

## **Project Fact Sheet**

### **The Upper AuSable River Watershed Monitoring Project**

Grant Amount: \$13,297                      Matching Funds: \$18,448

Project Duration: June 2008 - June 2011

Applicant:    Marguerite Gahagan Nature Preserve

                  PO Box 421

                  Roscommon, MI 48653

Contact Person: Tom Dale, Education Director, thdale@core.com

Project Location: The AuSable River in Crawford and Roscommon Counties

Project Partners:    The AuSable River Center in Roscommon

                          Kirtland Community College

                          Anglers of the AuSable

                          The AuSable River Watershed Restoration Committee

                          Huron Pines

                          Mason-Griffith Founders Chapter of Trout Unlimited

                          Headwaters Chapter of Trout Unlimited

                          William B. Mershon Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Project Summary: The project monitors water quality in the upper reaches of the AuSable River and including its major tributaries in order to insure its good health both now and into the future. Stream water quality and that of adjacent habitats at six selected sites are evaluated using the protocol identified in MiCorps Quality Assurance Project Plan. This includes macroinvertebrate collection, identification and scoring and habitat assessment. Teams of volunteers, including a trained collector systematically collect and preserve macroinvertebrate samples from 300 foot stretches of the river at each site, while also measuring appropriate physical parameters. The samples are transported to a laboratory at Kirtland Community College where they are sorted, identified, labeled, and scored. By the standard protocol, all of our samples have returned good to excellent scores in each of the six river day sampling events held over the past three years. Sampling events occur on the first Saturday in June and on the Saturday following Labor Day in conjunction with the Anglers of the AuSable's annual river clean-up. The data is made available to the public using our project webpage [www.ausableriverwatershed.org](http://www.ausableriverwatershed.org) and is also entered into the MiCorps database. The permanent collections and tabulated results are maintained and available at the AuSable River Center in Roscommon.

Our secondary goal is to assemble a diverse team of individuals and organizations who share a love of the river and who will staff the project and sustain it for the long term. We maintain a

constantly growing database of nearly one hundred individuals who wish always to be kept informed about the project and the River. Many of these individuals are connected with organizations such as Anglers of the AuSable and Trout Unlimited and their vast memberships also wish to be kept informed about the quality of the AuSable River watershed. Within in the database are 35 or more individuals who are active at river day events. Within that group are 10 or more individuals who are active at macroinvertebrate identification events.

And finally, we wish the public to be informed about the quality of our river and the value of protecting the river now and into the future. To this end, the project has been presented at numerous civic and public events, reported in local newspapers and explained in a colorful hands-on display at the AuSable River Center and in a colorful brochure that will be distributed at future watershed events.



Training gets everyone on the same page.



Collecting every single bug adds up to a very successful Bug Day Event.



In the field, eager teams work to complete a macroinvertebrate collection at a River Day Event.



A special bug picking day at the public library. It's so much fun, even kids can do it.