

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS!

165 members  
& growing...  
REFER A FRIEND  
TODAY!  
See Page 2.

# THE



# HOWL

Spring/Summer 2020

*Celebrating 25 Years*

Bi-annual Newsletter  
Volume 24, Issue 1

Preserving the Yellow Dog Watershed in its most natural state for the use of the public, now, and for the benefit of future generations.

## GRANDFATHERS

*By Gapu, aka Jan Zender, Vice Chairman*

My grandchildren are here along the Yellow Dog River for sugar season. Like their ancestors before them, countless generations have tapped the great maples for their beautiful sap somewhere in these north woods.

In a time long ago, they had a grandmother who had a grandmother who told about a time before time, when she called the Maple trees Grandfather trees, because they are leaders of the tree nation. They are like the head dancers, the men and women who lead the people into the Pow-wow grounds or into a ceremony. This is a position of great honor. She told of how these Grandfather and Grandmother trees, at that time, flowed pure syrup. It was great and so easy, but after some time, the Trickster noticed what was going on and thought the People were taking the Earth's bounty for granted, so he caused the sap of the trees to



*Jan Zender teaching his grandchildren the difference between the red maples and the sugar maples by looking at the buds. Photo by Sarah Heuer.*



**“They look up and see the great trees towering over them, and I can see the look of pure unbounded happiness on their faces...”**

*(L to R): Arjuna Zender, Florence Zender, & Tenzin Hurtado.  
Photo by Sarah Heuer.*

become thin like water. From then on, people had to work hard to have syrup or sugar: cutting and hauling wood for the fire, hauling and emptying sap buckets, even tapping the trees is enough work.

Tapping is the part, I would say, my grandchildren like the best. They run around screaming and laughing as I tap each tree. They follow me and catch the drips on their tongues as though they are nursing from each one. They look up and see the great trees towering over them, and I can see the look of pure unbounded happiness on their faces as they run from tree to tree. These trees are old, and that old grandmother believed they were spiritual beings. One morning, a few years ago, my granddaughter told me that the trees were dancing and that they were looking at her.

Later, when we have some sap that freezes in the buckets, they will run around sucking on the ice chunks, the biggest popsicles they will ever eat. As we boil, they will drink the ever-sweeter sap straight or in tea. Then eventually, we will have syrup. When my granddaughter was only four, she cried for “maple syrup in a bowl with nothing on it.” Which meant she just wanted to drink straight maple syrup.

Once the sap and sugar is all made and the trees have stopped flowing, Native Peoples will put up a Thanksgiving feast or dance as a way of showing how much this beautiful gift of the trees is appreciated. In olden times, this gift often kept people from starving in a season when hunting was difficult and the green plants had yet to appear.





White wolf on the Yellow Dog Plains, circa 1980s. Photo by John Anderson.

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

By Brian Noell, Administrative Assistant

The Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve passes a milestone this year, as we enter our 25th year of service to the river and the nationwide community that loves it. We began as a grassroots organization, and we remain so even as our focus has shifted to land acquisition, preservation, and stewardship. In these capital-intensive activities we depend on our generous supporters, and we truly appreciate every one of you, whether you have been with us for decades or have come onboard only recently.

As the number of contributors to YDWP has increased, we have adopted new tools to manage our interactions. One might think a move towards technological efficiency would alienate us from our core constituency. In fact, the shift has engendered a good deal of reflection about the people who make our endeavors possible and led us to serious consideration of what membership in the Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve actually means.

Members contribute at a range of levels, but what unites them is their commitment to the broad array of initiatives pursued by YDWP, from property acquisition and management to scientific investigation of water quality and educational programs. Donors give generously to support specific projects, but members are the lifeblood of the organization, and their annual contributions sustain us day in and day out. The impulse to check the membership box on the appeal envelope or click the membership button on the giving page of the website also indicates to us a desire on the part of the contributor to stay informed about our activities. Reciprocally, we send them *The Howl* bi-annually and keep them up-to-date by means of periodic email announcements. We also hope members will inform us about watershed-related issues that come to their attention and spread the word in their community about YDWP.

We are presently embarking on a campaign to invite inactive members back to the organization, as well as recruit new members. If each existing member acts as an ambassador and brings in two new ones, we will triple our base, ensuring that we may continue to pursue our ambitious agenda of protecting even more of our precious watershed and the life it nourishes. The updated membership page on our website makes it easier than ever to become a member or to renew a membership. You may also use it to update your membership profile. In particular, we encourage you to provide an email address if you haven't already, so we may send you periodic updates and calls for action.

It is humbling to become acquainted with people of all walks of life, of varied ages and incomes, from every corner of this country and beyond, who have been touched by this gem of a river and affirm their commitment to it through membership in the Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve. With supporters such as these, the future of our watershed looks very bright indeed.

## 'Say It' in *The Howl*

The Yellow Dog *Howl* is published bi-annually by the The Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve for its members and friends. We welcome your thoughts on environmental issues, stories of the history and legacy of the watershed, or anything you feel is related to our mission. Creative expressions are welcome too: art, poetry, photos, lyrics, etc.

Any comments, suggestions, articles, or artistic statements can be shared with Sarah Heuer at:

The Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve

PO Box 5, Big Bay, MI 49808.

Phone: (906)345-9223

Email: [sarah@yellowdogwatershed.org](mailto:sarah@yellowdogwatershed.org)

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Front page: 'Howling Wolf', hand drawn by Nancy Moran.

Center page spread (pp.8-9): 'Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve' logo, created by Nick Economides.



