



MAKING MICHIGAN'S WATERWAYS Cleaner, Healthier, and more pleasant to use.

WE'RE MICHIGAN'S #1 WATERWAYS STEWARDSHIP ORGANIZATION.



LANSING RIVERS AND RIVER TRAIL CLEANUP

MARSHALL WATERWAYS DAY | MERIDIAN ON THE FLY | RED CEDAR RIVER CLEANUP

CARING FOR THE KAZOO | MSU CREW CREATES IMPACT | CHERRY HILL PARK BEAUTIFICATION

KRUGER'S LANDING TRANSFORMATION | MWS 2024 TOP VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION



OUR CAPITAL CITY'S RIVERS HAVE NEVER LOOKED SO GOOD

Two years ago I wrote to the Lansing State Journal about the terrible state of our Capital City's rivers. Everywhere you looked there seemed to be litter, trash, and other evidence of urban living. Then, there were the river-wide obstructions making it difficult, dangerous, and at times, nearly impossible to navigate.

The conditions were so unpleasant that many described our rivers as a garbage dump. Many vowed never to use it again. I, too, was nearly in that camp. I thought to myself, "I have two options: One. Look away, be complicit, and hope someone will take care of this. Two. Deem it unacceptable, yet accept the challenge to solve."

It has been two years since our first Capital City waterways stewardship project.

Working with the new owners of Adrian and Blissfield Railroad Company and friends from the paddling community, we cleared a long-standing, towering, river-wide obstruction under an oldstyle railroad bridge. Having cleared this stretch of the Grand River in North Lansing of woody debris, litter, and trash, we unveiled a whole new waterways experience.

With the enthusiastic response and passionate pleas from others to do more, Michigan Waterways Stewards was founded. Its purpose is to protect, care for, and improve our treasured and vulnerable waterways for the benefit of fish and wildlife, recreation and sport. While our primary focus is on and along our rivers, we also conduct stewardship along our rivers' adjoining river trails and parks.



REIMAGINE, REDISCOVER, RECONNECT

We have been blessed with the generous and unprecedented support of local businesses and industry, schools and churches, civic and social groups, local government, and nearly 2,000 awesome volunteers. Because of them, here in our Capital City Region, we have cleared over 120,000 pounds of litter and trash and other evidence of urban and campus living from our prized Grand and Red Cedar rivers. Included in the tonnage were 269 electric scooters, 205 bicycles, an assortment of automobile and tractor tires, 60-gallon steel drums, highway barrels, police barricades, refrigerator/ freezers, and more. Also, more than 30 river-wide obstructions have been cleared.

Because of the remarkable efforts of our volunteers, here in our Capital City we now present Michigan's most scenic, pleasant, and varied urban waterways destination.

To ensure we sustain those gains made, we hold twice-yearly, community-wide, rivers and river trail cleanups in Lansing and East Lansing. With each passing season we seek to create greater impact. Our work now includes the beautification of riverside parks, clearing of invasive trees, bushes, and flora, the creation of natural areas, and reclaiming of long-time neglected green spaces.

It has been a remarkable journey. We have achieved far more than we ever imagined. It has been possible because of the generous support of so many. It demonstrates the ease with which we can accomplish great things when working together.

We wish to thank everyone who have helped make our Capital City Region's rivers cleaner, healthier, and more pleasant to use.

Mike Stout President and Founder, Michigan Waterways Stewards Protecting and Improving Our Treasured and Vulnerable Waterways.

WE'RE INNOVATING STEWARDSHIP



It was clear a new approach toward waterways stewardship was needed. One that eliminates those barriers to participate, is available on-demand, one that can be repeated and scalable, and where everyone who supports is recognized and rewarded.

Mike Stout, president and founder of Michigan Waterways Stewards, a Fortune 100 marketing executive and industry innovator, set out to solve. Michigan Waterways Stewards was soon formed.

A year-round, community-wide, collaborative approach, toward waterways stewardship was created. Rivers and their adjoining river trails and parks were soon transformed. As word of their work spread, so did demand for their services. They now serve 12 Mid-Michigan communities with plans to serve all of Michigan, then expand beyond.

Here in our Capital City we now present Michigan's most scenic, varied, and pleasant, urban waterways destination.





WE'RE MORE THAN STEWARDSHIP







STEWARDSHIP

Leading by example. We remove all barriers to participate.

