

2021-2022
Annual Report



GR

*generation
restoration*

Gather 'Round our Inner Circle

Everyone is welcome in our inner circle, where we focus on “generation restoration”.

While we thought that texting our 2022 report might be clever, this was simply impossible.

Instead, we'll use the acronyms of today to share work that creates a better tomorrow.

Our momentum continues with so many new projects, partnerships, and possibilities.

You'll see that in the last year, there were more dirty hands pursuing cleaner watersheds.

Kids dug in, and native plants rose up. Spirits were lifted as more stormwater was infiltrated.

This purpose is simple: initiate and network to fix our broken Lake Michigan watersheds.

Will there be fish for the future, patches for pollinators, and freshwater everyone can rely on?

Yes. Your support of the ‘stewards of tomorrow’ is making a healthy “win-win” watershed possible.

Diverse backgrounds, big corporations, and smarter cities are creating a more sustainable tomorrow.

Too much information??? Hopefully.

TMI
too much information?

With help from The Brico Fund, Fund for Lake Michigan, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, work continues on the UW-Parkside campus to save threatened pollinators. Putting big data to work, UW-Parkside students create a transect in Phase 1 to capture measureable pollinator results.



*On the cover: planning has begun for the dynamic and dangerous Pike River mouth.
Inset: hope for our future - a Bose Elementary student helps plant a Pollinator Patch*

Partners

TYSM

thank you so much

About Time Moving Systems LLC
Amazon MKE1
Blackhawk Community Credit Union
Brookwood Foundation
Butter Buds
Carthage College
Col. L.C. Christensen Charitable and Religious Foundation
Decorating Den Interiors
E.C. Styberg
EMCO Chemical Distributors Inc.
Fund for Lake Michigan
Godfrey & Kahn S.C
H. Fisk Johnson
Hey and Associates, Inc
ILM Environments
Indamira Pets LLC
Inter-Fluve Inc.
Jerry Smith Farm
Johnson Family Foundation
Johnson's Nursery
Jorgensen Partners, LLC
KCI
Kenosha Community Foundation
Kenosha Public Library
Lakeshore Pedal Tours
LUMW Foundation
Modern Woodmen
MotoSonora Brewing Company
Nielsen Madsen & Barber, SC
O&H Danish Bakery
Osterman Granite and Marble
Public Craft Brewery
Racine Community Foundation
raSmith
Reefpoint Marina
Rehrig Pacific
Resource Environmental Solutions, LLC
Retail Fixture LLC
Reva A Holmes Environmental Fund
Ruffo Family Foundation
SC Johnson
Sisters of St. Dominic
Solve Innovations LLC
Sozo Chiropractic
Springbrook Cabinetry
St. Joseph's Tool Chest
Strand Associates, Inc.
Thompson & Associates Wetland Services
Top of the Hill Furniture
Town Bank (Wintrust Bank)
Twin Disc, Inc.
Uline
V3 Companies LTD
Village and Town of Somers
WE Energies Foundation
Western Kiwanis Foundation of Kenosha
Wild Ones Root River Chapter
Woman's Club of Kenosha



Volunteers from Rehrig Pacific, led by Board Member Pete Rohlman (right), get ready to eradicate invasive buckthorn.



