

WINTER '22-'23 NEWSLETTER

MICHIGAN WATERWAYS STEWARDS



*Protecting and improving Michigan's treasured and vulnerable waterways.
Join us. It's our legacy.*

www.MiWaterwaysStewards.org



MICHIGAN'S TREASURED WATERS

Michigan is blessed with an abundance of fresh water, more than any other state in the country. We have access to four Great Lakes; Michigan, Superior, Huron and Erie. Running through our state is approximately 51,438 miles of river, of which 656 miles are designated as wild and scenic.

Our state's abundance of fresh water lakes and inland rivers, makes Michigan a top U.S. destination for on-water recreation and sport. Yet, in our capital city, and in many other Michigan urban cities, our waterways are under threat. They need our help.

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UNIMAGINABLE RIVER CONDITIONS

Less than two miles from our state's capitol building, on our prized Grand River and Red Cedar River rivers, not long ago were long-standing, towering, river-wide obstructions made of trees, logs, and other natural debris. Behind them were large unsightly pools of litter and urban debris.

Along the riverbanks it is not uncommon to see discarded bicycles, car tires, barbecue grills, grocery carts, pallets, highway cones and dividers, and other evidence of nearby urban living.

Our local and state governments, and environmental agencies, recognize the existence of these problems. They cite budgetary constraints, project overload, and lack of human resources, as contributing reasons for why these problems remain and have been allowed to worsen.

It was because of these unacceptable waterways conditions and lack of resources and solutions, that led to the founding of Michigan Waterways Stewards.



MICHIGAN WATERWAYS STEWARDS



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

Our success, and waterways health, is dependent on our achieving broad support from local government, clubs, businesses, civic organizations, schools, and passionate individuals. Through stewardship, education, and advocacy, we will inspire current and future generations to protect and care for our prized waterways.

Join us. Experience the joy and ease in which we accomplish great things. This is our legacy.

Recent Projects: Grand River Railroad Bridge Cleanup (N. MLK Highway), Tecumseh Park Cleanup, Red Cedar River Assessment (Kruger's Landing to Grand River), Red Cedar River Railroad Bridge Cleanup (S. Cedar Street), Grand River Assessment (Jackson), Red Cedar River Cleanup (MSU Campus), Cherry Hill Park Cleanup, Grand River (I 496) Cleanup, Abandoned Homeless Encampment Cleanup (N. MLK Highway), Grand River Assessment (Lansing to Grand Ledge, and Jackson), Red Cedar River Non Point Cleanup (City of Lansing Public Works Property), Red Cedar River Assessment (Williamston to Lansing), Red Cedar Assessment (Kruger's Landing to East Lansing), Red Cedar River Metal Impediments Removed (Railroad Bridge), Red Cedar Assessment (Meridian Riverfront Park), Red Cedar River Cleanup (east Lansing).

INTRODUCING MICHIGAN WATERWAYS STEWARDS FOUNDER

Michigan Waterways Stewards is the idea of Michael Stout, a Lansing area resident, MSU alumni, marketing executive, and avid long-distance solo paddler.

Seven seasons ago Stout took up kayaking for recreation and fitness on the local lake. He has since paddled over 6,250 miles on many of the most scenic rivers and lakes across the Upper Midwest. He has solo paddled across Lake Michigan a record setting six times, crossed Lake Superior, and competed in extreme races across the U.S.



Having recently moved back to Michigan, he now regularly paddles the Grand River and Red Cedar River. It was here where he discovered long-standing, towering, river-wide blockages, with unsightly, stagnant pools of trapped urban debris. No longer able to ignore these appalling conditions he reached out to local and state officials to create a solution.

Unable to gain initial government interest, Stout took matters in his own hands and founded Michigan Waterways Stewards.

Michigan Waterways Stewards is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and improving Michigan's treasured waterways. It combines Stout's passion for the outdoors and our waterways, and leverages his expertise in marketing communications and organizational development.

