



Huron Pines



2011 Annual Report



About Huron Pines

Our Mission

Huron Pines' mission is to conserve the forests, lakes and streams of Northeast Michigan.

Our Vision

Huron Pines is the recognized leader for developing projects and partnerships that restore, enhance and sustain the natural resources in Northeast Michigan.



Contact Us

Huron Pines
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Grayling, MI 49738
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www.huronpines.org



Our Service Area

Counties

Alcona • Alpena • Cheboygan • Crawford
Iosco • Montmorency • Ogemaw • Oscoda
Otsego • Presque Isle • Roscommon

Watersheds

Alcona Black River • Au Gres River • Au Sable River
Black River • Cheboygan River • Coastal Lake Huron
Manistee River • Muskegon River • Ocqueoc River
Pigeon River • Pine River/Van Etten Lake • Rifle River
Sturgeon River • Thunder Bay River

6,700 Square Miles

4,288,154 Acres

5,005 River Miles

172,800 Lake Acres

467 Shoreline Miles



Looking Back: 2011

We feel that in each of the past 10 years Huron Pines has increased its efforts to serve and conserve the forests, lakes and streams of Northeast Michigan. This past year was no exception—in fact, we feel it was our most successful.

In 2011, Huron Pines took an action-oriented approach to having a greater impact than we've ever had before with our projects. With the help of many supporters and partners, we made significant progress in restoring the health of the Lake Huron coastline, reconnecting habitat in many of our favorite coldwater streams, and launching several new watershed initiatives.

**Conservation is a
state of harmony
between men and
land.**

-Aldo Leopold

While our last several years have been very productive, 2011 really stood out in every measure we use to analyze the success of our efforts. Whether we look at the number of acres improved, miles of stream enhanced, partners we've worked with, people we've reached with educational programs, volunteers, increased diversity of plants, and so on, we were able to see an increase. What's more, 2012 looks to be a year where we can further build on such successes.

This excellence is made possible by the people and groups listed in this newsletter who support our work. Your contributions are what allow us to have the optimism to fuel our active land and water management improvement efforts. Thank you—with your continued support we will be able to achieve our commitment to the “mega list” of conservation opportunities that lay before us in Northeast Michigan!

Brad Jensen
Executive Director

Connie Schrieber
Board of Directors Chair

2011 Project Highlights

With the help of our partners and volunteers, we accomplished an unprecedented amount of conservation work in Northeast Michigan!

- 13 fish passage barriers removed, reconnecting 26 miles to the Great Lakes
- 107 tons/year reduction in sediment entering streams
- 2/3 of phragmites on Lake Huron shoreline treated
- North Branch Au Sable River completely cleared of purple loosestrife blooms
- Invasive Species Summit held to coordinate partners in Northeast Michigan
- 500 road/stream crossings inventoried
- 225 streambank erosion sites inventoried
- 300 feet of eroded bank restored on the Rifle River
- Over 4,000 acres of ecologically sensitive lands identified
- 5,000 students reached through educational programs
- 130 acres of land and 150 river miles restored
- 17,000 hours of AmeriCorps member service provided
- Over 2,000 watershed residents reached through volunteer, education and outreach events
- 200+ volunteers trained in land stewardship, resource inventories, and invasive species removal
- 700 trees placed in the Au Sable River as instream habitat
- Small Dams inventory completed for Au Sable River and coastal Lake Huron
- 4 staff presentations made at Great Lakes regional conferences
- \$1.4 million brought by Huron Pines to the Northeast Michigan economy from outside of the area





Conservation Is Our Priority

By starting first with field inventories and then meeting with resource partners regularly to review potential projects and priorities, Huron Pines has been able to select the most important projects to tackle that will provide large-scale benefits in a cost-effective manner. We use a technical advisory committee, made up of many partners, to provide candid feedback to our staff about potential projects. With all of this, we have developed our “mega list,” a 10-year plan of project priorities throughout our region aimed at reconnecting hundreds of miles of streams and stopping hundreds of tons of sediment from reaching our waterways.

