



Catalyst

FALL/WINTER 2017



Community and private philanthropic support for this project was unprecedented. Public funding was matched one-to-one with private dollars bringing much-needed investment to this rural corner of Michigan.

“Water Under the Bridge” on the Jordan River

The Jordan River is the epitome of a Great Lakes stream and is beloved by many recreationists. Some enjoy the cool waters to paddle, fish or swim. Others journey down the valley to catch a glimpse of the wildlife or snap that perfect photo. All visitors require a means to get on and off, cross, and view the Jordan River in order to fully enjoy the solitude and natural experience offered by the first state-designated “Natural River.”

Since 2013, the Chestonia Bridge project at Old State Road in Antrim County has been a group effort with the goals of improving fish passage, reducing streambank erosion, restoring a natural stream channel and providing recreational access on public land.

The restoration journey began with the construction of Chestonia Bridge. This involved replacing two 16ft-wide culverts found to be perched at least two feet above the natural stream bottom. These culverts were significantly undersized for the river and resulted in a wide, fast-flowing pool with velocities measuring up to 12ft per second. These velocities blocked fish passage and created a danger to paddlers.

The new 90-foot concrete Chestonia Bridge spans the river and floodplain during high flows. This allows velocities to decrease to the speed found upstream and downstream of this location where it measures an average of three feet per second or less. - *Continued on next page*



Brielle checks in on her mom’s (CRA Biologist Kimberly Balke) work on the Jordan River.

About CRA

Amy Beyer

Director

Sue Antaya

Accounting

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Biologist

Kira Davis

Program Director

Bethany Bucklew

Administrative/Development Assistant

Molly Flowers

Administrative/Development Assistant

Paul Kogelschatz

Watershed Coordinator

Chris Pierce

Biologist

Casey Ressler

Annual Gifts Coordinator

Matt Thomas

Development Coordinator

Diane VanderVeen

Contracted Chief Financial Officer

Nate Winkler

Biologist

In 1968, Conservation Resource Alliance was established with one goal – to preserve and protect Northern Michigan's waterways, wildlife, and forests for future generations. CRA is a private, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Through our River Care™ and Wild Link™ programs, we restore and protect over 700 miles of rivers, 5,000 miles of tributaries and diverse forests throughout 4 million acres in Northern Michigan.

We've been able to care for this region's natural resources because our partners and supporters continue to be the backbone of our organization. Thank you to all of our members for supporting hands-on feet-wet conservation. If you haven't donated, please join us as a supporting member. Your commitment is critical to keep this important work moving forward.

www.rivercare.org

Restoration on Jordan River Crossing continued

Alongside the construction of the Chestonia Bridge, a second stop on this project's journey was the now completed Cokirs Crossing. The redesign and construction of this crossing over Cokirs Creek provides a safe two-lane driveway with guardrails as an access to a newly constructed Michigan DNR recreational access site. This new path replaced the previous single-lane snowmobile bridge and has redirected recreational traffic away from Old State Road.

Part three, and the final destination for this project on the Jordan River, is almost complete with the Michigan DNR taking lead on a safe and user-friendly public access site. Stay tuned for a ribbon cutting event next spring!

At \$1.7M, the Chestonia Bridge and Cokirs Crossing projects would not have been possible without the support of many partners. Thank you to the Antrim County Road Commission, Charlevoix County Community Foundation, DTE Energy Foundation, Frey Foundation, Friends of the Jordan River, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians and Natural Resources Conservation Service EQIP program, Great Lakes Fishery Trust, Harry A. and Margaret D. Towsley Foundation, Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation, J. A. Woollam Foundation, Oleson Foundation, Michigan DNR Aquatic Habitat Fund, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Sustain Our Great Lakes, Paddle Antrim and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service – Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat program.

Welcome Molly Flowers

We are excited to welcome our wonderful new Administrative/Development Assistant Molly Flowers to CRA. Molly comes to us with a variety of experience including donor relations as the parish Administrator at Good Shepherd Church, certified personal trainer, CrossFit coach and actor/voice over artist. Molly, her husband Brett, and two children, Burke and Anabelle, relocated to the Traverse City area from Evansville, IN to be closer to family. In her free time, she enjoys sharing her enthusiasm for fitness with kids, hiking and taking walks with her family and dogs, Lou and Daisy. Please help us welcome Molly and wish Bethany Bucklew and her husband bon voyage as the Bucklews head south to Florida with the U.S. Coast Guard this winter.



Welcome, Baby James!

On September 23, CRA Annual Gifts Coordinator, Casey Ressler, and her husband, Jim Morse, welcomed James Kirkwood Morse IV into their family. Congratulations Casey and family on your beautiful baby boy!



