



LITTLE RIVER NEWS

SPRING/SUMMER 2017

**THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE HELD JULY, 8th
AT SKINNER PARK IN IRONS, MICHIGAN. THE MEETING
WILL BEGIN AT 10 AM, REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 9 AM,
SO MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND SEE YOU THERE.**

Our 21st annual meeting promises to be one presenting much information and news about the state and health of the river and the workings of the Council over the past year and plans for this year, as well as a status report on the development of the Watershed Management Plan.

The guest speaker will be Mark Tonello, fisheries biologist for the MDNR. Mark has been involved with the river and the activities of the Council for many years, and his "Status of the Fishery Resource Report" remains a benchmark document.

As usual there will be a bucket raffle and a silent auction as well as the main raffle that will give away three prizes:



A picture of the Betsie Valley course provided by Crystal Mountain Resort

A golf outing for four at the Betsie Valley course of Crystal Mountain Resort, a kayak package, and overnight accommodations provided by D-Loop Outfitters with two day's guided fishing.

Your trustees will each discuss his/her area of responsibility and how their various roles synchronize to ensure the smooth operations of the Council in our continuing effort to "Restore, Protect, and Preserve the natural character of the watershed."

Following the business meeting and the raffles, lunch will be provided by members of the Indian Club.

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AN OVERVIEW OF EROSION REMEDIATION EFFORTS

Since 2015 the LMWCC has committed a significant portion of its resources and efforts to remediating sites where erosion threatens further sedimentation of the riverbed. The LMWCC underwrote a river survey from King's Highway (Carrieville) Bridge to Old Stronach Road Bridge conducted by Conservation Resource Alliance (CRA) and completed in December of 2014. The final document, "Little Manistee River Eroding Streambank Assessment," can be seen via the LMWCC website — www.lmwcc.org — that connects to the CRA site. It identifies eighty-two eroding bank sites and provides specific details of each including: GPS coordinates, length and height of the problem area, river location (left/right), ownership, and photographic evidence. It also ranks the degree of the problem from severe to minor.

In 2015 the Council's trustees agreed to remediate these sites beginning with the most severe and working through the moderate and minor sites until all have been addressed. The chart on page #4 illustrates the progress to date. The remediation process entails permit application and approval through the MDNR and a NEPA evaluation on federally held lands, and there are different methods to control erosion depending on the demands of the specific site. In some instances a combination of erosion control methods may be used. One technique used mainly on low gradient banks is the installation of large wood. Logs are placed at the foot of the bank and rafted together to deflect

bearing flows. This also creates ideal fish cover. In broad flat areas, channel-narrowing projects can be undertaken. The effect is to increase flows by concentrating the current to move sediment more effectively. On higher bank sites stabilization needs to be done. This entails terracing with the installation of either rock revetments or placement of woody debris. It may also involve the planting of appropriate vegetation.

If you paddle the river, look for the work your council has been doing to "restore, protect, and preserve" our resource.

Below, and on the following page are "before and after" pictures of sites #10, 13, and 16 in the Carrieville area.



site #10 before remediation



BANK EROSION WORK IN THE CARRIEVILLE AREA

2016 Carrieville Eroding Bank Sites-Before and After

Site #10 (after)



2016 Carrieville Eroding Bank Sites-Before and After

Site #13 (after)



2016 Carrieville Eroding Bank Sites-Before and After

Site #16 (before)



Site #16 (after)



**All photos courtesy of CRA: Little
Manistee River Eroding Streambank
Assessment 12/31/14**

LMWCC Erosion Site Tracking

<u>Site #</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Ownership</u>	<u>Notice/Acceptance</u>	<u>\$Evaluation</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Start/Complete</u>
37/38	severe	private	10/2015			10/15
20	severe	private	10/15 – no reply			
42	severe	private	10/15	\$1500		
50	severe	private	10/15 – 12/16	pending		
56,57,60	severe	private	10/15 – 11/15	\$500, 4-8000, rock \$3000	1/17	
63	severe	private	10/15 – 11/15	\$1000	9/16	4/17 -
66,67	severe	private	12/16 – 12/16	pending		
10,13,16	severe	state	10/15 to CRA	\$2400, \$3500, \$1000	8/16	9/16 – 10/16
36,37	severe	state	10/15 to CRA	\$250,250	8/16	12/16 – 4/17
27 sites	severe	NFS	12/16, 1/17 pending			
22 -26	moderate/minor	private	10/15 – 10/15	?	8/16	8/16 – 9/16
1,2	moderate	state	9/16 – 9/16	pending		
12,14,15	moderate	state	9/16 – 9/16	pending		
18	moderate	state	9/16 – 9/16	completed 9/16	pending	

Sites 19, 31, 32, 34, 35, 39, 48, 51 have all been evaluated as moderate. They are all on privately held land, and the Council has targeted each of them for work to be completed in 2018.

