommon County—South Branch Au Sable Large Woody Debris Enhancement

August 21—Alcona County—PRVEL Restoration Successes

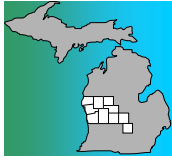
September 3—Ogemaw County—Wildlife Habitat Enhancement

September 15—Iosco County—Invasive Species Treatment

October 2—Alpena County—Native Plant Restoration



If you are interested in participating in any or all of the above events, please contact Jill at Huron Pines, (989) 344-0753 x21 or by email at jill@huronpines.org.



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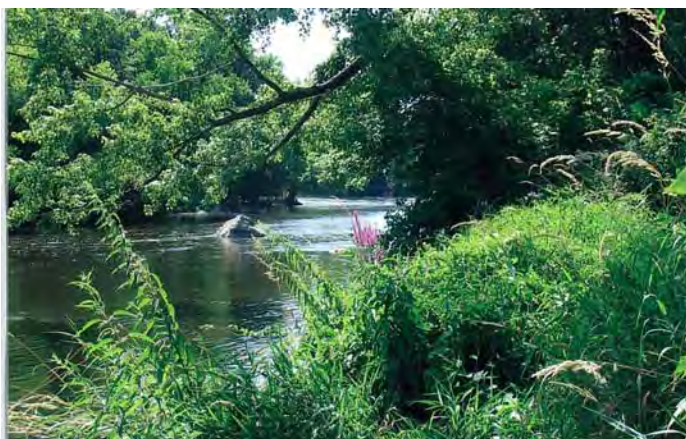
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President: Jack Enderle

Winter 2010



Have you ever wished that you could have been an explorer and gone along with Lewis & Clark to find a passage to the west? Would you like to map new lands and collect new plant and animal species, seeing areas of this great land that you have never seen before? Timberland RC&D will be assisting in the 2010 Grand River Expedition this year.

Grand River Expedition 2010 is a 13-day public event which is a locally-based, cooperative effort to raise public awareness of this unique regional resource, promote individual and collective stewardship for its many values and discuss the future of the watershed.



At 260 miles, the Grand River is the longest river in Michigan. Its watershed includes 5,570 square miles within 18 counties and 158 townships.

Over one and a half million Michigan citizens live, work and play within its borders. Like the rest of Michigan's 36,000 miles of rivers and streams, the Grand River has played a crucial role in the exploration, settlement, and economic growth of our state. It remains among our most valuable resources. Presenting unparalleled cultural, recreational, aesthetic, and ecological benefits, our rivers and streams contribute immeasurably to the quality of life for all Michigan citizens and visitors, present and future.



Beginning July 14, 2010, GRE 2010 will embark on a trip down the 225 navigable miles of the Grand River across mid-Michigan to its mouth at Lake Michigan in Grand Haven, arriving on July 26, 2010. Grand River Expedition 2010 is a program of the Timberland Resource, Conservation and Development Council. The Expedition is a broad coalition of organizations, individuals, and communities conducting a journey of discovery, study and enjoyment of the values, challenges and opportunities of the Grand River and its watershed.

(Continued on next page)

(2010 Grand River Expedition continued)

This effort will contribute to the public's knowledge, awareness and appreciation of the Grand River, and how it connects communities across the region - for present and future generations.

Grand River Expedition 2010 is designed to maintain the momentum achieved from GRE 2000 and GRE 1990, broaden citizen involvement and engage key decision makers in dialogue about the connection of land use and water quality. It is gratifying to see such a large and diverse coalition come together to conduct Grand River Expedition 2010. These leaders of government, agriculture, education, business, industry, and non-profit organizations, working together, will be responsible for the future health, integrity and vitality of the Grand River watershed, its citizens and its communities. It is only fitting that they come together now to celebrate the majesty and potential of this shared resource.

We encourage all watershed citizens to participate in this special observance to learn more about the river and watershed, and about how to become more responsible stewards of this treasure. 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.

Timberland Coordinator Moves On

In December, Steve Law the Timberland RC&D Coordinator received a promotion which moved him into a new position in the NRCS State Office as EQIP Program Director. Steve was a great asset to Timberland and guided us through good times and not so good times. The Board of Directors wishes him well in his new position, but will miss his knowledge and wisdom. The Timberland Board hopes to have a replacement to this position in the next few months.

