



# Huron River Report

The Newsletter of the Huron River Watershed Council

## Winter 2005

Drinking Water	p 3
Tackling Stormwater	p 6
Living on the Edge	p 7

## Does the Huron Need a Low-Salt Diet?

*In search of safe roads and healthy streams*

Every winter, HRWC receives numerous inquiries from watershed residents about the impacts of road salt on the health of our streams and lakes. Intuitively, the very idea of adding salt to freshwater systems seems like a bad idea. Salt applied to roads, parking lots, and sidewalks has a quick and easy path to our waterways when snow-melt runs off into storm drains. While research on the effects of road salt on water quality and aquatic life is limited, the threat appears to be minimal, especially when applications are managed wisely.

### HOW DOES ROAD SALT WORK?

This winter, as with every winter, roads, parking lots and sidewalks throughout the Huron River Watershed will be treated with salt and other deicers to keep them safe for drivers and pedestrians. The most commonly used salt is sodium chloride, which is cheap and effective.



*Winter's beauty presents a challenge as safety is balanced with environmental impacts.* —photo: University of Michigan

Without salt, snow and ice accumulate on roads and bond to the pavement, making it difficult to remove with snow plows. Salt applied to the surface causes some of the snow and ice to melt. The melt water combines with the salt to create a liquid

called brine. The brine moves the salt around and continues the melting process. Traffic moving across partially melted ice patches breaks them apart so that plows can remove them.

### HOW MUCH SALT IS USED?

The Michigan Department of Transportation uses approximately 748,000 tons of salt and 264,000 tons of sand annually, although the exact amount

varies from year to year. The Oakland County Road Commission uses about 99,000 tons annually to maintain approximately 3,600 miles of roads, and Washtenaw County uses 19,000 tons for 1,900 miles of roads. Astoundingly, the

*continued on page 4*

## Giddy Up, Partner!

*What is so exciting about the River RoundUp?*

Whenever the crowd gathers for a River RoundUp there is a wonderfully warm enthusiasm in the room. We asked people who participated in the September River RoundUp to comment on what they enjoyed. Here are a few of the responses.

"I have worked at a few RoundUps in the past. This is the first one where I had the opportunity to bring my 8-year old daughter. I was worried that she would be 'bored.' However, she was very valuable on the team at finding the insects, and she had so much fun that she did not want to leave our last site. In her words, 'Mommy, I can't

believe you thought I would be bored.' It was so satisfying to participate in such a worthwhile event, along with my child."

- Mary Ann Schaefer

"Sam, Mike and I loved the RoundUp. Sam is doing this project as part of his service project requirements for his upcoming Bar Mitzvah to help water