EDUCATION

Knowledge is key to driving change.

ADVOCACY

Sometimes a new perspective and new approach is needed.

We hope our work inspires current and future generations to become environmental stewards.

ABOUT MIKE STOUT

Michigan Waterways Stewards President and Founder

- Lansing area resident
- '83 MSU graduate
- Author and photographer
- World record long-distance solo-padder
- Fortune 100 CPG marketer
- President of i3 Marketing, LLC
- Founder of Michigan Waterways Stewards



Michigan Waterways Stewards combines Stout's passion for the water, adventure, and expertise in innovation and developing high performance organizations.

It's his way of giving back and paying it forward.

MICHIGAN WATERWAYS STEWARDS 2024 Top Volunteer Partner Organization



We're thrilled to have partnered with Michigan State University Crew Club. Few groups can match their energy, passion, and desire to give back to the community.

We are honored to recognize them as our 2024 Top Volunteer Partner Organization.

They made a huge impact on our Grand River, at Cherry Hill Park, and perhaps most of all at Kruger's Landing.

Thank you!

SUPPORT MSU CREW CLUB

Michigan State University Crew Club is a student-run organization not associated with MSU's Athletic Department. They do not receive funding through MSU Athletics. If you wish to support this great group of MSU students and all that they do:

- Donate directly to MSU Crew Club through Venmo @MSUCrew Club.
- For tax deductible donations, donate through the Red Cedar Rowing Foundation, go to: https://www.redcedarrowing.org/





























MSU & OKEMOS H.S. STUDENTS DETERMINED TO LEAD. DRIVEN TO CREATE IMPACT

The uncertainty of rain did not deter 160 volunteers from making the Red Cedar River looking its best.

Our fourth, twice-yearly, community-wide event was hosted by MSU's Delta Sigma Phi fraternity in partnership with Okemos High School Earth and Action Clubs, Meridian Township, and Michigan Waterways Stewards. The Delta Sigs have grown each event in size and scope to create greater impact.

In addition to removing thousands of pounds of litter, trash, and other debris from the Red Cedar River, considerable effort was given to the education and treatment of invasive trees and bushes. Led by Meridian Township's Land Stewardship Coordinator Emma Campbell, several cubic yards of invasive were cleared from both sides of the Red Cedar River.

We wish to give thanks to those who made this event possible and so successful: Volunteer Groups

Delta Sigma Phi, Sigma Chi, Okemos High School Earth and Action Clubs, MSU Rotaract, Meridian Township Parks & Recreation, Magnet Fishers (from across the state), and Rotary Club of East Lansing.

Event Sponsors

Dart Container, Lime Scooters, River Town Adventures, Great Lakes Watercraft, Home Depot, River Town Adventures, Anonymous Donor, Great Lakes Hardware, Sam's Club and Costco.







CLEANING UP THE GRAND WITH MICHIGAN AUDUBON

From Grand Woods Park to Delta Mills Park.

It was a spectacular day to be working with Michigan Audubon. We put in at Grand Woods Park. Our primary goal was to reach Michigan Audubon's Capital City Bird Sanctuary where we will conduct a thorough cleaning of the Grand River, the area leading riverbank, and general area.

Located on the banks of the Grand River, this 63-acre property is an oasis of habitat that attracts spring and fall migrating warblers.

Highlights of the day include the early morning lifting fog, incredible stretches of trees in full color, the abundance of waterfowl, a soaring eagle, and hawk on a hunt. Perhaps most spectacular of all was watching a team of geese land just ahead of our catamaran. When they noticed this section of river was already occupied they quickly take flight.

On this beautiful day, with work well done, everyone was in good spirit. Our collection of retrieved items included three tires, several large rubber garbage cans, several 5-gallon buckets, two bicycle wheels, an old motorcycle seat, along with the collection of plastics, paper, glass, styrofoam, unpaired shoes, and much more.

Thank you Michigan Audubon for a wonderful day's work and all that you do.









TAKING A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

Improving Red Cedar River Stewardship and Recreation.



MSU LANDSCAPE SERVICES IN ACTION

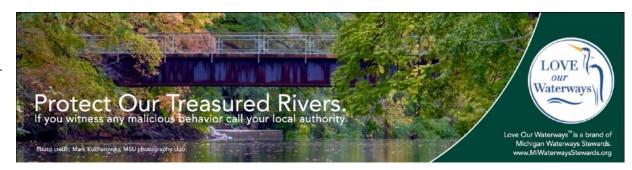
Red Cedar River Stewardship.

