



2015-2016 Annual Report

# ROAD TO RESTORATION

# REVIVED

Dear Friends,

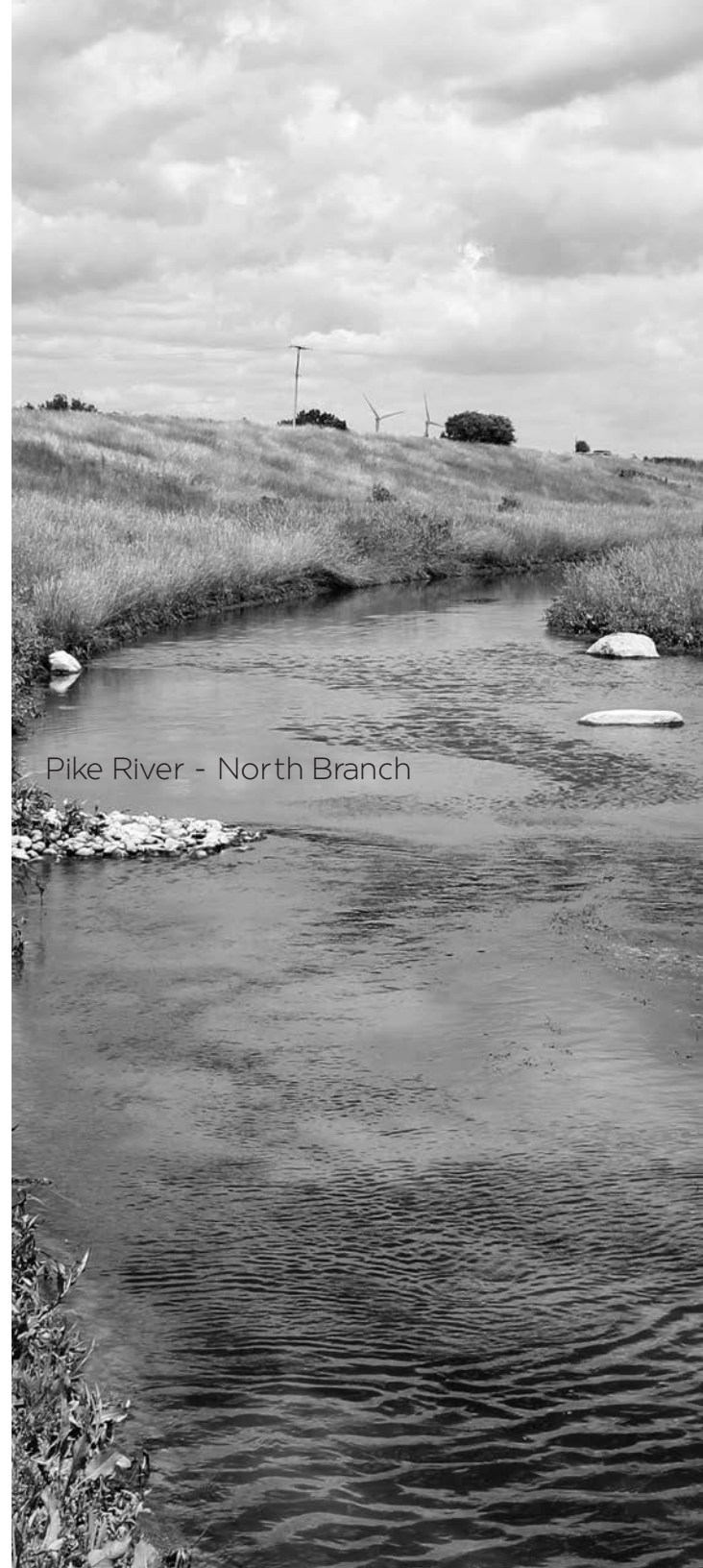
We accept the challenge of restoring, protecting and sustaining the Root-Pike basin. We have three completed Watershed Restoration Plans and two more in the works. We are persistent. We have partners willing to contribute. We have landowners willing to participate and municipalities willing to cooperate. We are positive. Together, we believe we can restore the Root-Pike basin watersheds.

Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) has undergone significant reorganization and revival. In 2015, Root-Pike WIN went through many major changes in strategy, staffing and positions on the Board of Directors. It gives me great pleasure to report that we are financially viable again, strategically aligned with our mission, operationally more efficient, and focused on tactics that affect the most critical watershed projects. Moreover, we are optimistic about the future as we have come to understand our unique value to the Root-Pike basin and the decade's worth of work needed to restore it. If we don't work together to repair the land, it's clear that our water quality and waterways will continue to suffer and decline.

