



The Rouge River Watershed Year in Review

Continuing our Successes



The River's Future is Bright

We Are Enjoying the Fruits of Our Labor

- **Water quality and ecosystem health continue to improve**
- **Projects Reinforce Regulatory Framework**
- **Rouge River communities have taken the reins**
- **Partnerships underscore our commitment to the river**
- **People continue to enjoy and learn about the river**





Water Quality and Ecosystem Health Continue to Improve

- **Improved water quality and overall ecosystem health show benefits of watershed management strategies**
- **The City of Melvindale with a Rouge grant obtained baseline samples from 7 locations: results were remarkably high for total dissolved oxygen and low for total coliforms and bacteria**
- **The Rouge Program Office's Long Term Monitoring Network in 2002 showed water quality standards were met nearly 100% at 3 stations; 85% at 3 stations and 75 percent at one remaining station**

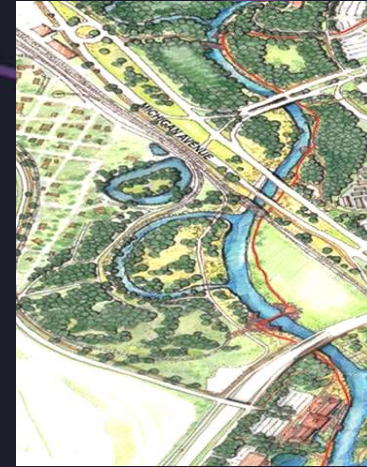
Water Quality and Ecosystem Health is Steadily Improving – Newburgh Lake

- **This year, John Curcio of Westland caught a really big fish in Newburgh Lake: a 31” pike!**
- **The MDEQ has lifted the PCB fish consumption ban for the general public on carp, channel catfish and largemouth bass caught in Newburgh Lake**



Water Quality and Ecosystem Health is Steadily Improving – Oxbow Restoration Project

- **This project is a collaborative effort between Wayne County, the Henry Ford and the State of Michigan**
- **Main objectives:**
 - **Restore fish and wildlife habitat within the Rouge River, and,**
 - **Restore functioning riverine wetlands that have been lost due to channelization of the river.**





Projects Reinforce Regulatory Framework: Sanitary Sewer Overflow Control

2002 SSO Projects Approved for Rouge Program Grants

- **City of Dearborn-Downspout Disconnection Program**
- **City of Melvindale-Illicit Discharge Investigation and Elimination; Sanitary Sewer Evaluation**
- **City of Garden City-Water Quality Based Determination of SSO Design**
- **City of Farmington Hills – East Lincolnshire Subdivision SSO Elimination- Phase I**



Projects Reinforce Regulatory Framework: Sanitary Sewer Overflow Control

2002 SSO Projects Approved for Rouge Program Grants

- **City of Garden City – Reduction of Excess Peak Flows Through Evaluation and Modification of In-line Storage**
- **Oakland County Drain Commissioner’s Office – Edwards Relief Drain Siphon Removal**
- **Oakland County Drain Commissioner’s Office – Farmington to Evergreen SSO Interceptor with CSO Regulator Adjustments**
- **Wayne County Department of Environment – Two Balancing Chambers to Improve the Efficiency of the Lower Rouge Interceptor**



Projects Reinforce Regulatory

Framework:

Combined Sewer Overflow Control



- **77 of the 83 Phase I CSO outfalls are now under control by 10 CSO retention/treatment basins and six sewer separation projects**
- **The demonstration CSO basins continue to perform well**
- **The Rouge CSO facilities continue to generate national interest, such as facility tours for Philadelphia Water Dept. representatives**



Projects Reinforce Regulatory

Framework:

Combined Sewer Overflow Control

- **There is significant progress toward controlling Phase II CSO outfalls in the Rouge Watershed**
 - **Detroit is starting construction of the Baby Creek Screening and Disinfection Facility**
 - **Detroit has requested proposals for design of a facility to control CSO discharges from the Oakwood pump station**
 - **Following completion of a regional study, Detroit and Dearborn are proposing to construct major, independent CSO control tunnels**
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Projects Reinforce Regulatory Framework: Storm Water Permit Activities

