



River Raisin
WATERSHED COUNCIL
Partner · Protect · Preserve

Streamlines Newsletter

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

Vol. 5 No. 2
Fall 2017

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

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

MEC PARTNERS - CLEANUP	1
WATERSHED GRANTS	1
AMERICORPS TEAM 2017	2
DISCOVER THE RAISIN	2
LAKE ERIE ALGAE BLOOM	3
LENAWEE COUNTY FAIR	3
UPCOMING EVENTS	4

Local Company Donates Time & Supplies to Help Cleanup the River Raisin

One Saturday in October 2017 an eight-member team from Midwest Energy & Communications (MEC) donated their time working with the City of Adrian crew to assist RRWC in cleanup efforts of the South Branch River Raisin. Patty



Clark, Community Relations Specialist of MEC, organized the event. The company's partnership efforts were greatly appreciated by the Watershed Council.

In order to complete the cleanup day, MEC purchased equipment in advance, including waders, chainsaws, loppers, gloves, garbage bags and much more. At the end of the day, MEC proudly donated the equipment and supplies to support RRWC in continuing cleanup efforts to help the River Raisin become a more navigable and appreciated natural resource throughout the watershed communities.

Donations not only included equipment and supplies, but also MEC donated a \$3,000 check to RRWC. Executive Director, Steve May and the council couldn't thank MEC enough for their time and donations for support. The RRWC looks forward to a continuing partnership with MEC throughout the future.



MSU IWR receives Phosphorus Reduction Grant: Accelerating Conservation Adoption by Farmer-led Engagement

The Institute of Water Research (IWR) at Michigan State University was recently awarded \$500,000 to lead a project in the River Raisin Watershed that will reduce phosphorus entering Western Lake Erie. Funded by the U.S. EPA through Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, the project brings together a unique partnership of twenty organizations, including the River Raisin Watershed Council, Lenawee and Washtenaw Conservation Districts, and the Farmer-led Watershed Conservation group.

This two-year project will provide funding for conservation treatments and leverage technology to reduce phosphorus runoff in agricultural watersheds. IWR has developed a suite of online tools that will be used to prioritize areas at

greatest risk for phosphorus loss, determine the most effective conservation practice to address the problem, and forecast manure/nutrient runoff amounts.

"This effort supports other programs and projects in the Western Lake Erie basin and will help in achieving the 40% phosphorus reduction goals established by the U.S. and Canada through the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement," said Jeremiah Asher, Assistant Director at IWR and project lead. Enrollment in the conservation program is anticipated to start in spring 2018.

More information can be found at: <http://raisinconservation.weebly.com/>



From cutting brush that obstructed the view of the river around bridges, to clearing log jams that obstruct the river, and removing trash from the river & river banks, the team proved the worth of the AmeriCorps program.

See updated news at riverraisin.org/news

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



AmeriCorps Team welcomed again for River Cleanup

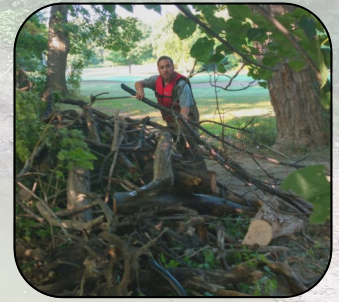
For the second year in a row, an AmeriCorps NCCC team came to town to help clear brush and debris from the South Branch River Raisin and Wolf Creek. The six-member Cedar 4 team continued work started last year by the Cedar 3 team, as reported in our Fall 2016 newsletter.

The RRWC partnered with the City of Adrian to bring AmeriCorps back. The RRWC plans to apply for additional AmeriCorps teams in the future, and will work with other communities to bring these hard-working young adults to other areas of the watershed.

Each AmeriCorps team spends a year in the program, working in four locations from their campus northwest of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Team leader Amanda, along with Steve, Keanna, Gage, Mike and Christian hail from

North Carolina, Minnesota, Florida and Connecticut.

Executive Committee member Sybil Kolon worked with the team on a few occasions. She was impressed with their productivity and dedication in challenging conditions. From cutting brush that obstructed the view of the river around bridges, to clearing log jams that obstruct the river, and removing trash from the river & river banks, the team proved the worth of the AmeriCorps program. They essentially adopted our community, just as the community adopted them.



During their six weeks of work, from mid-July to the end of August, the Cedar 4 team removed tons of woody debris and trash from the South Branch River Raisin as it flows through Adrian, and from Wolf Creek in Adrian Township. They removed all but the largest of the obstacles they tackled.

Large stretches of the river are now navigable for the first time in years thanks to AmeriCorps. The RRWC treated the team to a pizza dinner before they parted, to show our appreciation for their hard work.



“Discover the Raisin” Program Continues for Third Round

The River Raisin Watershed Council has announced the third round of the Discover the Raisin Award Program. This year, teachers for grades 3rd through 7th grade of any subject, whose school district is located within the River Raisin watershed, are eligible to apply. Five successful applicants will receive \$200 for class-

room supplies or other expenses relevant to the proposed project. Eligible teachers are asked to submit a short application form and narrative by February 2, 2018 to be considered for the award. Winners will be announced on February 23, 2018.

