

The River Raisin Watershed Council
2022
ANNUAL REPORT



MUNICIPALITIES:

DELEGATES:

Hillsdale County
Somerset Twp.

Jackson County
Columbia Twp.
Napoleon Twp.
Norvell Twp.

Village of Brooklyn
Village of Cement City

Lenawee County
Adrian Charter Twp.
Blissfield Twp.
City of Adrian
City of Tecumseh
Clinton Twp.
Cambridge Twp.
Deerfield Twp.
Fairfield Twp.
Franklin Twp.
Tecumseh Twp.
Madison Charter Twp.
Macon Twp.
Palmyra Twp.
Raisin Charter Twp.
Riga Twp.
Rollin Twp.
Rome Twp.
Seneca Twp.
Village of Blissfield
Village of Clinton
Village of Deerfield
Village of Onsted
Woodstock Twp.

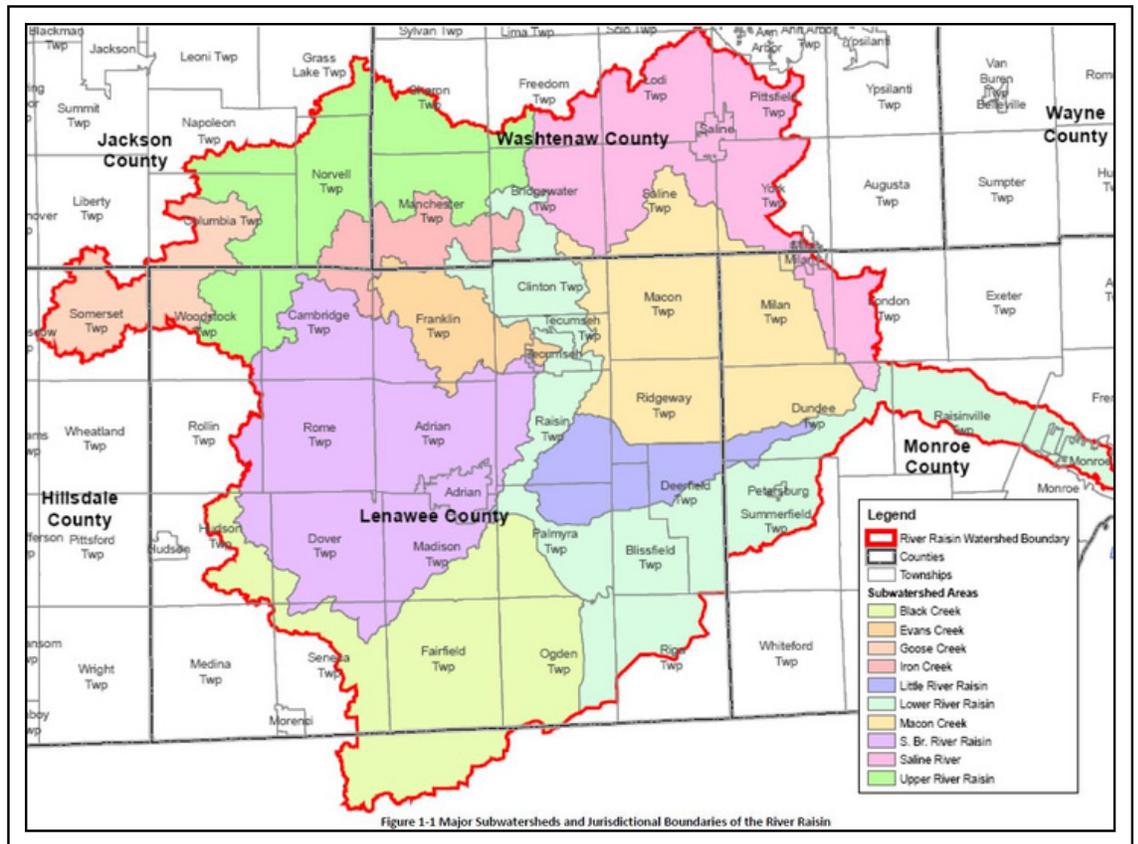
Monroe County
City of Monroe
City of Petersburg
Dundee Twp.
Frenchtown Charter Twp.
London Twp.
City of Milan
Milan Twp.
Monroe Charter Twp.
Raisinville Twp.
Summerfield Twp.
Village of Dundee

