



River Raisin
WATERSHED COUNCIL
Partner · Protect · Preserve

Streamlines

River Raisin Watershed Council
Partner... Protect... Preserve...

Vol. 6 No. 1
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www.RiverRaisin.org

Our Mission:

Our mission is to inspire behaviors that promote stewardship, improve water quality, and encourage public participation to protect, preserve, and enhance the River Raisin Watershed.

The RRWC seeks volunteers and members to help achieve our mission. Please contact us to find out how you can participate in the various activities outlined in these pages or to find out how you can help. Our success in improving water quality in the River Raisin Watershed depends on you!

Contact Us:

rrwc@lenawee.mi.us
(517)-264-4754

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Vernal Pools – Hidden Jewels of the Forest

In the spring you may notice pockets of water in the woods that often disappear in the summer. These may be vernal pools. The RRWC has taken a new interest in finding out more about these hidden wonders after learning about a program by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) to create a Citizen-Science program to



identify and find out more about vernal pools.

Wood frogs and many kinds of salamanders need vernal pools to reproduce because their egg masses, laid on twigs and debris under water, do not have the repellent that other amphibians have, to keep fish from eating them. Since fish cannot survive in vernal pools, these species can thrive there. Many other interesting creatures live in and around vernal pools, some of which can live nowhere else, such as the fairy shrimp, a crustacean that gets up to one-inch long. Vernal pools are small, isolated wetlands that occur in forested settings throughout



Michigan. Vernal pools typically fill with water in the spring or fall and dry up during the summer or in drought years. The base often consists of mineral soils with an impermeable layer such as clay, and may be covered by a layer of fibrous roots and dead leaves.

Though relatively small, and sometimes overlooked, vernal pools provide critical habitat for many plants and animals, including rare species and species with specialized adaptations for coping with temporary and variable water levels. Vernal pools are also referred to as vernal ponds, ephemeral ponds, ephemeral pools, temporary pools, and seasonal wetlands. While you are out enjoying our late-arriving spring, help us find vernal pools in your local parks and on property where you have permission to walk. Finding vernal pools is not easy with aerial photos, so we need your help. If you haven't been for a walk in the woods lately, this is a perfect reason to make the time. RRWC is working with MNFI to bring their vernal pool training module to the Raisin next spring. We want to gauge the interest so we can be ready to go next

spring. We are asking teachers, parents and others to let us know of their interest in taking this training and joining the Vernal Pool Patrol.

Help us Find Vernal Pools and Let Us Know of Your Interest in Monitoring

Middle and High School classes are welcome to participate. Please send us an email or give us a call: rrwc@lenawee.mi.us 517-264-4754



Blue Salamander Egg Mass



See updated news at riverraisin.org/news

We have apparel in stock. Contact us for more information!



Farmer-Led Watershed Conservation
Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB)

EPA: Action Plan to Combat Harmful Algal Blooms in Lake Erie

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced the release of the United States’ domestic action plan for reducing phosphorus, a major contributor to harmful algal blooms, in Lake Erie. The plan outlines federal and state efforts to achieve the binational phosphorus reduction targets adopted by the United States and Canada in 2016 under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

“Today’s action plan is a significant step in fulfilling our commitment to protecting the health of Lake Erie,” said Great Lakes National Program Manager and Region 5 Administrator Cathy Stepp. “EPA is working with federal and state partners to ensure local communities and economies continue to benefit from this vital resource.”

The United States committed to reduce phosphorus nutrient sources by 40 percent, a reduction of 7.3 million pounds. Today’s action plan summarizes the actions federal agencies and states are taking across the Lake Erie basin and provides a mechanism for tracking progress.

While the bulk of the phosphorus reductions will come from sources in Ohio, Indiana and Michigan, all five states in the basin are committed to taking action to reduce nutrient loadings and minimize problems of excessive algal growth. The U.S. plan presents a coordinated approach to link and expand the efforts across the states to achieve the nutrient goals in the basin. Additionally, the states of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Pennsylvania each submitted individual action plans that describe specific phosphorus reduction measures in more detail.

