



## **Annual Report**

**January 2002**

***Partnering to Improve Our Water Resources***

FRWC  
P.O. Box 3601  
Flint, MI 48502

[www.flintriver.org](http://www.flintriver.org)

## **Mission Statement**

The Flint River Watershed Coalition (FRWC) is a non-profit organization of concerned citizens, businesses, institutions, local governments, and non-governmental organizations. The FRWC works to enable wise stewardship and improvement of the ecosystem and the quality of life within the Flint River watershed. The FRWC promotes the appropriate use of the watershed through education, research, technical assistance, and coordination

## **Goals**

1. Provide a forum for the discussion of watershed related issues, encourage analysis and collaborative problem solving, and act as an information clearinghouse for related resources and data.
2. Educate the public about water quality and ecosystem protection and appropriate use of land and water resources.
3. Promote involvement of citizens, governments, organizations, institutions, and businesses to protect land and water resources.
4. Collect, maintain and develop essential scientific information on area lakes, streams, wetlands, and ground water.
5. Provide technical assistance to citizens, governments, organizations, institutions, and businesses in order to improve the management of water resources.
6. Maintain sufficient human resources and organizational infrastructure.
7. Ensure adequate and stable financial resources for the FRWC.

Adopted  
October 1998

## **Message from the Chair**

During 2001, the Flint River Watershed Coalition continued its efforts toward the goals it adopted in October of 1998. At the January 2001 annual meeting, in order better focus our efforts and better assess our progress, the Board of Directors began to develop specific measurable objectives for each of the coalition's goals. Those objectives were finalized and officially adopted by the Board of Directors in April of 2001. This report summarizes the status of our progress toward those objectives.

In our desire to improve things, it is always difficult to see what has been accomplished and much easier to see that so much more needs to be done. This report intends to show that the Flint River Watershed Coalition is making slow but steady progress both in improving the watershed and in building the capacity of our own organization so that we can be a more powerful force working for watershed quality in this community.

In retrospect, our objectives for last year were probably too ambitious and lacking in sufficient focus. As you read the following report, you will see that there are many things left unfinished. Nonetheless, given that we have been a board without staff or much budget, we have accomplished a great deal. Because of the diverse membership of our board, we have been able to bring together the resources of numerous other organizations to focus on our goals. On behalf of the board, I wish to thank all of the many community organizations and independent volunteers who have worked on our projects and made our successes possible.

As we move into 2002, I hope that we will be able to continue to build on the community partnerships of the past year. As a coalition, our role is to bring the community together so that the watershed is not the concern of our organization alone but the common concern of all organizations and individuals in the Flint River watershed.

Stephany Diana  
January, 2002

The following pages list each of the goals adopted by the Board of Directors in October of 1998 along with the specific objectives for 2001 that were adopted by the board in April of 2001. After each objective, there is a brief status report.

**Goal 1: Provide a forum for the discussion of watershed related issues, encourage analysis and collaborative problem solving, and act as an information clearinghouse for related resources and data.**

### Objectives

1. Plan an annual fall informational seminar for drain commissioners and other public works /storm water decision makers

Status: No progress was made on this objective.

2. Facilitate the development of a watershed management plan for the Swartz Creek Watershed.

Status: Because the FRWC did not yet have 501(c)3 at the time of application, we partnered with The Center for Applied Environmental Research (CAER) of UM-Flint to apply in 1999 for grant money from MDEQ to develop a watershed management plan for the Swartz Creek Watershed. In 2000, we were notified that the grant request for \$200,000+ was approved. In 2001, CAER has been working with the DEQ signing contracts and developing work plans. Because of administrative bottlenecks at DEQ, no actual work on the plan has yet been done. When the 2-year project begins, research will be done on what affects the water quality of Swartz Creek and a plan will be written for how to improve the water quality in the stream.

## **Goal 2: Educate the public about water quality and ecosystem protection and appropriate use of land and water resources.**

### Objectives

#### Citizen Involvement

1. Continue the stream-monitoring project in the spring and fall of 2001. By July 1, 2001, develop a system for the continuation, evaluation, and improvement of the program.

Status: Stream monitoring was completed on 23 separate sites in the watershed in Spring and Fall 2001. The sites included: Gilkey Creek and headwaters, Farmers Creek, Plum Creek, Flint River north branch, Squaw Creek, Evergreen Creek, Hasler Creek and headwaters, Butternut Creek and headwaters, Pine Run Creek, Misteguay Creek, Swartz Creek, Thread Creek and headwaters, Kearsley Creek and headwaters, Flint River South branch, Brent run, Silver Creek (in Saginaw Co.) Indian Creek, and Hunters Creek.