Washtenaw County
Bridgewater Twp.
Charter Twp.
City of Saline
Freedom Twp.
Lodi Twp.
Manchester Twp.
Pittsfield
Sharon Twp.
York Charter Twp.
Village of Manchester



Brad Benzing
Don Tappan
Amanda Riska (Clerk)
Bob Jenson
John Calhoun
Cathy Zenz (Clerk)
John Hummer
David Lamb
Marilyn Kremer
Irma David
Carol Ladd (Clerk)
Karol Bolton
Mike Herr
Gerry Donaldson
Sarah Gilmore
Christopher McCallister
Matt Carpenter
Alice Clark (Clerk)
Jim Isley
Mike Ayre
Phil Kittredge
Sharon Rodriguez (Clerk)
Susan Whitehead (Clerk)
Suzette Burk (Clerk)
Annette Roesch (Clerk)
John Gould
George Service
Roxann Sweet
Ronald J. Cousino

Dave Rogers
Doreen Escott (Clerk)
David Richards
Al Navarro
Danielle Gross
Peggy Taylor-Albaugh (Clerk)
Natalie Thompson
Buck Alar
David Hoffman
Gary Lazette
Dave Uhl
David Smith
Joanne Darling
Olga Mancik
Martha Churchill
Richard Janssens
Robert Clark
Charles & Cherri Haddix
James Holeman
Jimi Seegert
Harry Sheehan
Laurie Fromhart
Rudy Layher
Jan Godek
Sybil Kolon
Patricia Valliencourt
Craig Lyon
Kelly Marion (Clerk)
Dawn Krause
Trudi Cooper
Chuck Tellas



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR:

STEVE MAY

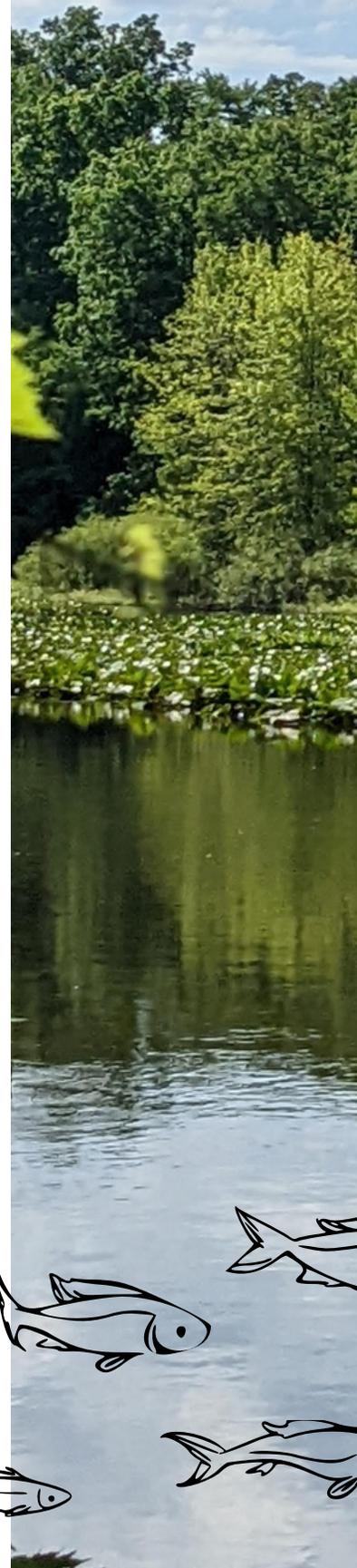
Your Watershed Council is growing! We are excited to continue working with our Outreach Coordinator, Meija Knafl, and Water Stewardship Coordinator, Lydia Lopez.

RRWC has also recently added (2) PT administration positions to help with day-to-day administration duties, volunteers, and fundraising activities along with a more significant social media presence.

Our vision of building capacity and influence in the watershed is being realized with the continued support of our executive committee, municipalities, delegates, partners/volunteers, and donors. It is an exciting time to be part of a growing and expanding organization that engages and supports ground roots efforts, as well, as everything from nature walks to tabling at fairs and festivals.

In addition to adding new staff, we also welcome Jackson and Hillsdale Counties as new voluntary members of the River Raisin Watershed Council increasing our membership from (52) to (54) out of (63) municipalities in the watershed – 86 % participation! We are working toward additional memberships this year.

