



Four-Township Water Resources Council, Inc.

P.O. Box 634 ❖ Richland, Michigan ❖ 49083-0634

Fall, 2016 Newsletter

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A Message from the President

The Four-Township Water Resources Council has been working this summer to collect data for streams in our area, in support of updating the [Watershed Management Plan](#) (WMP). These include Augusta, Comstock, Gull, Prairieville and Silver Creeks, as well as Spring Brook and part of Seven Mile Creek. We sponsored the initial WMP (published in 2010), and, in consultation with Michigan DEQ, have determined it time for an update of this plan. Jamie McCarthy, Watershed Coordinator for the Kalamazoo River Watershed Council, has been hired as the project lead for this effort, supported in the field by FTWRC Board Members Ken Kornheiser, Roger Turner, Emily Wilke, Rich Mather and Steve Allen. Jamie has been evaluating field data collection effort looking at road stream crossings of all the watershed streams that feed into the Kalamazoo River. Also to be included in this revision effort will be new and ongoing research and evaluation activities conducted by the Kellogg Biological Station, the Gull Lake Quality Organization and FTWRC.

We welcome watershed residents to attend an informational session at the regular FTWRC meeting on **Monday, November 7th**, to learn more about this project, the updates, and – where possible – contribute additional observations to this effort. Please consider attending with your comments, questions and concerns.

Water course or in-stream conditions, erosion locations feeding directly into area streams, runoff from fields or other agricultural activities, nutrient impacts from confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) – these and other impairments that can affect out surface waters are important and need to be documented where and when they occur.

By cataloging these conditions, to the extent they might be present in local waters, we can be prepared to work to correct and/or restore issues with grant funding sources that are offered by MiDEQ and other entities.

- Steve Allen

Public Input Encouraged on FTWRC Watershed Management Plan

The next Four-Township Water Resources Council meeting is scheduled for **Monday, November 7th, at 7PM** at the KBS Educational Building. We will be meeting in Room 145.

At this meeting we will be discussing proposed updates to our Watershed Management Plan for **local streams**. The Plan identifies threats to local water quality, pollution sources and issues, and future implementation strategy and projects – which might then become eligible for State grant funding. This Plan will determine the future direction the FTWRC will take in protecting water resources; the public is therefore encouraged to attend and provide input.

If you cannot attend the meeting, input can be sent to the FTWRC Board of Directors via email at mail@ftwrc.org or by U.S. mail PO Box 634, Richland by November 28, 2016. A final draft of the Plan will be posted to our website www.ftwrc.org from December 1st through 15th, and public comments can be sent to FTWRC by email or U.S. mail by December 15, 2016.

We look forward to your input on this very important matter.

Fall Color!

No, not exactly the turning-of-the-leaves color, but rather a move to add color to our newsletter. Starting with this issue, online versions will include color pictures and graphics. The printed newsletter will remain 'monochromatic'. Online newsletters will also henceforth contain live links to relevant content on the Internet.

FTWRC 2016 Kanoe the Kazoo Paddle Event on Fair Lake

For the fourteenth year in a row the Four Township Water Resources Council hosted a paddle as part of the Kanoe the Kazoo events. This year the Council conducted a guided tour on Fair Lake in Barry Township, Barry County, on Saturday morning, June 18, 2016. Thanks to the generosity of riparian land owners in providing this access for our paddle, we were privileged to be able to offer an opportunity to see Fair Lake, which has no public access site. Fair Lake is the southern most regular nesting site for the Common Loon in North America. Our tour focused on lake ecology and the interactions between the human and natural communities that live on or in the lake.

Our naturalist guides, Dr Stephen K. Hamilton, MSU Professor of Ecosystem Ecology & Biogeochemistry at the Kellogg Biological Station and Steve Allen, currently with Geum Services, Inc., Ecological & Native Plant Consulting and previously naturalist at the Kalamazoo Nature Center for many years, discussed the ecology of the lake and pointed out interesting birds, plants and other features of the aquatic environment. Along with the loon family, the pleasures of our tour including bogs featuring numerous wild orchids and carnivorous plants.

