



Michigan Clean
Water Corps

The MiCorps Monitor

Issue 3 | May 2007

MiCorps 2005 - 2006 Annual Report: *A Special Issue of the MiCorps Monitor*



Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council volunteers sorting samples at Stover Creek. *Photo: Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council*



Sarah Litch, Bob James and Julie Hay collecting macroinvertebrates from the east branch of Hatlem Creek. *Photo: Glen Lake Association, Inc.*

Saluting our Volunteers!



Grand Traverse Bay volunteers sorting samples during their Stream Search last fall. *Photo: The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay*



Jim Dixon, a CLMP volunteer, collects lake quality data on Big Star Lake during a side-by-side sampling trip with MiCorps staff. *Photo: MiCorps*

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Dragonfly Larva

Adult dragonflies can eat over
100 mosquitos a day!

This special issue of The MiCorps Monitor is the Executive Summary of the MiCorps 2005 - 2006 Annual Report, which is available online at www.micorps.net/annualreport

About The MiCorps Monitor

The MiCorps Monitor newsletter is a semiannual publication aimed at facilitating the exchange of information and ideas among volunteer monitoring program leaders, volunteers, and resource professionals on volunteer monitoring issues specific to Michigan.

Contact the Editor

For information about the MiCorps program or *The MiCorps Monitor* newsletter, or to submit items for future newsletter issues, please contact Elizabeth Johnson, Great Lakes Commission, 734-971-9135, ejohnson@glc.org.

Back Issues

Archived issues of this newsletter can be downloaded from the MiCorps web site at www.micorps.net/newsletter.

Reprinting material is encouraged, but we request that you notify the editor of your intentions, give credit to *The MiCorps Monitor*, and send a copy of your final publication to the editor.

Developing a Statewide Network



Elwin Coll, Chair, MiCorps
Steering Committee

In September 2003, Gov. Jennifer Granholm issued an executive order creating the Michigan Clean Water Corps (MiCorps) – a program to foster, assist and support volunteer monitoring programs in Michigan. Since its inception in September 2004, MiCorps staff and volunteers have worked hard to carry out Gov. Granholm's vision and create a statewide network for Michigan's lake and stream volunteers.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has long recognized the importance of volunteer monitoring; DEQ began a volunteer lake monitoring program in 1974 and a volunteer stream monitoring program in 1998. MiCorps was created to build upon this strong foundation and expand the programs and services provided to Michigan's volunteers.

We have accomplished a great deal in the past two years, including providing standardized data collection methods, implementing quality assurance practices to produce quality data, creating an online data exchange system to facilitate data sharing, and creating forums for education, communication and support.

In addition to our many programs, MiCorps staff is committed to working with volunteer groups on a range of levels. We have a talented, experienced and dedicated staff who genuinely want to see volunteers succeed. We provide hands-on training, help encourage and cultivate leadership and stewardship, and provide assistance in meeting specific challenges.

Our efforts over the past two years have been focused on developing the basic elements of the MiCorps program. Now that we have these in place, we are devoting our efforts to improving and expanding

Since its inception in September 2004, MiCorps staff and volunteers have worked hard to carry out Gov. Granholm's vision and create a statewide network for Michigan's lake and stream volunteers.

ing MiCorps to better serve DEQ and Michigan's dedicated volunteer monitors, and better protect and improve the quality of our state's valuable water

resources. Some of our goals for 2007 include achieving broader participation from volunteer groups; improving networking opportunities; strengthening education and outreach efforts; and ensuring program sustainability for monitoring groups.

We are proud of what we have achieved over the past two years. On behalf of DEQ and the MiCorps staff, I thank our current volunteers and urge other citizen volunteers to join us. MiCorps wishes you all the best for 2007.

Elwin Coll
Chair, MiCorps Steering Committee



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Our Accomplishments in 2005-2006:

- ◆ Awarded \$86,618 in grant funding to nine volunteer monitoring groups
- ◆ Created a start-up grant program to assist new volunteer monitoring programs
- ◆ Constructed an online data exchange platform to share volunteer monitoring data
- ◆ Developed and populated the MiCorps website – www.micorps.net
- ◆ Created an online directory of volunteer monitoring groups, with 58 registered programs
- ◆ Created a MiCorps membership program that represents a select group of monitoring programs and approved six for membership, with five memberships pending
- ◆ Created a recognition program, which provides certificates of recognition to each organization that qualifies for MiCorps membership
- ◆ Created a training program and held six training events for stream and lake volunteers
- ◆ Hosted two statewide conferences for volunteer monitors in Michigan
- ◆ Created a listserv for volunteer monitors in Michigan with over 70 subscribers
- ◆ Designed a program newsletter – *The MiCorps Monitor* - and published two issues
- ◆ Designed a program brochure and distributed this at conferences and meetings
- ◆ Created an online grants application system to streamline the application process
- ◆ Coordinated the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program to continue monitoring over 240 lakes annually with support from over 300 volunteers