It's exciting to see the growing collaboration among Capital City Region stakeholders. Having recently received our assessment of the Red Cedar River from MSU's Jenison Field House to the confluence of the Grand River, MSU Landscape Services offered to clear several Red Cedar River rive-wide obstructions.

On this day a MSU crew of four, with the assist of Cat wheel loader, cleared out a traditional hotspot of woody debris and where litter,

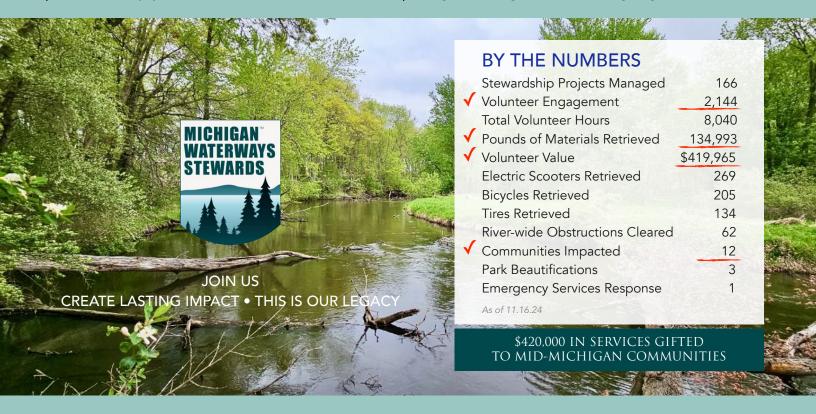
trash, and other evidence of campus and urban living, collects. This winding section of the Red Cedar River is about a quarter-mile upriver from the Kalamazoo Street bridge. If not addressed this choke point would worsen, making passage through this area more difficult and dangerous.

Let's give a special shout-out to MSU's Landscape Services Department for their great work and commitment to Red Cedar River stewardship and recreation.



MANY HANDS MAKES LIGHT WORK

Experience the joy and ease in with which we accomplish great things when working together.



CELEBRATING COMMUNITY





We do more than reveal cleaner, healthier, and more pleasant to use waterways. We reveal community spirit and civic pride. We have much to boast about. Even more to celebrate.



MERIDIAN ON THE FLY

Promoting Red Cedar River Recreation and Stewardship.

On Friday, September 20, Red Cedar Fly Fishers in partnership with MSU Rotaract, Meridian Township Parks & Recreation, and Michigan Waterways Stewards, launched its inaugural Meridian On The Fly. This event is meant to connect capital region communities, put a spotlight on our prized Capital City Region waterways, and promote recreation and stewardship.

This event was held at Meridian Historical Village, at the 188-acre Central Park located in the shadows of Meridian Mall. This living history museum provides a slice of 19th-century settler life. Also featured at Central Park is a fishing dock and pond that is regularly stocked, making it an ideal location to give fly fishing casting and tying exhibition and instruction to the novice or skilled fisher who wants to advance their skill.

Red Cedar Fly Fishers reports nearly 40 were in attendance. There were father and son teams, high schoolers and college students, and those who took out their fly rods for the first time.

Photos are a courtesy of Meridian Township photographer Courtland Jenkins.









It's More Than Stewardship. It's A Celebration Of Community.

Our fourth, twice-yearly, Lansing Rivers and River Trail Cleanup was a huge success. Based on volunteer engagement, miles of river and river trail covered, and park beautifications, it was our must successful event to date.

With event headquarters at Potter Park Zoo it made for an ideal setting. After the morning's stewardship activities everyone was invited for a Picnic at Potter Park Zoo. With music, hospitality, recreation, and interactive entertainment provided by BubblesRFun, it made for a wonderful celebration of community.

With the event's success and community-wide acceptance, it inspired us to do more. Plans are already in motion to make our next year's spring event larger in size and scope, to create even greater impact.



Photos are a courtesy of The State News Photographer Michael Roggernbaum,

We wish those who helped make this event possible and such a great success.

EVENT PARTNERS: Lansing Parks and Recreation, Potter Park Zoo, Lansing Lugnuts.

