

# U L A O

## W A S T L E R

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ULAO CREEK PARTNERSHIP, INC.

### FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Partners and Friends,

The Partnership is excited for another season on the creek. We started our campaign this year in mid March with a creek walk. The event was lead by Paul Helms and the weather was perfect. Winter is the best time of the year to access the creek. Areas that are virtually impassable in the spring or summer were glazed over and cold enough that the ice on the creek was still thick enough to walk on. But, it was mild and sunny enough to make the event enjoyable for the nice stroll along the creek bed. The tour was able to explore and study areas that need debris removal and the land topography and various channel widths of the creek. For those that missed the creek walk last winter, don't worry we will be bringing the tour back again in the winter of 2012.

Our team of water monitors is in place this year, and we will be performing water quality testing on three separate locations within the Ulao Creek. We are excited to announce that our monitoring results will be posted on our website for all to enjoy. Testing occurs between April and October. Six separate parameters are included as part of the monitoring program. Temperature, dissolved oxygen, stream flow and water clarity will be monitored monthly. We will also be assess the aquatic and streamside habitat as well as the stream's macro invertebrate community, using a biotic index. These parameters are very important in gauging the health of the creek. The more information we can collect, the better our understanding of the health of the Ulao Creek.

This spring the partnership will also be hosting a garlic mustard pull work day on May 21<sup>st</sup> near the banks of the Ulao Creek. This will be a



*Winter creek walk along the Ulao Creek.*

great opportunity to get involved with the Ulao Creek Partnership and do something good for our natural areas. Garlic mustard is a big problem, and we need all the help we can get.

If you want to catch up to see what the Ulao Creek Partnership is up to, it is very easy to do so. Our web site contains pictures and information about past projects that we have performed, meeting agendas and minutes are posted, along with other interesting facts about the Ulao Creek. Of course you can also check out our Facebook page to find out what our latest activities are.

Lastly I want to thank those that renewed their Partnership membership, so far we are having a strong year of membership renewals, and I would like to remind those who haven't yet, there is still time to renew for 2011. Thanks for all your support as we move along in 2011.

Sincerely,  
August Hoppe  
President

CREEK PARTNERSHIP



# Ozaukee County Planning and Parks Department Summary: Fish Passage Program Summer 2011 Newsletter Update

During 2009 and 2010, the Ozaukee County Planning and Parks Department was awarded a combined \$5.2 Million in funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to develop, refine, and implement a "Milwaukee River Watershed Fish Passage Program" (Program). The Program reconnects existing, high quality habitat in Milwaukee River tributaries to Lake Michigan, the Milwaukee Estuary, and lower reaches of the main stem Milwaukee River. It also forges new connections between Ozaukee, Milwaukee, and other counties, municipalities, businesses, schools, NGO's, citizens, volunteers, and state and federal agencies.

Much of Wisconsin's desirable aquatic habitat has been lost or significantly altered. Unfortunately, artificial aquatic habitat is expensive to create and often inferior to quality natural habitat. Many pockets of quality natural aquatic habitat do remain in Ozaukee County, but are ecologically isolated. Fish and aquatic life need to move around streams to reproduce, grow, and survive. Human activities can directly or indirectly create barriers or impediments that inhibit this movement and access to existing habitats. Impediments include dams, improperly placed culverts, invasive species, log jams, and railroad ballast deposits. Barriers include dams and improperly placed culverts. The resulting aquatic habitat fragmentation directly affects species abundance and distribution, genetic diversity, and recreational opportunities. Fortunately, opportunities to reconnect aquatic habitat while supporting infrastructure improvements, job creation, and recreational opportunities exist.

## NOAA Project Update

The Program continues to create important connections across the Milwaukee River Watershed. As of April 2011, the Program and its partners completed over 141 impediment removals on the main stem Milwaukee River and 9 tributary streams! This includes the completion of a "nature-like" fishway at the Mequon-Thiensville Dam in the Village of Thiensville/City of Mequon. A meandering channel allows fish to migrate upstream past the steep elevation change of the dam structure during critical migration periods. Program staff have observed hundreds of fish in the fishway, including northern pike, smallmouth bass, and steelhead. A pedestrian bridge and split-rail fence provide public viewing opportunities of the fishway, located adjacent to the Village Park and downtown area. In November 2010, crews removed the Village of Grafton's Lime Kiln Dam. This revealed a series of bedrock steps immediately upstream of the former dam, which is prime spawning habitat for the native, prehistoric lake sturgeon, a Program target species. This habitat will directly benefit the Riveredge Nature Center's lake sturgeon rearing and stocking activities. A pedestrian bridge at the former dam location is planned to allow public fishing access. Program staff and consultants also convened a host of national fish passage experts to design a fishway at the Village of Grafton's Bridge Street Dam. This unique structure will incorporate a combined buried box culvert and open channel fishway, and several attributes of "nature like" fishways to meet the design challenges of a densely developed commercial and residential downtown area.