Members

- Tara Abramson
- Sarah Andersen
- Matt Andis
- Linea Anthony
- Kristin Ashley
- Ross Astoria
- Pat Bachhuber
- Patricia Bajabir
- Maddie Ball
- Rebecca Belmont
- Jay Benkowski
- Natalie Bilik
- Joseph Bill
- Christine Blaine
- Liz Borger
- Bruce Bosman
- Julie Bosman
- Wayne Bradford
- Sam Braun
- Betty Breneman
- Carrie Bristol-Groll
- Jim Bruce
- John Bruch
- Scott Bruss
- Andy Buehler
- Bonnie & Don Buska
- Craig Calandrelli
- Margaret Cannestra
- Roger Chernik
- Kyle Chester
- James Cieslak
- Joel Clelland
- Ashley Cruz
- Megan Czajka Mathein
- Sally & August Dahl
- Marilyn Dahlen
- Kailyn Daum
- Karl David
- Margo Davis
- Warren DeKraay Jr.
- Harley Dell
- Meira Domash
- Joe Dubaniewicz
- David Easley
- Shauna Edson
- Elizabeth Emer
- Theresa Fandrei
- Brandi Ferree
- Ann Fleming
- Luanne Frey
- Tom & Lynda Friedel
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- Elizabeth Garcia
- Joseph Gardner
- Ruby Gemmell
- Camille Gendusa Bluestein
- Jennifer Gomez
- Aubriana Gordon
- Luigina Graceffa
- Linda Graeper
- Shawn Granlund
- Susan Greenfield
- Katherine Gregor
- Jule Groh
- John Hacker
- Sandra Halmo
- Edith Hammond
- Emily Hart
- Dan Hautzinger
- Stacie Havron
- David Hecht
- Joeseeph Heck
- Jeannine Heinemann
- Nancy Hennessy
- Jerold Hershberger
- Andrew Heuser
- Mike Hoadley
- David Hoffert
- Linda Horn
- Alyson Horton
- Joe & Debbie Huck
- Jennifer Hynds
- Robert Jenik
- Alex Johnson
- Ruth Johnson
- Matthew Johnsrud
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- Richard Kaiser
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- Julie Kinzelman
- Judith Kirby
- Herb Kohl
- Charlene Kordus
- Kay Krause
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- Cheri & Dave Krukowski
- Joseph Legath
- Mike Luba
- Olivia Lutterman
- Cherie Lyford
- Sierra Lyon
- Joseph Maier
- Charlie Manning
- Marisa Markowski
- Angela Martin
- Frank Martinelli
- Ed Mathein
- Wendy McCalvy
- Mark McClish
- Marilyn McGoldrick
- Chris McGowan
- Robert McKee
- Andrew McLean
- John Meyer
- Barbara Meyocks
- Margaret Miller
- Anthony Montgomery
- William Moore
- Joseph Moran
- Brian Mueller
- Ruben Nazario
- Randall Neu
- Katherine Neubauer
- Mary Norris
- Steve Novak
- Betsy O'Neill
- Maryann Ortmayer
- Peter Oster
- Sylvia Oxenknecht
- Luke Pacholski
- Sarah Palmer-Ball
- Tamara Patton
- Nakeisha Payne
- Donald Peterson
- Randall Peterson
- Raelyn Pierce
- Lisa Ptacek
- Helen Pugh
- Darcy Pylkas
- Julie Rather
- Emily Reed
- Emma Reed
- David Rhoads
- Kathryn Ritter
- Wolf Ritter
- Karen Roberts
- Richard Roberts
- Alyssa Rodway
- Pete Rohlman
- Arielle Romano
- Jack Rose
- Cinnamon Rossmann
- Pamela Rugen
- Kelsey Saari
- Adam Sadiq
- Daisy Saenz
- Bill Sasse
- John Scripp
- Sarah Sheerin
- Gregg Sinnen
- Jeff Siuta
- James Small
- Joshua Sopczak
- Simone Sorensen
- William Sparks
- Gabi Speca
- Joann & Peter Speca
- Howard Stacey
- Mike Staeck
- Patricia Stark
- Jayne Steffens
- Diane Steiner
- Linda Stengel
- Meryl Strichartz
- Judith Swanson
- Steven Szymanski
- Robert Taylor
- Allison Thielen
- John Thielen
- Nancy Thompson
- Alice Thomson
- Paul Torosian
- Steve Torosian
- Carol Turner
- Debrah Vander Heiden
- Joe Vass
- Sarah Vincer
- Frank Virgili
- Sonya Visor
- James Wardrip
- Melissa Warner
- Kate Watling
- Seth Weidmann
- Allison Werner
- Bob Wheeler
- Zachary Whitehead
- Ken Wiele
- Dawn Williams
- Tedi Winnett
- Megan Wolf
- Anna Wolff
- Rose Woodruff
- Lisa Woolford
- Brian Younger
- Patrick Zielinski

SMH

shaking my head

Eroding streambanks, and the excess sediment they produce, damage our community brand and create dangerous conditions for residents. The problem is evident here along Pike Creek.

Sediment remains the No. 1 contaminant for most waters around the world, and in the Root-Pike basin more than 50% comes from conventional farmland. Agricultural runoff also carries other pollutants like nutrients, pesticides and herbicides into our rivers and down to our beaches. Economically, the off-site costs of soil erosion affecting fisheries, recreation and industry can be greater than the lost agricultural productivity. (NRCS)



The unscientific application of road salt is killing our rivers and threatening aquatic life in Lake Michigan.