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## FROM THE CHAIR

By Chauncey Moran, Riverwalkerr

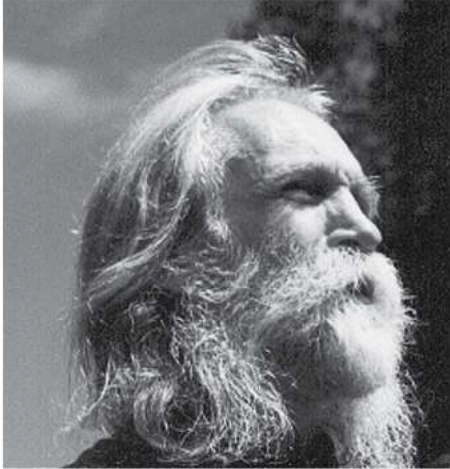


Photo by Wendy Johnson.

ation and its mission to keep the river in its most natural state now and for future generations. It is this 25-year legacy of dedication that we celebrate in this issue of the Yellow Dog *Howl*. Some may recognize that, in redesigning *The Howl*, we have been inspired by the newsletters of the past in charting a new direction for the publication.

In that same spirit, here I wish to speak of some of the ways in which we as an organization are maintaining the mission of our founders. To date we have acquired 2,400 acres in our trust, protecting our watershed for access so that the public may immerse themselves in preserved wild places. As opportunities arise to acquire specific properties that seem most at risk from development or as offers come in from current property owners, we will proceed with further acquisitions.

Stream monitoring at specific sites has always been a priority at YDWP. We will continue monitoring activities around our current properties for maintaining safe access that enhances the wilderness experience and protects the river corridor from erosion. This will be accomplished by individual site inspection after spring runoff or event rains. We also are reassessing previous monitoring sites that have been dropped from our water monitoring lists and reestablishing them.

The foundational source of hydrological recharge (springs, event rain, spring runoff) is essential to any watershed maintaining sustainable high quality waters for recreation as well as any living species that requires water. A dream of mine would be to map all incoming waters from the headwaters of the Yellow Dog in the McCormick Tract to Lake Independence and Lake Superior. Certainly a monumental task, that will require detailed, but flexible strategy for completion, but incredibly useful to our continued preservation efforts.

Currently we have an excellent staff of passionate, dedicated individuals, all of whom live within the watershed. They have increased the focus on recordkeeping and data collection, so that information is now being organized for more efficient retrieval and use. We continue building and nurturing relationships within the watershed communities, always an organizational strength. From the beginning we collaborated with universities, tribal governments, state agencies, town-

The winter of 1870 brought my ancestors to the UP in search of a sustainable livelihood cutting the renewable timber resources. By the 1990s, a mechanized and much more destructive version of those timber extraction methods inspired the founding of the Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve. Many individuals living in Northern Marquette County during that time were responsible for the foundation of our organiz-

ships, local schools, land trusts, corporate land owners, mining companies, timber harvesting contractors, fishing groups, environmental groups, sportsmen's organizations, and especially lovers of the river itself, who, by a plethora of efforts, have brought us to this point. You continue to inspire us to carry on, guided by the heart spirits within.

See you on the River.

P.S. We have a new home office on a rural paved road northwest of Big Bay, affectionately called the Hobo Hut. Although the space is modest, the location allows for relative quiet, with wildlife around, a place where the inspiration can flow freely.

### The Days of Yesteryear...

Some of YDWP's founding members.



Pictured (L to R): Ian Zender, Nick Economides, Aza Economides, Mike Davis, & Rochelle Dale.



Pictured (L to R): Chauncey Moran, Nancy Moran, Bob Pryor, Lorin Lardie, & Jan Zender.





## MONITORING EAGLE MINE

*By Chauncey Moran*

The Eagle Mine water quality monitoring agreement with the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community and Superior Watershed Partnership has been extended to 2025. Waters leaving the mine through the treated water infiltration system (TWIS) will be the focus. This joint venture through the Community Environment Monitoring Program (CEMP) will be funded by Canadian mine owners and operators, Lundin Mining. Wells located downslope from the TWIS will be the first line of testing. Down gradient north of the Eagle Project is an additional well for the purpose of validating constituent levels that are not absorbed during ground water flow. North of that are specific sites (headwater springs forming the East Branch of the Salmon Trout River) located by Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve personnel in 2003 and previously monitored by YDWP, GLIFWC, USGS and most recently KBIC/CEMP. The CEMP collaborative will continue to monitor many of those sites until 2025 under the contract with Lundin Mining. The mine is currently operational, as the minerals are considered essential at this time. Monitoring operations are continuing at specific sites near the Humboldt waste water treatment facility as well as in the west branch of the Escanaba River. In order to maintain high quality waters in the U.S., and specifically in Marquette County, the continuation of this monitoring program is vital.



*'Beside every great man, there is a great woman...' literally!  
Mudjekewis snow-shoveling crew leaders: Chauncey & Nancy Moran.  
Photo by Dave Kadell, who also volunteered on day two. Thanks, Dave!*

## MUDJEKEWIS: A YEAR-ROUND ADVENTURE

*By Chauncey Moran*



*One half-done roof after the first of a 5-day effort.  
(L to R): Nancy Moran, Tenzin Hurtado, Sarah Heuer,  
Kristi Mills & George Lindquist. Photo by Chauncey Moran.*

Our recent acquisition of the Mudjekewis Wildlife Refuge (April 2019) has brought unexpected excitement during the last two winters of heavy snowfall. For the second year running, three large roofs on the property's structures required over 100 man hours and ingenious methods for bringing down the white stuff. This year, with a strike force from the Yellow Dog Watershed A-Team, we were able to complete the work safely while still having fun.

We eagerly anticipate activities on the property beyond snow removal, however. Mudjekewis, which has an abundance of migratory and resident birds, mammals, as well as several distinctive aquatic species, has a management plan with specific guidelines for wildlife protection. Keeping these in mind, we will begin to organize hikes and ski outings. Watch for announcements. And if you are bored during winter and have a strong back and a strong heart, please volunteer for snow shoveling UP style, featuring unforgettable views, camaraderie, and excellent cuisine!