The Program also reconstructed 18 major road/stream crossings throughout Ozaukee County. These culverts and bridges are designed to replicate adjacent stream characteristics to minimize water velocity and stream bed elevation changes. The projects represent hundreds of thousands of dollars of necessary investments in local infrastructure, as most road and stream crossings and dams were aging and in need of repair, replacement, or removal. In addition, the Program worked with

the Milwaukee Community Service Corps, a vocational-training program for at risk inner city youth, to remove over 120 small impediments. Fish passage projects provided a structured, safe work environment, environmental education, and hands-on job training to over 40 corps members.

## Program Receives \$2 Million in Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Funds

On August 3, 2010, Governor Doyle announced the Program would receive a combined \$2 Million in Great Lakes Restoration Funds from the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to continue aquatic habitat reconnection efforts and monitoring activities in the Milwaukee River basin. This funding will provide for up to 20 large-scale and 100 small-scale impediment removals on 6 additional tributary streams. In addition, the Program and partners will develop and refine an existing Geographic Information Systems (GIS)-based wildlife tool by adding fisheries and aquatic habitat components. This refinement will ultimately assist other regional, state, and local planning and conservation initiatives and guide restoration efforts on the landscape, including prioritizing impediment removals and wetland restorations for maximum benefit across a wide range of terrestrial and aquatic species.

The Milwaukee Estuary was designated a federal Area of Concern (AOC) during the 1980s due to historical modifications and pollutant loads. The AOC includes the Milwaukee harbor and estuary, near shore areas of Lake Michigan, the Kinnickinnic and Menomonee Rivers, and portions of the Milwaukee River Watershed in Milwaukee and Ozaukee Counties. The AOC lists several impaired "beneficial use impairments" (BUI's), including detriments to fish and wildlife populations and habitat, and water and sediment quality concerns. Additional data is needed to fully document the extent of degradation and develop goals and action items to "delist" each use. Through a measured, scientific approach, the Program will sample and assess: (1) existing fish communities and potential native indicator fish species populations; (2) sediment quality at locations downstream of Cedar Creek in on the Milwaukee River; and (3) water quality parameters trends for various nutrients and pollutants. These activities will fill a critical knowledge gap on the current characterization of conditions within the Milwaukee Estuary AOC in Ozaukee County portions of the Milwaukee River Watershed, and serve as a pilot project generating information to assist and guide subsequent efforts targeting BUIs.

## National Recognition

To our knowledge, the Program is the largest, most comprehensive fish passage program ever undertaken. Program staff and partners are asked to present at several international, national and regional conferences, including the 2010 National Areas of Concern Conference, the 2010 71<sup>st</sup> Upper Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference, the 2011 National Conference on Ecosystem Restoration, 2011 Coastal Zone Conference, and the 2011 World's Large Rivers Conference in Vienna, Austria. In addition, staff has provided program information to thousands of Ozaukee County and Wisconsin residents through numerous presentations, forums, and brochures. The Program will also be featured on a Spring 2011 episode of "Outdoor Wisconsin" hosted by renowned environmentalist and conversationalist Dan Small.

## New Program Staff

The Program welcomes Luke Roffler, Program Assistant, to the "Stream Team." Luke has a M.S. in Natural Resources-Fisheries

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# Treasures of Oz

By Marjie Tomter

Treasures of Oz turns the spotlight on Ozaukee's outstanding coastline June 18th, for its 2011 event to uncover the natural gems of Ozaukee County.

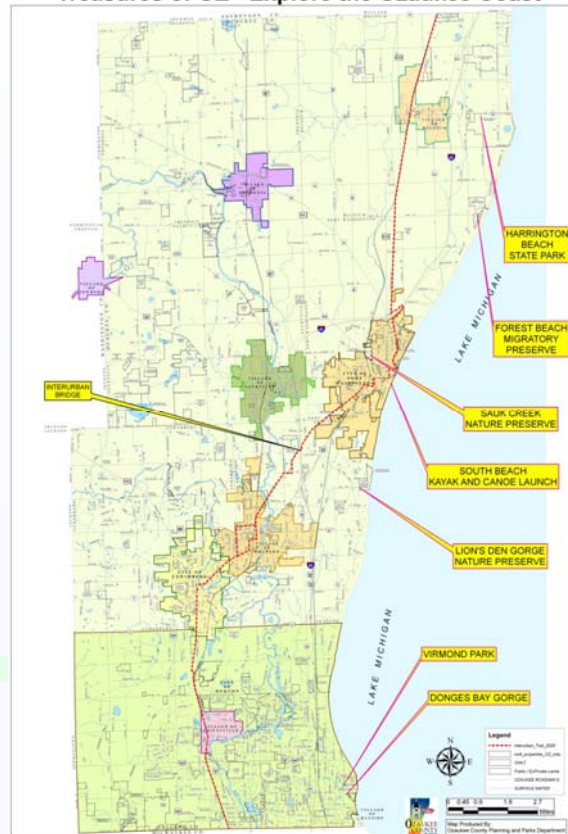
Ozaukee's entire eastern border is 25 miles of the western shore of Lake Michigan. The natural areas along this coast are diverse and wildly beautiful. Follow the 2011 treasures map and visit up to seven unique sites, each with docents and guides and special offerings for the day. Walk along the migratory flyway, venture into deep, pristine cedar gorges, spend time on vast overlooks, explore a rushing feeder stream, wander through areas being restored to natural habitats and find friendly places for beach hikes and launching kayaks and canoes. You may even learn about shipwrecks, ghost towns and a little lake history.

