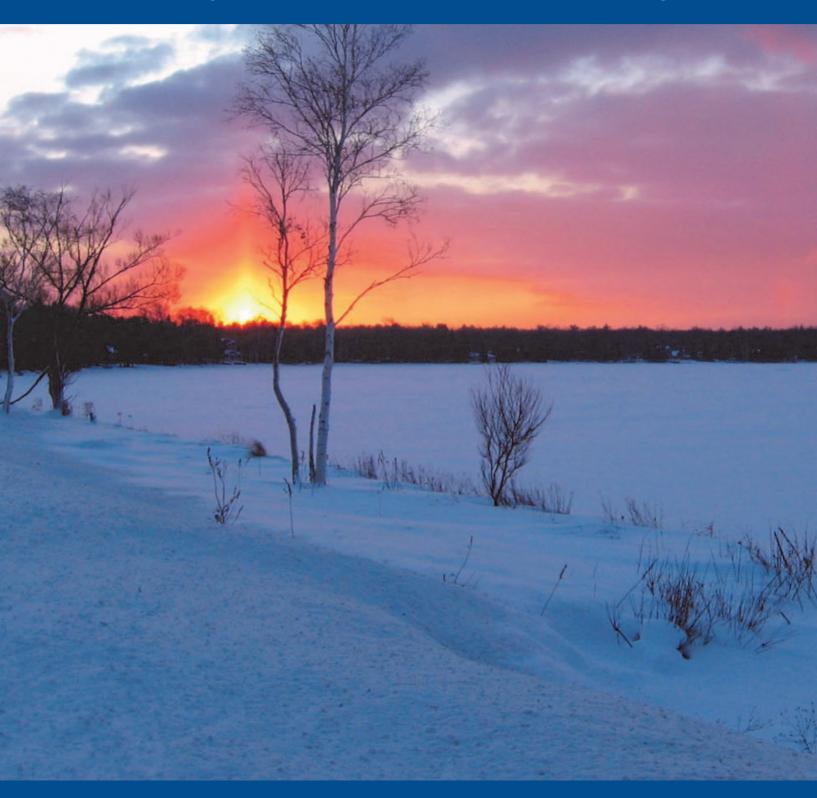
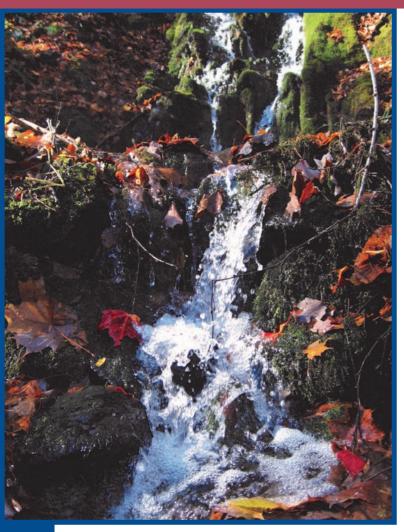


Conserving the Forests, Lakes and Streams of Northeast Michigan



## ANNUAL REPORT 2007



I'd like to thank all of our supporters for making our conservation work possible. Whether you have volunteered, made a donation, or participated in our programs, your active role in making Northeast Michigan a better place is greatly appreciated.

2007 was a very successful year for the organization and our mission of conserving the forests, lakes and streams of Northeast Michigan. We worked hard to provide many services and programs in what was truly a difficult time for the entire state. However, your contributions enabled us to keep this great work going. We're continuing to increase the impact of our land stewardship, watershed protection and conservation leadership programs to provide more service. Some of Michigan's best places for wildlife, fish and enjoying the outdoors are found in our service area.

We've found that many of our projects, such as the Au Sable River stream enhancement, Huron Pines AmeriCorps, Pigeon River Habitat Initiative, Better Backroads, and Greenbelt project, have really connected with our partners. Huron Pines plays an important part as a nongovernmental, regional not-for-profit organization. This role allows us to work effectively in many local communities with a variety of groups.

Your support enables Huron Pines to coordinate projects that cross political boundaries and that require technical support, funding and input from many different stakeholders. In 2008 and beyond, with your support, the organization is well-positioned to effectively and efficiently bring out the best from everyone for conservation in Northeast Michigan.