Muskrat Lake Project

Over the past 5 or 6 years a partnership has been developing to restore the water level of Muskrat Lake in Clinton County. Somehow beaver were introduced into the lake 30 plus years ago and they raised the water level above the historical lake level causing problems to the drainage system upstream of the lake. The County Drain Commission was asked to lower the level. During the removal of the beaver dam an excess amount of the ditch bottom was removed and the level dropped well below the historical level. This resulted in the destruction of some important spawning areas and waterfowl feeding wetlands.

A partnership was formed amongst the Clinton Co. Conservation District, Clinton County Drain Commissioner, Sons of the Maple River, Clinton County Ducks Unlimited, Clinton County Board of Commissioners and others to restore the water level of the lake. Many studies and surveys were made to set an appropriate water level. Permits are now in place to complete the project. The cost of this project is all that stands in the way of its completion. Sponsors are hopeful that the \$30,000 needed to complete this can be raised and this project will be finished in 2010.

Clinton Conservation District Providing Administration and Accounting Services for Timberland RC&D Council

In November 2009, the Clinton Conservation District (CCD) agreed to provide administration and accounting services for Timberland RC&D. Gary Fritz, Executive Director and Bonnie Hettler, Administration & Accounting Services, have been providing the requested services. The CCD agreement will include coverage during a transition period while recruitment is taking place for a new RC&D Coordinator. Bob Baetsen, NRCS RC&D Coordinator at Sauk Trails RC&D, is splitting his time in the interim to assist.

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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:

natureandpeople.org



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February 2010

KEARSLEY PARK UPDATE



The Saginaw Bay RC&D is working with the Flint Parks and Recreation Department to address erosion on Gilkey Creek which is dangerously close to a walking path in the park. Project plans include using a gabion mattress to lessen people movement of the rock. A permit has been issued from the Michigan DEQ and work is currently underway to obtain permits from the Flint Public Works office and Drain office. Once this site is finished there are several sites which will be re-inventoried and prioritized with one site very similar to the current site. Funding for the project comes from the Flint Park and Recreation through funds raised and grants.

MIGREATBAY

The Saginaw Bay RC&D has been asked to once again spearhead the development of a regional website promoting recreation along the shoreline of the Saginaw Bay. Counties including Iosco, Arenac, Bay, Tuscola, Huron, and Saginaw have participated in the past with the Bay County Convention and Visitors Bureau heading development. Recently the head of the Bay County's Convention and Visitors Bureau retired. Saginaw County Convention and Visitors Bureau agreed to a regional approach and is now handling the day to day operations of

Bay, Saginaw, and Midland Counties Convention and Visitors Bureau's and felt this was enough for them at this point than asking the RC&D to take over the development of the web site. It will be critical for the RC&D and members to move on development of the web site as the Bay Area Community Foundation and Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative granted \$19,000.00 for the development of the site a year ago and are anxious to see the site up and running.

WELCOME EARTH TEAM VOLUNTEER / EMPLOYEE

Laura Neuenfeldt is from Hemlock, Michigan. She will be graduating for Lake Superior State University with a Bachelor's degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Management in May. During the Summer of 2009 she interned at the Shiawassee National Refuge for Michelle Vanderhaar in which she monitored wetlands. She also helped Michelle with the Cass River Cleanup Project, surveying upcoming wetlands, and inputting data into Arcmap. In attending LSSU she has a lot of hands on experience with water and habitat assessments as well as wildlife and fish management techniques.

WELCOME LAURA



FRANKENMUTH FISH PASSAGE/ DAM PROJECT SET FOR SUMMER 2010 CONSTRUCTION

After nearly five years in discussion, Representative Dale Kildee announced that federal funds would be released to the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for the Frankenmuth Fish Passage Project located at the dam on the Cass River. The project will reconnect 73 miles of natural spawning habitat, supporting regional efforts to delist the Saginaw Bay/River AOC beneficial use impairment caused by diminished fish and wildlife habitat. The City of Frankenmuth hopes to be in construction of the project by August 2010.