Significant credit for our revival goes to the Board of Directors who stepped in and stepped up to put the organization on a healthy path. Their efforts are too voluminous to quantify. We are also humbled by the municipalities', funders' and foundations' reinvestment in our mission. Our membership group has also contributed in ways too numerous to detail. Thank you.

In 2016, Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network made significant progress in pursuit of restoring our watersheds. In the following pages, you will get a quick look at our reorientation and reorganization. Our intent is to encourage your participation in our mission once again. We are gaining strength and getting focused.

As many of you know, we have reorganized our strategy to move the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) nine-key element Watershed Restoration Plans (WRPs) forward. These plans not only represent the best opportunity for immediate restoration projects (and higher priority funding), they are backed by legitimate science, public input, local data collection, and municipal feedback. Our mission remains the same: restoring, protecting and sustaining the watersheds of the Root-Pike basin.



Pike River - North Branch

## WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?

REVISED our strategy and operations to focus on the Watershed Restoration Plans' project recommendations

REWORKED our accounting methods and review processes to ensure financial stability

REHIRED Allison Thielen as Program Manager

REDEVELOPED a plan to move our Resource Group to the Plans' Implementation Committee structure

REINVIGORATED our Board with two new Board members (Shannon Powell and James Small)

REINTRODUCED the Watershed Restoration Plans to more than 50 municipal stakeholders

RECREATED our website to better reflect watershed issues and the strategies to restore them

RE-ENGAGED with the DNR and EPA to review and approve the Wind Point Watershed Restoration Plan

RECOMMITTED to the nine-key element planning process by helping SEWRPC conduct the planning for the Oak Creek watershed, and we've starting to fund raise for the Pike Creek watershed planning

REWARDED with a grant to restore a ravine and oak savanna on the Pike River, which is our first grant for a Watershed Restoration Plan project

RECHARGED by three significant operational grants that keep us viable into first quarter of 2017

RE-AWARDED the *Respect Our Waters* campaign contract for the next two years, which helps meet a number of the Plans' education recommendations



on the cover: Mount Pleasant's completed restoration of the North of the Pike River

left: supporting experiential education in the Root River through the WATERshed program

## HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

TIME: We want volunteers for various projects both in our office and out in the field.

TALENT: We are seeking engineers, scientists, teachers, project managers and others in the environmental restoration related fields to serve on our implementation committees (formerly the Resource Group) in order to help educate stakeholders and move projects forward

TREASURE: We need financial support for operations in 2017; please help us continue to restore these rivers!

Despite the challenges we face with implementing the Watershed Restoration Plans' recommendations, we are inspiring leaders and landowners to embrace change and improvement. Perhaps the best comment I have received was from a high-ranking municipal leader who said, "Your organization has helped me see the light on the issues and solutions with this river." One local farmer said about their land management practices, "I now realize that I have been doing things wrong and now want to focus on clean water." I'm thrilled to hear and see this action start to happen. I haven't met anyone yet who doesn't want clean water, reduced pollution and flooding, and the creation of places where people want to be.

I cherish this opportunity and would love to hear about your renewed interest in our mission.

Sincerely,

Dave Giordano  
Executive Director



Samuel Myers Park

## WHO WE ARE

The Root-Pike basin has significant water quality issues. Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network's (Root-Pike WIN) mission is to restore, protect and sustain all the watersheds in the Root-Pike basin. More than two decades ago, we were founded by a cooperative effort with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to address specific issues within the Root-Pike basin. In 2001, we became a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Since inception, we have initiated and helped complete more than a half million dollars in education, restoration, and monitoring projects. Today, we continue to provide education, implementation and monitoring to landowners, municipalities and the general public. We are the catalyst for projects that improve the land – and water – in the Root-Pike basin.

## WHAT WE DO

Root-Pike WIN has detailed plans based on cooperative input to address watershed issues. We also have the passion and expertise to put the plans' recommendations into action. These plans are based on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Nine-element Watershed Restoration Planning guidelines. Pike River, Root River and Wind Point watersheds have completed plans in place while Oak Creek and Pike Creek are still in the planning process. EPA-approved plans represent years of cooperative efforts, trusted environmental research and significant community involvement. With these plans, Root-Pike WIN is improving water quality, reducing runoff and pollutant loads, slowing the velocity of water volume, restoring natural habitats, and creating places where people want to be.

