

2014

Regular Coalition Meetings

April 24

July 24

October 23

At 10:00 AM

Greenbush Township Hall



Working Together to Restore and Protect Our Natural Resources

PRVEL Partnership with AuSable River Watershed SOGL Program Steering Committee Update

Progress is being made through regularly scheduled meetings to arrive at the final selection of project sites for this large two year Sustain Our Great Lakes (SOGL) grant program. Under the leadership of Huron Pines, the focus has been on erosion control, invasive species removal, habitat restoration and aquatic passage barrier removal within the AuSable watershed, including the PRVEL "sub-watershed".

PRVEL board members serving on the committee have been asked to partner with the project in the following ways:

- provide guidance on site selection and educational/volunteer events
• promote partnership through current media
• make presentations to Alcona and Iosco county leaders
• conduct floristic (plant species) quality assessment on an 80 acre parcel north of Van Etten Lake

- present ongoing monitoring findings to the partnership on an annual basis
• contribute \$1,000 cash in matching funds

With so much to accomplish, PRVEL will be seeking volunteers to help out with field work/river monitoring, possible fundraising efforts, and outreach programs to "spread the word" about this important project taking place in our area.

Other partners in this project include Anglers of the AuSable, Dept of Natural Resources, AuSable Big Water Preservation Association, Conservation Service (NRCS), AuSable North Branch Area Foundation, US Fish and Wildlife, AuSable River Property Owners Association, AuSable River Watershed Committee, and Trout Unlimited, among others.

If all goes as planned, projects will be initiated in 2014 and extend through 2015. Ongoing updates can be found on the Huron Pines web site at www.huronpines.org

MAY MACRO SAMPLING PLANNED

The planned dates for the Spring sampling are:

5/14/14 (Wed.) 5/17/14 (Sat.)



Don't worry he doesn't bite, join us to learn more about him and other macro-invertebrates at our next sampling event

Pine River Watershed Macro-invertebrate Monitoring

The sampling we have been doing at six locations over the past six years, indicates that the Pine River and its tributaries are of a very good quality in macro-invertebrate terms. This means that organisms such as dragon flies, damsel flies, mayflies, stoneflies, caddis flies, black flies and beetles for example many of which would find it very difficult to live in polluted conditions are able to live quite well in the rivers and streams of the Pine River watershed. Our monitoring efforts are designed to ensure that any changes in this condition are noted very soon after they arise so that the source of the changes can be identified and dealt with.

The dates for the Spring sampling are scheduled for Wednesday, May 14 and Saturday, May 17. If conditions

are not right for sampling on either of those dates, Wednesday, May 21 and Saturday, May 24 will be used as alternates.

We are pleased to learn that Mike Berenkowski of the Oscoda school system plans to bring his 7th grade science class (6-7 students) on both days. We also have a couple of new samplers and always welcome more help. The watershed is very large and with more volunteers we could increase the number of monitoring locations.

Please contact Arnie at aleriche526@gmail.com or [739-2758](tel:739-2758) if you are interested in participating in this enjoyable activity.

Arnie will be contacting existing team members in early April to make the final arrangements for sampling.

RIVER KEEPERS WANTED



“WE NEED YOU”

Volunteers who enjoy being out in nature and want to help keep track of what's happening along the Pine River are invited to become a River Keeper for PRVEL's watershed.

The board wants to thank all of our current members and invite all of you who are reading this newsletter to consider joining in on this fun and educational program.

Please email Carole at caroleplunkey@charter.net for more details.

Watershed Wildlife Watch

By Carole Plunkey

Were you aware that according to the Federal Harvest Information Program, Michigan leads the nation in the number of active woodcock hunters and harvest? They report the highest densities in the northern 2/3 of the state. They are speckled brown in color, about 8 inches tall, bob when they walk, and weigh about 1/2 pound.

River Keeper, Matt Schiebold, has hunted and fished in Alcona County for several years and has reported siting's this past Fall, noting that the area provides the necessary habitat features as well as a water source, the Pine River. Hunting season begins in late Sept and lasts for 45 days.

Surveys to monitor woodcock populations are performed by DNR staff, biologists from other agencies, and volunteers in the Spring of the year and some are banded to monitor recruitment and trends in survival. The average brood size is 3-4 chicks.

The 2013 Woodcock Population Status report has again noted a long-term decline in the species, which is most likely due to loss of their natural habitat. In response to this observation, a North American Woodcock Conservation Plan has been implemented to guide management and hopefully improve those areas

where nesting is most likely to occur. In general, they need a mixture of small scattered openings among dense stands of shrubs and young leaf-bearing trees in a moist area.

You may visit the DNR website to learn more about the woodcock and other Michigan wildlife as well. And, please consider becoming a River Keeper yourself, to help us keep track of the valuable resources in the forests and woodlands of our watershed.