Standard ponds with turf buffers attract geese and don't infiltrate stormwater or process pollutants like constructed wetlands.

Watershed Problems & Stakeholder Solutions

Phosphorus (P)

problems: creates excessive algae & chokes off oxygen to aquatic species

solutions: reduce turf mowing in runoff areas & stabilize eroding banks

Nitrogen (N)

problems: overstimulates algae growth that can harm drinking water

solutions: less fertilizers, more naturalized ponds & wetlands

KCl, NaCl, PoCl, CaCl, MaCl (Road Salt)

problems: lots of combinations, all harm native plant & aquatic life

solutions: shovel & plow often, use salt sparingly & brine if you can

Total Suspended Solids (TSS)

problems: sediment adds excess phosphorous & impairs our water

solutions: increase stream buffers & plant shorelines with native plants

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

problems: permeates in the air, water, soil & very difficult to destroy

solutions: with over 9,000 types of PFAS, this is a tough one, stay tuned...

E. coli

problems: bacteria from pet & geese droppings make people & pets sick

solutions: pick up pet waste, rim ponds with native tall grasses to keep geese out



A typical stormwater pond drains excess sediment and bacteria into a clean section of the Pike River North Branch.



Excess sediment, phosphorus, and nitrogen create nightmarish harbor conditions.

In 2015, Mount Pleasant had a dream for the fallow farmland in Smolenski Park to become a 'pollinator paradise'. In 2016, the Root-Pike WIN / Mount Pleasant partnership to bring back the natives began. In 2018, restoration started with the help of the Fund for Lake Michigan and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. In 2022, the federally endangered RPBB was spotted and confirmed in the restored prairie.

Today, the dream is a reality. Tomorrow, who will take on the next challenge?

RPBB

rusty-patched bumble bee



Smolenski Park

BEFORE

AFTER



Pike River South Branch

Wetlands hidden under corn fields and a stream channel straightened along the railroad tracks, the Pike River South Branch suffers from damaging floods, impaired water quality, and poor habitat conditions. Over the last five years, we have been working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Kenosha County to change these sad facts. Currently in 60% design, here are some of the estimated outcomes for our kids and grandkids:

- ~80% of the Total Suspended Solids (TSS) and over 50% of the nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) pollutant load entering the system would be removed
- ~50 million gallons of additional flood storage
- ~225 acres of new passive and active space in the heart of Kenosha
- Addresses “poor” ecological scores with the goal of “very good”
- Satisfies many Pike River Plan goals and recommendations

The first phase of the South Branch restoration will create more than 225 acres of native pollinator and Northern Pike habitat.

you spend time with someone you love
while giving back to your community



you visit North beach
and pick up trash



you clear the way
for native plants



you used a shovel for the first time
in your life



your kids get connected
with their surroundings



you work together to make your
community better

TFW

that feeling when

Diverse Ecosystem Experiences

How does our mission matter to you? ... by bringing energy and enthusiasm to your local clean water future.

For some, it's a moment with a new outdoor experience. For others, it's a lifelong commitment to cleaner water or native species preservation. Whatever the unique connection might be, the wonders of our watersheds unite us. When a child puts down their phone and picks up a native plant, a healthier ecosystem for their children is one plant closer to reality. Root-Pike WIN helps create that hyperlink. Much like the natural world, diversity is celebrated in our unique motivations and what we accomplish together. We see this "hands on" celebration — in young and old alike — and know it's never too late to start. The "click" is different and it's special.

Root-Pike WIN is proud to bring communities together to support more resilient places where people and plant diversity thrive. Whether novice or naturalist, don't wait to get involved. Now is your time to create your own "that feeling when" experience.



**you seed a wetland
in Pritchard Park**



**your saw glides
through big buckthorn**



**you plant oak trees
in Gitzlaff Park's new
oak savanna**


LIT

really good or exciting



Klema Creek


In the last year, your support helped bring these three "lit" restoration projects closer to reality. The "Dirty" Klema Ditch is on a pathway to become a clean creek in Caledonia. Also in the Wind Point watershed...



Cliffside Park

Cliffside Park's highly-eroded ravine and lack of fish passage is now in planning for restoration. With help from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, stabilization to this coastal gem will reduce sediment inputs in

Lake Michigan by more than 1,000 tons a year. Finally, the Pike Creek watershed is getting some much needed attention...