*continued on page 5*

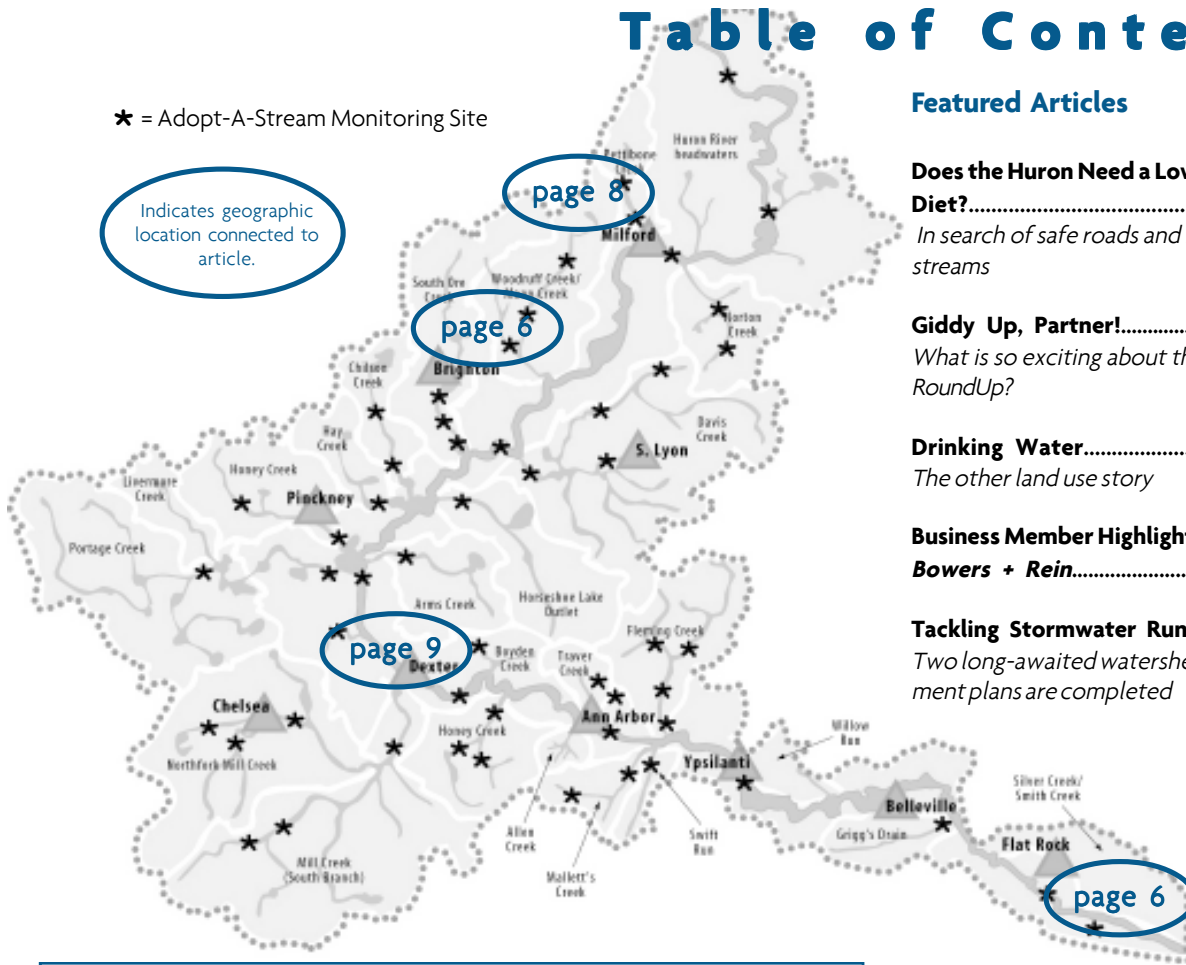


*Jim Fackert, Bill Stone, Larry Wolicki, Sam Lichtman-Mikol and Mike Silverman pausing near Davis Creek.* —photo: Lori Lichtman

# Table of Contents

★ = Adopt-A-Stream Monitoring Site

Indicates geographic location connected to article.



## Featured Articles

**Does the Huron Need a Low-Salt Diet?**.....cover  
*In search of safe roads and healthy streams*

**Giddy Up, Partner!**.....cover  
*What is so exciting about the River RoundUp?*

**Drinking Water**.....3  
*The other land use story*

**Business Member Highlight:**  
**Bowers + Rein**.....5

**Tackling Stormwater Runoff**.....6  
*Two long-awaited watershed management plans are completed*

**Living on the Edge**.....7  
*Lake workshops inspire homeowners*

## Other News

**Know Your Board Representative**.....8  
*Mary Bajcz, Milford Township*

**Laura's "Stream" of Consciousness**.....9  
*HRWC Update*

**Business Members**.....9

**HRWC 40th Anniversary Celebration**.....10  
*Heartfelt thanks to all of the contributors and participants!*

**Make a Difference** .....11  
*Leave a legacy through the endowment fund*

**Thank You!**..... back cover

## 2005/2006 EVENTS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Thursday, Dec. 8, 5:30-7:30 PM<br><b>HRWC Executive Committee Meeting</b><br>NEW Center<br>Call Laura at (734) 769-5123   | Watershed-wide<br>Call Joan at (734) 769-5971   |
| Saturday, Dec. 10, 1-2 PM<br><b>Meet Mill Creek: Dexter Dam guided tour</b><br>Dexter<br>Call Elizabeth at (734) 769-5123 | Thursday, Jan. 26, 5:30-7:30 PM<br><b>HRWC Board Meeting</b><br>NEW Center<br>Call Laura at (734) 769-5123  |
| Saturday, Jan. 21, 11:30 AM-2:30 PM<br>or 1-4 PM<br><b>Adopt-A-Stream Stonefly Search</b>                                 | Thursday, March 23, 4:15-7:30 PM<br><b>HRWC Finance and Executive Committee Meetings</b> (Finance starts at 4:15; Executive starts at 5:30)<br>NEW Center<br>Call Laura at (734) 769-5123 |

Submit a short film to the Millers Creek Film Festival by March 6<sup>th</sup> to win a KAYAK or a CAMCORDER.  
 See [www.hrwc.org/filmfestival](http://www.hrwc.org/filmfestival) for rules and details.

More events and updates on the web at: [www.hrwc.org](http://www.hrwc.org)

The NEW Center is located at  
 1100 N. Main Street in Ann Arbor  
 Call (734) 769-5123 or visit the HRWC website for directions

# Drinking Water

*The other land use story*

The Ann Arbor News recently ran a series of articles on the impact of rapid development on this region. I read the series with great interest but want to point out one additional, crucial way that we're all affected by sprawl: it damages our water supply.

The Huron River is the major source of water in the area. The City of Ann Arbor gets 80% of its drinking water from the Huron, and the river offers beautiful scenery, unique wildlife, and great fishing, all of which draw visitors from near and far. The Huron is vital to our health and economy. The biggest threat it faces is sprawl.



*Coming soon to a natural area near you: low density, suburban development poses the greatest threat to the Huron River Watershed.* —photo: City of Ann Arbor

Studies, both nationwide and on the Huron, consistently show an alarming fact. Sprawl directly harms water quality. HRWC volunteers have studied, for many years, 73 sites on the river and its streams. The worst conditions are found invariably in the locations with the greatest development.

What's the connection? Development creates impervious surfaces, such as roads, rooftops, and parking lots. When rain falls

on these surfaces, it has no chance to seep into the soil or be absorbed by plants. Instead, it rushes quickly and directly into the nearest waterway, washing pollution and sediment in with it, and flowing so fast that it tears away the riverbanks and causes flooding.