In the future, the RRWC will continue to focus on core vital issues: water quality, river access, responsible conservation measures, education, navigation, and habitat. Our measure of success will be a healthy river that our great-great-grandchildren can use for fishing, floating, drinking water and skipping stones.





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.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Harry Sheehan

Chair - Washtenaw County Representative

John Calhoun

Vice Chair - Columbia Township Representative

Sybil Kolon

Secretary - Manchester Township Representative

KZ Bolton

Treasurer - Lenawee County Representative

Phil Kittredge

Member - Cambridge Township Representative

Trudi Cooper

Member - Sharon Township Representative

David Hoffman

Member - Monroe County Representative

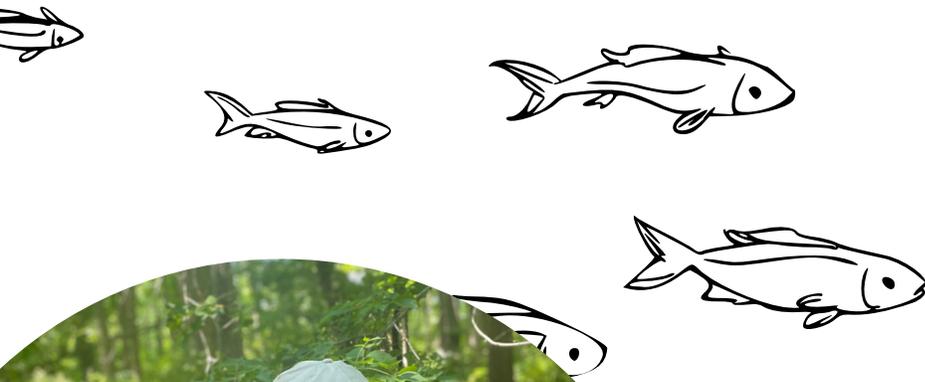


STAFF UPDATE:



RRWC staffing has continued to steadily grow, allowing our organization to continue to expand our reach and number of program throughout the watershed. In the summer, we added two amazing seasonal interns, Isabelle Uganski and Chris French, both students from local colleges. The internships gave us additional hands during our busiest season and gave Chris and Isabelle hands-on experience in a position related to their degrees.

Following the end of the seasonal internships, RRWC decided to add two part-time staff members to our team to fill the need for administrative roles within the organization. As a result, in December 2022 we hired Sarah Woith as our Administrative Coordinator, as well as bringing back Isabelle Uganski as an Administrative Assistant.



STAFF:

Executive Director
Steve May

Outreach Coordinator
Meija Knafl

Water Stewardship Coordinator
Lydia Lopez

Administrative Coordinator
Sarah Woith

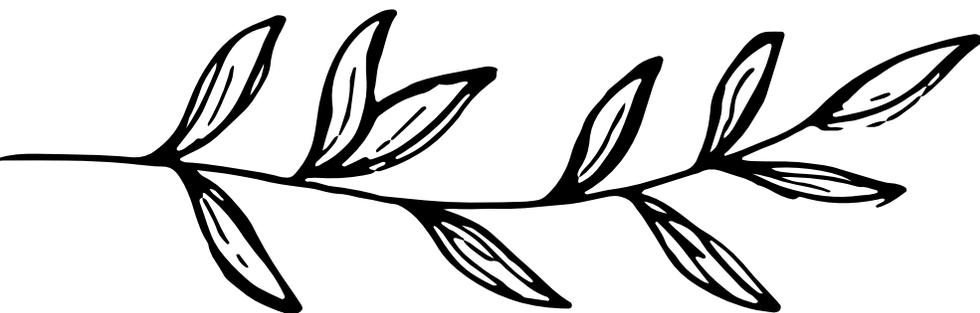
Administrative Assistant
Isabelle Uganski

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR:

HARRY SHEEHAN

For nearly five decades, the River Raisin Watershed Council staff, volunteers, and members have focused solely on river protection so that surrounding communities can reap the benefits of this natural treasure and appreciate its importance to agriculture, recreation, industry, and their local history.

In 2022, the RRWC continues its growth, expanding outreach to schools, clubs, and communities. The RRWC received generous support this year from the ERB Foundation, the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy, the University of Maryland, and numerous individual and corporate donors.





