Spring 2023

LITTLE MANISTEE RIVER NEWS

A Message from President Armas Soorus

Now that we are, hopefully, past the pandemic and the world is functioning more normally it feels like we are finally able to make progress in several ways. We are coming out of what has been a frustrating period of slow progress, for more reasons than the pandemic. But it really does help to be able to meet face to face.

One major area we can see progress is work that Wayne Anderson and Jim Squier have done on the bank remediation and fish cover projects. Our world was changed a few years ago when the federal government started enforcing the permitting requirements called for because we are a study river for the Wild and Scenic Rivers program. Wayne has an article in this newsletter describing the work to build relationships with CRA, NFS, DNR and Trout Unlimited to get these projects done. We will be surveying the river with TU between Fox Bridge and 9 Mile Bridge this spring to look at potential fish cover work. It is a slow process, but things are moving forward, and I am confident that in the long term our projects will be more impactful than ever because of what is being done.

Joyce Durdel has been working closely with the Mason-Lake and Manistee Conservation Districts and others to drive forward our Water Quality and Macroinvertebrate programs and invasive species surveys. Working with the Conservation Districts brings their expertise and resources so we can have better and more credible results than we could on our own. Our data is now on state databases that can be used for studies and other purposes, and it defines a clear baseline of data documenting the conditions in our river.

We have been working with the Conservation Districts to try to establish long term positions there for watershed technicians. This would provide more expert resources for us to work with for everything from field work on water quality and macroinvertebrate studies to writing grants, educational outreach and many other aspects of what we do. The Manistee Conservation District has their first "permanent" watershed technician starting this season and the person is funded by a millage and grants, not LMWCC. We are working with them to also get a summer employee again, but funding and just getting someone the time to manage the employee is making it difficult.

We are also working with GVSU and the Conservation Districts to get a survey to see what support we have in the watershed for the Natural Rivers program for the Little Manistee. You can expect to see it this summer. This has taken much longer than I expected. It seems like a simple thing on the surface. But it is not.

The Watershed Management Plan has, so far, not directly impacted our success in receiving grants for the LMWCC as we had hoped. It has opened opportunities for us to work with others, like the Conservation Districts, in ways that significantly benefit LMWCC and the Little Manistee. The fact that something we need is in an approved Watershed Management Plan often means they can request grant money for it and use it to benefit the Little Manistee River. Our summer interns are an example of this in action. The Watershed Management Plan opens doors for us at DNR, NFS and other places that will in the long term provide much benefit. Often the first thing we are asked is "Is this in the Watershed Management Plan?" When we can say yes it gets us to the next step.

We will also be having a traditional Annual Meeting like we had before the pandemic. The lunch, raffle, bucket raffles and other activities will all come back. Dana Castle from the Michigan DNR Natural Rivers group will be there to speak and answer questions.

I hope to see you there.

2023 Watershed Summit Meeting Highlights

The 2023 Little Watershed Summit Meeting was held March 3, 2023 at the Elk Township Hall. We had 14 people attend from a number or organizations, including the LMWCC, North Country CISMA, The Pine River Association, EGLE. Osceola-Lake Conservation District, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, MDNR, Manistee Conservation District, Wexford Conservation District and the Manistee Conservation District. Full minutes of the meeting as well as links to data and other documents are available on our LMWCC.org web site. The purpose of the meeting is to share information on work done by the different organizations, coordinate our work and plan our focus for the year.

We talked about the real time monitoring stations near Bear Track and N Widewaters Road. Both had been functioning well, but we are now having some problems with the N Widewaters station and are trying to identify the issue.

We are working closely with the conservation districts to conduct the Water Quality and Macro Invertebrate studies. The resulting data is now going onto the Mi-Corps Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program web site for shared use. Scheduled dates for the studies are mentioned in another article in this newsletter and we hope you can participate as a volunteer. E. coli tests show intermittent elevations at a few sites but returned to normal upon being retested. LMWCC has requested a review of the Little Manistee for eColi by EGLE and will communicate with EGLE and the local health department for advice and do additional spot testing.

