



## **Trees: It's What's for Dinner** *by Eric Ellis, CRA Biologist*

### **Emerald Ash Borer and Beech Bark Disease in Northern Michigan**

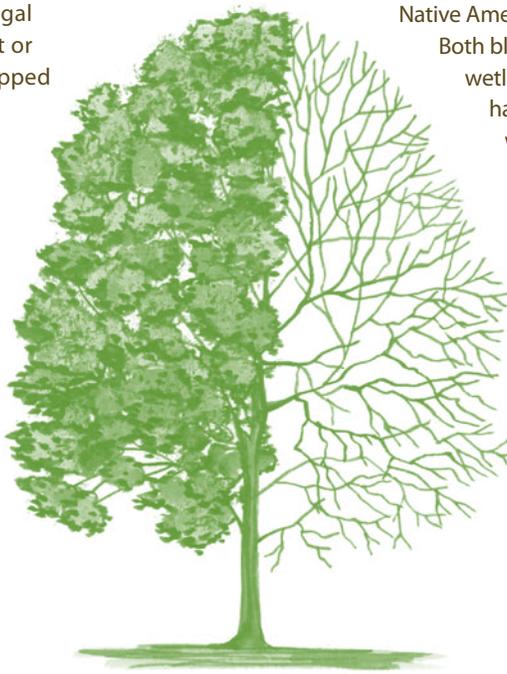
In the past few years Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and its lesser known counterpart Beech Bark Disease (BBD) have been spreading throughout northern Michigan. In CRA's 13 county service area, eleven have confirmed EAB infestations; seven have documented cases of BBD. The spread of these two invasive species is causing wholesale changes to the "Up North" landscape we all enjoy.

#### **The Gory Details.**

Both EAB and BBD are invasive species, but their biology is slightly different. EAB is a small metallic green beetle native to northeast Asia that was first discovered in 2002 near Detroit. It is suspected that the beetles arrived in wooden packing materials from Asia. The adults do very little direct damage to the tree but the larvae eat the growing tissue under the bark girdling the tree and killing it. EAB adults can fly to new trees but the spread of the beetles to northern Michigan has been hastened by people transporting firewood infected with EAB larvae.

BBD has been in the U.S. since 1890 but wasn't identified in Michigan until 2000. BBD is an intricate cooperation between beech scales, a tree sap feeding insect, and two or more species of fungi. The feeding scales injure beech trees making them susceptible to Nectria fungal infections. Nectria can kill trees outright or weaken them enough that they are snapped in half during storms.

According to [www.emeraldashborer.info](http://www.emeraldashborer.info) EAB has killed more than 30 million ash trees in SE Michigan and cost tens of millions of dollars for treatment and removal. BBD is currently most prevalent outside of large populated areas and it is uncertain how many trees have been killed or how much money has been spent on dealing with the problem. What is certain are the negative impacts on northern Michigan's rivers, wetlands, and upland ecosystems.



#### **Importance of Beech and Ash Trees.**

Beech and three species of ash are abundant in northern Michigan in a variety of ecosystems. White ash and beech are common associates in fertile upland sites. Red ash (also confusingly known as green ash) is more common along the shores of rivers, streams and lakes. Black ash is mainly found in swamps and wetland areas.

In the absence of other mast trees (especially oaks) beech nuts are the main source of food for many species of wildlife. Beech nuts are eaten by more than 40 species including game and non game birds, deer, small mammals, and bear. The growth patterns of beech make them very valuable as den sites for small mammals and raptor nests. It is safe to say that the loss or reduction of beech in northern forests will dramatically reduce the habitat and food for game and non-game wildlife.

Primarily known for its lumber, ash trees are surprisingly important for wildlife as well. Many species of small mammals and birds feed on the rice-sized seeds that are produced by the millions. These seeds are especially important for wild turkeys which feed on them during the winter as they rest on top of deep snow. In addition to its wildlife benefits black ash is culturally significant to some

Native American tribes for its use in basket weaving.

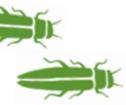
Both black and red ash are important riparian and wetland species which stabilize banks, provide habitat for wildlife, filter water, and maintain wetland water levels.