EVENT SPONSORS: ADBF Railroad, DART, 13 Marketing, Llc, Zhang Financial Services, Werner Paddles, Granger Waste Services,

Lime Micromobility, Red Cedar Fly Fishers, River Town Adventures, Choose Lansing, Great Lakes Watercraft,

Home Depot, BubblesRFun, Capital Area Housing Partnership, Pepsi Bottling Company.

VOLUNTEER PARTNERS: Everstream, Franklin Energy, MSU Crew Club, MSU Rotaract, Ingham County 4-H, Senior Corps RSVP, MSU

Forestry, Citizens Climate Lobby-Lansing, Michigan Audubon, Mid-Michigan Land Conservancy, Capital Area Housing Partnership, State of Michigan Departments and Agencies EGLE, DTMB, PMO, MDHHS, UIA,

Treasury, Labor & Economic Opportunity.

CAPITAL CITY PARKS BEAUTIFICATION CHERRY HILL PARK AND KRUGER'S LANDING

Helping Make Our Capital City's Rivers, Parks, and River Trails The Best That They Can Be.

When most think about Michigan Waterways Steward they think off the work we do on and along our rivers. This includes the clearing of litter, trash and other evidence of urban and campus living.

Many are aware of our woody debris management practices. Where we create navigable lanes, or remove entire river-wide obstructions, to make use of our waterways easy, safe, and as pleasant as possible.

With our Capital City Region's extensive River Trail system, we include those trails that run along our rivers as part of our stewardship plan. We realize, for most, enjoyment of our treasured waterways is of those views taken from land.

Taking care of our river-side parks has been part of our stewardship program from the beginning. Our list of parks has grown along with our reach across Mid-Michigan, and now includes: Lansing's Tecumseh Park, Rotary Park, Moorse Park, Burchard Park, and Kruger's Landing. Then there is Kalamazoo's Mayor's Riverfront Park and Verburg Park, Comstock's Merrill Park, and Marshall's Ketchum Park.

This summer, here in our Capital City, we have focused on Cherry Hill Park and Kruger's Landing. The beautification of these two parks was made possible via the support of several volunteer partner organizations, including:

Cherry Hill Park

Mid-Michigan Land Conservancy, MSU Crew Club, Capital Area Housing Partnership, Lansing Area Chapter Citizens Climate Lobby, and several State of Michigan departments and agencies: EGLE, DTMB, PMO, MDHHS, UIA, Treasury, and Labor & Economic Opportunity.

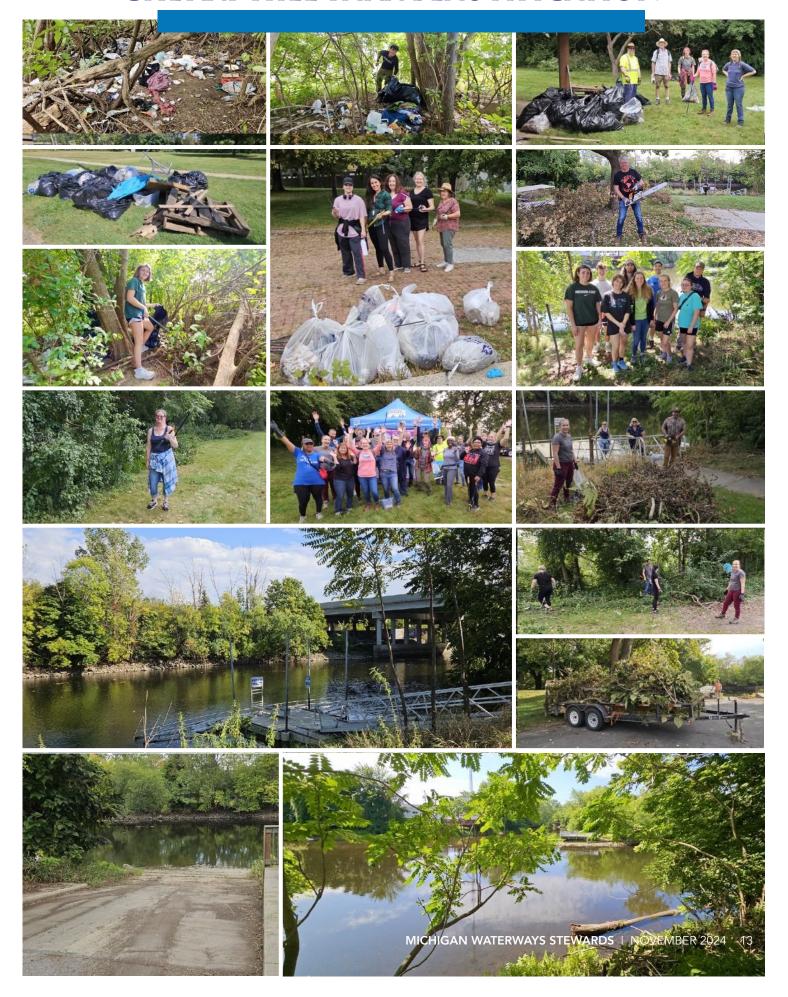
Kruger's Landing

MSU Crew Club, MSU Rotaract, and Capital Area Housing Partnership.