Steering Committee

Mr. Elwin Coll, Chair
Citizen

Ms. Pearl Bonnell
*Michigan Lake and Stream
Associations, Inc.*

Mr. Robert Burns
Friends of the Detroit River

Mr. Kevin Cronk
*Tip of the Mitt Watershed
Council*

Ms. Jane Herbert
*Michigan State University
Extension*

Dr. Joan Martin
Huron River Watershed Council

Ms. Lori Phalen
*Michigan Association of
Conservation Districts*



Mayfly Larva

The adult mayfly only lives for a few hours to a few days. It is one of the most common insects found in coldwater streams.

Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program

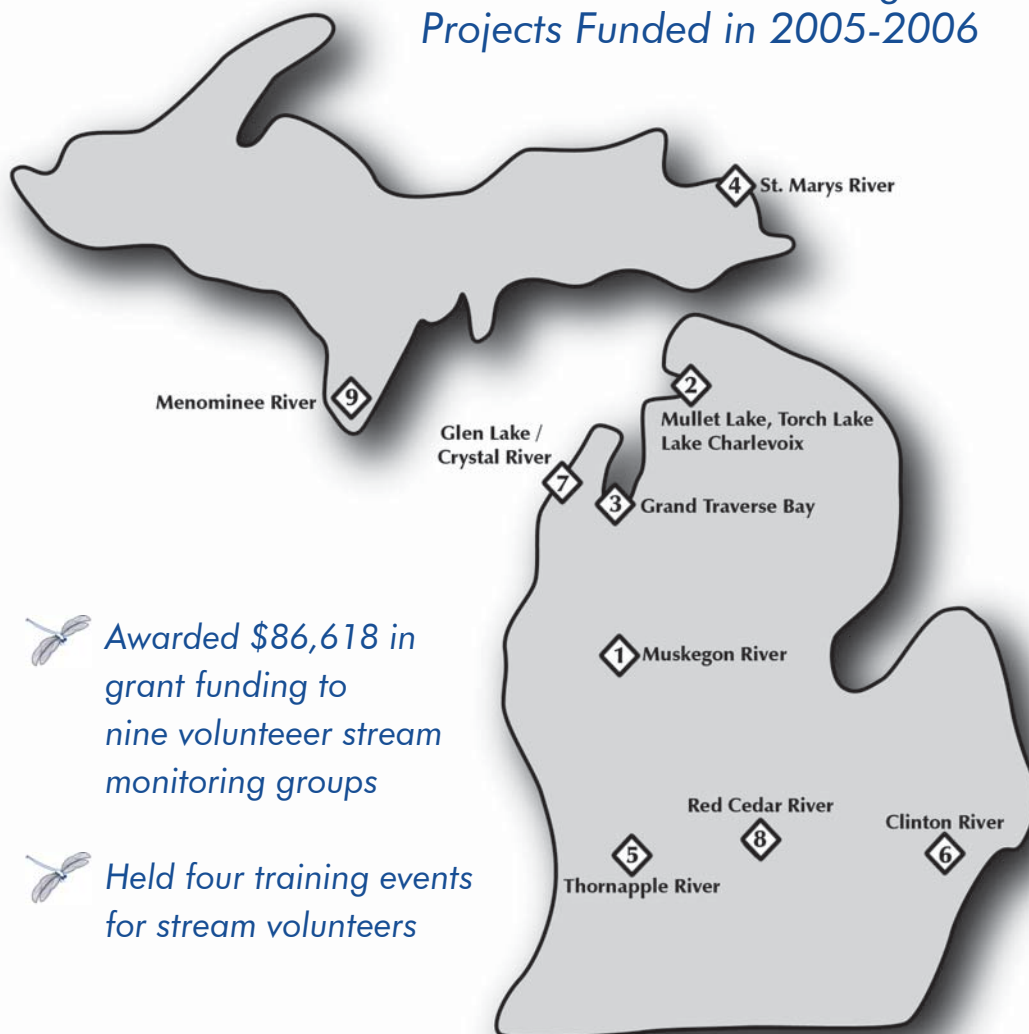
"Overall, we had a great fall monitoring session, and we could not have put together such a successful program quite so easily without the funding, support, and materials provided by MiCorps. It is truly amazing to have this support in accomplishing the mission of the Mid-Michigan Environmental Action Council: helping people transform environmental concern into action."

