



WINTER NEWSLETTER 2015-16

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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.

President's Message

by Dave Boberg

I am very happy to report that we have had another wonderful year of work and planning to maintain our commitment to the Upper Manistee River and her tributaries. Jim Anderson has been instrumental in coordinating a lot of these projects and you can read about the details in his report in the newsletter.

Early in the fall of 2015, I was worried that we had completed two successful years of projects; but what could we do for 2016 and where would the funding come from. Lo and behold, we are pretty much "booked up" for work projects for the summer of 2016. And we have acquired a large amount of the funding needed for the work. The state of Michigan has come through again for us, generously donating another HIA grant.

National Trout Unlimited's Jeremy Geist has work slated for Cannon Creek, as well as surveying projects for the area south of Yellow Trees Landing. He is becoming a valuable partner to UMRA, as not only is he very knowledgeable but is successful at acquiring the majority funding required for his projects.

We continue to grow our relationships with other local conservation groups and businesses. These new friends have become instrumental not only in helping us with work and donations, but to help us grow and take on larger and larger projects which allow us to carry out our mission statement.

We all were very happy with our River Clean Up and Work Day this year. Once again the weather did not cooperate initially, but sooner than later, the sun peaked out and we had a great day. This year's event will be held on Saturday, September 26, 2015. We hope to see a lot of you there to help out.

Our membership has grown steadily, although not by leaps and bounds, over the last five years. I will continue to ask our current members to put in a good word for us and ask those around you who share a love and commitment for our river to join us.

Although I am elated with the work we have done over the last five years, protecting the Upper Manistee River is a constant, never ending job. And we have plenty of projects starting to come together for 2017 and 2018. We are getting better every year at fund raising, but I still need to ask for your financial support, as the cost of some of larger projects can be quite daunting. If you can add a small amount to your membership each year, it really does help.

Finally, I would be amiss if I did not mention the changing of the guard in our secretary position. Terry Blakey has retired from being the secretary for UMRA. This position is probably one of the most thankless positions on our board. Terry (with a TON of help from his wife Ann) has done an exemplary job in this role for as long as I have known him and I cannot thank him enough. Terry and Ann will continue to be very involved with UMRA as we move forward. I thank and wish best of luck to our new secretary Tad Randolph as he takes over Terry's role. He has some big shoes to fill.

River Cleanup /Project Work Day

by Jim Anderson

September 19th was the annual river clean up and work day. Many volunteers participated by cleaning up access sites, river reaches and some worked on the refurbishing of the steps at the Deward access site. Thanks to all who came out to help. A follow-up luncheon was provided for volunteers at the Ole Barn restaurant in Grayling.

Watershed Meeting

by Bob Andrus

On April 20th 2016, the Upper Manistee River Association, along with the Au Sable River Watershed Committee, will be sponsoring the 21st. Annual Meeting of Volunteer Watershed Councils and Committees. The major focus of the forum has been the sharing successes and frustrations associated with implementing watershed management plans. Thirty-nine watershed organizations from northern and western lower Michigan are invited to participate along with representatives of various state and federal agencies. The first meeting in 1996 was organized by UMRA's Joe Kutkuhn and Dick Sweigert of the Pere Marquette Watershed Council.

The Website UMRASITE.ORG

by Dave Boberg

As many of you know, the website allows our members to renew their memberships online utilizing the webpage and the security of PayPal. Members may also make donations or memorial contributions on the web as well. In addition, we have all the newsletters available and will make major announcements regarding big events on the web page.

In addition to paying your dues online, you are encouraged to receive all correspondences from UMRA electronically. You may select this option either during the online dues payment process or by choosing this selection on our paper dues envelopes (enclosed with this newsletter). This serves the purpose of saving UMRA money in mailing and printing (more money for the river), allows quicker delivery to members and helps the environment by limiting our paper usage. We have set this up to be secure in that your email addresses will be kept private if you choose this method. UMRA will never sell or distribute our email list to anyone. We encourage our members to choose this option in the future. If you do decide to receive all correspondence electronically, you will always have the option to go back to paper mailings by emailing us.

River Care 2015

by Jim Anderson

The Upper Manistee River Association (UMRA) has been busy this past summer with river and access site projects. Crews from SEEDS were busy completing fish habitat work in the 2nd year of UMRA's \$50,000 Habitat Improvement Account (HIA) grant. During the summer the crews worked on the 43 sites in the area of the Tree Farm and Yellow Trees Landing. Approximately 30 of the identified sites were completed. The access site at Rogers Landing was completed in the Fall. This project was funded through generous donations from various sources, including the Mason Griffiths Founders Chapter [MGFC (001)]. Also, during October, two sand traps were cleaned out in the Deward area. The UMRA has had 5 traps to maintain for years. Currently, there is only a need to monitor and clean four of the original 5 traps.

