



THE NORTH BRANCH

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE AU SABLE NORTH BRANCH AREA FOUNDATION

Spring/Summer 2018

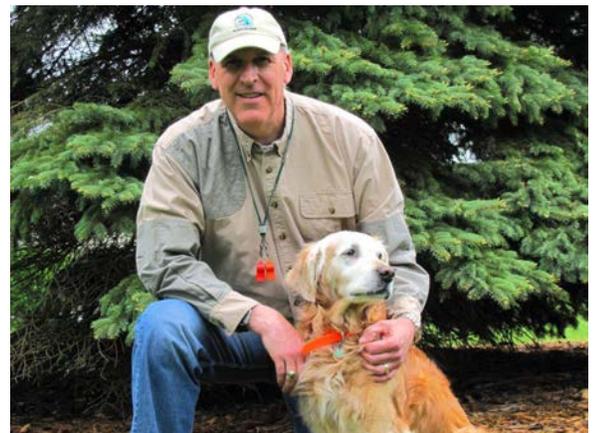


From the President's Desk

I cannot remember a time that I have been without the Au Sable River. It has been a constant and steadying presence in my life from the very beginning of my life. I believe that has been incalculably valuable to me for countless and profound reasons. The author, Henry David Thoreau, wrote in his essay Walden: "In wildness is the preservation of the world", and I know with certainty, that in the context of the Au Sable, that sentiment has applied to me. I am equally certain that it has similarly applied to many of you as well. Thoreau was invested in the notion that it was imperative for humans to coexist on equal terms with nature. Whereas most viewed the wilderness as an obstacle to be overcome on the road to additional conquests, Thoreau viewed man as one with nature. It was, in effect, a symbiotic relationship.

We each connect with our beloved river in different ways but for many of the same reasons. Whatever we enjoy doing on and around our North Branch serves to refresh our soul and allows us to regain our equilibrium in life. We gain a comfort and peace from the river that we get from few other sources. When looked at in that light, there is an intrinsic value to what the river and its environs bestow upon us that is impossible to quantify. And, if there is such value in what we receive from our North Branch, it certainly deserves our support, and love, and continuing protection to assure that it remains a healthy and vibrant resource.

This is my last message to you as President of the Au Sable North Branch Area Foundation. This coming fall, my term will end and another member of our board will assume this leadership position. I originally accepted this position as one small way that I could give back to that old lifelong friend we call the North Branch of the Au Sable River. As Thoreau implied, this river has certainly preserved me in a much more enlightened and improved state than I would otherwise find myself in without it. Thank you for your continuing support and care for our Foundation and its work.



North Branch Insect Survey by Neil Wallace

On May 12, The Anglers of the AuSable did their annual insect survey at six locations on our North Branch. Board Members from the Au Sable North Branch Area Foundation participated, including Steve Johnson, Mike Inman and me.

The two teams of six participants each did three locations, with our team doing Dam Four, a spot just above Morley Road and the third location below Flashlight Bend.

At each location we took three samples with the pictured contraption called a Hess Sampler by setting in into the gravel, then stirring up the gravel for a full minute. The samples were collected in the plastic jar at the end of the net. Then the contents were dumped onto the light tray to clear away the debris and put the remainder in a labeled sample container.

These containers will be shipped to a lab for study under a microscope, including a count of the bugs. But seeing the insect nymphs moving around in the tray was fascinating, especially to see the variety of bugs and the range of their sizes.

Also, pictured (bottom left) is the dip net process by which we were looking for invasive New Zealand mud snails --- and didn't find any!

As insects are an indication of the health of a river, these studies will help us better understand our river.



Annual Dinner: New Location and New Menu

The Foundation Annual Dinner, to be held July 14, definitely fits the category of “new and improved”. The planning committee has moved the dinner to the Lovells Township Hall, so that we can accommodate more people more comfortably, and selected Jan’s Deli and Catering, of Gaylord, to provide the food for the festivities.

The evening starts at 6:00 p.m. with refreshments, appetizers and socializing. This will be followed by the dinner consisting of: Vegetarian Lasagna, Baked Chicken, Beef Roast and Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Salad, Rolls and Dessert. The cost is still only \$30 per persons, so please send in your checks and RSVPs to:

Debi Anderson
42 South Wye Road
Grayling, MI 49738

Or you can call/email an RSVP and pay at the dinner by contacting Debi at:

Phone: 219-242-1900

Email: Debbiea20@aol.com

Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Project by Michael Inman

At the May 12, 2018 ASNBAF board meeting, Mr. Ryan Boyer, District Biologist (MI/IN) for the National Wild Turkey Foundation (NWTF) discussed the purpose, past and current activities, and future planned work of the Northern Michigan Wildlife Opening Enhancement Project. ASNBAF is partnering with the DNR, NWTF, Huron-Manistee National Forest Service, Michigan Army National Guard, Ruffed Grouse Society, Huron Pines and Michigan United Conservation Clubs to plant trees and shrubs in the Lovells area in an ongoing effort to rehabilitate land in the North Branch of the Au Sable River watershed area for the benefit of wildlife (examples from 2017 are shown below).

Ryan reviewed the group’s 2017 activities and planned project work for 2018. Much of the group’s work involves clearing openings and planting rye, buckwheat and clover. ASNBAF’s partnership activity involves the planting of food trees (primarily crab apple) at the perimeter of the cleared wildlife areas. The board has agreed to fund \$2,500.00 to the project for the purchase of 25 trees scheduled to be planted on September 8, 2018. Ryan is planning a volunteer day for that date and additional details of the work and how to volunteer will appear on our web site.