## OUR NEW OFFICE

By Rochelle Dale, Administrator



Remember the frozen digits cartoon in the 2019 spring *Howl*, with YDWP staff wearing their mittens and mukluks, working in an office dripping with icicles? That is all over now thanks to the generous support from two of our long time members. We are snug, warm, and dry at our new location on County Road KK about one mile outside of Big Bay. Some of you may recognize or know the building as the "Hobo Hut". The cabin, which had been vacant for several years, is now alive with activity and ideas.

Getting a vacant building ready for work was not an easy job. Staff, the Yellow Dog Board, members, and volunteers took on the tasks of cleaning the building, inspecting and upgrading the heating and electrical systems, insulating windows, and climbing up and down from the roof multiple times to shovel the never ending pile of accumulated snow. Another challenge was to connect internet wires and antennae, only to find the service inadequate. So, once again, on another day, Board members ascended the snow-covered roof with a plan and the tools to raise the antennae another 12 feet. Finally, success!

Thank you so much to everyone who helped make our office a comfortable space to share ideas and work together as a team. We love it! This summer we will be doing more repairs and renovations, so stop in and check out our progress.



A young guest, snuggling up with our 'shop dog' and official greeter, Sergey, aka 'Herman the German'. Photo by Sarah Heuer.



Rochelle Dale and Sarah Heuer examining an old mattress. "Hmm...smells okay?" Photo by Tenzin Hurtado.



Our deer friends hunkering down in the woods, keeping a watchful eye on us. Photo by Rochelle Dale.

Jan Zender  
&  
Rochelle Dale

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## BACK IN THE DAY

### Brook Trout Management Practices on the Yellow Dog River

By Rochelle Dale

How often do we hear older folks reflect on the past as if those were the good ole days? We might wish that we had been born in earlier times when wildlife was wilder, people were stronger, and fish were abundant in every lake and stream. This was my vision of what the Yellow Dog must have been like during the first half of the 20th century; however, recent encounters and further research shattered that idyllic dream. A few months ago, at a meeting about brook trout restoration, I was unpleasantly surprised to hear the Yellow Dog River referred to as a “put and take river”. First, I had to ask what this meant exactly. The answer was this: the DNR puts fish in, and the anglers take them out. “The Yellow Dog River cannot maintain a naturally reproducing brook trout population,” I was told. Incredible, I asked, “but what about historically?”



*Photo courtesy of Superior View: Jack Deo collection.*

In the late 1800s and early 1900s almost all of the Upper Peninsula was heavily logged, including the Yellow Dog Watershed and what is now the McCormick Wilderness Area. Dams were built at strategic sites on the river to corral and then send the logs down with an explosion of water when the dam opened. This would have scoured the banks and caused enormous amounts of sediment and sand to enter the river system and irreparably damage any existing trout population.

The Michigan Department of Conservation began stocking brook, rainbow, and brown trout as early as 1936, when 36,000 fingerlings were planted at the mouth of the river. The next year, the numbers were even higher. In 1938, experts decided to try yearlings and legal sized fish along with the fingerlings, and in a few years' time learned that these more mature fish had a much higher survival rate. From 1943 to 1965 only legal sized fish were planted, albeit in much reduced numbers.

In 1984, fisheries biologist Jerome Peterson produced a Fisheries Management Plan for the Yellow Dog. He defines the different divisions or reaches of the river: Upper Reach, from Bulldog Lake and Lake Dortay to the confluence of the two branches; Second Reach, the next 7 miles characterized by slow moving waters with shores of thick tag alders that arch over the channel; Reach Three, the next 15 miles including Pinnacle falls and Hills Falls to County Rd 550; and Lower Reach, 550 to the mouth. Peterson describes each reach in detail and explains the problems that brook trout would encounter within each one. For instance, Reach Two offers decent habitat for larger fish but offers little to no appropriate spawning habitat. In addition, beaver dams in this area make at least partial fish passage barriers.

The third reach, on the other hand, is suitable for brook or brown trout, but it is under considerable fishing pressure. Sand loads from nonpoint sources from upstream are a continual problem as well as swift flows and fluctuating water levels. Finally, Lower Reach is characterized by shifting sand substrate, providing poor habitat except in some of the deep pools. In the end, Peterson summarizes the findings and recommends a plan for brook trout restoration:

The Yellow Dog River has certain inherent characteristics which limit the production of trout. First and foremost appears to be the extreme annual flow due to snow melt in the spring. Rapid melting of deep snow causes an abrupt rise in the stream level and the vertical drop of 37'/mile causes flows which are hazardous to trout. The swift flow has caused much of the central and lower portions to take on a “scoured” look and is certainly a factor limiting the survival of trout. All of the tributaries show evidence of considerable water level fluctuation, and low trout populations reflect the negative impacts.

The extreme flows are instrumental in the large numbers of exposed sand banks, severe downcutting and moving sand bedload. Man has created some of the raw banks but most are of a natural origin. This sand bedload has decreased the amount of instream habitat, food organisms, and reproduction of brook and brown trout in the mainstream and tributaries.

The presence of natural barriers such as Bushy Creek Falls, Pinnacle Falls and the falls on the West Branch limit trout movement. In general, there is lack of good spawning habitat both in the mainstream and tributaries in proportion to the total amount of trout habitat available in the entire system. Beaver are a natural component of the ecosystem. Their activity has produced both positive and negative effects on the trout population. Dams in the second and the third reaches have probably been beneficial by providing more habitat for larger fish. Beaver dams on the tributaries have a negative influence as choice spawning habitat may be lost and up or downstream movement impeded. (Peterson 7-9)

With these limiting factors in mind, there still are management techniques which may be undertaken to improve the trout resources on





*Photo courtesy of Superior View: Jack Deo collection.*

the Yellow Dog. Peterson advises that large boulder groups be placed in several strategic locations in the third reach to increase hiding cover. In addition, he maintains that all vehicular traffic fording the stream, which still occurs in at least two locations, should be banned. No logging operations should occur within 100 feet of the river, and brook trout should continue to be stocked on an annual basis.

