

2020 Regular Coalition Meetings

There are no meetings planned at this time
A fall meeting at the library in Harrisville may be a possibility

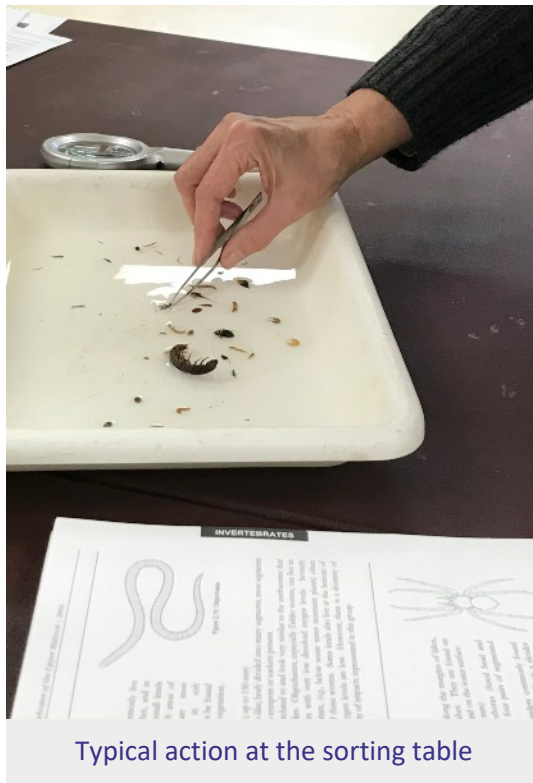


Working Together to Restore and Protect Our Natural Resources

Fall 2020 Macro-invertebrate Sampling

As canaries indicate the health of mines, the presence of certain small aquatic creatures hint at the health of our watershed. Macro-invertebrate sampling—checking for the number and variety of these organisms in the Pine River and its tributaries—is one of PRVEL's ongoing programs. Typically, PRVEL volunteers sample one or more designated sites twice yearly, spring and fall.

On September 24, 2020, nine volunteers gathered at the Buhl Road stream crossing to collect macro-invertebrates from the south branch of the Pine River. Present that morning were: Russ Williams, Dan Stock, Scott Lingo, Carole Plunkey, Alan and Cindi McGowen, Stephanie Carrico and Debbie and Doc Miller. Collection is performed according to specific instructions from MiCorps (Michigan Clean Water Corps). Three intrepid volunteers in waders used nets to procure samples from this stretch of the Pine River, while two volunteers monitored their activity and ferried the collected materials to the remaining folks at the sorting table. There, a variety of organisms, from tiny scuds to large predaceous diving beetles, were removed from the debris and placed in containers of preserving alcohol for later identification and recording on the MiCorps data sheet. Larger and vertebrate specimens were identified and counted (in this case two small fish and a crayfish) and then returned to the river.



Typical action at the sorting table

Altogether, specimens from eleven distinct groups of organisms were tallied, and the sampled segment of the Pine River received a quality score in the high end of the fair range. Later review of the day's collection indicated that the presence of excessive silt may have contributed to a somewhat lower-than-anticipated score. In the future, a structured training session for volunteers is planned prior to sampling with the aim of improving collection methods and the quality of the samples collected, as well as volunteer knowledge and satisfaction.

In addition to macro-invertebrate sampling, PRVEL provides a number of volunteer opportunities for those who enjoy the outdoors and the chance to contribute to the knowledge and well-being of the Pine River watershed. Thanks to all those who participated in September's sampling project. It is hoped many more will take advantage this or other opportunities in the future.

Invasive Species Spotlight By Russell Williams

Invasive species are an issue of concern in Michigan, and in our watershed. They tend to crowd out native plants and animals from well adapted ecosystems. The ecology of our watershed essentially controls water quality, which should concern everyone.

time. It is in other states and is a major concern. As a Forester, I worry about this one. We lost the ash to the Emerald Ash Borer not long ago. The Spotted Lanternfly is not limited to feeding on only one of our native species. It has a wide range of plant hosts,



One of the great information resources to check regularly is the Midwest Invasive Species Information Network. Found at www.misin.msu.edu.

For those people that are new to the world of *invasive species*, the magnitude of the problem can be a bit of a shock. The pressures that these species put on ecosystems is massive. Everyday we see the effects. The autumn olive brambles in fields and along roads. The phragmites filling the shallows of lakes and rivers. The dead ash trees scattered through the woods and entangled in the Pine River.

Building an awareness of the problem is a beginning. Learning what we can about the species before they arrive makes us more able to recognize their presence. What they look like, where they might occur first, what are their movement patterns, are a few examples. If we can identify an invasive while the population is low in number, we have a chance to take meaningful control actions.

including a number of trees. It also impacts fruit bearing plants important in agriculture. Watch for it, please.

As we learn how to better notice the initial effects of invasive species, especially the ones that are likely at our doorstep. We can detect them early, and let others know so action can be taken. If you see something say something. Call your local Conservation District, MISIN, the Michigan Department of Agriculture, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, or Michigan State University Extension, and let them know.



