



LES CHENEAUX WATERSHED COUNCIL



MEMBERSHIP &
FUNDRAISING
CAMPAIGNS



SPRING
2014
UPDATE

Les Cheneaux Watershed Council President's Message

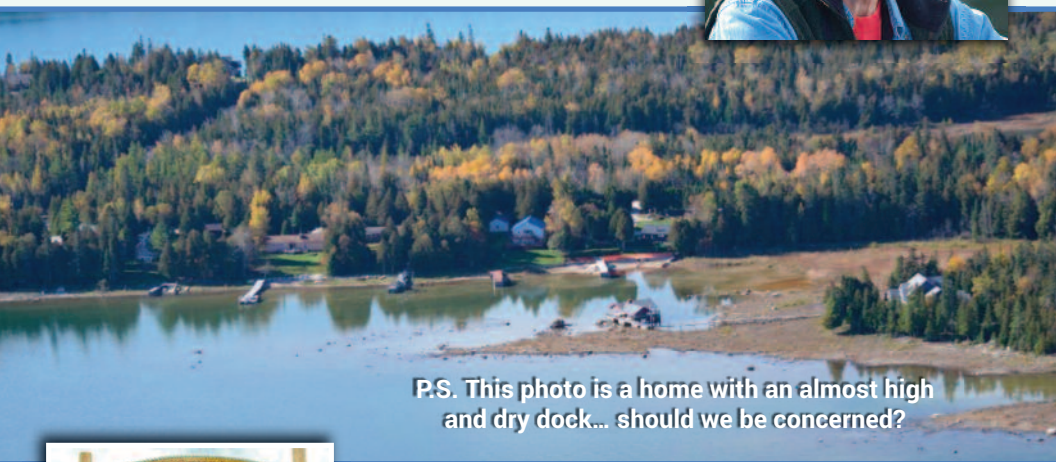
I wish to express a special appreciation and thanks for your collective efforts of time and money to Les Cheneaux Watershed Council (LCWC) programs!

As a result of your volunteer and financial support, we have a better scientific understanding of the major environmental issues that we face in our very special watershed.

This Spring 2014 Update, outlines three major projects of LCWC, our major concerns and, of course, our fundraising needs.

How can we ever do all of this? By scientifically understanding the causes of our ecological challenges, paying attention to the desires of the community, enlisting volunteers with a collective will to address issues, and responding in a way that is positive for both our Les Cheneaux ecology and our economy.

We hope you will consider helping the Les Cheneaux Watershed Council through our Membership and Fundraising Campaigns. The LCWC board invites all interested volunteers, yes, *we're all volunteers*, to bring your skills, talents, resources and enthusiasm to assist us in meeting our short and long-term goals for the preservation and enrichment of our beautiful area.



P.S. This photo is a home with an almost high and dry dock... should we be concerned?



Les Cheneaux Watershed Council Board of Directors

Bob Smith, President	Mary Baker	Roger Gauthier
Bob Dunn, Vice President	Christine Birkmeier	Bill Kurtz
George Herron, Treasurer	Chris Brumleve	Anne Phelps
Linda Hudson, Secretary	Mark Clymer	Ed Rusk
	Dave Dunn	Mike Stoll, update editor
		Gerry VandeVusse

Les Cheneaux Watershed Council Mission Statement

To promote the conservation, education, protection, restoration and sustainability of water-based resources within the Les Cheneaux Watershed.

LCWC maintains an office in the rear of the Les Cheneaux Chamber of Commerce Welcome Center adjacent to Autore Oil. Rent is reasonable, thanks to Autore and the Chamber. GPS co-ordinates are: 45°59'58.91"N, 84°22'36.71"W. LCWC is a 501(C)(3), non-profit, tax exempt Corporation, under the laws of the State of Michigan. Tax ID 20-1145050.

Special thanks to the Les Cheneaux Community Foundation for funding this Spring 2014 Update.

All material copy written, free use available, advise.