Built in the 1850's, the Frankenmuth Dam will be modified with the installation of a rock ramp with weirs to achieve fish passage at the dam site. Fish passage would reconnect habitat for Lake Sturgeon and Walleye (species targeted by the MDNR and Partnership for Saginaw Bay) as well as for a variety of other species including the white sucker, white bass, smallmouth bass, channel catfish, northern pike and steelhead.

This particular dam has been identified as one of three "critically important" fish passage opportunities by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Beginning with a study of the dam completed on behalf of the Partnership for the Saginaw Bay in 2004, the City of Frankenmuth has coordinated activity with the USACE to complete this project.

The USACE will provide 65% of the funding for this project with the balance funded by local match. The estimated cost of the project is \$2.1 million. To date, the City has received a major in-kind donation of stone from Signature Bank and cash contributions from Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN), Michigan Sugar Company and Star of the West. Also, WIN recently awarded a grant to CMU to monitor pre-construction and post-construction success at the project site. The US Fish & Wildlife Service has also pledged funds towards the project. Looking to raise an estimated \$750,000, the City continues to look for funding.

The resource team working on this viable project includes representatives from the US Fish & Wildlife Service, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN), the Partnership for the Saginaw Bay and USDA/NRCS RC&D. The Great Lakes Fishery Commission gave the project a "high priority" rating when evaluating the fisheries and ecosystem benefits of the proposed project. The project is a keystone project for the Cass River Greenway Initiative. For more information about this project, contact City of Frankenmuth project coordinator, Sheila Stamiris at 989.652.3430 ext 120 or email at sstamiris@frankenmuthcity.com.

Collaboration Creates New Cass River Water Trail

The City of Vassar, Tuscola Township and Frankenmuth have been working together for two years designing and promoting a water trail on the Cass River. On December 2, 2009, under the sponsorship of the Cass River Greenway Committee, the communities received an \$83,400 funding grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. Other funding for the \$145,000 project includes a \$29,000 grant from the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) and local funding from the three communities.

The water trail will be a series of three new canoe/kayak launch sites to be built on public property in Vassar, Tuscola and Frankenmuth. In addition to the launch sites, the water trail project includes parking and restroom facilities, along with promotional material and informative signage along the river. Construction of all three sites is anticipated for late summer, 2010.

The Cass River Greenway Committee includes representatives from each community along the Cass River from Bridgeport to Cass City. The committee would like to pursue additions to the water trail, both upstream and downstream from the section covered by this project. In addition to developing recreation opportunities along the Cass River and its corridor, the Cass River Greenway Committee's goals include; preserve and enhance wildlife habitat, improve water quality, promote good environmental stewardship practices and develop eco-tourism opportunities. By working these goals across township and community boundaries the Committee hopes to insure a future of healthy connected communities.

For more information on the Cass River Greenway visit www.cassriver.org



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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February 2010

2010 Michigan Family Farms Conference

This important and diverse Farm Conference was held for all of Michigan's farm community at Lakeview High School in Battle Creek, Michigan (Calhoun County) on Saturday January 16, 2010. This year's theme was: "Holding on to Good Food, Good Families, and Good Farms".

More than 400 people attend this year's conference to learn about sustainable agriculture, family farms and new opportunities to help farmers connect to resources, and improve their operations. Special youth activities focused on agriculture, too, made this family farms conference truly a family event.



This year's Keynote Speaker was Corey Flournoy. Corey was the first ever non-rural, African-American National FFA President in 1994-95. Today, he is the co-founder of Creative Outreach Consulting whose mission is to help youth and adults seek, discover and capitalize upon the creative elements of success within in order to make a positive contribution to our world. Corey is a native of Chicago who attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Michigan State University for his Bachelor of Science and Masters degrees. He has been recognized locally in Chicago and nationally for his business and leadership skills, including being one of the top "30 under 30" business leaders in the Chicago area and receiving the Outstanding Young Men of America Award. Corey is now a full-time consultant for Creative Outreach and is an adjunct professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in Agricultural Education.

