



Healthier Manistee Thanks To The Oleson Foundation

Healthier rivers, wildlife, and fisheries in the Manistee watershed are the result of a generous grant from the Oleson Foundation of Traverse City. Repairs and habitat improvements completed this summer will permanently eliminate hundreds of tons of sand from eroding each year into the Manistee.

As part of an effort begun in 1988 to stop the massive erosion of the Big Manistee River, CRA was busy this summer repairing erosion sites, access sites, and road crossings. Erosion mostly stems from logging activities at the turn of the century. Today, treeless banks, some of which were used as log "rollaways" are steep, sandy slopes that tend to slump into the river with each heavy rainfall. Repairs will help improve the habitat for everything from the tiniest in-water insects to amphibians, reptiles, birds, and fish. CRA works with a diverse group of partners who have carefully prioritized the problems in the watershed and are diligently working to repair them. Eroding sand is considered by resource professionals to be the top threat to area rivers.

Long-time CRA supporter Carl Mezeske, who says he's been enjoying the Manistee since the time he learned to walk, says, "There are places on the river that had holes over my head that today are knee deep. You wouldn't believe the amount of sand washing down from upstream." Mezeske says, "We know what the sources of sand are, and believe me, we will be attacking those problems as fast as the money will allow."

The health of the Manistee watershed is of prime importance to both the recreationists and the communities who depend on the tourism economy surrounding it. The US Forest Service estimates there are more than 20,000 canoe activity days annually on the Manistee and its tributary, the Pine River; and more than 50,000 "angler days" just at the popular Tippy Dam fishing site brings an estimated \$2.5 million each year to this rural area.

The Oleson Foundation grant is providing critical "matching funds" required under a large, \$700,000 grant from the



"bringing a halt to eroding sand improves habitat for all the living things, including people, who depend on the Manistee River"

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Other support for current work in the Manistee has come from the Pine River Area Chapter of Trout Unlimited, DNR's Fisheries Division, the Michigan Wildlife Conservancy, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Little River Band, the Huron-Manistee National Forests, local county road commissions, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, and the Michigan Department of Transportation.

Volunteers Dig In To Help CRA

A team of workers helped protect a stream and re-seed an eroding stream bank by planting pine seedlings much like the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps did over 60 years ago. Volunteers from the Traverse City Rotaries and NMC's Great Lakes Water Studies Institute joined in a work-bee hosted by CRA to plant 1,000 pine seedlings on the Big Manistee River at Baxter Bridge. Nearly 20 hard working people showed up to help with this project that will curb erosion and run-off and protect the stream and its habitat.

"Through this and other projects, Rotarians will pitch in to support crucial nonprofits like CRA and complete project of lasting value to our community. Planting 1,000 trees in a short amount of time is a challenge but I'm sure we're up to the task," said Rotary member Chuck Downey. "We welcome Rotarian partners," said Mark Johnson, CRA project coordinator. "Volunteer and community participation are essential ingredients to the long-term protection and management of our rivers and streams."

NMC's Water Studies Institute was formed in 2003 at the Great Lakes Campus to build stewardship of freshwater through education and partnerships involving the Great Lakes and its watershed. In February, Rotary Charities of Traverse City made a \$1 million grant to support Institute facilities and programs. CRA is proud to work with the Institute and Traverse City Rotaries to build strong alliances for water resources conservation in our region.



Big Sable Friends Gather For Float, Food & Fun

Nearly 30 like-minded individuals braved logjams and a half dozen portages to see first hand what was happening on the Big Sable River. A beautiful July day helped make CRA's annual Big Sable Float trip a great event for die hard river conservationists and others curious about the restoration efforts taking place on this vital northern stream.

The Big Sable Watershed Restoration Committee (BSWRC) was formed several years ago to help drive local interest and input for a comprehensive watershed restoration project. In addition to the very dedicated committee, enthusiasm and support has grown from riparian owners, river users, the Mason-Lake Conservation District, Mason County Fin & Feather Club, Dow Chemical Foundation, and many others. The Big Sable faces the same challenges that plague many of northern Michigan's rivers. Sand load has built up, covering important gravel, cobble, and streambed structure as a result of century old logging practices and road/stream crossings. The flotilla of canoes and

kayaks were able to view sites that have already been treated and are being healed along with a number of high priority eroding banks that are still in need of restoration.

