



P. O. BOX 282 • GRAYLING, MICHIGAN 49738

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2014-15

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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 (new President) ,

When I look back at the year the list of accomplishments we have achieved this year, all I can say is WOW! This really has been a great year for the Upper Manistee River Association and our commitment to carry out our mission statement of preserving and protecting the river. That being said, we could not have come even close to our goals for 2014 without all of the volunteer support in time, hard work and financial contributions from all of our members, friends and other organizations that share the same vision for the future.

I think we really got things rolling in 2012 when we held our first annual river clean up. Not only does that event help clean the river, but it gives us a lot of "press" which allows others to see what we are doing on the river. This year we had our third annual river clean up, and once again we had terrible weather to start. But everybody hung in there and we had a great volunteer event again. If anyone has any weather connections for the 2015 clean up, can you please put in a good word for us?

In 2013 our success continued with the acquisition of the State of Michigan HIA grant. That year also saw the creation of our wish list brochure, which helped us to complete many projects. And of course another river clean-up day with rotten weather.

The past few years have also been met with sadness for us, as we lost several of our board and advisory council members. These folks were not only paramount to our successes but were also our good friends and they are still dearly missed.

As 2014 began our Restoration Committee started to plan the work for our \$50,000 HIA grant. We are happy to report we improved more than 50 instream structures this year and will continue to work on that in 2015. We also received donations to improve 2 important access sites along the river. All of these are substantially large projects. We thank everyone that helped to make these a success.

Our electronic footprint continues to grow and help us. We now have over 540 friends of our facebook page, our website is up and running successfully, we are set up to take electronic payments and donations now, and our membership is at the highest level in close to ten years. These accomplishments were paramount in assisting us, Anglers of the AuSable and several other local conservation groups in stopping the State of Michigan from leasing thousands of additional acres of land along the Upper Manistee River and the Holy Waters of the AuSable to the National Guard.

We were also able to update our Master Plan in 2014. This plan outlines long term, ten year goals for protecting the river. With an updated plan in hand, we hope to be more successful in the next few years, not only in directing our efforts, but also in the acquisition of large grant monies and donations.

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I am happy to report we now have filled all of our open seats in our Board of Directors and Advisory Councils. We really have a good group of knowledge resources in these individuals. They have and will continue to spend a large amount of their personal time and energy in working to achieve the goals we all share. If you know any of these folks, please take a second and give them a word of thanks.

I am excited for our plans for 2015. We look forward to having another record year in membership as well as accomplishments. I hope you are all happy with the work we have been doing. Once again, I must make my plea that we cannot do this work without help from all of you. If you can donate your time, please do. Please take time to pick up a can or two as you canoe down the river. And if you have it in your resources, please consider a donation along with your annual dues. We thank you in advance for your support in the upcoming year.

River Care 2014

by Jim Anderson

The Upper Manistee River Restoration Committee (UMRRC) has been busy. A representative from the committee walked the river and identified over 65 different locations from C.R. 612 downstream to just above Longs Landing where HIA fish habitat work was completed during the 2014 summer. North Pointe Fisheries consulting was also involved to input their expertise. Permits from the DEQ and DNR were completed by UMRRC and approved. Of the 69 sites identified more than 50 sites were completed. Crews to do the work were from the SEEDS 501 (c) 3 organization which operates out of Traverse City. The SEEDS organization provide summer employment for area high school students. The crews are supervised by adult counselors, and for the river work on the various locations a representative from UMRRC worked daily with the crews. More fish habitat and river work is scheduled for summer 2015 in the River section between M72 and the Yellow Trees Landing.



SEEDS Team working in the River

River Cleanup /Project Work Day

by Jim Anderson

The third annual river clean up and work day was held on Saturday, September 21st. Many volunteers braved the forecasted stormy weather and came out to help. But by the time the event began and volunteers gathered at the Old AuSable Fly shop the threatening weather had subsided. Volunteers headed out in small groups to the various reaches of the river to do cleanup work. Other volunteers proceeded to two project sites at the "Hole in the Wall" and "Hole in the Fence" access sites. Those groups finished hauling and placing filter cloth

and rock into the rock cribs at each site. The timber extension slide rails had been put in place earlier by the SEEDS organization workers. All in all, both access sites are much better off. In addition to these river work and cleanup activities many volunteers worked with Howard Johnson, from Cedars for the AuSable, to plant trees in the Deward area. Thanks to all for their efforts on another very productive and successful river clean up and work day.



Hole in the Wall access site before



Hole in the Wall access site after



Hole in the Fence access site before



Hole in the Fence access site after

Fundraising Raffle Results

On November 15, 2014 a group of more than a half dozen UMRA Board and Advisory Council Members met to pick the three winning tickets for the 2014 Fund Raising Raffle. We met at the "Ole Barn" in Grayling and the tickets were drawn by one of their employees. The Rod Combo was won by Mark Hendricks, one of the "Old AuSable Fly Shop" gift certificates was won by Michele Steffey. The other gift certificate was won by someone who "gifted" it back to the UMRA. That gift certificate will used again in a fundraising endeavor.

