



Progress Summary on Middle Huron Project Initiatives

June 2016

Information and Education

- **2016 Watershed Community Calendar.** A total of 37,000 were produced and distributed (32,000 by the Middle Huron Stormwater Advisory Group and HRWC) in October/November of 2015. Thanks to everyone who participated. Repeat messaging is our goal. Please use the tips provided in each month as content in other public outreach materials. The calendar materials (PDF, Cover Shot jpeg, Ideas for distributing, etc.) are posted at the Middle Huron Stormwater Advisory Group web page, www.hrwc.org/our-work/programs/middle-huron-sag under the “Public Education Materials” section toward the bottom of the page. Looking ahead to 2017, we will research and provide estimated mailing costs at the next meeting so that communities can budget a direct mail of the 2018 calendar in the fall of 2017.
- **Stormwater Outreach Advertising and Content.** HRWC is working with our graphic designer to refresh and re-design our stormwater outreach campaign and materials for use in a variety of formats (print advertising, digital, social media, billboards, community newsletters, etc.) We will roll out a new suite of materials with directions and a schedule for their use in October.
- **Regional Events.** HRWC with support from the Middle Huron Stormwater Advisory Group conducted outreach at the following events:
 - Washtenaw Home, Garden & Lifestyle Show, March 18-20. Partnered with the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner’s Office to host a booth focusing on the water quality benefits of rain gardens, native plants and natural shorelines.
 - Washtenaw County Environmental Excellence Awards, April 14. Hosted a Huron River display featuring the Middle Huron Project.
 - Ann Arbor Earth Day, April 17. With the Skyline High School Environmental Club, the City of Ann Arbor and the WCWRC we hosted a “Make a Wildflower Seed Ball” activity for children to learn about the benefits of native plants to water quality and habitat.
 - City of Ann Arbor Water Treatment Plant Open House. Hosted a booth featuring the Middle Huron Project and information on the water quality benefits of rain gardens, and native plants.
- **Upcoming Events.**
 - Friday June 10, Ann Arbor Mayor’s Green Fair – crowd-sourced stormdrain art event at the Liberty/Main intersection led by Jennifer Wolf (a professional artist and educator) and HRWC volunteers promoting the Adopt-A-Stormdrain program “Chalk a River”
 - Sunday July 10, Huron River Day festival at Gallup Park -- the MH SAG will sponsor a stream table simulation activity run by the UM Museum of Natural History as well as a Bug/Stream Monitoring Demo by HRWC streamside education volunteers
 - Fri/Sat Aug 19-20, Dexter Daze
 - Thursday, September 15 (to be confirmed), University of Michigan EarthFest

- **Other.** Worked with a small SAG subgroup in November/December 2015 to brainstorm ideas for future outreach activities. Thank you to Heather Rice (WCWRC), Jennifer Lawson (City of Ann Arbor) and Katie Parrish (WCRC) for their ideas, discussion, and participation in this process. Outcomes:
 - HRWC is renewing efforts to address and provide refreshed Stormwater Outreach graphics and content for MH SAG use in additional formats – in particular social media (see above)
 - HRWC is creating a monthly “Stormwater Communications” email for the MH partners with public education opportunities/events, tips and reminders on how to maximize use of MH SAG outreach materials for stormwater permit compliance and recapping past activities (expect to launch in August)

Partnership Reports

- A reporting template was developed for MS4 partners to use for submitting their bi-annual stormwater reports to DEQ. The template includes reporting on projects and programs that HRWC and Washtenaw County implement on behalf of all partners, and includes prompts for partners to fill in progress on their own initiatives.
- Use of the dashboard was discussed and general concepts about a different framework are being considered, but a new draft has not been completed.
- The current web-based dashboard is located at <http://www.hrwc.org/middle-huron-dashboard/>, comments and feedback are still being sought.

