



UPPER MANISTEE RIVER ASSOCIATION

P. O. BOX 282 • GRAYLING, MICHIGAN 49738

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

JULY, 2010

Visit us at UMRASITE.ORG

The purpose of this Association is to preserve and protect for future generations the Upper Manistee River system and its drainage as a world class natural resource.

NOTICE !

**The UMRA Annual Meeting will be held at the Bear Lake Township Hall
Saturday, August 21
Pot Luck Dinner, Raffle, Auction Items – Fun for All!**

Annual Meeting Schedule of Events

6:00 pm Socialize

6:30 pm Dinner
(UMRA provides meat and, drink)

Please bring a dish to pass and table service for everyone in your group

7:15 pm Business Mtg. and a Q and A session

8:00 pm Fund Raiser

Raffle Items

David Ruimveld Framed and Matted Manistee River Print

also.....

½ Day Professionally Guided Float Trips –THREE CHANCES TO WIN

To order Raffle Tickets by Mail, please use the enclosed Order Form

Auction Items

A Unique, Bright Red 34" tall Charcoal Grill with a "Budweiser" script

Handmade Bird Feeder

Various Premium Cigar Sampler Selections

Golf for four at Local Golf Courses

and many more items

President's Message

by Doug Fairbanks

Goodbye Joe

On December 28, 2009 Joe Kutkuhn passed away at his Manistee River home. Joe was 82 and had been married to his lovely wife, Bobbie, for 56 years. Joe and Bobbie have three daughters, two sons, eight grandchildren, six great grandchildren and two great, great grandchildren. His death was sudden and unexpected and shocked everyone who knew him.

There is no way that I can possibly detail the many accomplishments of Joe's life (besides those mentioned above) and I would surely miss many of them if I tried. A few that stand out to me is serving his country for four years in the US Air Force, a BS from Colorado State University, a MS/PH.D. from Iowa State University in Fishery Management/Statistics and a distinguished, 30 year career with the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

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(Joe, continued)

We are more familiar with Joe's tireless work with the Upper Manistee River Association (UMRA) and the Upper Manistee River Restoration Committee (UMRRC). Joe was involved with nearly every major initiative for the last 20+ years as a UMRA Board member, serving at various times as President or Vice President. He was one of the main founders of the Restoration Committee and its first and only Chairman for approximately 21 years.

For many years before his untimely death, as members of the UMRA Board of Directors and Advisory Council would have conversations after some of our meetings, someone would invariably comment "What would we do without Joe?" In the meetings, Joe would quietly, give us some insight into some of the work he had done on various Restoration Committee initiatives, meetings that he had attended, contacts that he had made on the River, etc. etc. Without intending to, he revealed the enormous amount of effort he was expending for this fragile River that he loved. His conservation work extended far beyond the banks of the Manistee River as he coordinated a study of stormwater runoff from the City of Grayling that led to the elimination of this runoff from spilling into the Au Sable River. Joe also was a founding member of the Headwaters Land Conservancy. We all realized how lucky we were.

(Note: one of our Board Members, Don Buchanan, has bravely stepped forward as Chairperson of the UMRRC in order to keep this endeavor up and running.)

Joe took a walk for several miles every other day. His route was on the road that my wife, Sherrie, and I would take when we were "heading to town". Many, many times we would stop our vehicle and have a chat with Joe. These informal meetings were always a treat for us, as we would invariably be greeted by a large, contagious grin from Joe. Sometimes the meetings would be just small talk and other times would involve various UMRA/UMRRC activities. Now, when Sherrie and I are traversing Joe's walking route, we are again and again reminded that he is gone.

So, what words would you use to describe Joe, not that you could ever capture the essence of a great person in just a word. The following are words or phrases that would certainly apply; Husband, Father, Grandfather, Great Grandfather, Great Great Grandfather, Scientist, Friend, Steward, Ph.D., Veteran, Christian and Conservationist. There are other words for other virtues that certainly apply. To me personally, the one word that comes to mind is "Gentleman", and some might argue that there aren't enough of them these days. Joe, we miss you.

River Care 2010

by Don Buchanan

Much like the river itself the UMR Restoration Committee must go on in spite of adversity. The sudden passing of Joe Kutkuhn came as a shock to us all and left a huge void in our committee. As everyone knows, Joe was extremely knowledgeable, talented and dedicated to the Upper Manistee River. He will be missed by this committee and by all who knew him. The Association's leadership has acted to fill that void and keep the UMRRC and their efforts and projects on the river going forward.

Last years "showcase" project was the construction of ten fish habitat improvement structures located in the Deward Area. This year we were fortunate in that one of our committee members from the Fisheries Division of the MDNRE was able to obtain some matching grant money from the Consumers Habitat Improvement Account to construct ten additional structures. This project is now underway, the work being done by our great partners at the Kalkaska Conservation District.

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(River Care 2010, continued)

Our next project will be to remove and rebuild a new stairway and watercraft slide at the "Sand Banks" area. The KCD crew will also be repairing erosion where watercraft are now being launched at this site.

Other projects scheduled for the KCD crew are:

- Construction of two sets of stairs at access/camp sites in Springfield Township and repair long term erosion at those locations.
- Work with the Crawford County Road Commission to repair or replace a culvert at the CR 612 road crossing to alleviate erosion at this site.
- Other potential erosion sites are being watched and will need some work to avoid future more serious problems.
- At this time three treefalls have been reported and taken care of, however, this is an ongoing process throughout the summer to reposition and secure this debris for habitat enhancement and erosion control.
- Ongoing public access site repair and maintenance.
- All other work associated with the above projects (ie, drafting drawings, acquiring permits, purchasing material and equipment.)