#### **Solutions?**

There are no silver bullets for either invasive. Individual trees infected with EAB can be treated with a few select pesticides but treatments are only feasible on a small scale, such as a valuable yard tree. In mid June 2008, Purdue University released a wasp from China which parasitizes EAB. The success of this biological control is uncertain and may be too late for the ash trees of northern Michigan. Individual beech trees can be at least

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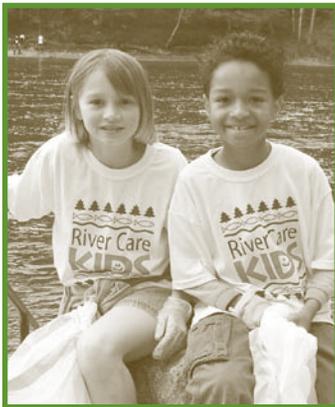


partially protected from BBD by scrubbing away the insects, high pressure water treatment and the use of certain horticultural oils but there are no practical large scale treatments. Private landowners deciding what to do about EAB and BBD in their woodlots and yards should consult a reputable consulting forester or arborist. Treatment options, including selective logging, will depend on the amount of each tree specie on your property and your overall property goals.

The main action we can all take is to maintain species diversity by planting a variety of native trees and shrubs to “replace” the lost food and habitat. Suggested tree species include hackberry, swamp white oak, balsam poplar, yellow birch, black cherry, and any native oak. Good shrub choices include dogwoods, winterberry, elderberry, serviceberry, hawthorns, sumacs, American plum, hazelnut, and crabapples. Plant hardiness zones in CRA’s service area range from 4a-6b. Before planting refer to a reliable source for specific habitat requirements of the species listed or to find other species options. Two great sources include Michigan Trees by Barnes and Wagner and Landscaping with Native Plants of Michigan by Steiner.

How we deal with these invasives now will dictate what the Northwoods will look like for future generations.

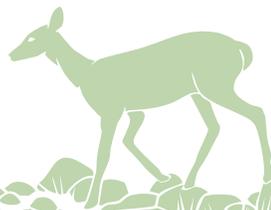
### **River Care Kids – Fun with a Purpose!**



One of the biggest question marks in the world of conservation is who will take responsibility for caring for natural resources in the future. The number of young people involved in outdoor recreation, especially hunting and fishing, is declining. Keeping kids excited and knowledgeable about resource needs and stewardship is a challenge.

CRA’s River Care Kids program is working to help groom tomorrow’s guardians of northern Michigan’s natural world. Designed to engage youngsters in education and real work conservation projects, this initiative provides opportunities for the next generation to get involved.

May 20<sup>th</sup> was the date of the 6<sup>th</sup> annual River Care Kids clean-up project at the busy Tippy Dam access on the Manistee River. Over 90 kids from Wellston Elementary scoured the banks and trails to fill their trash bags with the litter left by careless users of this popular site. Support from the General Motors Foundation, Consumers Energy Foundation, ATS Printing, and other River Care contributors help make this great event possible. Thanks to teacher, Vivian Peck, and all the hard working kids, parents, and volunteers that helped out!



### **CRA Honored as DTE Energy Achieving Excellence Finalist**

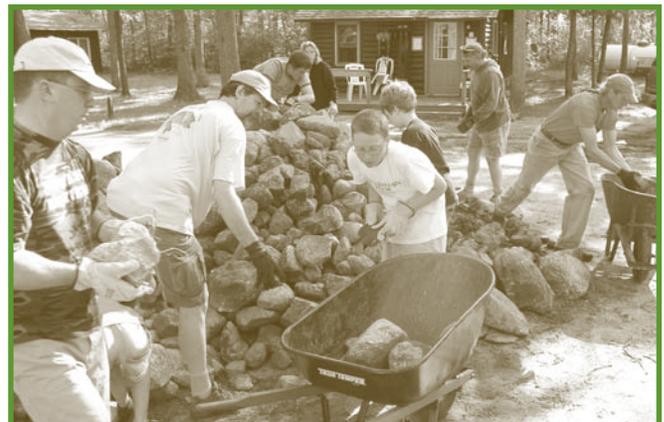
The Conservation Resource Alliance was one of 20 finalists in the DTE Energy Foundation’s Achieving Excellence Award. The competition recognizes the state’s exemplary nonprofit organizations in five categories: Collaboration, Innovation, Leadership, Merger and Sustainability. “The DTE Energy Foundation believes that nonprofit organizations that strive to maximize their time, money and efforts should receive praise, gratitude and support. That is why we created the Achieving Excellence Awards in 2003 and have presented more than a million dollars to award recipients since then,” said Fred Shell, DTE Energy vice president of corporate and government affairs and president of the DTE Energy Foundation.

