

Rifle River Prosperity Network

April 2016

Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team Agreement

Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team (Design Team) Background:

The Rifle River Watershed is rich in defining natural resources that knit together a unique and desirable landscape. Lifelong and year round residents share with thousands of annual visitors, a deep connection to the high quality waters of the Rifle River, the iconic centennial farms that dot the uplands and the diverse cultural and recreational experiences that define local communities. As the highest-quality tributary to Saginaw Bay, an EPA Area of Concern, it is widely recognized that the protection of the watershed's natural resources plays a significant role in long-term protection of the Bay as well as Lake Huron and the Great Lakes Watershed. Over a decade of planning and habitat restoration work has been completed in the watershed combining investment from conservation groups, community members, local decision makers, recreation enthusiasts and local landowners. This work has culminated in a comprehensive Rifle River Watershed Management Plan that will guide years of future on-the-ground stewardship activities.

Despite this level of involvement and stakeholder buy-in, one challenge continues to be identified;

- ❖ *How do the communities of the Rifle River Watershed fully realize the economic potential of the area's quality of life in a way that balances economic growth for residents with sound environmental stewardship?*

The *Rifle River Prosperity Network Project* developed by Huron Pines and partners will establish a framework for stakeholders in the watershed to meet this challenge head on.

The Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team is a key component of the overall program and vital to its success and sustainability. The Design Team has been developed as a collaborative network representing the diversity of sectors, communities and interests in the watershed and with representatives who are committed to ensuring long-term vitality and security of both the people and natural resources of the region. The Design Team recognizes that economic prosperity for the Rifle River region and natural resource protection is vitally linked and that leadership and support by the group can create a forum for identifying, showcasing and advancing opportunities that demonstrate this connection.

Design Team Vision: The Rifle River Prosperity Network is a respected leader in bringing together economic development and natural resource conservation leaders working collaboratively to advance stewardship opportunities while building vibrant communities.

Design Team Mission: Connecting economy and environment for community success in the Rifle River region.

Connecting economy and environment for community success in the Rifle River region

- **Primary Role:** To protect and promote the Rifle River region's unique natural assets by leading development and activities of Rifle River Watershed Prosperity Network program. Design Team members will be responsible for increasing public awareness and support for the program's mission and vision from a broadened base of community stakeholders.
- **Values:** The following values have been identified as central to Design Team work will help guide posts decision-making and action;
 - Community Engagement
 - Inclusiveness
 - Authenticity
 - Trust
 - Sustainability

Identified Areas of Work and Priorities: Currently four (4) Areas of Work have been identified and six (6) specific priorities selected by the Design Team through facilitated discussion.

**Areas of Work and Priorities:* Proposed milestones and action items for Rifle River Prosperity Network program development that are identified by the Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team as necessary for the long-term success of the region. Priorities may be reviewed annually and may shift depending on current needs/status of the species and programs.

- **Areas of Work**
 - Placemaking/Identity
 - Tourism
 - Business Development
 - Outreach
- **Priorities**
 - Unifying Theme/Brand
 - Exposure to Regional Marketing
 - Local Champions
 - Close gap/increase coordination between economic and environmental stakeholders
 - More Diversity of Businesses
 - Water Quality

Support and Commitment: Partners in the Rifle River Prosperity Network and members of the Design Team have demonstrated their support and commitment to the program, as well as understanding of their role and responsibility to the success of their vision and mission by signing and attaching a letter of support to this Design Team Agreement.

June 16, 2016

Rifle River Prosperity Network
C/o Huron Pines
4241 Old US 27 South, Suite 2
Gaylord, MI 49735

Dear Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team,

The Rifle River region is a very special area in Michigan. One that is unhurried and authentic. And one rich with unique natural assets, history and communities. It is a region poised to become a leader in how local stakeholders from various sectors work together to fully realize the economic potential of an area's quality of life in a way that balances economic growth for residents with sound environmental stewardship.

MSU Extension recognizes that the Rifle River Prosperity Network program has been developed specifically to help achieve this goal. For that reason our organization fully supports the program and is excited to commit to filling a role on the Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team. The scope of work proposed is exciting, and more important, necessary for our region's watersheds and communities to thrive in the future.

