

Making a Difference - Protecting the Waters You Love



TIP OF THE MITT

Watershed
Council
2018 Annual Report



2018

TIP OF THE MITT WATERSHED COUNCIL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Claire Rasmussen

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Bob Kingon

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Pam Roudi

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Rick Brandi

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Jan Quaine

Pam Roudi

Sue Stewart

Donna Stine

STAFF AND INTERNS

Executive Director and Staff Attorney

Gail Gruenwald

Administrative Team

Lynn D. Buffington

Sandy Schreck

Chelsea Olivarez

Policy and Advocacy Team

Jennifer McKay

Grenetta Thomassey, Ph.D.

Watershed Protection Team

Jennifer Buchanan

David Edwards

Caroline Keson

Communications and

Development Team

Kristy Beyer

Kate Cwikiel

Debbie Esposito

Education Team

Eli Baker

Maria Affhalter

Interns

Stephanie Facchine

Daniel Gonzalez

Elizabeth Michaelson

Sean Clark

Dear Friends,

I hope you enjoy this year's annual report with images that speak to all of us!

The Watershed Council has expanded its leadership in connecting water resource protection actions with our members, volunteers, partners, and citizens. Our ongoing strategic planning is keeping pace with evolving culture and issues as we maintain our focus on watershed management and policy. This report highlights topics that illustrate our effectiveness in results-oriented programming. Please contact us if you have any thoughts or comments on our work.

We are looking forward to increased involvement of our members who make it possible to accomplish our mission and vision. Thank you for being a part of our success!

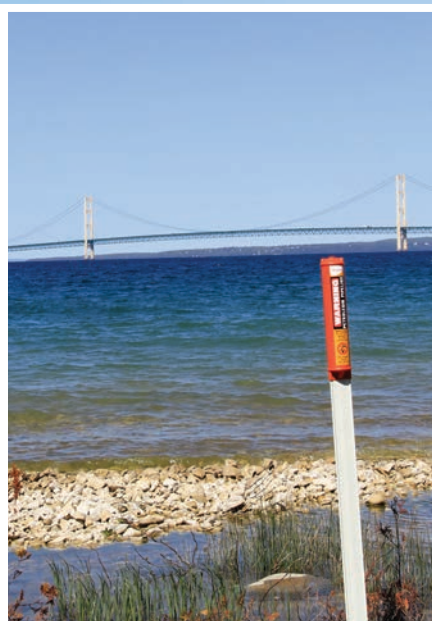
*Respectfully,
Claire Rasmussen
President*

Defending Water Protections at All Levels of Government

- The Watershed Council and our allies defeated or amended damaging bills presented during the 2018 Michigan legislative lame duck session.
- Worked locally and statewide to improve septic system regulations.
- Represented Northern Michigan in Washington DC on critical topics such as the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, Great Lakes diversion, ballast water, Asian carp, and other topics.

Confronting Threats to Our Waters

- Designed a local climate change resiliency plan for local governments to ensure watershed resiliency from our warming climate.
- Worked with all parties to address the risks of Enbridge's Line 5 pipeline.
- Developed a PFAS monitoring program to guide efforts to address this emerging threat.
- Worked in partnership to remove hundreds of pounds of prescription and over-the-counter drugs from misuse and improper disposal.



Taking the Pulse of Our Lakes and Streams

- Documented water quality trends and changes in our lakes through our Volunteer Lake Monitoring program, now in place for 32 years.
- Collected biological data from area streams to better protect each stream ecosystem through our Volunteer Stream Monitoring program.
- Assessed bird fatalities from avian botulism along the Lake Michigan shoreline to better understand this ecological problem. Volunteer Beach Rangers surveyed the shoreline.
- Measured invasive *Phragmites* along Emmet County's Lake Michigan shoreline.
- Launched freshwatercenter.org, a new data repository for Northern Michigan's waters.
- Completed a two-year study of Zequanox, a treatment for zebra and quagga mussels, on Round Lake in Emmet County.
- Conducted special monitoring and survey projects on Lake Charlevoix, Black Lake, Elk and Skegemog Lakes, Jordan River, Mullett Lake, Walloon Lake, and Schoofs and Fineout Creeks.



Restoring Our Waters Through Improved Infrastructure

- Built five rain gardens in Petoskey to clean stormwater entering Little Traverse Bay.
- Installed 550 linear feet of greenbelts along the Elk River Chain of Lakes shoreline to improve lake quality, including at the Milton Township Waterfront Park.
- Hosted two green infrastructure workshops to expand the use of this best management practice in our region.
- Improved two road/stream crossings over Minnehaha Creek in the Burt Lake Watershed to improve hydrology and fish passage.





Expanding Our Reach Through Successful Partnerships

- Gathered 40 representatives from our member lake associations for the 13th annual Lake Association Summit in order to increase lake protection efforts.
- Coordinated the Michigan Swimmer's Itch Partnership to provide technical and financial assistance to lake associations trying to reduce swimmer's itch on their lakes.
- Hosted two Michigan Shoreland Stewards Ambassador training for volunteers interested in helping neighbors protect their lakes.
- Convened regular meetings of partners in five major watersheds to further implement watershed management plans.
- Partnered with Leadership Charlevoix County to release 300 *Galerucella* beetles to control the invasive purple loosestrife plant.
- Teamed up with the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians to encourage clean boating practices and stop the spread of aquatic invasive species.



