

Pine River Van Etten Lake Watershed Monitoring

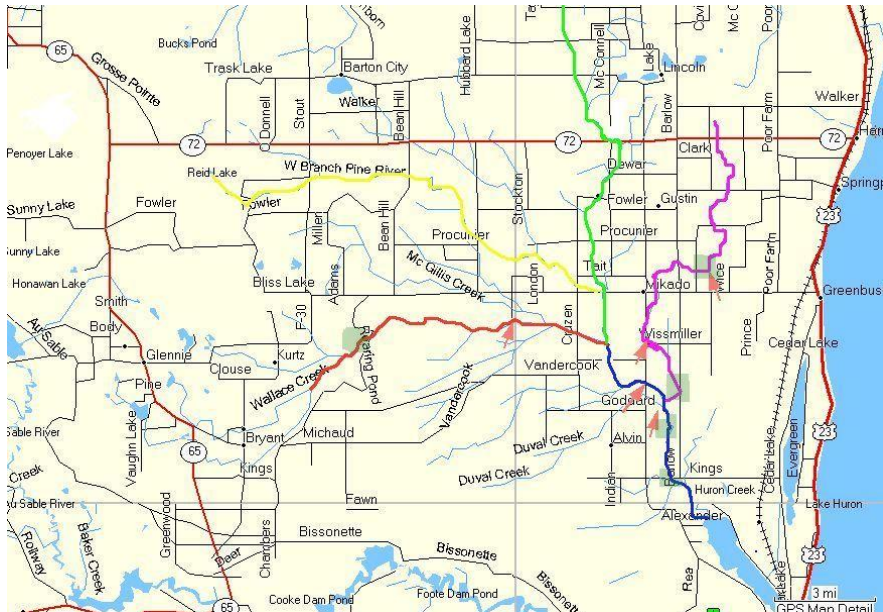
Grant Amount: \$7,420

Project Duration: June 2008-May 2010

Applicant: Huron Pines
501 Norway St
Grayling, MI 49738

Contact: Patrick Ertel, Project Manager

Project Location: Alcona and northern Iosco County



Project Partners: Pine River/Van Etten Lake Watershed Coalition
Iosco County Community Foundation
Paul H. Young Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Huron Pines
The Great Lakes Commission

Summary:

The Pine River/Van Etten Lake Watershed Coalition has taken the lead on developing and implementing the benthic macro-invertebrate populations with the overall goal of establishing baseline data for the purpose of monitoring the health of our watershed. As both development and restoration activities go forward, we want to ensure that the river and associated feeder streams do not significantly degrade further in their ability to sustain a cold water fishery. This project will also help to show any changes in the stream condition, as told through the macro invertebrate populations. Both negative and positive impacts in the watershed will be portrayed in our data, reflecting effects of continued development as well as installation of Best Management Practices at streambank erosion and road/stream crossing sites. Secondly, this project serves as an example of successful volunteer monitoring that can be modeled in other watersheds in the Huron Pines service area: the 11 counties of Northeast Michigan.

Accomplishments:

To date 7 sampling events have taken place, 4 on the Pine River/Van Etten Lake watershed and 3 on the Upper Manistee Watershed. Over 75 volunteers have participated in those events and we have engaged several passers-by on the river, the roads to our sites, and in conversations at the event locations. Samples have been identified and begun the trend to collect long-term baseline data for these river systems.

One presentation of the program was made by Huron Pines to the MiCorps conference attendees in 2008 and another is planned for the conference in October 2010.

Based on the success of these sampling events and protocols, this monitoring technique has begun to be used on many of our other restoration projects as a method to capture changes to the stream caused by the installation of Best Management Practices.

Activities and Costs:

The majority of funding for this project was utilized very early in the grant period. Those expenses were focused predominantly on acquiring the needed equipment and consumable supplies and the project management costs of writing the Quality Assurance Project Plan. Approximately 20% of the project funds were allocated to materials and equipment, including nets, pans, tweezers, scopes and magnifying glasses, and reference materials. Travel was a much higher expense than originally anticipated, as was project management.



Gene Stagner investigates his catch on the South Branch Pine River near Mikado, Michigan.



Volunteers from the Pine River/Van Etten Lake Watershed Coalition pick samples during their first event.



Bob Andrus reaches for the identification materials while many other volunteers continue sorting the sample.



Along Portage Creek, a major tributary to the Manistee, volunteers collect samples during the May 2010 event.