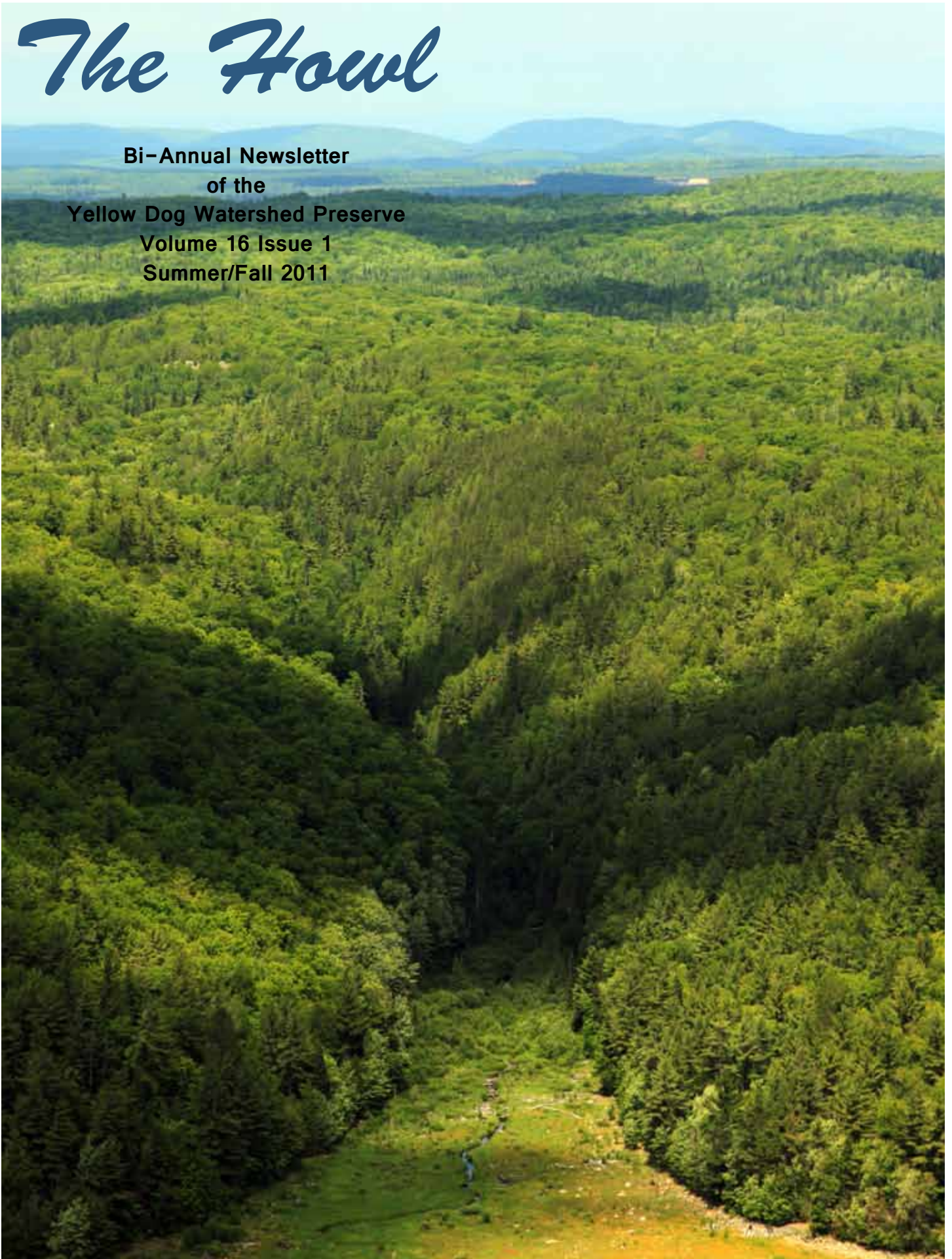


The Howl

**Bi-Annual Newsletter
of the
Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve
Volume 16 Issue 1
Summer/Fall 2011**





FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Fall is finally upon us after a long and beautiful summer in the watershed. Already, we are busy wrapping up our field work, events, and making time to just enjoy the splendor. Since our last newsletter, which was the first full color issue, we have heard from many of our members and supporters about how the vivid images and presentation has made a dramatic impact on our readers. We couldn't agree more. The full color format is much more expensive than our previous versions but we have been funded once again by the Western Action Mining Network and Indigenous Environmental Network. The groups gave us funding to bring you these special publications but our members have responded so generously with their pocketbooks, that it is very likely our group can continue to provide full color newsletters from now on. Once again, this issue is sure to inspire you to come see the laughing river, camp in the deep forests, or catch a prized trout. It is imperative to the river's health and to our work that we have scores of people who personally know how important this area is. While you are out, you might see things that were not there before. Kennecott's mining project continues its construction phase for now and traffic is heavy in the once quiet areas. We will do all we can to protect this place and that will never change. Having supporters such as you makes a world of difference. We sincerely thank you. ~Lorin Lardie

Online Fundraiser a Success!