Now, thirty-six years after his report, we may question some of his conclusions, but his recommendations for management techniques are still valid. We just have more to add. For instance, feeder stream connectivity, which Peterson also commented on, is not only an issue for brook trout spawning habitat but also in maintaining adequately cool waters in the face of climate change and warming temperatures. Fishing rules and regulations may need to be revised to address overfishing in certain reaches, and eroded stream banks must be carefully analyzed for possible restoration to decrease sand and sediment loading wherever possible.

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## 2020 ANNUAL SKI & SNOWSHOE

*By Rochelle Dale*

Here in the Upper Peninsula February can often be the most beautiful winter month, with the longer days, returning sunshine, and brilliant blue skies. February 29th, the day of our annual ski and snowshoe event, was just one of those times. Thirty people came out to enjoy the woods and waters of the Yellow Dog, exercise, breathe fresh air, and meet new friends.

Participants started at County Road 510 on the south side of the river and then followed their guide, Jan Zender, up into the high hills overlooking the Yellow Dog Valley with views of Lake Superior in the distance. Then they made their descent to the Yellow Dog Wilderness Camp where the winter tent, lively conversation, and lunch awaited: hot lentil soup, homemade sourdough bread, salami and cheese, fruit, chaga tea, and an assortment of homemade cookies.

After lunch break, folks meandered back to the starting point, some following the scenic trail along the river with Rochelle and others preferring the shorter path of the snowmobile trail with Emily and Ben. It was a lovely day!

If you missed this year's event, check our website or Facebook early next winter for the 2021 date, time, and place.



Shortly after ACL surgery Kalil Zender ventured out to the Yellow Dog's wilderness camp to share in the day's festivities. She was in good spirits, even after postholing 2 feet through the snow on her crutches! Also pictured (L to R): Dan Monhollon, Jan Zender, John Jungwirth & Jay Johnson.

*Photo by Rochelle Dale.*



## THE TARGET CIRCLE RESULTS ARE IN!

Thanks to everyone who voted during this campaign we earned \$1,653.13!



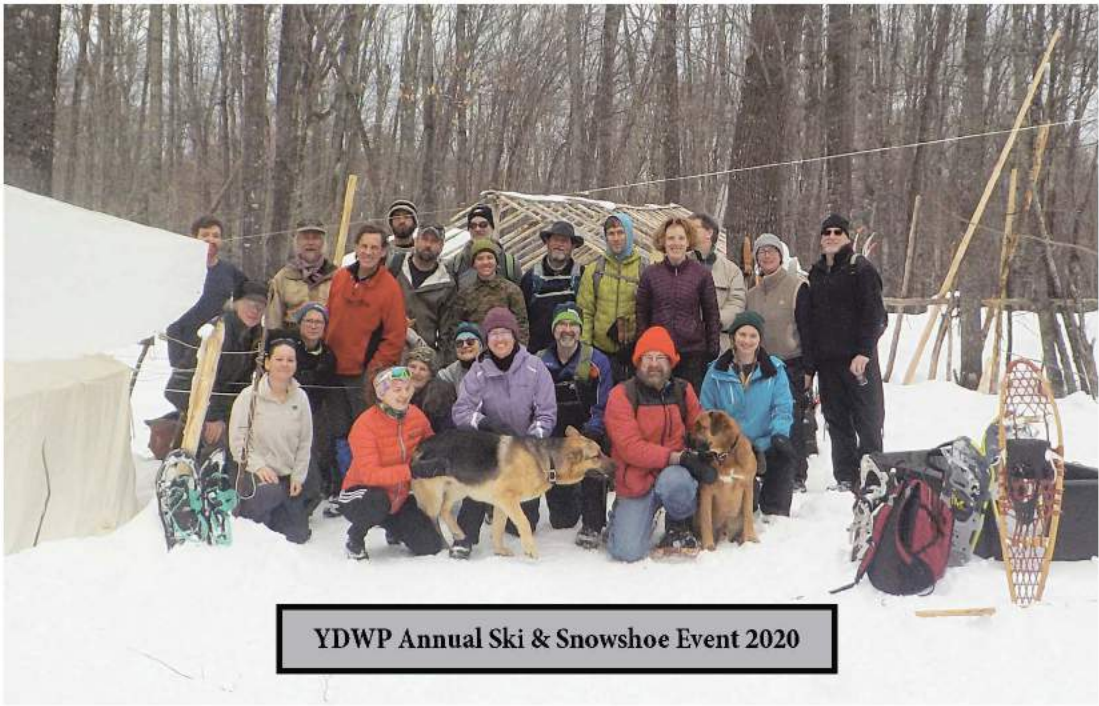
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Mike Kantola in foreground, on a mountain top overlooking the Yellow Dog watershed.  
Photo by Sarah Heuer.