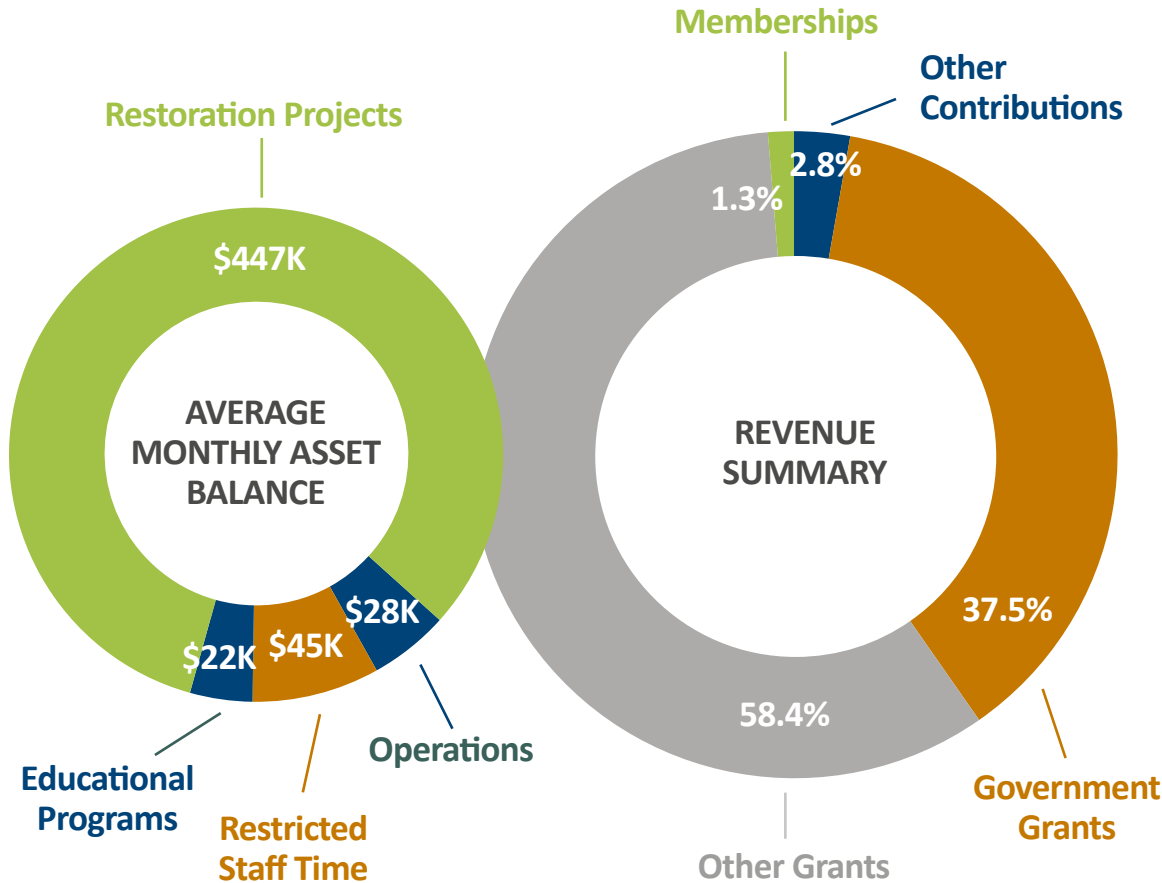


Pike Creek

Flowing through underserved communities in Kenosha, Pike Creek is ranked "High" for runoff impacts on streams and impacts on groundwaters. Addressing these impaired Root-Pike basin creeks is really good and really exciting!

Financials

accrual basis as of June 30, 2022



Staff

Kristine Heuser Stormwater Educator	Laura Buska Program Manager	Amy Kolb Bookkeeper	Dave Giordano Executive Director
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Financial Summary

REVENUE	
Contributions and grants	\$ 333,835
Investment income	\$ 117
Total Revenue	\$ 333,952

EXPENSES	
Salaries & benefits	\$ 196,118
Other expenses	\$ 179,123
Total Expenses	\$ 375,241

NET ASSETS OR FUND BALANCES	
Revenue less expenses	-\$ 41,289
Total assets at end of year	\$ 547,030
Total liabilities at end of year	\$ 2,570
Net Assets/Fund Balances	\$ 544,460

Balance Sheet

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 541,767
Accounts Receivable	\$ 3,450
Total Current Assets	\$ 545,217

