



Alpena Fishery Resources Office Partners for Fish and Wildlife

Annual Report 2002



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I. Introduction and History

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (Partners) is a voluntary habitat restoration program that provides restoration expertise and financial assistance to private landowners, Tribes, and other conservation partners that willingly restore fish and wildlife habitat on their property. The Partners Program differs from other Federal restoration programs in that it focuses on restoring habitat for migratory birds such as shorebirds, songbirds, waterfowl; anadromous (migratory) fish such as salmon, and declining plant and animal communities such as native prairie and stream habitats. All private landowners and Tribes are eligible for the program. Program participation is voluntary and project implementation is based on fish and wildlife benefits. Since the Partners program was initiated in Michigan in 1988, over 1,500 projects have been completed.

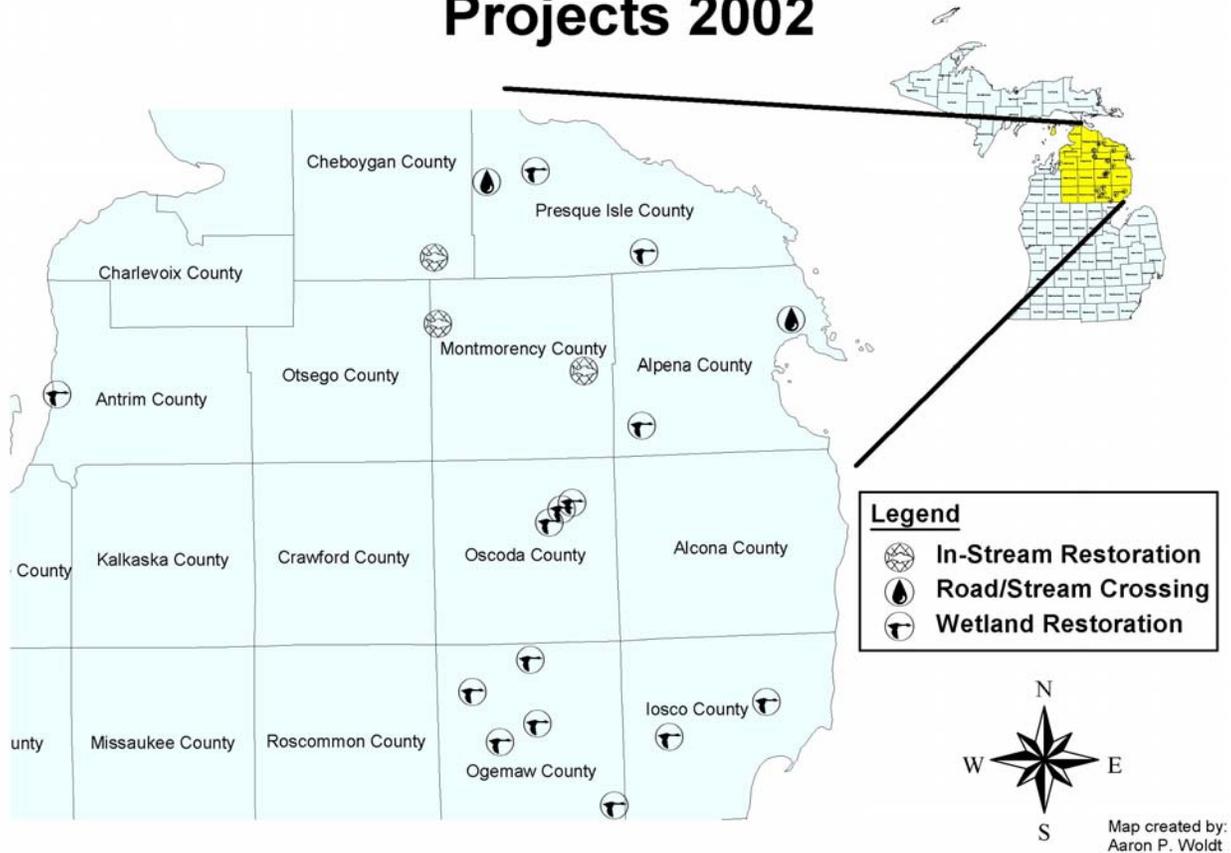
Alpena Fishery Resources Office Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program

The Alpena FRO initially began working with the Partners Program through Clean Water Action Plan and Fish Habitat Restoration funding that became available to field offices in 1999. Aquatic restoration is a natural focus of a fishery station, and the Alpena FRO had been working with local watershed restoration committees since 1997. The focus of projects was the reduction of sediment entering the watersheds from stream bank erosion sites, road/stream crossings, and improving fish habitat by removal or displacement of sediment, and removing barriers to fish passage. In 1999 the Alpena FRO started a small wetland restoration program and accepted five counties in NE Michigan as the area of responsibility. In 2001 the Alpena FRO received funding to hire a permanent coordinator and expanded the area of responsibility to include twenty counties in the northern part of the lower peninsula of Michigan.