What a summer it was for us for fundraising! YDWP was fortunate enough to be chosen from hundreds of non-profits nationwide to be part of an online fundraising campaign put on by Patagonia and Moosejaw. Our group was nominated by their customers as a worthy environmental non-profit that would compete for a \$5,000 donation from the companies. So YDWP and eight other groups set out to raise the most online donations in a two week period. Whichever group raised the most money would get the amount they raised plus the \$5,000 donation from Patagonia/Moosejaw. The companies said they had hoped this online campaign would generate \$10,000 from all of the groups by the time the fundraiser was over. Needless to say, they were surprised to see what happened. Our supporters responded with donations beyond what anyone had expected. After the two weeks were over, our group came out on top, beating out much larger national organizations. By the deadline, we had raised \$12,339. Since we had raised the most, we received the additional \$5,000, which put us at a grand total of \$17,339! Overall, our group was left awed at how generous our supporters are and we want to thank everyone once again for lending your support. In particular, we want to specifically thank Barbara and Phil VanSyckle who donated over \$2,000, the Resource Renewal Institute who donated \$1,000, and the Marquette Community Foundation who donated \$2,000 in the name of the Huron Mountain Club. The funds will be directed into two areas. \$7,339 will go into our General Fund, which keeps us afloat on a daily basis. \$10,000 will go into our Land Fund and used specifically for a land purchase. See page 8 about how this money resulted in the purchase of 40 acres!



Moosejaw



Executive Director's Report By Emily Whittaker

Perserverance is a key quality for groups and citizens dealing with the types of threats that our community faces daily. We have such a beautiful place and there are many of us who feel a sense of duty to protect it while others do not. It is painful for some to drive to their favorite spot and find the silence has been replaced by the sounds of machinery. But no matter how much we want to turn away from this, we must keep on caring for these areas. They still are beautiful and they still are there for us. It has been a very tough road but continuing on the

high road is how we must move forward. With that being said, YDWP continues to be the vigilant eyes on the ground and in the sky. The cover of this issue of our newsletter is an aerial photograph taken by Chauncey Moran, our Yellow Dog Riverkeeper. The photo shows Wildcat Canyon which is near the Silver Lake basin. In the photo, you can see the pristine nature of that area as well as the mine site directly north. This area is threatened by plans to build a haul road from Eagle Project to a mill in Humboldt Township. More details about our efforts are provided on page 5 of our Sulfide Mining Update. Photos like these have proved to be instrumental in our endeavors. So has the multitudes of hours that people in our community give to complete our mission. We will continue to keep up our work and add on where needed. We have been able to do alot since the last newsletter, including adding 40 acres of wildlife habitat to our protected lands, hire three interns, and reach countless people who care through our outreach activities. Please read through our updates and think about how this all affects you, either on a local or global scale. Because we are all part of one planet, and whether you live here or afar, its protection as the sustainer of life should be in the front of everyone's mind.

Education and Outreach

Environmental Career Day: As part of a grant from Nickelodeon's Big Green Grants Program, YDWP has been working with Powell Township School to become greener. One of the components to our project was putting on an environmental career day to encourage youth to think about how the environment and economics go hand in hand and are not mutually exclusive. A huge thanks to Anjila Holland of Michigan Energy Options, David Koepp of the MDNR Firefighters, Emily Clegg of the Nature Conservancy, and Matt Anderson of Anderson Sustainable Forestry.

Social Media: We recently attended a conference in which the buzz was all about social media. After some thought, YDWP decided to expand their social media presence by using Twitter in addition to Facebook, our listserv, and our website. If you haven't signed up yet, you can follow us on Twitter by looking up our handle, yellowdogUP.