## **Program Areas**

- Watershed Protection: Grayling Stormwater Project, Au Sable River Restoration, Pine River-Van Etten Lake Management Plan, Rifle Watershed Plan, Better Backroads & Eurasian Watermilfoil Control
- Land Stewardship: Pigeon River Habitat
   Initiative, Coastal Stewardship Program & Greenbelt
   Program
- Conservation Leadership: Huron Pines AmeriCorps & Workshop Series

Thank you,

Brad Jensen

Executive Director



### 2007 Accomplishments

- ★ Launched the Huron Pines AmeriCorps program, providing the opportunity for 9 nonprofit partners to receive full-time help in the areas of outreach, volunteer recruitment and project implementation
- Fully implemented the Better Backroads Program with projects at 7 road-stream crossing sites and the Guidebook updated and distributed across the state
- Coordinated 8 major stream restoration projects improving 21 stream miles and involving local volunteer groups
- Installed the final stormwater treatment in storm drains through the Grayling Stormwater Project, so that stormwater practices are in place for all the city's major outfalls and the Au Sable River is protected from oils, pesticides, sediment and other hazardous materials
- Developed a five year Strategic Plan that identifies key trends impacting conservation and lays the groundwork to get many projects completed in the years to come
- Increased our outreach and education efforts by hosting a water resource workshop series, developing a bi-weekly eNewsletter, and making 28 educational presentations to more than 1,200 people, including presentations in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois
- Completed 3 "EPA-approved" watershed management plans for the Higgins Lake, Ocqueoc River and Upper Manistee River watersheds

### Looking ahead to 2008

- → Develop the Coastal Stewardship Program which will greatly increase opportunities for private landowners to participate in shoreline conservation efforts along Lake Huron
- Initiate and complete several aquatic restoration projects including the complete stream restoration of a Myers Creek tributary, the Claybanks streambank stabilization project and a site on the Upper Black River
- ♣ Recruit and train volunteers to assist with Huron Pines and other area projects
- Create and update watershed management plans including the North Branch Au Sable, Otsego Lake, Rifle River and the Pine River-Van Etten Lake watersheds
- Host a summer workshop series to engage and educate citizens in conservation topics and better environmental stewardship practices
- Continue to assist local organizations in capacity building, outreach and project management
- Maintain and improve wildlife corridors through continued efforts in the Pigeon River Habitat Initiative
- Develop the Huron Pines AmeriCorps program to continue assisting organizations with their conservation efforts
- + Identify and include new partners and businesses in the effort to complete more hands-on conservation projects



## SERVICE AREA



## WATERSHED PROTECTION



A vortechnics unit, which separates oil and grit, was installed near the Au Sable River helping to filter out pollutants before reaching the river.

### **Grayling Stormwater Project**

The Grayling Stormwater Project is an ongoing pilot project in Michigan to reduce pollution caused by rainwater runoff. The project's highlights include 86 rain gardens and 7 oil and sediment filters, all of which prevent runoff from reaching the Au Sable River. All major outputs of stormwater from Grayling are now treated to remove pollution. This keeps the water cold and clean, perfect for the trout that attract anglers every year.

The city of Grayling, Michigan DEQ and all the individuals and organizations should be proud of their success. Recently, Huron Pines received the Exemplary Efforts in Environmental Protection Award from the Michigan Rural Water Association.

### Au Sable River Restoration

The Huron Pines River Restoration Crew had a very productive season installing Large Woody Debris in the Au Sable River system. The placement of this material is important to restore in-stream habitat for many coldwater species. It also protects streambanks from erosion and creates a more natural river system. Loss of the woody debris occurred during the logging era and later as a result of dams.

The Restoration Project Manager led the crew as they spent over 1,900 hours in the field and worked on over 4.2 miles of the Au Sable, with the majority of work focusing on the North Branch. The River Crew also restored 4 erosion sites downstream of the Mio Dam. In addition to the work the crew completed, there were 4 hands-on volunteer events, where 53 volunteers provided 177 hours of service. These events not only helped physically repair erosion damage, they also fostered better stewardship of the water.



A coir log helps to stabilize Claybanks, a severe erosion site.

### Pine River- Van Etten Lake Update

Huron Pines has been working closely with the Pine River– Van Etten Lake Watershed Coalition to improve area stewardship. Staff from Huron Pines inventoried 134 road/ stream crossings, coordinated a shoreline improvement demonstration project, provided riparian stewardship information on landscaping and restoration issues, and helped with the overall outreach activities of the Coalition.



A greenbelt was installed to help filter water on Van-Etten Lake.