Common Woodcock

EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Please join us at our future meetings and presentations

In our on-going efforts to inform the general public about PRVEL and what we are trying to accomplish, we continue to make power-point presentations to interested groups including school classes, governmental agencies.

A special emphasis is being placed on our efforts to secure funding for erosion and invasive species control projects. We are also promoting our fairly new River Keepers program, hoping to generate interest among the attendees in becoming a volunteer, as more "eyes" are needed.

Please watch for the announced dates of our future presentations and plan to join us for a pleasant evening, especially if you have never seen it. You will learn more about the watershed, our organization, how you may become more involved and meet some nice people.

If you know of a group that would be interested in a presentation, please contact Carole Plunkey at caroleplunkey@chater.net

“Fishing” for Answers

By Carole Plunkey

The Pine River has been fished for many years by locals and visitors alike who have reported good and poor fishing seasons.

In an effort to get a better idea of the current status of our fishery, PRVEL volunteers will be working with the DNR this 2014 season to place temperature loggers in several selected sites on the river and its branches.

These small devices record and store data for later evaluation to help determine if the waters are warm or cold and thus, what fish species might be within the system. Historically, several varieties of trout have been the primary species found.

The DNR has used this type of program for many years and have a large data base to compare results and determine if any action needs to be taken to either maintain or improve the fishery.

If you'd like to be a part of this enjoyable and educational project, please contact Carole at caroleplunkey@charter.net



FIRST ANNUAL ICE FISHING TOURNAMENT

By Carole Plunkey



Tournament organizer Andrew Beebe

If you were able to attend the January general meeting, you would have heard about the Iosco County Conservation District's plan to hold an ice fishing tournament on Van Etten Lake in February.

The district has been a PRVEL partner since its inception and the board voted to sponsor the event with a \$100 donation.

It was a sunny day, about 19 degrees and no wind, so the folks who purchased the 200 tickets sold had a wonderful experience

and took home many great prizes. Approximately 100 fish were caught in this catch and release event and 20 prizes in various categories were given out. More details and many pictures are available on the district's web site at www.ioscoconservation.org

This event was a fundraiser for the organization, making it possible for them to continue their work to provide programs and technical assistance to protect and enhance the land and water resources around in the area. PRVEL hopes to partner with the district in the near future – perhaps a river bank restoration or other land use project – as we share common goals to impact the watershed in a positive way.



A nice day for fishing

Winter 2014 Newsletter

Winter Scene on Bachus Creek



This view of the Pine was taken by PRVEL board member Scott Lingo while hiking along Backus Creek, east of Hubbard Lake Rd in December.

The picture is currently one of those on our Facebook page. To see more watershed pictures, visit our page at:

www.facebook.com/pineriverwatershed

Official Non-Profit Status for PRVEL Watershed Coalition

It seemed to take a long time in coming, but PRVEL has been approved by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization!

As previously reported, this new status will benefit us in several ways:

- eligibility to apply for grant monies directly
- tax-deductible donations permitted
- tax-exemption from certain state and federal taxes
- eligibility for non-profit mailing privileges
- increased credibility for the coalition

Our conservation projects and programs will continue under this new title, and as always, we look forward to working on our shared goals with those who have supported our efforts – volunteers and agency personnel alike.

We are excited and challenged to do all we can to further our successes in monitoring and preserving our watershed, and the board remains dedicated to this mission.

Our Treasury Report

January 1, 2013 Balance	\$4,475.91
Income	
Donations	\$1,220.00
Interest	5.80
Subtotal -	\$1,225.80
Expenses	
Program	
Meetings	- 125.40
Coliform Sampling	- 343.11
P/TSS Sampling	- 203.88
Subtotal -	\$672.39
Administration	
Post Office Box rental	- 64.00
Supplies and Newsletter	- 79.15
MI Nonprofit Incorporation	- 33.75
MI CORPS Conference	- 171.75
Subtotal -	\$348.65
December 31, 2013 Balance	\$4,680.67

The Pine River/Van Etten Lake E-Coli Water Quality

Samples were taken on four dates from nine locations on the Pine River system and from four locations on tributaries to Van Etten Lake in 2013.

A summary of the results for five base locations on the Pine are included in the table below. In addition, four sites were sampled on East Branch of the Pine this year.