Illicit Discharge Elimination Programs in 2002

- **Wayne County: 528 facilities were inspected and 44 buildings/facilities/structures were found to have over 190 improper connections to the storm sewer system**
- **Oakland County Drain Commissioner (OCDC) Storm Water Action Team: completed an inventory of all OCDC drains in the Rouge River Watershed (approx. 450 outfalls)**
- **Washtenaw County Drain Commissioner's Field Inspection Division: completed inspection of Rouge Watershed Drains in Washtenaw County**
- **In 2002, the City of Wayne documented two illicit discharges within its boundaries**






Projects Reinforce Regulatory Framework: Storm Water Permit Activities

On-Site Sewage Disposal System Management in 2002

- **Wayne County performed 121 evaluations; found 31 failed systems; 25 were corrected by the end of 2002**
- **Washtenaw County Environmental Health Division inspected 881 septic systems county-wide; found 180 failed systems; 48% were corrected by the end of 2002**
- **The Oakland County Drain Commissioner has drafted a regulation for regular inspection of onsite-sewage systems.**
- **The City of Northville utilized a Rouge Project grant to connect residents to the city sanitary sewer, thus abandoning existing failed septic systems**



Projects Reinforce Regulatory Framework: Storm Water Permit Activities 2002

- **Historically-Styled Covered Bridge was constructed at Ford Field in Dearborn**
- **The City of Novi passed a fertilizer ordinance**
- **Salem Township developed a model Storm Water Ordinance that addresses water quality and water quantity**
- **Farmington Hills has constructed an environmentally-friendly 9-hole golf course**



Projects Reinforce Regulatory Framework: Storm Water Permit Activities 2002

- **The City of Birmingham stocked large mouth bass, channel catfish and fathead minnows in a newly restored Quarton Lake**
- **The City of Livonia and the City of Inkster received Rouge Project grants in 2002 to fund Illicit Discharge Elimination and Public Education Activities**





Rouge Communities Have Taken the Reins The Rouge Assembly

- **37 Communities and 3 Counties have committed to join**
- **First meeting held August 5, 2003**
 - **18 Month Memorandum of Agreement Approved**
 - **2003 Assembly Budget and Community Assessments Adopted**
 - **Fiduciary Agreement Signed with Wayne County DOE**
 - **Officers Elected**
 - » **Tom Biasell
(Farmington Hills) Chair**
 - » **James Anulewicz
(Plymouth Twp.) Vice Chair**
 - » **Gary Mekjian
(West Bloomfield Twp.)
Treasurer**





Rouge Communities Have Taken the Reins The Rouge Assembly

- **Rouge Executive Committee**
 - **13 Members (3 officers, 3 counties, 7 subwatersheds)**
- **First Meeting October 8, 2003**
 - **Established Chairs, Membership, & Charge to Committees**
 - » **Finance**
 - » **Membership**
 - » **Organizational**
 - » **Public Involvement**
 - » **Technical**





Rouge Communities Have Taken the Reins The Rouge Assembly

- **Finance Committee**
 - **Reviewing**
 - » **Status of Contributions from Participating Communities**
 - » **Expenditures to Assure Consistency with Approved 2003 Assembly Budget**
 - **Recommending**
 - » **Assembly Budget for 2004**
 - » **Assessment of Local Costs to Match Federal Funds**
- **Membership Committee**
 - **Recommending Process for Adding Public Agencies with Water Permit Requirements in Rouge River Watershed (e.g., Detroit, School Districts, MDOT, etc.)**