Lanternflies in Berk Co, PA
Courtesy of Wikipedia



Spotted Lanternfly
Courtesy of Wikipedia

The insect of focus of the MISIN homepage today is the Spotted Lanternfly. This insect is not known to be in Michigan at this

If you would like assistance in identification or where to go for more information please let us know. You will be taking an important step in improving the ecology of the watershed. Refer to MISIN regularly, and spread the word.

Thank You for Caring!

E. COLI SAMPLING UPDATE
by Dan Steck, Water Quality Monitor

Samples were taken monthly from April through October at five locations on the Pine River system in 2020. The five base locations are: the Pine River at the county line, the East/West confluence at F-30, West and South Branches and Van Etten Creek at Barlow and Pine River Trail.

Table 1 - Pine River Watershed E. Coli Monitoring

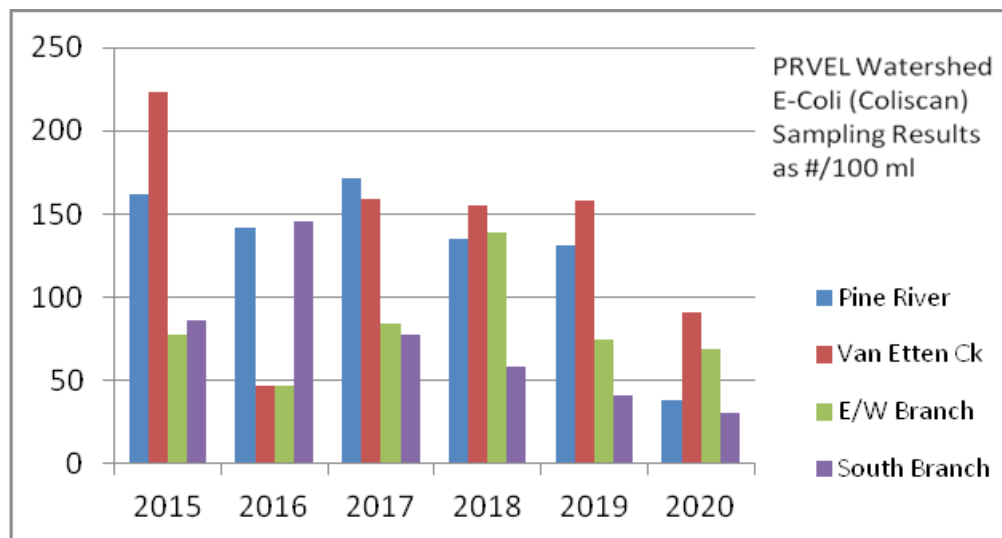
Location	Site No	2020				10-year Combined Results			
		No	Mean	Max	Min	No.	Mean	Max	Min
Pine River and Tributaries									
Pine River @ County Line Road	01	7	131	290	20	69	99	3500	1
South Branch @ Cruzen Road	04	7	68	180	10	66	65	2600	1
Van Etten Creek @ Barlow Road S.	11	7	158	660	30	65	136	3600	1
E/W Pine River @ F-30 Road	31	7	74	180	20	61	104	3800	1
E. Branch of Pine @ Tait Road	32	0				5	170	340	60
W. Br Pine @ Cruzen Road	41	7	65	210	20	42	80	1450	1

All results are expressed as CFU (colony forming units)/100 ml

Observations

1. The geometric means for none of the five sites sampled in 2020 had means higher than 130 CFU/100 ml state standard for swimming waters and only one site, Van Etten Creek, exceeded the 300 CFU/100 ml single sample concentration for the same standard.
2. The bacteriological quality of the streams in the watershed continues to be acceptable with no indicators of gross pollution.
3. A continuation of the sampling program at these base sampling points is planned for 2021.

FIGURE 1
TRENDS FOR FOUR SAMPLING SITES



Finding the Positive during the Pandemic

What a year! Most of us are looking forward to putting 2020 behind us and hoping for less restrictions and a more “normal” social environment. It has been pointed out however, that having more time to ourselves has brought out the creativity in many of us, including ideas on how to have fun outdoors. RV sales are way up, more people are camping than ever before (even if it's in their own back yard), taking a walk has become essential in some cases, and trips to outdoor venues/events have saved our sanity! Speaking of your own back yard ... have you ventured out into nature since the pandemic hit? The woodlands, wetlands, rivers and streams in our watershed have continued to thrive and are waiting to be appreciated. Even a walk to the mailbox is refreshing when you breathe in the cold, wonderfully refreshing winter air, smell the pines, and watch the squirrels scatter when you approach. Ice shanties can now be seen on Van



Etten Lake – there's something wonderful about eating freshly caught fish right from a cold stream or lake. And animal tracks are visible in the snow – can you identify the animal that made them? That might be a good project for the entire family. Birds are flitting in and out of the trees – maybe you'd like to provide feed for them this season.