- Jessica Yorko,
Program Director,
Mid-Michigan
Environmental Action
Council

Through the Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program (VSMP), MiCorps provides technical assistance, training and support to volunteer stream monitors in Michigan to ensure that they are collecting reliable, high-quality data. MiCorps provides this

support through a variety of services and programs, including the MiCorps web site, periodic training events, the annual MiCorps conference, and the Volunteer Stream Monitoring Grants Program.

Volunteer Stream Monitoring Grant Projects Funded in 2005-2006



Awarded \$86,618 in
grant funding to
nine volunteer stream
monitoring groups



Held four training events
for stream volunteers

2005 - 2006 MiCorps Grant Recipients

1. **Muskegon River Watershed Assembly** | *Muskegon River and Tributaries*
2. **Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council** | *Mullett Lake, Torch Lake and Lake Charlevoix*
3. **The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay** | *Grand Traverse Bay Tributaries*
4. **Lake Superior State University** | *St. Marys River Tributaries*
5. **Barry County Conservation District** | *Thornapple River*
6. **Clinton River Watershed Council** | *Clinton River*
7. **Glen Lake Association, Inc** | *Hatlem Creek, Glen Lake/Crystal River Watershed*
8. **Mid-Michigan Environmental Action Council** | *Red Cedar River*
9. **The Sierra Club Mackinac Chapter** | *Menominee River Watershed*



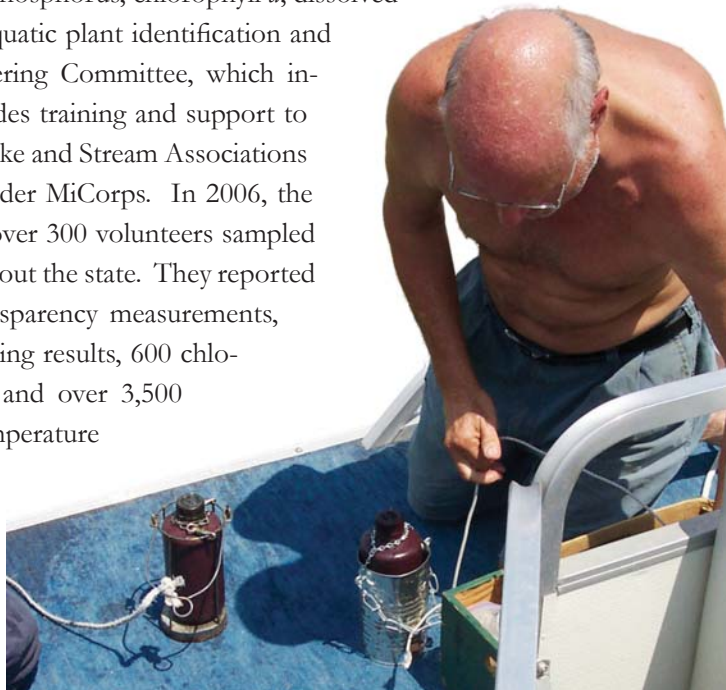
Freshwater Mussel

Native mussel populations are threatened by invasive species, habitat loss and harvesting.

Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program

The Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program (CLMP) is the second-oldest volunteer lakes monitoring program in the country and has been a vital component of Michigan's inland lakes monitoring program for over 30 years. The primary purpose of the CLMP is to help citizen volunteers monitor the water quality of their lakes and document changes in lake quality over time. CLMP participants collect data on a variety of different parameters, including Secchi disk transparency, total phosphorus, chlorophyll *a*, dissolved oxygen, temperature, and aquatic plant identification and mapping. The CLMP Steering Committee, which includes MiCorps staff, provides training and support to volunteers. The Michigan Lake and Stream Associations administers the program under MiCorps. In 2006, the most recent program year, over 300 volunteers sampled more than 240 lakes throughout the state. They reported over 3,800 Secchi disk transparency measurements, 420 total phosphorus sampling results, 600 chlorophyll *a* sampling results, and over 3,500 dissolved oxygen and temperature measurements.