Concurrent educational sessions included topic

- **Small-scale Farmer Opportunities with Bioenergy**, Dennis Pennington, *MSU Extension Bioenergy Education* and Dale Allen, *USDA Farm Service Agency*
- **The Top 5 Things Families Do to Break up Their Business**, Michael Fraleigh, *Fraleigh Law Firm*
- **Increasing Your Markets Using Michigan MarketMaker**, Tom Kalchik, *MSU Product Center for Agriculture and Natural Resources*

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

Sauk Trails RC&D Council Elects New Officers for 2010

At our Annual meeting held Tuesday, January 26, 2010 Officer Elections were held. Our new Chair is Ann File, Vice Chair is George Fusko, Treasurer is Richard Accoe, and Secretary is Victoria Chandler.



Sauk Trails RC&D Council current activities...

- Complete Business Plan 2010
- Completing the NARC&DC's Circle of Diamonds Standards of Excellence Program
- Pipestone Creek Soil Bioengineering Project
- 2010 Brrrr Winter Agri-Science Camp

2010 Michigan Family Farm Conference continued

- **Increasing Your Markets Using Michigan MarketMaker**, Tom Kalchik, *MSU Product Center for Agriculture and Natural Resources*
- **Successful Organic Specialty Crop Production**, John Biernbaum, *MSU Horticulture Department and MSU Student Organic Farm*
- **Planning for the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP)**, Jeff Douglas, *USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service*
- **Determining which Farmers Market is Right for Me**, Dru Montri, *Michigan Farmers Market Association* and Pam Weinstein and Jan Peterson, *Northwest Detroit and Lawrence Farmers Markets*
- **The Economics of Grass-based Dairy Operations and Robotic Milking**, Howard Straub, *Triple H Farms in St. Johns*
- **Putting Together a Food Safety Plan for your Farm**, Phil Tocco, *MSU Extension* and Shelly Hartmann, *Farmer's Experience*
- **Conserving Pollinators for Sustainable Crop Pollination**, Rufus Isaacs, *MSU Entomology Department* and Dale Allen, *USDA Farm Service Agency*
- **Farm Loan Assistance and Specialty Crop Disaster Information**, Dave Russ, *USDA Farm Service Agency* and Eric Fischer, *USDA Farm Service Agency*
- **So You Want to Sell Local?** Eric Hahn, *Locavore Food Distributors, Inc.*
- **Revitalizing Your Community with Youth and Small-scale Farming**, Greg Gaines, *Flint Youth Stand*
- **Growing Your Agripreneurial Business**, Ron Steiner, *The Starting Block, Inc. kitchen incubator* and William Lawson, *Farmer's Experience*
- **Telling Your Farm Story by Using the Web**, Bonnie Bucqueroux, *Sustainable Farmer blog* and Shelly Hartmann, *Farmer's Experience*
- **Are High Tunnels Right for Me?** Adam Montri, *MSU Horticulture Department and MSU Student Organic Farm*
- **Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Farmer Rancher Grants Farmer Forums I and II**



Potawatomi
Resource Conservation
& Development Council
We Bring People, Places, and Projects Together

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: Getting Things Done!

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OCTOBER-NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2009



Sprout Urban Farms!

The Potawatomi Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Council is pleased to be participating with a new initiative in Battle Creek, Michigan. Sprout Urban Farms is a grass roots effort initiated by a few people with a passion for gardening and a desire to eat fresher, healthier, locally grown foods. Have you ever pondered a better use for vacant land in the city limits? Why not turn them into gardens. The City of Battle Creek has identified over 300 vacant lots that could be neighborhood gardens. No, there won't be 300 new gardens growing in Battle Creek, but wouldn't it be great to see neighbors working together and enjoying the fresh taste of home grown foods.

A very successful public forum on community gardening identified a high level of interest from the public as well as a variety of potential resources for moving forward. The following ideas are being further explored: establishing a network of backyard gardeners, neighborhood based community gardens, alternatives to outdoor gardening, a food co-op, and the need for educational workshops. A major component of this initiative is to share the harvest with those in need. So, if you have a passion for gardening and love to share your success, consider getting involved with this great group of enthusiasts. For more information contact Jen Bomba in the RC&D Office at 269-789-2354. Stay tuned as this exciting initiative takes root!