A total of 55 volunteers were involved. We are currently looking for a volunteer to coordinator the program for 2002.

#### Public Presentations

1. Create a partnership with at least 12 other organization or institutions to sponsor 4 general audience community forums on watershed issues during 2001.

Status: Two general audience forums were presented in 2001. The first, on June 13<sup>th</sup> in Flint, was Dr. Soderstrom on the topic: "Toxics and Our Children's Health."

For the second program, on November 8<sup>th</sup> in Lapeer, the topic was "Who Watches the Water." We partnered with several organizations including: MSU Extension, Genesee and Lapeer County health departments, the Lapeer County Drain Commissioner, USDA/NRCR offices and the Lapeer Intermediate School District. These organizations presented topics and/or had written information

available to the audience.

2. By January 2002, make 6 presentations about the Watershed Coalition to community groups – Rotary, churches, civic groups, etc.

Status: Our Education Committee Chair and Public Relations Chair did a total of 18 presentations about the Watershed Coalition and watershed issues during 2001. Presentations were given to a variety of groups within the watershed including college students, civic groups and community school students. A total of approximately 350 people attended these presentations.

3. By January 2002, establish a speaker bureau with training on specific topics pertaining to the watershed and the coalition. Establish a method for promoting the use of the speakers.

Status: The speakers bureau is listed under education on our website: [www.flintriver.org](http://www.flintriver.org). There are currently 6 speakers listed. They are available to speak on the following topics: household hazardous waste, water quality monitoring, organizing a river cleanup, groundwater, storm water runoff, dam operation, soil surveys, wetlands, agricultural issues in a watershed, and others.

No specific plan has been developed to promote this service.

#### Displays

1. By September 2001, establish a permanent educational display about the watershed at the For-Mar visitor's center. Include at least a large color map, membership applications, and volunteer opportunities.

Status: The education committee is currently working with the staff at For-Mar Nature Preserve to establish this display.

2. By December 2001, create a plan for at least two other permanent watershed displays.

Status: The Education Committee is looking at potential sites in Lapeer County and Brandon Township near the Kearsley Creek

3. Have a traveling display on the watershed at 10 public events in 2001

Status: In 2001, displays were set up at the MCC Earth Day event, at each of the 2 FRWC sponsored general audience community forums, and at 2 career fairs for students one at Baker College and one at Longfellow Junior High.

Currently we are working on an improved traveling display that will include a large color map, FRWC materials and information on current water quality issues. We have secured funding from the Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) to finance this project.

#### Traditional Media

1. By September 2001, produce one set of TV advertisement spots to be aired on cable

Status: A grant proposal was submitted to the Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) to support this effort but we did not receive funding for this objective. We will continue to look for partners and funders.

2. Produce and distribute 3,000 newsletters quarterly – Feb, May, Aug, and Nov.

Status: No newsletters were printed in 2001 due to lack of funding. In the Fall of 2001, we received a grant from WIN to fund newsletters for 2002.

#### Web Site

1. By July 1, 2001, expand the existing watershed website and develop a system for keeping it up to date. Include a detailed events calendar, monthly committee reports, links to related sites, information about water quality and “appropriate use” outdoor recreation opportunities.

Status: In the summer of 2001, the website was expanded and updated. Keeping a website up-to-date is an ongoing task. We continue to have difficulty with monthly committee reports and

have yet to add “appropriate use” opportunities.

2. By June 2001, create connections and raise awareness of other environmental and conservation organizations in the watershed by collecting information on existing organizations and posting the information on the web site.

Status: By November of 2001, the Recreation Committee chair had contacted five outdoors, environmental, and conservation organizations that were not represented within our own organization. Information about the watershed coalition was conveyed to these organizations and information about the organizations and their activities will be posted to our website.

#### Schools

1. By fall 2001, establish a system to ensure that all area junior and senior high school earth science teachers receive information about the watershed coalition.

Status: No such plan was developed.

2. Beginning in the fall of 2001, work with the GISD to develop a common curriculum on the Flint Watershed for area K-12 students.

Status: Education committee is working with the GISC and has identified watershed related MEAP objectives. We hope to create lesson plans for teachers to make it easier for them to meet the MEAP objectives by using the watershed materials we provide. The Bay City Intermediate School District has received funding to provide these materials in their area. At the completion of their project, our committee will adapt their material to our local watershed.

3. Continue participation in Project Green

Status: The education committee has continued to work with General Motors, Delphi, and the Genesee Intermediate School District on this project. In 2001, 12 schools from 8 different districts participated in the program. A total of 601 students were

trained in water monitoring, 511 actually worked in the field; 26% of the student participants were minorities or ethnic. The committee also helped with teacher training for Project Green as well as providing additional resources such as watershed maps and soil surveys. Education committee members continue to look for funds to expand this program.