For previous award winners see our Spring 2016 & Spring 2017 Streamlines Newsletters.

The application will be made available on our website on November 3, 2017.

Contact RRWC at 517-264-4754 or rrwc@lenawee.mi.us for more information.



Students collecting water samples on River Raisin

“Producers in the River Raisin step up to Solve Algae Bloom Dilemma”

The following is an excerpt from the Fall 2017 MACDC Pipeline Magazine.

Alaina Nunn, Graduate Student Michigan State University Institute of Water Research

Lake Erie has undergone serious environmental stress over the past two decades due to extensive algae growth, and conditions do not appear to be improving. Dissolved reactive phosphorus (DRP) (a bioavailable nutrient that algae feeds on) entering Lake Erie has more than doubled since the mid-1990s, leaving agricultural producers concerned that they will become subject to increased regulation on spreading fertilizers containing phosphorus.

To address these issues, the Michigan State University (MSU) Institute of Water Research (IWR) is engaging farmers in a tile drain water monitoring project in the River Raisin watershed to help clarify what assortment of farm management practices lead to positive environmental results.

The River Raisin watershed, whose land use is approximately 70 percent agricultural, drains into Lake Erie, which makes it a key area for focused conservation efforts. The River Raisin was also deemed a priority watershed following the launch of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), which has initiated several projects intended to address nutrient pollution and increase awareness of Lake Erie’s condition. Producers in

this area have also been actively involved in a farmer-led watershed group (from which participants for this project were recruited), and momentum to help restore Lake Erie has continued to build.

Producers were enrolled in this monitoring project during the spring of 2016, and since then samples have been collected weekly from tile drains by students at Adrian College. Samples are analyzed back at the college, where students have been trained to measure levels of dissolved reactive phosphorus and nitrate, which is overseen by Dr. Jim Martin, an Associate Professor of Biology at Adrian College.

“This project has been a wonderful opportunity for me and my students to use new tools, interact with farmers and other stakeholders, and to see how land use and best management practices can influence nutrient runoff. This has given my students an excellent opportunity to see a bigger and clearer picture of a real world problem up close.” - Jim Martin.

Farmers have also been enthusiastic about this project, and were more than happy to share some of their thoughts about this work so far: “I got involved in the MSU water quality study because my farm is located in the River Raisin Watershed. With all the problems with phosphorus and algae blooms in the Great Lakes in recent years I want to be part of the solution, not the problem. So when I was asked to participate in this study, I jumped at the opportunity.” - participating producer.

“Farmers need to know what is coming out of their tile. We need to know what practices are cutting nutrient losses.” - participating producer.

Currently, this project is entering its second year with funding from the Michigan Water Environmental Association (MWEA), US Geological Survey (USGS), the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Office of the Great Lakes, Adrian College, and MSU AgBioResearch. Additionally, a number of other organizations, such as MSU Extension, the Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program MAEAP), and the River Raisin Watershed Council (RRWC) have offered invaluable insight and resources to help make this project a success.

Looking forward, we do realize that it is unreasonable to provide this type of data to every farmer in the watershed, but we are hoping that by providing it to those who are seen as leaders in their community we can capture the attention of their neighbors, and many others. This could be done through asking participants to present their results at field days or farmer-led watershed meetings, which is what we hope to accomplish by the end of this project next spring.

For the full article: <http://macdc.us/news/pipeline-magazine/>

2017 Lenawee County Fair Raffle A Success!

The 2017 Lenawee County Fair is now history and once again, the River Raisin Watershed Council booth generated generous interest. Working the booth allows volunteers to interact with the public and encourage them to think about what a great natural resource the River Raisin is to the area. This year, we were able to share space with the Lenawee Conservation



District which moved us to the front of the event building and gave us a greater presence than in the past.

For a second year, we had a successful kayak raffle during the week of the fair. The kayak raffle consisted of two options: a red Pescador 100 kayak and a completely furnished green camouflage Pelican Angler Catcher 120 model for river and lake fishing. We were pleased to deliver a new Pescador 100 to Rhonda Gage of Onsted and the Pelican Angler Catcher 120 to Ed Scheffler of Macon!

The raffles, in addition to the merchandise sales consisting of shirts, hats, mugs and maps help to generate interest and get our logo out into the communities where the

purchasers live. It’s always a good opportunity to inform anyone who comments about our logo, the purpose and goals of the watershed council. Think about volunteering to help us at the booth at the 2018 Lenawee County Fair!





River Raisin

WATERSHED COUNCIL

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Adrian, MI 49221

(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

Watershed Planner:

Brittany Jacobs
rrwc@lenawee.mi.us

Executive Director:

Stephen May
steve.may@lenawee.mi.us



Upcoming Events 2017-2018

Semi-Annual Fall Meeting (LISD Tech Center) - Oct. 19th

Volunteer Workshop Event (Stubnitz Center) - Nov. 2nd

Family Fall Celebration (Stubnitz Center) - Nov. 4th

Farmer-Led Watershed Conservation Semi-Annual Meeting (Old Mill—Dundee) - Dec. 7th

Ice Sculpture Festival (Tecumseh) - Jan. 20th & 21st

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

- See website or contact us for more details! -

<https://www.riverraisin.org/calendar>



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!