MSU Extension understands that to be involved in this program and provide representation on the Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team means we are;

- Providing a representative(s) of our organization/entity to serve as a Design Team Member
- Participating fully in Design Team meetings
- Providing thoughtful input and guidance for the development and activities of the program
- Helping to increase public awareness and support for promotion and protection of the Rifle River region's communities and natural assets
- Helping to broaden stakeholder engagement to achieve the program's mission and vision
- Communicating decisions, needs and activities of the Design Team and Rifle River Prosperity Network Program to others in our organization and our stakeholder groups

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives by bringing the vast knowledge resources of MSU directly to individuals, communities and businesses.

Michigan State University Extension sees the above roles and responsibilities as supporting and advancing our own mission and priorities. Therefore participating on the Design Team is a good fit for our organization as well as for conservation and economic development in Northeast Michigan.

Our organization looks forward to working on the Design Team and helping to advance the vision, mission and priorities of the Rifle River Prosperity Network program.

Sincerely,



David J. Ivan, Ph.D., Director
Greening Michigan Institute
Michigan State University Extension



MSU EXTENSION

**Greening Michigan
Institute**

160 Agriculture Hall
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824-1039

517.432.7575
Fax: 517.355.6748
www.msue.msu.edu

May 11, 2016

Rifle River Prosperity Network
c/o Huron Pines
4241 Old US 27 South, Suite 2
Gaylord, MI 49735

Dear Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team,

The Rifle River region is a very special area in Michigan. One that is unhurried and authentic. And one rich with unique natural assets, history and communities. It is a region poised to become a leader in how local stakeholders from various sectors work together to fully realize the economic potential of an area's quality of life in a way that balances economic growth for residents with sound environmental stewardship.

The Arenac County Economic Development Corporation recognizes that the Rifle River Prosperity Network program has been developed specifically to help achieve this goal. For that reason our organization fully supports the program and is excited to commit to filling a role on the Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team. The scope of work proposed is exciting, and more important, necessary for our region's watersheds and communities to thrive in the future.

The Arenac County Economic Development Corporation understands that to be involved in this program and provide representation on the Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team means we are;

- Providing a representative(s) of our organization/entity to serve as a Design Team Member
- Participating fully in Design Team meetings
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- Helping to increase public awareness and support for promotion and protection of the Rifle River region's communities and natural assets
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Arenac County EDC's mission is to promote Arenac County as a place to live, work and to support local economic development projects that will benefit the Rifle River Watershed.

The Arenac County EDC sees the above roles and responsibilities as supporting and advancing our own mission and priorities. Therefore participating on the Design Team is a good fit for our organization as well as for conservation and economic development in Northeast Michigan.

Our organization looks forward to working on the Design Team and helping to advance the vision, mission and priorities of the Rifle River Prosperity Network program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Curt Hillman / BB". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Curt Hillman
President
Arenac County EDC

May 23, 2016

Rifle River Prosperity Network
c/o Huron Pines
4241 Old US 27 South, Suite 2
Gaylord, MI 49735

Dear Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team,

The Rifle River region is a very special area in Michigan. One that is unhurried and authentic. And one rich with unique natural assets, history and communities. It is a region poised to become a leader in how local stakeholders from various sectors work together to fully realize the economic potential of an area's quality of life in a way that balances economic growth for residents with sound environmental stewardship.

Michigan Sea Grant Extension recognizes that the Rifle River Prosperity Network program has been developed specifically to help achieve this goal. For that reason our organization fully supports the program and is excited to commit to filling a role on the Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team. The scope of work proposed is exciting, and more important, necessary for our region's watersheds and communities to thrive in the future.

Michigan Sea Grant Extension understands that to be involved in this program and provide representation on the Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team means we are;

- Providing a representative of our organization to serve as a Design Team Member
- Participating fully in Design Team meetings
- Providing thoughtful input and guidance for the development and activities of the program
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Michigan Sea Grant is dedicated to fostering economic growth and protecting Michigan's coastal and Great Lakes resources. We see the above roles and responsibilities as supporting and advancing our own mission and priorities. Therefore participating on the Design Team is a good fit for our organization as well as for conservation and economic development in Michigan.

