

“Outstanding State Resource Water” Workshop

For the past 18 months, Grand Traverse Baykeeper John Nelson has been exploring the possibility of redesignating Grand Traverse Bay as an Outstanding State Resource Water (OSRW). Prior to 1996, the northernmost portions of Lake Michigan (including the bay) and Lake Huron were listed as outstanding waters in the state’s water quality standards. This designation was dropped for undetermined reasons in subsequent MDEQ water quality standards documents. Currently, Lake Superior is still designated an OSRW.

Being designated an OSRW affords greater protection from potential degradation under Michigan’s water quality standards. Currently, discharges to the bay must meet a statewide standard for Lake Michigan that is lower



Designation as an Outstanding State Resource Water affords greater protection from potential degradation under Michigan’s water quality standards.

than the current quality of the bay. Under OSRW designation, new discharges or increased discharges from existing permit holders would be required to meet the higher OSRW standards. No discharges of lesser quality than existing waters of the bay would be allowed unless it was determined that no prudent and feasible alternatives to lowering water quality existed.

In order to explore this issue and its potential impacts on local municipalities, Grand Traverse County and the City of Traverse City are hosting a workshop for representatives of local government on January 10th from 2-5 p.m. at the Hagerty Center. Watershed Center staff will serve as facilitators and

MDEQ staff will present information and address questions and concerns.



A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR

Members & Partners

WINTER 2004

Recent Grant Awards Total \$642,000 For Key Watershed Projects

The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay will be the beneficiary of \$425,000 in Clean Michigan Initiative (CMI) monies to continue implementation of key Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Protection Plan recommendations. The Watershed Center is one of 14 organizations to receive support in this round of grant awards which totaled \$6 million statewide. The grant addresses the two primary pollutants in our watershed – excessive nutrients and sedimentation – and their primary source, which is stormwater.

Project partners include the City of Traverse City, Grand Traverse Conservation District, Inland Seas Education Association, Kalkaska Conservation District, and the Grand Traverse County and Kalkaska County Road Commissions.

Between this project and the Center’s recent \$116,000 EPA award for stormwater work on Kid’s Creek, our efforts to work with local governments and other partner organizations to begin addressing stormwater issues in a proactive manner have gotten a huge boost.

The CMI grant includes several innovative components, including: the planting of 700 feet of vegetative buffer strips on a highly used golf course in the headwaters of the Boardman River in the Village of Kalkaska, and, the planting of 1300 feet of vegetative buffer along the Boardman River in Hannah Park in Traverse City. Buffers are considered to be one of the most effective ways of reducing the amount of non-point source pollution from entering a water body. Buffers help stabilize banks, reduce flooding and sedimentation, remove pollutants and provide shade.

Matching funds and in-kind services in the amount of \$225,000 are committed to the project by the City of Traverse City, the conservation districts, The Watershed Center and the two county road commissions.



▲ Through a small matching grant from Global ReLeaf, more than 60 students worked to plant 18 trees at the Kid’s Creek site. See story on page 4.

“The Watershed Center project will employ both proven and innovative pollution control practices at strategic locations in the watershed,” said Mike Stifler, district supervisor, MDEQ Cadillac District Office. “We are very pleased to support their continuing efforts to bring together communities and landowners to protect Grand Traverse Bay.”

Other project tasks include:

- Restoring three streambank erosion sites on the Boardman River, a total of 125 linear feet.
 - Stabilizing six eroding road/stream crossings where sediment is the primary pollutant of concern (three sites on the Boardman, two sites on the Rapid River, and one on Williamsburg Creek).
 - Installing and operating four stormwater remediation sites (oil grit separators/outfall rehab) in Traverse City on the Boardman River.
 - Constructing a 5200 square foot wetland stormwater treatment system at Inland Seas Education Center in the Village of Suttons Bay.
 - Installing a modular (pervious) pavement demonstration site in a downtown Traverse City parking lot.
- Project tasks for the Kid’s Creek Stormwater grant from the EPA are:
- Updating city stormwater ordinances and developing appropriate Best Management Practices to manage Traverse City stormwater.
 - Cost sharing project in the Kid’s Creek neighborhood to encourage owners to establish buffer strips and install rain gardens to control the flow of rainwater.
 - Rehabilitation of two sections of streambank on Kid’s Creek north of Meijer’s.
 - Restoration of the Boardman River banks at the Farmer’s Market.

Partners in this project are the Grand Traverse Conservation District and the City of Traverse City.

Calendar 2004-05

Please call The Watershed Center offices at 231/935-1514 for additional details about the following events and activities listed here.