It is his way of giving back.

OUR FIRST PROJECT - A GRAND RIVER TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

Michigan Waterways Stewards first project was to tackle a longtime, river-wide obstruction found below a railroad bridge a short distance downriver from N. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

Through the collaborative efforts of the new owners of Adrian and Blissfield Railroad Company, members from Lansing Oar and Paddle Club, Quiet Water Society, and other volunteers, we completed one of the area's largest river cleanups in well over a decade.

While working at this bridge site we discovered a large abandoned homeless encampment atop the steep riverbank. We knew if this wasn't removed before spring snowmelt and expected high floodwaters, much of this debris would make its way into the river.

Working with the City of Lansing and the property owner, this too was cleared.

While in the area, additional river cleanup work was conducted between the railroad bridge and Tecumseh Park. A small barge of urban debris was retrieved from the river and riverbanks, and a large pool of trapped litter was cleared at the north end of the park.

This once unsightly, impassable section of river has since been transformed into one of the most scenic river stretches in Lansing.

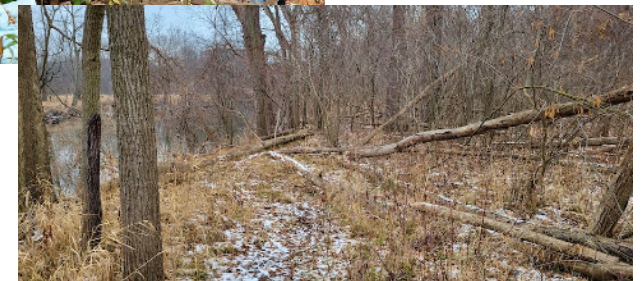
While this type of work can be wet, cold, and messy, when you see the transformational change and hear the praise of those nearby, you can't help but feel good about a job well done.



Grand River
Railroad Bridge,
North Lansing



Grand River
Homeless Encampment,
North Lansing



Grand River
Tecumseh Park
North Lansing



MICHIGAN WATERWAYS STEWARDS RIVER ANGELS

It is through the collaborative efforts of passionate individuals, clubs and businesses, schools, and government, that we are able to achieve all that we have. We call them River Angels. We wish to thank each for their work, passion, and dedication.

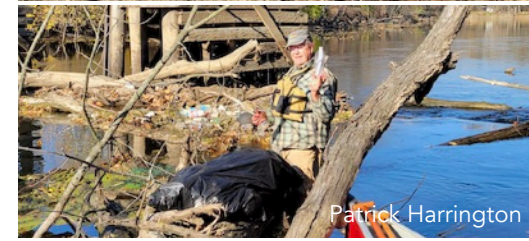
We have been blessed with the support of a large number of extraordinary River Angels. We wish to recognize a few whose exemplary efforts excite and encourage others to participate as well.

Michigan Waterways Stewards 2022 Valued Partners

- Top Business Adrian and Blissfield Railroad Company
- Living our Mission Matthew Edmond
- Top Volunteer Patrick Harrington
- Waterways Ambassador George Stockman
- Top Government Entity City of Lansing Parks and Recreation
- Promotional Partner Jayne Higo - Lansing State Journal

To learn more about our 2022 Valued Partners, [click here](#) or visit our website and click on tab titled, "Top Honorees."

To view our River Angels in action, [click here](#), or visit our website and click on the tab titled, "River Angels in Action."