Our organization looks forward to working on the Design Team and helping to advance the vision, mission and priorities of the Rifle River Prosperity Network program.

Sincerely,



Katy Hintzen
Extension Educator, Saginaw Bay Region
Michigan Sea Grant

THE
CONSERVATION FUND

GREAT LAKES OFFICE
P.O. BOX 734
BAY CITY, MICHIGAN 48707
(989) 892-9171
FAX (989) 892-7172
www.conservationfund.org

May 10, 2016

Rifle River Prosperity Network
c/o Huron Pines
4241 Old US 27 South, Suite 2
Gaylord, MI 49735

Dear Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team,

The Rifle River region is a very special area in Michigan. One that is unhurried and authentic. And one rich with unique natural assets, history and communities. It is a region poised to become a leader in how local stakeholders from various sectors work together to fully realize the economic potential of an area's quality of life in a way that balances economic growth for residents with sound environmental stewardship.

The Conservation Fund, and our local Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network program, recognizes that the Rifle River Prosperity Network program has been developed specifically to help achieve this goal. For that reason our organization fully supports the program and is excited to commit to filling a role on the Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team. The scope of work proposed is exciting, and more important, necessary for our region's watersheds and communities to thrive in the future.

The Conservation Fund understands that to be involved in this program and provide representation on the Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team means we are;

- Providing a representative(s) of our organization/entity to serve as a Design Team Member
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As a national nonprofit focusing on the combined goals of environmental conservation and economic development, the Rifle River project aligns exactly with the type of efforts that we support. We are excited to be a partner.

The Conservation Fund sees the above roles and responsibilities as supporting and advancing our own mission and priorities. Therefore participating on the Design Team is a good fit for our organization as well as for conservation and economic development in Northeast Michigan.

Our organization looks forward to working on the Design Team and helping to advance the vision, mission and priorities of the Rifle River Prosperity Network program.

Sincerely,



Michael Kelly, Director
Great Lakes Office
The Conservation Fund



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



DR. WILLIAM E. MORITZ
DIRECTOR

May 16, 2016

Rifle River Prosperity Network
c/o Huron Pines
4241 Old US 27 South, Suite 2
Gaylord, MI 49735

Dear Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team:

The Rifle River region is a very special area in Michigan. One that is unhurried, authentic and rich with unique natural assets, history and communities. It is a region poised to become a leader in how local stakeholders from various sectors work together to fully realize the economic potential of an area's quality of life in a way that balances economic growth for residents with sound environmental stewardship.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Parks & Recreation Division recognizes that the Rifle River Prosperity Network program has been developed specifically to help achieve this goal. For that reason our organization fully supports the program and is excited to commit to filling a role on the Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team. The scope of work proposed is exciting, and more important, necessary for our region's watersheds and communities to thrive in the future.

The Parks & Recreation Division understands that to be involved in this program and provide representation on the Rifle River Prosperity Network Design Team means we are:

- Providing a representative(s) of our organization/entity to serve as a design team member
- Participating fully in design team meetings
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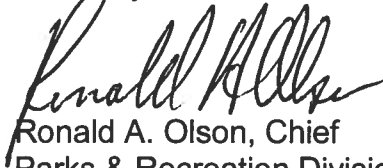
The DNR is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations. The DNR strives to:

- Protect natural and cultural resources
- Ensure sustainable recreation use and enjoyment
- Enable strong natural resource-based economies
- Improve and build strong relationships and partnerships
- Foster effective business practices and good governance

The Parks & Recreation division sees the above roles and responsibilities as supporting and advancing our own mission and priorities. Therefore participating on the design team is a good fit for our organization as well as for conservation and economic development in northeast Michigan.

Our organization looks forward to working on the design team and helping to advance the vision, mission and priorities of the Rifle River Prosperity Network program.

Sincerely,



Ronald A. Olson, Chief
Parks & Recreation Division
517-284-6135

cc: Mr. Marc Miller, Regional Initiatives Deputy, DNR
Mrs. Anna Sylvester, DNR
Mr. Bill Doan, DNR

2016 5 16 YAW