Property and Equipment	
Net Property and Equipment	\$ 1,813
Total Assets	\$ 547,030

LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable	\$ 2,570
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 2,570

Net Assets	
Without Donor Restrictions	\$ -3,999
With Donor Restrictions	\$ 548,459
Total Net Assets	\$ 544,460

Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 547,030
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AFK *away from keyboard*

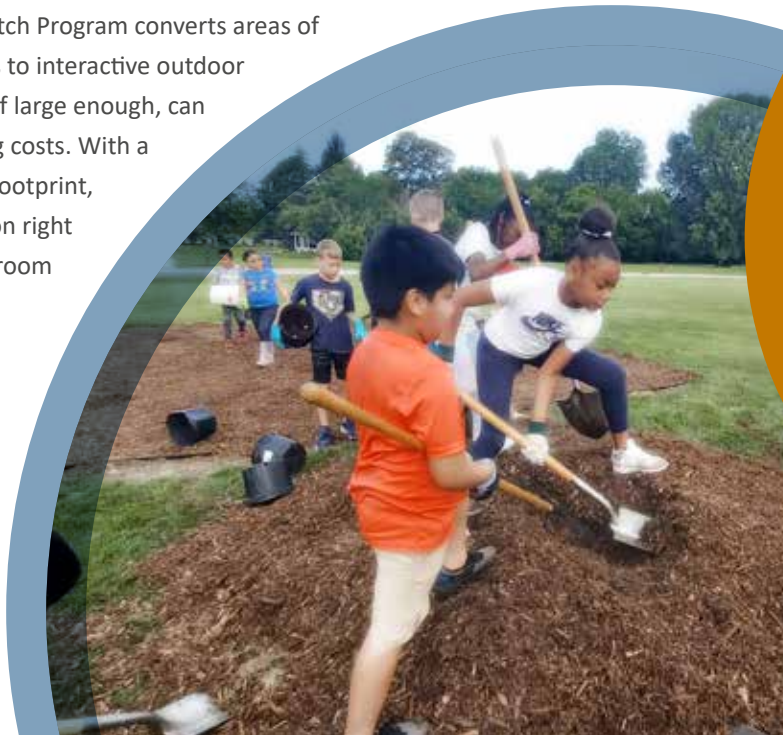
The Pollinator Patch Program

Artificial intelligence may be inevitable, but hands-on education is incomparable.