Nearly 100 nonprofit organizations statewide submitted applications for this year’s Achieving Excellence Awards. The finalists were judged by an independent panel of leaders in Michigan’s philanthropic community. To be considered for the Achieving Excellence Awards, organizations had to be tax-exempt under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and be located within DTE Energy’s service area.

### **Boy Scouts Help Out on the PM**

On Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, the Pere Marquette River received a helping hand, compliments of a volunteer team of down state boy scouts. In just over two hours, 20 cubic yards of fieldstone were loaded into wheel barrows and placed on an erosion site on PM River Lodge property. In the afternoon, youth enjoyed a cook out and received entomology, fly tying and casting lessons as well as some great donated gear. Frank Willets, owner of the Lodge noted, “As overwhelming as a project like this might seem, CRA was able to help cut through all the major red tape and organize the raw materials, which made it a lot of fun for me and all the volunteers. I can’t wait to begin our next project. Thank you again to Scott Freeman and Michigan Fly Fishing Club for their financial donation and all the volunteers and sponsors that made this happen.”

Many thanks to Frank and the Pere Marquette River Lodge Staff for their commitment to this beautiful river and doing their part to make it better.



*Many hands made short work of shoring up an eroding PM streambank.*

## Here's What's Happening with Wild Link



*CRA Biologist, Eric Ellis discusses alder regeneration.*

CRA co-hosted a field tour during the 2nd annual Michigan Ornithological Congress on April 4th in Petoskey. This event was co-organized by Al Stewart, Upland Bird Specialist with the Michigan DNR, and highlighted the importance of early

successional forest habitat in the region and how this habitat is being managed. A Wild Link forest management project was the focus of this event and the group met at the farm where the project is being conducted. The project was a continuation of alder regeneration cuts which will ensure sufficient early succession habitat along this section of the wildlife corridor. Funding for this project was provided by the landowner and the US Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Management Program.

In late April CRA staff teamed up with Wild Link landowner Jake Snider to plant over 500 native trees on his Emmet County property. The planting is part of Jake's Wild Link habitat management plan to improve the wildlife cover and mast on his land. A mix of white pine and oak species were planted.

On May 16<sup>th</sup> 47 students from Troy Athens High School met at the Gilbert Lake Wild Link property for a morning of habitat improvement work. The students removed invasive autumn olive, constructed two deer exclosures to monitor browsing impacts on the forest, and built large brush piles for



*CRA Development Coordinator, Matt Thomas, leads the Athens brush team.*



*Thank you to the crew from Troy Athens High School!*

small mammal and reptile habitat. The management plan for the property was recently completed by Daniel Schillinger of Schillinger Forestry, LLC in conjunction with CRA staff and paid for by a grant from the Michigan Coastal Management Program and Rotary Charities of Traverse City.

Financial support from the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation is funding the writing and implementation of three new habitat management plans on 510 acres in the Maple River Wildlife Corridor. Field work for these habitat management improvements has begun. Completed plans will outline specific activities to maintain and improve the wildlife habitat and water quality of the corridor near the Maple River in Emmet County.

The first completed Wild Link habitat management plan in the Kingsley Wildlife Corridor was celebrated during a field tour on June 14<sup>th</sup> at Tom and Luann Waurzyniak's property. A group of regional partners and interested landowners discussed private land wildlife and water management and viewed active habitat management activities on the property. The group also discussed funding sources for private landowners interested in improving wildlife habitat and water quality on their own land and in the region. Many thanks to the Waurzyniaks for hosting this event!