**One Touch of nature
makes the whole
world kin.**

*- William
Shakespeare*

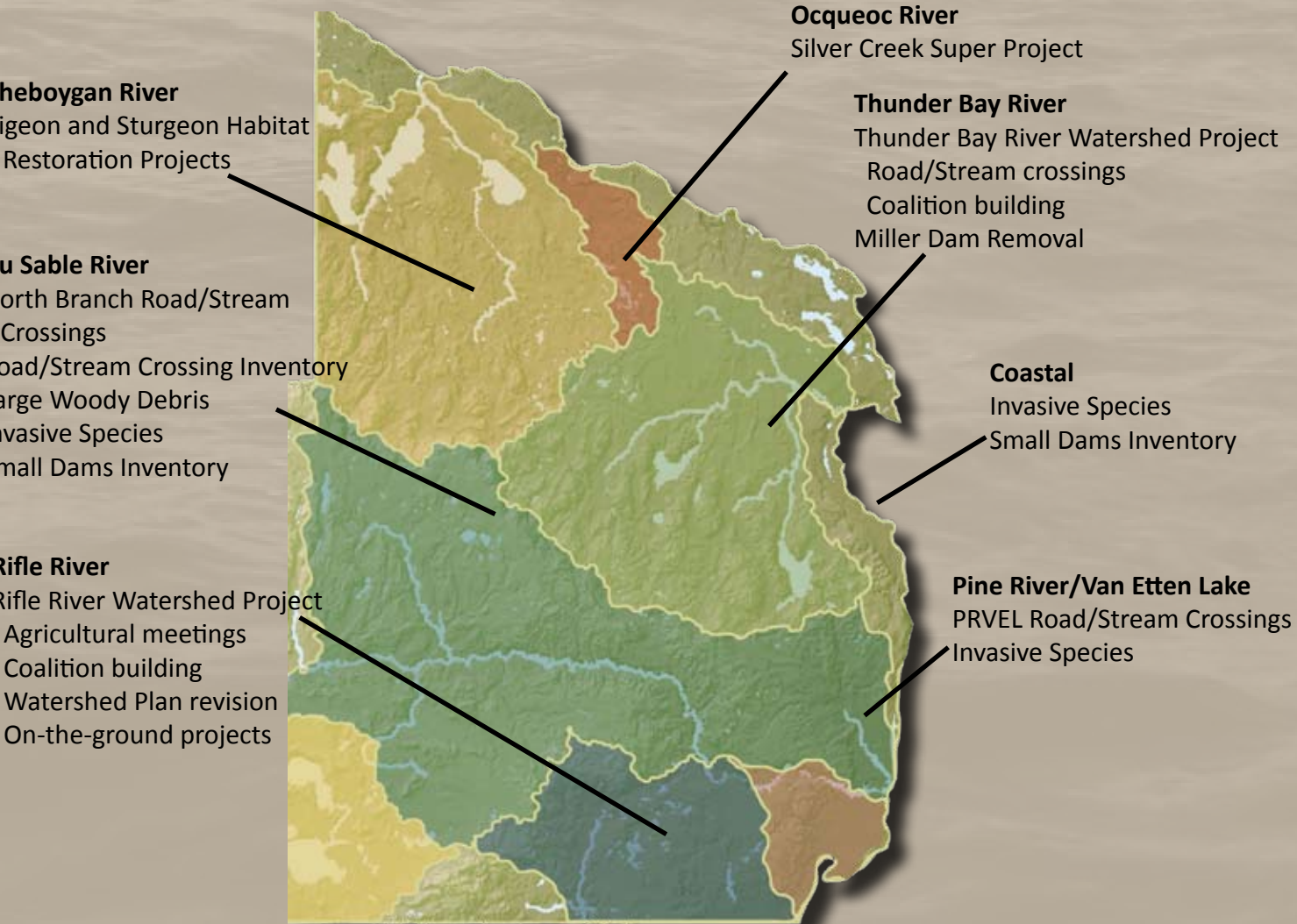
With the help of recent Great Lakes restoration funding sources, we’ve been able to tackle the worst road/stream crossings in several watersheds in our service area.