Excessive algal growth poses substantial threats to both Lake Erie’s ecosystem and human health. More than 10 million people rely on the lake for clean drinking water, swimming and fishing opportunities. In the last decade, harmful and nuisance algal growth in the lake has increased significantly due to storms that deliver high levels of nutrients from major rivers. Recurring algal blooms and associated “dead zones” (oxygen-depleted areas created when algae die and decompose) threaten drinking water quality and Lake Erie’s critical \$12.9 billion tourism industry and world class fishery.

EPA engaged stakeholders in the development of the domestic action plan in August and September 2017 through in-person engagement sessions with targeted stakeholder groups. The U.S. Action Plan can be accessed here: www.epa.gov/glwqa/

The full suite of U.S., state and Canada-Ontario domestic action plans can be accessed here: <https://binational.net/annexes/a4/>

<https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-announces-action-plan-combat-harmful-algal-blooms-lake-erie>

Accelerating Conservation Funding Adoption by Farmer-led Engagement

This conservation funding/program is one of many in the River Raisin Watershed that offers funding for conservation. Over \$300,000 is available through this program for select conservation practices that will reduce phosphorus loading to streams. Practices will be funded for farmland within the River Raisin

Watershed. Enrollment begins in 2018. This program is under development and information may change throughout the year. Check back for updates or use the sign-up below to receive periodic email program news.

<https://raisinconservation.weebly.com/conservation-funding.html>

Join the Challenge

There are many invasive species that threaten our native wildflowers and other natural habitats. One of the most obvious is Garlic Mustard. Soon the second-year plants will be bolting and going to flower. They will then spread their seeds even farther, unless we take action. Mid-April through May is the perfect time to pull them.

Garlic Mustard produces a chemical that changes the chemistry of the soil and over time makes the soil uninhabitable for wildflowers and many other native species. Sometimes there are large areas that are hard to tackle. The key to winning the battle is to pick an area you care about and commit to going back to it every year. Eventually you will only have to monitor and pull scat-



tered individuals. Join the challenge this year and use it as a good excuse to get outside and enjoy spring. Many of our local parks need help with this effort.

Since 2008, The Stewardship Network has hosted an annual challenge with the purpose of encouraging folks across North America to care for their local ecosystems by pulling non-native and invasive plants. In years past, the challenge has focused on pulling Garlic Mustard, but with the growing threat of other herbaceous species and the strengthening of our Network across diverse geographies that may not have Garlic Mustard invasions, we have decided to create a bigger, better challenge for 2018.

The Stewardship Network's Spring Invasive Species Challenge is a friendly competition to see who can pull the most herbaceous, non-native, invasive species in their area this spring. The challenge tracks the progress of our collective impact as we care for our land and water. Anyone can participate, all you need to do is fill out our reporting

form after pulling the invasive species in your area. Visit the web page to get more details.

At the end of the challenge, participants are split into 3 different "weight classes," and 3 winners will be announced. Even if you don't win your weight class, we will be tracking and celebrating your hard work and contributions to the larger movement!



<https://www.stewardshipnetwork.org/spring-challenge>

MDEQ Online Resources

The Michigan DEQ has many resources to help you explore the River Raisin Watershed, and any other area of the state you may be interested in. They may take a bit of time to navigate, but there is much useful information to be had. If you have the time and interest, take a look at some of these.

Michigan Surface Water Information Management System

The MiSWIMS application is an interactive map-based system that allows users to view information about Michigan's surface water. Users are able to view and download data collected by the DEQ and DNR from surface water monitoring sites located throughout Michigan. <http://www.mcgi.state.mi.us/miswims>

Beach Guard

This application lists current and historical beach monitoring results. The home page lists current advisories during warm weather. Historical information can be found using the Search/Export tab. The monitoring of beaches in Michigan is voluntary and is conducted by local health departments, which are required to comply with Michigan's reporting requirements. An authorized representative of a local health department that conducts tests at bathing beaches is required to notify the MDEQ and other entities of the test results within 36 hours of conducting a test or evaluation. <http://www.deq.state.mi.us/beach>