Dozens of studies, including those done on the Huron, show with remarkable consistency that when imperviousness in a watershed exceeds about 8-10% of the total area, water quality begins to suffer. A traditional residential development with one house per 2.5 acres already exceeds 10% imperviousness.

Building traditional cookie-cutter developments—where single homes sit at the centers of big lots on long streets—is one of the worst things we can do for water quality. In these low-density, car-dependent subdivisions, imperviousness runs amok. It landscapes rural areas with tons of pavement: longer and wider roads, driveways, parking lots, plus new commercial and big-box retail centers with their own new roads and lots.

At a regional level, the best way to keep impervious surfaces below the crucial 10% threshold is to group development into higher densities on smaller areas, preferably in areas that already have infrastructure in place and don't require, for instance, fresh roads. At the site level, cluster developments, which group houses in a smaller area while preserving large, natural tracts, can reduce imperviousness by one-third.

There are many steps we can take to mitigate the impact of sprawl on water quality. A few of the most important are:

- Local governments in the watershed should follow planning principles such as those described in the Washtenaw County master plan. This plan (discussed in the first article of the News series), seeks to preserve rural land and natural features while focusing growth in urban areas. Go to <http://complan.ewashtenaw.org/> to view the plan.
- We should encourage urban density, with new housing located within areas already served by sewers, schools, and roads.
- Where growth into rural areas is unavoidable, we should change zoning ordinances to prevent cookie-cutter subdivisions that chew up open space, instead favoring cluster developments that preserve large tracts of land and wetlands.

Regional planning and cooperation are essential to achieving these goals. If we deal intelligently with the current onslaught of development, we have an opportunity to save vast amounts of money, beautiful riverscapes, a wonderful way of life—and our own drinking water. But to do so, we must change the way we grow.

— Laura Rubin

# Does the Huron Need a Low-Salt Diet?

continued from cover

total US annual usage is approximately 14 million tons.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO THE SALT?

Road salt enters surface waters, soil and groundwater as snow melts. Leaks from salt storage facilities also contribute salt. The chloride portion of salt does not drop out into soil or evaporate; almost all the chloride that enters soil and groundwater ultimately reaches surface waters.



PHOTO: RIVERKEEPER

A familiar site on Michigan roads each winter. —photo: University of Michigan

## WHAT IMPACTS DOES SALT HAVE ON AQUATIC LIFE?

While road salt application can impact biological communities, the magnitude of these impacts is relatively unknown compared to other pollutants. Studies have shown that chloride levels in streams, lakes, and groundwater near salted roads and salt storage areas can be significantly higher than normal background levels, and frequently spike after snowmelts. Concentrations far surpassing those considered toxic to fish and other aquatic life have been found in surface water, although we are not aware of any such studies in the Huron River Watershed. It is important to note that toxicity is based on both chemical concentration and the length of exposure, and in most cases, brief spikes in salt concentration are temporary, and unless extremely high, have minimal impacts on aquatic life. As shown in the graph above, in a study of a stream in Minnesota, salt levels remain below toxic levels in between snowmelts. More locally, a study of certain Michigan wetland invertebrates found tolerance to chloride levels substantially higher than those found in winter in 43 wetlands along multi-lane highways. So, while it appears that high, toxic levels of chloride become diluted in

receiving waters, reducing their immediate threat to aquatic life, the long term impacts of continual “flushing” of salt into lakes and streams has not been studied adequately.

## ARE THERE OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS?

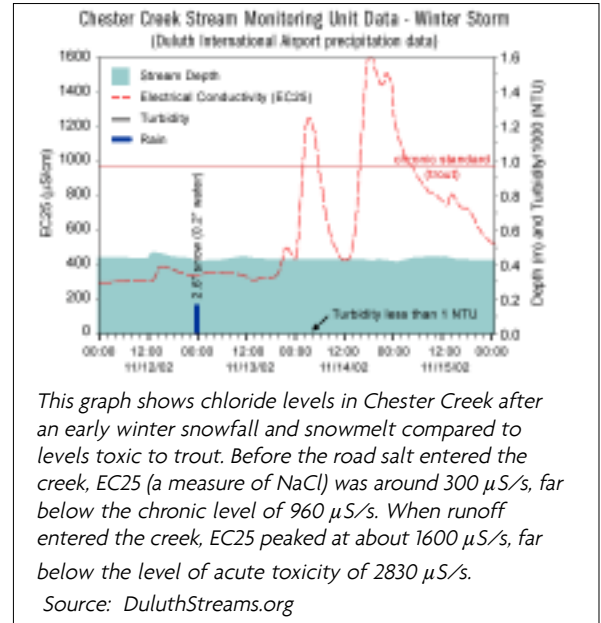
The most visible impacts of road salt are usually on roadside vegetation where a fringe of dead or dying trees and shrubs on major highways and streets may be visible. Salt-tolerant species like cattails and common reed-grass will replace salt-sensitive species. If the affected vegetation borders a stream or wetland, there may be increased erosion and loss of habitat for birds and other animals.