Additional monitoring projects this past year include Zach Peklo, Water Tech. for NCCISMA. Little Manistee River shoreline plant invasive species were surveyed this past summer from Old Grade Campground down to just past Bear Track Campground. Of the 10 priority species currently of concern to NCCISMA, they found 3 occurrences, two patches of Japanese Knotweed, and one of phragmites. NCCISMA will reach out to property owners to treat the invasives through their 'Strike Team for Hire' program, (an at cost program.) Zach added that the year prior they also surveyed and discovered Japanese Knotweed downriver from Bear Track to 9 Mile Bridge. These property owners will also be notified.

Jack Epstein from The Pine River Association suggested that the Pine River Association will stake out emerging information to share about current advances in work on environmental DNA tests and methods. He explained that EPA and EGLE are looking at eDNA to find and process tiny amounts of invasive species hoping to stall the spread, as well as to target sources of water contaminates, like E. coli. The smallest river dwellers such as aquatic insects, can also be tracked using eDNA, thereby streamlining macroinvertebrate survey process. Jack recently spoke with scientists at EPA and MSU about this research. He presented the Manistee River and tributaries as potential sites for further studies. If chosen, the Manistee River could be at the forefront of some very 'trail breaking' work that we may want to use in the near future.

LMWCC is also working with the conservation districts to help establish long term Watershed Technician positions to serve the watersheds. LMWCC does not intend to fully fund these positions, but we can support efforts for grants and other sources of funding. The Manistee Conservation District is in the process of establishing a long-term position for a watershed technician to serve the 4 water sheds in their district – including the Little Manistee. They hope to have a technician on board this spring. LMWCC is also working with Manistee Conservation District to get a summer employee again this year.

Wayne Anderson led a discussion on LMWCC bank remediation projects noting that we have had a pause situation in moving ahead with project work. Covid¬19, a change of leadership, a shift in Conservation Resource Alliance support, and a National Forest Service change in policies and permitting, has held up progress on this front for several years now. In 2021, LMWCC paid to conduct an eroding stream bank assessment and now wants to get back on track. Recent meetings with partners CRA, TU and NFS, have us moving ahead in trying to create a long-term sustainable program of bank stabilization projects.

LMWCC has looked into zoning by townships, groups of townships, and the Natural Rivers Program. The NRP seems to be the best approach to get an enduring management tool for the river, including unique aspects of it being developed with local representatives. It's been somewhat controversial, and some are reluctant to proceed because of time and money. Even if we show there is support out there via a survey of riparian owners and other partner organizations, will the state of Michigan step up to start the process for the Little Manistee to become a Natural River? We are looking to Grand Valley State University to conduct such a survey in cooperation with LMWCC and the Conservation Districts. A previous social survey indicated we may have the needed support but that is only an indicator. The state needs to have a scientific survey upon which to act. First, we would send out an educational pamphlet about the Natural Rivers Program, followed up by the survey to determine if there is enough support there for it.

On educational outreach, LMWCC has put together a Riparian Homeowners' Guide. One key piece we have developed is a map. On one side it builds on the basics of being good landowners along the river. On the other

side a good-sized map of the watershed centered on the river with information for fishing, paddling, camping, road crossings, GPS locations, and pictures. A few more documents related to cold water streams, river habitat and environmental stewardship are included, as well as a guide to septic systems from MSU Extension. It has been well received.

We are seeing more dock installations, bank modifications and even an island constructed in the stream that we suspect do not have necessary permits and are working with MDNR, EGLE and NFS to investigate them.

We concluded the meeting by agreeing that for this year the LMWCC should focus on Bank Remediation Projects, The NR Survey, River Monitoring Work and Establishing Watershed Technicians.

LMWCC MISSION STATEMENT

To bring together persons and organizations who have an interest in the resource conservation and restoration of them 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, and non-compensated.

Calling All Volunteers For Macroinvertebrate Surveys

FIRST OUTING: May 13, 2023 – Macroinvertebrate Surveys (Aquatic Insects Collection) - Meet at 9:00 am at the Manistee Conservation District, address below.