We are truly excited to be able to participate in this ongoing project and thank every one of you for your donations which allow all of us together to realize the goals of our mission statement: *To preserve, protect and enhance the natural endowments of the watershed of the North Branch of the Au Sable River for the benefit of wild fish and game and public enjoyment and appreciation.*



Web Site Photo Contest

We received some outstanding pictures from our readers and feel privileged to show them here and acknowledge the talented photographers who took them. Although we had to reduce them in size to fit in the newsletter, you can see full size versions of these and many other fine photos on our web site. We are looking for additional photos and would be thrilled to show your pictures and recognize your artistic talents. If you have photos to share, please send them to: northbranchphotos@gmail.com

Rose Dugdale



Janet Remus



Janet Remus



Garrett Walworth



We hope this newsletter is both interesting and informative for you, and have made a number of changes in an effort to improve it. We are also working hard to improve our web site and encourage you to visit it for additional information, articles and photos. However, we are always happy to hear from you. If you have any articles, ideas, comments or suggestions, please send them to Bob Weed: robertweed70@yahoo.com

We appreciate the donations that make our work possible. We can now accept donations by credit cards and Pay Pal on the web site. Please consider using our web site, or the form below to help us maintain and improve our North Branch

Au Sable North Branch Area Foundation

www.ausablenorthbranch.org

Here is my (our) contribution to support the Foundation:

Name: _____

Contribution Amount: _____

Address: _____

In Memory/Honor of: _____

E-mail: _____

Please return to:

Au Sable North Branch Area Foundation - c/o Marjie Warner - PO Box 2524, Grayling, MI 49738

Au Sable North Branch Area Foundation is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)3 not for profit.

River Keeper News by Eric Bankhead

The 9th season of River Keeping has begun. Nineteen of your neighbors volunteer their time to keep the river enjoyable for all of us. They observe and report issues that may be detrimental to the river, everything from large woody debris movement, wind or beaver tree falls blocking safe passage, invasive plants, septic or sewage leaks, unpermitted construction, zoning issues, excessive trash, to access site issues.

Be on the lookout for changes in the river as three high water events since November along with shore and anchor ice may have moved stuff around. Ken Reed (shown in the photo) will be doing river maintenance again this season. He's already been on the river twice, once in March and again in April to move LWD that was creating unsafe passage. All river maintenance is paid for by your donations.



Thanks to the River Keepers for their Time and Concern for the River and yours too. For contact information on your section of the river, see our website 'www.ausablenorthbranch.org', 'River Keeper Program'.

Honey Bee Hive on the North Branch by Eric Bankhead

Many members of the North Branch community and immediate region are avid gardeners and fruit growers. Many have expressed concern over challenges with limited pollination of flowers, vegetables and fruit blossoms. Several have attempted to improve results through the use of Mason Bees. However, measurable results are limited and mixed.

Continuous logging and specific un-natural replanting reduces naturally occurring wild honey bee populations by disturbing or destroying the hive. It also affects local regeneration of natural regional wild flowers like Trillium and good wild grasses, along with fruit bearing trees that attract grouse, woodcock, and wild turkey. These need cross pollination for regular reproduction.

A funding request was made and approved by the board for placement of a professionally managed hive in the immediate Lovells area with the cost underwritten as a conservation project by the Foundation.

Patrick Mohny, MI DNR, of Grayling MI is also a beekeeper and has offered to place a hive in our area. He will maintain and service the hive along with processing whatever honey might be produced. We will share updates and pictures once the hive has been installed.



A BIG Thank You to Our 2018 Supporters!

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Special Donations

Jim Knox, in memory of Margaret Eamen Knox
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 Mike and Rosemary Malbin, in memory of Bill Ross
 Bob Malecki, in honor of Eric Bankhead
 Farnham Randolph, in memory of Ruth Ann

UPCOMING EVENTS

ASNBAF Annual Dinner July 14 Lovells Township Hall 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Lovells Twp. Historical Society Beaver, Beer & Banjo July 28 Riverside Tavern, Lovells 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Lovells Bridge Walk & Log Drive August 18 Lovells 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

ASNBAF Annual Meeting September 1 Lovells Township Hall 10:00 a.m. - noon

AuSable River Clean Up (sponsored by Anglers of the AuSable) September 8 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Tree Planting September 8

Lovells Historical Society Tour at Scott's Lodge September 16

Additional details on all the above events and links to their sponsoring organizations can be found on our web site:
www.ausablenorthbranch.org

Officers

Bob Grant, President
 989-348-7574
 Mike Inman, Vice President
 989-348-2922
 Marjie Warner, Treasurer
 313-663-1331
 George Shaw, Secretary
 989-316-2224
 Glen Eberly, Past President
 989-348-3084

Directors

Debi Anderson	219-242-1900
Eric Bankhead	989-348-6704
Steve Johnson	989-344-1053
Gary Neumann	989-348-9848
Jerry Rucker	989-348-8738
Neil Wallace	248-891-5446
Bob Weed	248-310-6884
Tom Wessels	231-271-6151

Mission Statement: To preserve, protect and enhance the natural endowments of the watershed of the North Branch of the Au Sable River for the benefit of wild fish and game and public enjoyment and appreciation.

