



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

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Streamlines Newsletter

River Raisin Watershed Council
Partner... Protect... Preserve...

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Water Quality Monitoring

Water is vital for all life. Without it plants wither and animals either move away or die. We all rely on clean freshwater to survive. Thankfully we live in a unique place in the world—right next to a six quadrillion gallon “holding tank” of freshwater that we call the Great Lakes. Michigan is blessed with freshwater, but making sure that water is healthy can be a challenge.

RRWC is dedicated to keeping our water and ecosystems healthy by keeping an eye on water quality.

There are a few ways RRWC monitors the River Raisin.

RRWC volunteers and Dr. Jim Martin from Adrian College have sampled macroinvertebrates across the whole watershed since 2006. Macroinvertebrates are bugs that live in rivers or lakes for their larval stage, then develop into land-loving bugs like dragonflies, mayflies, and mosquitos. Certain macroinvertebrates are more sensitive to pollutants or changes in water chemistry than others, so keeping track of what types of bugs are present or absent can help us determine if

something needs to be investigated further.

Much of the data collected has yet to

be compiled and analyzed, so results are still pending, but keep an eye on our website where we'll post the information.

Water sampling is another way to monitor water quality. RRWC has recently hired someone who will follow state protocols to collect water samples from the river. Following these protocols is important so we don't accidentally contaminate the sample or use incorrect techniques or equipment. Our current focus will be within the South Branch sub-basin in the southwestern part of the watershed and will expand to more areas of the watershed in the future.



And the 2019 Discover the Raisin Awards go to...

3rd—7th grade teachers across the watershed were invited to apply to the Discover the Raisin program with a project idea regarding the River Raisin. The project could be in any subject as long as it got students more involved with the river. Four teachers applied and were rewarded \$200 toward their project! Here are the creative teachers and their projects:

Leigh Ann Roehm-Saline Middle School: Purchase water quality testing kits for her 7th graders to test water for different pollutants in the Mill Pond and at Curtiss Park. They will learn to identify different pollution sources and how to prevent more pollution and improve water quality. Leigh Ann has been doing this with her classes for 7 years!

Lora Fogiel-Clinton Middle School: Purchase drawing boards and pay for nature photography prints for her 7th grade art classes. Students will research artists inspired by nature, learn about plants and animals in the watershed, and create pieces inspired by their 3 day outdoor research. There will be a year-end art show to follow.

Jackie Murray-Clinton Middle School: Purchase water quality testing kit for her 6th grade science classes to test water for different pollutants at Tate Park. They'll analyze their results and present them to the community.

Kristin Scaife-Triumph Academy: Purchase native plants for the school's garden. Her 6th and 7th graders will learn why native plants are important in our ecosystem and how to properly care for them. They'll showcase their garden to the community and talk about successes and challenges.

Thank you, teachers, for all you do for our kids! If you're interested in applying for the next Discover the Raisin awards, just visit our website for the application.

Grand-Raisin Conservation Community

If you want to help protect the natural community that surrounds you, the Grand-Raisin Conservation Community (GRCC) is ready to meet the need. The GRCC is the local affiliate of The Stewardship Network. We work in the upper portions of the Grand River and River Raisin watersheds in parts of Hillsdale, Jackson, Lenawee and Washtenaw counties.



Our aim is to empower our neighbors to manage natural lands in ways that complement historic ecosystems. Our strategy is to provide information and opportunities to help everyone understand the value of native habitats and how the GRCC and its partners can help you preserve them in a way that is suited to your interests.

We participate in The Stewardship Network's Invasive Species Challenge, which is in its 12th year, and has removed hundreds of thousands of pounds of garlic mustard and other invasive species from our natural areas.

Along with our partners, we are putting on many events and workshops every month to provide opportunities to learn about natural area restoration, native plants, insects, wildlife, water quality and other topics. We can provide speakers for your meetings or events. We would also like to work with groups that want to restore native habitats. We welcome new partners and new initiatives. Please visit our webpage to access our brochure, view upcoming events, and connect with our partners:

www.stewardshipnetwork.org/GRC

See updated news at riverraisin.org/news



Farmer-Led Conservation Group and 5,000 MAEAP Verifications

Our Farmer-Led Conservation Group consists of farmers across the River Raisin Watershed, the Lenawee Conservation District, RRWC, the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts (MACD), and the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development. It's funded primarily by the Erb Family Foundation and helps farmers pay for conservation practices on their land. The group was ultimately formed to reduce the amount of nutrients flowing into Lake Erie from agricultural fields.

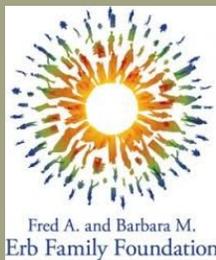
soil and water health (soil testing, putting in buffer strips, etc.) and gives them a way to pay for part of it. MAEAP was established in 1997 and continues to be a voluntary program. This year Michigan reached 5,000 MAEAP verified farms, a huge cause for celebration for the improved health of our soils and water all from farmers who care about keeping our natural resources healthy!

Our group hosts meetings each year to bring farmers together to talk about conservation practices, technology, research, and to spread awareness of cost-sharing and funding opportunities.

Through the MACDs across Michigan, farmers can become MAEAP (Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program) verified. For farmers, being verified consists of learning what conservation practices can be done to improve



One of our farmer leaders explains how this blind inlet works to reduce sediment and nutrient loss into tile drains.



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



Making our River Safer

Last year Zech McDavid, Tecumseh Eagle Scout candidate, and the Tecumseh Fire Department teamed up to post the River Raisin's first mile markers. Zech, with the help of a handful of boy scouts, completed marking a six mile stretch in Tecumseh; a popular paddling location.

