



Lower Grand River Watershed Project

Rural Pilot Project Information Summary Sand Creek (14 99 & 14 100)

March 3, 2003

Geographic Scope:

- Located in western Kent County and eastern Ottawa County
- Covers parts of five townships, 45 percent being in Wright Township
- Drains approximately 55 square miles
- Creek is fed by the Laubach Drain and the east fork of Sand Creek
- The stream flows primarily through agricultural lands, as well as forested, open field, and urban areas.
- Lower half to the watershed is developing rapidly, while the upper half is mainly rural
- The headwater section has been heavily impacted by channelization
- The stream encounters 79 road/stream crossings

Water Quality Threats/Pollutant Causes:

- Water quality and aquatic habitat are fair to poor, with fish and macroinvertebrate populations that suggest marginal to poor water quality
- Water quality is threatened by nonpoint source pollution such as increased amounts of silt and sand sediment
- Inadequately maintained road/stream crossings contribute to erosion and sedimentation
- Siltation and lack of woody debris have contributed to the loss of habitat/ fishery food sources
- Rapid fluctuations in the stream's hydrology result from excessive precipitation runoff
- Hydrologic changes result in an increase in sedimentation and degradation of the benthos
- Sources of groundwater contamination include an abandoned landfill, several oil and gas drilling sites, a leaking sewage lagoon, and several other contamination sites.



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Public Participation:

The Sand Creek Watershed Group, which meets monthly, is very active and has completed many activities within the watershed concerning data collection and public outreach:

- 10 to 15 cork flow gauges have been built by the Boy Scouts to be used in areas of concern
- A hydrologic model is the process of being developed
- Grant funding possibilities have been looked into
- A macroinvertebrate inventory was performed at six locations according to Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) Surface Water Quality Assessment Section (SWQAS) Division - procedure 51 in October of 2002
- Volunteers from Herman Miller inventoried all road/stream crossings, and an inventory report was created.
- Press releases, post card, and mailings have been created and sent to stakeholders
- Involvement with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Fisheries Division
- Logo/t-shirt development
- Development of a motto and mission statement
- Several group members attended the MDEQ Watershed Survey Training
- The groups has obtained Regional Geographic Information System (REGIS) maps used to make educated decisions
- Rain gauges and flow meters are being used to model the effects of land use change form 1978 to 1998
- Public meetings have been held to discuss watershed concerns and possibilities for funding

Information provided by:

“An Assessment of Water Quality and Aquatic Habitat and recommendations for the protection and Enhancement of the sand Creek Watershed”, 1996, Annis Water Resources Institute



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