Site numbers correspond to the CRA Erosion Assessment Survey completed in 2014. That survey can be found on the LMWCC web site — www.lmwcc.org — as well as the CRA site.

LMWCC AND AREA NEWS

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN

Under the outstanding leadership of LMWCC trustees Armas Soorus and Joyce Durdell, the realization of a comprehensive watershed management plan grows closer to becoming a reality.

The LMWCC had hoped that investing money with the Manistee County Community Fund would, with the assistance of the Alliance for Economic Success, provide incentive for corporations and other entities to contribute monies for the development of the Plan. It was expected that sufficient funds could be raised to finance the fees proposed by Public Sector Consultants to undertake the necessary background research and actually write the Plan before seeking approval from the EPA and the MDEQ. PSC's proposed fees were \$93,000. When it became clear that the expected growth of the Plan Fund was not going to be sufficient to meet those costs, the Council's trustees agreed to re-open the bidding process, and Networks Northwest emerged as a viable alternative to PSC.

Asked to submit a bid to the Little Manistee Watershed Management Steering Committee, Networks Northwest proposed a base cost for the development and writing of the plan of \$40,000. As this was a significant reduction in cost as opposed to the PSC bid, and given the lack of growth of the Plan Fund held by MCF, the LMWCC trustees, at their monthly meeting on March 4th, agreed to authorize the steering committee to select

Networks Northwest as the consultants for completing the Plan. The best part of the Networks Northwest proposal is their commitment to completing the Plan within a twelve month period.

Following the drafting of the Plan and approval by the Steering Committee and the Council's trustees, the Plan would be submitted to the EPA and the MDNQ to ensure that it meets the standards of those two organizations. As stated in an earlier article about the Plan, approval by the EPA and MDNQ will make it easier for LMWCC to compete for public, corporate, and other private grants to fund our continuing efforts "to restore, protect, and preserve the natural character of the watershed." For more see "Financing the Plan" page #7

LAKE MICHIGAN WATER LEVELS

According to the National Weather Service the water level in the Great Lakes has surged due to the spring's rainfall. Lake Superior has risen five inches; Lakes Michigan and Huron have risen ten inches; Lake Ontario twenty-one inches, and Lake Erie eight.

IMPORTANT LMWCC DATES

May 6 — with MCD macro-invertebrate study

May 13 — macro-invertebrate survey on Little Manistee

July 8, 9:30 AM — Annual Meeting

July 10 — Water Quality survey

MORE NEWS FROM AROUND THE AREA

GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE

It can be said that the first budget proposal of a new executive is a reflection of policy directions to be followed during his/her tenure. If that is so, the budget proposal released by President Donald Trump this spring indicates a callow and callous disregard for the health of the Great Lakes basin, specifically the work of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), by proposing to slash that program's federal funding by 90%.

Begun in 2010, the GLRI is committed to protect and restore the Great Lakes and their basin — the largest system of fresh surface water in the world and the source of clean drinking water for more than thirty million people. Since its inception the GLRI has provided supplemental federal monies to support efforts to improve the area's water quality. The GLRI has provided 300 million dollars each year to support public and private projects in cities, rivers, and harbors throughout the area. It has also enabled the National Park Service to address critical ecosystem needs in eight of the Great Lakes' thirteen National Parks.

The nearly 3,000 restoration and toxic clean-up projects that have been funded by the GLRI have improved water quality, prevented beach closings and fought invasive species like the Asian carp from advancing in our lakes and streams. Thanks to GLRI funding, scientists at Sleeping Bear Dunes are working to save Great Lakes shorebirds

from fatal outbreaks of disease caused by toxins in Lake Michigan; workers at Indiana Dunes are restoring hundreds of acres of wetlands used by migrating birds in the Great Marsh; and park staff and volunteers at Apostle Islands have restored eroding Lake Superior shorelines and rebuilt boardwalks for visitors to enjoy. Six million tourists a year visit the Basin's National Parks boosting local economies, and it has been estimated that the Great Lakes sport fishing industry generates at least four **billion** dollars a year in combined revenues.

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is the largest investment in the Great Lakes in two decades. In 2010, a task force of 16 federal agencies and many of the region's governors released the [GLRI Action Plan FY2010-FY2014 \(PDF\)](#) covering five urgent issues called "focus areas":

- Cleaning up toxics and areas of concern;
- Combating invasive species;
- Promoting nearshore health by protecting watersheds from polluted run-off;
- Restoring wetlands and other habitats; and
- Tracking progress, education and working with strategic partners.

Without this infusion of environmentally protective funding the consequences could be catastrophic to the Great Lakes and everyone who depends On them.