We’re in the process of completing several watershed restoration projects: Pine River/Van Etten Lake Road/Stream Crossings, North Branch Au Sable Road/Stream Crossings, Silver Creek Super Project, Au Sable Road/Stream Crossing Inventory, Rifle River Watershed Project, and the upcoming Thunder Bay Watershed Project. Because of our advance prepara-

tion, we already know what needs to be done at the many sites and have been able to spend the time with road commissions, engineers, and state permitting staff to come up with some innovative solutions to old problems, like new culvert types and bank stabili-


zation methods. In recent years, Huron Pines has brought more than 10 million dollars to this region, money that is used to employ local construction contractors and engineers, as well as to purchase materials and supplies.

Ongoing Projects by Watershed



Watershed Restoration

Over the years, our restoration projects have evolved from single-site erosion control projects to large-scale, multi-year projects that encompass entire watersheds. We use a watershed approach, creating a more significant impact to a system than doing individual and isolated small projects. By addressing water quality, aquatic and terrestrial habitat, and human quality of life all at the same time over an entire watershed or subwatershed, we're able to see progress compounded and multiplied, with dollars spread further than in the past.



I've known rivers:
I've known rivers
ancient as the world
and older than the
flow of human blood
in human veins.
My soul has grown
deep like the rivers.
- Langston Hughes

*Our **Silver Creek Super Project**, for example, started with a \$2,000 donation from a local Trout Unlimited chapter that, by itself, would not make much of an impact on the overall project. However, we used that funding to help us get a meeting with the road commission and other partners to show them why this project was important and why they should pledge their support as well, resulting in \$125,000.*

This led to a \$600,000 project that has improved fish passage and water quality, removed invasive species, and planted stream-bank buffers.

One of the strengths of our staff is the ability to bring together many different partners in order to complete these large-scale projects. We believe everyone should contribute when it comes to improving water quality or enhancing wildlife and fish habitat, from the individual landowners to the large corporations and agencies. We start a project by inviting everyone that can contribute, such as on a road/stream crossing improvement project, when we sit down at the table with a county road commission, engineers, a foundation, an environmental group, a power company, anglers, and state permitting staff. Some of these people and groups might not always get along outside of the meeting, but our point to them is this: for conservation to be successful we need everyone involved, especially in Northeast Michigan where funding and

people resources are more difficult to come by than anywhere else.

*We're turning up the heat on the Saginaw Bay Area of Concern through our **Rifle River Watershed Project**. Following our holistic watershed approach, we're not focusing solely on one issue but working to improve all aspects of the watershed. By bringing together a diversity of partners like agricultural producers, anglers, city officials, and many more, we're able to strategize and prioritize activities that will benefit the equally diverse ecosystems in the watershed. Working with our partners and many enthusiastic volunteers, we've already completed resource inventories throughout the watershed and are moving into prioritizing and implementing projects.*



As part of our watershed approach, we inventoried and treated invasive species that were threatening the Silver Creek Watershed, like this Japanese Knotweed.



Rifle River Watershed Project Manager Abigail Ertel organized several volunteer projects and workshops to raise awareness about issues affecting the Rifle Watershed.



Land Stewardship

While the waters of Northeast Michigan connect aquatic organisms to the Great Lakes and beyond, it is important to remember the connections our lands make for terrestrial wildlife. We are fortunate to be home to large tracts of forests and unique coastal habitats alike, and both provide important space for plants and animals to thrive here when they may be almost impossible to find in other areas.

