Our Leadership

Long-term planning & science for Great Lakes impact

With this annual report, we give a heartfelt thanks to the many supporters who helped make last year so productive. The year 2015 went down as our highest impact year ever in terms of the benefits we provided to water, wildlife and our communities. Huron Pines fills a unique role and we know that without the help of so many, our important work would not get done. This report offers a snapshot of a few of our programs, but it just scratches the surface—we hope you join us on a tour or at an event to discover more of what’s happening and why we are so optimistic about the future. We see a future with vibrant communities, large blocks of intact land and reconnected rivers, and both our conservation and civic groups working together toward shared goals. We have a way to go to reach that vision, but thank you for travelling the path along with us and helping us make the region a better place to be.

Jerry Rucker, Board Chair — Brad Jensen, Executive Director

Our work connects people to Northeast Michigan’s amazing land and the conservation of healthy ecosystems.
Our Impact

*Protecting the Great Lakes by conserving the forests, lakes & streams of Northeast Michigan*

Huron Pines is a nonprofit organization with a staff of ecologists, geographers, biologists and environmental educators who care about keeping Northeast Michigan’s wild places healthy and resilient for future generations. Located right in the center of the Great Lakes system, we have the unique privilege and responsibility to protect our treasured lands teeming with wildlife, and to sustain the world’s most important source of fresh water. Our organization has been working to protect the Great Lakes by conserving the forests, lakes and streams of Northeast Michigan since 1973. In 2015 we made great strides improving the health of our region’s world-class natural resources by reconnecting stream systems, keeping pollution from our rivers and lakes, restoring native plant communities, protecting Michigan’s rare wildlife and instilling an ethic of stewardship in our citizens and visitors.
Our Water Program
Making connections for healthy rivers & lakes

Barriers like dams and flawed road/stream crossings constrict and obstruct the flow of a river. At Huron Pines we decide which barriers are priorities to replace by comparing data from each one, including if fish could get through and whether the road is eroding into the water. When we reconnect a stream, we’re reconnecting a living system. Fish can now swim to reach upstream habitat where before they were blocked. Turtles can now travel along the unrestricted river rather than risking the road. Plus, we can often pool our resources with road commissions to take on large projects that both make our rivers healthier and our roads safer and less costly to maintain. With our Song of the Morning Dam Removal project, we witnessed a whole river coming back to life and an incredible transformation from dam and impoundment to a free-flowing stream spanned by a new timber bridge. This was just one of three timber bridges completed in 2015, along with 11 other road/stream crossing improvements that reconnected streams.

5 years prioritizing projects using our science-based Megalist

14 priority projects completed to reconnect rivers in 2015

114 priority barriers remaining on our Megalist
Since 2011 we’ve been using our science-based Megalist—a database of projects that are high priority for Northeast Michigan based on field inventory data & input from our Resource Advisors Committee. This map shows projects we’ve completed in the last 5 years that reconnected streams, color-coded by year.

“When you put your hand in a flowing stream, you touch the last that has gone before and the first of what is still to come.”

Leonardo da Vinci

New timber bridges at Houghton Creek (before and after shown) & the E. Branch Au Sable have opened up river habitat & improved community infrastructure.
Our Wildlife Program

Protecting special upland and coastal areas that are home to Michigan’s rarest wildlife

Huron Pines takes an ecosystem approach to protecting and restoring high-quality wildlife habitat. By battling invasive species, restoring native plant communities, installing instream habitat structures and connecting wildlife corridors, we are sustaining diverse Michigan landscapes that support rare and threatened species along with our state’s prized game and nongame animals. We have a unique ability to work with people across ownership boundaries to improve the health of public or private lands and protect rare plants and animals like Pitcher’s thistle, wood turtle, Hines’ emerald dragonfly and the Kirtland’s Warbler. In 2015 we made great progress preserving special areas like Lake Huron coastlines where we’re keeping invasive plants like phragmites at bay and Pigeon River Country State Forest where we’re restoring native grasslands and forest openings for elk and other wildlife.

Michigan’s incredibly diverse wildlife and native plant species depend on healthy lands and waters. We work with public and private land managers to enhance wildlife habitat and preserve ecosystems, focusing on vitally important areas like Lake Huron’s wetlands and the Pigeon River Country State Forest.

We work with private property owners to help them meet their land management goals—often to attract more wildlife.