## WHERE WE SERVE

Root-Pike WIN services the Root-Pike basin, which covers nearly 327 square miles of Southeastern Wisconsin. Included in the Root-Pike basin is the Pike River, Root River, Oak Creek, Pike Creek and Wind Point watersheds. These watersheds encompass more than 200 miles of streams and tributaries, which have been altered, by man and nature, over the last 150 years. Today, the Root-Pike basin and its numerous tributaries are increasingly threatened by growth and urbanization. Over 1.6 million residents from Kenosha, Milwaukee, Racine and Waukesha Counties interact with and impact these watersheds daily. Our reach extends into the coastal areas and beaches of Lake Michigan where we also provide pollution reduction education, assist with restoration projects and advance best practices.



## WHO WE HELP

**Municipalities:** Helping leaders and technicians become more aware of watershed issues and implement Nine-element plan recommendations in concert with their own development and environmental objectives

**Landowners:** Educating and guiding private citizens – from farmers to homeowners – through project planning, design, easements, implementation, monitoring and maintenance

**Citizens:** Bringing awareness to watershed issues and helping implement best practices to reduce pollution and improve habitats

**Non-profits:** Providing info, cooperative analysis and prioritized projects to increase results and reduce duplicative efforts

**Governmental Agencies:** Working collaboratively to advance watershed goals, implement best practices and connect stakeholders with solutions and funding

"Any river is really the summation of the whole valley. To think of it as nothing but water is to ignore the greater part."

- Hal Borland, This Hill, This Valley



Root River Parkway



Pike River - Mount Pleasant



# REALIGNED

## WATERSHED RESTORATION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of this report is to give you a meaningful update and encourage your participation in our mission once again. In the last six months, Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network has made significant progress in pursuit of restoring our watersheds. Our leap forward into plans into action was followed by the creation of our implementation framework. This framework is based on the intersection of the Plans' recommendations and public realities of land management. We are already using this collaborative approach and its moving projects forward.

"The horizon leans forward, offering you space to place new steps of change."

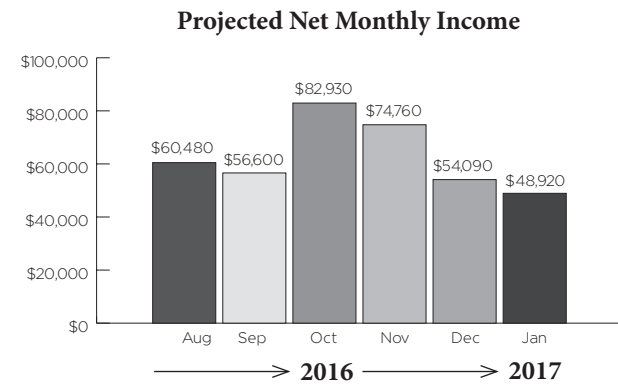
- Maya Angelou



Pike River - North Branch

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff at Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network, we are proud to say we are fully recovered from our financial issues of 2015. Our financial position from the start of 2016 has been positive and sustaining through the first quarter of 2017. We no longer hold any debt. We have put in place new accounting practices that track restricted and unrestricted funds with greater scrutiny from our Board of Directors. As we look ahead through the fourth quarter of 2016, we continue to project a positive net monthly income. While we are optimistic about this short-term trend, we are working hard to raise the funds necessary to ensure long-term viability through 2017 and beyond.

# RECHARGED



## Financial Position

As of June 30, 2016

### ASSETS

Current Assets	
Total Checking/Savings	\$76,779.37
Total Accounts Receivable	\$8,170.57
Total Current Assets	\$84,949.94
Total Fixed Assets	\$9,311.16

TOTAL ASSETS \$94,261.10

### LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$6,667.50
Credit Cards	\$5,604.81
Fiscal Sponsorships total balance	\$1,598.32

Total Current Liabilities \$13,870.63

Equity	
Unrestricted	-\$4,159.02
Net Income	\$84,549.49
Total Equity	\$80,390.47

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY \$94,261.10

## Profit & Loss

As of June 30, 2016

### INCOME

Donations – Operational	\$10,749.47
Corporate/business grants	\$30,000.00
Foundation Grants	\$45,200.00
Contract Service Reimbursements	\$109,989.80
Fundraiser event - donations	\$729.28
Fundraiser event - silent auction	\$1,559.84
Interest income	\$10.69
Weed Out! Racine fiscal sponsorship	-\$587.48

Total Income \$197,651.60

### EXPENSE

Advertising campaign	\$45,130.00
Personnel	\$53,753.45
Program	\$5,950.81
Occupancy	\$5,454.69
Administrative	\$3,218.39
Weed Out! Racine fiscal sponsorship	-\$405.23

Total Expense \$113,102.11

NET INCOME \$84,549.49

"A river is the report card for its watershed."