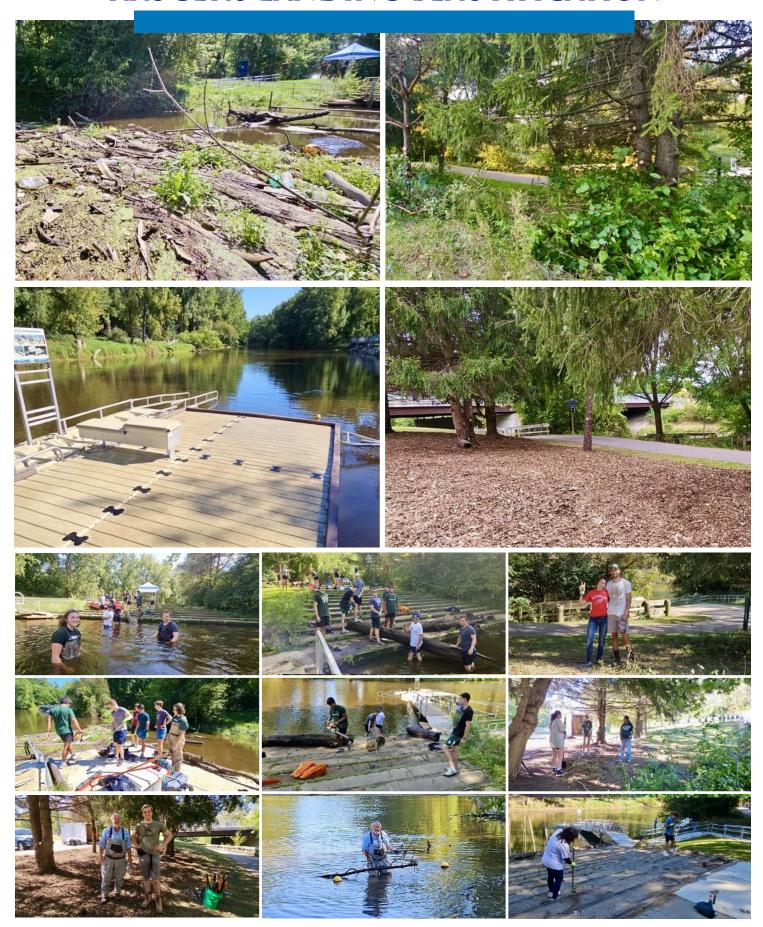
To look at the awesome efforts of our volunteers at Cherry Hill Park Kruger's Landing, please view the next two pages.



CHERRY HILL PARK BEAUTIFICATION



KRUGER'S LANDING BEAUTIFICATION





MARSHALL WATERWAYS DAY

Few Cities Are Blessed With Such Varied And Pleasant Waterways.

Our largest project this year, certainly the one that captivated most of our time and imagination, was working with Rotary Club of Marshall in the unveiling of their three waterways: Kalamazoo River, Rice Creek, and Bear Creek, along with the improvement of Ketchum Park Island.

It was the discovery of an overlooked, certainly underused, Ketchum Park Island, that was the highlight of this 5-month project. Work here tapped into all of our interests and most of our skills, including: woody debris management, trail restoration, invasive species management, and park beautification.

"When I visit historical Marshall, it is Kethcum Park Island's North Point where I head to first. When I arrive early in the morning I often spot deer grazing and minks crossing. Along the way I take in views of Rice Creek via the much improved .6-mile trail and recently created overlooks on both sides. Just beyond the north point migratory geese tend to be waiting. When time allows, Rice Creek from 194 to Ketchum Park's south point of Ketchum Park makes for a wondrous, scenic, journey via canoe, kayak, or inflatable catamaran," shares Mike Stout, Michigan Waterways Stewards president and founder.