**Goal 3: Promote involvement of citizens, governments, organizations, institutions, and businesses to protect land and water resources.**

Objectives

1. Continue the stream-monitoring project in the spring and fall of 2001. By July 1, 2001, develop a system for the continuation, evaluation, and improvement of the program.

Status: Status: Stream monitoring was completed on 23 separate sites in the watershed in Spring and Fall 2001. The sites included: Gilkey Creek and headwaters, Farmers Creek, Plum Creek, Flint River north branch, Squaw Creek, Evergreen Creek, Hasler Creek and headwaters, Butternut Creek and headwaters, Pine Run Creek, Misteguay Creek, Swartz Creek, Thread Creek and headwaters, Kearsley Creek and headwaters, Flint River South branch, Brent run, Silver Creek (in Saginaw Co.) Indian Creek, and Hunters Creek.

A total of 55 volunteers were involved. We are currently looking for a volunteer to coordinator the program for 2002.

2. By July 2001, develop a detailed membership drive plan to increase membership and to create a more diverse and representative membership.

Status: This objective has not been accomplished. A subcommittee of the finance committee has been formed, but the plan has not yet been developed.

3. By January 2002, increase membership in the watershed coalition to 100 individual members and 20 business/organizational members.

Status: As of December 2001, we had 31 individual memberships and 17 business/organizational memberships. An improved plan for sending renewals and for responding to new members has been put in place.

4. Each year, sponsor a river cleanup that includes sites in at least Genesee and Lapeer counties. In 2001, involve at least 10 corporate sponsors and at least 200 volunteers.

Status: The FRWC river cleanup occurred in May. A total of 16 sponsors helped fund this effort. They were: GM, MSUE, Genesee CO. Health Dept., Comcast, Pheasants Forever, UAW Local 599, Lions Club of Montrose and Lapeer, Zoom Digital Media, Flint City Market, Channel 5, Genesee County Parks, Lapeer City Parks, City of Flint Parks, Rich Rhein Disposal, Vietnam Veterans Chapter 175, and Fishing Tackle Grab Bag.

There were approximately 180 volunteers at three sites: Vietnam Veterans Park in the City of Flint, Holloway Dam Canoe Launch in Genesee County, and Cramton park in the City of Lapeer

5. Participate as an organization in Earth Day

Status: We had a display set up at the in Earth Day events at Mott Community College each April.

6. For summer 2002, sponsor a family fun day on the watershed.

Status: The recreation committee has laid the groundwork for this activity by compiling information on the various recreation/environmental organizations in Genesee and Lapeer Counties.

**Goal 4: Collect, maintain and develop essential scientific information on area lakes, streams, wetlands, and ground water.**

Objectives

1. Continue the stream-monitoring project in the spring and fall of 2001. By July 2001, develop a system for the continuous evaluation and improvement of the program.

Status: Stream monitoring was completed on 23 separate sites in the watershed in Spring and Fall 2001. The sites included: Gilkey Creek and headwaters, Farmers Creek, Plum Creek, Flint River north branch, Squaw Creek, Evergreen Creek, Hasler Creek and headwaters, Butternut Creek and headwaters, Pine Run Creek, Miteguay Creek, Swartz Creek, Thread Creek and headwaters, Kearsley Creek and headwaters, Flint River South branch, Brent run, Silver Creek (in Saginaw Co.) Indian Creek, and Hunters Creek.

A total of 55 volunteers were involved. We are currently looking for a volunteer to coordinator the program for 2002.

2. Participate in Project Green.

Status: The education committee has continued to work with General Motors, Delphi, and the Genesee Intermediate School District on this project. In 2001, 12 schools from 8 different districts participated in the program. A total of 601 students were trained in water monitoring, 511 actually worked in the field; 26% of the student participants were minorities or ethnic. The committee also helped with teacher training for Project Green as well as providing additional resources such as watershed maps and soil surveys. Education committee members continue to look for funds to expand this program.

3. By October 2001, include all available web based scientific information or links to that information on the watershed's website.

Status: A significant amount of information is now available. As new resources are discovered, they will be linked with our website.

**Goal 5: Provide technical assistance to citizens, governments, organizations, institutions, and businesses in order to improve the management of water resources.**

Objectives

1. Maintain a list of services available from CAER and other organizations.

Status: After further consideration, we realized this is a huge undertaking. Currently we are supplying links to resources from our website.

2. By October 2001, include all available web based scientific information or links to that information on the watershed's website.

Status: A significant amount of information is now available. As new resources are discovered, they will be linked with our website.

3. Create and activate a "local issues response team" to present the coalition's viewpoint at public meetings and in the press.