*Our **Land Stewardship Program**, piloted in the Pigeon River Country area, is a regional program that stands apart because it is*

- **Integrated:** we stand at the intersection of many program offerings and can help landowners choose which will work best for their needs*
- **Sustainable:** we're in the area year after year*
- **One portal for landowners:** through us, landowners can get assistance from multiple sources*
- **Responsive:** our staff is in the office and the field, ready to answer questions*
- **Focused:** we have prioritized the most important zones that will have the most impact for wildlife habitat*

Between every two pines is a doorway to a new world.

-John Muir

As a nonprofit, we are able to address community needs that a for-profit and/or government agency cannot.

*Our **Invasive Species Removal Program** is a great example. It is designed to detect invasive plants early on and bring a rapid treatment response, reducing costs and damage to our fragile ecosystems. The government is an important partner and brings a lot of resources to the table. However, they're not the answer for regional invasive species control because they simply cannot move as quickly as needed or concentrate on the invaders that are causing problems on a local level. Private contractors are also key partners in our proj-*

ects, but with our invasive species program, we're treating sites before they become big, expensive problems. For the private sector, there simply isn't the potential profit in doing that type of work. Our mobile SWAT team and centralized system of interacting with the public is something that has to be coordinated through an organization as flexible and responsive as Huron Pines. Finally, like most of our work, this program takes many different partners to be successful. Again, that's where a group like Huron Pines really is able to take the lead in working with everyone, at many different levels.



Northern Michigan's famous elk herd is one species that benefits from large connected tracts of habitat that include access to water, food and shelter.



Our Invasive Species SWAT Team visited landowners and identified their invasive species and helped them choose the best option for getting rid of the invaders. Emily King, one of our AmeriCorps members, is shown above.



The Human Element

The fate of our Great Lakes rests in our hands. Conservation efforts are underway locally, regionally, statewide and nationally to protect our forests, waters and wildlife. But these efforts need to be supported and that support starts with each and every resident and visitor to Northeast Michigan. Without local support, conservation efforts will lack the funding, voice, and action needed to make them successful. Our staff makes presentations to groups of all types, from a few neighbors on their land to regional conferences outside our service area.

Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is a process; working together is success.

~Henry Ford

Through our outreach efforts, we are connecting people to the resources that most need their help through our volunteer program. Whether it's a shoreline education day, removing invasive plants from the beach, assisting with office tasks, or a tough instream

habitat installation on a steep, slippery bank, we have something to offer to people of all ages, interest levels, and abilities.

The needs of each community and their natural resources are unique and therefore, conservation requires creative approaches to each individual situation. By linking natural resource professionals, residents and de-

cision makers, we can identify and solve issues specific to each community while building local support that will sustain these efforts.

*With the tough economic climate in Northeast Michigan, conservation groups and small nonprofits are trying to make an impact and raise their capacity to fill the gaps that exist in funding and government staff. Our **AmeriCorps** program helps to fill these gaps by recruiting young professionals that spend a term of*