FINANCING THE PLAN

In the article on page #5 presenting an up-date on the status of the Watershed Management Plan (WMP), it stated that the LMWCC Watershed Management Steering Committee has selected Networks Northwest as the consultants to do the necessary research on the watershed and draft the Plan before submitting it to MDEQ and hence the EPA for approval.

At its March 4th meeting, the LMWCC board of Trustees agreed to assume the entire financial responsibility for the cost of the plan. A brief history of the board's preparation for such a step is provided.

The board first began discussing the need and practicality of a Watershed Management Plan in October of 2014, and Greg Goudy of MDEQ attended the Trustees' meeting in April of 2015 and informed the board of the benefits of developing such a plan. At subsequent meetings, officers of Trout Unlimited, and MDNR reinforced the idea. By the August meeting of that year, the board was prepared to invest money with the Manistee County Community Fund (MCCF), with the Alliance for Economic Success (AES) acting in fiduciary oversight, to show the Council's commitment to the development of a Plan in hopes that the initial LMWCC investment would attract other monies in the form of grants.

At that meeting, the board developed three funds with MCCF with the expectation that each would grow through contribution of additional monies: The Plan Fund was begun with a

\$7,000 deposit from LMWCC to, underwrite the cost of developing a WMP, The Endowment Fund, with an initial investment of \$25,000, was established to realize a return and grow LMWCC funds, and The Implementation Fund, started with \$5,000 from LMWCC, to be used to make the Plan work once it was in place. The expectation of the LMWCC trustees was that each of these funds would, with the assistance of AES in soliciting both public and private grants, ultimately grow sufficiently to fund the development of the Plan. In the meantime the LMWCC Watershed Management Steering Committee had accepted a bid from Public Sector Consultants (PSC) of \$93,000 to write the Plan.

However, as of December 31, 2016, the funds with MCCF had shown little growth. The Plan fund contained \$18,341.47 mostly from contributions made and raised by LMWCC. The Endowment Fund had grown to \$26,574.84, and the Implementation Fund to \$5,827.74. Even combined the total amount was much less than the PSC costs. The Steering Committee then re-opened the bidding and received from Networks Northwest a proposal costing \$40,000.

At the board meeting in March of this year, the trustees agreed to assume the full cost of developing the Plan, and at May's meeting it was decided to commit the full balance of The Plan fund as well as \$21,000 from the Endowment Fund to meet the projected costs. Additional monies if needed will be taken from the LMWCC operating budget.

MORE ON INVASIVE SPECIES

In the Spring/Summer issue of the “Little River News,” we began a discussion of Invasive species, covering the New Zealand mudsnail, didymo or “rock snot,” the Emerald Ash Borer, and Hemlock Woolly Agelids. In this issue we will look at more invasives just as harmful as the others.

Oak Wilt — is a fungus that affects all species of oaks, particularly Red Oak, ultimately killing them. The leaves turn dull green or bronze, appear water-soaked, wilt, and then turn yellow or brown. Heavy defoliation accompanies leaf wilting and discoloration. The disease progresses rapidly, and some trees die within 1 or 2 months after the onset of symptoms. Most trees die within a year.

Beech Bark Disease — The disease is caused by a combination of a fungus and beech scale. The tiny scale insects, found on the tree trunk and branches, feed on sap in the inner bark. The fungus kills areas of woody tissue, sometimes creating cankers on the tree stem and large branches. Tree mortality occurs three to six years after scales initially infest an area. The largest trees are most susceptible.

Hickory Wilt — Like Beech Bark disease, this wilt is caused by a combination of the hickory bark beetle and a fungus. Hickory bark beetles are short, about 4-5 mm long, stout, thickly cylindrical, black to reddish-brown and almost hairless. They have a short curved spine or hook on the front tibia. The first symptom of hickory wilt is thinning crowns with small, yellow leaves. Decline and tree mortality follow within a year or two.

There are several aquatic animals that present serious threats to Michigan waters.

Sea Lamprey — They have blue-gray to olive-brown back, sides and fins with black marbling. Long and lean eel-like body with two dorsal fins. Expanded oral disc as wide as or wider than head with large, sharp disk teeth and sucking mouth. They average 24 inches in length but may grow as large as 45 inches. They attach to the side of a fish with a suction-cup like mouth, piercing the host's flesh and consuming blood and body fluids. They can severely weaken the fish, which can lead to death. Lake trout are the primary hosts, and fewer than one in seven lake trout survive. They have led to the decline of several native fish populations, including whitefish and lake trout. Continued next page.



There are four varieties of Asian carp that threaten our waterways, but three pose immediate threats.