#### Rifle Watershed Plan

The Rapid Watershed Assessment is designed to identify and organize information for conservation leaders, resource professionals, and units of governments to identify existing resource conditions and conservation opportunities. The assessment was completed and highlights resource concerns and recommendations. Also, a 5-part educational workshop for conservation leaders took place and a *Toolkit for Better Watershed Stewardship* were created to make more resources available.

### **Better Backroads**

The intersection of roads and streams are major points of entry for pollution, especially sediment, into water systems. Excessive amounts can result in a wider and shallower river channel, degradation of aquatic habitats and elevated water temperatures.

The Better Backroads program helps to alleviate sediment loading on some of the most critical crossings. Six sites were improved in the Thunder Bay Watershed, eliminating 64 tons of sediment from entering the water system and a crossing on Crapo Creek was enhanced. The *Great Lake Better Backroads Guidebook* (3rd ed.) was completed and is available on our website. It is a great resource for watershed groups, road



The Otsego County Road Commission replaced a culver on Crapo Creek r to reduce sediment runoff and improve fish habitat.

maintenance personnel, engineers and anyone interested in rural roads and water quality.

### Eurasian Watermilfoil Update

Eurasian Watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) is an invasive exotic species with the potential to disrupt a lake's ecological system. Huron Pines has been working closely with the groups around Higgins Lake to monitor and control this weed. Because of early detection and effective control methods, the spread of this plant has been very limited on Higgins Lake.

## LAND STEWARDSHIP

### Pigeon River Habitat Initiative

The Pigeon River County State Forest is the largest block of contiguous undeveloped land in the lower peninsula. To encourage conservation efforts around this valuable area, the Pigeon River Habitat Initiative was formed in 2001 as a partnership between private landowners, state and federal agencies and nonprofit organizations.

The mission of the partnership is to work with private landowners bordering on or near the forest to protect natural resources and to maintain wildlife corridors. Wildlife corridors are critical in preventing habitat fragmentation because they increase the quality habitat of the forest and connect land parcels.

For this project, the Huron Pines Habitat Specialist meets with landowners to discuss their property management strategy, explore land conservation options and implement techniques to attract wildlife. Beyond enhancing wildlife habitat, other benefits for landowners participating in the program include providing additional recreation opportunities and leaving a lasting legacy for future generations.

In 2007, a total of 15 site visits were conducted, 5 wildlife planting projects were completed and 1 Forest Stewardship Plan covering 150 acres was compiled. It was a very successful year and our efforts to conserve this beautiful area will continue through 2008.



Habitat Specialist, Eric Nelson, interviews a landowner to discuss management options.

### Coastal Stewardship Program

Michigan has approximately 3,921 miles of Great Lakes shoreline and the longest coast of any state in the continental United States. The coastal ecosystem not only serves as a vital transition between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, but also provides critical habitat for many wildlife, fish, and plant species.

To facilitate the protection and enhancement of our coastal resources, Huron Pines initiated a new project, the Northeast Michigan Coastal Stewardship Program.

Phase one includes the development of a geographic database of the 467 Lake Huron shoreline miles located in Iosco, Alcona, Alpena, Presque Isle and Cheboygan counties. This map will identify and prioritize sensitive coastal habitats. The second phase will implement on-the-ground improvement projects.

### **Greenbelt Program**

Huron Pines continued the Higgins Lake Shoreline Stewardship Program— our staff ecologist consulted with landowners to discuss water quality, erosion control and lake stewardship. The program resulted in the installation of several native greenbelts. Over 30 sites were reviewed in the process and several property owners received a flag denoting exceptional shoreline stewardship practices.

The program also featured Public Service Announcements about better stewardship practices, the installation of educational kiosks, Eurasian watermilfoil monitoring and the approval of the Higgins Lake Management Plan.



Above, property owners receive their Higgins Lake Stewards flag from Huron Pines Ecologist, Jennifer Muladore. Landowners around the lake who exhibit exceptional shoreline stewardship practices, such as planting native plants like purple coneflower (below), not fertilizing, and properly maintaining their septic systems are awarded these flags to highlight their accomplishments.

Greenbelting is landscaping with native plants to create an aesthetically pleasing buffer zone on shorelines. The goal of a greenbelt is to return more natural vegetation to shorelines to protect land and water quality. Benefits of greenbelts include erosion control, privacy, pollution absorption, low-maintenance landscaping and wildlife habitat.