Ford/Belleville TMDL Cooperative Agreement

- No additional progress has been made on the Cooperative Agreement since the meeting with DEQ and Thornton Farms. Currently, there is a draft that was revised December 2011 for review. Finalization was tabled due to a successful working relationship and progress without it.
- The next step is for Ric Lawson to outline potential changes and update the draft.

Implementation Projects:

Adopt-a-Stormdrain

- On hiatus for winter, per usual.
- Preparing for June crowd-sourced stormdrain art event at Ann Arbor Mayor’s Green Fair. Stormdrains located at the fair’s central intersection were decorated with chalk by a professional artist and the public with direction by an art educator. Informational flyers promoting the Adopt-A-Stormdrain program will once again be distributed to attendees. HRWC staff and volunteers promoted the connection between stormdrains and water quality.
- Will need communities to purchase or agree on stormdrain markers, as our supplies are running low.
- If members are interested in participating, they should contact Ric Lawson or Jason Frenzel (jfrenzel@hrwc.org)

Swift Run Green Infrastructure Grant Project

- As a reminder, the project includes:
 - 3 Green Streets including bump-outs with bioinfiltration in the oversized roadways;
 - Two large bioinfiltration projects on public properties – both parks;
 - A targeted rain garden program (in collaboration with Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner) for residential properties;
 - Extensive education and outreach to neighborhood residents, along with evaluation surveys
 - Water quality monitoring at creek sites upstream and downstream of the neighborhood
- The project website at www.hrwc.org/swift-run includes extensive information about the project and its current status. Please refer to the website for more information. Project progress will also be discussed at the meeting.

Green Infrastructure Planning

- HRWC is interested in working with municipalities who have an interest in developing a GI plan for their jurisdiction. HRWC has met with a few interested communities (including the cities of Dexter and Chelsea) and will develop proposals for plans tailored to municipal needs.
- HRWC has a student intern who is working on a graduate degree in Landscape Architecture this summer. She may be available to develop concept designs for Green Infrastructure projects.
- Contact Ric (rlawson@hrwc.org) if interested.

Middle Huron Creek Groups

- Several creek groups in the Middle Huron have formed over the years. Each meets on a fairly regular basis to review development proposals and projects specific to those creeks. HRWC participates and supports each of these groups. Currently active creek groups include:
 - Malletts Creek Coordinating Committee
 - Millers Creek Action Team
 - Fleming Creek Advisory Committee
- All three groups review development projects that are brought to them by local planning bodies.
- DEQ is doing some sampling and data collection in Millers Creek this year. The results may lead to additional project recommendations or policy changes.
- Additionally, HRWC has developed “Creek Reports” that summarize the status and history of each creek and recommend actions for residents and others. Currently available creek reports can be found at www.hrwc.org/huron-river-creeks/. All Middle Huron tributaries have reports, except Allens and small direct drainages to the Huron River.
- If there is interest in establishing a creek group to review development proposals or projects in your area, contact Ric.

Grant Proposals and Future Projects

- **Michigan DEQ 319 Grant Funding awarded for work in Honey Creek:**
 - HRWC was recently awarded a grant to implement a set of recommendations from the Honey Creek Watershed Management Plan. This will be discussed at the meeting, but the main project areas include:
 - Identify human sources of bacteria and follow-up with remediation through the health department
 - Establish a farm advisory council
 - Public education, including storm drain labelling
 - Establish a pet waste ordinance and collection stations

- 1 additional grant opportunity is being pursued that could be used to address Middle Huron Partner priorities:
 - **Reducing nutrients from agriculture:** HRWC developed a proposal to work with the Washtenaw County Conservation District (CD), Water Resources Commissioner (WRC), Stewardship Network, University of Michigan Graham Institute and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), to develop a three-year program targeted at agricultural producers within critical subwatersheds, especially Mill Creek. HRWC monitoring data shows significant reductions in urban nutrient loading, but increasing loading from Mill Creek. The project would use a “Pay for Performance” structure similar to a project in the River Raisin watershed. Unfortunately, the project was not selected for funding by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. HRWC is seeking other funding sources.