



# UPPER MANISTEE RIVER ASSOCIATION

P. O. BOX 282 • GRAYLING, MICHIGAN 49738

## SUMMER NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2016

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*The purpose of this Association is to preserve and protect for future generations the Upper Manistee River system and its drainage as a world-class natural resource.*

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**The UMRA Annual Meeting will be Saturday, August 20 at 9:00 A.M. at the Bear Lake Township Hall. Come early and join us for coffee and pastries.  
(Please note, we always attempt to schedule the meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in August)**

### ***President's Message***

*Dave Boberg*

Another summer has almost come and gone now. We continue to have another very successful year in our fundraising. This has allowed us to continue to support our mission statement to preserve and protect the Upper Manistee River.

I continue to assure everyone that we could not be working on these projects without the financial support of our membership. And I thank all of you for that. However, I would be remiss if I did not give a big thank you to several organizations that gave us large donations this year for our projects. Mason Griffith TU, The Michigan Fly Fishing Club, Elliott Donnelley TU, National TU, SEEDS, The National Guard and the DNR's HIA program all showed their support for the Upper Manistee River with their generosity this year.

As you can see from our Restoration Committee report in this newsletter, we are involved in a number of projects again this year. The "largest" of these projects involves a two year study of Portage Creek, which is one of the main tributaries of the Upper Manistee River. While this project, seems quite daunting at first, we have many partners that are more than willing to help us with this study and to compile all the data. We also have become quite high tech in this project and are doing a lot of the mapping of the creek using drones. The drone photos and videos are amazing and I intend to have some of these videos at the annual meeting for viewing. It is our hope that we will find that Portage Creek is just as healthy as the Manistee, but that it might need a bit of our care and carry into a 2 year work project after the study is completed.

The mission statement of UMRA, listed at the top of this newsletter, states that we will preserve and protect the river for generations to come. That being said the projects that we do on the river have to have the primary goal of following our mission statement. It would be nice if we could do projects that make everyone happy. Unfortunately, it just doesn't work out that way. All of our work is designed and approved both by private fish biologists and The DNR and/or The DEQ. Sometimes the plans we would like to do are not approved, are not feasible or are changed at the last minute. I would love to have everything done selfishly the way I want it to benefit me at this time in the world. But then I remember that the long term goal is to protect the river for generations to come. So if you see something in the river that has changed or that doesn't seem to be the way you would have done it, keep in mind that hopefully that change will have a long term lasting effect way beyond our time on the earth.

Please continue to support us and our projects. I ask again that you tell your friends and neighbors about all the good things we are doing on the river. We have been much more active on our Facebook page as of late. So tune in there to see what we are up to. Additionally, our web page is undergoing a major facelift. The new page will be much more user friendly and we hope to have updates on there more frequently for those of you that prefer the web page to Facebook.

## ***Stream Projects***

*Jim Anderson*

There is a lot going on this summer in the Upper Manistee River! Crews are working in the river revisiting previously constructed habitat sites. Each of the over 75 previously constructed habitat sites is being assessed and repaired as needed. This maintenance project is taking place in the areas of Goose Creek campground, Upper Manistee campground and the Watershed Club.



SEEDS WORKER



SEEDS WORKER

A day was set aside to team up with the DNR, Mason Griffith TU, Americorp and SEEDS to repair a serious erosion site at the Goose Creek campground. Much can be accomplished, in a short period of time, when organizations combine their efforts and resources.



A separate project to gather baseline data on Portage Creek is also underway. A grant from the Michigan Army National Guard Environmental Section has been awarded to UMRA for the work. The project will last through summer 2017.

Finally, two HIA grants will upgrade the access sites at the Tree Farm and 3 Mile Bend. Both locations will have a boat slide installed in order to reduce erosion .

## ***Sad News***

James E. (Jim) Powers passed away on June 9. Jim was very active in the UMRA for over 25 years and served as its President three different occasions. He worked tirelessly during his tenure on the Board of Directors to establish the major initiatives that were accomplished during that time. He was also active in Trout Unlimited and the Grayling Rotary. He will be missed by the UMRA and his family and friends. The complete obituary for Jim can be viewed at <http://www.sorensonlockwood.com/obituaries/James-Powers-7/#!/Obituary>



## ***River Clean-Up September 24, 2016***

*Dave Boberg*

Our fifth annual river clean up and volunteer work day will be held on Saturday, September 24, 2016. We will be meeting at 9:00 am to set up teams of workers and cleaners.