Partnerships

No Partners project is initiated without at least a 1:1 non-federal match. These funding matches can be received in the form of in-kind services such as labor, supplies and equipment, or in the form of funding contributed to the project. Many times a combination of the two is used for the match. Contributions are received from private landowners, conservation organizations, conservation districts, and watershed restoration committees. The Partners Program works closely with our Department of Agriculture counterpart, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Many projects are evaluated by both the agencies in consultation with the landowner to determine the best program for the specific project. There are several scenarios where both NRCS and Partners Programs can be combined for a maximum benefit to both our natural resources and the private landowner.

Alpena FRO Partners for Fish and Wildlife Projects 2002



II. Wetland Restoration

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program was initiated to restore wetlands for migratory birds and associated wetland plants and wildlife. Typical projects are located on agricultural lands that had been drained by ditches or field tiles. Approximately 50% of Michigan wetlands have been lost.

In FY 2002 the Alpena FRO received \$35,000 from habitat restoration funds to restore wetlands. Additional funds were utilized from neighboring offices. Landowners provided \$51,300 in matching funds contributing to the wetland restoration projects. A total of 71 acres of wetland was restored in 6 counties on 14 sites throughout the northern tip of the lower peninsula of Michigan. Restoration cost to the Service averaged about \$700 per acre.

Table 1 lists wetland projects by landowner name, county, acreage restored or enhanced, and project cost.

Table 1. 2002 Wetland Restoration Projects

Landowner Name	County	Acreage	Cost
Layman, Doug	Oscoda	2	\$3,000
Gerrity, Patrick	Ogemaw	2	\$2,390
Snitko, Paul	Oscoda	5	\$2,500
10 Pts. Sportsmans Club	Ogemaw	7	\$10,000
Corning, Joseph	Presque Isle	10	\$1,000
Sapp, Lawrence	Ogemaw	6	\$4,000
Engle, Ferris	Ogemaw	3	\$2,470
North Riverside Club	Presque Isle	3	\$2,490
O'Loughlin, Earl	Iosco	5	\$2,500
Lalone, Vernon	Antrim	3	\$6,500
VanGoethem, Ray	Ogemaw	1	\$1,000
Beaver Lake Hunt Club	Alpena	10	\$1,000
Abbe, Steve	Oscoda	4	\$3,885
Bain, Thomas	Iosco	10	\$5,500
TOTAL	6 Counties	71	\$48,235

Following is a brief description of each project and the resource outcomes. **Many of the 2002 projects have yet to fill with water due to drought.** The dry fall and warm winter predicted for Michigan offer little hope for the coming year. It may be a number of years before these restorations realize their full potential.

Doug Layman, Oscoda County

A 276-foot earthen dike was excavated in a fallow field previously used for hay. This dike created a two-acre wetland.



A grass spillway is the only means of drainage. Construction was completed at the end of July 2002. Before and after pictures are located left to right respectively.



Patrick Gerrity, Ogemaw County



A 150-foot earthen dike was placed at the edge of a crop field (corn) at the Garrity residence. This dike created a 2-acre wetland (left). Peripheral drainage areas that drain into the wetland were enrolled into the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Conservation Reserve Program, and buffer strips were installed along all of those drainage areas (right). This site is a

good example of a partnership

between two federal agencies, and how programs can collaborate to provide the best service possible to the landowner. This farm received a "Historic 100-Year Old Farm" designation in 2002. The Garrity family is very proud of their commitment to agricultural land use and conservation, and was pleased with the restoration of their field. The project was completed in August 2002.