We wish to thank three who helped made this project successful and most enjoyable: Marty Overhiser (Marshall Rotary Club President), Mitch Robbins (Friends of Ketchum Park), and Justin Miller (Marshall Parks and Recreation Superintendent).



SHOWCASING THE BEST OF WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

WMU's Greek Community Creating Impact.

 $A \Sigma \Phi$

Over 40 members from Western Michigan University's Sigma Chi and Alpha Sigma Phi fraternities teamed up to clear liter, trash, and other evidence of urban living along a 1.75 mile stretch of the Kalamazoo River. This area was from Kalamazoo's Mayors' Riverfront Park to Verburg Park.

Stewardship was conducted on the river, along its adjoining riverbanks, river walk, and parks.

This event was a follow-up from this spring when Sigma Chi covered much of the area. Not only did they return to build on their previous work, they invited Alpha Sigma Phi to create greater impact.

It's great seeing WMU's Greek community collaborating and engaging in community service projects, representing themselves, their university, and the greater community.

We would like to Crusader Container for being a returning event sponsor. They provided the roll-off dumpster for the collection, then eventual disposal, of litter and trash.







GIVING BACK | CELEBRATING COMMUNITY

We support those efforts to create greater connectivity with the outdoors and our waterways.













TRICK OR TREAT TRAIL

A Lansing Parks and Recreation Inaugural Event.

Hundreds of area youth and their families took in Lansing Parks and Recreation's inaugural Trick or Treat Trail event. The event took place at Benjamin Davis and Burchard Parks. It was much more than the celebration of Halloween, it was about encouraging our youth to get outdoors, explore and take in our Capital City's parks and treasured Grand River, and create a greater sense of community.



We, Michigan Waterways Stewards, were placed at Burchard Park with a direct overlook of the Grand River below the North Lansing Dam and Brenke Fish Ladder. The weather was great, attendance was even greater, and everyone had a wonderful time. All the kids were dressed in costume and many of their parents were too. The steady parade of characters included princesses and butterflies, super heroes, and characters from television and film. We did not have to worry about ghosts as the many ghostbusters had us well protected.

We wish to thank Lansing Parks and Recreation for inviting us to participate. We also would like to thank Granger Waste Services, Dart Container, and R.E. Olds Foundation for their support and allowing us to generously hand out candy, pour water, and distribute our 8-page Love Our Waterways environmental education brochures.



IN THE NEWS

Many Hands Makes Light Work.

It is amazing the ease with which we can accomplish great things when working together. Over two years we have received the support of more than 2,100 volunteers having logged over 8,000 hours, across 12 Mid-Michigan cities. Our giving back to community, the value of our volunteers' services alone, is estimated at \$420,000.

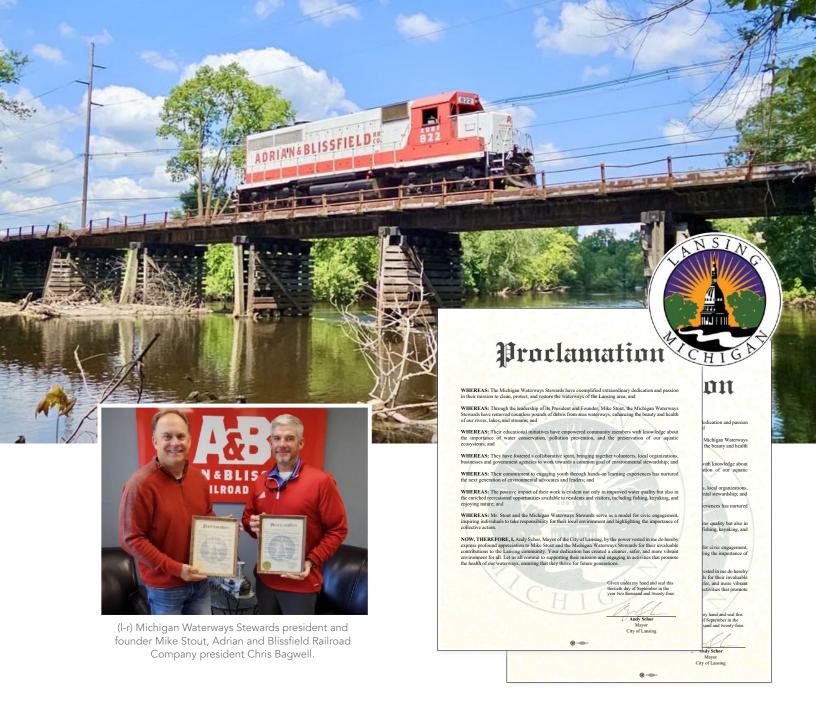
Our awesome volunteers have transformed our capital city's rivers. In several cities, rivers and creeks have been cleared of long-standing woody debris making navigation safe and easy. Parks have been rescued; cleared of litter, trash, trails reopened, overlooks created, invasive trees and bushes removed.

