



STEWARDSHIP | EDUCATION | ADVOCACY

Environmental Justice

*Protecting and improving Michigan's treasured and vulnerable waterways.*

ROTARY CLUB OF EAST LANSING

April 18, 2023

## ABOUT MIKE STOUT

Michigan Waterways Stewards Founder

Mike is a Lansing area resident, '83 MSU graduate, author, world record long-distance solo-paddler, president of i3 Marketing, LLC, and founder of Michigan Waterways Stewards.

Over the past seven seasons he has paddled over 6,500 miles, solo paddled across Lake Michigan six times and Lake Superior once, and competed in extreme paddling races across the U.S.



Stout is a C-level executive having Fortune 100 experience and over 30 years of industry leading success. He is driven to create winning strategy to enact change and organizational improvement. He is expert in leading innovation and transformational change. Over his career, he has taken regional companies nationally, transformed private label companies into national branded powerhouses, turned around major businesses, and led company and industry-wide innovation.

Michigan Waterways Stewards combines his passion for the water and expertise in developing high performance organizations. It his way of giving back and paying it forward.

Michigan Waterways Stewards Website:

[www.MiWaterwaysStewards.org](http://www.MiWaterwaysStewards.org)

Michigan Waterways Stewards Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/people/Michigan-Waterways-Stewards/100089421867471/](https://www.facebook.com/people/Michigan-Waterways-Stewards/100089421867471/)

i3 Marketing Website:

[www.I3-Marketing.com](http://www.I3-Marketing.com)

Stout's Personal website:

[www.TheNorthlandAdventurer.com](http://www.TheNorthlandAdventurer.com)

Stout's Personal Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/mike.stout.165](https://www.facebook.com/mike.stout.165)

## AN UNEXPECTED AMAZING JOURNEY

What started out as summer fun on the local lake evolved into an obsession of extreme sport, high adventure, and personal achievement.

As my skill and confidence grew so did my desire to accomplish more; whether it be to paddle faster, travel longer, or seek greater challenges.

Then I had the thought about setting world records.



I have paddled 6,335 miles over my first seven seasons.



LAKE MICHIGAN (6) • LAKE SUPERIOR • LAKE HURON • STRAITS OF MACKINAC





A HIGHLIGHT OF MY LAKE MICHIGAN CROSSINGS  
IS THE FIRST SIGHTING OF LUDINGTON'S BIG SABLE LIGHTHOUSE.





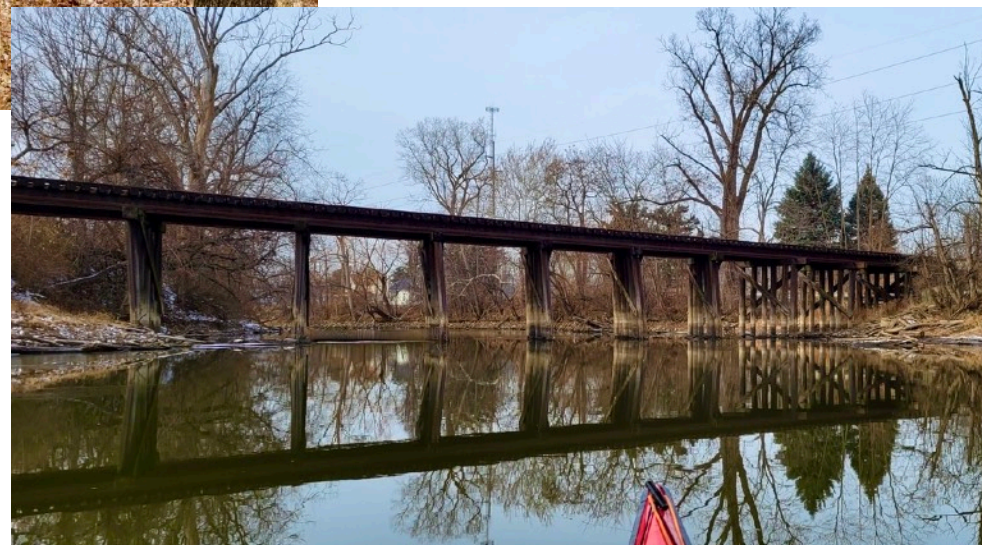
**OUR BEGINNING.**  
Unimaginable  
Unacceptable  
River Conditions





I WOULD NOT BE  
COMPLICIT.

What we have since achieved  
has been described as  
remarkable if not  
transformational.