Paul Snitko, Oscoda County

A 150-foot dike, utilized as a driveway, was installed to create a five-acre wetland. A saturated area that was previously drained by a ditch and culvert was plugged to restore this wetland. Construction was completed in January 2002. The picture to the right shows the driveway in the foreground following construction. The area to be inundated continues to the edge of the aspen in the background.



10 Points Sportsman Club, Ogemaw County



A 170-foot earthen dike was placed to restore a 7-acre wetland. A saturated area that was drained by a ditch and a culvert was plugged to restore this wetland. Construction was completed by the end of July 2002. The Sportsman Club selectively logged the area in the winter of 2001 as a part of their forestry plan developed by the Ogemaw Conservation District. The dike now serves as a two-track for the sportsman to access the east side of their property.

Joseph Corning, Presque Isle County

A 250-foot earthen dike was placed to block an intermittent drainage on the property of Joseph Corning. The site required a Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) permit. This permit was received during the spring of 2002. Mr. Corning's



40-acre parcel is enrolled in the USDA's Conservation Reserve Program. Mr. Corning donated a substantial amount of funding (\$10,000) toward the construction of his 10-acre wetland. Construction was completed in August 2002.

Lawrence Sapp, Ogemaw County

Two dikes, one 420 feet long, and one 120 feet long were excavated in a hay field on the property of Larry Sapp. A tile was broken to restore the larger pond, and the smaller pond will fill through surface water. Together the two wetlands will saturate six-acres of former field. The upland habitat will remain in grassland, providing nesting habitat for migratory birds.

Ferris Engle, Jr., Ogemaw County



A 90-foot dike was placed between two small ridges to create a three-acre wetland in a former horse pasture. The wetland is a forested wetland, ideal habitat for wood ducks. This is an especially nice wetland with a lot of edge habitat created by two long fingers of the wetland extending into the forest. The landowner is in the process of drilling a well to feed the wetland (see picture).

North Riverside Club, Presque Isle County

A 265-foot dike was placed to block an intermittent drainage in order to restore a three-acre wetland. A MDEQ permit was required for this site, and the permit was received in May 2002. One of the club members owns an excavation company, so Urban Excavating was hired to do the job at a reduced rate. Construction was slow, but was finished in September 2002. The club members were happy with the results, and the wetland is filling with water quickly due to the presence of several small springs.



Earl O'Loughlin, Iosco County

A 140-foot dike was created to block an intermittent drainage in order to restore a five-acre wetland. No permits were required. Originally scheduled for construction in the fall of 2001, the construction date was delayed until 2002 due to heavy fall rains. The site was completed in August 2002. A Five-Star General, O'Loughlin was very enthusiastic about the project. Before and after pictures are located to the right.



Vernon Lalone, Antrim County



At 240 feet long, this earthen dike restored a three-acre wetland to the Lalone property. Located less than $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from Lake Michigan, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ - miles from Torch Lake, this wetland should be heavily used by migrating birds. This will be a wooded wetland for quite some time, until the trees succumb to the higher water levels. This site did require a MDEQ permit, which was received at the end of May 2002. Construction was completed in September 2002.

Ray VanGoethem, Sr., Ogemaw County

A 75-foot dike was placed to enhance a one-acre wetland. Mr. VanGoethem paid for most of the construction costs associated with the project. Although small, this site will attract attention by migratory birds due to its close proximity (1000 ft.) to Horseshoe Lake. This site did require a MDEQ permit, which was received in June 2002. Construction was completed in August of 2002.



Beaver Lake Hunt Club, Alpena County

The Partners Program at the Alpena FRO planted 10 bushels of wild rice on a 40-acre flooding owned by the Beaver Lake Hunt Club on October 10, 2002. The flooding is in the headwaters of the Thunder Bay River. The Hunt Club is located in the southwest section of Alpena County, MI, and is a 1,300-acre



private hunting club. Members primarily hunt white-tailed deer, but are searching for ways to improve habitat for a number of wildlife species including turkey, partridge, migratory birds, and brook trout. Four



members of the hunt club assisted with the planting. Canoes were utilized to plant the rice. Technical difficulties ensued when one of the planting teams managed to flip their canoe twice. Luckily, a majority of the rice had been planted before the canoe was inundated with water.



Success or failure of this project may determine if the Partners Program in Michigan will pursue the planting of wild rice as a viable means of improving wetland habitat.

