



West Michigan Watershed Partners (WMWP)

April 21, 2022

Meeting Notes

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Sustainable Watersheds Funding Initiative (SWFI)
 - a. Proposal for Erb Family Foundation for additional funding has been submitted
 - b. Statewide MOU has been signed by all current partners
 - c. Facilitated meetings will begin in May
 - d. WMSRDC is on the advisory group and represents all watersheds in this partnership
3. National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERR)
 - a. Erin Kuhn (WMSRDC) is working with Al Stienman (GVSU AWRI) and other partners to establish a NERR in West Michigan for drowned river mouths from the Travers City area to the Indian boarder. First step is a letter from the Governor to the Federal Government. DNR is moving it up the chain of command. Local legislators have been helping to move the process along. Hoping to have the letter sent in July.
 - b. The NERR designation would open funding for research and education otherwise not available. There would also be a pot of funding to manage the NERR. In partnership, the research funding could extend to the watersheds.
 - c. Letters of support from the drowned rivers mouth are not need yet. The group leading this effort will reach out if and when they are needed.
4. Updates on Existing Projects and Grant Proposals
 - e. NOAA/WMSRDC Regional Partnership Projects (Current)
 - i. Little Cedar Creek: 2 road stream crossing culvert replacements and in-stream habitat restoration
 1. Permits have been obtained for both sites. Ready to start construction soon.
 - ii. White River: 4 road stream crossing replacements and in-stream habitat restoration

1. QAPP has been approved. Know of potential locations for in-stream restoration but working on cost estimates to verify.
 2. Survey Overview by Carl Ruetz: Very similar to work done at Little Cedar Creek, which will include fish survey backpack electrofishing upstream and downstream at each crossing. Will be conducting the EGLE Procedure 51. Sample until 100 fish or caught. If it takes longer than 35 minutes to catch 100 fish, sampling takes place for another 15 minutes. All fish bigger than an inch will be identified and measured. Transects of the stream will be measured for velocity and depth.
 3. Sampling is done before and after construction. There is also a control site upstream to see if the fish are responding to the habitat work.
 4. Potential to work with TU for additional data collection depending on their schedule (Jake was not on the call). The White River Watershed Collaborative may also be interested in conducting additional monitoring.
- iii.* Stony Creek/Marshville Dam: dam remnant removal, two bridge removals, one bridge replacement, and in-stream habitat restoration
1. Permitting meeting held with EGLE and project partners that went well. QAPP has been approved. Starting survey work.
- f.* National Coastal Resilience Fund Pre-proposals
- i.* Pentwater – Big Sandy Bend
 1. Currently Limno Tech has been contracted to develop a 60-80% engineered design under Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding through Coastal State Organization with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Ocean Service
 2. Under this project West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission will competitively select an ecological restoration engineer to develop QAPP, complete 100% design, obtain permits, and preliminary landowner maintenance plans. Grand Valley State University, Annis Water Resources Institute, will conduct pre-restoration monitoring. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources Pentwater State Game Area, the landowner, will provide input and long-term management of the restored resources. Additional tasks covered by West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission will include, but is not limited to, community engagement, public outreach, and reporting.
 - ii.* Shoreline Restoration along Lake Michigan in Mason, Muskegon, and Oceana Counties
 1. Erosion management, large scale dune grass plantings, and understory plantings for tree species diversity along the shoreline

would ensure resiliency of West Michigan's valuable coastal resources. The project areas will be better adapted against erosion and other threats associated with lake level changes, increased frequency and intensity of storm, invasive species, and other unforeseen events.

2. This project will include surveying 300 acres along the Lake Michigan shoreline, determining 3 sites in need of erosion management, restoration, and biodiversity plantings, obtaining permission from landowners, contracting an ecological restoration engineer to develop QAPP, 60-80% designs and preliminary landowner management plans, and community engagement/outreach
 3. Project partners include Mason-Lake Conservation District, Muskegon Conservation District, and Oceana Conservation District, as well as the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and community members.
- g. Other Current Projects and Proposals - *WMWP Participants / Round Robin*
- i. White River/Lake: high water hindering spring field work; ready to deploy the 6 temperatures loggers; sample 6 sites for macroinvertebrate, macroinvertebrate display at the Oceana County Earth Day event; putting in a third mayfly station in Carlton Creek to measure temperature, depth, and conductivity every 15 minutes.
 - ii. Little Flower Creek: no update
 - iii. Stony Creek: no update
 - iv. Pentwater River/Lake: putting together an informal group to start studying the river; meeting with DNR, the Conservation District, the drain commissioner, and TU; plan to have meeting with GVSU AWRI and the road commission. Hoping to do a regional proposal for Clean, Drain, Dry outreach.
 - v. Mona Lake/Black Creek/Little Black Creek: no update
 - vi. Muskegon River: ready to submit the permit for the removal of the Altona Dam with Barr Engineering; Buckhorn Creek replacement of box culvert with an open span timber bridge; monitoring of Kenny Creek where a removed a dam last fall.
 - vii. Muskegon Lake/Bear Creek/Lake: working on delisting as an AOC in the near future; hosting the AOC conference in May including habitat tours; focused on maintaining public access especially for fishing sites. Boys & Girls Club shoreline restoration for erosion control and habitat.
 - viii. Duck Creek/Lake: macroinvertebrate monitoring has stopped but hoping to bring that back; no significant change to the trophic status since the 80s; lake is invaded by water milfoil that is requiring additional treatment efforts.
 - ix. Pere Marquette River/Lake: awarded consultant for design and engineering for Conservation Park.

5. Current Funding Opportunities

- a. [Sustain Our Great Lakes 2022 Request for Proposals | NFWF](#)

6. Next Meeting Date: July 21, 2022