



**River Raisin**  
WATERSHED COUNCIL  
Partner • Protect • Preserve

[www.RiverRaisin.org](http://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.*

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

**Contact Us:**

[rrwc@lenawee.mi.us](mailto:rrwc@lenawee.mi.us)  
(517)-264-4754

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# Streamlines Newsletter

River Raisin Watershed Council

Partner... Protect... Preserve...

Vol. 7 No. 2

Fall 2019

## Raisin Expectations: Healthy Lands = Healthy Waters

During September, RRWC was able to share how to maintain and improve the health of the River Raisin Watershed at an exhibit at the Clinton Arts Center. We also highlighted the work of many of our partners. The exhibit was named *Raisin Expectations: Healthy Lands = Healthy Waters* to highlight activities that result in healthy water.

Ruth Knoll, founder of The Clinton Arts Center, has a passion for clean water and spreading awareness about what each of us can do to keep our earth cleaner. Knoll asked RRWC Executive Committee Secretary, Sybil Kolon, to create a display that could do just that. While the exhibit is now over, this is a good chance to remind our supporters that there is much work going on to make our watershed healthier, and that we each have a role to play to improve water quality.

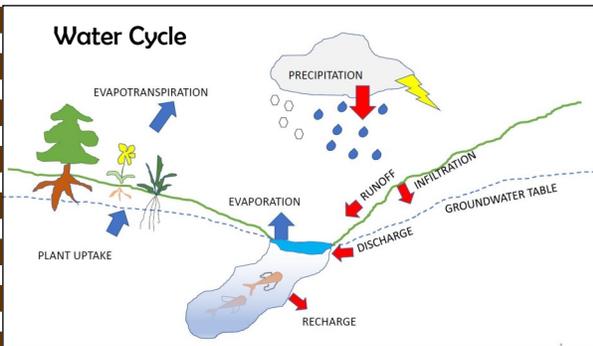
To help people understand water quality we used a graphic of the water cycle, below. All water is connected. As water contacts the air, the land and our built environment, it is affected in many ways. The health of our water is determined by what we do on the land.

The display highlights the work of 18 of our partners: what they're doing, how it helps create healthy water, and how you can support their efforts. Some of our partners who participated include the Lenawee Conservation District, Clinton Community Schools, and Hidden Lake Gardens.

Open Grown School, another RRWC partner, seeks to connect people to the wild world they are a part of through classes and workshops immersed in nature. "Water is life. By getting to know the flora and fauna that call the River Raisin watershed home, we hope that people will feel compelled and empowered to protect, care for and heal the lakes, vernal pools, streams, ponds, fens, bogs, and wet meadows that are vital to all life."

Unfortunately, the Clinton Arts Center is now closed, but efforts are in process to continue use of the space for the benefit of the community.

*-Sybil Kolon, RRWC Executive Committee Secretary & Manchester Township Delegate*



## RRWC Helps Celebrate Great Lakes Restoration Projects

The River Raisin Watershed Council was one of many entities participating in the Great Lakes Restoration Celebration held at The Henry Ford in Dearborn. The event celebrated projects initiated over the past three years throughout Southeast Michigan.

Each group highlighted two of its projects for a "Virtual Tour" for the audience. RRWC shared our success working with local farmers to implement conservation practices and our 17-year history of collecting river bugs for our Adopt-a-Stream program to assess the health of our river system.

*Story continued under Celebrate on page 3*



The Jackson Lenawee Washtenaw Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (JLW CISMA) is dedicated to eradicating and controlling invasive species.

If you have questions or concerns about invasive species, you can contact them at (517)395-2089 or email [shikha.singh@macd.org](mailto:shikha.singh@macd.org)



Japanese knotweed taking over native plants in Adrian along the Kiwanis Trail.

## Japanese Knotweed: Not Welcome Here

Did you know there are certain plants and animals that are harmful to our local ecosystems? We call these invasive species. They come from other areas similar to our own and since they don't have any "enemies" to control their growth or population, they can grow like crazy. Japanese knotweed is one of Michigan's priority invasive species to get rid of. This is a plant with a hollow stem like bamboo, heart-shaped leaves, and zig-zagging stems. It grows very aggressively and can even grow through concrete, threatening the foundations of buildings, driveways, and sidewalks. If Japanese knotweed is mowed or cut, it grows back even more aggressively. If any cuttings from the plant are spread, they can sprout and become rooted, dispersing the problematic plant even more. The only effective way to get rid of Japanese knotweed is with herbicide.