With this support, the RRWC has engaged the Farmer Led Group to promote and spread their knowledge of conservation practices, sampled water at 15 sites in communities throughout the watershed, engaged with over 300 students in K-12 schools, developed plans to open up 44 river miles of habitat upstream of Brooklyn by 2025, cleaned up river access points, and removed obstacles to navigation along the "crooked-est river in the world". Staff and volunteers have participated in 258 community events throughout the watershed.

The RRWC will continually focus beyond 2022 on core key issues: water quality, river access, responsible conservation measures, education, navigation, and habitat. Our measure of success will be a healthy river that our great-great-grandchildren can use for fishing, floating, drinking water and skipping stones.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

NATURE WALKS

In partnership with Saline Recreation, RRWC held multiple monthly nature walks complete with interpretation, observation of critters, and discussion of the importance of protecting and connecting with nature. These walks are enjoyed by individuals of all ages, and are something we look forward to expanding across the watershed in 2023.



Staff & Board of
RRWC Participated in

258

Events, Presentations
and Meetings
in 2022



DISCOVER THE RAISIN

The Discover the Raisin scholarship is a \$250 award given to four middle school teachers within the watershed who are looking for funding to support a water-related educational activity they are looking to implement into their classroom.

POSTER CONTEST

The poster contest is an opportunity for students in grades K-12 to submit a piece of environmental-related artwork in return for a chance to win \$100 for themselves along with an additional \$100 to go towards their school's STEAM education. This year we continued our annual poster contest after a year off and received over 250 beautiful submissions.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

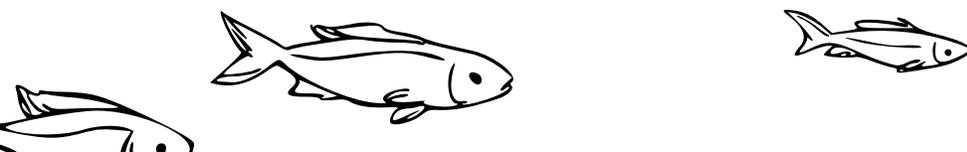
ADOPT-A-STREAM

The Adopt-A-Stream program is a semi-annual survey done by the River Raisin Watershed Council, in partnership with Dr. Jim Martin and Dr. Carley Kratz from Adrian College. Adopt-A-Stream volunteers collect macro-invertebrates from stream bottoms. Because of the organisms' varying tolerance levels, these aquatic bugs tell us about the quality of the water in which they are found. With this knowledge, we can focus more conservation efforts and funds on the areas of the watershed that most need help.



RIVER & BEACH CLEAN-UPS

Several times a year, RRWC organizes river, beach, and land clean-ups. Our devoted teams pick up the trash that pollutes our waterway and removes woody debris that blocks the river's flow. In 2022 RRWC partnered with multiple organizations, including the Adrian Rotary, the River Raisin Institute, and Wacker to complete river clean-ups throughout the watershed.





**Farmer-Led
Watershed
Conservation**
Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB)



**MISSION
STATEMENT:**
To connect and communicate with other farmers, to increase conservation on the farm to reduce the amount of nutrients and sediment flowing into Lake Erie.

FARMER LED WATERSHED CONSERVATION GROUP UPDATE:

As part of our collective efforts to protect Lake Erie, the River Raisin Watershed Council has continued to partner with the Erb Family Foundation, the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts, and local conservation districts, including Lenawee, Monroe, and Washtenaw. The Farmer-Led Conservation (FLC) Advisory and Leadership Committees wrapped up this year's grant cycle, which was focused on three target audiences: Women Farmers, Young Farmers in Multigenerational Farms, and Certified Crop Advisors. This work gives us insight into best management practices, as well as the conservation messaging that resonates with these farm operators.

As we move into a new 3-year grant cycle, we will continue to explore these collaboration opportunities. Funding from our generous partners allows us to bring a new coordinator into the FLC team. This coordinator will plan more opportunities for farmers from across the watershed to connect with each other and with members of the FLC in person at regional events. We look forward to connecting with our allies in a shared effort to protect the water quality of the Western Lake Erie Basin!