Rouge Communities Have Taken the Reins The Rouge Assembly

- **Organizational Committee**
 - **Examining and Recommending Options to**
 - » **Formalize Assembly as Legal Entity**
 - » **Expand Scope of Cooperative Watershed Management Efforts Beyond Storm Water**
- **Public Involvement Committee**
 - **Coordinating and Recommending**
 - » **Public Education and Involvement Activities Required Under Storm Water Permit to Reduce Costs**
 - » **Approaches to Include Non-profit Organizations and Others in Assembly Efforts**
 - » **Integrate Rouge Efforts with Similar Public Information Programs (e.g., SEMCOG and MDEQ)**

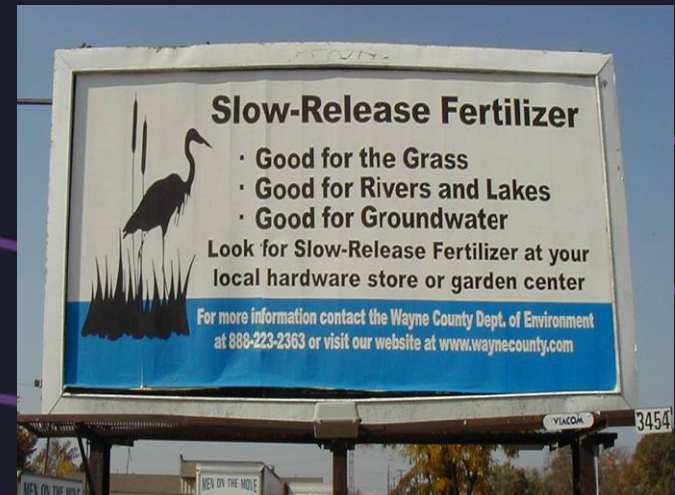


Rouge Communities Have Taken the Reins The Rouge Assembly

- **Technical Committee**
 - **Guiding and Reviewing Watershed-Wide Sampling Plan Required Under Storm Water Permit**
 - **Advocating Effective and Efficient Approaches to Meeting Storm Water Permit Requirements on Behalf of Local Agencies**
 - **Recommending Priorities and Criteria for Future Grant Awards**
- **Next Assembly Meeting December 10, 2003**
 - **2004 Budget and Allocation of Costs**
 - **Status Reports from Assembly Committees**

Partnerships Underscore Our Commitment to the River

- **The City of Farmington Hills and the Sisters of Mercy: Received a Rouge Grant for innovative storm water projects, including a green roof**
- **The City of Novi and Northville Township: Completed the Quail Ridge Drain Project which controls the water velocity and volume leaving Novi and entering Northville Township**
- **SOCWA and Wayne County Dept. of Environment: Ran the Slow-Release Fertilizer Sticker Program in spring 2002 mobilizing over 35 stores across the region, including all English Garden and Damman Hardware Stores**



Partnerships Underscore Our Commitment to the River

- **Northville Township, Salem Township and the Johnson Creek Protection Group: Worked jointly on a score of Johnson Creek preservation activities, including a natural features inventory, a riparian corridor enhancement project and a wet meadow creation project**
- **The Friends of Rouge Park, the City of Detroit, Friends of the Rouge, Wayne County Master Gardeners and the Redford Township Girl Scouts: Planted 500 rescued native plants adjacent to the 15-acre prairie planting in Rouge Park, Detroit on River Day 2003**



Partnerships Underscore Our Commitment to the River

- The City of Southfield, the City of Beverly Hills and the City of Birmingham, facilitated by SOCWA, have joined together to preserve green space, known as the Rouge Green Corridor in the Main 1-2 Subwatershed
- SOCWA is working to create five demonstration rain gardens in Main 1-2 communities
- The Main 1-2 SWAG Public Education group and has created a septic PSA and a bi-annual riparian newsletter



Fall 03 Issue 3 The Invertebrate Newsletter for Riparian Owners in the Rouge River Watershed

Waterside Living

Bugs and Healthy Rivers

After a week spent in Michigan's north woods, the thought that these creatures were simply a bug nuisance becomes entirely believable. Yet a closer look at the insect world reveals a fascinating variety of over a million species that range from harmful pests to beneficial providers of honey, silk and leaven. Many plants would never fruit without the pollination provided by insects and many animals depend on bugs for food.

