



Streamlines Fall 2015

Steve May - New Executive Director

Steve May has taken on a new role with the RRWC as our part-time Executive Director, as of Oct. 1. Steve recently served as Chair of the RRWC Executive Committee and as Lenawee County Drain Commissioner. The Executive Committee voted unanimously to hire Steve to focus his attention on increasing the capacity of the RRWC. It is clear the RRWC needs funding beyond the dues paid by local governments in the watershed to achieve its goals. Steve said "I am excited to lead the RRWC in our mission, especially rebuilding our financial base with a goal of allowing me to pass the baton to a full-time Director in the future".

The River Raisin Watershed Council is a nonprofit membership organization with a growing constituency of individuals, businesses, municipalities and community groups seeking to protect the natural resources of the watershed. Working in partnership with these diverse interests, RRWC acts as a catalyst to improve the watershed environment through planning, advocacy, education, science, and protection of watershed lands.

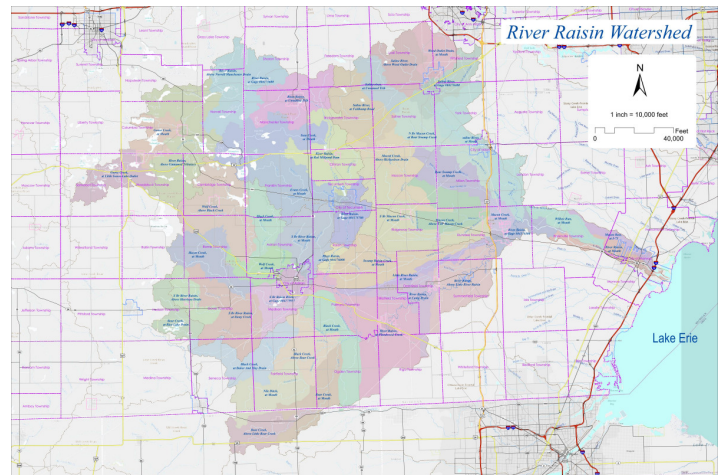
"The main consideration was our need to keep up the positive momentum built by Carley Kratz, PhD, (the prior Director) in the past year and a half. Mr. May brings years of experience with our mission and a wealth of contacts to build the resources needed to protect the watershed." stated Evan Pratt, Executive Committee representative for Washtenaw County. Laurie Johncox, Treasurer for RRWC added that "Right now the Executive Committee sees Mr. May as our best option for stability and growth. Our motion included monitoring his performance regularly as we have with past Directors".

Steve admitted that "Carley set the bar high and will be a tough act to follow." Steve has been in touch with Ms. Kratz about a continued role in the group's outreach and education.



He added, "Carley really got our rebuilding efforts off the ground and we want people to know she is still involved. Now it's time for a hands-on role to ensure our rebuilding continues to make a difference in the watershed."

The River Raisin Watershed



Contact Us!

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Partners Connecting the Raisin

The River Raisin Watershed Council (RRWC) is pleased to present some of the efforts of three of our partners in helping their residents connect to the Raisin. We are sharing some of their recent successes to provide other individuals, groups and local governments with examples of how a “can do” spirit can result in positive outcomes for local residents and the land and waters that surround us. The RRWC is committed to working with these and other groups to continue this progress. The RRWC applauds their efforts and looks forward to working with them in the future.

Saline River Greenway Alliance

The Saline River is a tributary of the River Raisin, starting west of Saline, continuing through Milan and into the River Raisin just downstream of Dundee. The Saline River Greenway Alliance (SRGA) has been working since 2007 on projects small and large to preserve and protect land along the Saline River. The cities of Saline and Milan and townships of Saline and York have supported these efforts.

Due to the efforts of a core group of SRGA volunteers, two preserves along the Saline River have been accepted by Washtenaw County as part of their Natural Area Preserve Program, another is in the works. The SRGA also has their sights on an easy access Water Trail for kayaks and canoes on the Saline River between Saline and Milan.