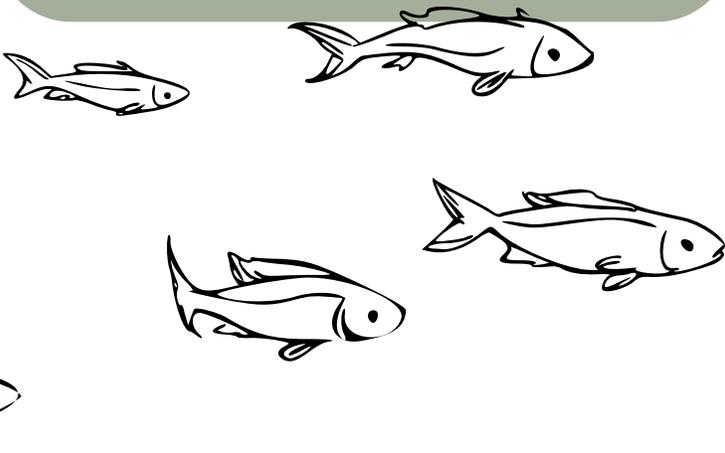
2022 INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Aubrey Musolf
Eric & Trudi Cooper
Catherine Sala
Joel Rodriguez
Dr. Sherman & Julie Shultz
Harry Sheehan
KZ Bolton
Larry Feldpausch
John & Anne Farmer
Dave Maxwell
Denise Rock
Gerald Schorin
Darrin O'Brien
Anthony Palazzolo
Jann Battersby
Jennifer Wrzesinski
John & Rebecca Collins
John Calhoun
Kim Hyde
Laurie & Jim Isley
Leanne Czarnecki
Lightcap Farm
Marty & Hedi Kaufman
Matt Claucherty
Meija Knafel
Mike Ayer
Pat Mason
Patricia Stuk
Phillip & Linda Kittredge
Stephen & Tina May
Sybil Kolon
Taylor Williams
Todd Losee
William Blackerby

The River Raisin Watershed Council wants to thank everyone who gave their time or a financial donation to our organization in 2022. Your support has helped us continue our mission to preserve, protect and enhance the River Raisin.

2022 CORPORATE DONORS

City of Saline- Recreation Department
Consumers Energy
Erb Family Foundation
Five Healthy Towns
Kroger
River Raisin Land Trust



River Raisin

WATERSHED COUNCIL

Partner • Protect • Preserve

GRANT HIGHLIGHTS

THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY - BASE OF OPERATIONS

The RRWC received a \$14,500 Base of Operations grant for one year, to open and equip our new satellite office. Although our base of operations remains at the Lenawee County Drain Commissioner's Office, our expanded location in Tecumseh makes room for our increasing staff and ever-expanding programs throughout the watershed, including the Farmer Led Group, the Brooklyn Dam removal, as well as outreach, development, cleanups and outdoor education.

THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY - OUTREACH AND EXPANSION

The \$40,000 Outreach Expansion and Fundraising grant provides a chance to implement the RRWC Marketing Playbook, create a development plan, initiate a business advisory group, purchase software for volunteer/member communications, and initiate a map-based data tool for the watershed.

THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY - UPPER WOLF CREEK WATERSHED

RRWC also collaborated with the Loch Erin Property Owners Association on a \$100,967 EGLE grant to study the Upper Wolf Creek watershed area, to determine potential sources for phosphorus and *E. coli*. Preliminary water sampling in local streams indicated both phosphorus and *E. coli* may be present at levels exceeding state guidelines in the watershed flowing into Loch Erin.

ERB FAMILY FOUNDATION OPERATING SUPPORT GRANT

We recently reapplied for General Operating Support of \$25,000 per year for 2022-2024, with our first installment received in 2022. RRWC has applied again for a year (2) of (3) and is pleased that we were approved again for 2023!!! This grant will assist RRWC to continue to grow and add new staff as we position ourselves to partner, protect and preserve the expanding landscape of managing resources in our watershed.

ERB FAMILY FOUNDATION COMMUNICATIONS GRANT

Along with the Operating Support grant, we were invited by the Erb Family Foundation to apply for a Watershed Stewardship Communications grant to increase social media engagement in 2023. This two-year grant was \$10,100, and we are pleased to announce that we were approved for 2023 & 2024!