DECEMBER 2004
December 16
Annual Holiday Open House
The Watershed Center
4-6:30 p.m.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

JANUARY 2005
January 10
Outstanding State Water Resource Forum
2-5 p.m., Hagerty Center
Great Lakes Campus
Northwestern Michigan College

FEBRUARY 2005
February 9
Brown Bag
Water Studies Institute, room 112
Please call the office for the agenda.

MARCH 2005
March 9
Brown Bag
Water Studies Institute, room 112
Please call the office for the agenda.



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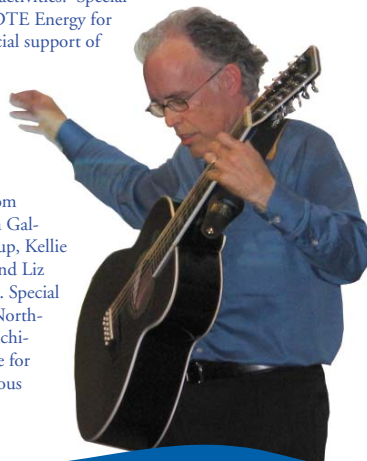
The Members&Partners newsletter is a quarterly publication of The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay. Our purpose is to keep members and partners informed about programs and activities of our organization as well as developments affecting the Grand Traverse Bay and its nearly 1,000-square mile watershed. Reader comments are welcome. Phone: 231/935-1514 or email: info@gtbbay.org.

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10th Anniversary Open House

Local writer Michael Delp and performer/composer/educator John Wunsch (below) helped entertain more than 100 guests at The Watershed Center's 10th Anniversary celebration October 20th at the Hagerty Center. The event highlighted ten years of water quality protection activities. Special thanks to DTE Energy for their financial support of the event.

Thanks to Susan Spears, Dee Smith and Lisa Steward from the Lawton Gallagher Group, Kellie Ferguson and Liz DeLaRossa. Special thanks to Northwestern Michigan College for their generous assistance.



Dear Friend of the Bay

Did you know that the Grand Traverse Bay watershed covers nearly 1,000 square miles, yet we only have one Baykeeper?

That's why we need your help now – we must raise \$15,000 by the end of the year so that our Baykeeper program can continue its critical work.

John Nelson is our Baykeeper. He works hard day in and day out to protect our quality of life. He answers all our pressing questions as land-owners. He conducts water quality monitoring. He promotes the environmental health of Grand Traverse Bay. He serves as a liaison between concerned citizens and agencies. He assists local governments.

John Nelson is the eyes, ears and voice for the natural wonder that is Grand Traverse Bay.

If our Baykeeper can't take care of it, who will? Please give now and as generously as you can. If you have already contributed this year – would you consider an additional gift? Together we can preserve the bounty and beauty that is our Grand Traverse Bay. Thank you for your caring generosity.

The bay supplies our drinking water. It's where we fish, kayak, swim, boat and meander along the shore. It's where we gaze at spectacular sunsets. Its beauty and bounty sustain our economy and our spirits.

Sincerely,

Anne Brasie, Executive Director



Yes, I would like to help protect Grand Traverse Bay.

\$35 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1000 Other \$_____

Please charge my gift to VISA MasterCard Discover American Express

Credit Card # _____ Expiration Date: _____

Signature _____

Enclosed is my check payable to The Watershed Center. Please use my donation toward the Baykeeper Boat.

Name _____

Billing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Send this form with your check to: The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay • 232 E. Front St. • Traverse City, MI 49684

Watershed Protection Plan Update

Since completing the Protection Plan last December, work has been progressing on implementation efforts. In addition to the grants listed on page 1, The Watershed Center received a “transition grant” to do work required to meet new EPA guidelines for watershed protection plans and to begin implementation of the recently approved plan. Partners in this project include the Conservation Resource Alliance, Grand Traverse Conservation District, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, the City of Traverse City, the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments, the Land Information Access Association and others.

Project elements include further inventory and assessment of streambanks, road stream crossings, local natural resource protection ordinances, septic tanks and other wastewater treatment infrastructure; development of public information materials; meetings to introduce local governments and the general public to plan; and laying the groundwork for the development of a stormwater task force.

Baykeeper Boat Tour: A Summer Afloat

The Watershed Center launched its new tugboat, the *Grand Traverse Baykeeper*, at the Grand Traverse Yacht Club on July 22. Approximately 100 friends, supporters and donors to the boat project attended a cocktail party and enjoyed Baykeeper Wave ice cream cones from Moomers. The launch party was the first in a summer long series of outreach events throughout the watershed billed as the “Baykeeper Boat Tour.” The purpose of this tour was to introduce the public to the boat and the Baykeeper program, and to provide useful information about clean boating and controlling the spread of invasive species. The tour was partially funded by a grant from Michigan’s Coastal Management Program.