This year's offerings include:

1. Tours of Donges Bay Gorge along with landscape information from MATC Landscape and Horticultural program.
2. Lake Michigan Resources presentation by Tom Kroeger from Lakeshore State Park at Virmond Park in Mequon.
3. Lion's Den Gorge Nature Preserve tours and conversations with some of the preserve's "founding fathers."
4. An introduction to adopting beaches and kayaking at the new South Beach Kayak and Canoe Launch in Port Washington,
5. Hikes around Sauk Creek Nature Preserve, one of the lake's major feeder streams in Ozaukee County with a local environmental scientist, who has interacted with that creek since childhood, and Milwaukee Riverkeeper,
6. A no-fee admissions day at Harrington Beach State Park with talks by Rick Smith, noted lake historian, in the visitors center on shipwrecks and shoreline history, and
7. Tours of the restorations at Forest Beach Migratory Preserve. and, of course, the celebration at that site.

Many other organizations will be present as well at the various sites with offerings of their own on diverse topics.

## Treasures of OZ - Explore the Ozaukee Coast



Download a passport, collect stamps at each site and turn them in at Forest Beach for raffle tickets to win very cool prize certificates from local businesses.

Explore with Treasures of Oz on June 18th starting at 9 a.m. and ending at 5 p.m. Enjoy opportunities for photography, birding, hiking, biking, geocaching and discovering new places. This adventure ends for the day with food, music, a silent auction, raffle and more at Forest Beach Migratory Preserve. Downloads and information will be available at [www.treasuresofoz.org](http://www.treasuresofoz.org).

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from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and several years of experience in natural resources management, particularly fisheries monitoring and research. Following his research into genetic diversity concerns at various Great Lakes lake sturgeon rearing facilities, Luke worked in fisheries management for the WDNR. He has experience with a wide array of fisheries monitoring approaches, as well as project development, grant procurement, data management and quality oversight, habitat improvement, invasive species control, volunteer and cooperator coordination, and field crew oversight. Through his lake sturgeon research and fisheries monitoring efforts on the Milwaukee River, Luke has been directly involved with Milwaukee River restoration even prior to becoming a Program Assistant in the Milwaukee River Watershed Fish Passage Program. Luke is now involved with fish barrier inspection and removal planning, engineering plan review and approval, fish community monitoring, coordination of contractors, drafting and review of technical documents, and equipment coordination. Welcome, Luke!



Please contact Matt Aho, Program Manager, at 262-236-2005 or [maho@co.ozaukee.wi.us](mailto:maho@co.ozaukee.wi.us) for Volunteer opportunities and additional Program information.



**ULAO CREEK PARTNERSHIP, INC.**  
**POST OFFICE BOX 994**  
**PORT WASHINGTON, WI 53074-0994**  
**Phone: 262-238-8271**  
**Fax: 262-238-8278**  
**Email: [UCP@co.ozaukee.wi.us](mailto:UCP@co.ozaukee.wi.us)**  
**Website: <http://www.ulaoecreek.org>**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

*The Ulaocreek Partnership, Inc. (UCP) is a grassroots, community-based 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization comprised of concerned citizens, landowners, and public and private organizations aligned to protect and improve the water quality and natural habitats in the Ulaocreek Watershed.*

Ulaocreek Partnership is now on Facebook!  
Check us out and become a fan.

## Garlic Mustard Pull Event May 21<sup>st</sup> 9:00 a.m.

Invasive species are causing big problems in the watershed. One of the worst offenders is garlic mustard. This problematic plant spreads quickly, choking out space for other plants. Garlic mustard is a cool-season biennial herb that ranges from 12 to 48 inches in height as an adult flowering plant. Leaves and stems emit the distinctive odor of onion



or garlic when crushed (particularly in spring and early summer), and help distinguish the plant from all other woodland plants.

First year plants consist of a cluster of 3 or 4 round, scalloped leaves rising 2 to 4 inches in a rosette. Second-year plants generally produce one or two flowering stems with numerous white

flowers that have four separate petals. Garlic mustard is the only plant of this height in our woods with white flowers in May.



The month of May is usually the best time to physically pull garlic mustard out of the ground. The plants are large enough to get a good handful, but not firmly rooted into the ground yet. It is important to pull out garlic mustard before the flowers mature and release seed.

***The Ulaocreek Partnership will be busy pulling garlic mustard May 21<sup>st</sup> at 9:00am. We will be working along the Ulaocreek across from the BP gas station at the southwest corner of I-43 and Hwy. 60.***

*We need volunteers to help. If you can make it, please contact August Hoppe at 414-640-8714 or [augusthoppe@wi.rr.com](mailto:augusthoppe@wi.rr.com)*