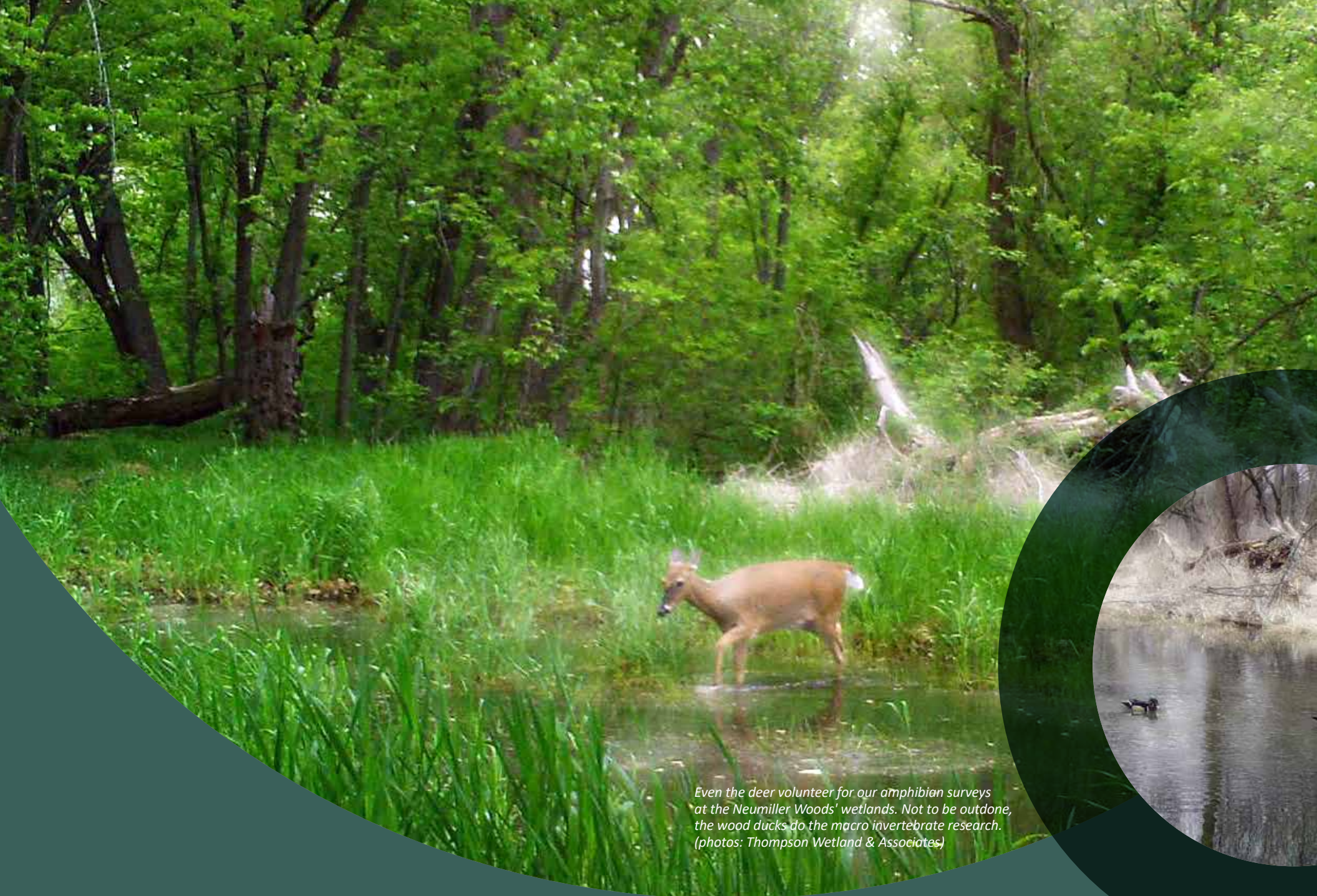
At Bose Elementary School, the generation restoration is in full force. With help from Root-Pike WIN, SC Johnson and the Colonel L.C. Christensen Charitable & Religious Foundation, students and teachers planted their first Pollinator Patch on school grounds. Everyone from fifth graders down to early education students worked to put these native plants into their new home. We are just as excited as they are to see their "patch" begin to blossom.

The Pollinator Patch Program converts areas of unused turf grass to interactive outdoor classrooms, and if large enough, can decrease mowing costs. With a reduced carbon footprint, outdoor education right outside the classroom door is priceless.

The Pollinator Patch Program can also be applied to parks, religious properties, public buildings and corporate campuses. Here, employees from Rehrig Pacific help plant the new Patch at Lincoln Park in Kenosha.







Even the deer volunteer for our amphibian surveys at the Neumiller Woods' wetlands. Not to be outdone, the wood ducks do the macro invertebrate research. (photos: Thompson Wetland & Associates)

IRL *in real life*



Gitzlaff Park from above, and it's Great Blue Heron and grey-headed coneflowers can be found below.

Neumiller Woods and Gitzlaff Park

In 2016, Neumiller Woods was a degraded wetland full of sediment and Gitzlaff Park was a fallow farm field lacking plant diversity. In 2022, both areas received “Phase One” restorations. At Neumiller Woods, the sediment was removed from the wooded wetlands and a one-acre scrape was created for more aquatic habitat.

At Gitzlaff Park, three new wetland scrapes were created and the prairie was improved with more native plants and oak trees. The 15-acre area restoration includes a trail system and provides more habitat and better infiltration of runoff from adjacent farm fields.

Today, these areas are teeming with wildlife – including American toad tadpoles, cedar waxwings, and wood ducks. Phase Two restorations in both parks, including more wetland scrapes and tall grass prairies, will begin in 2023. We are grateful for the Fund for Lake Michigan, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and the Village of Somers for their tremendous support and collaboration in bringing new life into these areas.