Michigan E. coli Pollution and Solution Mapper

The purpose of this mapping tool is to allow users to evaluate potential point and nonpoint sources of fecal pollution in their local areas. E. coli is a type of bacteria commonly found in the intestines of animals and humans. The presence of E. coli also indicates the potential for other pathogens to be present. The Water Quality Standard for E. coli was developed to protect human health during work and play, and is the maximum amount of E. coli that is allowable in surface waters of the state. These standards, known as the total and partial body contact (or recreation) standards, apply to all waters of the state, including streams, rivers, wetlands, lakes and beaches.

<http://mdeq.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=2a060da30e25451292220861632b2c99>



River Raisin

WATERSHED COUNCIL

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(517)-264-4754

E-mail: rrwc@lenawee.mi.us

Website: www.riverraisin.org

Get Involved! - Join today!

Individuals: \$25

Non-Profit: \$50

Corporations

Supporter: \$100 - \$499

Partner: \$500 - \$1,000

Sponsor: \$1,000 +

WE NEED YOU! - Become a member today.

Members contribute to the strength of the RRWC through membership dues, volunteer activities, and participation.

The RRWC is run by a board of directors appointed by local government members who pay annual dues based on jurisdiction population. We encourage others to join and provide additional support to help us with programs and activities that protect and preserve the River Raisin.

Executive Committee

Chair:

John Calhoun
Columbia Township
Representative, Jackson
County

Vice Chair:

Sybil Kolon
Manchester Township
Representative, Washtenaw
County

Secretary:

K Z Bolton
Lenawee County
Commissioner
Representative, Lenawee
County

Treasurer:

Laurie Johncox
Cambridge Township
Representative, Lenawee
County

Director:

John Chandler
Summerfield Township
Representative, Monroe
County

Director:

David Hoffman
County Commissioner
Representative, Monroe
County

Director:

Evan Pratt
Water Resources
Commissioner
Representative, Washtenaw
County

Executive Director:

Stephen May
steve.may@lenawee.mi.us

Upcoming Events 2018

Semi-Annual Spring Meeting (Cabela's) - April 26th

Manchester River Raisin Kayak/Canoe Race- May 20th

River Raisin Festival (Blissfield) - July 12th, 13th & 14th

Lenawee County Fair - July 22nd to July 28th

Monroe County Fair - July 29th to Aug. 4th

Jackson County Fair - Aug. 5th to Aug. 11th

Fulton County Fair - Aug. 31st to Sept. 6th

Great Outdoors Jamboree (Lake Hudson) - Sept. 9th

Artalicious (Downtown Adrian) - Sept. 21st & 22nd

Clinton Fall Festival - Sept. 28th, 29th, 30th

Hillsdale County Fair - Sept. 23rd to Sept. 29th

Executive Committee Meetings are held the third Tuesday of every month.

- See website or contact us for more details! - <https://www.riverraisin.org/calendar>



2018 ADOPT-A-STREAM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED !!!!



Help monitor water quality by sampling macroinvertebrates ("bugs") from the River Raisin and its tributaries.

May 12th - Training Day - Learn how to sample aquatic bugs

10 AM Adrian College; Jones Lecture Hall 110

May 19th - Stream Search Day - Volunteer teams collect samples

9 AM meet at Adrian College in basement of Pelle Hall

TBD - Bug ID Day - Identify bugs and learn about water quality

10 AM Adrian College; Pelle Hall Laboratory 281

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Partner

Donate today!

Membership dues and donations fund various activities and projects throughout the watershed. Contact us for more information or donate online today!

Protect & Preserve

Throughout the watershed we promote stewardship in educating the general public about what YOU can do to help us protect and preserve our natural resource - River Raisin Watershed.

Promote

Check out our website at:

www.RiverRaisin.org

Find us on Facebook!

RRWC Merchandise is available!
Order t-shirts and hats online today!