Not only we will have some clean up to do in the river, we also need to clean up access sites and perform general maintenance of these locations. We are also putting together a project to work on as well.

We will need river walkers, workers, paddlers and probably tree planters. Lunch and beverage will be served afterwards.

Please email us at [umra@umrasite.org](mailto:umra@umrasite.org) if you can attend and what you would like to do.

Hope to see a lot of you there.

## ***Financial Update***

*Mark Rais*

As of July 2016, our year-to-date income is \$34,515.00. This amount includes a \$6,650.00 Habitat Improvement Grant through the State of Michigan. Our expenses total \$8,365.00. Thus, our net income is \$26,150.00. However, Net Income will be reduced substantially during the summer as disbursements to the Restoration Committee budgeted expenses are paid. Other large disbursements will include river patrols, and Portable toilets.

As of July 2016, the Upper Manistee River Foundation had a balance of \$76,465.00. Undistributed earnings for future Restoration Projects totaled \$13,490.00. Many generous donations have been received with dues payments and memorials for men and women, who truly love the Manistee River. We appreciate your support.

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***If your newsletter envelope contains a dues envelope it means that our records show that we have not yet received your 2016 dues. Please renew your membership today, as we appreciate your continued support.***

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## ***Water Quality Sampling***

Bob Thorsen

The Spring Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Event on the Upper Manistee was held on Saturday, June 4th. It was a beautiful sunny day that was definitely uncharacteristic for a bug collection event.

Unfortunately, only 13 volunteers were present at the Kalkaska Eagles Club to participate. The surprisingly low turnout required some creative solutions including having to form an additional team that sampled after lunch as well. The small (but efficient) group of citizen scientists were in good spirits and did a great job collecting bugs followed by a hot lunch under the Eagles Club canopy!

The use of river bug surveys to gauge water quality is widely accepted within the scientific community. Michigan Clean Water Corps (MiCorps) has developed a protocol for evaluating rivers such as the Manistee River. Teams of volunteers capture and sort river dwelling insects (mostly benthic macro invertebrates) to determine both the diversity and counts of the various critters. The information helps to monitor long term trends and overall health of the river environment, serving as "canaries in the mineshaft." The amount and variety of bottom dwelling river critters provide one of the best indicators of water quality. The information gained through the volunteer monitoring process is then available to agencies such as the MDNRE for scientific evaluation and resource decision-making.

The 2016 Fall event will be held on Saturday October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, starting at 9 AM at the Kalkaska Eagles. All volunteers are welcome. This "forever" event is only possible through the continued support and participation of citizen volunteers.

Please call Bob Thorsen (248) 318-5220 or email: [sockeyebob@att.net](mailto:sockeyebob@att.net) if you would like to volunteer or have any questions.

## ***Misbehavior on the River***

We are often asked, "What can we do about bad behavior on the river". The answer in short is that UMRA cannot "do" anything about the raucous behavior that we all see on busy weekends. We are not the police and cannot enforce laws.

However, we have talked with both the Kalkaska and Crawford county sheriffs and in fact we lend financial support to the Crawford County Sheriff's river patrol system. Both counties have heard our concerns and are supportive of our goal to reduce some of these behaviors. They have both told us to get as much information as we can about perpetrator, i.e., description, canoe or boat number, location, etc. Call the appropriate county's sheriff and report as much information as you can:

Kalkaska County 231-258-3350

Crawford County 989-348-6341

Both counties have asked us to use these central dispatch numbers unless it is an emergency, then dial 911.

As of yet, there are no set of universal canoe livery rules on the Upper Manistee River. If those were in place they would have to be agreed upon by the liveries and enforced by them. As we all know, this will probably not happen.

However, the folks at Shel Haven have told us that if you see bad behavior occurring in one of their boats, get the boat number and call them. They will deal with the individuals when they return to the livery. In fact they have banned several groups from using their services for complaints of this nature.

Keep in mind that both Shel Haven and Long's Canoe Liveries have lent their support to our annual river clean up.