The UMRA was awarded a HIA Grant for access work at two sites for 2016. The two access site upgrades will be at Three Mile Bend and the Tree Farm. Three Mile bend is below the CCC Bridge and the Tree Farm is located between Hole in the Fence and Yellow Trees Landing. At the Three mile site a boat slide will be incorporated with the steps and dock that are already in place. The Tree Farm site has nothing for putting boats, canoes or kayaks in. Currently, river users are using a natural slope which exists and the bank is being damaged with vehicle traffic.



Sand Trap Sediment Removal



Fish Population Electroshocking



Rogers Landing - Addressing this erosion site

Stream Monitoring on the Upper Manistee

by Bob Thorsen

The Fall Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Event on the Upper Manistee was held on Saturday, October 3rd. The thirty-one citizen scientists that met at the Kalkaska Eagles Club were greeted with a chilly morning that was a welcome break from the normally wet bug sampling weekends. After a brief introduction and orientation the teams of volunteers dispersed to the five sampling sites. The groups returned at noon, samples in hand and enjoyed a hot lunch on the Eagle's back porch.

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 bugs (mostly benthic macro invertebrates) to determine both the diversity and density 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. Thanks to the diligent efforts of Bruce, Dave and Christina all of the available sampling data was recently uploaded to the MiCorps site and will be maintained for future reference.

The 2015 Fall session closed out the 7th year of the project on the Upper Manistee and the volunteer support continues to be amazing. "Bug" collecting is a very fun and educational event that is ideally suited for both the young and old and everyone in between. I hope that you have an opportunity to join us at a future event.

The 2016 Spring event will be held on Saturday June 4th, 2016, starting at 9 AM at the Kalkaska Eagles.

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



2016 Dues are Due

We value your membership. You have both an online option as well as the traditional dues envelope option for joining or renewing your membership. Enclosed is a dues envelope for your convenience. Dues are for the 2016 calendar year and are now payable.

If you have not chosen to receive electronic versions of the newsletter, please keep us updated with your current email address, as we do sometimes send emails to all members regarding upcoming events. If you are mailing in your dues envelopes this year, please write the word "NEW" along the address line if your contact information has changed so that we may update our records.

We have included Comment Cards because we love to hear from you.

2016 Annual Meeting

The Annual Membership Meeting is currently scheduled for August 20, 2016, the third Saturday in August. We plan to make the third Saturday the regular date for each Annual Meeting. Stay tuned for more details in the Summer Newsletter.

UMRA Foundation 2015 Donors

Jim Anderson	Chad McCurdy
Glen & Jean Anderson & Family	Hank Milius
Ken & Jean Bergman	John & Jean Mount-Campbell
Ann & Terry Blakely	Brett & Anessa Nelson
Thomas G. Boldt	Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Nelson
Brian & Margaret Casey	David Nicely
Dr. William Dean	Thomas N. Olvitt
Gerald & Judy Ann Dill	Donald & Cynthia Peitz
Tom & Ruth Dostie	Sara & David Pope
Duane Elenbaas	Mr. & Mrs Tad H. Randolph
Tom & Lorel Evans	James E. & Louanne G. Reed
Doug & Sherrie Fairbanks	Jill and Jim Robnett
John Forte	A. V. Schwarm
Mr. & Mrs. James D. Glaspie	Darryl J. Snabes
Mark & Valerie Hendricks	Anthony Vesico
Drew and Sara Hinderer	John H. Volz
Mr. Dean Iverson	Tom and Peg Walbridge
Dave & Peg Lehnen	David and Jan Weissenborn
George & Karen Leshkevich	Mark Wieland
Thomas & Christina Losiowski	Ray & Sue Woodard

Note: Our apologies if you contributed to the Foundation in 2015 and we inadvertently omitted your name. Thank you to all who have contributed.

Financial Update

by Mark Rais

As of December 2015, our year-to-date income is \$43,405. This amount includes approximately \$25,000 in Habitat Improvement Grants, through the State of Michigan. Our expenses amount to \$49,750.00. Thus, our net income is -\$6,345. Nearly 90% of our expenditures funded River Restoration Work done in 2015! Additional funding went to portable toilets for 9 access points on the river.

As of October, the Upper Manistee River Foundation had a balance of \$73,850. Undistributed earnings in the Foundation totaled \$13,500. Many generous Foundation donations have been received with dues payments, and memorials for and from those who have shared a passion for preserving our Manistee River. We appreciate your continued support.

UMRA Board of Directors and Advisory Council Members

<u>Board of Directors</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Advisory Council</u>	<u>Term</u>
Jim Anderson	2017	Bob Andrus	2017
Terry Blakely	2016	Ann Blakely	2016
Dave Boberg(Prez)	2017	Vince Caruso	2018
Bill Dean	2018	Mark Hendricks	2016
Doug Fairbanks	2016	Chuck Hewitt	2018
Chuck Hawkins	2018	Ed McCoy	2017
Mark Rais (Treas)	2018	Jim Montagne	2017
Tad Randolph (Secretary)	2016	Bob Thorsen	2018
Jeff Steffey (V-P)	2017	Sue Woodard	2016

Emeritus Committee

Dave Weissenborn, John Mount-Campbell and Jim Powers
