



**Clean Michigan Initiative  
Clean Water Fund Grant**  
2005-9119

Muskegon River Watershed Assembly  
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## Muskegon River Watershed Education Project

September 1, 2005 - March 31, 2008

The Muskegon River Watershed is located in north central Michigan and is approximately 219 miles long from its start at Houghton and Higgins Lakes down to its mouth at Muskegon Lake and, eventually, Lake Michigan. The River is the second longest in Michigan and the Muskegon River Watershed is one of the largest in Michigan. The cool and cold-water tributaries help to sustain trout and other cool-cold water aquatic species in the Muskegon River.

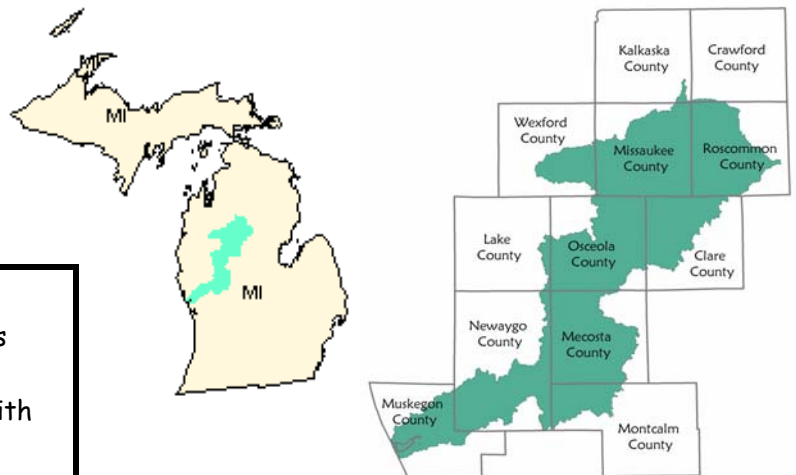
The goal of this project was to continue efforts to reduce nonpoint source pollutants. This was done by working with local decision makers to address land use changes that are threatening or have impacted water quality. Tasks included revising existing master plans and ordinances and using a social profile to uncover issues of importance in the community that need to be addressed to lead to a change in behavior.



**Grant Amount: \$48,600**  
**Match Funds: \$60,100**

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**Total Amount: \$108,700**



### I&E Activities:

- Developed Brooks Creek Watershed survey that was distributed to 1,700 randomly selected watershed households. A 17.2% response rate was achieved with 292 useable surveys.
- Using survey results a Social Profile for the Brooks Creek Watershed was created which provided insights into the perspectives and attitudes of watershed residents.
- An added task resulted in the creation of a newspaper insert that summarized survey results. This insert was also distributed to the residents that received the original questionnaire along with all local decision makers in the Brooks Creek Watershed.
- Four townships in the Brooks Creek Watershed agreed to participate in the process of formulating language to be incorporated into their township master plan and ordinance. In the process of formulating new language, these local decision-makers were educated about how land use changes can adversely impact water quality and how revising master plans and zoning ordinances can control nonpoint source pollutants.

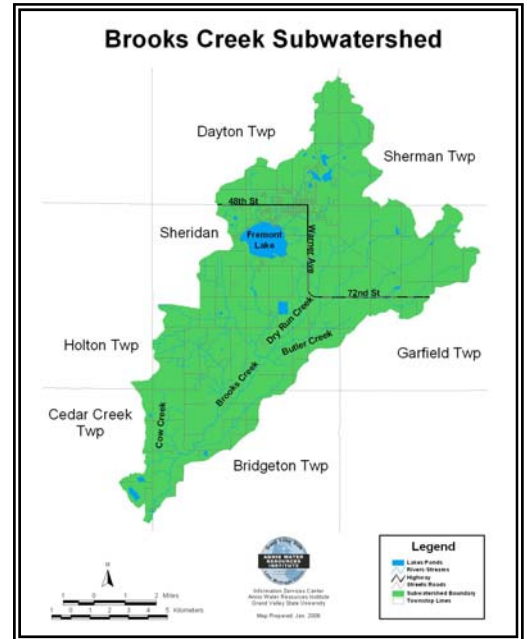


### Partners involved:

- Grand Valley State University-AWRI
- Center for Environmental Studies
- Langworthy, Strader, and LeBlanc, Inc.
- Wege Foundation
- Bridgeton Township
- Dayton Township
- Garfield Township
- Sherman Township



Reviewing master plan and zoning ordinance language with Sherman Township Board



**Excerpts from the Brooks Creek Watershed Survey Results**

- 83% of survey respondents were familiar with the term "watershed" and 89% identified Brooks Creek or Muskegon River Watershed as home.
- During the past 12 months, the action most often taken to help protect water quality was:
  - o Used car oils not dumped (75%).
  - o Wastes reused or recycled (71%).
  - o Read about water quality (70%).
  - o Reduced indoor water use (68%).
  - o Rarely used pesticides (66%).
  - o Reduced outdoor water use (66%).
  - o Cars not washed on pavement (54%).
- Survey respondents (55%) were very interested in environmental issues and 90% believed water quality was very important, but 43% didn't believe water quality has improved in the past 10 years.
- Survey respondents identified the following as the most pressing environmental issues today:
  - o Pollution and contamination (40%)
  - o Farm runoff, factory farms (10%)
  - o Air quality and odors (9%)
  - o Water withdrawal, diversion (9%)
  - o Waste disposal, recycling (7%)
  - o Global warming (7%)
  - o Development, sprawl (7%)
  - o Invasive species, wildlife habitat (4%)
  - o Other (7%)