Status: No progress on this objective.

**Goal 6: Maintain sufficient human resources and organizational infrastructure.**

Objectives

1. By July 1, 2001, find funding or institutional support to provide for long term, stable, staff support of the watershed. This support would include a permanent address, phone, etc. and approximately a 1/8 time executive type secretary.

Status: Over the summer the finance committee agreed that we could afford funding for a 1/8<sup>th</sup> time secretary out of our general budget. The person was never hired because it became easier, at least temporarily, to use the secretarial staff of one of our officers until an executive director could be hired to supervise the secretary. We have established a Coalition post office box as a permanent address.

2. By July 2002, employ a half-time executive director.

Status: As of January 2002, we have funding for this position for one year. It is currently being advertised and we hope to have the executive director working by sometime in February.

3. By January 2002, involve at least 25 people who are not on the board of directors in the committee structure of the coalition

Status: No progress on this objective.

4. At least once per year, make a personal contact to every coalition member to discuss possible participation in coalition activities.

Status: No progress on this objective.

5. By May 2001, complete a study of successful watershed coalitions for ideas on how to improve our organization.

Status: A task force was established to work on this project, but no major break-through ideas were reported back to the board.

6. By July 2001, develop and adopt a complete set of short-term goals for the coalition.

Status: The short-term objectives you are reading now were adopted by the board in April of 2001.

7. By July 2001, design and print a new color membership brochure.

Status: The new membership brochure was completed and available in November 2001.

## **Goal 7: Ensure adequate and stable financial resources for the FRWC.**

### Objectives

1. By July 2001, develop a detailed membership drive plan to increase membership and to create a more diverse and representative membership especially focusing on area business.

Status: This objective has not been accomplished. A subcommittee of the finance committee has been formed, but the plan has not yet been developed.

2. By January 2002, increase paid membership in the watershed coalition to 100 individual members and 20 business/organizational members.

Status: As of December 2001, we had 31 individual memberships and 17 business/organizational memberships. An improved plan for sending renewals and for responding to new members has been put in place.

3. By July 2001, develop a plan to pursue funding for basic coalition operations through non-grant dollars.

Status: Money is available for a variety of watershed related activities. Once an executive director is in place, it is our hope that the director will (a) help us build a continuing financial commitment from local governments, businesses, and other organizations that will support our basic operations and (b) actively pursue additional funding for specific projects. In addition, CEAR has agreed to temporarily provide the Coalition with office space, computer, telephone, and other basic services.

4. Investigate project funding possibilities through the Watershed Initiative Network (WIN), MDEQ, and other funding sources.

Status: Prior to our 401(c) 3 status, we worked with CAER to fund

the Swartz Creek Watershed Management Plan with MDEQ dollars. That funding is still forthcoming. We have also received our fourth year of grant money, \$900, from the State of Michigan for the annual river cleanup. WIN awarded us a \$3,000 grant this fall for public awareness activities.

5. By July 2001, create a document detailing the financial history of the watershed, its various partnerships and grants, and its accomplishments.

Status: In August of 2001, we completed a funding proposal for the Community Foundation that summarized most of the basic information about our organization including: mission statement, goals, current objectives, history, major programs and accomplishments, linkages to other organizations, etc.

## 2001 Board of Directors

Darren Bagley	MSUE Genesee County	810-244-8524
Linda Berker	Sierra Club	810-653-8242
Jennifer Bigelow	General Motors	989-894-7380
Jay Blair	USDA NRCS	810-230-8766 x3
Bob Carlyon	City of Flint DPW	810-787-6537
Deb Cherry	Citizen	810-766-6746
Stephany Diana	Mott Community College	810-232-3161
Dan Emerton	UAW Local 599 Environmental Commission	810-812-2769
John Freeman	Vietnam Veterans of America	810-238-5094
Dorothy Gonzales	Genesee County Health Dept.	810-257-3190
Howard Gray	Lapeer County Health Depart.	810-667-0391
Harry Blecker	U of M-Flint, CAER	810-767-6490
Olof Karlstrom	Attorney	810-239-5511
Brent Lewis	Kettering University	810-762-7918
Jeff Mansour	U of M-Flint, Govt. Relations	810-766-6647
Roxie Moreno	Genesee County Parks & Rec.	810-736-6760
Jack Minore	49 <sup>th</sup> District State Representative	517-373-7515
Larry Petrelia	Pheasants Forever	810-743-8972
Robert Podolsky	U of M-Flint Biology Department	810-762-3360
Fred Townsend	Audubon Society	248-627-3587
Bill Welch	GISD	810-591-4442
Mary Wines	Citizen	810-724-5540
Jeff Wright	Genesee County Drain Comm.	810-732-1590

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