The physical and chemical properties of soils also can be damaged by the sodium component of road salt. Excess sodium destroys soil structure, which reduces its ability to retain water and increases its susceptibility to erosion.

## DO ALTERNATIVES EXIST?

State and local agencies look constantly for methods of ice removal that are more effective and environmentally friendly than salt. Several alternative deicing products are available. To date, the alternatives are significantly more expensive and not more effective than road salt. In a time of deep budget cuts, safety and short-term cost effectiveness become major considerations. However, management choices can reduce the impacts of road salt runoff:

- Equipment and procedural improvements can result in lower salting rates while maintaining public safety
- Salt stockpiles can be stored indoors
- Runoff collection systems can be installed around salt and sand stockpiles and truck washing areas
- Maintenance yard housekeeping practices can be designed to minimize salt brine runoff



This graph shows chloride levels in Chester Creek after an early winter snowfall and snowmelt compared to levels toxic to trout. Before the road salt entered the creek, EC25 (a measure of NaCl) was around 300  $\mu\text{S}/\text{s}$ , far below the chronic level of 960  $\mu\text{S}/\text{s}$ . When runoff entered the creek, EC25 peaked at about 1600  $\mu\text{S}/\text{s}$ , far below the level of acute toxicity of 2830  $\mu\text{S}/\text{s}$ .

Source: DuluthStreams.org

## WHAT EFFECT DOES THE SALT THAT I SPREAD ON MY DRIVEWAY AND SIDEWALK HAVE ON STREAMS?

Good question. The answer isn't really as simple as “Lots” or “Little.” Of course, salt is needed for public safety. Yet, too much salt can have negative effects on aquatic life, soil, and vegetation, and these effects must be added to all the other stresses we contribute. Salt also costs money, not only the cost of purchasing 10 or 20 pounds, but the added cost of rust and corrosion on cars, pavements, roads, culverts, and bridges. As with other household chemical applications, the river-friendly rule of thumb is moderation and careful application, avoiding areas near open water and drains.

## TO SALT, OR NOT TO SALT?

In summary, while excess salt inputs into our waterways have the potential to cause significant harm, the limited information that is available suggests that road salt application, if managed in an environmentally-conscious manner, can co-exist with healthy rivers and streams.

Adapted in part with permission from DuluthStreams.org. Additional information from <http://www.ec.gc.ca/substances/ese/eng/psap/final/roadsalts.cfm>.

—Jo Latimore, Elizabeth Riggs and Kris Olsson

# Giddy Up, Partner!

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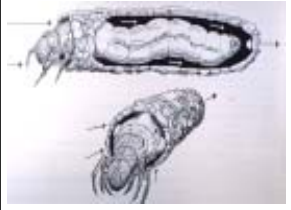
quality so he can help frogs. We had wonderful leaders who explained what destroys our water and how to help water. We went to two sites - a creek and part of the Huron River, and it was a glaring difference as to the variety of insects and plants at the two different sites due to the Huron River site being so close to more development. When you read about the effects of development on our water system it doesn't have the same impact as when you actually see the difference in how much life is being destroyed. It brought us closer to nature that normally we just look past and don't realize [is] there. It also made us appreciate the diversity of life when it often looks just like water and by seeing the diversity it made us want to preserve the diversity."

- Lori Lichtman & Mike Silverman

## Saddle up and join the fun!

- The River RoundUp is a five-hour event that attracts 100 – 150 people
- Each team of about 5 people visits two stream study sites where they collect a sample of all the different kinds of insect larvae and other creatures (benthic macroinvertebrates) that are living on the bottom of the stream
- No prior knowledge is required. Children who are interested and are accompanied by an adult can be terrific team members
- Call the Adopt-A-Stream Program of the HRWC to get involved: 734-769-5971, or email Joan Martin at [jmartin@hrwc.org](mailto:jmartin@hrwc.org)

### WANTED!



*caddisfly larvae*  
Last known location:  
a stream near you!

"I enjoy just wading in the river/creek, and feeling the force of the current. I also like discovering that there is so much life beneath the surface of the water. There's more than a few fish and the occasional turtle."

-Tim Hughes

"What I liked was seeing parts of Ann Arbor for the first time. I've driven by those places [all my life] and never knew there was a river only a few feet away. If you don't know something is there, it is hard to care about it."

-Dwight Davis

## Business Member Highlight: Bowers + Rein

*Local architectural and planning firm considers environmental impacts*

Bowers + Rein, an architectural and planning firm with 18 years of experience, is a business partner of HRWC. The firm employs both architects and landscape architects. Since 1987, Bowers + Rein has successfully completed work on numerous commercial, residential, research and institutional projects. Clients include Compuware, Botsford Hospital, Bank of Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Health Systems, Balance Technology and Washtenaw Community College (WCC).

Bowers + Rein is very much involved in and a strong proponent of green development and sustainable design. While every project is unique, the overall goal of reducing a project's impact on our natural resources is something Bowers + Rein strives for as an organization. At a project's inception, the site planning process is guided by preservation of natural features including woodlands, water features, and slopes and clustering development to maximize

density and minimize developed area (i.e., impervious surface). The firm's landscape architects work closely with consulting civil engineers on stormwater management techniques such as bio-swales, first flush or sedimentation basins and water re-capturing. Permeable surfaces and shading studies are considered for parking and circulation paths. Building orientation is also an important consideration.