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY WATER SCHOOL

Michigan State University applied for a grant to provide a Water School instructional format to organizations, and to watershed councils, to participate in grant activities such as legislative meetings, focus groups, and surveys. RRWC met via Zoom with several legislators to discuss three emerging and challenging issues within our watershed.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND WATERSHED REPORT CARD

The University of Maryland received \$474,000 to co-develop socio-environmental report cards in the Clinton, Detroit, Huron, River Raisin, and Rouge rivers. As part of the process, RRWC attended several meetings to discuss environmental indicators that will be used to develop a report card for our watershed. Regional meetings will be scheduled to share the information in 2023.

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES BROOKLYN DAM CONNECTIVITY PROJECT

To date, the RRWC has received \$1,075,000 in funding for a feasibility study, initial design, and permitting for partial removal of the Brooklyn Dam, and a fish ladder over the Nooney Dam. Once implemented, the project will remove the earthen berm portion of the Brooklyn Dam and provide fish passage to 44 miles of high-quality headwater tributaries of the River Raisin.

Due to its age and deferred maintenance, the Brooklyn Dam is currently at high risk of failure, which is common with dams that no longer provide power or significant recreation opportunities. US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources have provided the funding.



WHEELS TO WOODS

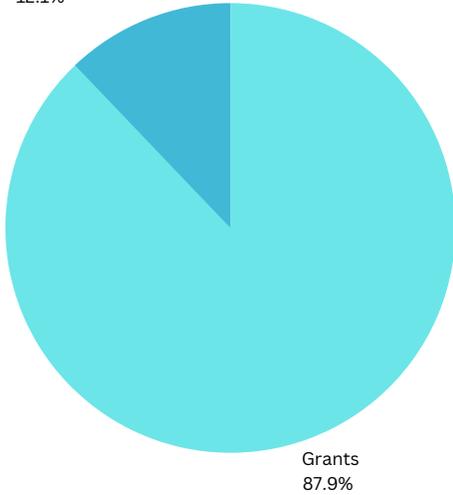
Wheels to Woods provides funding to Pre K-12 schools and other youth groups to pay for transportation costs for an educational field trip to a nearby forest. RRWC applied for this grant in partnership with Alexander Elementary School in Adrian and was able to bring local students out to enjoy the River Raisin Water Festival. Our thanks to the Lenawee Intermediate School District, International Hearts Ministry Dominican Sisters, and the River Raisin Institute!