Battery Recycling: This September, residents will be able to recycle their batteries thanks to numerous partners working together. The program originally was put into action in 2007 by our group "I thought about mining and looked for ways to reduce the need to mine. Recycling was one way we came up with. Batteries have minerals that end up in the garbage," says Emily Whittaker. YDWP wrote a grant to purchase a hammermill for battery recycling and it was funded by the Marquette Community Foundation. Supporting groups include NMU, Marquette Food Co-op, Superior Watershed Partnership, and Citizens for Peace and Justice. Drop sites are located at the Marquette Food Co-op, the YDWP office, and the Messiah Lutheran Church. For more information, visit <http://www.yellowdogwatershed.org/blog/programs/battery-recycling/>.

*Water Quality Protection
Program
Chauncey Moran
Yellow Dog Riverkeeper*



Many of us have heard the old adage that water is life. Anyone who has ever gone without clean water can attest that it goes beyond just having drinking water. State drinking water standards pale in comparison to the pure conditions of our water here in the watershed. We work everyday to make sure our water is not degraded. Below is a quick list of actions we are undertaking to complete our Water Quality Protection Program.

Baseline Data Survey

We continue to survey 11 sites in the Yellow Dog and Salmon-Trout River watershed for a host of parameters. The goal is to have a strong baseline dataset to prove the water's original conditions should anything happen to it. We follow strict protocols set up by both state and federal government to ensure quality data. This year we have added 4 new sites in the Salmon-Trout watershed. Additionally, elevation points are now being taken at each site thanks to Dustin Taylor.



Volunteer Monitoring

YDWP has relied upon volunteer monitoring for both river and lake sites in the Yellow Dog River watershed for many years. This year we have been able to give 3 internships to NMU students working with this program. These students have shown exceptional aptitude for conducting repeatable science and braving the elements. A huge thanks to Charlie Murphy, Hailey Spillane, Julie Christiansen, Nancy Moran, and Jeremiah Moran.



Year of Intensive Monitoring

YDWP has been fortunate enough to be part of a regional effort to study the impacts of mining on Lake Superior tributaries. We will be part of a study put on by the U.S. Forest Service and Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission that has been funded by the U.S. EPA. We will be adding several components to our current programming including sampling sediment, biota for metals, water chemistry, and installing conductivity meters. We received a grant from the Norcross Foundation for \$2,500 to purchase conductivity meters, which will gauge any spikes or dips in water conductivity. In addition, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community and Huron Mountain Club are working with/funding us to complete the project. Our information will be supplied to the study.



Sulfide Mining Update

Efforts to thwart the construction of Eagle Mine continue as groups and communities take new strides in defending our waters from degradation. Below are some actions that are happening as we speak.

1. **Legal Actions**: YDWP continues to be co-petitioners in two appeals cases, one for the Mining Permit and one for the Groundwater Permit. Oral arguments were heard on June 9 in Ingham County Circuit Court. Arguments were heard by Judge Paula Manderfield. Currently, the cases are being reviewed and a decision date is unknown. We will keep everyone up to date as events transpire. A motion of stay was sought but not granted and as such, the company is now drilling, setting charges, and excavating the tunnel at the base of Eagle Rock to the ore body.
2. **County Road 595**: The haul route for ore is still not set in stone for Eagle Project. The original route, termed the Woodland Road, was abandoned by the company after concerns were expressed by the public, as well as state and federal agencies, about the impacts on wetlands and water resources. Work then began on a new proposed road known as CR 595. The Marquette County Road Commission is looking to apply for permits from the MDEQ to build the road in the same corridor that the Woodland Road was in. Funds to build the road would be provided by Kennecott. The permit application will go through the same review process as the Woodland Road.
3. **Concerned Citizens of Big Bay (CCBB)**: CCBB was able to secure a grant from Freshwater Future for \$2,500.00 with the help of the YDWP. This financial assistance will aid CCBB by funding the education of the public and our officials about concerns with our fresh water resources. In addition to continuing this work, CCBB will apply much of the grant monies to a recently filed Contested Case Petition over the DEQ's failure to follow legally required procedures in issuing an electrical use amendment to their original permit application. Kennecott filed and had been granted a motion to intervene in the case. A ruling on a motion CCBB made to move any evidentiary hearings from Lansing to Marquette was postponed for now.
4. **Climate Adaption Project**: This spring, YDWP was awarded \$3200 from Freshwater Future to investigate how climate change might impact the watershed, with special consideration of the effects from mining. For instance, how will the precipitation changes impact how well the aquifers recharge, considering how much water will be removed and used during mining operations? Have the models that Kennecott has been using incorporating climate trends in their calculations? Many questions need answers and our project aims to find out.