- Alan Levere



Root River - Main Branch

# RECOGNITION

"The song of the river ends not at her banks but in the hearts of those who have loved her."

- Buffalo Joe

Root-Pike WIN would like to recognize all of those who have helped advance our mission, fund projects and move our operations forward. Thank you for your contributions in fiscal year 2015-2016!

Allison Thielen  
 Anonymous Contributor  
 Applied Ecological Services, Inc  
 Beth Wentzel  
 Betty Brenneman  
 Bill & Linda Sasse  
 City of West Allis  
 David & Ellen Easley  
 E.C. Styberg Foundation  
 Elaine Radwanski  
 Fund for Lake Michigan  
 Gerald & Susan Greenfield  
 Gregg & Julieann Sinnen  
 Harry Knipp & Mary Ann Ortmayer  
 Heather Patti

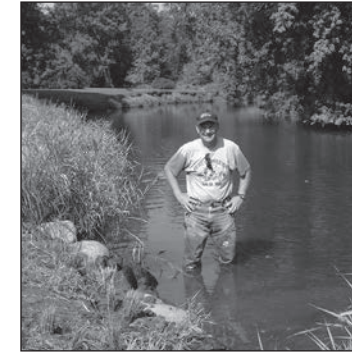
Herbert H Kohl Charities, Inc  
 James & Christine Mueller  
 Jean Freeman  
 Jeffrey Sytsma  
 Joann Sustachek  
 Joe Fonk  
 Julie Kinzelman  
 Julie Rather  
 Karen & Bill Boyd  
 Kate Gillogly  
 Kenosha Community Foundation  
 Kevin & Carol Rannow  
 Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership  
 Letitia Short  
 Linda Stengel & Richard Kinch

Lori Artiomow  
 Matthew Rochte  
 Melissa & Jay Warner  
 Michael & Ann Luba  
 Morris Firebaugh  
 Nancy Hennessy  
 Pamela Holy  
 Putzmeister, Inc.  
 Racine Community Foundation  
 Rick Fox  
 Sandra Halmo  
 SC Johnson & Sons  
 Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission  
 Todd Brennan  
 Wendy McCalvy



Pike River - North Branch

Former Board President Roger Chernik stands near the newly built canoe & kayak launch in Linwood Park, Caledonia.



Dam removal and streambank restoration at the Kenosha Country Club spawned new interest in restoring the Pike River



An intern for the City of Racine Health Dept. collects samples for the Seasonal Water Quality Study of the Root River.



Paddlers of all ages enjoy the new canoe and kayak launch at Linwood Park in Caledonia.



Volunteers plant trees for Milwaukee County Dept. of Parks, Recreation & Culture's Root River Parkway Reforestation project.



4th & 5th grade students monitor the Pike River as part of the Carthage College Expeditions Program.



City of Racine Health Department Laboratory staff removed phragmites as part of the restoration at Samuel Myers Park.



Students volunteer for UW-Parkside's Native Plant Restoration Project at the Root River Environmental Education Center.



City of Racine's Samuel Myers Park restoration includes dunes and wetlands, native plantings and stormwater features.



Weed Out! Racine purchased equipment for invasive species removal and successfully increased their volunteer base.

Root-Pike WIN has a 15-year history of moving projects forward in the Root-Pike basin. Root-Pike WIN is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 2001, and has awarded \$545,000 in small grants to more than 100 local conservation projects in the five watersheds we serve since our inception. Here are just a few of the projects we have funded in our 20-year history.

# RESULTS

"Water is the most critical resource issue of our lifetime and our children's lifetime. The health of our waters is the principal measure of how we live on the land."

- Hal Borland

# RESPOND

## Board of Directors

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

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

Todd Brennan - Secretary  
Wisconsin Outreach Coordinator  
Alliance for the Great Lakes

Bill Sasse - Former President  
Director of Engineering (retired)  
Village of Mount Pleasant

Joshua Sopczak  
Assistant Vice President  
Tri City National Bank of Racine

Lori Artiomow  
Restoration Ecologist  
Hawthorn Hollow Nature Sanctuary

John Scripp  
Environmental Attorney (retired)  
Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek

Bob Eaton  
Owner  
Bob Eaton Company

Shannon Powell  
Project Manager  
Racine Unified School District

## Staff

Allison Thielen  
Program Manager

Dave Giordano  
Executive Director



## Contact

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