Somers Branch culvert replacement for fish passage and riparian improvements



Pike River mouth: long-term beach safety and fish passage solutions



Pike River rearing pond area and streambank improvements



Pritchard Park urban fishing pond improvements

Carthage College Sanders Arboretum wetland and forest improvements



Gitzlaff Park Phase 2 wetland re-creation and stream buffer improvements

Kirkorian Park wetland, prairie, pond and forest restoration



Root River East Branch wetland and stream enhancements



ICYMI

in case you missed it

Projects in the Pipeline

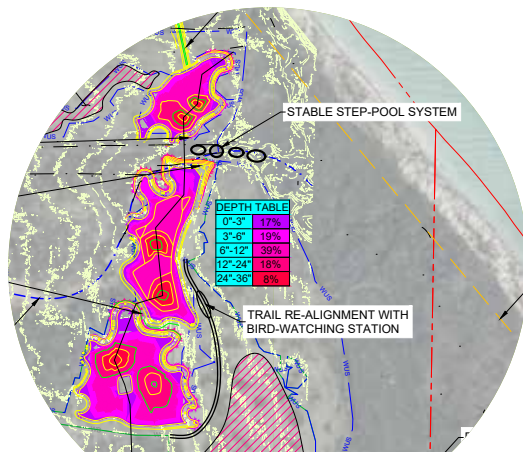
Cliffside Park coastal forest and ravine stabilization for fish passage



Campbell Woods acquisition, and forest and wetland restoration



Cliffside Park wetland restoration for migratory bird and waterfowl habitat



Shagbark prairie improvements and outdoor education area near Pike Creek





Putting Native Plants into Kids Hands

Stormwater Space players were able to take home their very own native plant to further expand and improve home stormwater infiltration. In total, we showcased the native event tent at 9 events and gave out 320 native plants which provides roughly 128 gallons of additional stormwater infiltration.

“Stormwater Space” Native Tent

Complete with water blaster fun, this one-of-a-kind display shares various stormwater pollutants, how stormwater is affected by impervious surfaces and turf grass, and how native plants assist with infiltrating and detoxifying stormwater.



Stormwater Stories with Koerri Elijah

@KoerriElijah, local social media creator and influencer, interviewed Root-Pike WIN's Kristi Heuser on water pollutants and current restoration projects. These interviews spread throughout the diverse audiences in the Root-Pike basin.

Turf to Prairie: Infiltration Education

Laura Buska, Root-Pike WIN's Education and Outreach Manager, and Vince Moscha of Hey & Associates demonstrate how native plants process stormwater better.





RESPECT OUR WATERS

A3 *anytime
anyplace
anywhere*



In 2022,
our Respect Our Waters
education program reached
306,742 people with
solutions to runoff pollution,
excessive flooding, and
invasive plants.

Warming Up to Winter Maintenance

16 of 20 municipalities participated in training to learn about the environmental impacts of winter salt and deicers this year. The big takeaway: how to protect public safety, reduce operating costs, and improve local water quality!

Cleaning Up the Pet Waste Facts

This year, our pet waste education display was revamped to combat the maligned myth that pet waste degrades into “fertilizer”. Seeing the heads turn as kids and parents alike learn more about bacteria has moved the awareness needle on pet waste cleanup!



Current Directors

Michael Luba - President
Basin Supervisor (retired)
Department of Natural Resources

Joshua Sopczak - Vice President
Vice President – Business Banking
Town Bank

Jim Small - Treasurer
CPA, & Partner
Maller Peterson, LLC

Joann Speca - Secretary
Senior Regulatory Specialist
UnitQ, LLC

Roger Chernik
Past President
River Bend Nature Center

William Sasse, P.E.
Consultant /Past President
Sasse LLC


John Scripp
Environmental Attorney
Private Practice

Pete Rohlman
Operations Manager
Emco Chemical

Chris Meier
Vice President
Riley Construction

Current Grantors

The Brico Fund
EC Styberg
The Enroth Foundation
Fund for Lake Michigan
Greater Milwaukee Foundation
Kenosha Community Foundation
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin
Racine Community Foundation
SC Johnson
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Western Great Lakes Bird & Bat Observatory
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Uline



Work continues into Phase Six of the UW-Parkside Cross-Country Course. Here in Phase One, native prairie vegetation is back and so is the RPBB.

Burning out the invasive reed canary grass, Phase Two of the mesic forest and wetland is in the third year of improvements.



The second year of restoration begins in Phase 3 as Laura brings this bundle of joy to reseed the "Old Farm's" oak opening.



Volunteers from Amazon cut, treat and bag invasive buckthorn — making room for the spring ephemerals in Phase 6.



WYWH
wish you were here

GWHTLC

glad we had this little chat

learn



volunteer



donate



Restoring, Protecting and Sustaining the Root-Pike Basin Watersheds

Root River

Pike River

Oak Creek

Pike Creek

Wind Point

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