The most important benefits of greenbelts are erosion control and pollution filtering—by keeping sediments and excess nutrients from washing into the water, greenbelts keep the water clear and cool. This allows light to reach deeper in the water, allowing aquatic plants to grow and provide food, oxygen and a place to live for the many fish and other animals.

When too many nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus get into the water, they cause algae to bloom, blocking out light and killing the native plants, creating an environment without oxygen in which fish cannot survive.



## CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP

### **Huron Pines AmeriCorps**

More than ever, with rapid changes northern Michigan is facing, there is an urgent need for the conservation community to use new approaches and improve collaboration. More technical resources are required by the nonprofit sector to increase their capacity and meet community and natural resource needs.



In order to meet these needs, Huron Pines partnered with AmeriCorps, a national service program designed to strengthen citizenship and the ethic of service by engaging thousands of Americans to help communities to address their toughest challenges.

Huron Pines AmeriCorps is a new program designed to enable conservation organizations to meet their resource protection goals. The program helps existing nonprofit organizations increase their ability to implement conservation projects by placing full-time, highly skilled members to serve directly with them for a year. Huron Pines AmeriCorps members provide assistance with organizational capacity building, volunteer coordination, on-the-ground restoration and habitat improvement projects and public outreach and stewardship.

The program is part of the solution to help address both the natural resource and funding problems that exist in the region. Through the service of an AmeriCorps member, organizations are better able to meet community needs. By helping build the resources of key conservation partners, Huron Pines helps to make the area more self-sustaining and successful.

## www.huronpinesamericorps.org



Huron Pines AmeriCorps members at Member Orientation at Hartwick Pines.

### 2007 AmeriCorps Host Sites

- ★ Freshwater Future
- Grand Traverse Conservation District
- → HeadWaters Land Conservancy
- + Huron Pines
- Michigan Association of Conservation Districts
- Michigan Council of Trout Unlimited
- Muskegon River Watershed Assembly
- → Otsego Conservation District

### AmeriCorps Project Tasks

- Helping groups with strategic planning and membership building
- Serving as a volunteer coordinator for an organization
- Directing a public relations/marketing campaign to promote resource stewardship
- Implementing on-the-ground water resource improvement projects
- Promoting land stewardship to local officials, school groups, landowners, and volunteer conservation organizations



Members help coordinate events such as the statewide Envirothon competition. Here students compete at the regional level in Traverse City, MI.

### Workshops

Huron Pines hosted a series of fall workshops in Ogemaw Co. to help grassroots partners in the areas of farmland preservation, wetlands, hydrology, fundraising, financial management, project management and communications.

Funded through the Americana Foundation and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Huron Pines was able to bring in some great resource speakers and further the conservation message. In addition to course materials, attendees also received a CD toolkit containing a wealth of resource conservation information.

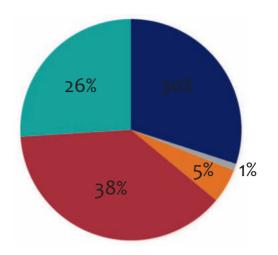


Participants who completed the workshop series received a Watershed Conservation Certificate. To expand training opportunities in 2008, Huron Pines is offering monthly trainings covering such topics as grant writing, CPR certification, GIS, soils, and site survey techniques.

# FUNDING INFORMATION

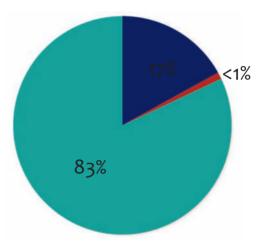
## Revenue

Total	\$767,113	
Other	\$8,491	
Membership and Contributions	\$199,196	
Contracts	\$291,192	
State Grants	\$35,021	
Federal Grants	\$233,213	



## Expenses

Projects & Program Services	\$651,217	
Management	\$132,245	
Fundraising	\$4,049	
Total	\$787,512	



# Project Distribution

Watershed Restoration \$489,976
Land Stewardship \$83,814
Conservation Leadership \$77,427

Total \$651,217

Huron Pines is independently audited each year. Audited financial statements and IRS Form 990 are available upon request.