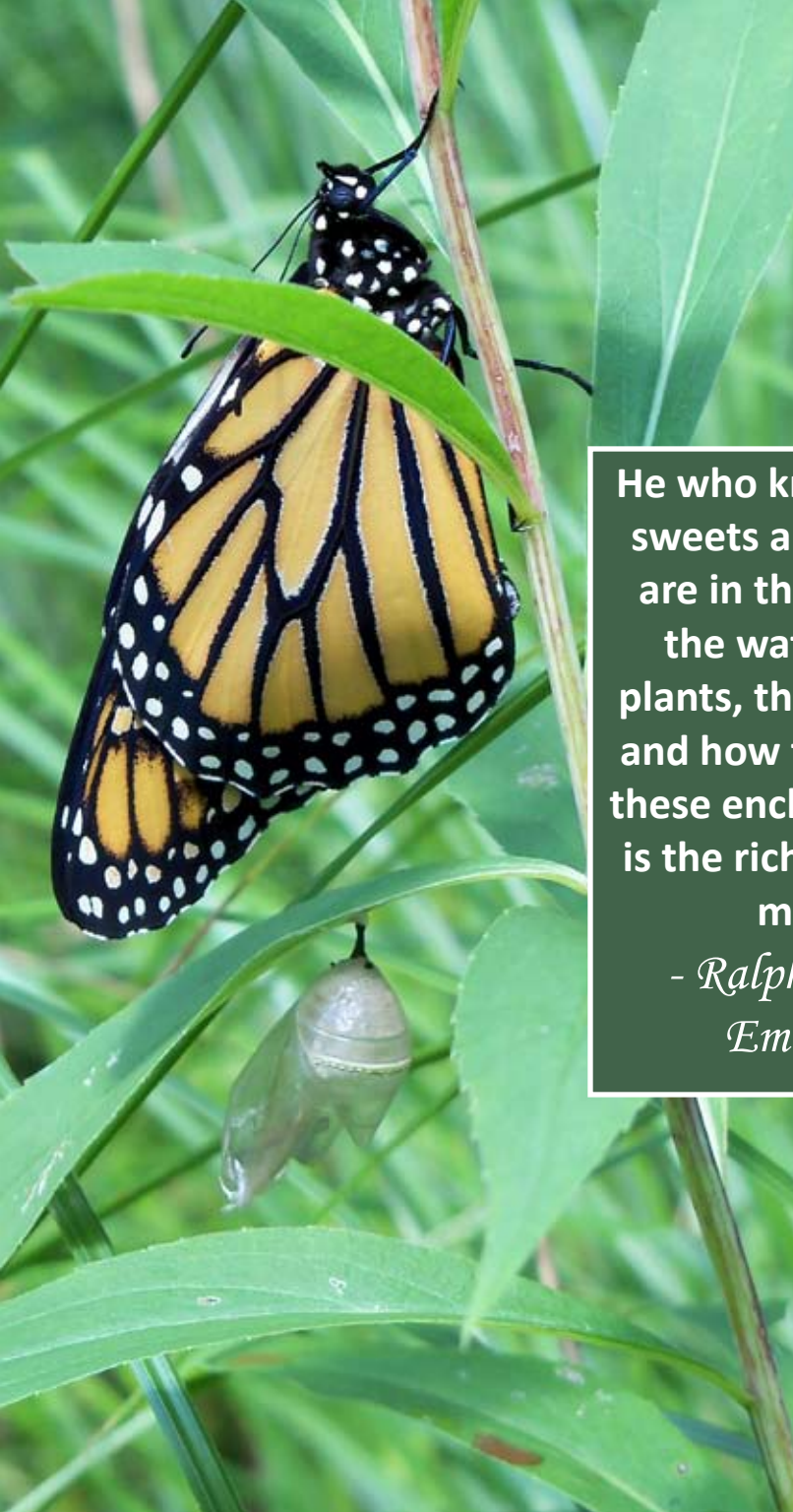
service with a nonprofit group and provide the needed hands to get projects done while receiving valuable job experience. Labeled as one of the 52 most innovative programs in the country, its success goes beyond the impact members have on their host sites. To date, 26 of the 44 participants in our Huron Pines AmeriCorps program have been able to secure employment in their field, with several others continuing on with advanced degrees.



Huron Pines AmeriCorps member Lisa Tobin helps young volunteers create native plant seed balls at an event in Alpena.



Former AmeriCorps member and current Invasive Species SWAT Team leader Tim Engelhardt (right) talks with a partner about the future of invasive species at a shoreline stewardship education event in Millersburg.



What We Do Is Critical

Michigan has 64,980 inland lakes and ponds—a person in Michigan is never more than six miles from a natural water source or more than 85 miles from a Great Lakes shoreline. In addition, forests make up 50% of the land cover in Michigan and over half of those forests are owned by non-industrial landowners. Conservation pro-

He who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

jects some of the most precious resources we have in Northeast Michigan—water and wildlife. Projects such as reducing stormwater runoff and road/stream crossing enhancements result in decreasing the impact of human degradation of our water resources. Projects such as linking fragmented habitats and removing invasive species from fragile ecosystems result in healthier habitats for wildlife to thrive in.