## MICHIGAN WATERWAYS STEWARDS

Our mission is to protect and improve our treasured and vulnerable waterways for the benefit of fish and wildlife, recreation and sport.

Through our work will inspire current and future generations to take a greater role in protecting our waterways.

Our goal is to make Michigan's waterways the envy of our Great Lakes industrial states.

**Join Us. Make An Impact. This Is Our Legacy.**





City of  
**EAST LANSING**  
Home of Michigan State University



**PLAN OF ACTION**  
Assess  
Communicate  
Collaborate  
Celebrate

River Angels In Action: Michigan Waterways Stewards: Mike Stout, Christine Pearson. Delta Sigma Phi: Michael Rhadigan, CJ Brenton, Will Grenolds, Abishek, Kumar, James Ikler, John Murray, Benjamin Jackson, Jack Kirkwood, Christopher Cording, Matthew Kosak, Spencer Ances, Jonah Kalawa, Jake Van Horn, Jake Pelton, Aiden Koechley, Brendan Woellecke, Timothy McKay, AJ Gordon, Lucas Hicks, Spencer Rajewski, Oscar Henderson, Zach Kaplan, Kai Cyr, Andrew Degidio, and project lead Gage Farrow. There were others who participated coming in and out. **East Lansing Rotary: Project lead Peter Dewan with President; Bill McMillan, President-Elect; Maribeth Fletcher, Secretary and Sung Lee, former President of the East Lansing Rotary.** Friends of the Red Cedar River: George Stockman. City of East Lansing: Cliff Walls, Environmental Specialist. Meridian Township: Emma Campbell, Land Stewardship Coordinator Parks and Recreation. Independent volunteer: Matthew Edmond.







## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING



### This Is Exactly What We Need.

Fantastic work on the river clean-up! Your organization is exactly what we need in the State of Michigan to help us tackle the trash build up in our streams.

Barney Boyer  
EGLE, Environmental Quality Analyst

### The Best Thing.

Michigan Waterways Stewards is the best thing that has ever happened to our local rivers.

Tom Cannon  
Okemos Resident and Avid Paddler

### Your Efforts Are Phenomenal.

Michigan Waterways Stewards efforts are just phenomenal. It's a testament to what a committed citizen can do when passionate about an issue. Thank you sincerely for being a steward over our precious water resources for generations to come.

Beth Bowen  
Delta Township Trustee

### Thank You For Your Actions.

Thank you for your work. The areas cleared have been a long-term concern for paddlers, anglers, and others enjoying the Grand and Red Cedar Rivers for years. Thanks again for your responsible actions to promote a clean, healthy, and navigable river system in our watershed.