The committee is also monitoring the progress of two large projects scheduled for the North Branch. At the Mecum Road crossing the three existing tubes will be replaced. Engineering is in progress with construction scheduled for 2011. Also on the North Branch is a much larger project, which is the restoration of the old Flowing Well Trout Farm property. Funding for this project is underway.

The River Keeper Program is alive and well even though our reports are reduced at this time. We hope that this is due to less trash in the river or generally less problems to report. The Association and the Restoration Committee are deeply appreciative of the efforts of all those associated with the program.

Anyone wishing to report any damage or maintenance needs (ie, treefalls, erosion problems or damage at our public access sites) may do so through the Association's web site, UMRASITE.ORG

UMRA Board of Directors and Advisory Council Members

<u>Board of Directors</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Advisory Council</u>	<u>Term</u>
Terry Blakely (Secretary)	2010	Ann Blakely	2010
Dave Boberg	2011	Bill Dean	2012
Don Buchanan	2010	Harry Olson	2010
Doug Fairbanks (Prez)	2010	Tony Petrella	2011
Chuck Hawkins	2012	Jim Powers	2010
Mark Hendricks	2012	Tad Randolph	2011
John Mount-Campbell (V-P)	2011	Al Slenk	2012
Mark Rais (Treas)	2012	Bob Thorsen	2012
Jeff Steffey	2011	Dave Weissenborn	2011

Deward Fish Cover Project

by Russ LaRowe, Kalkaska Conservation District

With the help of the Kalamazoo Chapter of Trout Unlimited in 2009 and DNRE Fisheries Division in 2010 - several fish cover structures have been installed in the Deward Stretch of the Upper Manistee. Fish cover structures consist of natural woody debris secured in the river in a fashion that accomplishes a couple of functions. First and foremost, the debris is meant to provide shade and safety for trout. Second, the woody debris provides bank protection from erosion and serves to narrow the stream channel. A narrowed channel increases flow velocity, flushing sand and silt while exposing the cobble.

The structures calm the water along the bank allowing sediment to settle out and stabilize over time. This reduces the need for removing sand via sand traps that are increasingly expensive to service.

The Upper Manistee River Restoration Committee has surveyed the Upper Manistee for sites where these structures will provide the most good to the river. The structures vary in design from site to site but are usually red pine trees providing a ledge along an eroding bank or a trellis or crib type structure at an excessively wide spot in the river. Work on the 2010 structures is starting in mid July.



Natural Woody Debris

New Trout Regulations Proposed

by Doug Fairbanks

The UMRA Board of Directors have written to Kelley Smith, State Bureau Administrator of the Fisheries Division; Rebecca Humphries, Director, DNRE and the members of the Natural Resources Commission regarding the proposed changes to the fishing regulations in the upper sections of the Manistee River. We questioned whether there is enough scientific study or data available to support the changes. We wrote that we can only support such changes if there is sufficient scientific data to ensure that these changes will maximize the River's natural trout reproduction capabilities. (Summary – Science vs. Politics)

Stream Monitoring on the Upper Manistee

by Bob Thorsen

The Spring river “bug” survey, held on May 29th, was a huge success. A group of 26 volunteers collected bug samples from the four sites within the Upper Manistee River watershed. The day started with wonderful coffee and donuts from Goodale’s on the Kalkaska Eagles’ tented patio on M-72. Patrick Ertel from Huron Pines provided a brief overview of the sampling process. The volunteers included three families and ranged in age from 6 to “very experienced.” The teams returned to the Eagles facility around noon to turn in their collections and to enjoy a grilled lunch. Everybody had a great time working on and learning about the river.

The sampling occurs twice a year on the river and only requires two to three hours of your time. Trained leaders will coordinate each sampling event and site. **The fall event will be held on Saturday, October 2nd from 9 to 12.** The long term prospects of the volunteer bug monitoring process within the Upper Manistee Watershed will ultimately rest with the local community.

The variety and abundance of bottom dwelling river critters, otherwise known as benthic macroinvertebrates, is one of the best indicators of water quality. The use of river bug surveys to gauge water quality is widely accepted within the scientific community. The information gained through the volunteer collection process will be available for future scientific studies and to ensure the health of our wonderful river.

The volunteer program (MiCorps) was created to assist the DEQ in collecting and sharing water quality data for use in water resources management and protection programs. MiCorps is tasked with expanding volunteer water quality monitoring organizations statewide and fostering water resources stewardship to facilitate the preservation and protection of Michigan’s water resources. We plan on expanding the number of sites monitored within the Upper Manistee River watershed based on the number of participating volunteers.

This is a very educational, low impact volunteer activity that is perfectly suited for all ages and abilities.

To volunteer for the **October 2nd**. Fall sampling event or obtain more details, please contact Bob Thorsen, UMRA advisor, at (248) 318-5220, sockeyebob@att.net ; or Patrick Ertel, Huron Pines Project Manager, at (989) 344-0753 x19, Patrick@huronpines.org.

Comments or Questions?
Please contact Doug Fairbanks
at
theriverslure@aol.com or