### We Need Your Help!

While there are many projects on the docket for this field season for CRA staff, there are two noteworthy sites that are still in need of funds to get the go-ahead. In Antrim County, CRA has seed funding from the Charlevoix County Community Foundation for the removal of the failed electrical weir on the Jordan River near Webster Bridge. With a total cost estimate of \$40,000, the project is approximately 50% funded. Work will begin on site plans and permits as soon as further funding commitments are made.

In Lake County, a perched culvert replacement estimated at \$275,000 is over 70% funded by federal dollars. We need

matching funds to replace the crossing of Silver Creek and State Road, which cuts off Silver Creek from the Pine River. If funding is secured, the site will likely be replaced during the 2009 field season.

Please give us a call to find out more about these projects. Your tax-deductible donations to help meet these critical needs can be sent to CRA, 10850 Traverse Hwy, Suite 1111, Traverse City, MI 49684 or made through CRA's website: [www.rivercare.org](http://www.rivercare.org). Please note which project you're supporting in the memo. Thank you!

# Thank you for your recent support of CRA, River Care™ and WildLink™

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Wes Williams  
Curt Yeiter  
Chris Zarb

## Greens Fore Streams Big Hit

Folks have started asking us what it takes to pull off a successful golf outing like our annual Greens Fore Streams. Well, the perfect late spring weather that we've had for all five years of this event sure helps. Over 100 CRA friends, old and new, joined us for a great day on the links on May 28<sup>th</sup> at Crystal Mountain. In addition to the relaxed competition of the four person scramble format, everyone enjoyed the prizes, auctions, buffet dinner, and fly-casting contests coordinated by Bruce Richards of title sponsor 3M-Scientific Anglers. Bob Garner returned to work hard to wiggle a little cash out of the willing as the auctioneer. The team of Ron Kochanny, Tim Kochanny, Matt Kochanny, and Ken Hogan carded the best score of the day (again) with the team of Paul Paradis, Chaz McCall, and Kelly King again taking the second place honors.

Thanks to Crystal Mountain, 3M-Scientific Anglers, all of our hole sponsors, Cherry Capital Subaru for the hole in one sponsorship, and everyone who came out to help support CRA. We raised over \$22,000 this year to bring the total revenue from this event to \$120,000 in five years!



Dick DeBoer lets the line fly at the Greens Fore Streams casting contest.

## Fulfilling your Conservation Goals

Leave a legacy by including the Conservation Resource Alliance in your will and estate plans. Please remember CRA and the sensible conservation programs that continue care for our precious natural resources with a generous bequest in your will or trust. Your future gift will support critically important real work projects that restore, preserve, and protect some of Michigan's most beautiful places. Donating to CRA's Permanent Fund through planned giving or a special gift is a wonderful way to help us meet the challenges of keeping our rivers running free and healthy.

If you've already included CRA in your estate planning, please let us know so we can thank you. With your support, Michigan's rich natural heritage and resources will be enjoyed by future generations.

Please contact us to discuss planned giving options.

Matt Thomas  
Development Coordinator  
(231)946-6817  
matt@rivercare.org

Always consult your advisors about philanthropic gifts.

### Yes! I Want to Support CRA & Practical Conservation!

Enclosed is my CRA Membership contribution:

- Contributor \$30     Supporter \$50     Sponsor \$100  
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Business Membership:  Small \$100     Large \$500  
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Credit card payments are also accepted at: [www.rivercare.org](http://www.rivercare.org)  
Your donation is tax-deductible. Make all checks payable to:  
Conservation Resource Alliance  
10850 Traverse Highway, Suite 1111, Traverse City, MI 49684

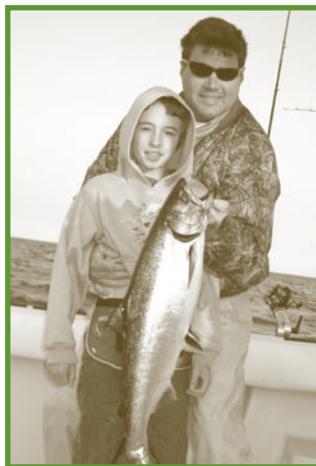
**Thank You For Your Support!**



## Big Sable Banks Near Completion

Two severely eroding streambanks remain on the Big Sable River. Once funding is in place and MDEQ permits are in hand CRA and the Big Sable Watershed Restoration Committee will look for volunteers to help stabilize the remaining 2 severe erosion sites on the entire Big Sable River. Total project cost is estimated at \$30,000. To date, \$24,000 has been raised for these two projects and through upcoming fundraising events we hope to reach our goal by the end of 2008.