The Jackson Lenawee Washtenaw Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area

(JLW CISMA) offered a grant to get rid of invasive species like Japanese knotweed, so naturally RRWC applied! We received funding to hire a contractor to treat the Japanese knotweed with herbicide in Adrian near the River Raisin. Volunteers cut the stems of Japanese knotweed in a patch near Riverside Park a few months before the herbicide treatment to "tire out" the plants. The plants were sprayed with herbicide in late September and RRWC and volunteers will monitor the area to be sure they don't grow back. This will also provide space for native plants to grow back, which provide better food and habitat for native animals.



## Renewed Funding to Focus on Conservation on the Farm



Visit [www.waterqualityfarming.org](http://www.waterqualityfarming.org) or follow on Facebook!

Reach Lenawee Conservation District Manager Lindsay Garrison at 517-263-7400 Ext. 5576

Funding from the Erb Family Foundation Grant began in 2016 to fund meetings, educational materials, and best management practices (BMPs) for farmers in the Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB). This was a three year grant awarded to the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts in partnership with RRWC, Lenawee Conservation District, and Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. With funding from the grant, a Farmers Advisory Committee (FAC) was formed and led by four local farmers within the River Raisin Watershed. The FAC put together two annual meetings for farmers to discuss conservation initiatives, new research results, cost share opportunities, and ways to improve water quality on the field. These farmer leaders also led smaller meetings and one-on-one conversations to spread the word about the group and different ways to promote conservation on the field.

In these 3 years, over 100 new farmers began the Michigan Agriculture Environmen-

tal Assurance Program (MAEAP) through different conservation districts. Approximately 377,736 pounds of phosphorus, 855,457 pounds of nitrogen, and 222,362 pounds of sediment has been reduced due to different BMP application on land across the WLEB since 2015. 13 farmers had applied for cost-share applications since 2017 for various BMPs to reduce sediment and phosphorus loss. The success of the FAC and emphasis on BMPs resulted in the Erb Family Foundation renewing the grant funding for three more years.

Beginning in October 2019, the group will focus on involving young farmers, women farmers, and Certified Crop Advisors along with strengthening partnerships previously made in the community. Water sampling on farm fields, continued promotion of MAEAP verifications and BMPs to farmers and the general public, and increased nutrient and sediment retention on fields through BMPs will all be the focus of the next 3 years.

# Thoughts from a Roadside Rambler

A good portion of our [John and Anne Farmer's] contributions over the years (~\$70 in this case) has come from deposits claimed on beverage containers I pick up along with all sorts of other roadside trash during my daily walks within a couple miles of our home. My walks combine exercise, nature study, and roadside clean-up.

I bring this up with the thought that others might consider my exercise/self-education/community service model and in so-doing could make a significant contribution to reducing the amount of waste that is thoughtlessly tossed from vehicles to litter the natural environment and eventually pollute run-off water throughout the watershed.

When the state-wide referendum that became Michigan's successful "Bottle Bill" was being considered in 1976, I promoted it strongly in my biology classroom, the local Jaycee Chapter, and local

media. Now, some 43 years later I'm again encountering a growing litter problem along Michigan roads. Since 1976, the number of beverage brands has exploded, bottled water has become a huge and growing industry, and fast food restaurants have expanded the stream of plastic trash that is both unsightly and ecologically damaging.

I believe it would be possible to regain some of the environmental advances from the 1976 Bottle Bill. In 1976 dollars, the 10¢ deposit levied on carbonated and alcoholic beverage containers would equal 45¢ each today. If that deposit were added to fast food beverage cups, the full range of containers for drinks that are neither carbonated nor alcohol based, and especially for bottled water, I have to imagine that the incentive to restrain from littering would be nearly irresistible. Sure, some people would continue to ignore the cost of irresponsibility, but a new force of gleaners would emerge to pick up the rewards of several

dollars per mile if litter does remain significant.

I am bringing this to your attention because I firmly believe that society and our shared environment stand to benefit immensely from an updated Bottle Bill (perhaps requiring a new name like "Roadside Responsibility Bill"). If the political climate should be in favor of such legislation or a voter initiative along these lines, a partnership of backers including watershed councils like RRWC would be vital to its popularization and passage.

- John Farmer, Alternate Delegate of York Township & Veteran Saline Area Adopt-A-Stream Leader



## Nature Walks

RRWC has begun a Nature Walk series this year to get more people out to enjoy our local parks and the plants and animals living in them. Nature Walks are short "hikes" in parks around the River Raisin Watershed for people of all ages and backgrounds to explore the outdoors. We identify the plants and animals we see along the trail, we talk about the history of the area we're in, and if we're near the river, we'll look at some of the life living in the water!