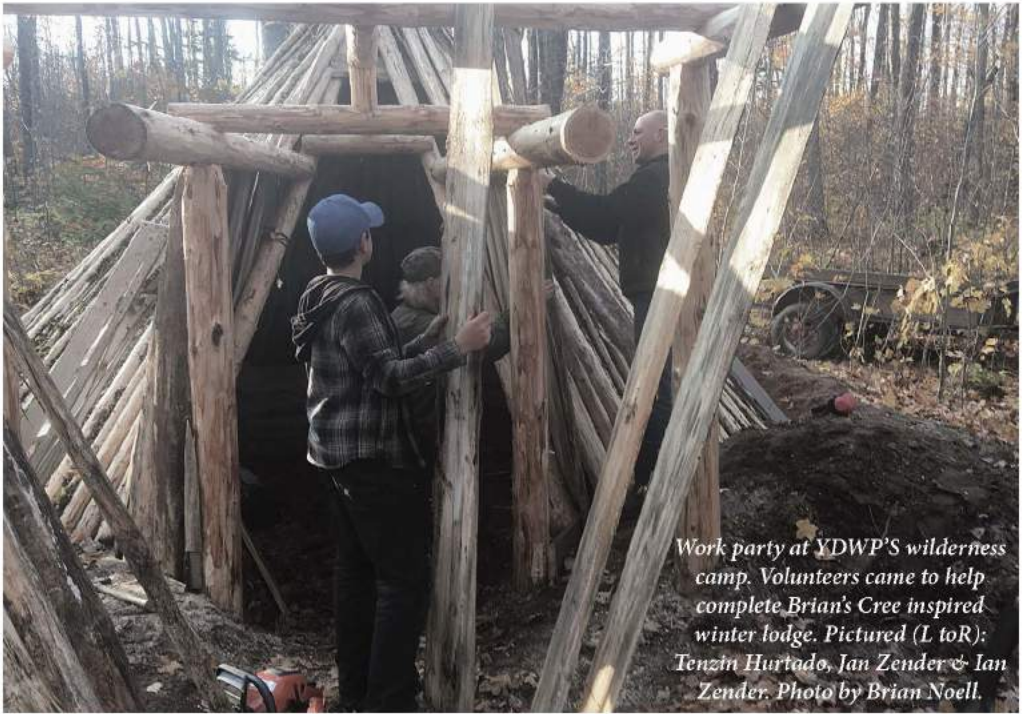
YDWP Annual Ski & Snowshoe Event 2020



Inside a winter tent, a warm and cozy atmosphere awaited participants of YDWP's annual ski and snowshoe event, where homemade food and beverages were served. Photo by Rochelle Dale.



Yellow Dog  
Watershed Preserve



Work party at YDWP's wilderness camp. Volunteers came to help complete Brian's Cree inspired winter lodge. Pictured (L to R): Tenzin Hurtado, Jan Zender & Ian Zender. Photo by Brian Noell.



YDWP Yellow Dog Dash 5/10K 2019



Photo by Ted Carlund.



## LATE WINTER ALONG THE YELLOW DOG

By Brian Noell

The red squirrel can reach the hornets' nest without a climb in the three-foot snowdrift of March, a moment of scarcity and eager new beginnings. Excavating a meal, she pauses, scanning the azure dome for avian predators. The cat feels the change, too, gamboling on exposed roof and digging in soil above the snowline on the earth lodge. She stops, waits, listens, leaps. I negotiate crunchy crust gouged by snow machines on old skis new to me, interrupting intense concentration to rest: black trunks and shadows on waves of pillowy white emerge into view, and again, the sky.

Late winter on the Yellow Dog has its distinct rhythms, like all the seasons, everywhere, for all beings. Yet, the human making these observations, who lives alone with the aforementioned feline in the woods uphill from a bend in the river overseen by a mammoth yellow birch, detects an underlying wisdom. The intervals between thoughts and the actions they provoke have increased slightly: restful attention, the common heritage of conscious life.



Tara. Photo by Brian Noell.



Photo by Brian Noell.

I might say that this winter was mild, but that we had abundant snow, that the skiing was great, and folks observed that the chickadees and nuthatches were less numerous than usual. The river never froze (nor, thankfully, did my water source, The Deer Creek). Increasingly muscular snowmobiles buzzed on the steepest hillsides, and the mine hummed and mutely illuminated the sky to the Northwest. A lighthouse beacon in the direction of the lake rotated on overcast evenings. The moon made its ambits south to southwest around the rim of my valley, and starry nights were more numerous than last winter, which now strikes me as having been uncompromising and relentless.

But that is all in my mind. The difference, really, between this winter and last (my only two in this watershed) is the duration of the interstices, the in-betweens, the moments of restful attention. They are longer, engendering increased clarity and greater ease. As I write this, the world is experiencing the unprecedented shock of the coronavirus pandemic. The scale of impending physical suffering and economic impact remains shrouded in mystery, just as the future always is. The past, even just a few weeks or months, seems ages removed from our present... which is where exactly? Yet, aside from the sudden absence of snowmobiles in the hills and fewer mining trucks on the AAA, what change is there along the Yellow Dog? The creatures in our woods continue to avail themselves of a glance to the sky, a gap, a pause, a moment of attention to their broader field of experience, which makes possible a skillful response to whatever circumstance awaits them.

## THE BOOK NOOK

### A YDWP Recommended Read

#### THE OVERSTORY: A NOVEL

By Richard Powers



'The Overstory' won the 2019 Pulitzer Prize for fiction, which the Pulitzer Board described as "an ingeniously structured narrative that branches and canopies like the trees at the core of the story whose wonder and connectivity echo those of the humans living amongst them."

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## 2019 YELLOW DOG DASH 5/10K

By Sarah Heuer, Programs Coordinator



Post-race music by the campfire. John Gillette (banjo) & Brian Noell (guitar). Also pictured: Mike McDonald, Nathan Meadows and Tenzin Hurtado. Photo by Ted Carland.

We did go 'the distance' last fall, and we plan to go it again this October 3rd, 2020. October 19th turned out to be a gorgeous fall day for all involved. This fundraising event offered a unique experience on an old ski trail loop (the Lizzard Loppet Trail).

A blast from the past— some of you may remember Chris Lawler (Lizzard), a kind hearted Scandinavian of these parts, known for his annual cross-country ski race (called a loppet). Thanks to a little guidance from Chris and some old-timers who remembered the trail, the LLT made its debut as a running trail. In lieu of snow, we had miles of uneven terrain, rocks, bare roots, heavy leaf-packed trails, old logging roads, narrow meandering paths, river views, and an old log crossing near the finish.