Fred Cowles  
President, Middle Grand River Organization of Watersheds



## CREATING A MID-MICHIGAN TOP RIVER DESTINATION



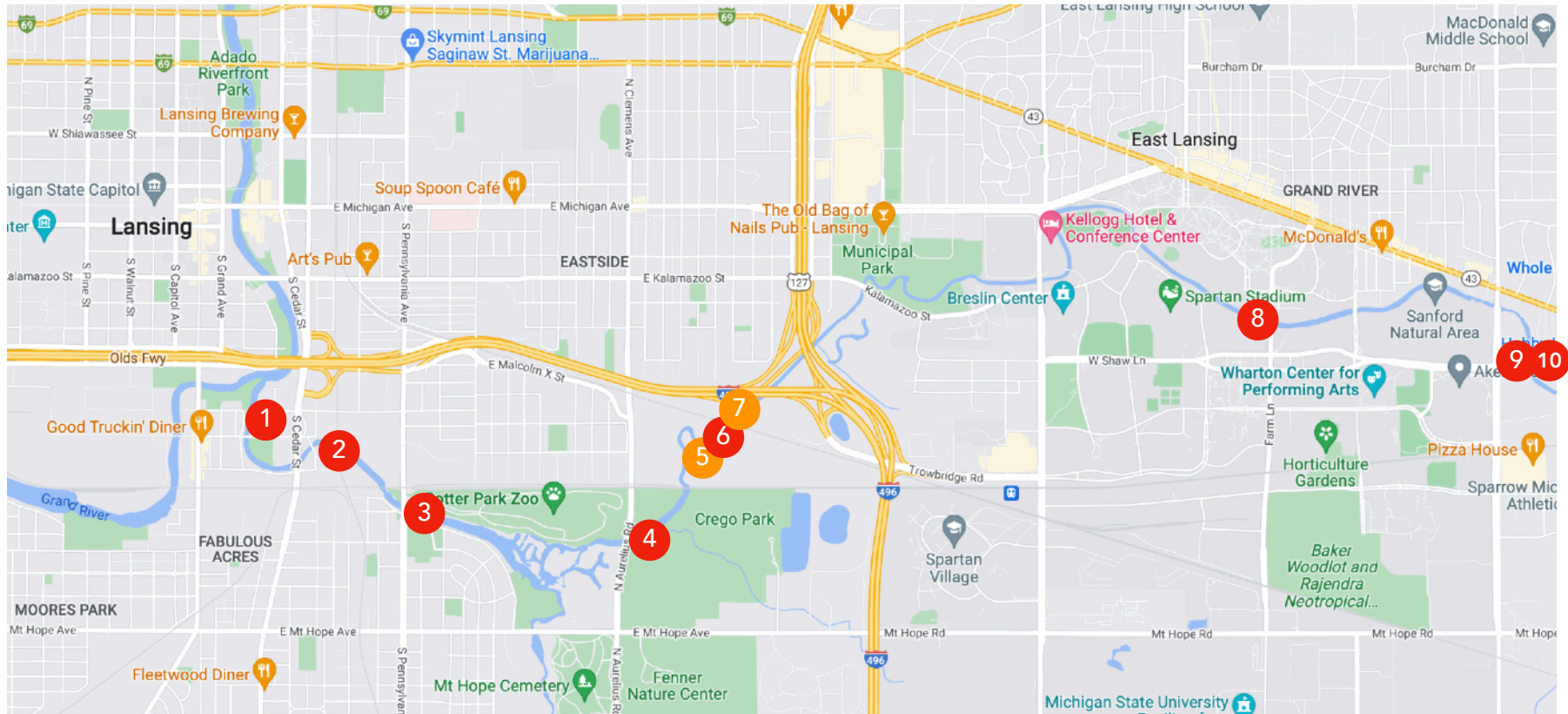
The Red Cedar River offers more scenic beauty, abundance of fish and wildlife, varied rural and urban settings, and opportunities for sport and recreation, than any other Michigan river.

Our work will create a vibrant river-long community for the benefit of its residents, guests, and businesses.

ROTARY CLUB OF EAST LANSING IS MAKING AN IMPACT

# CREATING MID-MICHIGAN'S TOP RIVER DESTINATION

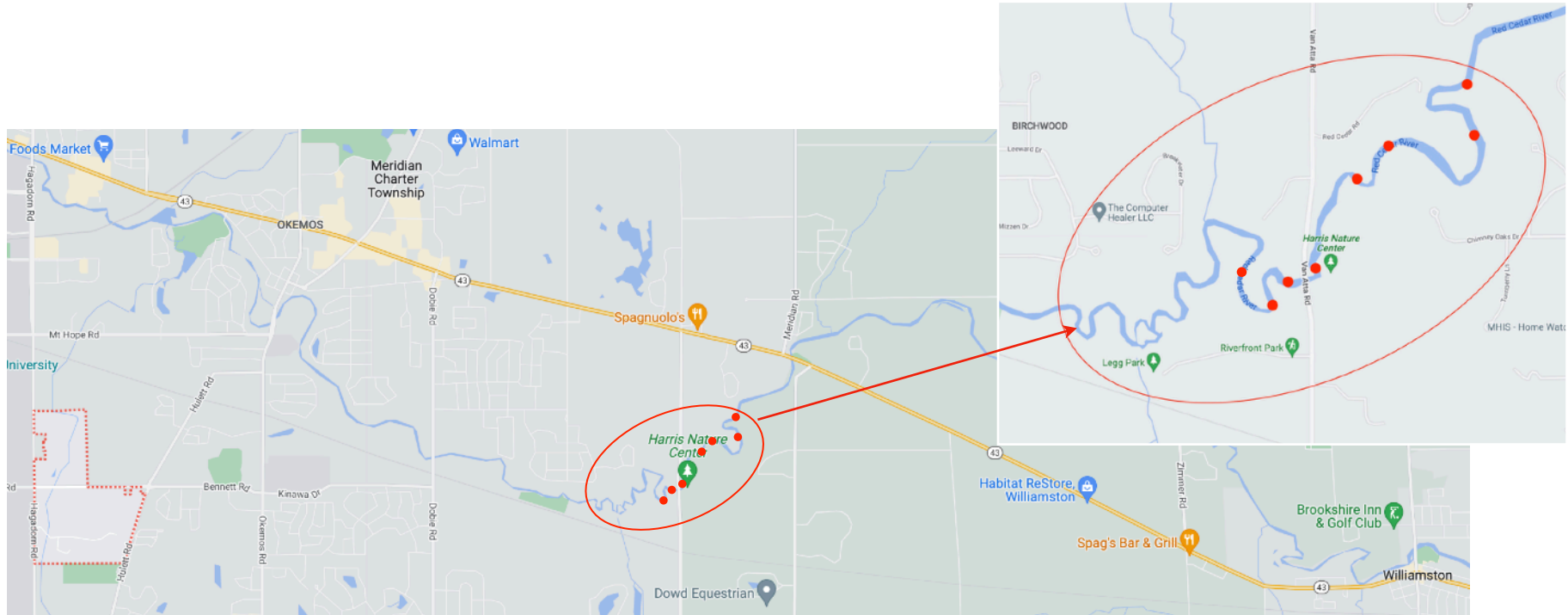
Red Cedar River, Lansing-East Lansing metropolitan area work recently completed.