Cardinal flower found along the river at Sharon Mills

Preserve

Nature Walks are a great way for us to leave our screens, phones, and electronics behind to enjoy the natural world around us. We have activities along the way to engage all our senses, making it fun for everyone!

If you'd like to join us on a Nature Walk, visit our website or Facebook page to find out when the next one is.

## Celebrate *continued from page 1*

Since the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) was established in 2010, over \$3 billion of environmental restoration has been performed in the Great Lakes basin, from cleaning up heavy industrial pollution in Areas of Concern, such as in Monroe, to restoring shorelines to improve fish and wildlife habitat.

The University of Michigan and other partners recently completed a study documenting the benefits of the GLRI program. For every dollar spent on the GLRI from 2010 through 2016, \$3.35 of additional economic activity in the Great Lakes region will be produced through 2036. Additional tourism dollars are also produced, and housing values increase in restored coastal communities.

The gathering provided a great networking opportunity for all of the participants. We made some new connections and shared ideas that will continue to generate positive results to celebrate in the future.

-Sybil Kolon, RRWC Executive Committee Secretary & Manchester Township Delegate



2019 Great Lakes Restoration Celebration at The Henry Ford.



# River Raisin

WATERSHED COUNCIL

Partner · Protect · Preserve

Partner... Protect... Preserve...

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Website: [www.riverraisin.org](http://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 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.

## Upcoming Events 2019

*Nature Walk—Nan Weston Preserve, Manchester—11/2, 10-11:30am*

*Adopt-A-Stream: Bug ID Day—113 Peelle Hall, Adrian College—11/16, 10am-1pm*

*Volunteer Teacher Training—Lenawee Drain Commissioner's Office, Adrian—11/20, 6:30pm-8pm*

See website or contact us for more details!  
[www.riverraisin.org/calendar](http://www.riverraisin.org/calendar)

We can come to your school to teach about natural resources!  
Email [rrwc@lenawee.mi.us](mailto:rrwc@lenawee.mi.us) or call 517-264-4754 to schedule a free lesson in your classroom!

## Executive Member Highlight: Phil Kittredge

Phil spent nearly 40 years working in the Detroit area as an engineer for heavy truck component suppliers. He had always hoped to sometime live on a lake, so as retirement approached he and his wife found and moved to a house on an Irish Hills lake.

Having more available time as a retiree, he attended the lake property owner's association meetings to keep abreast of the association's activities and issues. This led to assisting with the association's water quality committee. He became aware of RRWC and began to regularly attend their monthly meetings. Ultimately he

was asked to consider joining the board.

Having spent most of his life taking water quality for granted, he has in the last two years come to realize there is much to be done to assure the quality of water we enjoy for recreation and rely on for public water supplies. He hopes his involvement will help increase awareness of our need to carefully provide responsible stewardship to this valuable resource.



## Executive Committee

### Chair:

John Calhoun  
Columbia Township  
Representative, Jackson Co.

### Vice Chair:

Harry Sheehan  
Chief Deputy Water  
Resources  
Commissioner  
Representative, Washtenaw  
Co

### Secretary:

Sybil Kolon  
Manchester Township  
Representative, Washtenaw  
Co.

### Treasurer:

K Z Bolton  
Lenawee County  
Commissioner  
Representative, Lenawee Co.

### Director:

John Chandler  
Summerfield Township  
Representative, Monroe Co.

### Director:

David Hoffman  
County Commissioner  
Representative, Monroe Co.

### Director:

Phil Kittredge  
Cambridge Twp.  
Representative  
Lenawee Co.

### Outreach Coordinator:

Katie Goplerud-Smith  
[rrwc@lenawee.mi.us](mailto:rrwc@lenawee.mi.us)

### Water Quality Coordinator:

Danielle Brosamer  
[riverraisin001@gmail.com](mailto:riverraisin001@gmail.com)

### Executive Director:

Stephen May  
[steve.may@lenawee.mi.us](mailto:steve.may@lenawee.mi.us)

## Partner

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

## Protect & Preserve

We promote stewardship in educating people about what YOU can do to help us protect and preserve our natural resources in the River Raisin Watershed.

## Promote

Check out our website at:  
[www.RiverRaisin.org](http://www.RiverRaisin.org)  
Find us on Facebook & Instagram!  
RRWC Merchandise is available -  
Order t-shirts and hats online today!