As for the building itself, Bowers + Rein focuses on a broad range of opportunities to reduce the project's environmental impact. Selection of building materials, energy consumption, efficient HVAC systems, optimizing daylight and reducing water consumption are all areas for closer design scrutiny. Currently, Bowers + Rein is

working with Washtenaw Community College on the development of their new Health and Fitness Center. To their credit, WCC has made it the goal of the design team to attain the highest possible LEED certification for this project. 'LEED' stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, the emerging national standard for environmentally sound, sustainable buildings, established by the United States

Green Building Council (USGBC), of which Bowers + Rein is a member. Bowers + Rein is working with two Colorado firms, OLC (architectural) and ENSAR (LEED consultant) to meet the goals of WCC.

Bowers + Rein feels fortunate to be located within a community that understands the importance of our environment and has a strong advocate such as HRWC to protect our valuable resources.

— Mike Rein

# Tackling Stormwater Runoff

*Two long-awaited watershed management plans are completed*

The LHRWIC and HCLSC recently completed their WMPs for their NPDES Phase II stormwater permits so now they can embark on their SWPPIs. Of course, months ago, they completed and are now implementing their PPPs, PEPs and IDEPs.

“Huh? What?” you’re saying. Welcome to the world of federal permits, where abbreviations abound. It is a world in which HRWC has been immersed since 2003, when we began assisting watershed communities with their stormwater permit requirements. Twenty municipalities and one school district hired HRWC to facilitate the development of watershed management plans for two large areas of the watershed. Two years, six public meetings, and many more committee meetings later, the final plans are complete and under review by the MDEQ.

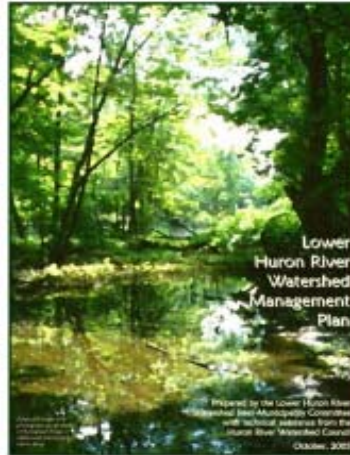
## THE SETTING

One plan covers the area known as the Huron Chain of Lakes, which consists of 253 square miles of the Huron River Watershed in Livingston County and neighboring portions of Washtenaw and Oakland Counties. The Huron River flows 27 miles through this part of the watershed from the Kent Lake Dam to just below Portage Lake, draining eight major tributary creeks



along the way. Including all or parts of twenty communities, the Huron Chain of Lakes Watershed is home to some of the state’s most intense development pressures from a growing economy and urban sprawl.

The other plan covers the 74-square mile downriver portion of the Huron River Watershed, which drains all or portions of fourteen municipalities located in Monroe



and Wayne counties. The lower Huron River flows for more than 28 miles from French Landing Dam to the river’s mouth where it flows into Lake Erie. The conditions in this portion of the watershed are a reflection of what happens below the dam but also, to some extent, what happens in the upper 92% of the Huron River Watershed.

## THE STORYLINE

The purpose of these watershed management plans, as stated by the MDEQ, is “to identify and execute the actions needed to resolve water quality and water quantity concerns by fostering cooperation among the various public and private entities in the watershed.” The emphasis of the plans is to mitigate the impacts of pollutants and problems caused by stormwater runoff.

Both plans present a profile of the current natural and human environments in the watershed areas through a review of water quality data, field surveys, human population and development information, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data, and other relevant information on current watershed conditions. Both plans also provide a section on land use analysis that includes a review of local codes and ordinances, impervious cover analyses, community build-out scenarios, pollutant runoff models, and identification of critical areas in each watershed. The plans include

long-term goals and objectives for restoring and protecting the watersheds, and an “action plan” that lists specific recommended actions for meeting the goals and objectives. Types of recommended actions include improving community codes and ordinances, locating and correcting illicit discharges, educating and involving the public in watershed issues and stewardship, and building engineered systems (such as stormwater wetlands or infiltration trenches).

## THE EXCITING CONCLUSION

Based on reviews of existing data and input from the intergovernmental committees and the public, both watersheds face similar challenges, though these challenges differ in priority. Due to the historic and continuing human-caused alteration of flow in the river system (which is a driving force in the amount of waterborne sediment and nutrients), hydrology is the top environmental challenge to address in the lower Huron River Watershed. In the Huron Chain of Lakes, the number one concern is excess phosphorus from nonpoint sources. This problem is the reason that Brighton Lake, Ore Lake, and Strawberry Lake fail to meet the state’s minimum water quality standards. Other environmental concerns or pollutants identified in both plans include: excessive sedimentation/soil erosion; salt, organic compounds and heavy metals; pathogens; elevated water temperature; and debris/litter.