Some much needed TLC was required to clean up the trail in advance, adding to my winter's supply of wood, yeah! The loop is approximately 3.1 miles, twice around for a 10K. We received donations of pumpkins for decoration, and Queen City Running Co. of Marquette loaned flags to use as trail markers. All races commenced with the beating of a rawhide Indian drum, thanks to Gapu. Yellow Dog members held posts at various checkpoints to keep runners on track and to offer fresh spring water as well as to relay a few words of encouragement.

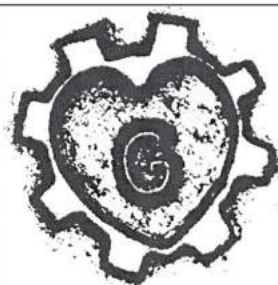


(L to R): runners Katie Cothran, Lynnae Branham & Jane Fitkin, members of the NMU Conservation Crew, a student organization dedicated to preserving the local environment through environmental education & outreach. Photo by Ted Carland.

To keep things backwoods style, no official times were recorded. Participants were more than pleased with a high five and a photo op in the wake of their glorious finish. Prizes were awarded to 1st-3rd place finishers; a favored prize was a bottle of local homemade maple syrup. Volunteers tended a fire at Lizzard's sauna cabin, luring folks to gather for a feast, socializing, live music, and a game of woods basketball on a leaf-strewn earthen court.

Thank you to all who participated and volunteered your time to make this a cool event. Come out and join us this October for the 2nd annual Yellow Dog Dash, and bring a friend, or two, or three...

If you missed it, check out our 2019 promo video and watch in 1080HD ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wshc0g\\_59cA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wshc0g_59cA)).



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## Reflections on the Yellow Dog River

Hello Old River!  
Haven't seen you since you were frozen up  
and silent in December.  
Now spring waters have swollen you,  
Covering rocky islands,  
Filling your banks to the brim.

This spring morning  
Birds serenade,  
Flitting in and out among the branches,  
Building hidden nests,  
Enjoying a truly peaceful, cloudless,  
(and so far bugless!) day.

Trilliums everywhere!  
Applied like lacy white patches along your border.  
Dutchman's breeches, trout lilies,  
Jack-in-the-pulpits,  
Heralders of spring  
Nourished  
By your sweet amber waters.

Scattered footprints  
Appear on small beaches,  
Telling stories  
Of watchful deer  
And inquisitive raccoon,  
Who've quenched their thirst  
In your coolness.

Sun-bleached logs  
Forced along by wild spring run-off,  
Randomly tossed  
Up, down and across  
Your face  
Like a game of pick-up sticks.

As sandy banks give way  
to your meanderings,  
Trees lean into their fate  
Eventually creating bridges  
For sure-footed rivercrossers.

Ahh--the greens!  
Birth of luscious colors  
After the long grays and whites  
of winter.  
Spongy patches of chartreuse moss,  
Thick clumps of emerald leeks,  
Fresh-born leaves and elegant ferns,  
Fragrant pine needles,  
Tall dark-green pinnacles rising  
Sentinels of your secret harbor.

Old River,  
Your precious waters  
Carry crystal memories  
of treasure hunts  
for fossils,  
Pieces of the past  
Churned up by winter's melting.

Every year you present new possibilities,  
As swift spring currents  
Recarve your banks,  
Reflect the future,  
And place each stone  
just so...

J. Sarosik  
May 25, 1997

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## WISH LIST

The Watershed Preserve is in need of a few things this year. Please call us at (906)345-9223 if you can donate any of the items on this list. Thank you!

**CHEST WADERS:**  
for the Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program.

**BOAT MOTOR:**  
for a 12' aluminum row boat, used for our lake monitoring.

**LAPTOP & DESKTOP:**  
new or used; these would be replacing 10 year old machines.

**CARPENTRY HELP:**  
time & labor would be needed for repairs and construction at our new office building.

**BUILDING MATERIALS:**  
storm windows, lumber, insulation, roofing materials.

**REPAIRS ON AN OLD PITCHER PUMP:**  
outside our office.

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## HEALING WATERS

By Sarah Heuer

Digging through old YDWP newsletters, a greater picture of what was, what is and what may be, emerged through the voices of those who have cared about this place. Recorded history of the last 25 years paints a different picture than the one I have held in my mind for the last few. It was like looking at someone's diary, a window to the organization's soul. But much more than all the work folks have done to keep this a whole and less altered place, I saw how much this river had changed people. Did their strength as human beings emerge at a time when the watershed needed it most, or were they given strength by something unadulterated, to act on its behalf? Activities and events played out so seamlessly, like an intricately composed song, or a perfectly edited film. Most things, it seems, unfolded in response to individuals' connection with something outside of themselves, but familiar enough. Entranced by a deeper consciousness of a united pulse, they moved into unplanned and uncharted territory. There's an artistic expression in that, flowing from one endeavor to the next, not confident of success and risking failure, but not afraid.

We are planning for a more diversified and inclusive look at the river this season. Back in the fall of 2003, a DEQ/CMI (Clean Michigan Initiative) funded volunteer water monitoring project began, what we refer to today as the VSMP (Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program). At that time 20 sites were established along the Yellow Dog River, based on geographic regions containing diverse morphology and stream cover. These sites also had past, current, or proposed activity altering them and were selected keeping the overall threat to the Yellow Dog River watershed in mind.

Due to a fluctuation in staffing, volunteers, time, and money, 10 of these original 20 sites were dropped in around 2012. By the time I came on board in 2017, our chairman was emphasizing the importance of the program and expressing a desire to once again pick up these sites. But as things do, this aspiration took time to come to fruition, and I needed to build an eagerness for the work. Now, with ample funding, time, and motivation we are able to commit to further studies in the field, bringing back the lost 10.