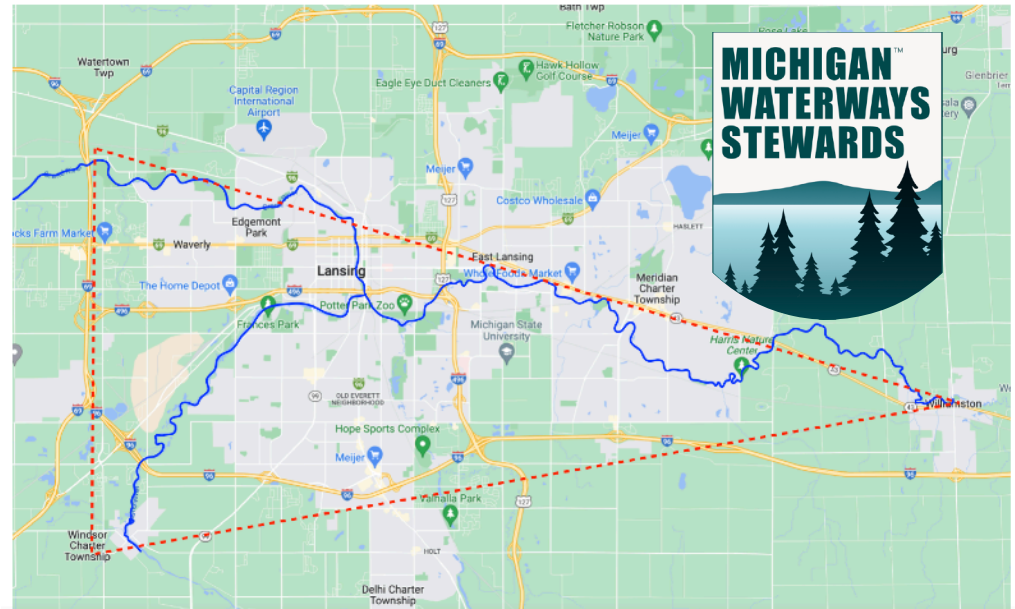
2022 River Angels: Aaron Douglas, Andrew Fedewa, Anthony Crabtree, Anthony Scott, Autumn Edmonds, Brett Kaschinske, Chris Bagwell, Clint Knoblauch, Connie Cannon, Cynthia Donovan, Dan Koch, David Ford, Dennis Ludwig, Don Chandler, George Stockman, Jeff Hensley, Jim Mazzola, Ken McDermott, Kim Mazzola, Lance Garrison, Matthew Edmonds, Mike Stout, Patrick Harrington, Paul Malewski, Randy Werner, Richard Bailey, Roger Miller, Shayne Salisbury, Steve Darby, Thad Vance, and Tony Kuhlman.

MICHIGAN WATERWAYS STEWARDS A MID-MICHIGAN 2023 FOCUS

This year our primary focus is to lead, support, and promote river stewardship initiatives on Mid-Michigan's two largest rivers; Grand River and Red Cedar River.

Our core geography encompasses the area from Williamston, to west of Waverly, to Dimondale. Our stretch goal is to expand to include an area from the headwaters of the Red Cedar River beginning near Cedar Lake, to Portland, to Eaton Rapids.

In addition to the work here, we will support projects outside this geography when possible.



INTRODUCING BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEMBERS

MICHAEL GREEN, SECRETARY

Mike's professional career has spanned 30 plus years as a lawyer, administrator and financial consultant in the public and private sectors. His public sector experience included working in the executive, judicial and legislative branches of government.

Among a number of interests, he is an avid fly-fisherman with a profound appreciation of nature and the bountiful gifts it provides.



CHRISTINE PEARSON, TREASURER

Christine is a long-time west Lansing resident. She grew up in the Port Huron area, where the blue water of Lake Huron was at the center of summertime activity.

She is an MSU graduate and has worked in the nonprofit industry for more than 35 years. Her greatest achievement was founding the Mid-Michigan Affiliate of Susan G. Komen in 2001. She served as Board president for six years and was then the organizations first paid Executive Director until leaving the organization in late 2014.



WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING.

Thank you, Waterways Stewards, for your continued enthusiasm and dedication to protecting our waterways! Your passion is contagious.

Jayne Higo

Fantastic work on the river clean-up! Your organization is exactly what we need in the State of Michigan.

Joanne Foreman

Communications Coordinator, DNR, EGLE, MDARD

I had no idea this wonderful organization has been working so hard (and in such difficult conditions) to keep them clean. Thank you again!