In rivers, lakes and ponds, bugs are a cornerstone of the system. They provide food for fish, amphibians and other animals that help break down and cycle or grade material. Human activities such as dredging, dumping, and even removal of vegetation and bank straightening can devastate insect populations and in turn, the animals that rely on them for food.

A healthy river system has a diverse assemblage of insects, clams, snails, scums and crustaceans, collectively known as invertebrates. Because some invertebrates are extremely sensitive to pollution and habitat modification while others have a high tolerance, biologists use invertebrates to assess the health of river systems.

Since May 2001, Friends of the Rouge has been sampling Rouge River tributaries for benthic macroinvertebrates (animals whose backbone that can be seen without a microscope and live in the streambed) through a volunteer sampling program. As we complete our third year of sampling, we are beginning to piece together a picture of the health of the river. We have been surprised to find a lack of benthic macroinvertebrates in the upper portions of the Main Rouge branch and continue to add site factors (optimum temperature where the problem lies).

If you are interested in learning firsthand about what we are finding in the river, consider volunteering for our Annual Fall Bug Hour on Saturday, October 11, 2003 (see details in Events on page 4). To find out more about how to volunteer or learn more about monitoring, frog and trout populations, contact POE at the phone or website listed above.

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Rouge Resources and Facts

- The Rouge Assembly was formally established in May 2003 by the communities in the Rouge River Watershed. The Assembly members will act as the governing center for related programming, outreach, and advocacy. Visit www.rougevt.com to find out more.
- Riparian Corridor Management Technical Advisory Committee is a special group of professionals formed to provide technical assistance, guidance and advice to riparian property owners. Review the spring article. To contact the RCATAC, call 313-762-9968.

Waterside Living

Rouge River Watershed

Partnerships Underscore Our Commitment to the River

Rouge Gateway Partnership

- **Southwest Detroit/South Dearborn Greenway**
- **Kingfisher Bluff Bank Stabilization and Scenic Overlook**
- **The Greening of the Ford Motor Rouge Plant**
 - **New Green-Roofed Manufacturing Plant**
 - **New car storage areas constructed of porous pavement**
 - **Mass plantings of native plant materials**
 - **Reconstruction of Miller Road with stormwater detention within boulevard (With Wayne County Roads)**



Partnerships Underscore Our Commitment to the River

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

- We are partnering on a variety of projects
- Detailed hydrologic and hydraulic analysis is underway for final design of concrete channel restoration





People Continue to Enjoy and Learn About the River Friends of the Rouge

- **Over 500 people from around the watershed participated in the 2003 Frog and Toad Survey**
- **226 volunteers stenciled 1,380 Storm Drains in 11 communities**
- **There were 24 Rouge Rescue Sites in 2003**



People Continue to Enjoy and Learn About the River Friends of the Rouge

- **Over 180 teachers and 6,300 students from more than 90 schools performed water quality sampling in the Rouge River Watershed during the 2002-2003 school year as part of the Rouge Education Project**
- **Over 120 stakeholders participated in FOTR Rouge Watershed Bus Tours in 2003**



People Continue to Enjoy and Learn About the River Rouge River Water Festivals

- **Nearly 3,000 fifth-graders from participated in the 6th Wayne County Rouge River Water Festival at UM-D in May 2003**
- **Nearly 1,500 fifth-graders participated the 1st annual Oakland County Rouge River Water Festival at Cranbrook Institute of Science in September, 2003**



People Continue to Enjoy and Learn About the River

- **In 2002, SOCWA sponsored 50 outreach events accounting for more than 1,000 volunteer hours**
- **Some 134 people attended River Friendly Lawn & Garden workshops in 14 watershed communities**
- **The Rouge River Web Site (www.rougeriver.com) receives approximately 200,000 hits a month.**
- **A group of volunteers is forging a canoe route along the Lower 2 Branch of the River**



**We Have Stepped
Into the Future . . .**



**And There's
No Turning Back**