



SWMPC 2015 1st Edition

Cass County Master Plan Collaboration Honored for Cooperative Efforts



The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) announces the selection of the Cass County Michigan Master Plan Collaboration for the 2015 Graham Woodhouse Intergovernmental Cooperation Award.

During the SWMPC April 21, 2015 Board meeting at the Lake Charter Township Hall, John Egelhaaf, SWMPC Executive Director, explained that "The Graham Woodhouse Intergovernmental Effort Award recognizes the value of cross-jurisdictional, regional cooperation. These projects utilize limited resources efficiently, combine goal-setting, and visualize the world as nodes of regional resources. The players in this process are frequently not recognized so to those who search for collaborative change, SWMPC appreciates your work!"

The nomination was submitted by Barbara Cook, Chair, Cass County Planning Commission and Roseann Marchetti, Member of the Cass County Planning Commission and Cass County Board of Commissioners. The Cass County Master Plan Project had several different components:

review, update and adopt a Cass County Master Plan and future land maps after the census of 2010. They sought to assist any municipality within the County to review, updated and adopt a master plan after the census of 2010 for a fraction of the cost of doing it independently. The master plans adopted by the municipalities would serve as their master plan and the basis for adopting or updating their zoning ordinances. Six of the 21 municipalities in Cass County participated in the project. SWMPC Board Chair, Gloria Payne presented award plaques to representatives from agencies involved.

This award was established in 1987 to honor former Dowagiac Mayor, Graham Woodhouse and is presented annually by SWMPC for projects that exemplify cooperation by local units of government. Recipients receive the Award in recognition of outstanding cooperative effort in problem solving. The criteria used in evaluating project nominations include relative degree of effort by local units, methodology, scope, and project dimension.

Introduction to "Placemaking" coming to Southwest Michigan on June 18

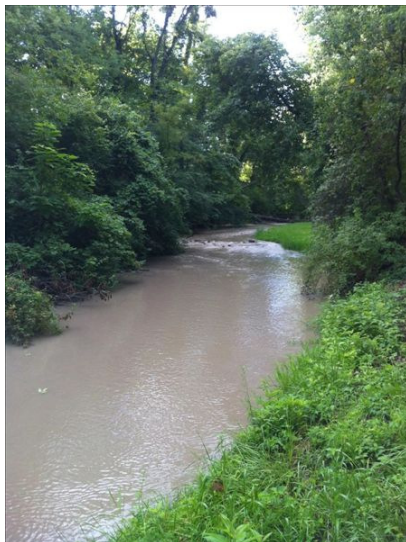
Join the City of Buchanan, Andrew Haan from Governor Office of Urban & Metropolitan Initiatives, and Jim Tischler, Director of the Community Development Division at the MHSDA, to learn about Michigan's Placemaking program. This event takes place on Thursday, June 18, 5:30 – 6:30 PM located at the Buchanan Art Center, 117 W. Front St., Buchanan, MI.

Great places are economic drivers for communities, and are particularly important in small cities and towns. They promote a sense of civic pride, attract visitors, and enhance the quality of residents' lives. In an era of limited resources, it is increasingly important to target investments that will build upon communities' existing strengths. Learn how Michigan has become a Placemaking leader, and how small communities can benefit from undertaking Placemaking strategies. Participants will learn Placemaking fundamentals: how to identify opportunities, create a vision for the future, and transform "spaces" into extraordinary, economy-boosting "places."

This event is free, but space is limited, and is sponsored by the Buchanan Preservation Society, with assistance from the Buchanan Downtown Development Authority. To reserve your spot, send an email with your name, the event name and date, and a contact phone number to: preservebuchanan@gmail.com

Cleaner Water on Tap for the Paw Paw River Through Grant Funded Efforts

Having clean water is not only essential for our health and well-being, but also for our economy. We are fortunate to have an abundance of water in southwest Michigan: hundreds of miles of streams and rivers, hundreds of inland lakes, and of course Lake Michigan.



Overview

According to the Paw Paw and Black River Watershed Management Plans, sediment is the number one pollutant impairing streams and lakes. Sediment comes from many places in the watershed such as construction sites, eroding stream banks and farmland. Sediment can cover up important fish spawning areas

and also clog our harbors costing hundreds of thousands of dollars each year in dredging of the South Haven and St. Joseph harbors.