We will learn about aquatic insects, why they are important, what their presence in the stream means about water quality and how to collect them for identification. The surveys take place at nine sites - 2 on Bear Creek, 1 on Hinton, 1 on Adams Creek, 1 on Fletcher Creek, 1 on Sickle Creek, 3 on the Little Manistee River

If you wish to Volunteer, please call (231) 889-9666, Ext. 3, Chelsea Cooper, Environmental Educator, to say that you would like to attend. – Chelsea will have a training review video to watch. The team leaders and their teams will disperse with equipment to 2 or 3 sites where the insects will be collected. It can be cool or rainy, dress to stay warm and dry, and bring your snacks and drinks. We have bug repellent. Teams of 3 to 5 people will work together, some on shore and others will be in the water with waders on. If you have waders, please bring them along. Some sites require stepping into soggy areas, so boots are helpful. It usually takes about one hour per site plus travel time. Teams usually go to 2 or 3 sites, depending on the number of volunteers we have for the day. Please call with any questions. We hope to see you there!

Manistee Conservation District
8840 Chippewa Highway
Bear Lake, Michigan 49614

SECOND OUTING: May 17, 2023 – Macroinvertebrate Surveys (Aquatic Insects Collection) - Program of Mason-Lake Conservation District, Scottville, MI 49464

Meet at 10:00 am in the parking lot just north of Club M-37, 3803 N M-37, where the ORV trail starts near 4 Mile Rd. and M-37. (The address is Baldwin but is much closer to Peacock)

We will learn about aquatic insects, why they are important and what their presence in the stream means about water quality and how to collect them for identification. The surveys will take place at three sites on the Little Manistee River between Spencer Bridge and Queens Hwy.

If you wish to Volunteer, please call 231-757-3707 Ext. 5 to inform Seth Howard, Conservation Technician, that you would like to attend. On the event day, after brief instructions, the team will travel to 3 sites where the insects will be collected. It can be cool or rainy, dress to stay warm and dry, and bring your snacks and drinks. We have bug repellent. The team will work together, some on shore and others in the water with waders on. If you have waders, please bring them along. Some sites require stepping into soggy areas, so boots are helpful. It usually takes about one hour per site plus travel time. Teams usually go to 2 or 3 sites, depending on the number of leaders and volunteers we have for the day. Please call with questions. We hope to see you there!

Mason-Lake Conservation District Annual Dinner Banquet & Conservation Connection, April 5, 2023

Armas Soorus and Joyce Durdel were chosen by the MLCD Board and Dani McGarry, Director, as their ' Volunteer of the Year Award' for MLCD's fiscal year 2022. The district nominates 4 -5 volunteers or organizations and one volunteer or group is selected at their annual awards banquet. The certificate is given in recognition for volunteer service to the Mason-Lake Conservation District and the Community. Dani McGarry cited their hard work on the Little Manistee River Water Management Plan implementation projects, as well as partnering efforts on water quality projects with summer interns who assisted

Both Armas and Joyce appreciated the district's recognition and spoke of the great opportunity they had experienced in working with the Mason-Lake

Conservation District, as well as the Manistee Conservation District. Both districts have greatly supported the LMWCC's Water Quality projects with macroinvertebrate surveys, water quality surveys and making connections through their staff and others who assisted in numerous ways.

The Conservation Connection portion of the evening included several displays by partners and natural resources organizations. A display for the LMWCC was placed with the help of LMWCC volunteers Rose Soorus and Lou Fitz. MSU Extension, Mason-Lake CD, North Country Coop of Invasive Species Mgt, Farm

Bureau and several more provided displays and representatives. The MLCD Board and Staff assisted with dinner accommodations and were introduced to the audience. Many people from the community attended along with past board chairs who were recognized. Raffle prizes and a door prizes provided some fun for the attendees. It was a good evening with great opportunities to connect and dinner was delicious!

Stewardship Highlight:

Wayne Andersen

Conservation Resource Alliance (rivercare.org)

Another LMWCC member and board trustee, Wayne Andersen, was recently highlighted as a CRA 'Stewardship Highlight' by Gavin MacDonald, Development and Communications Coordinator. Two quotes from an excellent article written by Gavin and posted online 4/18/2023 at Conservation Resource Alliance News & Events, read,

1) For five generations, the Andersen family has been deeply rooted in Victory Township, just northeast of Ludington, Michigan. Wayne Andersen grew up hunting, fishing, and enjoying the hidden wild places of this scenic corner of the state. His childhood of immersion in nature undoubtedly planted the seed of conservation in him. When he was grown, Wayne was inspired to become a steward of the state's most valued resources. "At about the age of 40, I realized the importance of the land and waters of Northwest Michigan. I wanted to help support the enhancement and long-term health of these natural resources," Wayne stated.