- 1) Red Cedar River Clean Up
- 2) Red Cedar River-wide Railroad Bridge Disentanglement
- 3) Red Cedar River Spring Assessment
- 4) New Kruger Landing Boat Launch
- 5) Red Cedar River River-wide Obstructions To Be Cleared
- 6) Red Cedar River Railroad Hazards Removed
- 7) Red Cedar River River-wide Obstructions To Be Cleared
- 8) Red Cedar River/MSU Campus Clean Up
- 9) Red Cedar River Clean Up (Delta Sigma Phi)
- 10) Red Cedar River Winter Assessments - Meridian Township (3)

# RED CEDAR RIVER ASSESSMENT

## Meridian Township Riverfront Park - Scenic - Wild - Not User Friendly



Presented to Meridian Township Board on 1.24.23.

Later presented to Meridian Township's:

- Parks and Recreation Director, LuAnn Maisner.
- Supervisor, Patrica Jackson
- Assistant Township Manager, Dan Opsommer

Also presented to Williamstown Township Supervisor Wanda Bloomquist.

To view the entire presentation, visit:

<https://www.miwaterwaysstewards.org/meridian-township-board-meeting-12423.html>

### AREAS NEEDING WORK - RED

- 1) River-right Riverbank Urban Debris<sup>1</sup>
- 2) River-wide Entanglements<sup>1</sup>
- 3) River-wide Entanglements<sup>1</sup>
- 4) River-wide Entanglements<sup>1</sup>
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- 6) River-wide Entanglements<sup>1</sup>
- 7) River-wide Entanglements<sup>1</sup>
- 8) River-wide Entanglements<sup>1</sup>
- 9) River-wide Entanglements<sup>1</sup>
- 10) River-left Riverbank Urban Debris<sup>2</sup>

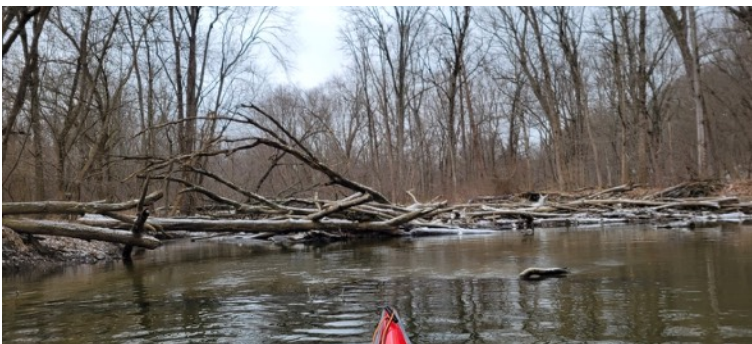
<sup>1</sup>Meridian Township Has Expressed A High Level Of Interest to Learn.

<sup>2</sup>No response from City of Williamston.

Seven river-wide entanglements within 1.25 miles make this stretch difficult for all, impassable for many, and more dangerous for everyone.