1. The geometric mean for all of the sites sampled continues to be very low and indicates the high bacteriological quality of the streams in the watershed.
2. **There is no indication of contamination from the smaller tributaries to the lake being monitored.**

FIGURE 1 TRENDS FOR THREE SAMPLING SITES

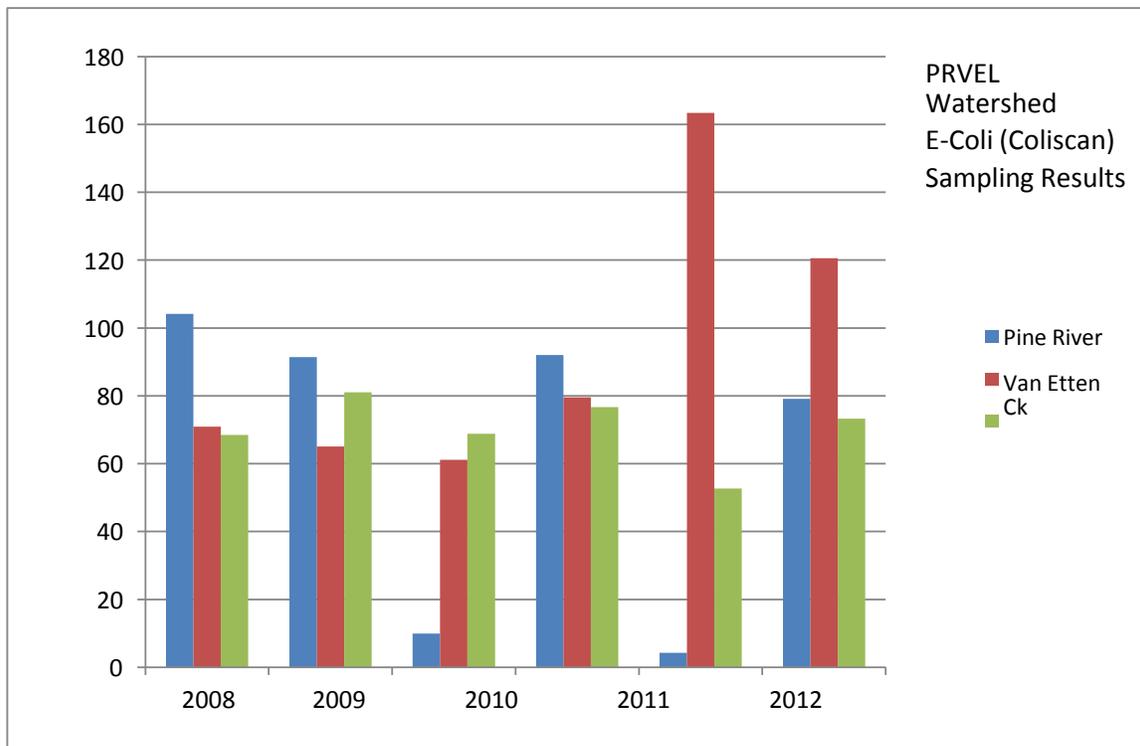


Table 1

Location	2013			9-year Combined Results			
	No.	Mean #/100 ml	Max. #/100 ml	No.	Mean #/100 ml	Max. #/100 ml	Min. #/100 ml
Pine River and Main Tributaries							
Pine River @ County Line	4	79	140	38	88	3500	1
Pine River @ F-41	4	86	160	35	59	2400	1
Pine River @ Cruzen Rd.	4	85	110	31	55	2600	1
Van Etten Crk @ Barlow Rd S	4	121	220	30	126	3600	1
East Br Pine River @ F-30	4	73	240	31	111	3800	20

Winter 2014 Newsletter

PRVEL Coalition Board

Chair - Carole Plunkey
Recorder - Doug Jager
Treasurer - Dan Stock
Scott Lingo
Arnie Leriche
Sheila Phillips

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dj62852@charter.net
dstock4239@charter.net
scott@targetrealestate.com
aleriche526@gmail.com
srplincoln@juno.com

Non-Voting Advisors

US Forest Service
USDA-NRCS
US Fish & Wildlife

Huron Pines RC&D
DNR/Fisheries
DEQ/Water Quality

If you would like to receive this newsletter as an electronic file in pdf format, send your e-mail Dan Stock at the address above.

Spread the Word!!

In an effort to make our organization more recognized in the area and beyond, the board has taken the following actions:

1. creating a Facebook page  at www.facebook.com/pinriverwatershed
2. joining the Chamber of Commerce in both Iosco and Alcona counties
3. updating our PRVEL brochure for use in fundraising

4. updating our power-point presentation for ongoing community education
5. creating a membership solicitation letter to garner financial support

We ask all of you to help us in this push to become a more visible entity within the two counties we watch over and let other people know who we are and what we're trying to accomplish through your own contacts. As always, we welcome any feedback on how we can improve our outreach and need your support to keep the momentum going.

Yes! I wish to support the water resource improvement efforts in the Pine River Van Etten Lake Watershed with my tax deductible contribution.

Please make your check payable to PRVEL Watershed Coalition and send to:

**PRVEL Watershed Coalition
PO Box 680
Oscoda, MI 48750**

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____