Resource Conservation & Development Councils: Making positive changes in people's lives! NATION WIDE IN 2009

- *676 new businesses were created*
- *5,921 businesses were expanded or retained*
- *631 instances of Tribal Nations served*
- *More than 500 natural resource related school curricula and programs were developed*

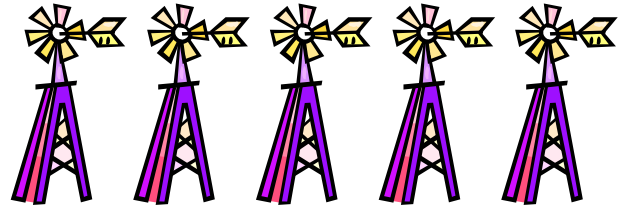
- Community Supported Agriculture •
- Sustainable Development •
- Alternative Energy •

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 •
- Land Use

Community Supported Agriculture Project – Community Supported Agriculture is one of the main pillars of our 2010-2014 Area Plan. In all of our scoping meetings the need for a citizen driven, multi-faceted, Community Supported Agriculture Program ranked very high. Community supported Agriculture, or CSA, is about developing and nurturing relationships between local agricultural producers that grow healthy, fresh food and the local people that consume that locally grown food. It's about local people empowering themselves to take an active part in both increasing the healthfulness and quality of the food they consume as well as increasing the quality of care given to the land, plants and animals that are the true providers of the food. It is about growing local economies. Growing not only local economies of a monetary nature, but also growing an economy of trust, an economy of health, an economy of compassion, an economy of outreach, and an economy of environmental sustainability. The Community Supported Agriculture Program envisioned by Potawatomi Resource Conservation & Development Council and our partners is one that will have the following traits and characteristics:

- It will be a interconnected network of growers and consumers that produce and deliver fresh and healthy food
- It will build and enhance relationships, mutual support and commitment between local farmers and community members.
- It will build families and communities
- It will be focused on the health and well being of all participants
- It will provide local, fresh, and healthy food to those who may not be able to provide for themselves including vulnerable adults, children and families.
- It will provide economic security by providing lift to the local economy
- It will provide food security by insuring that food is grown locally
- Its roots will be planted firmly in both agricultural and environmental sustainability.
- It will provide food growing, food consuming and marketing education.
- It will utilize the full range of CSA concepts, models and mechanisms to insure a strong and resilient food production and delivery network.
- It will span all ethnic, cultural, and economic arenas as to insure all have a voice and all have a place at the table.



Wind Turbine Demonstration Project – We are very excited to announce the inception of our Wind Turbine Demonstration Project. This is a brand new and large scale project that Potawatomi Resource Conservation & Development Council will be embarking on over the next 5 years. The Wind Turbine Demonstration Project is a multi-partner, collaborative project, sponsored by the Potawatomi Resource Conservation & Development Council, aimed at demonstrating, researching and providing resources for sustainable wind-generation using new multi-veined wind turbine technology and innovative on-site energy storage methods. This demonstration project will involve installing multi-veined wind turbines at several sites, monitoring them, and providing live, on-line data for two years. It is apparent that there is a profound lack of hard scientific data on the performance of small scale wind energy equipment that has been installed at diverse locations and put to a wide diversity of uses. In order to foster the increased application and installation of the multi-veined wind turbine technology utility companies, regulators (such as local and state zoning and building code authorities), lenders, contractors, and consumers need more information in order to make responsible decisions on the subject.

The goal of this project is to bring together the private, industrial, educational, governmental, and non-profit sectors to install and demonstrate the utility and applicability of multi-veined wind turbine technology. The turbines will be installed at a wide variety of sites, with a wide variety of operational conditions and demands, and diverse uses for the energy generated. The project will provide; 1) an assessment of small-scale multi-veined wind turbine technology in a variety of real-world conditions; 2) for the design, installation and refinement of appropriate, useful, and reliable real time data collection systems for multi-veined wind turbine technology; 3) provide all project partners with an opportunity to gain real-world and research experience with renewable energy equipment installation, operation, and analysis. We will keep you posted on project activities and accomplishments as we move together into an era of clean, renewable energy that benefits all the residents of South Central Michigan.