7 inland lakes inventoried for invasive species in 2015

75 acres of forest wildlife openings restored: Pigeon River Country

90% success rate for phragmites treatment
Since 2009 we’ve been the lead organization coordinating the fight against invasive species through our Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA).

Huron Pines & partners are protecting threatened Pitcher’s thistle plants & wetland wildlife habitat by managing invasive phragmites at the Charity Islands in Saginaw Bay. This map shows 2015 work at Big Charity Island.

“The care of the Earth is our most ancient and most worthy, and after all our most pleasing responsibility.”

Wendell Berry

25 acres phragmites treated in 2015

Known Pitcher’s thistle range

3 miles of river targeted to improve instream habitat diversity

162 landowners provided resources or onsite services

225 acres of sensitive habitat protected for threatened plants and animals
Our Community Program
Inspiring people to care & protect our natural resources

Northeast Michigan is an outdoor lover’s paradise, and Huron Pines works hard to preserve the untrammeled feeling that calls residents and visitors from far and wide to experience our quieter, natural world. Our work is driven by a desire to make sure that our Great Lakes resources will continue to be healthy and that our region’s people are trained and empowered to aid in the protection of natural resources. In 2015 we made big impacts in communities across Michigan. We dug into visioning for the future of our innovative Huron Pines AmeriCorps program which for 8 years has placed college graduates to help solve the toughest environmental challenges across Michigan. We held special tours with traditional and new partners to connect on the importance of natural resource protection across sectors. We provided conservation leadership in our region through efforts like the Kirtland’s Warbler Initiative and were inspired by the many hands-on volunteers who came to join us in protecting and enjoying Northeast Michigan’s natural resources.

30+ organizations participated in our Nonprofit Leaders Series in 2015

768 people attended our 2015 events & workshops

2,421 hours volunteers spent in hands-on conservation & trainings

We know that caring about natural resources begins with seeing, touching, feeling & experiencing the peace, adventure & opportunity for learning offered by the outdoors. We love our Northeast Michigan home, here in the heart of the Great Lakes, & we connect people with tools & resources to be better stewards.
2015 Focus Communities

Gaylord: Our Nonprofit Leaders Series is providing ongoing training for nonprofits across the region.

Alpena: We’re working with many community partners to protect wetland habitat & fight invasive species.

West Branch: To build on recent projects protecting the Rifle River, we’ve expanded partnerships to launch a Rifle River Prosperity Network.

“Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you.”
Frank Lloyd Wright

300+ community leaders & elected officials toured projects in 2015

222 students brought to explore our jack pine ecosystem in 2015

20+ partners involved in Kirtland’s Warbler conservation

In 2015 Huron Pines along with a volunteer planning committee hosted the revived Kirtland’s Warbler Festival in Roscommon, MI. Hundreds of attendees came to celebrate the Kirtland’s Warbler and enjoy wildlife-themed workshops.
Our Sustainability

Investing in top-notch people & programs for big impact

During more than four decades spent protecting the Great Lakes by conserving the forests, lakes and streams of Northeast Michigan, Huron Pines has taken the time to listen to the many partners who appreciate our work and help make it possible. We work in a complementary role with local, state and federal partners to use public funding for a portion of our projects, and we connect locally to make resource management a collaborative effort, breaking down barriers among government agencies and people. Our approach to building strong private-public partnerships aims to bring everyone together for the benefit of our Great Lakes water, wildlife and communities. We invest in staff development to be able to provide a high level of technical support to people across our service area, and because of our burgeoning partnerships with business, foundation, individual and government funders who are seeking better ways to do things, Huron Pines is poised for even more success as we diversify our base of support.
“Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, cherish the history & romance as a sacred heritage for your children’s children.”

Teddy Roosevelt

Our Financials

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<th>Revenues</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Giving</td>
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<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>2015</th>
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<td>Program Expenses</td>
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<td>Management Expenses</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,745,579</strong></td>
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<td>Net Income</td>
<td>$3,870</td>
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10 dollars leveraged for every one dollar of local investment

10+ new projects started in 2015

100+ contracts administered in 2015

Water Program 67%

Wildlife Program 16%

Community Program 18%
Our Thanks

Investing in healthy natural resources benefits all

Huron Pines’ ability to accomplish so much for Northeast Michigan and the Great Lakes is only possible because of the support of an incredible array of funding agencies, organization and individuals. We seek to involve everyone in the stewardship of our natural resources, and we work hard to align priorities with our partners so that we can leverage and build on existing support and enthusiasm. This helps us stretch each dollar further for maximum benefits to Great Lakes ecosystems for the good of all who enjoy and depend on them—so you can be sure we are developing and completing the most important projects to really benefit the land and water we all enjoy. When people come together to invest in healthy water, wildlife and communities, everyone wins—so if you’re not already a Huron Pines member, make your tax-deductible contribution today at www.huronpines.org/donate.