Led by the US Army Corps of Engineers and fueled by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, the removal of Boardman Dam, shown here in July 2017, marks the second dam to come out on the Boardman River.



Sen. Debbie Stabenow visits *The Boardman: A River Reborn* project in August to celebrate the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and its impact in northern Michigan.

Coldwater Revival on the Boardman

It's been a big year for the Boardman River. For the first time in over 100 years, the river flowed through its historic channel under the new Cass Road bridge.

Anyone who witnessed this transformation got to see history being made – the wow factor was truly unparalleled. Beginning in June, 14 siphons began to draw down Keystone Pond. A detailed process in its own right, each siphon was hand-controlled to ensure the impoundment was drawn down properly. Once lowered sufficiently, the river was carefully woven first through a temporary channel and then to its final resting place where nature intended it to be.

In the meantime, the former channel where the powerhouse stood went through a dramatic metamorphosis. The brick powerhouse was toppled and the area prepped for a two-lane roadway.

All the while, hundreds of tons of sediment were managed to prevent excessive downstream mobilization. Some of the largest wood structures we've ever seen were strategically placed to reduce erosion and provide instream habitat. With the Brown Bridge Dam removed and the Boardman Dam now

gone, aquatic life again has the freedom to travel through that stretch, restoring this important coldwater fishery.

There's been a tremendous amount of work on the river since 2005 when *The Boardman: A River Reborn* started. Big thanks again to the unbelievable community support for this landmark project and to the Great Lakes Fishery Trust and Michigan Department of Natural Resources who have recently committed to helping the team achieve removal of Sabin Dam through funding awarded to Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians.

We're very excited about the overall impact of these dam removals and restoration efforts. Together, we are bringing light to places that haven't seen it for over 120 years and rediscovering stretches of river that used to lie underneath ponds. We recognize how globally-rare these coldwater streams are and how essential it is to protect them. It's detailed, it's delicate and it's important.

Stay tuned as the effort to remove Sabin Dam gets underway next year. Plans are also coming together through the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to modify Union Street Dam.



Biennial Celebration Kicks Off CRA's 50th Year

It was a great fall afternoon at our Biennial Celebration at Black Star Farms in beautiful Leelanau County! We are so grateful to have kicked-off our 50th year of conservation with friends and community partners we value so much, like you! The sold-out event was attended by over 130 guests and included a reflection on what we've accomplished together, as well as a look forward to what's next for CRA.

Many partners have helped CRA get to where we are today. Standouts over the past year were recognized with an *Outstanding Partner* award including:

Burt Thompson, Antrim County Road Commission

Burt Thompson's efforts on the Chestonia Bridge and Cokirs Crossing projects went above and beyond all expectations. As a road commission manager, he surpassed the call of duty when working with CRA and partners to help expand the original bridge project to encompass the Cokirs Creek crossing and development of an adjacent recreational access site. Combining these projects into one scope required a strong partnership mindset and close attention to cost-effectiveness – Burt did that and more. Thank you Burt for being an Outstanding Partner!

DTE Energy Foundation

The DTE Energy Foundation has invested over \$700,000 in CRA's River Care™ program since 2003, ensuring the highest priority projects are completed throughout the northern Michigan region. This incredibly impactful corporate partnership has also included board service from dedicated DTE executives including Dick Redmond, whom accepted the award on behalf of DTE, and Bob Richard. The foundation's support throughout the years has been nothing short of exceptional.

Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians

The Grand Traverse Band's dedication to natural resources and passion for conservation benefit all of those who depend on northern Michigan's water and wildlife. Their leadership on *The Boardman: A River Reborn* and the *Regional Conservation Partnership Program* and support of CRA's River Care™ projects through the 2% Revenue Sharing Program have had a huge impact on the rivers we love. The Band is willing to dream big and have the courage to do whatever it takes to make those dreams a reality. Councilor Mark Wilson accepted the award on behalf of Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians.

Kaleva Norman Dickson Elementary School

In 2002, teachers from the elementary school in Brethren contacted CRA wondering how to get their kids involved with conservation. The result was a clean-up of the busy Tippy Dam access site on the Big Manistee River. This year, the same teachers and their pint-sized crew were back for the 15th consecutive year of picking up litter left behind by the 50,000+ annual visitors. Their commitment to come back, year after year, rain or shine, and scour those streambanks keep the river clean and inspires the next generation of conservationists.

During the event, many attendees jumped on board to support CRA monthly as a *Conservation Sustainer*. If you are interested in becoming a *Conservation Sustainer*, we ask you simply designate a fixed monthly gift to be charged to your credit card or automatically withdrawn from a checking account. To sign up, please visit rivercare.org, go to the “Donate” tab and select the “monthly” option when you complete the online donation form. The minimum monthly donation is \$10 and you may cancel or change the amount of your gift at any time.