Bob Hake, a CLMP volunteer, prepares chlorophyll bottles for sampling. Photo: MiCorps



The CLMP is the second oldest volunteer lake monitoring program in the country. Each year, over 300 volunteers participate to monitor over 240 of Michigan's inland lakes.

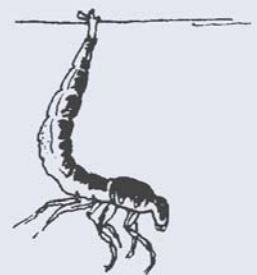
Volunteer Stream Monitoring Start-Up Grant Program

For Fiscal Year 2007, MiCorps set aside a portion of the Volunteer Stream Monitoring Grant Program funds as "seed money" for newly forming volunteer monitoring groups. These start-up funds serve two purposes: 1) provide funding and support to assist start-up groups in designing a monitoring strategy; and 2) help groups develop a full proposal for the 2008 grant

program. The start-up grants are intended for individuals and communities that want to get involved in volunteer stream monitoring but do not have a volunteer program to build on and are not sure where to begin. In 2007, MiCorps received nine start-up grant applications requesting \$23,238 in grant funds. Three projects have been recommended for funding.

Our Mission

The mission of MiCorps is to network and expand volunteer water quality monitoring organizations statewide for the purpose of collecting, sharing and using reliable data; educate and inform the public about water quality issues; and foster water resources stewardship to facilitate the preservation and protection of Michigan's water resources.



**Predaceous Diving
Beetle Larva**

This is one of the most common of all aquatic beetles. It has an immense appetite and will even eat its own kind.

Become a MiCorps Member

Volunteer monitoring organizations that meet quality assurance and operating procedure criteria are eligible to become MiCorps member organizations. MiCorps members represent a select group of monitoring programs in Michigan and receive a variety of benefits, including permission to enter data into the online database, which can be accessed by the monitoring community and the general public. The data will be used by the DEQ as a screening tool and as supplemental data for its water resources management programs. If you are interested in registering your organization as a MiCorps member, please visit the MiCorps web site at www.micorps.net/register.html



Caddisfly Larva

Caddisflies are very important food for fish. This larva has built its own shelter from leaves and twigs.

Featured Projects and Services



Monitoring Network

The MiCorps Monitoring Network refers to a set of services and products that help enhance communication, encourage data and information exchange, and foster increased recognition and use of volunteer monitoring data.

Survey of Monitoring Organizations

MiCorps staff conducted an online survey of monitoring organizations to gain a greater understanding of the activities of monitoring programs in Michigan and to assist in developing the MiCorps program. Survey results can be found online at: www.micorps.net/documents/survey_results.pdf.

MiCorps member organizations

- MiCorps member organizations represent a select group of monitoring programs that meet MiCorps-established quality assurance and management criteria.

As members, these organizations receive a variety of benefits. To date, 11 organizations have applied for MiCorps membership, six have been selected for membership and five selections are pending.

Directory of Michigan Monitoring Organizations

- This online, searchable directory provides contact and basic program information for volunteer monitoring organizations in Michigan. All monitoring groups are eligible to register. To date, 58 organizations have registered in the MiCorps directory.

Recognition Program - MiCorps has developed a recognition program, which provides certificates of recognition for

each MiCorps member organization. Certificates of recognition have been distributed to 10 organizations at the MiCorps annual conferences.



Education and Outreach

Annual Conference - MiCorps hosts an annual conference to report on volunteer monitoring activities and progress in the state and to provide training for interested volunteers. MiCorps has held two conferences in October 2005 and October 2006. Combined, nearly 170 people from over 60 organizations attended the two conferences.

Training Program

- The MiCorps training program offers training opportunities for both current and aspiring MiCorps volunteers. MiCorps has conducted four training events for stream volunteers and

two training events for lake volunteers, as well as conducting side-by-side sampling in the field.

Newsletter - MiCorps publishes a semi-annual newsletter - *The MiCorps Monitor* - to report on volunteer monitoring activities in Michigan. MiCorps has published two online issues of *The MiCorps Monitor*.

Email Listserv - The MiCorps email listserv facilitates the exchange of information and ideas between volunteer monitoring program leaders, volunteers, and resource professionals. Listserv subscription is available through the MiCorps web site. As of May 2007, the MiCorps listserv included 115 subscribers.



