



River Raisin
WATERSHED COUNCIL
Partner · Protect · Preserve

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.

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

Contact Us:

rrwc@lenawee.mi.us
(517)-264-4754

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

RIVER RAISIN WATER FESTIVAL	1
KAYAK LAUNCHES & PARKS	1
WETLANDS AND FARMING	2
CLINTON ART CENTER	2
PFAS INFORMATION	3
EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT	3
UPCOMING EVENTS	4

Streamlines Newsletter

River Raisin Watershed Council

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

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Fall 2018

A New Water Festival in Lenawee County for 6th Graders

RRWC is partnering with the River Raisin Institute, Adrian Dominican Sisters, and the Lenawee Intermediate School District to bring a new event dedicated to environmental education to Lenawee County. The River Raisin Institute and Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who have overseen the Lake Erie Water Festival for five years, want to bring a similar event to Lenawee County. The Lake Erie Water Festival is an event for 6th grade students across Monroe County to learn about water quality, ecosystems around the lake, pollution prevention, and more through short presentations with professionals.



The new River Raisin Water Festival will be much the same, with presentations from various organizations and professionals like Michigan Native Butterfly Farm, Envirollogic Engineering, Hidden Lake Gardens, a Farm Bill biologist, a herpetologist, and more! The presentations will cater to 6th graders in Lenawee County. Planning for this event has been in the works since late summer of 2018.

The Adrian Dominican Sisters will be hosting the event on May 1, 2019 at their campus on Siena Heights Drive in Adrian. The planning committee is securing presenters and 6th grade classes across Lenawee County to participate. This unique opportunity provides new information and special hands-on activities for the students to learn and participate in. The planning committee wants this to become an annual event, and is open to suggestions for presenters, schools, or future locations.



New Sites for Kayak Launches and Parks in the Works

Many communities are recognizing the value of river recreation. They see not only recreational value, but a possibility to enhance the local economy too.

The Village of Manchester is working on the proposed River Raisin Park next to Ollie's. Dredging is finished and the kayak launch may be done by April. The whole park will include the kayak launch, a fishing dock, walkway along the river with a pavilion, and a paved area for community activities.

The City of Milan is planning a similar park on Ford Lake, part of the Saline River. They will be creating a walkway along the lake with seating, waste bins, and lighting. A

kayak/canoe launch will be built to make the lake and river more accessible for recreation. Not only this, a kayak and pedal boat facility is in the works to be open to the public in Spring 2019.

Brooklyn and Monroe, the beginning and end of the River Raisin, have parks and launches in the works too.



Proposed park in Milan along Ford Lake.



"The private-public partnership between the MMWA and the MDNR helps make compliance with strict wetland mitigation requirements less complicated, less expensive, and less time consuming."

See updated news at riverraisin.org/news

We have apparel in stock including new Youth sizes! Contact us for more information!



Wetlands and Farming in the River Raisin Watershed

One reason for the high productivity of farmland in the River Raisin Watershed is many farm fields had previously been considered wetlands. Much of the watershed was described by early travelers as a swamp not worthy of human habitation. That notion has long since been proven wrong. And farming has been an important part of the economy for nearly 200 years.

The RRWC has been working with farmers over the past several years to help them implement conservation practices that will improve the water quality of the River Raisin, its tributaries, and Lake Erie into which the river flows. There have been programs over the past twenty years or more to provide incentives for farmers to take critical areas out of production, such as floodplains, and restore them to resume their role as water filters and for flood control.

Many farmers entered into 15-year contracts to do just that, and now those contracts are expiring. They now have the option to return those acres to production. The RRWC recently became aware of a program that provides farmers who have expiring Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) wetland projects with another opportunity. In addition, farmers who are out of compliance with the Wetland Conservation Compliance

(Swampbuster) provisions of the Farm Bill also have options to regain compliance under the same program.

Michigan is one of ten states chosen by the USDA to establish a wetland mitigation banking program that serves both purposes. A wetland mitigation bank is a wetland area that has been restored, enhanced, or created for the purpose of providing compensation for unavoidable wetland impacts elsewhere. Some of these wetland mitigation banks will be built on MDNR public lands, while others will be built on private land owned by landowners with expired CRP contracts.

