

# **The Boardman: A River Reborn—4th Quarter 2011 Activities and Status Report**

Prepared by Conservation Resource Alliance

The following report was prepared for the Implementation Team (I.T.) to summarize the progress of the project during the fourth quarter of 2011. The I.T. Chair may forward or present parts of this material to City Commission and County Board, and possibly others.

## **Activities and Progress October-December 2011**

- The project Communications Plan has continued to be implemented resulting in press releases related to the project. Updates and documents have been posted on the dedicated project website: [www.theboardman.org](http://www.theboardman.org).
- CRA, as the project consultant, provided support to the I.T. for planning meetings, preparing materials and minutes; also assisted in coordinating working teams formed to address bottomlands, communications, sea lamprey and fish passage and project management. Key staff has been on site periodically to assist in field work to acquire data.
- A transition in IT leadership was facilitated and resulted in Frank Dituri, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians Wetland Ecologist replacing Todd Kalish, Michigan DNR Fisheries Biologist as IT chairperson.
- Brown Bridge and Sabin ponds have been drawn down (beginning in September) to the fullest extent possible utilizing the existing water control structures. Brown Bridge pond has been drawn down a total of 6' and Sabin pond has been drawn down a total of 4'. Strategically positioned "trail cameras" have been continuously documenting the drawdown.
- In response to the recent discovery of sea lamprey passage above Union Street dam, an additional working group has been formed ("Sea Lamprey and Fish Passage").
- Concurrent with the dam removal project is a long-term planning initiative for the Boardman River Watershed. The Boardman Watershed Prosperity Plan has been focused on developing a new approach to natural resource planning - one that leverages the economic and community development potential of a unique asset (the 291 square mile Boardman River Watershed) with protection of that watershed. The plan is intended to reflect one of the prime tenets of Michigan's long-term vision: creating a sense of place and emphasizing the importance of natural resources to regional prosperity.
- Draft Environmental Assessment ("EA") submitted to US Fish and Wildlife Service and Grand Traverse Band for review.

## **Challenges in the Fourth Quarter:**

- Arsenic concentrations in sediment at Brown Bridge pond which exceed state "residential contact" criteria have resulted in a re-calculated "recreational contact" criteria proposed by AMEC. The decision by the MDEQ on whether or not to consider the recreational contact criteria will have ramifications on sediment management during dam removal and channel restoration.

### **Activities Planned for Next Quarter:**

- Continued evaluation of channel response to drawdown
- Attend and assist in coordinating regularly scheduled IT working team meetings
- Continued fundraising activities
- Continued work towards resolving FEMA floodplain mapping issues
- Drafting of dam removal “Evaluation Plan”

### **Costs and Resources Supporting Current Quarter:**

Approximate contract and grant funds expended in current quarter: \$100,000

Approximate contract and grant funds expended to date: \$491,794

Approximate donated/discounted and volunteer value in current quarter: \$25,000

Approximate donated/discounted and volunteer value to date: \$200,000

\*”to date” refers to current date back to dam **removal** initiation-approximately October 2009