P.O.Box 578 | Cedarville, Michigan 49719 | 906-484-3031 | www.LesCheneauxWatershed.org |



Projects of the Les Cheneaux Watershed

Cedarville Dock

- Enhancing the Cedarville Dock access will attract additional local, seasonal and visiting boaters.
- Since the 1970s day-use slips have been few; only 10 usable slips are available at the municipal dock today!
- More day-use slips will support the widely desired revitalization of the downtown area and restoration of Cedarville as one of the two area waterfront communities.
- A launch-ramp staging area for the Clark Township Fire Department & EMS will provide a more efficient transfer of emergency patients.
- A one million dollar matching grant was awarded by the Michigan Waterways Commission to help fund this project, thanks to LCWC and Township efforts.

Low Water

- Has severely restricted recreational and commercial access to local waterway attractions.
- Evaporation and climate change have been proven as major causes.
- Person-made dredging, and thereafter, nature-made erosion of the St. Clair River near Detroit, has created an increased outflow – estimated at 20" of difference in Les Cheneaux, Lakes Michigan & Huron water levels.
- This is the fourteenth consecutive year when levels have been below "chart datum," i.e. the historic standard.
- Our Council has been instrumental in an advocacy role over the last year in promoting solutions to water level extremes. LCWC established ROW International, Inc. with a memorandum of understanding between the groups. ROWI has had meetings in Washington, D.C., issued position papers, and scientifically studied remediation in the St. Clair River.

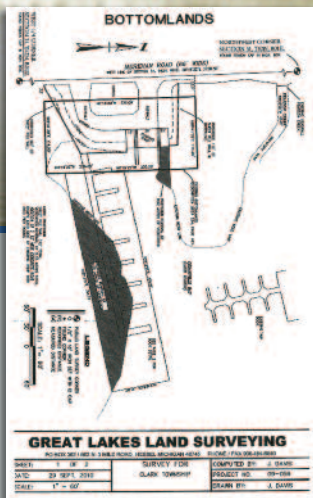
Weeds

- Nuisance aquatic weeds have found their niche in Les Cheneaux waters!
- Eurasian watermilfoil is the primary invasive species. *See technical discussion.*
- Work is being done by the community and LCWC to manage weed growth.
- One of our two goals is to re-establish a healthy aquatic plant, fish and recreational community.

Additional Projects

- Co-ordinating individual, Township, and Army Corps of Engineers dredging projects.
- Clearing paths and trails on Government Island with the National Forest Service.
- Hosting the annual "Frog Fest" this year, July 12, 2014.
- Hosting a "Boat School Built" row boat raffle, Drawing at Frog Fest, 4pm. (License #R24413, Les Cheneaux Chamber of Commerce, tickets available at Chamber office)
- Shoreline invasive Phragmites control.
- Investigations of new watershed technologies and old technology problems.





Cedarville Public Docking

While it may seem this Update is all about problems, there are many wonderful aspects about the Les Cheneaux Islands. Consider coming by boat via the recently dredged Federal Channel to Cedarville or Hessel harbors, assisted by the Les Cheneaux Watershed Council.

Day boaters and over 1,200 island property owners have plenty available on the water fronts:



Two feet of water and weeds before recent dredge.

Photographs courtesy of Mark Clymer

From ice cream (Jersey Muds) and pizza, lunch or dinner for the family, to daily errands like going to the bank, getting a haircut, or storing/repairing their boat at any number of waterfront marinas, our area offers everything you could possible need. Walk to the lumber yard and post office, or play tennis on the school/township court, and when you need to, use the new township restrooms. On Sundays you can boat and walk to one of the four churches near the docks.

Why use an old photo of the Association dock with 40+ slips available? To show that presently there are only 10 usable public slips! (*Marinas have many commercial slips available*). That's only 10 boats out of a potential 400+ boats. We jump in our cars 305 days to "get"; why not the boat for the other 60 days to "get" also?

Question: which came first, the egg or the chicken? Do we plan more businesses, implement and then build docking facilities, or would it be better the other way around?



Can you find the tennis court and post office?

The Les Cheneaux Watershed Council has scientifically addressed this question, is seeking funding and approvals for more docking, and firmly believes commerce will build to meet consumer demand. Make your voice known by helping the LCWC!

We now have a rare opportunity to once again make an adequate number of slips available through a one million dollar matching grant awarded by the Michigan Waterways Commission for the Cedarville Harbor improvement.

A recent township and Mackinac County public survey expressed the desire for a Grab-and-Go grocery, Wi-Fi enhanced coffee shops, news stands, and more in downtown Cedarville... afterall, if you get the *Times* and the *Journal* at home, why not here?