2) Wayne is humble, kind, and a faithful caretaker of Michigan's wild places. He is a steadfast proponent of getting out and being present in nature to help remind us why preserving it for generations is so important. I asked him what he would say to the next generation of river stewards, and he replied, "Visit, paddle, and learn about the rivers of Northwest Michigan for a lifetime of enjoyment."

Wayne is an incredible role model for all who pursue the enjoyment of the natural world and care for wildlife habitats. Gavin reveals how Wayne actively achieves personal joy and satisfaction by interacting with the natural world. We highly encourage reading Gavin's entire article with great photos at the following link to Conservation Resource Alliance – News & Events,

LITTLE MANISTEE RIVER 1979-2022 FISHERIES SURVEYS

Johnson's Bridge Index Station

Mark A. Tonello

Introduction:

The Little Manistee River is a 145,280-acre watershed (Tonello 2005) flowing through Lake, Mason, and Manistee Counties in the northwestern lower peninsula of Michigan. It originates from spring fed wetlands in eastern Lake County near the village of Luther and flows generally northwest until it empties into Manistee Lake near Stronach, Michigan. Manistee Lake empties into Lake Michigan, and therefore the majority of the Little Manistee River watershed is accessible to Great Lakes migratory fish including Pacific salmon and steelhead. The Little Manistee River serves as the MDNR Fisheries Division broodstock stream for nearly all Steelhead and Chinook Salmon stocked in Michigan. The only fish stocked in the Little Manistee River are Chinook Salmon, in order to ensure that enough return to the Little Manistee Weir to conduct an egg take. The Little Manistee Weir is the primary egg take station for MDNR for both Chinook Salmon and Steelhead.

The Johnson's Bridge index station is located about three miles south of the Village of Irons, MI. The station length is 984 feet upstream from the Johnson Road crossing. On August 5, 2020, the station averaged 36.4 feet in width and 2.1 feet in depth, and discharge was measured at 84.4 cubic feet per second.

Upstream of Johnson's Bridge, the Little Manistee River is regulated as a Gear Restricted stream, meaning that only artificial flies may be used. The daily possession for this reach of the Little Manistee River is two fish, with a 15-inch minimum size limit (msl) for Brown Trout and a 10-inch msl for all other trout or salmon species. Downstream of Johnson's Bridge, the Little Manistee River is a Type 4 stream, open to all tackle types. The daily possession limit for Type 4 streams is 5 fish, with no more than three fish that are 15 inches or larger. The minimum size limit for Brown and Rainbow trout is 10 inches, for Brook trout it is 8 inches, and for Coho Salmon and Chinook Salmon it is 10 inches. In both the Gear Restricted and Type 4 reaches of the Little Manistee River, Brown and Brook Trout may only be kept during the traditional trout season, from the last Saturday in April until September 30. Rainbow Trout and Pacific salmon may be possessed during all open fishing seasons. In addition, the entire Little Manistee River is closed to fishing from January 1 through March 31 to protect the wild steelhead broodstock.

Methods and Materials:

Beginning in 2002, the station was adopted as a Fixed Site in the Status and Trends Program. Per the protocol of the program (Wills et al. 2011), the station will be sampled for three consecutive years, and then not sampled for three consecutive years. In one of the three sampling years, habitat data will also be collected. Temperature data will also be recorded in each of the sampling years with the use of a continuous recording thermometer. This station was sampled by electrofishing in 1979, 1981, 1995, 20022004, and 2008-2010, 2014-2016, and 2020-2022 (Table 1). It will again be sampled in 2026. Habitat evaluation data was collected in 2002, 2008, 2014, and most recently in 2020 (Table 2). Temperature data for the station was recorded in numerous years as well (Table 3).

Results: See Table 1.