Undaunted by some pretty mucky hikes through the woods, boats in tow, the group finished the day sharing a picnic lunch at the Freesoil Township Hall with enough stories of the adventure to last until next year. Thank you Jim Miller, BSWRC Chairman and everyone who participated in the fun and informational outing!



On The Ground With Wild Link

Here's another example of a Wild Link implementation project. CRA rented the Plotmaster 400 to evaluate its usefulness and at the same time to help Wild Link participants, Ray and Craig Bonter, establish fields with alfalfa, clover, chicory, rape, and buck oats. This equipment has both limitations and advantages due to its small size. If a landowner does not have access to a tractor and larger planting implements, but does have access to a quad runner, the Plotmaster 400 could serve as an "all-in-one" solution. Its best application would be for small food plots and those in hard to get to locations.



Coe Creek Restoration Continues

On Saturday, September 11, a dedicated group continued work on the Coe Creek project near the Pine River in Lake County. The work bee was the second for this field season, the fourth so far on the project. Log jam structures were installed for fish cover and bank protection, and brush bundles were installed to help concentrate flows to the center of the stream. The results are deeper water, more exposed gravel, and better fish cover. Funding for this year's work was provided by the Embrace-A-Stream program through Trout Unlimited and the Michigan Wildlife Conservancy. The Pine River Area Chapter also contributed dollars and matching labor for the project's completion. Members of the Kalamazoo Valley Chapter also made the drive up to assist with project implementation. Many thanks to all the volunteers who showed up this year to make the project a success, including CRA board member Sue Peters and her husband Dave!



Thank You Carl

Long-term CRA board member Carl Mezeske, also a Manistee County Commissioner, was recently recognized for his 11 years of service. Mezeske recently resigned from the board, but will continue his service on CRA's fundraising committee.

The Betsie River Celebration!

Saturday, September 18th, 2004 the Betsie River Watershed Restoration Committee hosted an open house for those who live and recreate on the Betsie River to get an update of all that is happening in the watershed. Kimberly Balke gave a presentation on river restoration projects including streambank stabilization, road/stream crossing work, woody debris placement, salmon in the classroom efforts and sand trap maintenance. Mark Tonello, MDNR Fisheries Biologist, presented on fisheries status and management of the Betsie including electroshocking data, temperature data, fish planting and the importance of the proposed (but not yet funded) Dair Creek dam removal. Sean Duperron, Betsie Valley Trailway Manager, gave an update on trail status and construction, including the Thompsonville railroad trestle bridge over the Betsie River. The Grand Traverse Band and Benzie Conservation District had displays and hand-outs. Approximately 60 people attended the event and the Restoration Committee passed out 35 door prizes, including two beautiful pieces of artwork, donated from various local businesses, organizations and residents!