Emergency (EMS) Boat & Vehicle Docking



Late fall pictures

Completion of an improved, enlarged launch ramp will reduce traffic congestion and allow room for boaters to remove weeds from their boats and trailers before launching and after return, helping to reduce the spread of invasive weed species.

A new staging area endorsed by the Clark Township Fire Department is dedicated for rescue vessels to significantly reduce emergency response time. The expanded launch site will allow more efficient transfer of emergency



Proposed Facility Rendering by Rob Robley

patients brought from the islands by first responders. This is what EMS and emergency 911 response is all about.

High & Dry — McGulpin Channel
Between Government and LaSalle Islands



Restore Our Water International Members work to improve water levels throughout the watershed.

Low Water — High Water

The Challenge of a LIFETIME

Boating—Fishing—Island Living CHANGING DRAMATICALLY

There is still plenty of navigable water in Les Cheneaux; however, we do have long term water level concerns.

“Everybody” says: “Just wait around awhile, high water will come back!” Well, we’ve waited for 14 years of “cycles” and we are still about 20” low.

Continued low water has created significant ecological and economic damage.

- Fostering dense weed growth in waterways.
- Transforming bottomlands and wetlands into mud flats.
- Lowering property values and adversely affecting tourism and therefore commercial viability.

The primary forces behind the low levels are warmer temperatures across the Great Lakes region since 2000 and the increased outflows from Lake Huron caused by uncompensated person-made changes to the St. Clair River near Detroit.

The words “uncompensated, person-made changes to the St. Clair River (near Detroit)”, are the operative words in this statement !

LCWC has been advocating for the U.S. and Canadian governments to fix the St. Clair River “leak”.

Early last year, the Watershed Council joined with other concerned environmental and shoreline property owner associations in the U.S. and Canada to create a new non-profit organization named “Restore Our Water International” or “ROW-I”.

The purpose of this consortium is to promote scientific solutions to the low water problem with the principal focus on retaining water on the upper Great Lakes, as well as advocating governments to restore a more natural water level range in the lakes based on historic records and scientific research.

Simple, off-the-shelf engineering solutions to the St. Clair River problem exist, but the “political will” to implement them in Washington D.C., Ottawa, state and provincial capitals, has been lacking.

ROW-I, and its member organizations including the Watershed Council, recognize this effort will be a long-term campaign and will require consistent support from concerned citizens.

So far in this quest, Federal and State funds existed for major emergency dredging, including both Les Cheneaux Harbors, however, this money has not funded major scientific studies or compensation for the person-made problems in the St. Clair River. LCWC advocates for this focus to change.

Individual waterfront property owners, at great personal expense, have gone through the arduous permit process and secured local contractors to “get their boats to the water”.

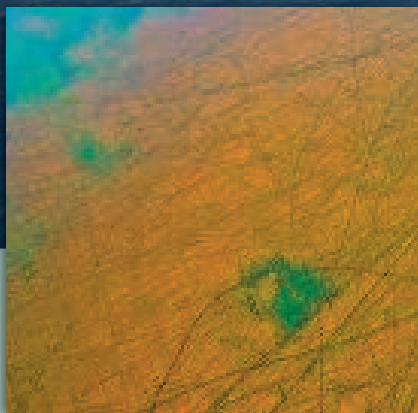


High & Dry — Low water levels cause these docks to sit completely unusable.

It's *Weeds, Weeds* Everywhere



Above: The Weed Harvester at work in the Les Cheneaux Watershed.



Milfoil in Sheppard Bay, so dense that boat tracks can be seen from an aerial view (2011).



Milfoil at public dock before recent dredge.



It Needs to Be Water, Water Everywhere

Since it costs so much to cut the milfoil, can't we package it up and sell it as "fodder" at the Pickford feed store? No, LCWC does not want to be in the "fodder" business, just in the business of controlling invasive weed presence and growth where they interfere with our ecosystem, our recreation and our economy.

Is this a "life long" project of LCWC?

Several consecutive years of lower Lake Huron water levels and long, warm springs have contributed to dense nuisance weed growth. There are measures that can be taken by the community to limit nuisance aquatic weed growth and to reduce growth of secondary nuisance aquatic weeds, which are also a major problem.