Grass Carp — Grass carp have been found in Lakes Michigan, Erie and Ontario. Grass carp feast on aquatic vegetation that provides crucial habitat and spawning grounds. Grass carp were introduced to the United States in the early 1960s to control weed growth in waterways. Like other Asian carp, some escaped into the Mississippi River and have migrated northward toward the Great Lakes. They are gray to brassy green above, white to yellow below, with clear to gray-brown fins. The body is slender and fairly compressed; wide head and terminal mouth. Scales are large and have dark edges with a black spot at the base. They have harmed ecosystems by removing vegetation that native fishes, waterfowl and other species rely on. They feed on a wide range of food including algae, invertebrates and vertebrates to the point of harming several native plant and animal species.



Silver Carp — They are olive to gray above and silver or white on sides and below. Body deep and laterally compressed. Eyes are below the middle of head. Large terminal mouth. They can grow up to 48 inches.

Silver carp were at first introduced to some aquatic communities with the intention to control phytoplankton levels. Large populations of silver carp can be damaging to native larval fishes, mussels and some adult fishes that rely on phytoplankton for food. Silver carp have the potential to spread diseases that can wipe out native fish populations.



Bighead Carp — The largest of the three, they can grow to 60 inches weighing 100 pounds. They are dark gray above and on sides to off-white below. Large body with small scales but none on the head. Upturned mouths without barbels and low-set eyes. They are filter feeders that primarily eat phytoplankton and zooplankton throughout the water column. Plankton is the base of the food web; therefore these fish eat food that would otherwise go to native fish and other organisms to maintain the delicate ecological balance.



LMWCC GOALS FOR 2017 ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**ANNUAL EVENTS**

- **Bug Survey**
- **Water Quality Survey**
- **Private Projects** — Continue to monitor and assist owners with the permitting process.
- **Membership** — Pursue the mass mailings to riparian owners begun last year.
- **Annual Meeting** —
Secure permits, print raffle tickets
Procure raffle prizes and solicit donations for the auction.
- **Salmon-in-the-classroom** —
LMWCC continues to support the program in the KND school district.
- **Newsletter** — published twice a year; mailed to members and posted on the LMWCC web site.
- **SWAT** — the team will clear the river periodically or as needed.
- **Fundraising** — Continue to explore fundraising options.
Sell LMWCC logo merchandise.
Identify organizations and groups as potential sources of support for on-going projects.
- **Web Site** — Make sure all significant and current information is available to members on the site
Provide links to other related organizations and partner groups
PayPal has now been implemented allowing members to renew on-line and make donations to the council.

2017 EVENTS

- Complete a final report on the CRA channel restoration project located above 9 Mile Bridge including results of an electro-shocking.
- Complete the funding for and undertake the removal of the Syers Creek dam.
- Continue the stream-bank remediation program based on the CRA bank erosion survey of 2015.
- Identify a stream section for another proposed channelization project.
- Study the results of the TU woody debris and fish population survey completed in 2015 in an effort to target areas for improving fish habitat and populations.
- Complete three fish habitat projects in section #3 of the TU woody debris survey using funds from a gift of the Jorgensen Family Foundation.
- Continue the recruitment of river-front property owners to join the organization.
- Continue the development of the EPA and MDEQ approved comprehensive watershed management plan.

Projected expenditures for implementing this year's goals run to \$32,700.00. This does not include the commitment made by the board to fund the Watershed Management Plan. For that see page #7, "Financing the Plan."

YOUR TRUSTEES

Tim Phillips	President
Jim Squier	Vice president
Evelyn Furman	Recording secretary
Dan Sernick	Treasurer
Dale Downes	Membership
Joyce Durdell	Water Quality
Armas Soorus	Marketing
David Spruance	Newsletter/ Grant writing
Joe Rogers	SWAT Team
John Miller	Corporate Member- ships
John Gorys	Emeritus
Kaye McDonald	Emeritus
Gordon Lewis	Emeritus

**OTHER COMMITTEE
CHAIRS**

Anna Jo Rogers Web Master

Check out our new-look, up-dated, and informative web site: www.lmwcc.org. Many thanks to our wonderful web master, Anna Jo Rogers for her efforts on our behalf.

**LMWCC MISSION
STATEMENT**

Is to bring together persons and organizations who have an interest in the resource conservation and restoration of the Little Manistee River and its watershed. Our goals are to restore, protect, and preserve the natural character of the watershed by communicating resource problems and then offering and implementing problem resolution. We are a state chartered non-profit, tax-exempt organization. All contributions are tax deductible under §501{3} of the IRS code. Our business is conducted by a council of trustees elected by the membership. All positions are voluntary, non-compensated.

Hope to see everyone at Skinner Park in Irons on July 8 at 10 AM for what should be an informative members' meeting with speaker Mark Tonello, fisheries biologist with the MDNR. The meeting will be followed by a raffle drawing, silent auction, and bucket raffle. Lunch will be provided courtesy of members of the Indian Club.