2022 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

INCOME

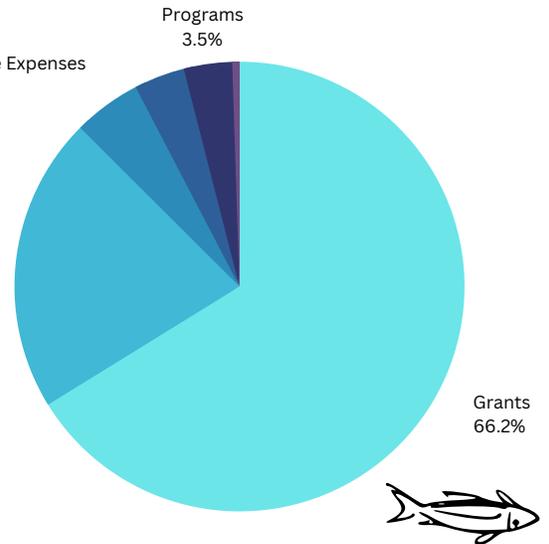
Membership Revenue
12.1%



EXPENSE

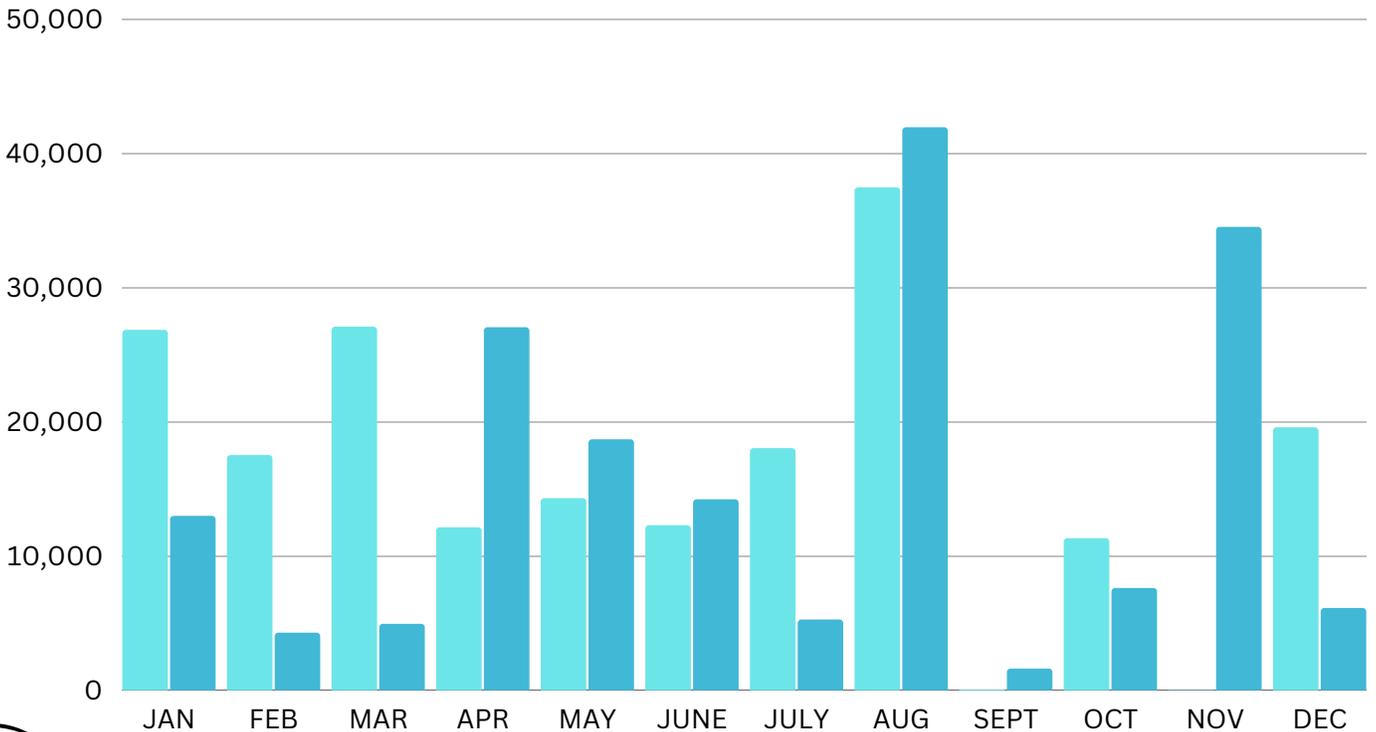
Professional Service Expenses
4.9%

Salaries & Related Expenses
21.3%



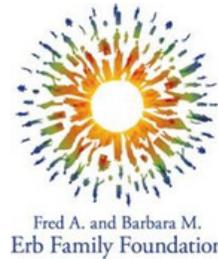
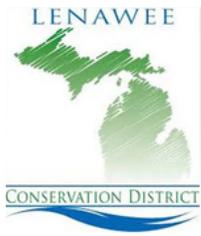
2022 INCOME V.S. EXPENSE

Income Expense

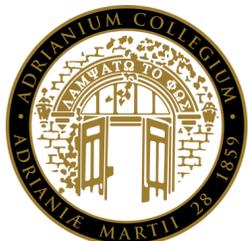


DISCLAIMER: THE ACCURACY OF THE INCOME & EXPENSES FOR 2022 ARE SUBJECT TO AUDIT.

RIVER RAISIN WATERSHED COUNCIL & FARMER-LED GROUP 2022 PARTNERS:



Michigan Vernal Pools Partnership





River Raisin

WATERSHED COUNCIL

Partner · Protect · Preserve

CONTACT US:

Riverraisin001@gmail.com
517-264-4754

VISIT US:

Adrian Office:

Within Lenawee Drain Commissioners Office
320 Springbrooke Ave. Adrian, Michigan
Office Hours: By Appointment

Satellite Office:

804 N Evans St. Tecumseh, Michigan

Office Hours:

Monday & Wednesday- 12 pm to 6 pm

Tuesday & Thursday- 9 am to 12 pm

Saturday- 10 am to 2pm

FOLLOW US:

Website: riverraisin.org

Facebook: @riverraisinwatershed

Instagram: @river_raisin_watershed_council

Twitter: @RiverRaisinWC

Tiktok: @riverraisinwc

iNaturalist: @RiverRaisinWatershedCouncil

YouTube: @River Raisin Watershed Council