One solution to reduce sediment reaching local water bodies is to work with farmers to implement better conservation practices such as filter strips, cover crops, and reduced tilling or no-till.

With grant funding from the Great Lakes Commission, the Van Buren Conservation District (VBCD) offered a new and exciting program to increase the use of conservation practices and reduce the amount of sediment reaching local water bodies. Farmers with land in the Pine, Mill, or Mud Lake Drain Watersheds participated in this new program.

The exciting twist of this program is that the farmer can decide how much money is needed to try new conservation or best management practices (BMPs). The

practices must be newly implemented and cannot be funded by other federal programs. Once bids are received, the Conservation District uses a sediment calculator developed by Michigan State University to determine the amount of erosion reduction on the field with the new practice. Then the bids will be ranked based on the cost per ton of sediment reduced. The bids with the lowest cost per ton will be selected for funding. That is, the more critical the location and the more reasonable the bid, the better chances of getting accepted.

The goal of this program is to increase practices that reduce soil erosion in the Paw Paw River Watershed (PPRW). Here are the results....

Total BMPs Installed:

- 514.5 acres No Till
- 183.5 acres Mulch Till
- 1,367 acres Cover Crops
- 8 acres Filter Strips
- 5.5 acres Grassed Waterway

2,078.5 total acres of BMPs installed*

*It is important to note that many of the no or mulch till acres are on the same land as cover crops. There is an increased sediment reduction when there is a combination of the tillage and cover crop practices. The most effective practice in reducing sediment is usually no-till combined with cover crops.

Total Tons Soil Savings: 6,950 tons (calculated by the MSU sediment calculator for the Paw Paw River Watershed). The goal was 6,576 tons. The goal was surpassed by 374 tons.

7,714 pounds Phosphorus savings

1,352 tons Sediment savings

\$168,700 in cost share to producers (this equates to about \$24/ton of soil saved; \$22/pound of P saved; \$124/ton of sediment saved, and \$81/acre of BMP installed.)

www.swmpc.org/cleanwaterontap.asp

Register for Wetlands Working For Your Community Workshop and Tour! Learn about planning and zoning for Clean Water! Thursday, June 18th, 2015 in Benton Harbor, MI.

For more info and to register online please visit: www.swmpc.org/wetlandworkshop.asp

Welcoming New Staff

Please join us in welcoming Patrice Rose to our staff as Administrative Assistant. Patrice started in February 2015 and came to us with an extensive background in administration and management of non-profits, having worked in the non-profit sector for more than 20 years. If you have not met Patrice, please be sure to introduce yourself at the next opportunity. You may contact Patrice at (269) 925-1137 Ext. 1520 or rosep@swmpc.org.



Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

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*The SWMPC Mission is to promote a sustainable high quality of life through
facilitation of sound planning and decision making*

Save Paper by Receiving our Newsletter Electronically: email rosep@swmpc.org

Calendar of Events 2015

SWMPC

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May

18th 9:00 am TwinCATS &
Policy Mtg**
25th SWMPC Office
closed
26th 1:00 pm NATS TAC
& Policy Mtg*

June

15th 9:00 am TwinCATS
TAC & Policy Mtg**
18th Wetland Workshop
and Tour 4 pm
18th Placemaking Program
5:30 pm
23th 1:00 pm NATS TAC &
Policy Mtg*

July

3rd SWMPC Office
Closed
20th 9:00 am TwinCATS
TAC & Policy Mtg**
28th 1:00 pm NATS TAC
& Policy Mtg*

*NATS Meeting location: 1345 E. Main Street, Niles, MI

**TwinCATS Meeting location: Kinexus , 499 W Main St, Benton Harbor, MI 49022
Anchor Rooms A+B

For more information visit: www.swmpc.org/calendar.asp

2015 SWMPC Board Meeting Schedule

SWMPC Full Commission Meetings

Location: Lake Township Hall,
3220 Shawnee, Bridgman, MI
July 21, 2015 9:30 am
October 20, 2015 9:30 am

SWMPC Administrative Committee Meetings

Location: SWMPC Conference Room
Benton Harbor, MI
June 16, 2015 9:30 am
September 15, 2015 9:30 am