*Scouting expedition, spring 2019, dropped site YDR 15.0. This is one of several outflow drainages from the Yellow Dog Plains into the Yellow Dog River, significant because of its proximity to the mining activity on the Plains. Pictured: Sarah Heuer with dog Sergey. Photo by Chauncey Moran.*



*YDR 13.0, Bob's Lake Road Crossing; a site that we will pick up this spring.*

Does it really matter? I think it does. A watershed is an emergent entity. The whole has properties that its parts do not have on their own; but these properties only exist due to the parts interacting within the greater whole. By increasing the number of sites (the parts) that we monitor and remediate, we ensure the stability of the greater whole, hoping to observe an 'emergence' of vitality and health that can only endure when a watershed is operating in its most natural state.

Eyes will be observing, allowing us to act in the event of sediment overload from logging, deterioration of culverts and bridges, or destruction of stream beds by vehicles at crossings. In the case of natural bank and stream changes, such as those caused by beaver activity, spring runoff, and low or elevated water levels, no action would be necessary other than observing how nature adapts.

Ears will be listening. Through increased monitoring, opportunities arise to tune in to wildlife habits and patterns. For example we hope to increase spawning beds and stream connectivity for brook trout. As well, broader public exposure in the field creates occasions for educational and informational exchange.

My human mind wants to see qualitative results in my own lifetime from the havoc my species creates, but human time and nature's time are not the same. By bearing witness to the natural processes unfolding all around me, however, I begin to transform myself, and that is a change I *can* see. Paying attention, growing, adapting and evolving, this "organization" is nothing but a living creation of which I am a part, no different from that old river, ancient but new in each and every day we learn to see it for what it is and what it has to say.



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# BEST WAYS TO PRESERVE NATURE WHILE HIKING

By Rachel Gaffney

Hiking is a great way to get outside and enjoy the great outdoors while also getting some exercise. While there are different kinds of hikes that range from casual strolls along a winding path to arduous treks to the top of a mountain, hiking is something that can be enjoyed by almost everyone.


The most important thing about hiking is that you always want to leave the trail the way you find it. There is nothing worse than seeing someone trying to get the perfect photo, crushing wildflowers in the process, or seeing trash left over from a picnic. Nature should be cherished for the treasure that it is, and that means taking care of it.

Here are 5 tips to help you preserve nature while out on a hike:


- **Stay on The Trail:** There is a reason that trails and paths exist. Yes, they help to keep you from getting lost, but they also keep people from going all over the place. It might not seem like a big deal if you step off the trail, but consider what would happen if dozens (or even hundreds) of people decided to blaze their own paths while hiking. The landscape would be destroyed. The trail is there to protect the landscape so stay on the trail at all times.
- **Respect Wildlife:** Your hike will take you through the heart of a natural habitat for countless creatures, from snakes to deer to chipmunks to even mountain lions. In some cases, trails are created to keep you from getting too close to known wildlife hotspots. When you venture away from trails you might find yourself near a mountain lion's hunting grounds, or you could scare deer away from their grazing spots. You might even venture into an area where rattlesnakes have been found. Staying on the trail helps to keep animals safe while also keeping hikers safe at the same time.
- **Pick Up Trash:** If you're enjoying a long hike you will no doubt bring water and snacks with you. You should use a refillable water bottle to reduce single use plastic water bottles and to allow for easy refilling later on. Also, bring snacks in reusable containers, and make sure to pack all of your trash with you. Leave nothing on the trails because trash can be hazardous for wildlife.

- **Don't Make Fires:** Wildfires are a terrible problem all over the world. From the horror of Southern California wildfires to the devastating fires in Australia, dry weather and drought can lead to the perfect recipe for wildfires. Don't smoke while hiking, don't start a campfire in areas where fires are prohibited, and be mindful of anything that can cause sparks when you're on the trail.
- **Memories but No Mementos:** You might come across some really amazing things on a hike, from pretty rocks or little plants that you would like in your yard. As tempting as it can be, you should avoid taking anything from your hike. If everyone took something from the trail, it would destroy the landscape. Take as many pictures and videos as you like, but don't take any keepsakes.

*This article was provided by [www.personalinjury-law.com](http://www.personalinjury-law.com), an organization dedicated to providing the public with information about personal injury and safety information. Nothing in this article should be construed as legal advice, and it is intended for informational use only.*



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Ice Boulder: photo by Ted Carland.



# CHANGE

By Rochelle Dale

As YDWP enters into its 25th year, it is a good time to reflect and think about how our organization has grown and changed. Change often comes whether we want it or not, and this year brings changes to our staff.

Wendy Johnson has served as YDWP coordinator for 22 years. I remember her in those early years organizing and directing the activities at our annual meeting with a baby on her hip and a list of directives in her hand. She has been instrumental in promoting fundraising events and concerts — like the Greg Brown benefit concert for the purchase of Pinnacle Falls. Her energy seemed endless. Later she took on jobs that no one else wanted: taking care of insurance, renewing licenses and basically all of the unglamorous upkeep jobs, but she always did them with a smile and a shrug because she was helping the Yellow Dog. Most recently, she has been the editor of the Yellow Dog Howl, a position now passed along to Sarah. Family obligations have put Wendy on a different path these days, and she has made the tough decision to resign.



Emily Whittaker has served YDWP in many different capacities. First hired on in 2006-07 to help with programs, she later became our executive director for many years, and under her direction, YDWP grew into a much-respected organization with sound science, concise data, and hard-working crews in the woods and watershed to support our programs. Later, when Emily transferred the role of executive director to others, she took on the task of special projects coordinator. In that capacity, she was responsible for securing grants and other large donations to purchase, preserve, and develop a stewardship plan for what is now the Yellow Dog River Community Forest. Soon after, she oversaw the complex transfer of the Mudjekewis properties to YDWP's care. Emily is now taking some time to pursue other interests, to be creative, and to travel. She too is resigning her post.



*Emily Whittaker and her mandatory volunteer Ben Kent in British Columbia, enjoying new horizons.*

I am not saying good-bye to either Wendy or Emily. They will still be available if I need to call and ask a question or get advice, and no doubt, they will be out on the river assisting with water monitoring, pulling invasive European Swamp thistle, or helping with an event. And even if one or the other is no longer living in the watershed, I know their hearts are here. Thank you Wendy and Emily!