Discussion:

The 2020-2022 data from the Johnson's Bridge Station shows that the Little Manistee River consistently produces large year classes of Steelhead, and Coho Salmon, in addition to supporting a robust population of resident Brown Trout that attain large sizes. This is due to the combination of excellent spawning substrates, adequate habitat, and suitable water temperatures found in the Little Manistee River. Therefore, at present, the Little Manistee River remains as one of the most productive salmon, trout, and

Steelhead streams in Michigan. However, climate change will pose a major threat to the Little Manistee River watershed and its fish populations in the future. The strategies described below should help provide resilience to the watershed to the effects of climate change.

Recommendations:

1. The Little Manistee River supports a high level of natural reproduction for Brown trout, salmon, and steelhead. It also serves as the primary broodstock source for Chinook Salmon and the sole source of broodstock steelhead, supplying eggs for stocking programs in Michigan and other states. The Little Manistee River should be diligently protected from over-development and poor land-use practices by assisting EGLE, the office of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy to evaluate permit applications and by advising local units of government of best management practices (BMP's) in and around the watershed.

2. MDNR Fisheries Division should continue to work with the Little Manistee River Restoration Committee (LMRRC), which includes such non-profit groups as the Little Manistee Watershed Conservation Council, Conservation Resource Alliance, and Trout Unlimited; and governmental agencies such as MDEQ, USFS, USFWS, township and county commissions. The LMRRC has completed many projects in the watershed, including stabilizing eroding streambanks, replacing poor road/stream crossings, and installing instream fish cover. The LMRRC meets regularly to identify, plan, and prioritize habitat projects within the watershed.

3. Although fisheries habitat in the Little Manistee River is very good, the population of larger Brown trout and juvenile Steelhead could likely be increased by adding additional woody material to the river, in the form of artificial log jams, sweepers, and platform structures. The goals of such work should be to narrow and deepen the river, and in addition provide overhead cover for large, adult trout, and older (age 1+) juvenile Steelhead. Several projects of this nature have been completed in the watershed, but the potential for many more exists.

4. The Michigan Natural Rivers designation should also be considered for the Little Manistee River. Nearby rivers like the Pere Marquette, Pine, White, Upper Manistee, and Betsie are all statedesignated Natural Rivers. The Natural Rivers program uses private land zoning and proper public land management practices to ensure that the river is protected from unwise use and development activities. The Natural Rivers program has a proven track record and has been extremely effective in protecting other rivers in Michigan. The program has shown to not only protect but increases property values for landowners along designated streams (Leefers and Jones 1996). Designating the Little Manistee River as a Natural River would help to ensure that the Little Manistee River remains one of the best wild trout, salmon. and Steelhead streams in Michigan for future generations.

References:

Leefers, L. A., and D. M. Jones. 1996. Phase II Final Report: Assessing changes in private property values along designated natural rivers in Michigan. Michigan State University, East Lansing.

Tonello, M. A. 2005. Little Manistee River: Status of the Fishery Report. Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Fisheries Division, Cadillac.

Wills, T. C., T. G. Zorn, A. J. Nuhfer, and D. M. Infante. 2011 Draft. Stream Status and Trends Program sampling protocols. Chapter 26 in Manual of fisheries survey methods. Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Fisheries internal document, Ann Arbor.

Table 1.

MDNR Salmonid population estimates for the Little Manistee River at Johnson's Bridge, 1979-2022.

	BNT	RBT	COS	CHS	BKT					
Year	#/acre	lbs/acre	#/acre	lbs/acre	#/acre	lbs/acre	#/acre	lbs/acre	#/acre	lbs/acre
1979	348	51.26	211	5.46						
1981	364	83.10	390	18.26						
1995*	392	106.58	439	35.66						
2002	689	135.58	1,354	18.36	1,271	4.93				
2003	556	98.61	1,965	18.18	328	1.83	10	0.23		
2004	628	88.16	768	16.59	13	0.09				
2008	508	92.56	1,126	11.78	1,866	6.52			1	0.07
2009	826	83.28	2,382	16.82	625	3.79	28	0.67		
2010	988	95.79	1,879	23.23	409	3.01	13	0.18		
2014	682	71.98	2,690	18.33	2,217	7.31	31	0.39		
2015	925	80.82	949	13.53	2,069	11.54	5	0.08		
2016	746	100.86	1,335	16.02	1,006	5.93	3	0.05		
2020	823	114.7	955	10.17	1,540	6.71	10	0.14		
2021	700	119.19	1,405	13.36	1,170	5.93	2	0.07		
2022	599	105.3	1,561	12.02	1,576	7.38	8	0.2		
Ave:	**651.6**	**95.2**	**1,293.9**	**16.5**	**1,174.2**	**5.4**	**12.2**	**0.2**	**1.0**	**0.1**

**Estimates include only fish 4" and larger. Station length = 984 feet*

1979-2004= .90 acres *2008-2010= .82 acres*

2014-2016=.87 acres *2020-2022=.84 acres*

Table 2.