With nearly 500 hundred abandoned electric scooters and bicycles retrieved from our Red Cedar River we pushed for greater accountability, preventive measures, and improved oversight.

Our volunteers were of all ages. They come from across the state, even travel as far as Canada to help. What our volunteers accomplished is unprecedented. It is certainly newsworthy.

Just imagine what will be accomplished over the next one to two years. Then think of the impact we'll make over the next five!





ADRIAN AND BLISSFIELD RAILROAD COMPANY & MICHIGAN WATERWAYS STEWARDS

CITY OF LANSING AWARDS BOTH WITH A LETTER OF PROCLAMATION

It was fitting for Adrian and Blissfield Railroad Company and Michigan Waterways Stewards to be both awarded a letter of proclamation on the same day for their unprecedented collaboration and stewardship. It was their working together to remove years of collected woody debris and pooled litter and trash at an old ADBF railroad trestle in North Lansing, that marked the start of Michigan Waterways Stewards and the transformation of our Capital City Region's Grand and Red Cedar rivers.

Their working together continues. News of their grand plans for 2025 expected to be shared soon.

MAXIMILIAN HORNUNG

A Michigan Waterways Stewards Advisory Council Member

It is an honor to announce Michigan Waterways Stewards's newest advisory council member, Maximilian (Max) Hornung. We have been working with Max over the past year coordinating two community-wide Red Cedar River Cleanups. He has consistently taken the initiative to engage MSU's Greek community and reaching out to other partners to make each event larger in size and scope.

Max has impressed so much that he has been invited to corporate events where he was recognized for his on-campus, community, and environmental stewardship leadership. He was the only MSU student in attendance at MSU's inaugural Red Cedar River Stewardship and Recreation Committee public meeting.

Member

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ing Political Science with a double minor in Law, Justice, and Public

Max is a junior at Michigan State University, studying Political Science with a double minor in Law, Justice, and Public Policy and Business. He has a strong interest in politics and law and plans to attend law school after completing his studies at Michigan State.

His interest in nature was sparked upon moving to Michigan, and attending Michigan State has deepened this interest. He believes that a university campus rich in natural beauty should be treated with care. To support this belief, he has partnered with Michigan Waterways Stewards over the past two years to coordinate two community-wide river cleanups, giving back to both his community and his school.

Please join us in welcoming Maximillian Hornung to Michigan Waterways Stewards Advisory Council.

MICHIGAN WATERWAYS STEWARDS

Board of Directors and Advisory Council Members



- 1. Stout, Michael
- 2. Green, Michael
- 2 6 1:11 6
- 3. Greenshields, Chris
- 4. Zarkovich, Andy
- 5. Carr, Evan

President and founder

Counsel, Treasurer

Safety & Operations

Community Engagement

Events Management

Advisory Council

- 1. Belbot, Max
- 2. Bosheff, Pete
- 3. Campbell, Emma
- 4. Ceru, Bob
- 5. Dewan, Pater

6. Donovan, Cynthia

- 7. Hoholik, Suzanne
- 8. Hugo, Jayne
- 9. Hornung, Maximillian
- 10. Kaschinske, Brett

11. Marlatt, Rachel

- 12. Naerebout, Joseph
- 13. Ochylski, Rachel
- 14. Walls, Cliff
- 15. Washington, Dwight Dr.





2025 MAJOR EQUIPMENT NEEDS

We're just a few pieces of equipment away from taking our stewardship to the next level. Imagine the impact we will create when fully resourced!

- Single axle trailer with inside build out.
- Inflatable catamaran.
- Four wheeler with winch.
- Commercial wood chipper.
- Office space Lansing/East Lansing.









We're determined to make Michigan's waterways the envy of the Great Lakes states. JOIN US • CREATE LASTING IMPACT • THIS IS OUR LEGACY