Thank you for your recent support of CRA, River Care™ and Wild-Link™

Adams Chapter of Trout Unlimited	Wayne Andersen	Kent Gage	John Preston	Victor and Nila Withee
Antrim County	Wendell and Betty Jo Anderson	Michael Gensic	Richard and Alison Puffer	Helen Zielinski
Betsie River Watershed Restoration Committee	Linda Badalucco	Virginia Gerstenberger	David and Betsy Randall	In Memory of Bud Andersen
Big Sable Watershed Restoration Committee	Barney Barnett	Thomas Gotts	Ty Ratliff	Robert Bachman
Charlevoix County Community Foundation	Dennis Barthel	Jim Gunderson	Dean Rhoads	In Memory of Mark Bosse
DTE Energy Foundation	Denise Beaupied	Joseph & Marlene Haines	Steven Robbins	Charles and Carole Dilla
Elliott Donnelley Chapter of Trout Unlimited	Jim Bedford	Don Halvorson	Leonard Rossa	In Memory of Joseph Heureux
Gensic Engineering	Brian & Lynn Bentley	Barbara Hansen	Nathaniel Rowe	Skip & Jan Mebert
Ice Mountain	Jeff and Barb Bergers	Doris Hays	Edward Rumer	In Memory of Bill Hutto
Knorr Marketing	Reg Bird	Robert Heacox	Nancy & Philip Ryan	John & Joan Hutto
Long Lake Township	H. Michael Biscan	David Hobrock	Jerry & Angela Sawicki	In Memory of Burton Janis
Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation	Mike & Lindy Bishop	Philip and Catherine Jarvi	Catherine Seroczynski	Wayne Andersen
Michigan Wildlife Conservancy	Craig Bonter	J.W. Keener	Jim Shepherd	In Memory of John Reneau, Eleanor Reneau, & Leonard Bonk
Northwestern Bank	Ray Bonter	Charles Kehr	Dirk Shorter	David & Barbara Reneau
The Oleson Foundation	Jerry Borsum	Tom & Anne Kelly	Dick and Deb Shotwell	In Memory of Dee Thomas
OMI	Jim and Joani Braun	John Kivi	Stanley Skalski	John Thomas
The Orvis Company	John Broderick	Robert Koch	Alan and Cheryl Slater	Mike & Lindy Bishop
Patagonia	Don and Peggy Calhoun	Patrick Kochanny	Don & Linda Smith	In Memory of Charlie Williams
Petoskey Plastics	Keith Charters	Jack and Jane Kuipers	Jim Squier	Kerry & Marcy Tucker
Pine River Association	Yvon Chouinard	Nick Kussy	Richard & Carol Streit	In Honor of Emily Beyer's trophy Smallmouth Bass
Shepherd Lincoln-Mercury	Boyd Clampitt	Joe Kutkuhn	Andrew and Linda Summerville	
Jenifer Thomas Design & Illustration	Douglas Conover	Mark Lee	Roger & Jane Suppes	
Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council	James Coursey	Joanne Maio-Spruth	Dennis Tatum	
USDA-NRCS	Louis and Mary Czubak	John Makinen	John Thomas	
USFS	Charles and Carole Dilla	Chuck Martin	Jenifer Thomas	
David & Susan Aker	Charles Dabee	Jack and Kathleen Mensching	John and Diane VanderVeen	
George Anacker	Tim Ervin	Michael Nolan	Howard Walker	
	Yarda Ervin	William Norris	Jaque Wallace	
	Stephen Ewing	Walter North	Van White	
	Nick Fant	Bill and Joan Olsen	Gary White	
	Bob and Marlene Flannery	Harry & Joyce Parker	Pat Wicksall	
	Len and Karen Franseen	Bradley Parlato	Shari Wild	
	Cathy Freebairn	Jim & Barb Pielsticker	Mike and Kathy Winczewski	
		William Porter		

Join Hands With CRA – A message from Matt Thomas, Development Coordinator



The long stretch of perfect late summer weather has caused me to pause more than a few times with thankful reflection for the magnificent corner of the world where we live, work and play. For me, the true beauty and value of northern Michigan is defined by the rivers, lakes, and forests. The natural resources that create the backdrop for a quality of life that is hard to beat no matter where you might travel.

I have the enviable job of making friends and building relationships with lots of folks that feel the same way. We are all very fortunate to share this connectedness to the natural world.

My goal each year is first and foremost to help bring others to a better understanding of just how valuable our natural resources are and to help figure out how they might translate that

to stewardship that works for them. For some, the answer will come in leadership positions on local watershed committees or volunteering time and material to help complete the real work that CRA coordinates to save a delicate trout stream or endangered wildlife habitat. Others will be able to introduce us to individuals and organizations interested in getting involved. And some will be ready to create a legacy through estate and planned giving that will make a difference for generations to come. Everyone can be part of the solution. Everyone can join hands with CRA to make a difference.

As we kick off our annual Membership/Fundraising campaign in November, please consider how helping CRA can be a part of your own mission to care for our special places. Remember your deduction is tax deductible and that you can contribute by responding in writing, by phone, and online at www.river-care.org. And please give us a call at 231-946-6817 anytime you have a question about our projects. We love to hear from you.





Jim Widgren (left) proudly shows off his grand prize brown trout, hand carved by Chet Babcock and presented by Jim Miller (right).