Lorissa Feravich, a Muskegon River Watershed Assembly volunteer, examines the contents of her net during a training session. Photo: MRWA

Featured Projects and Services (cont. from page 6)



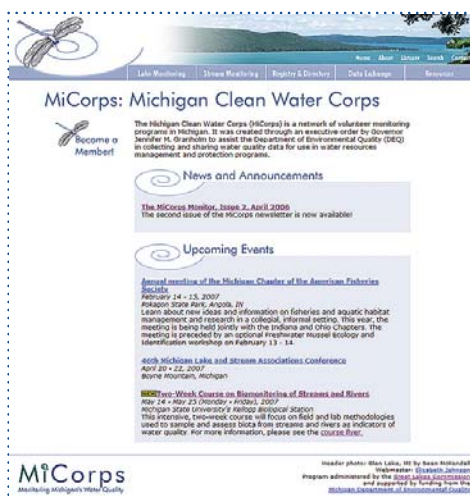
Website

The MiCorps website – www.micorps.net – was created to serve as the information center for aquatic volunteer monitoring programs in Michigan. This site contains information about MiCorps and its grants programs; a water quality data exchange platform; a directory of Michigan monitoring groups; resources for water quality monitoring; information on quality assurance; and much more. MiCorps staff update and enhance the website on an ongoing basis.

operating procedure criteria and provide a rich data set to use in interpreting and comparing results for MiCorps monitored lakes or streams.



Quality Assurance



www.micorps.net

MiCorps has developed Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) guidelines to help all MiCorps monitoring organizations develop their own QAPP – a standardized document that describes a monitoring program's procedures. Staff also

provide assistance with QAPP development and review. Furthermore, MiCorps staff provide quality assurance through side-by-side sampling for stream and lake programs. Quality control checks are also built into the MiCorps Data Exchange.



Data Exchange

MiCorps staff have developed the MiCorps Data Exchange platform, which provides online access to volunteer monitoring data through a searchable database. Monitoring data collected by our member organizations meet quality assurance and

Future Steps

MiCorps staff have identified a number of goals to enhance the MiCorps Program in coming years. For each of the goals listed below, specific tasks have been identified, which can be found in the MiCorps Annual Report (www.micorps.net/annualreport).

1. Achieve broader participation from monitoring groups
2. Enhance networking among volunteer monitoring organizations
3. Ensure program sustainability for monitoring groups
4. Increase data use and analysis
5. Strengthen education and outreach efforts
6. Continue Volunteer Stream Monitoring Grants program development
7. Continue Cooperative Lakes Monitoring program development
8. Continue improvements in program administration

MiCorps Members

Michigan Lake and Stream Associations, Inc.

Muskegon River Watershed Assembly

The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay

Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council

Lake Superior State University

Sierra Club Michigan Chapter

Glen Lake Association, Inc. (pending)

Barry County Conservation District (pending)

Mid-Michigan Environmental Action Council (pending)

Clinton River Watershed Council (pending)

Friends of the Rouge (pending)



Water Scorpion

A water scorpion can hang upside down for hours, remaining perfectly still as it waits for unsuspecting prey.



MiCorps Partners



Michigan Department of
Environmental Quality



Great Lakes Commission



Huron River Watershed
Council



Michigan Lake & Stream
Associations, Inc.



Michigan State University
Extension

About MiCorps

The Michigan Clean Water Corps (MiCorps) is a network of volunteer monitoring programs in Michigan. It was created in 2004 through an executive order by Governor Jennifer M. Granholm to assist the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in collecting and sharing water quality data for use in water resources management and protection programs.

Who We Are

The Great Lakes Commission, in partnership with the Huron River Watershed Council, was selected by DEQ to develop, implement and administer MiCorps under the direction of DEQ and with advice from a steering committee. The program began in fall 2004 and is funded through August 2007 at \$679,600. Of that total, \$300,000 is passed through in grants under the Volunteer Stream Monitoring Grants Program, a stream clean-up program, and the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program (CLMP). MiCorps staff also partner with the Michigan Lake and Stream Associations and Michigan State University Extension to administer the CLMP.



Ralph Bednarz (left) and Jack Wuycheck (right).
Photo: DEQ.

Ralph Bednarz, MiCorps Program Manager for DEQ's Water Bureau, was the architect of Governor Granholm's vision for the Michigan Clean Water Corps

and administered the development and implementation of MiCorps during the program's first three years - 2004 through 2006. Recently, John (Jack) Wuycheck, DEQ Water Bureau, assumed overall responsibility as Mi-

Corps Program Manager for the DEQ. This allows Ralph greater opportunity to focus and provide his expert oversight on lake monitoring issues and the MiCorps CLMP.



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