

BOARDMAN/OTTAWAY RIVER NETWORK

June 4, 2024 | 10:30-11:30am

Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy

MEETING NOTES

I. Welcome and Introductions

See participant list below.

II. Recreation Plan Action Team Updates

- a. Legal framework for the river
 - i. Provided an update on the status of the team's priorities:
 1. Create a mission statement that defines the "why" case – in progress; draft composed, need final agreement among team members.
 2. Research existing models including international models of communities who have already done this successfully – in progress; research compiled, need to share with the team.
 3. Identify a list of stakeholders to engage in this work moving forward – in progress.
 - ii. Working to meet with a local lawyer to discuss the potential for establishing the river as a legal entity and identify next steps if appropriate.
- b. Robust and comprehensive education program
 - i. Provided an update on the status of the team's priorities:
 1. Assess current educational programs, identifying what educational programs are currently in place and what else can be developed – complete, need to share with the network.
 2. Develop a shared educational template that includes key messages about prioritizing the health of the river that can be adopted by all – in progress; using the priority metrics identified by the Healthy River Action Team (temperature, stage/flow, fish and macroinvertebrate abundance and diversity, nutrients).
 - ii. Shared priorities the team decided to focus on next:
 1. Compile a document that describes each type of river ecosystem from headwater wetlands all the way to the bay.
 2. Create a "river academy" core curriculum about the river.

3. Offer in-person educational events on the river.
- c. Healthy thriving river
 - i. Determined 8 river segments (subwatersheds) that represent the diversity of the river from headwaters to outlet.
 1. Indicators/metrics will be reported for each segment as well as the entire river.
 - ii. Discussions focused on identifying what indicators/metrics best reflect the ecological health of the river, as well as what might be feasible to monitor.
 1. Agreement that priority metrics are water temperature, stage/flow, macroinvertebrate and fish diversity and abundance, and nutrients.
 2. Upcoming meeting to decide final indicators/metrics and begin discussing a monitoring plan.

III. Topic of Interest

- a. S. Airport road-stream crossing – GT County Road Commission
 - i. The road commission applied for a RAISE grant to begin the planning phase of finding a viable option to lift S. Airport Rd. out of the floodplain in the Logan’s Landing area; they have not heard if their application was approved.

IV. Open Forum/Announcements

- a. Conservation Resource Alliance
 - i. Boardman/Ottaway dam removal and restoration efforts are inspiring other dam removal work.
 1. Secured funds for a feasibility study to remove Boyne Falls Dam with support from the village.
 2. Presenting to the Kalkaska County commissioners related to the potential removal of Rugg Pond.
- b. Grand Traverse Conservation District
 - i. Boardman River Clean Sweep held a river clean up between Shumsky & Beitner; noticed riparian vegetation removal in the natural rivers segment.
 - ii. Conducted a planting at Medalie Park; county has established no mow zones.
 - iii. On June 18, Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) staff are meeting about the proposed Boardman/Ottaway River crossing
 - iv. Spring field trip season is wrapping up (NEST).

- c. Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy
 - i. Working on the Spring Lake addition to Brown Bridge, funded through MNRTF grant.
 - ii. Acquired Camp Grelick.
 - iii. Turtle Cove preserve is open.
 - iv. MNRTF board is holding a meeting in East Bay Township; includes a bus trip in the Boardman/Ottaway River watershed.
- d. East Bay Township
 - i. Hired a sustainability fellow (MiClimate Corps).
 - ii. Township is interested in a septic ordinance interest; Time of Transfer or something more protective.
 - iii. Mapping tree canopy by district.
 - iv. Looking to update their stormwater ordinance.
- e. Grand Traverse Band
 - i. Submitted a NOAA coastal resiliency proposal (\$11.9M) to purchase and restore the Timber Shores property in Northport, as well as conduct shoreline habitat restoration and fisheries habitat improvements along the 100-block of Front St. with the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority.
 - ii. Built a streamside facility to raise lake sturgeon and stock them below Union Street Dam this fall.
 - iii. Update on grayling reintroduction:
 - 1. Have eggs from the first brood stock and will possibly stock 1 system next year
 - 2. Researching how grayling fair with brook/brown trout
 - 3. Conducting an eDNA study to see what historic fish were in the Boardman/Ottaway River.
- f. Great Lakes Fishery Commission
 - i. Received funds to hire an education and outreach position and cover some construction costs for FishPass
 - ii. Phase I of FishPass construction is underway

V. Adjourn

PARTICIPANTS

Brown Bridge Advisory Committee (BBAC)	Paul Maxbauer
Conservation Resource Alliance (CRA)	Kim Balke
East Bay Township (EBT)	Claire Karner
Garfield Township (GT)	Sean Kehoe
GT Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians (GTB)	Naomi Louchouran, Brett Fessell, Courtney Hessell, Nick VanderStelt
Grand Traverse Conservation District (GTCD)	Steve Largent, Rachel Straughen, Tom Vitale, Tom Wertz
Grand Traverse County (GTC)	John Chase
GT Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC)	Chris Garrock, Jennifer Jay
Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC)	Reid Swanson
Inland Seas Education Association (ISEA)	Juliana Lisuk
Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition (MHRLC)	Bob Stuber
Rotary Charities (RC)	Freya Bradford
The Watershed Center GT Bay (TWC)	Christine Crissman
TC Downtown Development Authority (DDA)	Harry Burkholder
Engaged community members	Rick Kane, Jeanie Williams