Steve and Wendy Abbe, Oscoda County



A 175-foot dike was placed to create a 4-acre wetland on the property of Steve and Wendy Abbe. Both an in-line structure and a rock spillway were installed to handle the water flow. A MDEQ permit was needed in order to construct the project. The permit was received in September 2002, and construction was completed in November 2002. Surrounded on three sides by a scrub/shrub wetland, this wetland should produce a lot of productivity.

Tom Bain, Iosco County

A site of a former beaver dam, this project was challenging to construct. A 200-foot dike was placed to enhance a 10-acre wetland. A MDEQ permit was required for the project, and was received in the fall of 2001. Construction was completed in



September of 2002. Tom Bain assisted with a majority of the



construction by providing the excavating company with the use of his dump truck.

III. In-Stream Habitat Improvements

The Alpena FRO has been working with local watershed restoration committees since 1997. Two of the local watersheds have completed the EPA 319 Planning Grant process, and are now pursuing Implementation Grants. The Alpena FRO has been assisting these groups both with the Planning Grant process and with funding the work crews that are hired each summer. Work crews target restoration sites identified as priority sites in the Planning Grant process. Types of work include stream bank erosion restoration, construction of access stairs and canoe launch platforms, fish habitat improvement, beaver dam removal, and assisting county road commissions with road/stream crossing improvements. This type of restoration is hard work because it is all manual labor. For this reason private contractors usually will not consider stream work. College and high school students are hired through local conservation districts for the summer. The crew chief, hired through the conservation district, is a permanent or seasonal person with several years of experience conducting stream restoration work.

Black Lake Watershed

Three college students comprised the 2002 work crew for the Black Lake Watershed. These local youth are enrolled in environmental and engineering programs at Lake Superior State University and Michigan Technical University. The crew's biggest challenge was beaver dam removal. Local trappers had reduced beaver numbers from "problem areas" where dams were completely blocking the river. Local trappers removed beaver over the winter months. The work crew removed 90 dams over the course of the summer throughout the Upper Black River watershed.



Another large project for the work crew was the placement of current log deflectors. Due to sediment loading many reaches of the Black Lake Watershed have become shallow and wider,



resulting in a uniform river morphology (left). Current log deflectors are placed to closely imitate naturally fallen trees in the stream. These logs divert the main current to the center of the stream to create a narrower and deeper stream

(right). During bankfull precipitation events the logs trap sediment behind them,



eventually creating a new stream bank. Additionally the logs provide shelter for fish and other aquatic organisms. Thirty-eight structures were placed in eight river-miles of the upper Black River. More log structures are planned for installation during 2003.

The following groups contributed funds, materials, and labor to in-stream restoration work in the Black Lake Watershed:

Michigan Wildlife Habitat Foundation	\$10,000
Michigan Flyfishing Club	\$ 5,000
Huron Pines Resource, Conservation & Development	\$ 2,000
Upper Black River Watershed Restoration Committee	\$ 5,000
Trout Unlimited, Vanguard Chapter	\$ 2,000
State of Michigan	permit assistance
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	\$ 7,500
TOTAL	\$31,500

Fish Passage- Stony Creek at Hutchinson Highway



A tributary of Black Lake, Stony Creek is a seasonal trout stream. Located in Presque Isle County this creek supports seasonal populations of brook and rainbow trout. In September of 2002 the culverts (left) were removed and replaced with a large steel elliptical culvert (right). Five river-



miles were opened to fish passage. Hutchinson Highway was paved, and proper ditches and sediment basins were installed.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service contributed \$5,000 in Fish Passage funds toward the culvert replacement. The Presque Isle County Road Commission contributed \$20,000 in funding and in-

kind services toward the project, a 4:1 match of Partners dollars. Other partners included the State of Michigan, Huron Pines Resource, Conservation & Development, and the Upper Black River Watershed Restoration Committee.

Thunder Bay River

Three college students were once again hired to work on stream bank erosion sites on the Thunder Bay River. Beginning in 1996 the work crew has progressively moved downstream restoring stream bank erosion sites caused by human activity. The crew is now working downstream from the Village of Hillman on the main branch of the river, and began work on a large tributary of the watershed, Crooked Creek. Four sites were restored during the 2002 field season. A lack of funding forced the work crew to disband at the end of June.