Old tailings basin at the Humboldt Mill
Photo by Chauncey Moran





Belly of the Beast

This picture was taken on October 6, 2011 by Chauncey Moran of the Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve. Much has changed since our last issue despite multiple attempts by community members and organizations to halt the drilling and blasting of the mine portal and ensuing tunnel to the ore body. Pictured is an easterly view of Eagle Project, with the mouth of the tunnel at the base of Eagle Rock. The backdrop of fall color in the Huron Mountains makes for a conflicting view of the watershed. There are still so many places that awe us with its beauty. But a growing number of developments are rapidly changing the landscape. And of course, we are not alone in facing these challenges. In fact, mining projects are becoming quite prominent in other Lake Superior watershed states, such as Wisconsin and Minnesota. In late September, we saw the second mine permit application to be submitted since the creation of Part 632. Orvana Minerals submitted an application for their Copperwood Project, near White Pine, MI on the 23rd of September. By the following Monday, it was deemed administratively complete by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. State legislators in the region are doing what they can to create a more mining friendly environment by passing laws weakening local authority to regulate mineral extraction and watering down the application process. It is going to take people in each community that will be affected to withstand the domino effect that we will likely see with mining projects.

Land Preservation

Our first land campaign was in 1998, shortly after YDWP was founded. Through the years, several other parcels were acquired for permanent protection, totalling 372 acres. We are happy to announce that we have added another 40 acres to this number with the latest land campaign. Early this year, YDWP identified a parcel of land in the watershed that was for sale and which aligned with our land conservation priorities. The parcel was directly adjacent to the McCormick Wilderness Area's north entrance, which is Marquette County's only federal wilderness area. Along with its outstanding biological characteristics, its social and cultural importance in maintaining access for the public to visit this unique area made it a great opportunity to add it to YDWP's currently owned land. After talking with the landowner, a deal was struck and we entered into land contract with two years to pay off the purchase. We began our fundraising efforts in March at our Benefit Concert for Land Preservation. We had an excellent turn out at the Landmark Inn and a great show was put on by Legacy's Universe. During that time, our group also had been working with the J.A. Woollam Foundation to potentially acquire a matching grant for the land purchase. With the help of Jeff Knoop of the Nature Conservancy, we were able procure a grant for \$20,000! However, we needed to raise a matching \$10,000 in one year to get the funds. As luck would have it, right about that time, Moosejaw and Patagonia offered our group a chance to compete in an online competition. The online campaign was hugely successful and we were able to raise the match in two weeks. Everyone who donated over \$100 to the online donation will receive an opportunity to help name the parcel, have their name on a sign that will be placed on the property, and a small gift basket. YDWP is currently in the process of sending in the final paperwork and payments for the land to be paid off. This has been an incredible opportunity and success for our group. But most importantly, it has resulted in an additional 40 acres of untouched wilderness in our watershed to be permanently protected yet accessible for present and future generations. Thank you Woollam Foundation!