Nearly 1,000 Baykeeper cones were served over the course of the summer at the following marinas and sites: Suttons Bay, Elk Rapids, Clinch Park, Northport, Clam River at the Docksides and at Friday Night Live August 27. The final stop on the boat tour was The Watershed Center’s recent 10th Anniversary Open House.

As part of the tour, the Center produced a handy “Clean Boating” card and provided an informative brochure on invasive species. Special thanks to tour sponsors: Arms & Cole, Republic Bank, Alden State Bank, TV 29&8, WTCM, Bonek Insurance, Bay Breeze Yacht Charter, Marsh Auto and Moomers.

And thank you to our volunteers who worked at the tour stops: Liz DeLaRossa, Jim and Laura Dagwell, Kate Jaquish, Tom Yocum, Jenny Manville, Sue and Gordy Brown, Jack Nowland, Dave Dickerson, Ken Bindschatel, John McKinney, Ellen Kohler, Phil von Voigtlander, and Randy Tucker.



The background photo salutes the launch of The Grand Traverse Baykeeper. Other momentous occasions of the tug’s first season include: 1) The Grand Traverse Baykeeper welcomes the public on its stop at Clinch Park Marina. 2) The maiden voyage on Grand Traverse Bay.

Tug Assists in Torch Lake Project

Three Lakes Association was recently awarded \$62,000 from the MDEQ for an 18-month project to build a predictive water quality model for Torch Lake. Surrounding townships are contributing \$14,000 in matching funds. Volunteers, including student interns, will bring another \$25,000 or more in matching funds to the project.

The model will help predict the impacts of various changes to the lake’s ecosystem, including increased phosphorus inputs from future sources such as new sewage collection and treatment systems, marinas, condominiums or other residential development, failing septic tanks or other man-made or natural ecological changes. The initial effort will focus on Torch Lake, but the model will also include Clam Lake and Lake Bellaire.

Hundreds of samples will be collected from the



lake’s water column by volunteers who will also measure tributary rates flow and work with a peer review committee to ensure the results will withstand scientific scrutiny.

Preliminary screening of stream flows and total phosphorus loadings were made as part of a summer internship program with two Elk Rapids High School honor students.

The Watershed Center is assisting Three Lakes Association this fall

by providing the Baykeeper tugboat as a monitoring platform. Most pleasure boats have been removed from the lake, but the rugged tugboat will stay in a slip at DeWitt Marine on the Clam River until the lake freezes over. Special thanks to DeWitt Marine for providing the tug a home for the fall and helping us get her in and out of the river.

City and County Step Up To Protect Our Waters

Traverse City’s wastewater treatment plant is now on line with its new membrane bioreactor technology. The plant upgrade, the largest installation of this technology in the United States, is already exceeding all expectations. Effluent samples indicate that the quality of the discharged waters far exceeds necessary standards – and in some cases meets drinking water standards. Now that’s clean! This \$31 million dollar project not only upgraded treatment levels from secondary to tertiary, it increased the capacity of the plant to accommodate future growth. Noise and odor levels have been substantially reduced. The plant serves the city and surrounding townships.

Ground has been broken on the new Grand Traverse County Septage Treatment Plant. The county expects to open this plant in April 2005. When finished the plant will convert an estimated 10 million gallons of septic, grease trap and holding tank waste into a Class A biosolid suitable for fertilizing gardens. Currently, untreated waste is applied directly onto fields at various sites located around the county. As our population grows it becomes increasingly difficult to find suitable sites for land applied septage. All 13 Grand Traverse County townships are participating in this project and when it is complete all septage haulers in the county will be required to use the treatment facility.

Kudos to all the forward thinking officials and citizens that helped make these two great projects happen – they represent a significant public commitment to clean water for our future.

Summer Secchi Dipping

Once again, a devoted crew of volunteers from the Power Squadron spent the summer taking Secchi Disk readings from five different locations in East Bay. The disk measures the clarity of the bay. From 2002 to 2003 there was an approximate 11% increase in the depth at which the disk could still be seen. This summer the numbers were slightly below last year’s figures with average depth readings of 35 feet compared to 38.75 feet in 2003. Although this one parameter does not tell the whole story, the increase in clarity of the bay indicates potentially harmful changes to the ecosystem. The increasing clarity, attributed to the filtering capabilities of the zebra mussel, is allowing light to penetrate to much greater depths leading to increased plant and alga growth. Some of this plant material ends up on area beaches, causing unwanted messes and odors.

Special thanks to the following volunteers: Harv Norris, Lyn and Pat Salathiel, Judy and David Pohlod, and Barbara and Tom Lyon.