Redd Surveys

by Jim Anderson

For the past three years a few hardy volunteers have braved the cold weather in early November by “wading up” and getting into the river to gather spawning data. Three areas have been targeted, the Deward area, 1 mile above to 1 mile below M72 bridge and the Yellow Trees area. Redds are areas that have been fanned clean by the fish in order to create a spawning area. These locations have been identified, gps plotted and measured. Year after year the number of redds counted remains about the same number and are roughly in the same locations. This information is vital for consideration of future fish habitat and stream improvement work.

Due to the amount of snow cover and extremely cold temperatures during the first two weeks of November only one reach of the river data was collected. Thank you Chuck Hewitt for braving the elements to get the Deward area completed.

Electronic Options

by Dave Boberg

As most of you know, we have had a web site for some time now and in 2013 we expanded to add a Facebook page. During 2014 our social media presence grew even more. It is easy for us to inform our membership and others about all of the good things we are doing and we have had a lot of positive responses to these electronic mediums.

Our website has now grown and expanded to allow 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 2015, it is our hope to add a projects tab to the web page to show our progress on the river.

We continue to find that the convenience of our Facebook page is quite useful for quick items and more frequent communications. We currently have over 500 members on our Facebook page. Please follow UMRA on both our website and Facebook 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.

All of our contact information for emailing different UMRA departments (membership, info, restoration, etc.) are listed on our website, www.umrasite.org. However, if you email us at umra@umrasite.org, the email will be distributed to the proper person. If you have questions on how to use our electronic options, please send us an email.

Even 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.

2015 Dues are Due

We value your membership. You have both an online option as well as the traditional dues envelop option for joining or renewing your membership. Enclosed is a dues envelope for your convenience. Dues are for the 2015 calendar year and are now payable. We have included Comment Cards because we love to hear from you.

2015 Annual Meeting

Okay, get your 2015 calendars out, the Annual Membership Meeting is currently scheduled for August 15, 2015, 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 Donors

Steve Adams	Thomas & Christina Losiowski
Glen & Jean Anderson & Family	Christian and Alison Meyer
Doris Austin	Thelma Meyer
Dave and Jan Barr	Mr. & Mrs. Dane C. Nelson
Mark & Liz Banker	Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Nelson
Ken & Jean Bergman	Herm Thomas
Ann and Terry Blakely	Harry Olson
David Boberg	Thomas N. Olvitt
James H. Burton, Jr.	Donald & Cynthia Peitz
Don & Adair Calder	Roy & Britta Portenga
Dr. William Dean	Dave and Karen Purvis
Tom & Ruth Dostie	Thomas Quail
Tom & Lorel Evans	Mr. & Mrs Tad A. Randolph
Doug & Sherrie Fairbanks	Nicolas and Donna Rayner
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James and Jane Fochtman	James Rorick
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Judith Gregory	Jeff and Michele Steffey
Ron & Charlene Hatlen	Anthony Vescio
Mark & Valerie Hendricks	Bob & Diana Vought & Amato
Drew and Sara Hinderer	Tom and Peg Walbridge
Lorna Howenstein	David and Jan Weissenborn
Mr. & Mrs. W. K. Howenstein	Juanita Wennerstrom
Mr. Dean Iverson	Mark Wieland
Brian Johnson	David Wilson
Yoshihiro Koseki	Ray & Sue Woodard
George & Karen Leshkevich	Ron Zeeb

Note: Our apologies if you contributed to the Foundation in 2014 and we inadvertently omitted your name. Thank you to all who have contributed.

Financial Update

by Mark Rais

As of December 2014, our year-to-date income is \$56,050. This amount includes a \$25,000 Habitat Improvement Grant through the State of Michigan. Our expenses amount to \$32,683.00. Thus, our net income is \$23,367. Major disbursements included river patrols, Manistee River management plan and Portable toilets.

The Upper Manistee River Foundation had a balance of \$71,062. Undistributed earnings for future Restoration Projects totaled \$13,264. 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.

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 4th. The group of 27 citizen scientists were greeted by surprisingly dry weather and nice Fall temperatures when they assembled in the Kalkaska Eagles parking lot at 9 am on Saturday. After a brief introduction, teams of 5 and 6 volunteers dispersed to the five sampling sites. The group returned at noon, samples in hand and enjoyed a hot lunch on the sunny Patio.

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."

2014 represented the 5th year of the project 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 2015 Spring event will be held on Saturday, May 30, at 9 AM.

Please contact Bob Thorsen at sockeyebob@att.net or 248 318 5220 if you would like to help or would like more information!

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 (Secretary)	2016	Ann Blakely	2016
Dave Boberg(Prez)	2017	Vince Caruso	2015
Bill Dean	2015	Mark Hendricks	2016
Doug Fairbanks	2016	Chuck Hewitt	2015
Chuck Hawkins	2015	Ed McCoy	2017
Mark Rais (Treas)	2015	Jim Montagne	2017
Tad Randolph	2016	Bob Thorsen	2015
Jeff Steffey (V-P)	2017	Sue Woodard	2016

Emeritus Committee

Dave Weissenborn and John Mount-Campbell