Habitat evaluation from the Little Manistee River at the Johnson's Bridge Index Station, 2002, 2008, 2014, and 2020.

		2002	2008	2014	2020
	% Riffle	7.7	0.0	0.0	7.7
	% Run	92.3	100	100	92.3
	Average width (ft)	35.3	36.4	37.9	36.4
	Average depth (ft)	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.1
	Max depth (ft)	3.8	4.1	4.4	4.7
	Discharge (cfs)	61.2	96.6	88.8	84.4
	Woody cover (sq ft)	1,673	1,663	1,100	1,418
	Linear wood (ft)	420	336	132	198
Substrate					
	detritus/silt	15.4%	25.6%	22.2%	17.2%
	sand	49.2%	21.7%	32.9%	39.1%
	gravel	15.4%	25.6%	35.5%	32.5%
	small cobble	12.3%	20.4%	4.4%	2.7%
	large cobble	6.2%	2.0%	1.9%	2.7%
	boulder	1.5%	4.0%	2.5%	6.0%
	wood	0.0%	0.7%	0.6%	0.0%
	island	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 3.

Temperature data collected by MDNR from the Johnson's Bridge station on the Little Manistee River, 2002-2022.

	2002	2003	2008	2009	2010	2011	2014	2015	2016	2020	2021	2022
January												
Average	33.4		33.2	36.2	34.4	34.5		36.2	37.4		34.7	
Maximum	39.3		35.9	41.0	43.5	39.8		41.3	41.1		39.3	
Minimum	31.9		32.0	32.0	32.0	31.9		31.9	33.4		31.9	
February												
Aveverage	34.0		35.6	37.1	35.7	33.0		36.7	35.2		36.0	
Maximum	41.3		42.1	41.7	42.7	38.3		42.5	42.8		39.5	
Minimum	31.9		32.1	32.1	32.0	31.9		31.9	31.9		31.9	
June												
Average	59.8		60.7	58.4	59.8	59.2	59.1	59.2	60.6	60.9	60.3	
Maximum	68.4		67.9	68.3	67.4	66.2	64.6	66.3	67.5	68.3	69.4	
Minimum	50.8		53.90	51.4	53.6		51.5	53.6	50.6	53.6	52.4	52.8
July												
Average	63.1		60.4	58.0	62.9		59.1	60.6	61.8	63.4	63.0	62.4
Maximum	70.5		65.1	64.3	68.3		66.5	66.8	68.6	69.4	69.7	69.1
Minimum	56.6		54.8	52.3	54.3		54.0	52.2	55.0	58.3	57.4	57.3
August												
Average	60.7		59.5	58.3	61.7		59.0	59.6	61.3	60.5	62.9	60.7
Maximum	67.6		64.7	63.7	67.0		63.7	67.2	67.5	65.3	70.3	66.7
Minimum	54.4		54.0	50.8	54.2		53.2	52.9	57.4	54.6	56.5	55.1
December												
Average	36.6		34.9	36.5	36.6		37.6	40.8		38.7	37.9	
Maximum	42.4		40.0	41.8	43.0		42.5	48.8		42.2	44.6	
Minimum	31.9		32.0	32.1	32.0		31.9	32.2		34.4	34.2	

LMWCC Stream Bank Erosion/ Habitat Improvement Projects

After a pause in stream bank erosion and habitat improvement projects, LMWCC has resumed actively pursuing projects on the Little Manistee River. We are now working on developing relationships with the Conservation Resource Alliance (CRA), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), EGLE, Michigan Trout Unlimited (MTU), and private riparian property owners on the Little Manistee River.