To be successful the LCWC is working with community organizations, Clark Township and a recent grant from Mackinac County to minimize nuisance weed growth in the navigation channels and in major bays.

An equally important aspect in weed-management is participation of waterfront property owners in weed reduction measures on their shoreline areas as a way to attack the nuisance weed issue in concert with the island-wide effort. This would be at property owner expense with helpful guideline assistance from LCWC if desired.

A comprehensive waterways management plan is being developed by LCWC.

Of the proven milfoil control methods available, the majority of our community has supported the use of mechanical and biological measures over herbicides.

Our goals are:

- Identify common factors that stimulate the growth of nuisance aquatic weeds.
- Take environmentally responsible management measures.
- Help re-establish a healthy aquatic plant community. Yes, some weeds are beneficial for fish and wildlife !
- Improve recreational use of our channels as well as our water-centric economy.

Milfoil management acreage will be expanded each year over our five-year management plan.

Program success will be evaluated each year and decisions on long term nuisance weed control made based upon successful, cost-effective strategies.

LCWC weed management plans for reducing milfoil using mechanical and biological control methods were based upon community feedback from several community public meetings.

Above: Cut Milfoil from the weed harvester being off-loaded to shore and then trucked to mulch bed. This is a very slow and very labor intensive process.

LC Watershed Technical Projects

Research Information



Cedarville Dock

There are 1,275 constructed docks in the Les Cheneaux waters at waterfront homes. There is one, 10 slip, Public dock in Cedarville. Thanks to recent State of Michigan funding for dredging, the water depth at this dock is 6+ feet as of the fall of 2013.

A State of Michigan Waterways matching grant file #10-49-0070-P for one million dollars is awaiting signatures of Clark Township and the LCWC. A Preliminary engineering study, Project 09-056, has been finished by Great Lakes Land Surveying.

Estimated local **matching** dollars needed for Phase 1 dock work is \$265,000. Phase 2 in-land work is \$300,000 and will not be constructed until public demand indicates such need exists. LCWC needs to raise \$100,000 to assist local township efforts with Phase 1. **Les Cheneaux Lions Club has already donated significantly to the project.**



Cedarville Dock

Low Water



Bosley Channel

ROW-I, the LCWC supported group is VERY fortunate to have as its co-presidents Roger Gauthier, retired Chief Hydrologist with the Army Corps of Engineers and Mary Muter of the Canadian Sierra Club. Doesn't that say a lot about the importance of this issue, as these well qualified volunteers give nearly full time hours in leading this effort?

ROW-I goals:

- Build public consensus to determine the best scientific methods for restoring a more natural water level range in Lakes Michigan and Huron.
- Expand the network of affected communities, organizations and individuals to call for government action with a unified voice throughout the Great Lakes Basin.
- Seek funding for installation of compensation structures in the St. Clair River to raise water levels in Lakes Michigan and Huron by 10-20 inches within the next 3-5 years.
- Improve public science knowledge on climate and human impacts on Great Lakes water resources.

LCWC recommends continued support of ROW-I during the planned five-year program from 2014 to 2018 at a level of \$20,000 per year.

2013 Vegetation Survey and Eurasian Watermilfoil Strategic Biological Control Program at Les Cheneaux Islands, Lake Huron, Michigan

Prepared by:

The Les Cheneaux Watershed Council

Prepared by:

EnviroScience
Environmental Quality Professionals

30400 Sibley Dr.
Bloomington, IL 61710
815-896-0000
www.enviroscience.com

Project No. 978-4803

Date: January 2, 2014



Weeds

A recent, highly informative scientific study sponsored by the LCWC, and the Federal EPA, (cover of report shown to the left), on the different kinds of weeds found in the waters of the Les Cheneaux — we now know what is down there! Understanding and treatment now become more pointed than ever before!

Of 43 different native aquatic plants growing throughout the islands, four are considered nuisance weeds in addition to milfoil. Something that makes these nuisance weeds special is that they appear to successfully compete with milfoil for their own territory and, thus, help contain and restrict milfoil spread. In other words, we have native plants helping our fight against milfoil! This is important new information.

Results from all 2013 treatments are being assessed and details reported on our website as to which methods worked best, which methods will be used in 2014, and where expanded acreage trials will be conducted.