Crooked Creek

This site is located at the Crooked Creek Crossing on County Road 487 south of Atlanta. Forty cubic yards of fieldstone were placed on 150 feet of stream bank. Bushes and grasses were planted on the upper part of the erosion site. The landowner supplied all materials, and the Thunder Bay River work crew provided the labor.

Site #3.5, Patny Site

Located on Airport Road, south of Atlanta, this site was a continuation of work done in 1999. An additional 20 cubic yards of fieldstone was placed to extend the site approximately 50 feet. Bushes and grasses were planted on the upper part of the erosion site. The landowner supplied materials, and the work crew supplied the labor.

Site #71

This site is at the Salina Road crossing, downstream from Hillman. This site is often used for river access by canoeists. Due to the foot traffic an erosion site has been created. The working committee built access stairs and a launch platform at the erosion site. Ten cubic yards of fieldstone was placed on either side of the access to protect the stream bank. Bushes and grasses were planted on the upper part of the erosion site.



Site #72



¼ mile downstream from site #71, this site was being used for access by swimmers and boaters. The foot traffic had removed vegetation, and the bank had eroded to a steep slope. The site was sloped by Ferguson



Excavating to a 3:1 slope. The work crew built access stairs and a launch platform, and approximately forty cubic yards of fieldstone was placed along 100 feet of bank to protect the erosion site. Bushes and grasses were planted on the upper part of the erosion site.

Norwegian Creek



The Alpena County Road Commission replaced a culvert on Hamilton Road, north of Alpena, at the crossing of Norwegian Creek.

This small tributary to Thunder Bay had fish passage restored to a river-mile of habitat. The road commission replaced an ageing culvert with a box culvert that was buried in the stream substrate about a foot. A Service Coastal Wetland Grant,

administered out of the East Lansing Field Office provided funding for this replacement. This section of Hamilton Road has been designated a “Natural Beauty Road”.



IV. Technical Assistance

Beginning in 2002 the Alpena FRO Partners Program began serving on the Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) review team. All sites that are being considered for submission into the WRP Program are subject to review by several agency personnel to be scored. Teams in Michigan consist of the local NRCS coordinator, an NRCS engineer, a Michigan Department of Environmental Quality representative, and a Partners coordinator from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. To date the Alpena FRO representative has reviewed WRP sites in Grand Traverse, Leelenau and Missaukee Counties.



V. FY 2003 Projects

2003 will be a busy year for the Alpena FRO Partners Program. Wetland restoration will continue with bigger and better projects, and with increased funding through both internal and external granting sources. Four local watersheds, (Thunder Bay River-north and south branches, Misery Bay, Ocqueoc River, Pine River), have received EPA 319 Watershed Planning grants. The Alpena FRO will serve on the steering committee for these grants. Two local watersheds are seeking EPA 319 Implementation Funds (Thunder Bay River-main branch, Black Lake Watershed). If these funds are successfully received there will be some large restoration projects taking place within these watersheds.

Three road-crossing projects funded partially by the Service will restore fish passage and virtually eliminate sediment loading to valuable brook trout habitat.

Eichorn Bridge, a series of four culverts on the Thunder



Bay River will be removed and replaced with a single-span bridge (right).

Clute Road on the Black River (left) will have two culverts removed and replaced with a timber bridge. Johnson Crossing is at the headwaters of the Black River, and, if funded, the perched culverts will be replaced with a steel or aluminum bottomless culvert (right).



A small lowhead dam removal in Emmet County at a golf course is a potential 2003 project if it is funded through the Service Fish Passage Program.



Stream bank erosion work is scheduled for the Thunder Bay River, Black River, and Pigeon River through Service Partners funds. Fish habitat work and beaver dam removal is scheduled for the Black Lake Watershed as multi-year projects. Possibly due to local dam removal by the Black Lake Watershed work crew, these beavers decided to build their dam inside a culvert (left).



VI. Outreach

The Alpena FRO Partners Program is working hard at building support with both private landowners and natural resource agencies. Attached is a fact sheet developed in 2002 that describes the program and gives contact information for Michigan residents. The Alpena FRO has been active in utilizing opportunities to give presentations at local conservation club meetings, conservation district meetings, watershed committee meetings, and natural resource agency meetings. A poster highlighting the Partners program is currently on display in the Alpena Federal Building. Additional information about the Alpena FRO Partners program is located on the office website: <http://midwest.fws.gov/alpena/partnersforfishandwildlife.htm>.