As one of the leading states for water recreation and the state with the second most diverse agricultural economy, Michigan depends on its natural resources for tourism, agriculture, mining and logging. Michigan's tourists spend \$17.2 billion per year in the state, supporting 193,000 tourism jobs. Destinations draw vacationers, hunters, anglers,

and nature enthusiasts from across the United States and Canada. The forests, lakes coastline and wildlife are top attractions. Michigan ranks first in the nation in licensed hunters (over one million) who contribute \$2 billion annually to the economy. The forest products industry and recreational users contribute \$12 billion and 200,000 associated jobs annually.

New in 2012

We're expanding our list of holistic watershed projects to include the Thunder Bay River Watershed and the Pigeon/Sturgeon River Watersheds in 2012. Through funding from the Sustain Our Great Lakes Program administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, we'll be helping to stop pollution from entering the Great Lakes while improving water and habitat quality throughout these watersheds.

Pigeon and Sturgeon Rivers

Huron Pines will coordinate efforts with resource professionals to reconnect 14 river miles for aquatic passage and improve 10,000 instream feet of blue ribbon trout stream while engaging over 100 local volunteers in watershed protection efforts. In addition, Huron Pines will utilize Best Management Practices to re-vegetate erosion areas



The Sturgeon River will benefit from water quality improvement projects in 2012.

and control water runoff. Plans are to also add Large Woody Debris (LWD) to improve aquatic habitat and reduce erosion. All of the projects will involve working with multiple partners, funding sources, and landowners – on a voluntary basis and for the good of the river.

Thunder Bay River

The inventories conducted in the Thunder Bay River Watershed Management Plan have led to the identification of several priority road/stream crossings that are contributing sediment and inhibiting fish passage in the watershed. By addressing the top 10 sites in the Thunder Bay, Huron Pines will open up 134 miles of habitat for the fishery and reduce the annual amount of sediment from these crossings by 113 tons per year. Huron Pines staff will develop conceptual plans,

hire design engineers, obtain permits, administer the grants and contracts, raise additional funding, and oversee the work.

In addition, we'll be expanding the scale of this project to increase watershed-wide impacts by finding and removing invasive species, reducing erosion, and providing education and outreach through our many area partnerships.