For 2014 and the foreseeable future, Milfoil is a \$70,000/year effort. The Les Cheneaux Lions Club, Community Foundation and many others have already made donations to this effort.

Phragmites australis, or common reed, has invaded our shorelines. Although a "native" form of phragmites has grown sparsely in Les Cheneaux for generations, it was around 2000 that the aggressive, invasive phragmites became established in multiple spots. The invasive phragmites commonly flourishes in newly exposed beach areas as a result of low lake levels.

Our ecological diversity and our property values are negatively impacted where large, dense phragmites stands grow.

The Council has been working with the Eastern Upper Peninsula Cooperative Weed Management Area (EUPCWMA) under a Michigan State University (MSU) program to eliminate the invasive form of phragmites from our area. Fortunately, the invasive form has been confirmed in only twenty-two of over one hundred Les Cheneaux sites identified as suspected invasive phragmites.

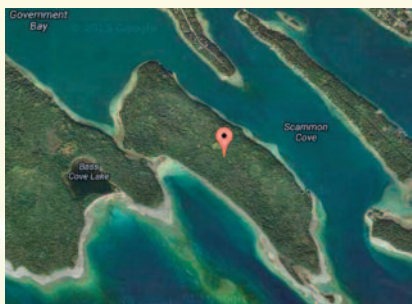
Top: 2013 Vegetation Survey and Eurasian Watermilfoil Strategic Biological Control Program at Les Cheneaux Islands, Lake Huron, Michigan. Middle: Invasive Phragmites.

Technology Changes

The LCWC has donated to the Cedarville High School for the National STEM (*Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics*) program. Students are investigating using underwater robots, overhead drones, and other technology to help LCWC with the Science of our Watershed.

The Internet fortunately or unfortunately is omnipresent today. The LCWC is using the www.lescheneauxwatershed.org site as the scientific document site for all key research of active and past issues. Try us, you'll be amazed at the "stuff" on the site!

The LCWC Facebook page is the place to keep up on all activities. Please comment on Facebook for us.



Government Island

Have you ever been to Government Island, walked, hiked, and camped? It's the 11th wonder of the world... well almost.

As an effort to enhance appreciation of the natural beauty of Government Island the Council has teamed with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to maintain and expand rustic walking trails on the island.

Council members have been trained by the USFS in trail maintenance procedures and will actively work with USFS in 2014 to clear and expand trails.

Efforts with Government Island trails are dedicated to the memory of a deceased Board member, Mike Mahoney, and island signage will reflect this sentiment.

Many organizations, (see affiliates list), have worked very hard with the leadership of Clark Township Supervisor Gary Reid, to make a dramatic effort to improve access to Government lands and Conservancy lands. Government Island is included in this effort.



Frog Fest: EDUCATION, FOOD AND FUN



Have you ever seen a hundred adults and kids focus on the environment in a tent on the Autore Oil property? Now is your chance! Come to **Frog Fest July 12th**, and discuss collaborator's displays, play games, and learn about frogs — all

sponsored by the LCWC.

LCWC engages community members of all ages and is intended to communicate Watershed Council environmental activities and commitment to address water-centric issues of the area.

Kids learn about how local plants and animals make Les Cheneaux a special area.



Row Boat Raffle at Frog Fest

LCWC has a rare opportunity and passes that opportunity on to the community to purchase raffle tickets for a very unique Wooden Row Boat built by our own Great Lakes Boat Building School (GLBBS). Thanks for this generous donation from an individual. It's NEW! And will be on display around Cedarville in May and June.

A copy of the raffle ticket tells it all. Buy bunches at the LCWC office in the Chamber of Commerce building at the Autore Oil property on M 134.



Additional Projects & Concerns of the Les Cheneaux Watershed Council



Microbial Research

The Council has been working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to develop a biological control agent to manage invasive milfoil. This promises to be very beneficial to Les Cheneaux waters as well as to the Great Lakes region and across the country.

Enbridge's 5-Mile Pipe Lines

Under the Straits of Mackinac

Enbridge is a Canadian Company that owns thousands of miles of energy pipe lines in Canada and the United States. Environmental groups have recently been concerned about the pipe lines due to their age, and the potential for a leak. These two lines are under the Mackinac Straits, two miles west of the Mackinac Bridge.