Photos courtesy Ken Kornheiser and Steve Allen.



Crooked Lake residents install wash station **Reprinted from the Hastings Banner (25 August 2016)**

A watercraft wash station, the first in southwest Michigan, has been constructed by lake community volunteers at the Upper Crooked Lake Township launch site. The purpose of the station is to reduce the possibility of further introduction of aquatic invasive species. Upper Crooked Lake is host to five non-native aquatic species, a higher number than other lakes in the area.

Property owners in the area will collectively pay more than \$345,000 during a seven-year AIS special assessment cycle.

“In an effort to control invasive species which are most often plants, communities located near lakes, particularly inland lakes, may request a special assessment district be created,” said John Hoek, chairperson for the Prairieville Township Parks and Recreation Commission. “Residents pay fees to hire weed control professionals to come in and dredge or treat the lake. This is a seven-year process.”

Hoek said new invasive species could substantially increase the amount residents must pay, lowering lakefront property values by double-digit percentages.

Last summer, a study conducted by a group of concerned Upper Crooked Lake residents, found that approximately 12 percent of the watercraft launched at the site were not properly cleaned, drained and dried. Other research data consistently identifies recreational boaters are the primary carriers of invasive species.

A new township aquatic invasive species ordinance requires all site users to have their watercraft inspected upon entry and decontaminated, if needed, prior to launch. Owners refusing this service will be directed to leave the site.

The Upper Crooked Lake group also adopted a “good neighbor” initiative, a unique feature designed to prevent movement of aquatic invasive species from Upper Crooked Lake to nearby lakes.

“This initiative requires all watercraft coming out of the water be power washed before leaving the launch site,” Hoek said. “We’re very excited to be the first in our area to have wash station, but we want to look after our neighbors, too.”

The watercraft wash station will be staffed during prime usage periods by trained attendants. During non-manned hours, self-wash equipment will be available.



Invasive European frogbit detected in W Michigan Lakes
Excerpt from the [Michigan Lake & Stream Associations website](#)
(12 October 2016)

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has confirmed the presence of European frogbit, a prohibited aquatic invasive plant, in Reeds and Fisk lakes in the city of East Grand Rapids. European frogbit was first verified in Michigan in 1996 along the Great Lakes waterways in southeastern Michigan and has since been found in areas along Lake Huron and the eastern Upper Peninsula. The detections on Reeds and Fisk lakes represent the westernmost known locations of this invasive plant in Michigan and the Midwest.



The plant quickly forms dense colonies or mats in shallow, slow-moving waters. These thick mats prevent native plant growth, make movement difficult for ducks and large fish, and cause problems for boaters, anglers and swimmers. European frogbit is spread by plant fragments or by turions – small, quarter-inch buds that break off the plant and overwinter in lake or stream beds. Plant parts easily can be transported to new water bodies on boat motors or trailers, fishing gear and other recreational equipment.

Anyone can help by reporting suspected European frogbit. The easiest way to report this harmful invasive plant is through the MISIN website, at www.misin.msu.edu or by downloading the MISIN app to a smartphone. First, become familiar with identifying the plant. MISIN offers a short identification tutorial which helps distinguish between European frogbit and similar aquatic plants. If you encounter European frogbit on the water, take some photos. These can be uploaded on the MISIN website or attached to a report via the MISIN app. Reports are directed through MISIN to DNR and DEQ aquatic biologists.

Membership Information

The Four-Township Water Resources Council is financed by tax-deductible dues and contributions. Benefits include the council newsletter, information on education programs, and participation in the annual meeting and election of directors. Dues cover the period from January 1 through December 31 of each calendar year.

- Yes! I would like to join the Four-Township Water Resources Council
 I am already a member and would like to renew my membership

Name _____

Email address _____

*Providing your e-mail address will help us to save on mailing costs.
Your e-mail address will not be shared or sold.*

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