Thanks to a \$5,000 grant from the Greater Milan Community Foundation in 2014, SRGA now has a work boat for river cleanup work. The grant purchased a boat, motor and trailer. The boat will be used to address log jam problems as they develop, and keep the river open for recreational use. The boat is stored and maintained by the Milan DPW. Both the City of Milan and the Milan Area Fire Department will have use of the boat for easy access to the river during any incidents. This is the kind of collaboration that benefits the entire community. Contact SRGA Chair Frank Stukenborg at fxstuken@aol.com

Connecting Lenawee

One Lenawee is a collaboration of concerned people dedicated to the Vision of making Lenawee County a great place to live, work, learn, worship, and invest. One of the initiatives of One Lenawee, being led by its Connecting Lenawee Task Force, is to provide leadership and support for the concept of connecting the various points of interest in Lenawee by creating a non-motorized master plan for the County. The aim is to improve the health and well-being of the community by making it safe and attractive for people to engage in physical activity.

The Connecting Lenawee Task Force engaged livingLab to produce a Non-Motorized Transportation Plan for Lenawee County. The resulting document provides each Lenawee community with a framework for their local portion. The Master Plan must meet MDOT guidelines, which is required to assure that MDOT will consider non-motorized transportation in their future road improvement plans. It will also provide each local community a document to incorporate by reference in their streets and roads plans, if they wish.

While working on the transportation master plan, the Connecting Lenawee team realized that another important asset is the River Raisin watershed. In the plan, a section was added referencing the desire to restore the River Raisin. Working with the River Raisin Watershed Council, Connecting Lenawee will work to fund a master plan for the river in terms of its natural potential, making it attractive, accessible, and navigable. Connecting Lenawee believes that such a plan will also help secure funding for the priority projects, especially where the river follows the Kiwanis Trail. More about One Lenawee <http://www.lenaweenow.org/living/about/>

Monroe County Completes Water Trail

With the many miles of navigable rivers locally, as well as the Lake Erie shoreline, with its numerous bays, lagoons and estuaries, the Monroe County community is a premier destination for canoeists and kayakers. Monroe County would be an even more attractive destination if there were a clear and organized system of launch sites, portages, amenities and information to serve the residents and visitors interested in paddling the waters of Monroe County.

To address this, the Monroe County Planning Department completed a Water Trail Master Plan, and a map and guide to the existing paddling routes and facilities. Funded in part by an MDEQ Coastal Zone Management Grant, the plan calls for development of facilities, placing signage and amenities at existing sites and publicizing locations and descriptions of paddling routes throughout the county.

One of the first steps toward implementing the plan has been completed. Raisinville Township and the County of Monroe cooperated in developing a new launch and access site on the River Raisin on township hall property by the Ida Maybee bridge. A parking lot and ramp now allows canoers and kayakers, as well as fishermen, to access the river safely, legally.

Contact the Monroe County Planning Department for a copy of the Water Trail Master Plan, copies of the map and guide, or to discuss joint projects to improve access to our shared waters. Webpage link leads to details on this and other water trails in Michigan, including access points: <http://www.michiganwatertrails.org/>

Executive Committee Update

At its September meeting the RRWC Executive Committee (EC) accepted the resignation of Steve May as Chairman and appointed John Calhoun to serve in the position. Calhoun has been on the EC since 2012 and represents Columbia Township in Jackson County. In addition, Hedi Kaufman, Secretary, stated her intention to resign from the EC at the end of October. She intends to continue as representative of Frenchtown Township in Monroe County. The EC will appoint her replacement at its next regular meeting.

Lenawee County has appointed County Commissioner Karol "KZ" Bolton to replace Steve May as the representative and replace him on the Executive Committee. The EC will appoint a nominating committee early next year for selection of officers and members of the EC. That recommendation will be presented to the entire board of directors for election at our spring meeting. Nominations can also be made from the floor at that time. We invite interested member representatives to consider stepping up for one of these positions or to take a larger role on one of our committees. RRWC's success is dependent on active involvement by each representative.

