



Final Project Report

Kalamazoo Volunteer Stream Monitoring Project VSM2013-04

Calhoun Conservation District

This project was initiated to sample benthic macroinvertebrate populations twice annually with trained volunteers to engage our community and provide water quality education. The Wilder Creek watershed was chosen because it includes several distinctly different land types and uses and had little known monitoring in the past.

Using many of the volunteers recruited through the MiCorps start-up program (VSM2012-07) and a few new ones, we trained a total of 16 volunteers in benthic macroinvertebrate sampling procedures, protocol, and identification. Most of these were associated with the Wilder Creek Conservation Club with a few coming from Albion College. Four sampling events were held at five sites each time.

We initially were concerned about getting enough volunteers but once the sampling dates were established, we had successful sign ups. Event dates were published on the Calhoun Conservation District's website, Facebook, and if needed, local newspapers. The biggest challenge to this project was the identification of the macroinvertebrates. Although volunteers and staff were trained in the identification process, occasionally it was difficult to ascertain exactly which species we had found. In this case, the "bug" and its jar was labeled and brought back to the office for a positive identification.

Benefits of this project are numerous. Residents living along Wilder Creek are continuing to monitor the sites and now have a solid understanding of how, what, and why monitoring is important. Albion College students have taken their knowledge learned from this project and are applying it to other sites closer in location.

Partners to this project and their contributions were:

Wilder Creek Conservation Club – promoted project, volunteers assisted with sampling events, building use

Trout Unlimited – promoted project, assisted with sampling events

Albion College – assisted with sampling events

Whitehouse Nature Center – assisted with training events, assisted with sampling events

Marshall Area Conservation Committee – promoted project, assisted with sampling events

The Resource Institute of Michigan (TRIM)- Equipment use

Sustainability of this project includes monitoring events at Wilder Creek Conservation Club and at sites on the Kalamazoo River near Albion College. Future monitoring events are planned at several streams and rivers in Calhoun County with volunteers.

Photos & press releases





DISAPPOINTMENT FOR DETROIT

Lions lose via last-second field goal. **Sports, B1**



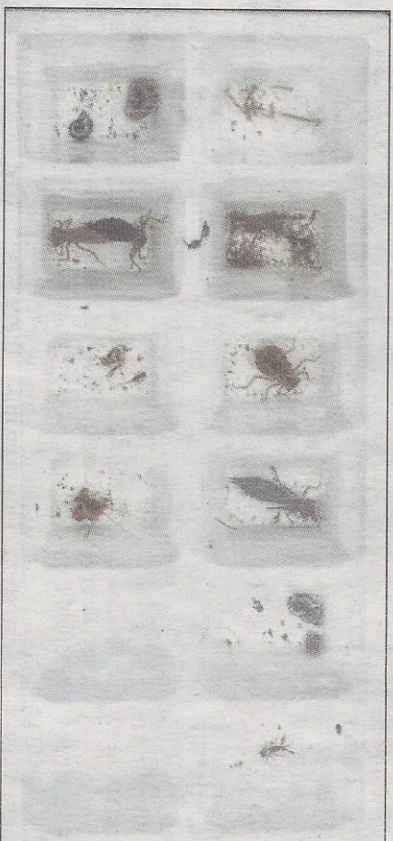
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Various invertebrates, such as those above found in the Garfield Lake Drainage, can be indicators of a waterway's health. NICK GARRISON/FOR THE ENQUIRER

DIP A TOE IN FOR CONSERVATION



Service with a smile

Battle Creek residents lend a helping hand to all

Olivia Lewis

olewis@battlecreekenquirer.com

Brenda Parrott followed her then-boy-friend from Grand Rapids to Battle Creek in the spring of 2004. The army veteran said she spent her first night under the Elm Street Bridge.

"It's not something I would recommend," she said.

After being beaten one night at the bus stop, Parrott said another woman reached out to her and told her to call S.A.F.E. Place.

The small-town aspect of Battle Creek was appealing to Parrott, who said she has enjoyed to



Rick Pearson and Sharon Williams look for a sample of organisms in the Garfield Lake drainage. NICK GARRISON/FOR THE ENQUIRER

Public invited to help collect organisms from Wilder Creek

Andy Fitzpatrick

afitzpatrick@battlecreekenquirer.com

CONVIS TOWNSHIP—haron Williams of the Calhoun Conservation District climbed out of a stream near Garfield Lake Thursday and dumped the muddy, wet contents of a bag into a pan.

Moments later, when water was splashed over them, several small creatures came to life and cautiously crawled around their new surroundings.

Investigating these animals is an opportunity open to the public Friday, and it's also a chance to get a close look at the health

of local water ecosystems.

The Calhoun Conservation District received funding from the Michigan Clean Water Corps, or MiCorps, to start a stream monitoring program that will track the health of local watersheds.

The grant of nearly \$15,000 will first be used Friday when volunteers can join the experts in examining the Wilder Creek watershed area; Wilder Creek is a tributary of the Kalamazoo River. Registration is required and ends Tuesday.

MiCorps receives funding from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

IF YOU GO

» **WHAT:** MiCorps Volunteer Stream Monitoring.

» **WHEN:** Friday, exact times will depend on volunteer availability.

» **WHERE:** Wilder Creek Conservation Club, 19833 D Drive S., Marshall.

» **COST:** Free.

» **INFO:** Dress to be in the field for two hours. Registration is required and ends Tuesday. Call Suzanne Ebricht at 209-8594 or email suzanne.ebricht@macd.org.

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mend," she said.

