



River Raisin
WATERSHED COUNCIL
Partner · Protect · Preserve

Streamlines Newsletter

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

Vol. 5 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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Connecting Lenawee: River Raisin Signage

Most recently, RRWC has begun installing signs around Lenawee County as a way to raise awareness of the River.

These signs are installed with the help of a Lenawee Health Network Grant through the Connecting Lenawee group.

Motorists and Lenawee County residents will see more signs popping up around Lenawee County, specifically near the River Raisin crossings. These signs carry a logo and ask readers to partner, protect and preserve the River Raisin Watershed.

“There’s been little to no identification of the River Raisin Watershed, so by placing these signs in different locations we are trying to bring more awareness to it and its place in our community,” said Steve May, Executive Director of the RRWC.



Thus far signs have been placed by the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Lenawee County Road Commission and City of Adrian. They will be placed in such areas as bridges and other river crossings. RRWC is looking to expand River Raisin signage further outside of Lenawee soon. Other River Raisin signs are also installed along the Kiwanis Trail.

May said the signs are one way the RRWC is working to promote stewardship, improve water quality and encourage public

participation. He cited last year’s cleanup efforts by an AmeriCorps team and community members as examples of what can be done to make the river a better resource. He said there are plans to put in access points along the river for kayaks and canoes in the near future.

“The watershed should be a place for recreation and conservation instead of a dumping spot,” May said. “Protecting the water quality needs to be the priority.”



2017 Discover the Raisin

Our second annual Discover the Raisin awards have been announced! The following were four successful applicants for 2017:

Vicki Coscarelli —3rd Grade Class of Clinton Elementary— Project: Water, Water Everywhere

Alexandra Hoeft—3rd Grade Class of Herrick Park Elementary, Tecumseh Public Schools— Project: Ecosystem Organisms at Globe Mill Pond

Bill Koebbe—3rd Grade Class of Madison— Project: Weather Unit

Jennifer Marlatt—5th Grade Class of Onsted Elementary— Project: Pollution & Runoff

Each recipient will be awarded with \$200 to put towards educational materials for their class project related to the watershed. Congratulations recipients! We look forward to next year!

For more details go to:

www.riverraisin.org/programs



Contamination in 2014 left more than 400,000 people in Toledo, Ohio, and parts of southeastern Michigan unable to drink tap water for two days. The 2015 bloom was the largest on record—covering an area the size of New York City.

See updated news at riverraisin.org/news

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



Lake Erie Impairment Designation

The State of Michigan is designating its section of Lake Erie as an impaired waterway because of damage to fish and other wildlife caused by harmful algal blooms. The declaration affects only the section of the lake under Michigan's jurisdiction, which is less than 2 percent. But it was required under the federal Clean Water Act after shoreline monitoring and analysis of satellite imagery showed that the western Lake Erie basin was failing to meet Michigan water quality standards, said Heidi Grether, director of Michigan DEQ.

Outbreaks of blue-green algae — which is actually a type of bacteria that can produce toxins — have plagued the lake since the 1990s, at times coating large sections in pea-green slime. The 2016 bloom was smaller than the 2014 and 2015 bloom because there were fewer storms that washed phosphorus-laden fertilizers into the lake. But toxicity levels were higher, according to scientists with NOAA.

Michigan, Ohio and the Canadian province of Ontario agreed in 2015 to seek a 40 percent cut in phosphorus runoff into the lake by 2015. They are developing plans to meet the goal, focusing primarily on preventing

overflows from municipal sewage treatment plants and encouraging farmers to use practices that prevent manure and fertilizers from flowing into tributary rivers. A finding that a water body is impaired can lead to a federal order for stricter pollution controls, including a maximum amount of a contaminant that can exist in the water and regulation of industries and others who cause the pollution. But for now, Michigan officials are not developing such a plan, known as a "Total Maximum Daily Load" or TMDL blueprint. Instead, they will ask the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to give the agreement between the two states and Ontario time to work. "We are always looking for more collaborative, voluntary approaches to trying to solve these problems," Grether said, adding that using a TMDL would be "like taking a sledgehammer when you might need a pencil."

John Flesher, Associated Press. (Nov. 10, 2016)

See full article at: <http://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan/2016/11/10/algal-blooms-lake-erie/93591872/>

Farmer-Led Watershed Conservation Erb Family Foundation Grant

The Erb Family Foundation has funded a \$480,000, three-year grant to the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) to expand the former Farmer's Advisory Committee. The grant is administered by Lenawee Conservation District (LCD) with assistance from the RRWC and partners from Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD). The project covers the Western Lake Erie Basin with a focus on the River Raisin Watershed.

This grant is providing support to continue and expand the FAC into four regional areas of the River Raisin Watershed, led by four farmers who have volunteered to lead a local FAC chapter and encourage neighbor action.

Michigan farmers within the Western Lake Erie Basin are invited to attend numerous educational regional meetings. These meetings are geared for farmers interested in implementing best management practices (BMP's).

So far, the RRWC and LCD organized four small regional farmer-led shoptalk meetings and a semi-annual meeting in 2017. These meetings were attended by many farmers, agribusiness, and friends of agriculture.

