



Streamlines Newsletter

River Raisin Watershed Council
Partner | Preserve | Protect

Vol. 10 No. 1
Spring 2022

MISSION

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 by phone:
(517)264-4754

Contact us by email:
rrwc@lenawee.mi.us

Use Your Network!!

By Sarah Gilmore

Networking. How do we use our “networks” effectively? We have to somehow reconcile budgetary constraints, limited staffing, and goals. How do you accomplish everything? You get by with a little help from your friends. That has increasingly been the case with the River Raisin Watershed Council. Through program support, highlighting resources, and stewardship opportunities RRWC has been a valuable resource and partnership for the City of Tecumseh Parks and Recreation department.

Having access to the program outreach coordinator at RRWC is a tremendous asset. For example, Tecumseh experienced an unusually large algae bloom in 2020 on Globe Mill Pond – a popular access point for kayaking and fishing. The city was able to work with RRWC to come up with information about algae blooms to help educate the general public. They also assisted us in distributing that information to home owners with direct water access. Together we hosted a round table informational session for the public to learn more about algae blooms and be able to ask questions. Having a knowledgeable and willing resource just a phone call away was incredibly reassuring.

Actively highlighting our natural resources and parks sometimes gets lost in the shuffle. However, these are the places folks are seeking out – one of the positives from quarantine times. RRWC has expanded their guided hikes throughout the watershed. RRWC is happy to help lead a program in your community or help develop one. I encourage you to take advantage of this support service!

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New Membership Option

We rely on memberships to get people outside and keeping our land and river clean. If you'd like to become a member, please visit our website to become a member of RRWC for just \$25 for the year, or \$10 for veterans, students, and seniors!



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Follow Us on Social Media!

Facebook:
@riverraisinwatershed

Instagram:
@river_raisin_watershed_council

Twitter:
@RiverRaisinWC

Tiktok:
@riverraisinwc

iNaturalist:
@RiverRaisinWatershedCouncil

YouTube:
@River Raisin Watershed Council



**Partner
Thank You:**



Farmer-Led Conservation Group Updates

By Dan Moilanen



Over the last few years, the COVID-19 pandemic created challenges for virtually every single advocacy group or organization that traditionally hosted events in person. For the Western Lake Erie Basin Farmer Led Group, the challenges presented by the pandemic were equal in measure. Our group quickly shifted gears to the virtual setting and created a variety of virtual field day events and videos that are available to view on our YouTube Channel.

In addition, we started a new contract with Water Words That Work to create a broad digital outreach campaign to farmers throughout the entire WLEB. As a part of this campaign, the Farmer Led Group is building out a new website which we hope to debut soon. This website will serve as an information hub for farmers looking to learn more about soil conservation practices and how they can do their part to reduce the nutrient loss on their land.

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Executive's Corner

By Steve May

Staff at the RRWC has been gearing up for a busy 2022. We are in the process of building additional capacity with memberships, generous donations, grants and projects. Currently in 2022 we have received a General Operating Support grant from the Erb Family Foundation - \$25,000 per year for (3) years, Michigan Association of Conservation Districts – Farmer-Led Group - \$62,010 and EGLE grant funding for an additional base of operation (1) year - \$14,512.

RRWC is currently working with Niswander Environmental – Brighton, MI and a private land owner to administrate the removal of the High Hazard Dam – Brooklyn MI. on the River Raisin with initial grants totaling \$1,002,000 along with \$25,000 received in 2021 - \$800,000 from U.S. Fish & Wild Life, \$252,000 from MDNR Fisheries Habitat Grant program. The program addresses obsolete or poorly designed dams, culverts, stream crossings, and levees keep fish, and other aquatic species from moving freely to feed, migrate, and reproduce.

These challenges put fish populations at risk and undermine the health of the rivers. This project will benefit imperiled mussels by allowing their associated host fish species (like the Rayed bean) to migrate freely.

RRWC has established a Corporate Advisory Board from our Development Director/Committee to gain knowledge and insight into fundraising with corporate support. We have also purchased new software to track volunteers and donations – Network for Good. We are in the beginning stages of populating the software with emails and training staff to implement for the Spring/Summer outreach. Last but not least we had a marketing Group - Hoyden Creative – review and make recommendation to our website – those changes are occurring as time allows.



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..."Executive's Corner" continued from Page 2

If you have not noticed RRWC has an incredible Executive Board along with staff - Outreach & Water Stewardship Coordinators & Development Director. As you can see, we are growing by leaps and bounds but this does not go without a few growing pains. We will hire additional staff, engage volunteers, internships, and administratively expand to cover grants, inquiries, requests, events, nature walks, fairs and festivals.