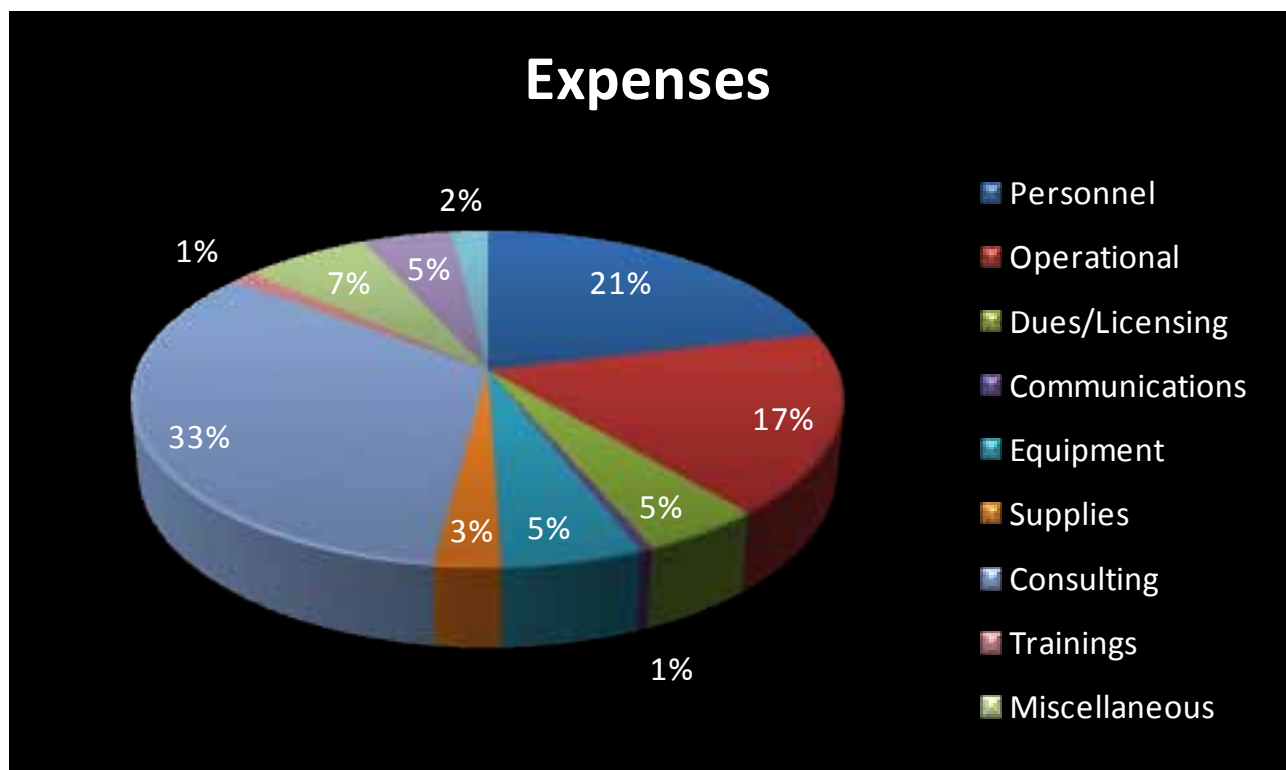
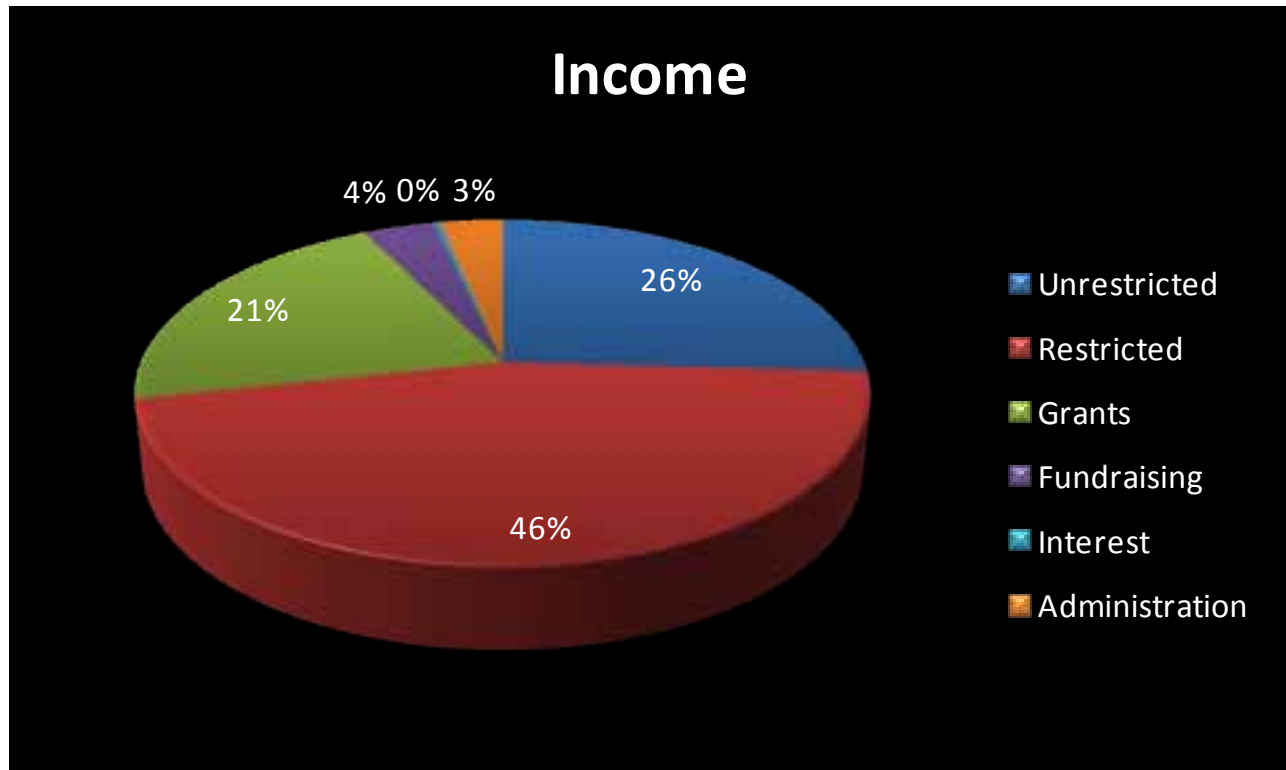
Wetland Protection through Invasives Removal