Of the plans’ many recommendations, among the first that communities will need to act on are making financial and institutional arrangements to fulfill the plans, and increasing efforts to raise awareness of watershed issues among the citizenry. Setting up a coordinated monitoring program to generate data on baseline watershed conditions is another “must do” activity, particularly in the lower Huron where there is a paucity of information on stream flow, water quality and aquatic biology. To view the complete plans, go to [www.co.livingston.mi.us/drain/phasell](http://www.co.livingston.mi.us/drain/phasell) for the Huron Chain of Lakes Plan, or [www.lowerhuronriver.net](http://www.lowerhuronriver.net) for the Lower Huron Plan.

— Chris Riggs and Elizabeth Riggs

# Living on the Edge

Lake workshops inspire homeowners

HRWC recently completed a series of five, three-hour workshops for lakefront homeowners throughout the watershed. Called "Living on the Edge," the workshops focused on educating lakefront property owners about simple steps they can take to protect the quality of their lakes. HRWC Watershed Ecologist Jo Latimore kicked off each workshop with a discussion of local water quality and watershed management efforts, and then introduced a number of local experts who presented practical and environmentally sound advice for lakefront homeowners. Topics included lake-friendly shoreline stabilization and erosion control, lakescaping with native plants, common sense lawn care, the shoreline alteration permitting process, and residential water quality protection. Included in the registration fee was a copy of the excellent book, "Lakescaping for Wildlife and Water Quality," published by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

The primary focus of the workshops was lake-friendly shoreline management. Erosion control is a concern of most waterfront residents, and while the most obvious response to this problem is the installation of a seawall, such artificial structures are not the most lake-friendly alternative. Homeowners learned that deep-rooted native shoreline vegetation can stabilize soils, filter pollutants out of upland runoff, and deter nuisance wildlife far better than high-maintenance turf grass.

Lakefront homeowners enjoyed the workshops and came away with new



Cecilia Govrik of the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program uses a model to demonstrate groundwater contamination pathways at the Living on the Edge workshop for Ford and Belleville Lakes. —photo: Jo Latimore

knowledge and lots of ideas. Among their comments: "Very knowledgeable speakers, very professional and articulate." "Excellent overview and clear practical suggestions." "This is great that you do this! It's a good use of time and money!" "Thanks for a great program. Thank you for the exceptional presenters and handouts." "Great workshops! Thank you! Time well spent!"

HRWC thanks the expert speakers who participated in the Living on the Edge workshops, including Matt Catanzarite and Cecilia Govrik of the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program, Kristine Hahn of MSU Extension, Steve Olds of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service,

Bethany Perris of MDEQ, Jewel Richardson of Wetlands Nursery, and Tom Smith of the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation. The workshops were made possible with cooperation from Van Buren, Dexter, Sylvan, and White Lake Townships, the American Legion Post #31 of Chelsea, the Pine Creek Ridge Conservancy and Lake Committee, and the Portage-Base-Whitewood Owners Association. The Great Lakes Basin Program for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control, administered by the Great Lakes Commission, and MDEQ provided funding for the workshops.

— Jo Latimore

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## NEW! Become a CONSERVATION STEWARD through MSU program

MSU Extension of Livingston County is offering the Michigan Conservation Stewards Program.

Forty hours of classroom and field experiences will teach ecosystem complexities and current natural resource management issues, plus opportunities for volunteerism in related areas.



**BEGINS FEBRUARY 2006.**

Call 1-517-546-3950 for details.



# Know Your Board Representative

Mary Bajcz, Milford Township

The vigilance of citizens is invaluable in protecting our river. Mary Bajcz noticed that her township was not a member of HRWC and brought it to the attention of the supervisor. HRWC is pleased that Milford Township is now a member, and Mary is the township's representative on the HRWC Board.

Mary is trained as an accountant but she also enjoys spending her time in other pursuits. She attends township board and planning meetings to keep herself, and the township, informed on watershed issues. She participates in River RoundUps and sets a great example for her 17-year-old son, Alex, who has been active in watershed issues since he was ten.

Mary has also been a tremendous help in collecting water quality samples and monitoring flow rates as part of two

innovative stormwater demonstration projects in Wixom, coordinated by HRWC.

Mary has three children and three grandchildren. She is an accomplished quilter and makes both bed and art quilts. She also teaches quilting and belongs to a knitting group and an art group where she designs some of her art quilts.

Residents of Milford Township can call Mary with questions, comments, or suggestions regarding watershed issues. Or, if you want to become involved, you can reach Mary at (248) 685-9015 or the Huron River Watershed Council at (734) 769-5123.



HRWC Board Representative for Milford Township, Mary Bajcz —photo: Mary Bajcz

— Eunice Burns

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# Laura's "Stream" of Consciousness

An update on HRWC projects: occasionally, it's better to put up walls than to build bridges

## GREAT SUCCESS!

For the past 2 years HRWC led the efforts, along with the help of other environmental and conservation groups, to uphold the Natural Rivers Act and opposed a permit application to build an unnecessary bridge crossing the Huron in the natural river zone. We were successful! In early November, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) denied the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's (HCMA) permit application. Thank you to all of the organizations and individuals who made comments, came to public meetings, and spoke up in support of the Natural Rivers Program and the scenic beauty of the river.