Adopt-A-Stream Volunteer Update

Dr. Jim Martin stated that 17 out of the 20 sites which include two sites on the Saline River were sampled and over 40 people were involved. John Farmer, volunteer stream captain, praised his group stating "a heartfelt "THANK YOU" for having gone the extra mile and having endured the rain and cold of one of the most disagreeable Stream Search days I remember. For those who weren't there, I thought you might find a special comfort in seeing what you didn't have to put up with. That beach umbrella was NOT for the sun!

If you have any interest in helping out the cause and learning more about those critters we collect year-after-year, you would be most welcome to participate in "Bug I.D. Day" on October 24, 2015, 9 am - 3 pm at Adrian College - Peelle 113. See you there!



RRWC
Executive Committee

Chair
John Calhoun
Columbia Township Representative, Jackson County

Vice Chair
Sybil Kolon
Manchester Township Representative, Washtenaw County

Secretary
Hedi Kaufman
Frenchtown Township Representative, Monroe County

Treasurer
Laurie Johncox
Cambridge Township Representative, Lenawee County

Director
K Z Bolton
Lenawee County Commissioner & Representative, Lenawee County

Director
David Hoffman
County Commissioner & Representative, Monroe County

Director
Evan Pratt
Water Resources Commissioner & Representative, Washtenaw County

Executive Director
Steve May
steve.may@lenawee.mi.us



RRWITC Donation Expands C Programs

The “*Discover the Raisin*” award program is made possible through a generous donation from ITC. ITC is responsible for high-voltage power lines in most of the River Raisin Watershed. You may have seen ITC surveying, making repairs, or removing brush from under the powerlines to ensure the reliability of our power supply. We would like to thank ITC for providing the support to allow the RRWC to launch this program that will encourage our youth to discover the Raisin. The RRWC is seeking additional sponsors for future award programs.

RRWC Launches Award Program: *Discover the Raisin*

The RRWC is launching this award program to provide an incentive for students to explore the natural world that surrounds them. There is a world to be discovered right here in the River Raisin Watershed. Biology, chemistry, physics, math, arts, literature and history are just a few of the topics that can come to life when connected to the land and waters that are so easy to take for granted.

This award is intended to be the first in a series of “*Discover the Raisin*” awards to classrooms to help students experience the out-of-doors and apply their skills and creativity toward understanding how the land and water affects us and how we influence the land and water.

The initial awards will go to three middle school science classrooms, which will receive water quality testing kits to monitor surface waters in their area. Testing kits will include guidebooks, chemicals and tools needed to measure nitrogen, phosphorus, dissolved oxygen, chlorine, pH, and *E. coli*. This data can be used by students to assess the health of the watershed and to propose solutions that could result in improvements.

Efforts to Restore River Raisin Seeing Progress

The DEQ’s Office of the Great Lakes announced significant progress in the River Raisin’s environmental recovery. Located in Monroe County, the River Raisin was designated as a Great Lakes Area of Concern in 1985 due to severe environmental degradation from industrial and municipal pollution. Areas of concern are locations within the Great Lakes Basin that suffered significant environmental damage. They are defined by beneficial use impairments – specific ecological problems that must be addressed to achieve recovery.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency confirmed the River Raisin is on the road to recovery by removing its Loss of Fish & Wildlife Habitat and Degradation of Fish & Wildlife Populations beneficial use impairments. Restoration of these beneficial uses means the fish and wildlife habitat in the River Raisin has vastly improved and can support healthy populations.

The restoration was made possible due to multiple grants totaling over \$6.5 million from the federal Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. The habitat restoration projects were implemented by the City of Monroe and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and included eight projects to remove or retrofit dams from the 1930s to provide a passage for fish, as well as four wetland restoration projects in Sterling State Park. For more information on the DEQ’s Areas of Concern program, visit www.michigan.gov/deqaocprogram.



Fall 2015 Meeting “Partners Connecting the Raisin”

Saline River Greenway Alliance - Frank Stukenborg - Chairman of York Township Parks and Recreation
James Peters - Saline Area Historical Society

Connecting Lenawee - Dave Maxwell - Chairman Connecting Lenawee Task Force
Leah Groya - AICP, LEED, AP - Professional Planner + Partner - LivingLab

Monroe County Water Trails - Robert Peven, AICP, Director Monroe County Planning Department