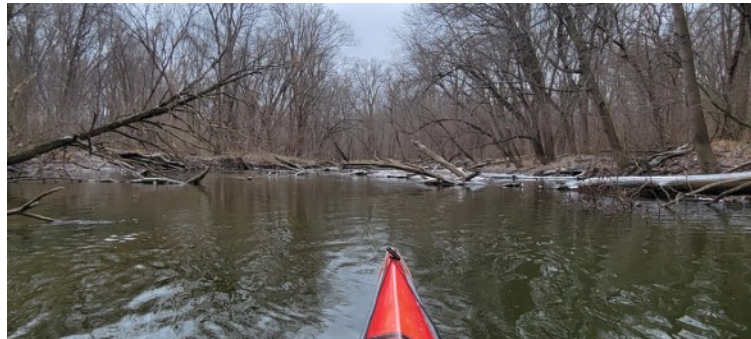
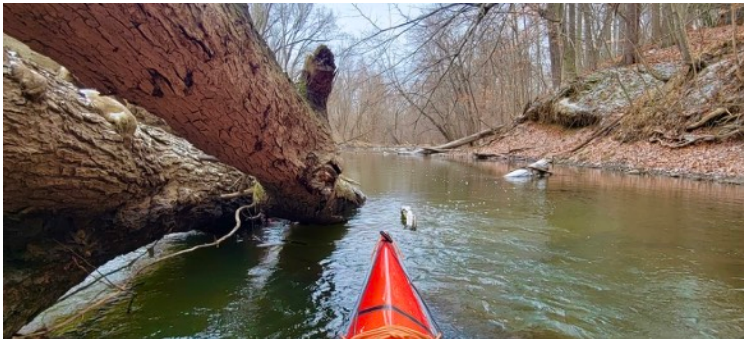
JANUARY 2023 ASSESSMENT



PADDLING MERIDIAN RIVERFRONT PARK



**JANUARY 2023 ASSESSMENT**



**PADDLING MERIDIAN RIVERFRONT PARK**



JANUARY 2023 ASSESSMENT



PADDLING MERIDIAN RIVERFRONT PARK







## RECOMMENDED ACTION AND BENEFITS SUMMARY

A 1.25 mile stretch in Meridian Township, with its eight river-wide obstructions, makes Red Cedar River passage difficult for all and impassible for many. As waters rise and the river quickens, additional areas may prove impassable and certainly more dangerous. Several of these entanglements are so jammed up with trees, logs, and other natural debris, they may contribute to flooding during spring thaw and periods of heavy rain.

The removal of these eight river-wide obstructions will:

- Contribute to making the Red Cedar River a treasured community asset.
  - Improves the user experience.
  - Improves user safety.
- Build on Meridian Township's prized park system.
- Mitigate the risk of potential flooding.
- Help promote the Red Cedar River as a top Mid-Michigan destination for fishing, paddling, and floating.
- Help create a vibrant river-long community.
- Be worthy of a grand celebration: Red Cedar River Run.

With the Red Cedar River at seasonal low levels at the time, and with accessible river trails on river left (south side), removal of these river-wide entanglements would have been easiest and safest then.

If Meridian Township doesn't want to remove these river-wide entanglements in their entirety, creating 10 - 12 foot wide passages will significantly improve the user experience and their safety.



With spring thaw and floodwaters upon us, Red Cedar River conditions are considerable different now. New assessments and plans must be made



## ITS A LAUNCH

### Introducing Michigan Waterways Rescue Unit

Michigan Waterways Rescue Unit (MWRU)

- A first of its kind concept
- Provides all that is needed
- Any group, small or large, can now conduct waterways stewardship

MWRU will consist of an enclosed cargo trailer containing an inflatable catamaran, electric engine, canoes, Jon boat, PFDs, paddles, 4x4 ATV, trash picker grabbers, trash grabbing nets, thick ml trash bags, contractor bags, buckets, ropes, chain and cable, grappling hook, industrial magnets, first aid kits, an equipment cleansing station, and more.

MWRU is a game changer, it allows for:

- Inclusivity
- Repeatability
- Scalability
- Sustainability





# KEEP A LID ON IT!

Do your part. Make an Impact. Close the lid to prevent trash and litter from polluting our treasured and vulnerable waterways.



This is a public service announcement from Michigan Waterways Stewards.  
[www.MiWaterwaysStewards.org](http://www.MiWaterwaysStewards.org)

# Lansing Rivers and River Trail Cleanup

JOIN US. MAKE A LASTING IMPACT. THIS IS OUR LEGACY.



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 2023

JUN 8, 9, 10\*

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2023

SEP 20, 21, 22\*

- Join us. Become a River Angel and make an impact.
- Equipment provided. Food, drinks, and FREE merchandise for all!

\*Can't make the main event date? No worries. There is always time to make a difference. Join us during any of our three event days.



### EVENT PARTNERS AND SPONSORS



### Volunteer Partner Organizations



[www.MiWaterwaysStewards.org](http://www.MiWaterwaysStewards.org)



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Environmental Justice

*Rotary Club of East Lansing,  
Thank you for your interest, support, and most of all  
Your environmental leadership!*