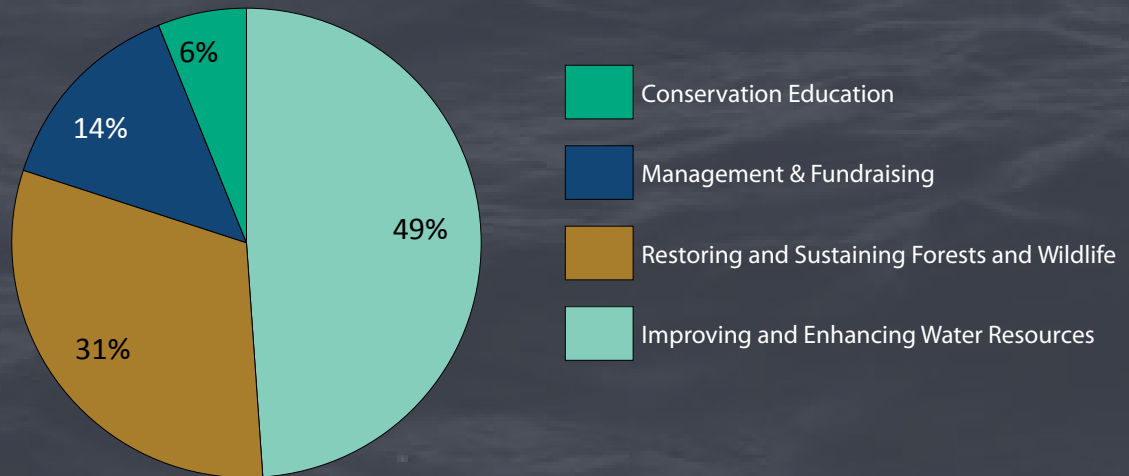


Our Financial Strategy

Huron Pines is proud of the quality and quantity of projects completed in 2010 and 2011. Careful management, budgeting, efficiency and experience resulted in a surplus at the end of both years. The Huron Pines Board of Directors knows the importance of reserves in building a sustainable organization. It is our goal to accumulate adequate unrestricted funds to provide security and seed money to further implement the lengthy “mega list” of projects that everyone would like to see completed in Northeast Michigan.

Grants have provided much of the funding for project costs, however most of the grants received required at least 25% in match. These matching funds have been met with contributed services and funds from Huron Pines and its various partners. Reserves are key to providing the bridge to cover expenses while match funds are sought. They are the cash flow to cover vendor payments while waiting for payments from grantors. They make it possible to develop projects and goals for the future.

The board and staff of Huron Pines have worked hard during these tough economic times to give our supporters the highest conservation impact for their dollars. Thanks goes out to all of those partners, contributors and volunteers who have helped to make that possible. Hopefully the financial success of the past two years will provide the foundation to enable Huron Pines to further pursue its mission.



	2011	2010
Revenues		
Annual Giving	35,869	32,996
Project Contributions	184,248	107,803
Contractual Services	80,258	66,292
Federal Grants	841,813	1,008,738
State Grants	244,826	61,550
Other support	380	474
Total Revenue	\$1,387,394	\$1,277,853
Expenses		
Program	1,158,358	1,066,586
General and Administrative	176,332	158,691
Fundraising	12,662	8,404
Total Expenses	\$1,347,352	\$1,233,681
Net Assets	\$40,042	\$44,172
Functional Expenses		
Personnel	657,657	610,667
Project construction cost	501,126	507,591
Permits	3,126	2,705
Equipment	22,465	6,547
Rent	15,527	11,059
Repair costs	3,357	1,105
Travel	27,539	28,665
Printing and postage	34,235	23,466
Insurance	22,554	18,438
Administrative Cost	59,766	23,438
Total Expenses	\$1,347,352	\$1,233,681

2011 figures are unaudited projections.
2010 figures are from audited financials.

Major Funders

Every new funder brings a new opportunity for increasing the impact of our projects. We appreciate the contributions of our Major Donors and Agency Funders.



Net Assets **\$40,042** **\$44,172**

Functional Expenses

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Au Sable North Branch Area Foundation
The Carls Foundation
Healing Our Waters - Great Lakes Coalition
Michigan Natural Features Inventory
Mullett Lake Area Preservation Society
The Elizabeth, Allan, & Warren Shelden Foundation
Upper Black River Council



2011 Contributors

The donors below allow our organization to do much of the important work you've heard and read about. Despite the recent economic downturn, we've actually seen an increase in the total size of our donations. We are deeply appreciative of the generosity of our supporters.

Major Donors

\$20,000+

The Americana Foundation
Au Sable North Branch Area
Foundation

The Carls Foundation
National Fish and Wildlife
Foundation

Saginaw Bay Watershed
Initiative Network (WIN)
The Elizabeth, Allan, & Warren
Shelden Foundation

\$5,000+

Anglers of the Au Sable
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Watershed Champions

\$2,500 - 4,999

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Mabel Ruth and Gene Willings from Bonnie Willings

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Our People

The staff and board of Huron Pines are comprised of professionals with diverse backgrounds, helping us to be open to new ways to meet conservation and community needs. We're proud to retain our hardworking board and staff members while adding new people to help us achieve our mission of conserving the forests, lakes and streams of Northeast Michigan.

The purpose of conservation: The greatest good to the greatest number of people for the longest time.”
- Gifford Pinchot



Connie Schrieber, Chair



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Executive Director

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Tim Engelhardt
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