HCMA argued that this bridge was necessary for Washtenaw County's efforts to build a recreational hike-bike path system across the County. We disagreed. HRWC strongly supports the County's path system and is committed to helping develop the path system while not compromising the "country scenic" beauty or designation of the Natural Rivers Act and the protection the Act affords the river. We will work hard with Washtenaw County and the HCMA to meet both of these needs.

## 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

I hope you were able to enjoy some of HRWC's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary events this fall. There was a great assortment of events including photography, outdoor music,

history, literature, and adventure. The most exciting event for my family was the canoe trip. We started from Hudson Mills Metropark on a warm but cloudy day and were surprised by a constant rain for the rest of the trip. The stop at the Dexter Cider Mill was warm and wonderful. A hardy crew of members proceeded down the river to the Delhi rapids while the rest of us abandoned canoe. Thank you to all who joined us for the anniversary events and raised a toast to another 40 years.

## DEXTER DAM

Will we have to replace the wetlands lost by removing the dam? And what if we can't remove the dam because of the potentially heavy cost of sediment management/removal from the impoundment, only to have the old dam break apart in twenty years, sending the sediment plume downstream? These are some of the unexpected and convoluted questions we are asking as we go further down the road towards removing the Mill Pond dam in the Village of Dexter. Right now, it is all coming

down to the composition of the sediment built up behind the dam. We'll let you know what we find in the muck.

## HERITAGE WATER TRAIL

Planning has begun on a water trail for canoes, kayaks, and small boats in the Lower Huron, from Flat Rock to Lake Erie. The vision for the regional water trail is in the early stages and includes additional boat launches, restrooms and water facilities, and historical signs. We hope to extend this trail all the way up to the Huron's headwaters!

## THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Our strategic planning efforts continue and four umbrella priorities have emerged... beware, these are large and lofty goals:

1. To build a larger group of stewards, HRWC will engage citizens, businesses and governments in HRWC stewardship activities and programs that reach a broad and more diverse audience throughout the watershed.
2. To save the Huron River Watershed from irreparable damage, HRWC will change current patterns of land development toward more river-friendly choices, specifically encouraging higher density development where infrastructure exists, and encouraging open space and farmland preservation in rural areas.
3. To support watershed management policy and education, HRWC will provide technically sound data and research analyses. These goals align with our three focus program areas of science, technical assistance, and education and outreach.
4. The final goal pertains to raising unrestricted funds to carry out the above initiatives.

We have five years to meet these goals and we can only do it with your help!

— Laura Rubin



Modification of the new office space, labor and materials donated by McKinley Associates. — photo: HRWC

## ALL TOGETHER NOW

Our offices are now all consolidated to one side of the second floor at the NEW Center. We now all overlook the majestic Huron. McKinley Associates helped make our work environment more pleasant and productive by building a wall in the middle of one rather large office space, giving us two nice offices. Stop by and visit us sometime.

## Business Members

Thanks to these businesses for joining or renewing their memberships and helping to protect the Huron:

### FRIEND

- Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc.
- NSF International—support for Fleming Creek

### SUPPORTER

- Orchard, Hiltz & McCliment, Inc.

### MEMBER

- Ann Arbor Area Trout Unlimited
- NTH Consultants, Ltd.

# HRWC 40th Anniversary Celebration

*Heartfelt thanks to all of the contributors and participants!*

To the **Ann Arbor District Library, WEMU, the Matthaei Botanical Gardens and the Nichols Arboretum, the Huron-Clinton MetroParks, the City of Ypsilanti, and the Riverside Arts Center** for working with us to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

To **Marc Akemann** for displaying his beautiful photographs of the Huron River watershed in Livingston and Washtenaw counties.

To **Bob Hotaling of the Huron-Clinton MetroParks** for leading a wonderful bird walk early on a Sunday morning.



*Keith Taylor, author, 40th Anniversary Literary Event*  
—photo: HRWC

To **John Knott and Keith Taylor** for organizing and participating in a delightful literary evening and to **Alison Swain, Linda Gregerson, and Dargie Anderson** for reading their beautiful works about rivers and life.

To the **RFD Boys**, who donated their time to give a rousing Sunday performance of bluegrass in a gorgeous setting on the banks of the Huron River.

To **Barry LaRue** for donating his time and expertise to help find and operate sound equipment so that folks could hear the music on the river, to **Joe Reeher** for assisting with the set-up and operations of the equipment, and to **Dave Brooks** for transporting and storing it.

To the **Raisin Pickers** who donated their time to play wonderful music about rivers and gave a memorable acoustical concert.



*Canoeing down the Huron toward Dexter Cider Mill. Mmmmm..... donuts and cider!* — photo: HRWC

To **Ron Sell** for organizing and leading a canoe trip to see the Huron, **Skip's Canoe Livery** for donating the canoes, and the **Dexter Cider Mill** for providing wonderful cider and warm, delicious donuts.

To all the **HRWC members** who celebrated our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary on the canoe trip and smiled while paddling through a pouring rain.

To **Paul Cousins** for helping paddlers get warm and out of the rain.

To **Scott Newell of Big City Small World Bakery** for donating a delicious 40th anniversary cake.



