



West Michigan Watershed Partners (WMWP)

October 19, 2023

Meeting Notes

Attendance: Rich Pugsley, Ray Schinler, Garry McKeen, Jack Epstein, Sky Harsch, Jake Lemon, Kathy Evans, Erin Kuhn, Fallon Chabala

1. SWFI
 - a. No update.
2. National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERR)
 - a. Letter from the Governor has been resent to NOAA. Waiting on contact from NOAA to move to the next step.
3. Current Funding Opportunities
 - a. [Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grants | NOAA Fisheries](#)
 - i. WMSRDC submitted a proposal for road stream crossing replacements in the Muskegon Lake Watershed and the White River Watershed.
 1. Partnering with Muskegon County Road Commission, Oceana County Road Commission, GVSU AWRI, and Trout Unlimited
 - b. [Region 9 - Grants & Agreements \(usda.gov\)](#)
 - i. Extended due date to Friday, October 27th
 - ii. Program Areas
 1. Mitigate Forest Insect and Disease Impacts
 2. Reduce Runoff from Degraded Sites through Green Infrastructure
 - a. WMSRDC submitting a proposal for tree inventory, maintenance, and planting in the City of Muskegon
 3. Restore and Connect Coastal and Riparian Forest Habitats
 - a. Oceana Conservation District submitting s proposal
 - c. [Nonpoint Source Implementation RFP FY 2024 \(michigan.gov\)](#)
 - i. Full proposal due November 15th
 - ii. Previously needed a watershed management plan. Now can fund a project without a plan in areas of EJ.
 - d. [Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants | NOAA Fisheries](#)
 - i. Due November 17th
 - ii. Award amounts range from \$1 million to \$25 million

- iii. WMSRDC resubmitting the Big Sandy Bend project
 - e. [Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience Grants for Tribes and Underserved Communities | NOAA Fisheries](#)
 - i. Due December 19th
 - ii. Award amounts range from \$75,000 to \$3 million
 - iii. Muskegon Lake Watershed Partnership looking at working with City of Muskegon to submit a proposal for parcel of land between Fisherman's Landing and Verplank
- 4. NOAA/WMSRDC Regional Partnership Projects (Current)
 - a. Little Cedar Creek: 2 road stream crossing culvert replacements and in-stream habitat restoration
 - i. Sweeter Road crossing is complete. Michilinda Road crossing is almost complete.
 - b. White River: 4 road stream crossing replacements and in-stream habitat restoration
 - i. All permits are in. Culverts are placed at 144th Ave and Pierce Rd. Bid for restoration work has been advertised. Bridges will go in, in the spring.
 - c. Stony Creek/Marshville Dam: dam remnant removal, two bridge removals, one bridge replacement, and in-stream habitat restoration
 - i. Working through awarding a contractor for restoration implementation. Rebidding work for the bridge replacement. Construction to begin spring of 2024.
- 5. WMWP Participants / Round Robin
 - a. White River/Lake: Fundraising for projects based on previous monitoring and inventory work, received funds for USFW for habitat work upstream of White Cloud and applying for DNR fisheries habitat grant for this work, received funding for engineering and design of aquatic organism passage projects, 3rd watershed clean up event, White River Watershed Collaborative meeting on December 6th, added a 5th enviro-DIY station, finished road stream crossing inventory on the major waterbodies, writing a habitat assessment report for the north branch. WRWP had 8 loggers out over the summer, working on macro invertebrate sampling.
 - b. Little Flower Creek: No update
 - c. Stony Creek: See project above. Oceana Conservation District working on trail system and restoration funding for their parcel on Stony Creek.
 - d. Pentwater River/Lake: Friends of the Pentwater River Watershed became a committee of the Pentwater Lake Association, completed a road stream crossing inventory (280 crossings), many of the tributaries had dried up, 60 perched culvert (most are above Heart Dam), North Branch only has about 2 perched culverts, dam inventory of the 17 dams in the watershed (3-4 have already failed), high E-coli source tracking, kicking off the household survey to be sent out in November, tour with TU, survey with EGLE Water Resources. Looking for a

lab that could test if chemicals from Hart Lake invasive treatments migrating downstream (Trace and GVSU-AWRI can't complete this work). Waiting for fish report from MDNR. Working on projects to help improve the shoreline of Pentwater Lake. Crystal Valley Dam will have a new report for the county board soon.

- e. Mona Lake/Black Creek/Little Black Creek: Non-point source and habitat restoration efforts going on.
- f. Muskegon River/Muskegon Lake/Bear Creek/Lake: Erosion control on Muskegon River at Maple Island Bridge. Watershed management planning on mosquito creek. Muskegon Lake 53 site that can be purchased from Verplank that is an old coal combustion site that had impacts on the wetland that need restoration and potentially lead to public access opportunities (potential project for the underserved communities opportunity). Interested in a watershed plan for Muskegon Lake, watching the blue green algae blooms, involved in reviewing development and promoting public access. TU is working in the x Little watershed with the US Forest Service, DNR, and others to replace 8 crossings; 6 have been replaced and working on the last two.
- g. Duck Creek/Lake: No update
- h. Pere Marquette River/Lake: TU is collecting baseline information on what work should be prioritized and habitat mapping.
- i. Manistee/Little Man/Pine: Funded for design work on 11 culverts, construction on 2, TU completed two culverts that included plantings, bridge removal and plantings, working on funding from DNR to determine why the public doesn't have high percentages for use of boot brush stations/cleaning gear, 25 year follow up of micro-invertebrate sampling, 50 year follow up of sediment surveys, looking at transferring turbidity data into sediment data with USGS, 7 sites for Micore next year. Little Man is doing a survey with GVSU for natural river designation.

6. Other Discussion

- a. Audubon Grand River Coastal Corridor Report out to work on preserving marsh habitat for marsh birds.

7. 2024 Meeting dates

- a. January 18th
- b. April 18th
- c. July 18th
- d. October 17th