We will be using the 2021 Little Manistee River Eroding Stream Bank Assessment, completed by Nate Winkler CRA Biologist, as a guide to determine a priority of projects to be addressed on the river. The three classifications of riparian property ownership on the Little Manistee are private, federal, and state ownership. Each classification of ownership requires different challenges in securing permits, financing, and field work to complete projects.

LMWCC Board recently approved 2 projects on private property on the Little Manistee River. CRA Biologist Nate Winkler is currently preparing a proposal to property owners for the projects. LMWCC policy is for LMWCC to pay for permitting/design costs and the property owner and LMWCC to split costs 50% each with the landowner for the field work. We are interested in talking to other riparian property owners who have eroding stream banks on their property. Feel free to contact Wayne with your concerns.

We met with Scott Peedle, USFS District Ranger, in January to discuss the possibility of addressing eroding stream banks on USFS Property. We came away with some hope of doing work on USFS Property at the same time in the future. We discussed three eroding stream banks above 6 Mile Bridge that were in close proximity to a Wildlife Habitat Project the USFS is planning in the near future. Unfortunately, we were unable to incorporate the streambank work into the Upland Habitat Project. Scott has asked us to submit a letter to him describing our priority projects that are located on USFS Property. Nate Winkler, CRA Biologist is determining the projects that will be submitted.

We met with Michigan Trout Unlimited (MTU) in February. They have completed a habitat survey of the river in recent years and have expressed a strong interest in becoming an active partner on Little Manistee River Projects. They have recently begun river improvement projects on the Upper Manistee River and are planning work on other rivers. Their survey revealed a lack of large woody debris from Fox Bridge to 9 Mile Bridge. We have scheduled a float trip on this section of river on May 15th to determine the possibility of a project in this area of the river.

On State of Michigan Property above M-37 there are 10 erosion sites identified on the 2021 Stream Bank Assessment. Nate Winkler is currently looking at developing a plan to bundle up to five of those sites and pursuing a permit to stabilize the erosion sites and enhance the stream habitat.

As you can see, we are in the planning stages of some projects with a goal of developing relationships so we can have a coordinated project schedule that we can sustain long term to benefit the river and its inhabitants.

Enjoy the Little Manistee River!

Wayne Andersen

Email: andersenwayne@gmail.com

Cell/Text: 231-843-4618

LMWCC ANNUAL MEETING

JULY 8, 2023

Skinner Park Irons, Michigan
REGISTRATION 9:00
MEETING 10:00

Name_____
Address_____
Phone_____
Return this stub with payment to:
LMWCC, P.O. Box 52, Irons, MI 49644

LMWCC RAFFLE

To fund restoration projects on the Little Manistee River

JULY 8, 2023 • SKINNER PARK, IRONS • 9:00 A.M.

1st Prize: Delux Kayak Package for 2
Includes 2 kayaks, 2 paddles & 2 life jackets

2nd Prize: One day Guided Fishing Trip with John Gouker
Lunch & Supplies Included

3rd Prize: Iron Fish Distillery
Farm & Distillery Tour Package for 6 Expires 7.31.2024

Need Not Be Present To Win • Keep This Portion for Your Records
License No. R69134 *Tickets $5.00 each • 5 for $20.00*

BUCKET RAFFLES HAVE RETURNED

Speaker: DANA CASTLE from the DNR
Speaking On The Natural Rivers Program And Answering Questions

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

Little Manistee
Watershed Conservation Council
PO Box 52
Irons, MI 49644

SWAT TEAM ACTIVITY

LMWCC SWAT Team Volunteers are already at work! On a beautiful early April day, Joe Rogers and Tod Nyson tackled a large white pine that fell in a February windy gust. The river was totally obstructed in this location. Joe and Tod created an opening that allows passage on this tricky LMR hairpin turn. "It's still a challenge to navigate this corner and has always been, as reported by Dave Gendler, but at least it is not a portage spot." Paddling the Little Man is considerate to be moderately challenging due to its many twists and turns.

Report downed trees to
whitepine50@gmail.com.
We will let the SWAT Team know.
A GPS location, address where the team can access the tree, a phone number and who is reporting the downed tree is needed information.

THANK YOU! Joe and Tod. We really appreciate your help out there!

Paddlers, Fishermen and All others, be prepared and stay safe out there!