When a mitigation bank is established on private land, the landowner retains ownership and use of the property, while a conservation easement protects the wetlands from damaging activities. When a farmer agrees to resolve their wetland compliance issues by contributing to the wetland mitigation bank, they take an important step to return much-needed wetlands to their prior beneficial use.

We will be bringing more detailed information to our farmers group in coming months. In the meantime, more information can be found at michiganwetlands.com.

Clinton Arts Center Promoting RRWC

Last year, as the Clinton Arts Center was under construction, we formed a partnership with them to create unique pieces of art using wood block prints donated to RRWC by artist Gregg Perez of Tecumseh.

The Clinton Arts Center is now open, including the Clinton Twelve Restaurant. The Gift Shop includes mugs, tiles and note cards with the six wood block images: a heron, kingfisher, fish, morel mushroom, lily pad and a macroinvertebrate. They make great gifts. A portion of your purchase of any of these items will be donated to the RRWC to support our programming.

We encourage you to pay a visit to the CAC, also known as The Oak Openings. You will find displays of fine arts, including exhibits from the Detroit Institute of Arts, art classes and the gift shop, which is

loaded with interesting items. You can start by checking out their website: www.clintonartscenter.org/

We'd like to thank the CAC for their commitment to the community and for their financial support in contributing some of the proceeds of our items to the RRWC. Our partnership with the Clinton Arts Center and Gregg Perez provides the RRWC with a new and unique way to reach new audiences.



Water Quality in the River Raisin

You may have heard about PFAS in water around Michigan. These compounds have been around for decades, but we are just learning that PFAS have found their way into ground and surface water. Testing by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has detected PFAS in the River Raisin at low levels.

PFAS stands for “perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances”, a large group of substances used in firefighting foam, non-stick pans and stain repellent, among other uses. PFAS do not break down easily in the environment and they bioaccumulate, meaning it builds up in animal tissue over time. Exposure to PFAS have been linked to some health problems.

The science behind the amount of PFAS exposure that may cause human or environmental problems is evolving. PFOA and PFOS are two commonly found kinds of PFAS that can be detected in parts per trillion (ppt). 1 ppt is the equivalent of 1 drop of water in 20 Olympic-size swimming pools.

Low levels of PFAS are found in people and the environment throughout the world. While uses of PFOS and PFOA are being phased out in the US, we must learn what we can do to reduce exposure to PFAS and observe fish advisories.

RRWC is committed to staying on top of developments to help residents understand these findings, as well as how to

protect yourself and your family from unwanted exposure. See our website for helpful links and information.

Drinking Water

The DEQ has adopted 70 ppt as the amount of combined PFOS and PFOA in drinking water for all populations, including pregnant women. The DEQ has been sampling all municipal water supplies this summer.

No PFAS were found in the City of Adrian’s treated water, 20% of which comes from Lake Adrian. Blissfield and Deerfield get all their drinking water from the River Raisin. Their results were similar: up to 4 ppt of total PFAS in treated drinking water and 8 ppt in raw water. The City of Monroe uses the River Raisin for emergency backup.

The remaining municipalities in the River Raisin watershed get their drinking water from groundwater. No PFAS has been found for raw and treated drinking water here. Results are pending in Brooklyn, Dundee, and Petersburg.

If you have an individual water supply well, contact your county health department with any concerns.

Surface Water

DEQ toxicologists have established water quality standards for two common PFAS compounds in surface water for all designated uses including agriculture, fish consumption, and partial /total body contact from May 1 to October 31. For surface water used for drinking water the standard for PFOS is 11 ppt and for PFOA is 420 ppt.

samples this summer and analyzed them for PFOS and PFOA. The sampling included the main branch of the River Raisin from Brooklyn to Monroe, the South Branch, Wolf Creek and the Saline River. PFOA was within the DEQ recommended limits at all locations. Six samples in June showed PFOS levels above the recommended limit, but the follow-up sampling in August showed levels below the limit. Changes in flow and rain resulted in these wide variations. The DEQ is continues to look for and control sources of PFAS found in the River Raisin and its tributaries.