Nurturing Our Future Water Stewards

- Engaged students from 13 area high schools in our stream monitoring and education program – the Watershed Academy.
- Taught watershed science to over 500 middle school students from Boyne City, Boyne Falls, Charlevoix, East Jordan, Ellsworth, Petoskey, and Wolverine schools.
- Co-hosted over 300 Charlevoix County middle school students on the Beaver Islander ferry to learn about Lake Charlevoix and water science.
- Educated over 400 students through a variety of outreach programs including Earth Week Plus, Petoskey Robotics, Waganakising Bay Day, school career days, and more!



TIP OF THE MITT WATERSHED COUNCIL



Connecting with Others Who Care

- Provided technical and financial support to 11 teams of volunteers taking action through our WAVE program (Watershed Action Volunteer Experience).
- Collected hundreds of pounds of trash with over 150 enthusiastic volunteers at the 14th annual Healing the Bear – Bear River Cleanup.
- Gathered with Watershed Council board and staff alumni to stay connected with current efforts.
- Engaged over 300 volunteers across a myriad of programs ensuring program success.

Thank You for Standing with Us in the Effort to Protect Our Waters

The Watershed Council contributions continue to grow in challenging times. In 2018, the Watershed Council received \$483,023 in membership gifts. This represents a 16% increase over 2017. This increase was primarily due to several generous members who increased their gifts this past year.

We also received \$78,626 in contributions toward special projects and welcomed 179 new members for a total of 2,127 member individuals, families, organizations, and businesses.

Our private contributions represent one half of our total operating budget, so you can see we truly couldn't do it without our members!

The Watershed Council's Commitment to Long-Term Financial Success

The Watershed Council relies on endowment funds for both current and long-term funding. We have general agency funds at both the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation and the Charlevoix County Community Foundation. We also have a fund that is managed at Fifth Third Bank.

We rely on two funds that support our education programs, one at Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation and the other at Charlevoix County Community Foundation. Our intern program is supported by a fifth fund at the Charlevoix County Community Foundation created to honor a longtime member's daughter who passed away several years ago.

The total market value of all five of these funds as of December 31, 2018, is \$2,429,381.

Endowment funds offer a variety of opportunities for gift giving including planned gifts. The Watershed Council has set a goal of \$3 million in endowed funds. Please consider a gift to help us reach our goal and sustain our programs into the future.

For a listing of all of our generous supporters please see the on-line version of this annual report at www.watershedcouncil.org/annual-reports.

2018 Financial Highlights

The Watershed Council runs a tight ship. We use every dollar wisely, knowing our funding comes from others who expect nothing less from us. Our day to day operations are funded by our Operating Fund. The categories and amounts of revenues and expenses are illustrated in the charts below.

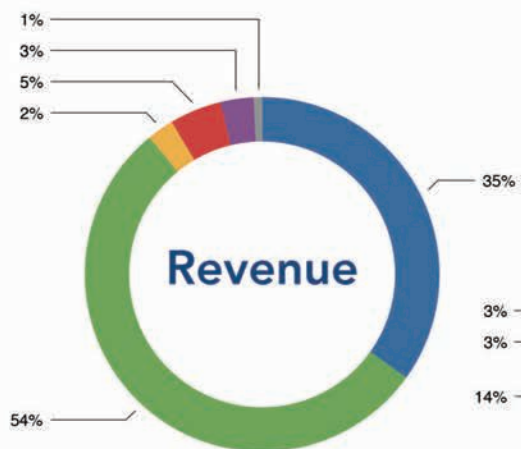
Revenue

REVENUE	AMOUNT
Contributions	\$563,719.97
Grants	\$874,998.88
Contracts	\$39,211.69
Endowment Support	\$76,614.00
Bequests	\$48,772.88
Other	\$12,376.79
TOTAL	\$1,615,694.21

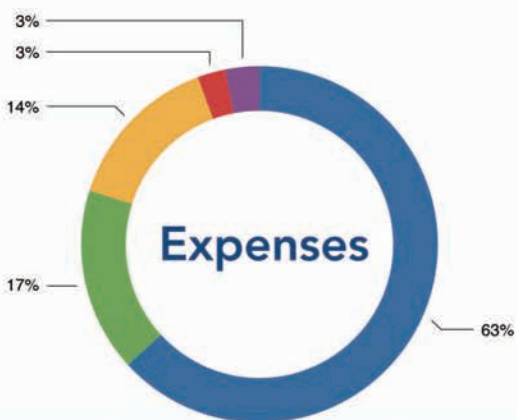
Expenses

Expenses	AMOUNT
Watershed Protection	\$1,017,126.84
Policy and Advocacy	\$268,880.00
Outreach and Education	\$233,069.00
Development	\$41,062.00
Management and General	\$49,728.00
TOTAL	\$1,609,865.84

For detailed information or to view our audited financial statements, go to www.watershedcouncil.org/annual-reports.



- Contributions
- Grants
- Contracts
- Endowment Support
- Bequests
- Other



- Watershed Protection
- Policy and Advocacy
- Outreach and Education
- Development
- Management and General



2018 staff dressed up for Halloween: (top row, left to right) Kate Cwikel, Caroline Keson, AmeriCorps Volunteer Macy Doster, Lynn D Buffington, Grenetta Thomassey, David Edwards, Eli Baker (front row, left to right) Jennifer Buchanan, Gail Gruenwald, Chelsea Olivarez with her dog, and Debbie Esposito.

Our Mission

The Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council speaks for Northern Michigan's waters. We are dedicated to protecting our lakes, streams, wetlands, and groundwater through respected advocacy, innovative education, technically sound water quality monitoring, thorough research, and restoration actions. We achieve our mission by empowering others and we believe in the capacity to make a positive difference. We work locally, regionally and throughout the Great Lakes Basin to achieve our goals.



Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council
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www.watershedcouncil.org