Thank You for your continued support with your financial commitments, volunteer hours, semi-annual attendance and genuine awareness of OUR River Raisin Watershed that we all love – Partner – Protect – Preserve for GENERATIONS !!!

..."Farmer Led Conservation Updates" continued from Page 2

In addition, this Summer the Farmer Led Group will be sending out a multiple-round, direct mail campaign to farmers throughout the basin, promoting our group and upcoming events to a larger audience. Moreover, on June 13th, we'll be hosting our Summer Annual Meeting at Sunrise Farm in Palmyra, MI; which is owned by one of our founding members and leaders Jim Isley. Our Summer Annual Meeting will feature multiple presentations on a variety of conservation practices and how farmers can implement said practices into their farming operations. It will be a great opportunity for folks to connect with one another and learn more about how they can positively impact the Western Lake Erie Basin.

In addition, through our work with local Conservation Districts in the basin, our group will continue to offer cost-share opportunities to farmers and landowners looking to adopt conservation practices on their land. Lastly, as we enter the final year of this 3-year project funded by the Erb Family Foundation, we will be looking to the future on how our group can continue to push the envelope on addressing the nutrient loss and algal bloom issues in our region. We hope to continue to expand our Farmer-Led Network by bringing more farmers into the fold. We will continue to promote the economics of conservation practices and show farmers that they can achieve higher yields while reducing negative impacts on water quality.



The Farmer Led Group thanks the Erb Foundation, Michigan Association of Conservation Districts, River Raisin Watershed Council, Monroe Conservation District, Lenawee Conservation District, and Washtenaw Conservation District for their continued support in this mission!

..."Use Your Network" continued from Page 1

RRWC also provides opportunities to be stewards of the river. Now, seemingly, more than ever before people are looking for ways to give back and be involved. River clean up days connect the public to our shared resource. Clearly seeing tangible results – an actual boatload of trash coming out of the river – can foster continued stewardship and buy-in from stakeholders. We all want to know that what we are doing is worthwhile and meaningful. Working with RRWC to coordinate a river clean up day is a great way to make connections to each other and the river itself.

These are just three ways that RRWC has been a great partner for the City of Tecumseh. Don't lose sight of that fact that RRWC is within your professional network and more than willing to lend a hand.



Intern Announcement :

Isabelle Uganski

Isabelle Uganski will be an intern with the River Raisin Watershed Council this year. She is going to be a junior this coming fall at Siena Heights University, and is majoring in Environmental Science with a minor in Biology. Isabelle grew up in Muskegon, Michigan where she spent most of her time in Lake Michigan rather than on land. She is very passionate about the environment, conservation, and the community.

In her free time, Isabelle enjoys running, playing soccer, and reading. Isabelle says: "I am super excited to learn all about the watershed and work with the River Raisin Watershed Council this summer!"



Intern Announcement :

Chris French

Chris French will be an intern with the River Raisin Watershed Council. While attending Adrian College he majored in Criminal Justice with a minor in Environmental Science. His career goal is to become a DNR Conservation Officer. Chris was raised in Lake Orion Michigan but spent most of the summer and weekends up north at Houghton Lake. He enjoys spending time outside on



the water kayaking and boating. On land he likes hiking, running, and playing lacrosse. Chris says: "I am very excited to get the chance to work with the River Raisin Watershed Council, this is a great fit for me because my beliefs are similar to the goals of this organization!"

Executive Committee and Staff

Executive Committee Chair:

Harry Sheehan
Chief Deputy Water Resources
Commissioner Representative,
Washtenaw Co.

Vice Chair:

John Calhoun
Columbia Township Representative
Jackson Co

Secretary:

Sybil Kolon
Manchester Township Representative
Washtenaw Co.

Treasurer:

K Z Bolton
Lenawee County Commissioner
Representative , Lenawee Co .

Director:

Trudi Cooper
Sharon Township Representative
Washtenaw Co.

Director:

David Hoffman
County Commissioner
Representative, Monroe Co.

Director:

Phil Kittredge
Cambridge Township Representative
Lenawee Co.

Outreach Coordinator:

Meija Knafel
rrwc@lenawee.mi.us

Water Stewardship Coordinator:

Lydia Lopez
riverraisin001@gmail.com

Executive Director:

Stephen May
steve.may@lenawee.mi.us

Development Director:

Gerald Schorin

Partner

Membership and donations fund activities and projects throughout the watershed.

Contact us for more information or donate online!

Protect

We promote stewardship!
Ask us about group projects, community service, and scout opportunities to help us protect and preserve our natural resources across the watershed.

Preserve

Planting gardens, especially those with native plantings, are a great way to do this at home!