Eating Fish from the River Raisin

Sampling of fish between Dundee and Monroe in 2016 by the DEQ found PFOS in Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass and Rock Bass at up to 35 parts per billion (ppb). Any concentration over 9 ppb triggers a health advisory to limit how often these fish are eaten. Existing advisories on eating these fish due to PCBs are already in place, so the current advisory is protective. 300 ppb or more of PFOS would trigger a “do not eat” advisory. More fish sampling is planned. Be sure to consult the “Eat Safe Fish” guide put out by the MI Dept of Health and Human Services.

See our website to find useful links and updated information as it becomes available.

Eagle Scout Project in Tecumseh to make Paddling on the River Safer

Zech McDavid is working on his Eagle Scout project and decided to partner with the Tecumseh Fire Dept., City of Tecumseh and RRWC to make it happen. The goal is to make it easier for the Fire Dept. to rescue people and make the river safer by posting mile marker signs from Staib Road to Russell Road. Signs will be placed along the river every half mile, covering much of Tecumseh.

The Fire Dept. has been called to rescue people on the river a handful of times this summer and is looking forward to an easier way to locate those who need help. This stretch of river is part of a popular paddling route, as Tecumseh Paddling offers trips from Clinton to Tecumseh and around the ponds.

Zech is contacting landowners on the river to explain the project and get their permission to post the signs. The signs, brown 6

foot posts with a green reflective mile marker decal, will be put in just above the high water mark and as close to the river as possible.

The mile markers go from 89.5 to 95.5 on this stretch.

Mile 1 is at the mouth of the river in Monroe and the last mile (136) is near Brooklyn. It’s numbered this way so other groups in the rest of the watershed can easily start a similar signage project.

If you’re interested in posting signs on your stretch of the river, contact RRWC!





River Raisin

WATERSHED COUNCIL

Partner • Protect • Preserve

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Website: 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 the 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 Event; 2018-2019

- Semi-Annual Fall Meeting (Stubnitz Center) - Oct. 23rd
- Family Fall Celebration (Stubnitz Center) - Nov. 3rd ; 10am -2pm
- Adopt-A-Stream: Identification Day (114 Peelle Hall, Adrian College) - Nov. 17; 10am
- RRWC Strategic Meeting (AJ Smith Rec Center, Tecumseh) - Nov. 27; 7pm—9pm
- Farmer-Led Watershed Conservation Semi-Annual Meeting (Old Mill—Dundee) - Dec. 6; 9am—12pm

Executive Committee Meetings are held the third Tuesday of every month. —See website or contact us for more details!

<https://www.riverraisin.org/events>

Wacker Group River Cleanup 2018



A group of Dundee Middle Schoolers collecting macroinvertebrates in the Little River Raisin.

Executive Committee

Chair:

John Calhoun
Columbia Township
Representative, Jackson
County

Vice Chair:

Sybil Kolon
Manchester Township
Representative, Washtenaw
County

Secretary:

K Z Bolton
Lenawee County
Commissioner
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County

Treasurer:

Laurie Johncox
Cambridge Township
Representative, Lenawee
County

Director:

John Chandler
Summerfield Township
Representative, Monroe
County

Director:

David Hoffman
County Commissioner
Representative, Monroe
County

Director:

Evan Pratt
Water Resources
Commissioner
Representative, Washtenaw
County

Outreach Coordinator:

Katie Goplerud-Smith
rrwc@lenawee.mi.us

Executive Director:

Stephen May
steve.may@lenawee.mi.us

Partner

Donate today!

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

Protect & Preserve

Throughout the watershed we promote stewardship in educating the general public about what YOU can do to help us protect and preserve our natural resource - River Raisin Watershed.

Promote

Check out our website at:
www.RiverRaisin.org

Find us on Facebook!

RRWC Merchandise is available!
Order t-shirts and hats online today!