Local concern is amplified by the failure of Enbridge to efficiently and effectively deal with a line breakage in the Kalamazoo River area two years ago. LCWC is monitoring the flow of information on this topic. Check our web site for up-to-date information.



EUPCWMA

Eastern Upper Peninsula Cooperative Weed Management Area

One of LCWC's major affiliates, the Eastern Upper Peninsula Cooperative Weed Management Area, is part of a Federal Conservation District. These districts were formed after the great Dust Bowl to help citizens with conservation efforts such as re-forestation, weed/plant control, stream maintenance, farm land operation and preservation.

Local offices are located in Sault Ste. Marie. If you need help identifying something growing in your yard, or would you like to plant some trees to help in the effort, please call 906-635-1278.

Money

The Les Cheneaux Watershed Council follows strict Generally Accepted Accounting Standards using the latest computer software, to track income from memberships, donors, and expenses. The Executive Committee of LCWC regularly reviews the financial statement with full Board oversight. Federal and State Tax forms and registrations are both timely and current.

The enclosed envelope is, as indicated on the flap, for membership in LCWC. This spring LCWC will initiate a major fund drive for projects indicated in this Update.

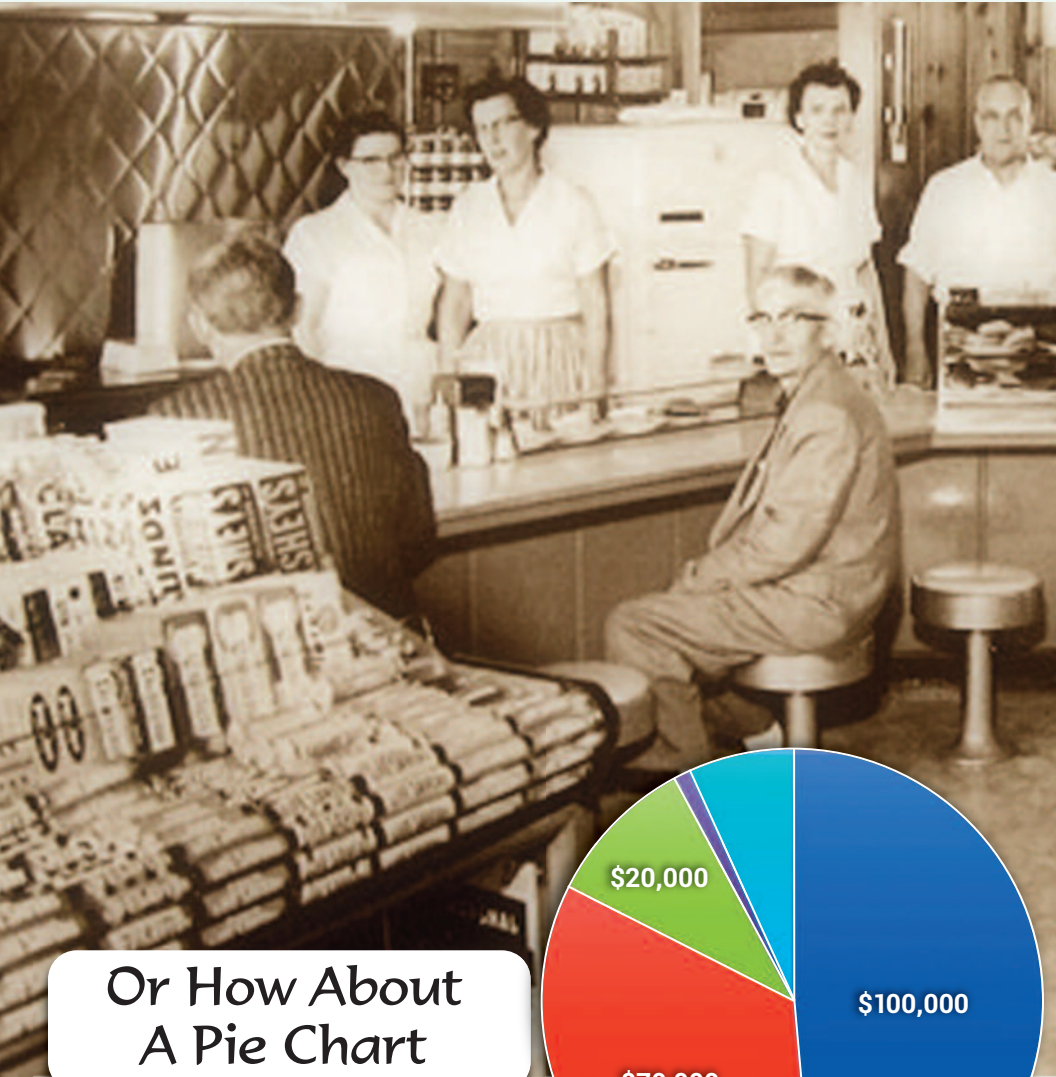
Affiliates

Thanks to all of you!

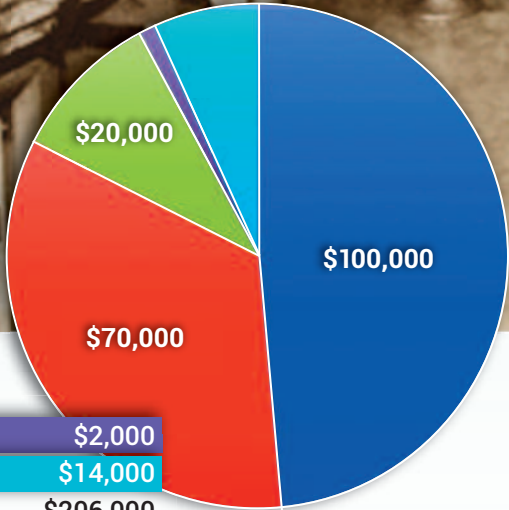
Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, Huron Pines Watershed Council, Michigan State University and the EUPCWMA Phragmites Control Program, Little Traverse Conservancy, Restore Our Waters International, Inc., Freshwater Future, Georgian Bay Association, Sierra Club, University of Michigan, Michigan Technological University, Eastern Michigan University, Lake Superior State University, Grand Valley State University, Oregon State University, Loyola University, Mississippi State University and Bowling Green State University.