## McKenzie Bay Retreat

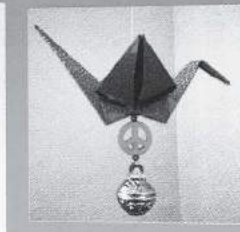
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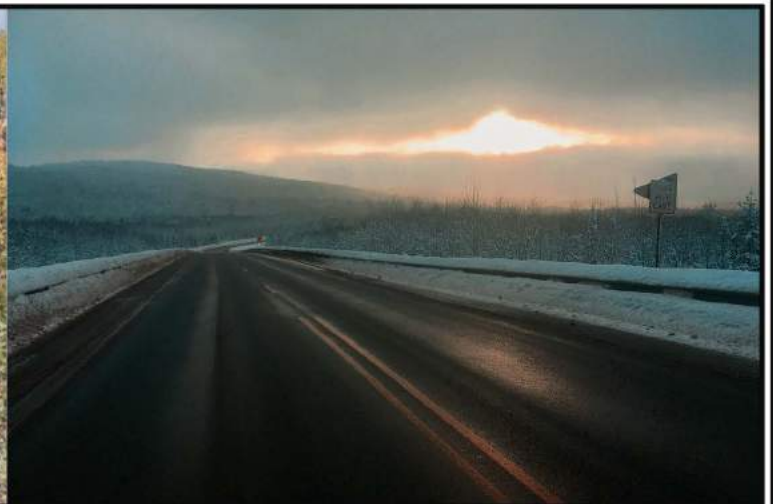
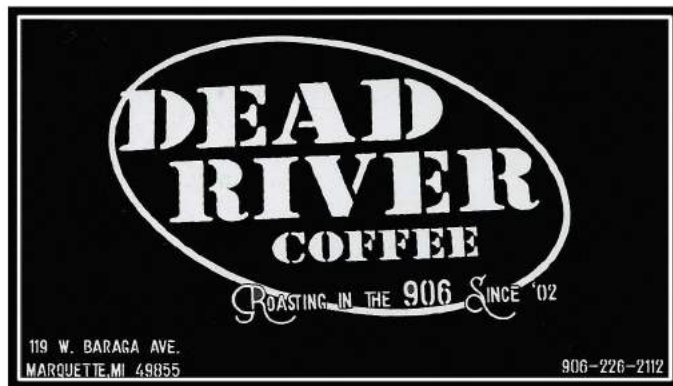
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(906)345-9223

ydwp@yellowdogwatershed.org

www.yellowdogwatershed.org



*The AAA/510 intersection, once a two-track dirt road. Both pictures taken in the same spot 25 years apart.*

*Photo left, by John Anderson, 1995. Photo right, by Brian Noell, 2020.*

*“Every place must anticipate the approach of the bulldozer. No place is free of the threat implied in such phrases as ‘economic growth,’ ‘job creation,’ ‘natural resources,’ ‘human capital,’ ‘bringing in industry,’ even ‘bringing in culture’—as if every place is adequately identified as ‘the environment’ and its people as readily replaceable parts of a machine. Devotion to any particular place now carries always the implication of heartbreak.”*

*-Wendell Berry-*



# THANK YOU MEMBERS AND DONORS!

September 18th, 2019 - April 23rd 2020

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## Welcome to Our New Members!

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Roy Kranz & Family  
Keith Kuykendall  
Theodore Mattis  
Kent Newman  
John Rosenberg  
Daniel Russell  
Bernard Sheff & Kimberly Krause

*If we have accidentally omitted your name, or you find an error, we apologize. Please contact Brian at (906)345-9223 or email [brian@yellowdogwatershed.org](mailto:brian@yellowdogwatershed.org) so we can make it right. Thank you.*

HAPPY SPRING!

-YDWP



Drawing by Florence Zender



**Theme:**

*'The Healing Power of Nature'*

**Who Can Submit:**

Anyone except YDWP staff, board members, and their immediate families.

**Format:**

Word document, Times New Roman 12pt. font, double-spaced, name on each page, and must have a title. Maximum word count, 800.

**How to Submit:**

email [brian@yellowdogwatershed.org](mailto:brian@yellowdogwatershed.org)

**Deadline:**

May 31, 2020

**Prizes (Student & Adult):**

Winning essays will be published in the next issue of *'The Howl'* as well as on our website.

Adult prize includes a gift membership for her/himself, a friend, or a family member.

Student winning writer will receive a YDWP t-shirt.

**SPRING 2020**

**ESSAY CONTEST**



**'the healing power of nature'**

We invite you to reflect upon this in your life,  
either as it relates to our present circumstances,  
or at any previous time.

*Photo by George Lindquist.*

## What's up on da Dog, eh?

**YDWP Bi-Monthly Meetings.**

Open to the Public.

Every third Wednesday

@ 6:00pm at our new office:

N4210 Huron Mtn. Club Rd.

Big Bay, MI 49808

(1 mile north of town, on Co.Rd. KK)

Due to COVID-19 meetings are via conference call.

The next scheduled meeting is **May 20th.**

For more information or to confirm call (906)345-9223.

**SUMMER/FALL 2020... PLANNED EVENTS.**

**JULY 18th**

A workshop with Victoria Jungwirth:

Making wildcrafted, organic herbal  
tinctures, tonics and salves.

**AUGUST (date TBA)**

Fly Fishing Educational Gathering  
at the YDWP's Community Forest.

Stay tuned via social media.

**OCTOBER 3rd**

The 2nd Annual Yellow Dog Dash,  
5/10K trail run and or hike.

**NOVEMBER (date TBA)**

YDWP Annual Meeting:

Open to members & the public.

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for more information closer to these events.

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