Fish Raffle Nets Big Catch

The Big Sable Watershed Restoration Committee cleared over \$2700 with the first annual fundraising raffle to benefit River Care restoration in the watershed. Jim Miller, BSWRC Chairman said, "It was a real pleasure to meet the grand prize winner, John Widgren, of Kaleva, and present him the beautiful hand carved Brown Trout crafted and donated by Chet Babcock." John bought the winning ticket at the Manistee Art Fair, where his son, also a carver, was displaying his work. Winners for a dozen other wonderful prizes were also drawn at the July meeting of the Mason County Fin & Feather Club, a generous supporter of Big Sable River Care projects. Thank you to everyone who helped out by selling and purchasing tickets and to all of the businesses and individuals that donated prizes to make this effort a big success!

Yes! I Want to Support CRA & Practical Conservation!

Enclosed is my CRA Membership contribution:

- Contributor \$30
 Supporter \$50
 Sponsor \$100
 Benefactor \$500
 Patron \$1000
 Other \$_____

Business Membership:
 Small \$100
 Large \$500
 Special recognition and employee benefits available

I would like to make a special contribution of \$_____

Gift Membership Name: _____

Address: _____

In Memory/Honor of (circle one): _____

River Care Permanent Fund

My employer will match my gift (please send forms)

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: (H) _____ (W) _____

Please send my FREE CRA T-Shirt in the following size:

- M
 L
 XL
 XXL

I wish my support to be anonymous

Your donation is tax-deductible. Make all checks payable to:
Conservation Resource Alliance
 10850 Traverse Highway, Suite 1111, Traverse City, MI 49684

Thank You For Your Support!



Welcome, Preston!

CRA Administrative Assistant, Jill Rowley and her husband, Brian became proud parents of a handsome baby boy

on September 28, 2004. Preston James Rowley made his debut at 6 lbs. 15 oz. and 20 inches long. This is Jill and Brian's first child (although they do have a sweet little Pug named Lucy) and they are so happy to welcome baby Preston into their family. Congratulations, Jill and Brian!

Where's Laura?

Biologist Laura Kuehn, one of CRA's four project managers, will be spending the next 12 months working with Northwestern Michigan College's new Water Studies Institute working on a project to aid non-profits like CRA with capacity building. We are very excited about this special opportunity for Laura, and look forward to both assisting in, and benefiting from, the capacity building effort. The project is supported in part by a \$1 million grant that Water Studies Institute received from Rotary Charities of Traverse City earlier this year. As always, watershed partners and colleagues at CRA will miss Laura, but we intend to keep forging forward in our River Care work in her absence!



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Stewardship Spotlight



Discover drift boat fishing at it's best with an experienced, licensed, and insured fishing guide. Nick Fant has over 25 years experience fishing the rivers in northwest Michigan including the Betsie and Manistee rivers. No one knows the beauty as well as the threats to these beautiful streams better than folks like Nick, who spends most of his time on the water. That is why Nick has been a CRA supporting member for many years. He's seen the impact of restoration and habitat improvement work on these fisheries. It's also clear

to Nick that we all must pull together to maintain the momentum of sensible conservation. Pressure on natural resources increases and government alone can't keep up.

So pick a season, pack your enthusiasm and take a day off to drift down Michigan's most beautiful rivers with Nick's Riverbend Charters. You can find out what's biting and how to schedule a trip with Nick by calling 1-888-292-8659 or visit www.nicksfishingcharters.com. Thank you Nick for all of your support for CRA and River Care!

CRA Website Extreme Makeover

Although it seems like just yesterday that CRA launched the www.rivercare.org website, it was actually around four years ago. That's forever in the light speed world of Internet technology. So with the help of our very creative friends at Byte Productions, a complete artistic and functional renovation of the website has been undertaken. Visitors will enjoy a much easier navigation of more information about CRA's conservation projects and activities throughout northern Michigan. Joining

CRA as a supporting member and submitting an online donation via our secure server is smoother than ever and a fun store feature will soon be added as well. An E-Newsletter will launch by year end that will allow friends and partners to be updated on a more regular basis. So take a tour through the new and improved www.rivercare.org, let us know what you think, and share this cool website with others that might be interested in the efforts to care for our natural resources.