

**PARTNERSHIP FOR THE SAGINAW BAY WATERSHED
SPRING, 2016 NEWSLETTER**

AND NOW, IT'S FREE!!

At its March 29 meeting, the Partnership's Board of Directors set the dues for the 2016-17 fiscal year at zero! For 30 years, it cost \$25 or more a year to be a Partnership member. We want the public to know what's happening to restore the water resources of this region, and you're the public!

Use this handy form to give us your contact information and you'll be a member of the Public Advisory Council for the largest Area of Concern in the entire Great Lakes system and Michigan's largest watershed. That will get you in the loop for updates on lots of work that's going on to repair various parts of Saginaw Bay or its tributary rivers.



**BECOME A MEMBER OF THE PARTNERSHIP
FOR SAGINAW BAY WATERSHED**

We invite individuals, organizations, educational institutions, local governments, and businesses to become Partnership for Saginaw Bay Watershed members. To become a member of the Partnership, complete the form below and mail to the address below.

Yes, I would like to support the Partnership's effort to restore and protect the Saginaw Bay and its watershed. Please accept my membership:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE: _____

Return to:

The Partnership for the Saginaw Bay Watershed
P.O. Box 2056
Bay City, MI 48707

Or email to:

Bill Wright at: impart77@gmail.com

MAKE NEW FRIENDS, AND KEEP THE OLD

At the Partnership's Annual Meeting, eleven members were elected, or re-elected, to the Board of Directors. Board members for this year are: Kyle Bostwick (Saginaw), Zygmunt Dworzecki (Akron), Peter Frauson (Linwood), Steve Kahl (Saginaw), David Karpovich (University Center), Jim Hergott (Standish) Elan Lipschitz (Midland), Laura Ogar (Bay City), Glenn Rowley (Bay City), Bill Wright (Bay City) and Dennis Zimmerman (Lake George)

THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF DAM NEWS THIS YEAR!



Ribbon cutting for Frankenmuth's rock ramp – Oct. 27, 2015.

After 10+ years of work, raising and spending over \$2 million, and navigating a sea of permits and paperwork, the City of Frankenmuth celebrated the reconstruction of their 150 year old dam on the Cass River.

A massive collection of limestone boulders maintains the water level above the dam, so the riverboat tours continue unaffected. Downstream, however, the change is quite noticeable. A series of pools and riffles slows down some of the water on its way through, enough to allow non-jumping fish, like walleye, to make their way past the old dam site and get to more than 70 miles of rivers and streams for spawning. That should give a big boost to natural reproduction of walleye and other species. Researchers will document how well this fish passage works for several years, as they already are doing at the site of the rock ramp that replaced the Chesaning dam.

Meanwhile, on the Shiawassee River, the City of Corunna just recently learned they'd get a state grant, to match earlier funds from the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network. The plan is to completely remove the low-head dam near downtown Corunna. Farther upstream, the State of Michigan and Friends of the Shiawassee River are continuing a years-long effort to remove the hazardous Shiatown Dam. Work in 2012 lowered the level of water impounded behind the dam, and complete removal is projected for later in 2016.

Hamilton Dam on the Flint River at the U of M-Flint campus also is being considered for replacement by a rock ramp. The dam is just a few steps from the Flint River Watershed Coalition's office, and could serve as an example for thousands of students who pass by it every semester. The design proposed for this site would create a destination for kayakers in our watershed's largest community.

COASTAL INITIATIVE TAKES ON ISSUES FROM WATER TRAIL TO SEPTIC CODE

In addition to devoting lots of time and energy to the study of Beneficial Use Impairments and encouraging the Partnership this year, our fellow organization, the Saginaw Bay Coastal Initiative, has

worked with counties along Saginaw Bay to complete the Lake Huron Blueway, a water trail along the American side of Lake Huron. Detailed maps for each county's segment of the Blueway identify access points and launching spots for canoes and kayaks, camping facilities, parking areas, restrooms and goods or services available along the way.

The Coastal Initiative also is developing a proposed Regional Septic Code to standardize rules for on-site sewage disposal systems. If not properly constructed, maintained or operated, each property's septic system can become a source of bacterial contamination and excess nutrients in surface water. Multiply this pollutant load by dozens of homes that could impact even small streams, and one can see that the issue of failing septic systems ties closely to the Beach Closings Beneficial Use Impairment that remains a target for restoration work in Saginaw Bay.

MEANWHILE, AROUND THE WATERSHED -

Work continues on the dioxin cleanup in the Tittabawassee River. Planned extensions of this work will reach through the Saginaw River and into the Bay.

SVSU's Saginaw Bay Environmental Science Institute added to its capabilities in 2015 with development of a drone (unmanned aerial vehicle) equipped to collect water samples.

Studies of inner Saginaw Bay's rock reefs has led to proposals for restoration of these important fish spawning habitats. 2016's work will complete evaluation of Spring and Fall spawning activity at remaining rock reefs and proposed restoration sites in the Bay.

We're glad to celebrate so much progress on so many fronts, and we applaud the efforts of the people who've made all this happen. Please, keep up the good work!