Clark Township, Mackinac County Commission, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, State and Congressional Representatives, Les Cheneaux Islands Association, Les Cheneaux Community Foundation, Lions Club, Islands Wildlife, Sportsman's Club, Township Government, the Charles Stewart Mott and Highfield Foundations, and the Michigan Sea Grant Program.

Pie at Lil's Snack Bar in Downtown Cedarville?



Or How About
A Pie Chart



Harbor	\$100,000
Weeds	\$70,000
Low Water	\$20,000

Frog Fest	\$2,000
Operations	\$14,000
TOTAL	\$206,000

Les Cheneaux Watershed Council Financial Needs



Lil's Snack Bar was built in 1959 by Lilly and Fred Johnson, who served excellent food and homemade pies. The Johnsons are pictured behind the counter on the right, with Mrs. Johnson at the far right. Left of Mr. Johnson is Geraldine Thon. Notice the gentlemen in suits, the size of the candy bars and the manual pin ball machine! The other people in the photograph are unidentified. Any clues? (Photograph courtesy of Lorraine Powers of Mackinaw City)

With an old fashioned pin ball machine you never knew what you would get on the score wheels...

It's different when you invest your dollars in the
Les Cheneaux Watershed Council
through a membership and donation.

Our projects are firmly grounded in scientific ideas for the betterment of the Les Cheneaux Watershed.

We hope you will consider donating generously to our Spring 2014 Fundraising Campaign.

Important 2014 Dates

May 14 - Mackinac Economic Alliance, Community Center, 7pm

May 22 - LCWC Watershed Update Presentation, Community Center, 6pm

July 10 - LCWC Update Presentation & Annual Meeting, Community Center, 7pm

July 12 - LCWC's Frog Fest, Autore Oil Front Grass, 12pm to 4pm

July 12 - LCWC Row Boat Raffle Drawing, Frog Fest, 4 to 5pm

**We are volunteers
working for the
betterment of
Les Cheneaux.**

Thank you !



LES CHENEAUX WATERSHED COUNCIL

Thank you for helping preserve
and protect the place we enjoy...

where is your place?

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www.lescheneauxwatershed.org