How can you help? Volunteers from the BSWRC have been spending hundreds of hours working on an 11ft. solo cedar strip canoe donated to the committee for their annual raffle. All proceeds go directly to Big Sable River projects. Please contact Chris Pierce for tickets: [chris@rivercare.com](mailto:chris@rivercare.com). Becoming a member of CRA not only makes you feel good, but it gives our staff a chance at improving our cold water resources.



*Austin McIntire and Captain Kevin Hughes show off part of the day's catch.*

## A Reel Experience

Each year CRA offers two lucky kids the opportunity to experience an exciting day of fishing as part of a memorial to Alec Beyer. Austin McIntire and Vanessa Voll from Wellston Elementary School were the winners of a Lake Michigan charter trip on the Sandpiper III with Captain Kevin Hughes. They submitted the top essays describing their experience as young conservationists at the annual Tippy Dam clean up.



## Welcome Bob!

Bob Richard recently joined CRA's Board of Directors. Bob is senior vice president of gas operations for Michigan Consolidated Gas Company (MichCon). He is also a Board member for the Wildlife Habitat Council and has been involved with regional fundraising for United Way and Boy Scouts of America. We are excited to welcome Bob to our Board!



## Conservation Resource Alliance

COORDINATING SENSIBLE STEWARDSHIP OF THE LAND

10850 Traverse Highway Suite 1111  
Traverse City, MI 49684

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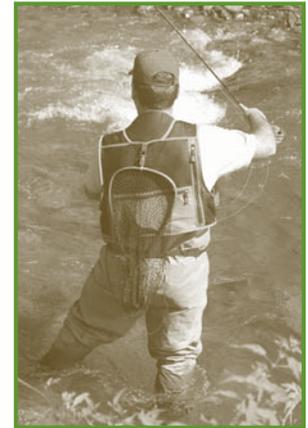
### Stewardship Spotlight

The Pere Marquette River Lodge is nestled on the banks of the world famous Pere Marquette River. They are a Platinum Level Orvis Dealer and Orvis Endorsed Lodging Outfitter Guide Service. Offering clean, comfortable lodging in the main lodge, rustic cabins and two houses on the river, the lodge boasts some of the best home cooked food around. The courteous and knowledgeable staff and full service Orvis fly shop is sure to meet your every need while insuring your best destination fishing experience. Experienced guides can help you explore many of the local rivers including the Pere Marquette, White, Pine, AuSable, Manistee and the Muskegon. The Pere Marquette River Lodge is the perfect place for corporate retreats, family reunions, mountain biking and just good old fashion fun.



Lodge owner, Frank Willets, is dedicated to caring for the resources that support his business.

Check out their website: [www.pmlodge.com](http://www.pmlodge.com) to find out more about the lodge and many opportunities they offer to enjoy northern Michigan. They are located at 8841 S. M-37 Baldwin, Michigan 49304, phone (231)745-3972. CRA is proud to have the Pere Marquette River Lodge as a supporting member and project partner.



### Thank You Little Traverse Bay Band!

Jackie Pilette, the wetland specialist for the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians, led a field training exercise for CRA biologists in early June. The training is part of the Native Plant Initiative, a cooperative effort between CRA and LTBB to protect and manage critical habitats for culturally significant plant communities. This initiative is part of CRA's larger USDA Conservation Innovation Grant. A reference for these plant species will be produced by the tribe for CRA and will be a valuable guide for CRA staff as we plan our field work along the rivers, streams and wildlife corridors of northern Michigan.

Join us for the  
**Bear Creek Open House!**  
Presentations, networking  
and site tours  
**Saturday August 9th**  
from 1:00-4:00 pm  
Spirit of the Woods Club,  
Kaleva  
RSVP to Chris Pierce at  
[chris@rivercare.org](mailto:chris@rivercare.org).