Nick Hall

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

Tom Cannon

Wow! Thank you for taking our aquatic invasive species information and running with it!

Barney Boyer

EGLE, Environmental Quality Analyst

We applaud your determination and diligence and we THANK YOU & CONGRATULATE you and all your volunteers.

Barb Shipman

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



RIVER ANGELS IN ACTION





Visit our booth at the March 4 at the Quiet Adventures Symposium held at the MSU Pavilion. To learn more, visit: www.QuietWaterSociety.org



THANK YOU!

We are honored by your interest, support, and the growing enthusiasm about our waterways stewardship. Through stewardship, education, and advocacy, we hope to inspire current and future generations to protect and care for our prized waterways.

With the support of passionate individuals, clubs, businesses, and local government, we have accomplished great things over a short period of time. What is most exciting, is what more we will do.

In the next few weeks, we will be announcing more exciting news about our waterways stewardship work and a first-of-its kind concept that will certainly excite and encourage others to participate in waterways stewardship programs.

For only \$30 you can become a Michigan Waterways Stewards member. For your generous support you will receive a full-color Michigan Waterways Stewards waterproof decal that you can proudly display on your kayak, canoe, boat, or water bottle. Or keep at home or office, as a reminder of your support to protect and improve our treasured waterways.

To become a Michigan Waterways Stewards member, visit our website and click on the tab titled, "Support." Join us today. Make a difference. This is our legacy.

Thank you.

Mike Stout
 Founder, President, Michigan Waterways Stewards
Protecting our Treasured and Vulnerable Waterways
www.MiWaterwaysStewards.org



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IMPROVING AND PROTECTING
 OUR TREASURED AND
 VULNERABLE WATERWAYS.

JOIN US.
 MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
 THIS IS OUR LEGACY.



STEWARDSHIP • EDUCATION • ADVOCACY

**DON'T MOVE
 A MUSSEL!**

CLEAN • DRAIN • DRY



Protect Our Treasured Waterways
STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!

7

StopAquaticHitchhikers.org



WE WISH TO RECOGNIZE AND THANK OUR VALUED PARTNERS AND SPONSORS



ADVENTURE, ACCESSIBILITY, RESPECT FOR NATURE, AND RELATIONSHIPS

Great Lakes Watercraft is a family-owned business operating out of SE Michigan. They are a locally operated online store and a premier maritime distributor in the Midwest.

It is their mission to provide their customers a gateway to adventure and exploration of the outdoors.

We wish to thank Great Lakes Watercraft for their support. We look forward to our working together as our interests and passion for the outdoors are alike. We wish to make each outdoor experience extraordinary through innovation and stewardship.

www.GreatLakesWatercraft.com



The Adrian & Blissfield Railroad Company (ADBF) is an Okemos based company, They are a shortline railroad that also doubles as a holding company operating a total of five short-line railroads in southeastern Michigan.

In addition to the historic Lenawee County line, ADBF operates the Charlotte Southern Railroad (CHS), the Detroit Connecting Railroad (DCON), the Jackson & Lansing Railroad (JAIL), and the Lapeer Industrial Railroad (LIRR) linking us to the Canadian National (CN), CSX, and Norfolk Southern (NS) railroads!

We wish to thank ADBF for their eagerness to support and extraordinary effort to clear long-standing river-wide obstacles. Let's hope other businesses and railroad companies follow their lead in being valued community partners and environmental stewards.

www.ABRailroad.com



INSIGHTS - INNOVATION - IMPACT

i3 Marketing is a strategic marketing and creative services firm expert in leading transformational change and fast tracking business initiatives.

They have been instrumental in bringing the Michigan Waterways Stewards vision to life via the development of winning strategy, branding, and integrated communications to engage like-minded businesses, clubs, civic organizations, government, and passionate volunteers.

We wish to thank i3-Marketing for their extraordinary response and rapid innovation.

www.i3-Marketing.com