*The Aznovarians, longtime HRWC members, enjoy the paddling before the rain starts* — photo: HRWC



*The Raisin Pickers at the U-M Arboretum*  
—photo: HRWC



*Grace Shackman, History of the Huron presentation* — photo: HRWC

To **Ann Arbor Print and Mail**, which donated the mailing so that all of our members could be invited to the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration events.

To **Grace Shackman**, who gave a fascinating presentation about life along the Huron in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century and made us all realize that while things change over time, the Huron is a constant presence.

— **Ellen Offen**

# Make a Difference - Leave a Legacy

*Become a River Fund Endowment Contributor*

The Huron River is an essential and beautiful part of southeast Michigan. It provides recreational opportunities, drinking water, wildlife habitat and economic vitality. There is a way you can help protect the Huron for future generations: The Huron River Fund Endowment.

The Endowment will ensure the financial future of the Watershed Council – and help maintain a beautiful, healthy river for years to come.



*Davis Creek, downstream from Milford Pond*  
— photo: HRWC

If you would like to donate to the Huron River Fund, you can do so in a number of ways. Everyone’s situation is unique, so talk to your bank, financial planner or attorney about supporting the Huron River Fund through:

- A specific dollar amount
- A percentage of your estate’s value
- A part or all of the remainder residue or your estate bequest in your will to provide a specific percentage of your estate for the river
- All or part of the proceeds of your Life Insurance or Retirement Plan
- A Life Income Gift, such as a Charitable Remainder Trust

When you give to the Huron River Fund, your donation is professionally and securely invested by the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation.



*Adopt-A-Stream volunteers on Mill Creek*  
— photo: HRWC

For more information about the Huron River Endowment Fund, please contact Ellen Offen at 734-769-5123 or by email at [eoffen@hrwc.org](mailto:eoffen@hrwc.org). Thank you!

— **Ellen Offen**

## The Huron River Watershed Council

**The Huron River Watershed Council** is a coalition of Huron Valley individuals, businesses and local governments established in 1965 under Michigan’s Local River Management Act to inspire attitudes, behaviors, and economies that protect, rehabilitate, and sustain the Huron River system. The Watershed Council is a non-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the federal tax code.

**If you enjoy this newsletter, please consider membership.** Services of the Council include hands-on citizen education, technical assistance in policy development and direct river protection projects. You will find a membership form below. All contributions are tax deductible.

Yes, I want to help the Huron River Watershed Council protect and restore the Huron River.  
 Here are my member dues, mailed to: Huron River Watershed Council  
 1100 N. Main St.  
 Ann Arbor, MI 48104

<input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000 Mink	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Blue Heron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Friend
<input type="checkbox"/> \$2,500 Smallmouth Bass	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Mayfly	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Supporting
<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Green Heron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Steward	<input type="checkbox"/> \$___ Other

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City, State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**The Huron River Watershed Council**  
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*Please examine your mailing label for your HRWC membership expiration date and use that as a reminder to renew. If there is no date, then you may not be a current member of the Watershed Council. Please consider HRWC membership. We need your support. Thanks.*

*The Huron River Watershed Council receives contributions via payroll deduction through EARTH SHARE of Michigan.*



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## Thanks to Our Supporters!

Protecting the Huron is a big job and we would be lost without the donations of time, talents, and resources from our dedicated volunteers and supporters. **We extend Special Thanks to:**

**Tom Jenkins** who keeps our phone system operating.

**McKinley & Associates** for building a better wall, thereby improving our working conditions.

**Doug Denison, Scott Dierks, Lee Green, and Arthur Pancioli** for giving us laptop computers in good shape. We also appreciate the response from many others of you to our need.

**Tom Chettleburgh** for becoming a consistent assistant for several hours every week.

**Patricia and Ava Myles** for organizing and inventorying our equipment.

**Twenty people** who are making the Millers Creek Film Festival happen. (See details in the next newsletter.)

**112 volunteers** who conducted and enriched the fall monitoring of 42 study sites. The essential visiting bug experts were **Jill Kelley, Catherine Riseng, Theresa Scherwitz, Janice Sloan, and Beth Sparks-Jackson.**

**Dave Brooks and Margaret Doub** for regularly fixing and downloading the transducers. **Dave Brooks** provided exceptional support and ability for many other problems as well.

**Sam Upton and Robert Wang** for the marvelous production of Itty Bitty Bug Booklets, starting with their original drawings.

**58 hardy souls** who trained and then measured and mapped the physical characteristics of 19 study sites. Special thanks to **Tammy Rabideau and Tim Hughes** for working on several sites.

**Twenty people** who surveyed their neighbors and/or distributed fliers about the tree project in Millers Creek watershed.

**Dave Wilson** for teaching children, managing our sediment study, and alerting authorities to end a sedimentation problem in Mill Creek.

**Noah Hall** for his keen legal assistance on the anti-degradation rule as it relates to new National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (or permits as we know them).

**Randy Perry** for his expert advice on the Michigan River Alliance's IRS's non-profit application. And to **Scott Munzel** for facilitating this work.

**Great Lakes College Association** for donating their "old" phone system, which is a terrific upgrade for HRWC!