**Major Donors**

- Au Sable North Branch Area Foundation
- Healing Our Waters - Great Lakes Coalition
- Michigan Department of Military & Veterans Affairs - Camp Grayling
- From the People Fund
- From an anonymous donor-advised fund
- The Carls Foundation

**Great Lakes Heroes**

- Anglers of the Au Sable
- Bay Area Community Foundation
- Consumers Energy Foundation

**Great Lakes Commission**

- Michigan Audubon Society
- Mullett Lake Area Preservation Society
- J.A. Woollam Foundation

**Watershed Champions**

- Au Sable River Property
- Owners Association
- County of Crawford

**Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan**

- Suggested by Sally Binard from the Frank W. Lynch & Roberta Jane Lynch Endowed Family Fund
“The environment, after all, is where we all meet, where we all have a mutual interest. It is one thing that all of us share.”
Lady Bird Johnson

112% increase in business supporters from previous year

River Patrons
Eric Bankhead & Connie Schrieber
Canada Creek Ranch
Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan- Mr. & Mrs. O.B. Eustis Memorial Fund
William & Linda Demmer
The Chip & Betsy Erwin Family
David Irani & Laurel Moore
Jennifer & Michael Koralewski
James Kure
Otsego County Community Foundation
Otsego Wildlife Legacy Society
Jerry & Fran Rucker
Schwab Charitable-suggested by Raymond & Frances Hoobler from the Hoobler Fund
John G. Shedd Aquarium
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Upper Black River Council
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Emily & Robert Kemnitz
Harvey Kern
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John & Sheila Marsh
John Marshall
Randy & Jeanette Mateen
Mike Mathieu
Greg & Diana McComas
Paul & Sue McEwen
Rick & Anne Meeks

Sustainers
Anonymous
Black Lake Association
Harold (Tim) Blanchet
Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan—suggested by Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Anthony IV from the Cathy & Bob Anthony Fund
Consumers Energy
Flygirls of Michigan, Inc., Beach & Marianne Hall
Huntington Bank
Robert & Michaele Malecki
Meijer Store #250
Thomas Mudd
Paddle Hard Brewing LLC
Roger Rasmussen
Mark & Pam Rohr
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Roscommon Rotary Club #2814
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Twin Lakes Property Owners Association
Walma...
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Arlene Westhoven
Chuck Wheeker
Joseph Wildberg
Dave & Adrian Wilson
Mary K. Wolf
Terrance & Lisa Yarem
Robert Yask
Stanley Yokiewicz
In Honor Of
Abigail Ertel & her dedication
to Kirtland’s Warblers &
other conservation issues.
She also helped a
couple of Texans &
we are grateful
from Anonymous
Chip & Betsy Erwin
from Dirk VanKoughnett &
Katherine Erwin
Jim & Judy Gaskell
from Ronald & Valerie
Beatty
Mike Grant
from Barbara Fosmire
Tom Green
from Josh Green
Joe Jarecki
from Glenn & Moon Seagren
Bruce & Tammy Kohnert
from Anonymous
Marilyn Kohnert
from Bruce & Tammy
Kohnert
Mrs. Claudia Osborn
from Throck Osborn
In Memory Of
Charlotte D. Adams
from William R. & Charlotte
Adams
Mrs. Susan Baldwin
from Dr. James & Mrs. Mikel
O’Neill
Kim W. Beck
from Carol Morley Beck
Martin Beer
from Karen Beer
Bonnie & Bing Benghauer
from Karl Benghauer
Ed & Dolores Bozynski
from George & Janet
Bozynski
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from Alen Burchi & Barbara
Patek
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from George Ebling
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from Marian Hebekeus
Edward Petrucha
from Raph & Yarmilla
Kleinidler
Edward Petrucha
from Marcan Kovark
Edward Petrucha
from Linda & Marcos Salazar
Edward Petrucha
from Alan & Sherry Schlicht
Edward Petrucha
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to all these contributors
for making
our work
possible!