Kid's Creek Project Update

Over the summer, The Watershed Center coordinated six work bees with the general public and various organizations to complete work at the site. So far, seven organizations and more than 100 people have volunteered their time to help assist with restoration efforts at this site, overseen by staff from the Grand Traverse Conservation District and Goudie-Fraser. More than 30 erosion sites (or 3,000 linear feet of stream) will be repaired as part of the stream restoration project, with some 20 sites already completed. Special thanks go to the following organizations for providing volunteers and assisting with restoration efforts:

- * Traverse City Rotary Clubs
- * United Way Day of Caring – Great Wolf Lodge and Kohls
- * Home Depot
- * DTE Energy Green Team
- * Conservation Resource Alliance
- * Goudie-Fraser Inc.
- * Traverse City Central High School students
- * TBA Career Tech Center

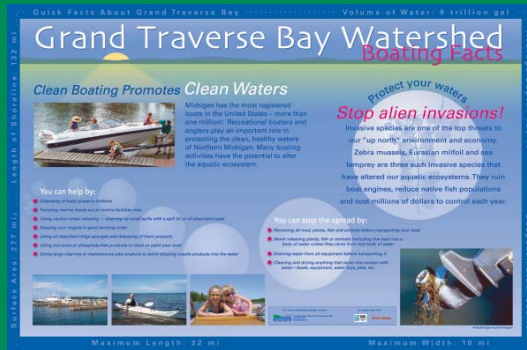
A public Open House was hosted at the site October 2. The Center and Garfield Township hosted a workshop at the Great Wolf Lodge in early October for local businesses and township officials to learn more about the project and tour the site. Thanks to the small, but dedicated, group of individuals who came to these two events!

Through a matching grant from Global ReLeaf, we were able to plant 18 balled and burlapped trees at the site on November 3. More than 60 students from construction classes and instructor Anna Bligh's Agri-Science and Natural Resources classes at the TBA Career Tech Center were on hand to assist in the planting effort. Dennis Bowles, from Global ReLeaf, provided guidance and education regarding the importance of trees and how to properly plant them. Seven river birch, seven red maple, and four red oaks were planted. Special thanks go to J.E. Landscape & Irrigation Inc., Garden Goods, and TC Rentals for donating labor, materials, and equipment to prep the site and plant the trees, and to Global ReLeaf for supporting the project.

Since Global ReLeaf is an initiative of American Forests, their mission is the planting of trees throughout communities to learn the impact of global warming, reduce heat island and air pollution, and to enhance our quality of life. For more information, visit www.globalreleaf.org.

Project Coordinator Sarah U'Ren has been leading the effort to develop and place educational signs around the Grand Traverse Bay. These signs inform the public regarding general watershed facts, clean boating, coastal wetlands, and the Chain of Lakes watershed. Additionally, a three panel kiosk will be placed at Hill Park teaching visitors about Traverse City's newly upgraded wastewater treatment plant, the importance of rain gardens, and historic Boardman Lake. Some of these signs have already been installed – be on the lookout for them! The rest will go in by the end of the year. Signs include:

1. Clean Boating signs placed at marinas and boat launches around the Bay
5. General Watershed Education signs placed at public parks located along the shoreline in the Traverse City area
3. Chain of Lakes General Watershed Education signs
2. Coastal Wetland signs
3. Panel Kiosk at Hill Park in Traverse City



Special thanks go to Corbin Design for donating design work for the Clean Boating, General Watershed, Coastal Wetland, and Chain of Lakes signs. Thanks to Heidi, Lynn, Shawanna, and Scott! Other partners on this project include DDC, National Park Service River & Trails Program, Grand Traverse Conservation District, Top of the Stra Watershed Council, City of Traverse City, Western Media, and the many municipalities and villages who agreed to place signs on their property. Thanks to everyone who has assisted in this large effort!

Below is an abbreviated list of Grand Traverse Baykeeper John Nelson's activities the past six months.

Baykeeper Log	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Served on the Leelanau Township Land Use Visioning Committee.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organized a forum with Traverse City and Grand Traverse County officials to consider the designation of Grand Traverse Bay as an Outstanding State Resource Water.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Participated in the VisionTC planning charette hosted by the Traverse City Convention and Visitors Bureau and conducted by William McDonough Associates.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Serving on a coalition of regional stakeholders, including the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce, city and county officials, the Michigan Land Use Institute, TC-TALUS and others, to develop a Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan for the area.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assisted with the Kid's Creek Restoration Project.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Serving on Acme Township's boat launch committee.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Participated as a team leader for Stream Search.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attended Shoreline stakeholder workshops.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assisting in Three Lakes Association phosphorous modeling study. <i>The first use of the Baykeeper tugboat for research in the watershed.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Served as a resource and presenter at the Crystal Lake Walkabout.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provided presentations in several area classrooms and assisted in the RIPPLE teacher workshop this summer at the Water Studies Institute.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Responded to various citizen inquiries regarding water quality and shoreline issues.