If you have limitations that prevent you from doing any of these things, maybe searching the Internet for subjects about nature or conservation would both enlighten you and make the time spent searching enjoyable websites like vanettenlake.org, michigan.gov/dnr, or huronpines.org are filled with interesting and enjoyable topics for you to explore.

All these ideas might just make you think about how important our surroundings are to our health and happiness and how fortunate we are to live in an area that provides us with such beauty and opportunity. We all live in a watershed – go out and enjoy it!

CROWD HYDROLOGY

109 gauge readings were submitted to the Crowd Hydrology web site from the six gauges in the watershed in 2020. The most popular site was the one at the Pine River Campground where 34 readings were taken, many by campers. This is an encouraging use of the crowd sourcing concept. Gauges are located at the following locations:

MI1055 Pine River @ the County Line

MI1056	Van Etten Creek @ Pine River Trail
MI1057	E/W Pine Junction @ F-30
MI1058	South Branch @ Cruzen Rd
MI1059	West Branch @ Cruzen Rd
MI1060	Pine River Campground

While driving around the watershed this spring with your bird watching binoculars, also take some water level readings.

Giving Tuesday Event Successful!

On December 1, 2020, the Community Foundation of NE Michigan once again sponsored the community wide event which allows non-profit organizations like PRVEL to ask for online donations to support their programs. Calling it Giving Tuesday, it takes place on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving each year. We are very pleased and proud to report that donations totaled \$1,550 (!) to benefit our conservation ef-



orts. PRVEL wants to once again thank all those who were so generous with their financial support. We rely heavily on donations to accomplish our goals (in addition to grant funding if/when awarded) and could not function without such assistance.

Donations can always be mailed to PO Box 680, Oscoda, MI, 48750 with our sincere thanks.

WATERSHED WILDLIFE WATCH
The Barred Owl



Courtesy of Wikipedia

Nesting high up in the trees of some of our picturesque woodlands, the Barred Owl, also known as the northern barred owl, striped owl or, more informally, hoot owl spends its daylight hours roosting on its nest, hidden from view inside a tree cavity, well camouflaged by its brown and gray striped feathers. A night hunter, it feeds on birds, fish, and reptiles, well adapted to swooping down to get

its prey with its 43 inch wing span. Unlike most birds, it makes almost no noise when it flies because of special feathers that break turbulence into smaller currents, thereby reducing sound. It has more than a dozen calls, including one that sounds like a monkey. These owls tend to mate in spring in Michigan and usually lay between one to five eggs, which hatch in about 30 days. Life expectancy is 23 years.

OUR 2020 TREASURY REPORT

January 1, 2020 Balance	\$4925.03
Income	
Donations, General	255.00
Giving Tuesday	1550.00
Grants	0.00
Interest	4.12
Subtotal -	\$1809.12
Program Expenses	
Meetings	
Newspaper Ads	90.00
Macro Sampling	239.52
Temperature Logging	0.00
Coliform Sampling	144.47
Crowd Hydrology	0.00
Invasives Program	0.00
P/TSS Sampling	0.00
River Clearance	0.00
River Keepers	0.00
Administration Expenses	
Chamber Dues	160.00
Giving Tuesday	0.00
Supplies, Newsletter	52.71
MI Nonprofit Fee	20.00
PO Box Rental	76.00
Subtotal -	\$782.70
December 31, 2020 Balance	\$5951.45

MLSA60 Virtual Conference
Friday, April 30
Join us for our 60th Annual Conference
celebrating 60 years!
 Compelling topics, networking opportunities, and prizes.

Mark Your Calendars!

Michigan Lake Stewardship Associations 60th Annual Conference
 Friday April 30, 2021 will be virtual this year
 For more information visit the ML&SA 60th Annual Conference web page at <https://www.mymlsa.org>

PRVEL Coalition Board

Chair - Russell Williams	jrusswill@gmail.com
Treasurer - Dan Stock	dstock4239@charter.net
Secretary - Deb Miller	millerdb613@gmail.com
Scott Lingo	scott@targetrealestate.com
Carole Plunkey	caroleplunkey@charter.net

Non-Voting Advisors

US Forest Service	Huron Pines RC&D
USDA-NRCS	EGLE/Fisheries/Water Division
US Fish & Wildlife	

HOW CAN I VOLUNTEER FOR PRVEL?

Our conservation group is comprised totally of volunteers, all working together to make things happen for the benefit of the watershed. Please step forward and make 2021 the year you help us make a difference in your neck of the woods.

Ways you can volunteer:

- Macro invertebrate sampling program – Spring and Fall
- Monitoring fishery – place temp loggers
- Invasive species monitoring
- Water quality monitoring
- River Keepers/monitor watershed out in the field
- Write articles for the newsletter
- Serve on the watershed board of directors

Contact any board member for program details

Visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pineriverwatershed and please “like” and “share” the page to help support the watershed.

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 _____