Special thanks to our guest speaker, Todd Ambs from Great Lakes Coalition – Healing Our Waters, and to all of those who

were able to join us. Of course, we would not be able to make this incredible celebration possible without sponsors Glenn and Shari Hirt, Krenn Timber Bridge, Co. and NatureChange.org as well as raffle prize donors, Wanigas Rod Co. and Iron Fish Distillery. If you’d like to see more photos from the Biennial Celebration event, visit our website at rivercare.org.



Matt Thomas, CRA Development Coordinator, awards a grade “A” to educators Vivian Peck, Jennifer Cordes and Chris Gravlin who accepted the award on behalf of Kaleva Norman Dickson school.

A Wild Wildland Hydrology Experience

CRA project manager and biologist, Chris Pierce, recently returned from a trip to Alta, Wyoming where he attended a 10-day river assessment and monitoring course through *Wildland Hydrology*. Established in 1985 by Dave Rosgen, PhD, *Wildland Hydrology* offers specialized training courses that focus on fluvial geomorphology, watershed assessment and management, river restoration and monitoring. Rosgen, a professional hydrologist and geomorphologist, leads the courses and lends his extensive field experience in river work spanning 49 years, 20 of which were with the U.S. Forest Service.

Chris’ experience included an opportunity to receive expert training in the field of data collection methods and analysis techniques to predict and measure stream channel stability, streambank erosion and sediment competence, among other things. This unique training helps Chris to analyze various natural resource problems associated with streams and watersheds use, and the potential effect with management or no management decisions. Chris is excited to add one more tool to CRA’s toolbox in order to better understand

and help predict cumulative watershed impacts and help improve our precious river systems.



CRA project manager and biologist, Chris Pierce, streamlines his river knowledge with Dave Rosgen, PhD, at Wildland Hydrology training.

THANK YOU for Your Recent Support

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Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians - Natural Resources Conservation Service - Tribal Environmental Quality Incentives Program
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The Herrington-Fitch Family Foundation
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Lake County Community Foundation
Lake County Road Commission
Lilly Christy Busch Hermann Charitable Foundation
Little Manistee Watershed Conservation Council

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Michigan DNR Dams Management Grant Program & Aquatic Habitat Grant Program
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Pine River Area Trout Unlimited
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Memorials & Honorariums

In memory of Mark Bosse
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In memory of Steve Haveman
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In memory of Judy Johnson
from Bill & Jacquie Johnson

In memory of Mike Kandel
from Wildlife Wetlands Solutions

In memory of Jan Mebert
from James Mebert

In memory of William R. Olsen
from Joan J. & William C. Olsen

In memory of Karen Ressler
from Anonymous

In memory of Lu Schwikert
from Dick Schwikert

In memory of Robert A. Smith
from Patricia Smith

In honor of Kent & Kathy Taylor
from Christopher Edwards

Steady Down the Stream to Conservation

As we approach our 50th year of conservation efforts in 2018, we can't help but be grateful for the many team members who have worked diligently to make sure the wheels keep turning behind the scenes on the road to conservation in northern Michigan. Several CRA team members recently celebrated landmark anniversaries including our steadfast leader, Amy Beyer, celebrating her 25th anniversary with CRA this summer! Others include Diane VanderVeen and Sue Antaya, both celebrating 15 years. We truly could not do what we do without these team members – thank you for sticking around!



Director Amy Beyer recently celebrated 25 years with CRA.



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Please send contact information to CRA.

- ▶ Make checks payable to **Conservation Resource Alliance**
- ▶ Donate online at www.rivercare.org
- ▶ Please consider leaving a legacy of conservation through a bequest in your will or trust. Contact us at **231-946-6817** or info@rivercare.org.

Thank You!

CRA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and all donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

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Conservation Resource Alliance

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Stewardship Spotlight

Yoga for Health Education hosted a day of discounted 60-minute introductory yoga sessions to benefit CRA. Eighty people participated in classes that day and over \$400 was raised! Founded by Michael and Libby Robold, *Yoga for Health Education* takes a holistic, classical approach to practice, offering practical yoga, Ayurveda, meditation, tai chi, Pilates and Feldenkrais for all ages and ability levels. The studio is located in the Village Center at the Grand Traverse Commons. Special thanks to *Yoga for Health Education* for their partnership and for helping us continue to care for northern Michigan's water and wildlife. For questions or more information on classes at *Yoga for Health Education*, call 231-922-9642 or visit their website at www.yogaforhealthtc.com.



Printed on eco-friendly tree free paper.

Save-the-date Saturday, February 3 Please join us at The Boathouse Restaurant on Old Mission Peninsula for the Michigan Wild Game Dinner benefiting CRA. Visit rivercare.org for details. Reservations can be made directly with The Boathouse at 231-223-4030.