The trend is quickly spreading to other areas along the river in hopes to make it safer for kayakers and canoers in an emergency. Boaters will be able to more easily identify where they are on the river as they paddle past the reflective mile and half-mile marker signs.

"One of our canoes flipped while we were out posting the signs," says Zech. Even experienced paddlers can run into trouble, and knowing where you are on a river can help get you the help you need from authorities faster.

Zech's ambition has caught on in other communities. A generous donor has purchased mile marker signs for the Bridgewater Township, Manchester, and Sharon Township areas along the river. There are two prospective Eagle Scouts who want to tackle posting signs along this 39 mile stretch of the river soon.

The main stem of the River Raisin is 136 miles long, with the headwaters out of the Irish Hills area near the MIS Speedway and the mouth of the river flowing into Lake Erie in Monroe. RRWC would like to see markers along the entire river to encourage safety and recreation.

RRWC has the GPS points for all mile and half mile marks along the entire River Raisin. Anyone who's interested in posting more signs along the river can contact us and we'll help make it a reality! Just email rrwc@lenawee.mi.us or call our office at 517-264-4754.



Zech McDavid at mile marker 92 along the River Raisin in Tecumseh.

Staff Update

Meet our newest team member at RRWC: Danielle Brosamer! Danielle is our Water Quality Coordinator and will be working toward gathering baseline water quality data across the watershed. She'll be assisting in multiple projects, including a research project through Michigan State University.

Danielle is an undergrad at Siena Heights University in Adrian getting her Environmental Science and Waste Management degree, and got her Associate in Applied Science from Jackson College in 2018. She has decided to follow this career path because of her concern for water quality across the globe. Her goal is to help achieve improved water quality for her children's generation.

Danielle is married and has 3 daughters that help to fill her time. She enjoys being outside in nature with her girls, the family's farm animals, their golden retriever and 2 rescue pit bull mixes.



Earth Day Bag Project

RRWC, Busch's, and the Compass Learning Center in Tecumseh partnered to teach the community about plastic pollution! 2nd - 4th grade classes learned about plastic from RRWC the week before Earth Day. Students investigated what they use that's made of plastic, where it ends up when we're done using it, and problems it can cause when we aren't careful about proper disposal or how much we're using. Students came up with ways to use less plastic in their own lives. Some favorites were cutting out single-use plastics by using reusable utensils, bringing a take-out container to restaurants, and using cloth or paper grocery bags instead of plastic bags. After exciting discussion about alternatives, the students each got a paper bag from Busch's to decorate based on what they learned. They listed plastic alternatives and illustrated creative ways we can reduce the amount of plastic we use.

Busch's donated over 300 paper bags and, once decorated, passed them out on Earth Day to shoppers. The students were excited about the chance to teach their community about sustainability through their creations and hope it inspired others to think about their plastic use!





River Raisin

WATERSHED COUNCIL

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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 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 Events 2019

Semi-Annual Spring Meeting (Cabela's) - April 25, 5:30-8pm

Adopt-A-Stream: Training Day (Basement Peelle Hall, Adrian College) - April 27, 10am-1pm

Adopt-A-Stream: Stream Search Day (assigned sites) - May 4, 9am

Lenawee County Solid Waste Disposal Day - May 11

Manchester River Raisin Kayak/Canoe Race - May 19, 12-4pm

Free Chainsaw Training Class (Lenawee County Drain Commissioner's Office) - May 20-21, 8am-2pm

Sterling State Park Beach Clean-up - June 15, 9am-12pm

Wampler's Lake Invasive Species Boat Wash - June 23

River Raisin Festival (Blissfield) - July 12 & 13

Lenawee County Fair - July 22nd to July 28th

See website or contact us for more details!
www.riverraisin.org/calendar

River Raisin Water Festival

May 1st is the first River Raisin Water Festival: a field day for 6th graders across Lenawee County to learn from professionals in the natural resources field about the importance of water and conservation. 135 6th graders will go to 6 presentations across the Adrian Dominican Sisters campus and learn about topics from vermiculture and permaculture, to wetland birds, vernal pools, and habitat restoration. Each presentation will tie in the importance of water and how to take better care of it.

The River Raisin Water Festival wouldn't be possible without the planning committee, especially the River Raisin Institute (RRI). RRI hosts the Lake

Erie Water Festival for 6th graders in Monroe County and wanted to bring a similar event to Lenawee County. They partnered with RRWC, the Adrian Dominican Sisters, and the Lenawee Intermediate School District to start planning. During the process, several organizations and companies have generously donated their funds and volunteers to make this Water Festival possible. Anderson Development Company, the Adrian Noon Rotary Club, and the Greater Federation of Women's Clubs have been vital in making the event a success! If you know of an organization interested in continuing the funding of future River Raisin Water Festivals, contact rrwc@lenawee.mi.us.

Partner

Donate today!

Membership dues and donations fund 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!

Executive Committee

Chair:

John Calhoun
Columbia Township
Representative, Jackson Co.

Vice Chair:

Sybil Kolon
Manchester Township
Representative, Washtenaw
Co.

Secretary:

K Z Bolton
Lenawee County
Commissioner
Representative, Lenawee Co.

Treasurer:

Laurie Johncox
Cambridge Township
Representative, Lenawee Co.

Director:

John Chandler
Summerfield Township
Representative, Monroe Co.

Director:

David Hoffman
County Commissioner
Representative, Monroe Co.

Director:

Evan Pratt
Water Resources
Commissioner
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