YDWP received a grant award from the National Forest Foundation this spring for \$5,000 to put toward protecting the McCormick Wilderness Area from invasive plant species. We worked hard this summer to remove European Swamp Thistle in particular, since it prefers the wetlands that make the McCormick so valuable for habitat. We have had the pleasure of working with community groups such as the 4-H Adventure Club, pictured right, the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Youth Crew, Friends of the McCormick, and the Marquette County Juvenile Corrections Program. With their help, one of the prized jewels of Marquette County will be safer from invasives and its habitat protected.



Annual Report (April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011)

We were able to meet our budget for the last fiscal year and then some, with a total of \$69,153 for income and \$63,157 for expenses. That leaves us with about \$5,000 to start the year off with as a surplus. We operate on a very modest budget for the amount of work we do and below, you will see where it comes from and where it goes.



Benefit Concert Raises \$\$ for Land Preservation



As we mentioned on page 8, we were able to successfully raise enough funds to purchase another 40 acres to put into our Land Preservation Program. Part of this was thanks to a concert that we put on in March at the Landmark Inn. The night consisted of great music from Legacy's Act, a complimentary keg of beer (!), delicious food, a 50/50 raffle, and a photography auction featuring photos of the watershed taken by Chauncey Moran. We raised over \$2,500 that night and had a great time! A huge thanks to Legacy's Act and Jeffery Loman who made this happen.

Annual Meeting Planned for the Fall

Our members have always enjoyed our annual meetings along the river but this year we wanted to try something a bit different. Fall is always a good time to have a shindig indoors so we reserved the Banquet Room at the UpFront and Co. for December 3. We are planning an event with the theme of looking back in time. We will have displays, photos, and maps of the area as we look back at who was here long ago and how they interacted with the watershed. We will share historical stories about the river and its inhabitants to take you down memory lane. We will put on a slideshow of how current people interact with the watershed with photos from you! Email us your favorite shot and we will include it in the slideshow. There will, of course, be a good band who some may have already heard of, Steppin' In It, to get your groove on to as well as tasty morsels to snack on and potent beverages to quench your thirst. We'll get you more details as the date approaches but mark your calendars for this fun evening with your friends at the Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve.



Kirtland's Warbler Survey and Update

Once again, YDWP and friends surveyed the Yellow Dog Plains for Kirtland's Warblers this June. Volunteers went out everyday for two weeks and listened for their distinctive song in key habitat areas. The first sighting was made in 2009 and we are happy to report that an additional sighting occurred this year on the last day of the survey. The sighting was reported to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for recording. The bird that was sighted is featured on our backpage. Thanks to Nancy, Chauncey, and Jeremiah Moran, Rochelle Dale, Hailey Spillane, and Emily Whittaker for their help!

Road Restoration Update

Our last newsletter featured a photo on page 3 of a road crossing that was contributing tons of sediment directly into the river. This was due to a poor road/stream crossing aggravated by a dramatic increase in traffic. We are happy to announce that the crossing has been restored after working with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the Marquette County Road Commission. Engineers replaced the crossing with a newer, larger culvert that could handle the amount of water during high precipitation events. Thanks to all who helped restore this problem area and alleviate the issue.

The People Page

Here's to all of the donors who keep it all going!

Zach Bartel	Craig/Bobby Sparks	Lynn/David Suits Lamkin	Richard Bell
Christine Oaks	Jack/Marion Stringer	Richard/Sandra Rollis	Herbert/Helen Remien
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Alan Rebertus/Lynn Roovers	Brad Kik	Gloria/Jim Versailles	Roberta Noss
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Chris Gale	Betsy Farwell	Jim Turner	John Dixon
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Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve
P.O. Box 5
Big Bay, MI 49808
(906)345-9223
www.yellowdogwatershed.org

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Our mission since 1995 has been to protect and preserve the Yellow Dog River and its watershed for the benefit of present and future generations.

Kirtland's Warbler on
the Yellow Dog Plains
Photo courtesy of Nancy Moran