## 2007 VOLUNTEERS

### Thank you to the many individuals and groups who donated their time.

Rob Burg Keith Charters CompuMentor Grayling Fish Hatchery Steering Committee Glenda Grix Hartwick Pines Headwaters Chapter of Trout Unlimited Jack Hipchen Jim Humes at Penrod's Canoe Livery Ruth Joyce George Jury Craig Kasmer Kimball Electronics James Knox Gerry Lake Jerry LaVanture Natural Resources Conservation Services Oscoda Conservation District Andrea Paladino Bruce Patrick Paul H. Young Chapter of Trout Unlimited Tony Scarzo Lucille Smith Margie Thomson

## 2007 MEMBERS

### Thank you so much to the people who make our hands-on conservation programs possible – our members. The supporters below allow our organization to do much of the important work you've heard and read about.

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### Huron Pines would also like to thank our project contributors.

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Blue Water Realty Company—Crapo Creek Road/Stream Crossing

Chris and Geraldine Bodker—Grayling Stormwater

Alcona-Black River Advisory Council—Alcona County-Black River Watershed

Anglers of the Au Sable—Mason Tract Cedars

Au Sable North Branch Area Association—Au Sable North Branch

Watershed Planning

Sally Binard—River Restoration

Clinton Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited—Au Sable North Branch LWD Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan— Huron Pines AmeriCorps, O.B. Eustis Awards Program, Fletcher Pond, Alcona County Black River

Watershed Crawford County

Marilyn Forrest—Van Etten Lake Greenbelt Project

Freshwater Future—Huron Pines AmeriCorps

City of Grayling—Grayling Stormwater

Great Lakes Commission— Great Lakes Better Backroads Guidebook, PRVEL Monitoring

Hammond Bay Area Anglers Association— Ocqueoc River Watershed

Headwaters Chapter of Trout Unlimited—North Branch Au Sable Restoration

HeadWaters Land Conservancy—Huron Pines AmeriCorps

Higgins Lake Foundation—Higgins Lake Stewardship

Holly Jennings—Pine River Van Etten Lake Watershed

Kiwanis Club of Onaway—Ocqueoc River Watershed

Lake Avalon Property Owners Association—Fletcher Pond

Adam and Karen Landis—Au Sable River Watershed Restoration

Mason-Griffith Founders Chapter of Trout Unlimited— Au Sable River

Watershed Restoration, Mason Tract Cedars

Greg and Diana McComas—Grayling Stormwater

Mercy Health Services North—Mercy Hospital/Grayling—Mercy Hospital Project

William B. Mershon Chapter of Trout Unlimited—Mason Tract Cedars, Au Sable Claybanks

Michigan Association of Conservation Districts—

Huron Pines AmeriCorps

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality—

Pine River/Van Etten Lake Watershed

Michigan Fly Fishing Club— Au Sable River Large Woody Debris Michigan Forest Resource Alliance— Michigan Tree Farm Committee

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Northeast Michigan Council of Governments—

Thunder Bay Road/Stream Crossings

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Otsego Lake Association—Otsego Lake Watershed Project

Otsego Wildlife Legacy Society—Pigeon River Habitat Initiative

Joe and Carole Plunkey—Pine River/Van Etten Lake Watershed

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation—Pigeon River Habitat Initiative

Colman and Gloria Sanders—Pine River/Van Etten Lake Watershed

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USDA Forest Service—Grayling Pathway Signs

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service—

Rifle-Au Gres Tawas Watershed

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service—Au Sable River Restoration, Thunder Bay Road/Stream Crossings, Crapo Creek Road/Stream Crossing

Upper Au Sable River Preservation Association— Au Sable LWD

Paul H. Young Trout Unlimited— Au Sable LWD, Crapo Creek, Grayling Stormwater, River Restoration Program

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## 2007 Major Funders

Thank you to our major funders who make our conservation programs possible. Funding from these contributors supports multiple projects.

## Au Sable North Branch Area Association **Higgins Lake Foundation Upper Au Sable Preservation Association**







For good, For ever,







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If you are not already a member of Huron Pines, please consider joining. When you become a member, you'll receive:

- Huron Pines tote bag
- Our quarterly newsletter
- Discounts at Huron Pines events & workshops
- Biweekly eNews updates on regional conservation news
- Tax deductions on your donation
- The satisfaction of helping further conservation in Northeast Michigan



We would like to offer our supporters a 100% natural cotton canvas bag as a gift. They are great for grocery shopping, daily errands and travel. And, your donation will help Huron Pines promote land stewardship and protect watersheds in northeast Michigan.

Visit us online or contact the Huron Pines office for more information.

Thank you for helping to conserve Michigan's natural resources!

This organization is an equal opportunity provider.

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