- Community Supported Agriculture
- Sustainable Development •
- Alternative Energy •

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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

February 2010



**NEW MEDIA PROMOTES LOCAL
URBANWOOD BUSINESSES**

In today's tough economic climate, small businesses must be innovative to attract customers. Through help from the Southeast Michigan RC&D Council, members of the area's Urbanwood Project have new tools for promoting their unique services and unusual business strategy. Their work, turning urban "waste" wood into valuable products, used to be tough for many people to visualize, but thanks to several new videos, these businesses can introduce customers to the concept of reclaiming urban trees, recruit more arborist partners, and help builders and other wood users learn more about these sustainable products. These short films, including in-depth interviews with sawyers, woodworkers, and architects, are available on the Urbanwood Project's channel on YouTube. All of this activity also landed the Urbanwood Project a cover story on the Greenovation.tv website. To see available products, learn more about the participating businesses, or join the mailing list, please visit <http://urbanwood.org>.

**EAB UNIVERSITY PROVIDES
GUIDANCE ON ASH WOOD USE**

Staff from the Southeast Michigan RC&D Council presented strategies for the *Utilization of Ash in the Wake of EAB* on a recent *Emerald Ash Borer University* webinar. Since mid-2004, the Council's *Ash Utilization Options Project* has helped communities and businesses find more value in trees removed due to the emerald ash borer outbreak. The webinar gave an overview of this work, providing research results, planning strategies, success stories and resources that may help with the development of effective EAB response plans. The full webinar (including slides and audio track) can be viewed at: <http://breeze.msu.edu/p28503914/>.



Extension educators at Michigan State University, Ohio State University, and Purdue University launched *Emerald Ash Borer University* as a joint effort to broadcast free webinars that provide up-to-date education and the latest information on responding to the emerald ash borer outbreak. For more details, visit: http://www.emeraldashborer.info/eab_university.cfm.

See Urbanwood videos on YouTube:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/urbanwoodproject>

Read more about Urbanwood on Greenovation.tv:
<http://www.greenovationtv.com/2010/01/harvesting-trees-from-cities/>



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

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

COUNCIL SEEKS PROPOSALS FOR NEW GRANTS & PROJECTS

The Southeast Michigan RC&D Council will be accepting proposals and seeking partners for the following new projects in the coming months:

- *Community Wood Use Demonstration Site* - The project will use an interested county, city, or public recreation area in southeastern Michigan as a large-scale urban wood utilization demonstration location. The selected community will receive a package of technical assistance and training services worth approximately \$90,000.
- *Firewood Debarking Technology Grant* - This project is aimed at creating simple, affordable, easy-to-build firewood debarking equipment suitable for small wood-processing businesses. A grant of \$30,000 is available for the development of the equipment designs.
- *Firewood Chemical Testing Contract* - In an effort to help with the development of safer firewood products, the Council is seeking professional testing to determine the impacts of borate insecticide treatments on firewood performance and emissions.
- *Wood Boiler Installation Grant* - A grant of \$60,000 is available to help fund the installation of a wood-fueled biomass boiler system in a public facility in southeastern Michigan. Preference will be given to facilities that can lower wood disposal costs, lower energy costs, and act as a demonstration site for others.
- *Pellet Industry Workshops* - Together with the Michigan DNR and the Potowatomi RC&D Council, workshops will be held to explore the challenges and opportunities facing the state's emerging wood pellet industry.

For more information about these programs, please visit the News section of the Council's *Ash Utilization Options Project* website at <http://semircd.org/ash/news> or contact jessica.simons@semircd.org.

TRI-STATE COLLABORATIVE LOOKS AT URBAN WOOD MARKETS

Along with partners throughout Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin, the Southeast Michigan RC&D is helping to lead the *Urban and Community Wood Marketing Collaborative*. This group has come together with a mission to encourage the highest possible use of downed trees from urban areas and is looking for ways to increase demand for urban and community wood products in green building markets.

The Collaborative will be hosting two roundtable meetings to bring together key stakeholders in the urban wood industry - arborists, governments, sawmills, wood products certifiers, and green builders. Together, they hope to create new ideas for how to expand the market opportunities for urban wood. The first of these meetings is scheduled to take place on March 8, 2010 at the Ann Arbor District Library's Traverwood Branch. The Traverwood facility's architects have received national recognition for their innovative use of reclaimed ash wood in the library's interior.

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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