Through the Erb Grant, up to three rounds of cost share cycles will be offered to farmers to apply to implement and promote conservation practices that reduce sediment and phosphorous runoff. The first round of the cost share application ended in April. The application was designed to open up the

opportunity for farmers to implement BMP's. The successful applicants will be notified by the end of April 2017.

Up to \$10,000 will be granted to the successful applicants to implement BMP's during each of the three cycles.

Local farmers in the River Raisin Watershed especially are encouraged to take part in reducing sediment and phosphorous runoff.

www.WaterQualityFarming.org



Local Resident Creates Wildflower Website

Robert “Bob” W. Smith is a long-time Adrian resident and seeker of wildflowers. He has started a website and blog, *Wildflower Daze* (www.wildflowerdaze.com), to share his photos of flowers from Lenawee County and around the country. Bob’s quest for flowers started long ago. We are rewarded by his passion in the form of crisp close-ups of flowers, many of which we never thought to glance at.

Bob grew up “all over the place”, including the hills of West Virginia. He remembers hours of tromping around in the woods as a young boy. He came to Michigan in 1967 after serving in the Army, including a one-year tour of duty in Vietnam. He attended the University of Michigan where he received a BA degree in Psychology and a Master of Social Work in Administration. He moved to Adrian in 1977 where he worked in child services with the state until he retired in 2005.

Bob did not wait until retirement to take up a hobby. In the late 1970s, his

interest in nature photography motivated him to identify his plant subjects. Exploring the plant kingdom in Lenawee County soon became his primary interest. He used photographs to document his findings. Until his retirement, this hobby served as a much needed pressure relief valve from an often-stressful job.



While driving down Ives Road in 1980, Bob spotted a promising area. He found many interesting plants in the unique wetland, also known as a fen, adjacent to the River Raisin. He shared his findings with The Nature Conservancy. He completed the initial botanical survey in 1982. In

1986 TNC called him because “they thought he would like to know” that a recent bequest would allow them to acquire the first parcel of what is now known as the Ives Road Fen, south of the Raisin Valley Golf Club. The preserved fen has since grown to 700 acres.

Bob maintains a list of all plants identified in Lenawee County. It now numbers over 1,500 species, 700 of which he discovered. Bob was the first person to find and report 20 of these species in Michigan. He began taking digital photos in 2010, allowing him to share his images easily. Bob wants to inspire others to appreciate our natural world. You can download and share his images. Please be sure to give him credit if you do.

Bob welcomes calls that will inspire him to lace up his boots in his quest to add yet one more species to his list. You can reach him by commenting on his website, or at 517-265-3521.

Farmers Encouraged to Explore Lake Erie

Ahoy! Land lovers, who produce our agricultural products, the Lenawee Conservation District is hosting events for farmers and farm owners to get out on Lake Erie! The events are free to Farmers, Landowners of farmed land and Partners of Agriculture. Charter bus transportation and lunch are included.



During the tour participants will discuss the conservation practices that work on their land. Natural Resource Conservation Service staff will describe the funding available to implement conservation practices. Also, a MAEAP technician will explain the benefits of the Michigan Agriculture

Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP).

MAEAP Water Quality Tall Ship Sail Workshops include a tour of the National Museum of the Great Lakes. You can even help hoist the mighty sails of the 85-foot wooden schooner “Appledore”.

The Western Lake Erie Basin MAEAP and Conservation Practices Day Conferences in the Lake Erie Islands provide an in depth look at the science behind harmful algae blooms. You will tour the water quality lab and aquatic resources center.

Both events provide an opportunity for farmer-to-farmer conversations. Participants are encouraged to register for both events.

2017 Fields to the Great Lakes Dates:

August 11, 22, 24 and Sept 14th:

Western Lake Erie Basin MAEAP & Conservation Practices Day Conference at Stone Lab in the Lake Erie Islands.

August 28, 29, 30th:

MAEAP Tall Ship Sail Workshop and National Museum of the Great Lakes Tour

View the event flier:

www.lenaweeconservationdistrict.org/events-contact-info

For registration information and Charter bus pick up locations please contact

MAEAP Technician, Amy Gilhouse
Lenawee Conservation District,
(517) 673-1655 or amy.gilhouse@macd.org





River Raisin

WATERSHED COUNCIL

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320 Springbrook Ave.

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

Adopt-A-Stream - May 13: Training - May 20: Bug Collection (Subject to change - water level)

Lake Erie Water Festival (Monroe) - May 16th

River Raisin Community Clean-Up - May 20th (Tentative)

Boat Wash (Free) (Wamplers Lake) - June 10th

Free Fishing Weekend (DNR) - June 10th & 11th

Boat Wash (Free) (Wamplers Lake) - June 25th

River Raisin Festival (Blissfield) - July 13th, 14th & 15th

Lenawee County Fair - July 23rd to July 29th

Artalicious (Downtown Adrian) - Sept. 15th & 16th

Clinton Fall Festival - Sept. 22nd, 23rd & 24th



Wildflower Daze, Bob Smith

- See website or contact us for more details! -

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



Riverside Park, Adrian, MI - April 11, 2017

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!