After being beaten one night at the bus stop, Parrott said another woman reached out to her and told her to call S.A.F.E. Place.

The small-town aspect of Battle Creek was appealing to Parrott, who said she has learned to be able to trust the city after not being able to trust many others in her life.

"I learned a big city isn't always the answer for people," she said. "It's been a trusting time."

Brenda Parrott



The mixture of cultural, racial, social and economic backgrounds in Battle Creek is surprising for its small size. With easy access to Interstate 94, the VA Medical Center, a downtown jail that rents beds to other jurisdictions, a strong mental-health provider and numerous non-profits brings about a rumor that Battle Creek is an attractive place for people to get their life on track. But providers throughout the city have dismantled the rumor; people aren't coming here for extra help.

"Battle Creek is not a magnet community," said Marlene Lawrence, executive director of the Share Center. In fact, Lawrence doesn't think the city offers enough services to help people in need. "I think that we have some really good safety net organizations. I don't think that for people to work their way out of poverty, this community has what they need."

Elaine Hunsicker, executive director of The Haven, said the rumor is a pure myth.

"It really is a myth, especially because we have to remember that Battle Creek is in Michigan," said Hunsicker. "Just to come to Battle Creek to get some welfare; I don't think so."

Hunsicker and Lawrence are two people who work the closest with the homeless of the area on a daily basis. In the September 2013 Point in Time Count of Sheltered Clients by Summit Pointe and the Haven of Rest, a total of 236 homeless people were found in the city in a 24-hour time period.

The Coordinating Council's 2012-13 County Report Card said 281 adults in

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A grand reopening

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Thanksgiving Day print

edition is delivered with

WATER

Continued from Page A1

Conservation District workers were at a site in Convis Township Thursday as work was being done on a stream that runs from Garfield Lake, through crop fields and into Indian Creek in Lee Township. The work they were doing there is similar to what volunteers can do on Wilder Creek.

"We collect benthic macroinvertebrates, which are basically insects that live in the water," Education Coordinator Suzanne Ebright said. "Whether they are very pollution tolerant or intolerant gives us a really good idea of the water quality. That's one of the methods we use when we're monitoring any streams or trying to help determine water quality by what's living in the water."

Volunteers will be able to put on waders and head into the water with bags on poles. They can over-

turn rocks and collect mud from the bottom of the creek. Once that's done, they'll place biological findings into trays for examination.

Of course, caring about water quality may not mean someone wants to get up close and personal with caddisflies, snails and other aquatic animals in their homes.

"If they want to delve into it, we can get into actually learning the orders and families of these macroinvertebrates," Ebright said. "If they want to stand on the sidelines, they can, and just help sort the insects and macroinvertebrates."

Watershed technician Brett Riser said the diversity found in even the simple drainage ditches such as the one in Convis Township host a diverse array of insects.

"If you drove across the road here, most people would think there wasn't any kind of aquatic life in there," Riser said, pointing at the point where V Drive North passed over



Brett Riser removes various invertebrates from a rock in the Garfield Lake drainage. NICK GARRISON/FOR THE ENQUIRER

the stream. "This is an impacted stream. It doesn't have a good recurring corridor, and there's still aquatic life in there, and there's sensitive aquatic life in there."

The bits of evidence for that were sitting in a re-purposed ice cube tray,

staring up at the humans that put them there. Sensitive aquatic life, Riser said, is that which is highly intolerant of physical and chemical changes to its habitat.

"They need high-dissolved oxygen," Riser said. "They need cool water temperature. They need clean water. They're a good indicator of water quality."

Riser said the presence of gilled snails in the stream meant it was a relatively healthy system, given the animals' sensitivity.

Those are the lessons people can learn about the world around them Friday.

"Whether people have an interest or not, the bottom line is we all want clean water," Ebright said. "I think that's a common denominator that we all have. This is just one way to help tell what's going on in the watershed."

Call Andy Fitzpatrick at 966-0697. Follow him on Twitter: @am_fitzpatrick

communities and you can tell," said Hunsicker. "We have a very large volunteer base and it's because we have a very caring city."

"That's the richness of our community, having that kind of a system to be able to take care of our neighbors, relatives and friends," said Durham. "That we are welcome to all walks of life and that we are taking care of them, and I think that is what's so great about our community."

Though there are

SERVICES

Continued from Page A1

families identified as homeless and 256 children identified as homeless in 2011. About 20 percent of residents said their income was below the poverty level in the previous 12 months. In the same report, 54 percent of the living arrangements for the night before people entered an emergency shelter were at a family or friend's home.

"It's not a magnet com-



Calhoun Conservation District seeks volunteers for stream monitoring event

Want to find insects, crayfish and other small water creatures this spring while enjoying our natural resources and learning about water quality?

Assemble a small team with your family, friends, or coworkers, or allow the Conservation District to place you with a team of new friends, for a unique activity that will get you out into the beautiful outdoors and on Wilder Creek, a tributary to the Kalamazoo River, on Friday June 20.

Using nets, you will collect samples of the bugs and other creatures (benthic macroinvertebrates) that live in Wilder Creek. Like canaries in a coal mine, these creatures describe how clean – or not so clean – the stream may be as some are very sensitive or intolerant to pollutants, while others are not.

Trained volunteer leaders will take you to one or two stream sites, where you help search through stones, leaves, and sediment in the stream bottom. You don't have to go into the water, but if you would like to, we will provide you with a pair of chest waders.

We need team members to collect, transport to shore, and sort and place specimens into alcohol for later identification.

Dress to be in the field for a couple hours. The amount of life in our fresh water is amazing.

Volunteers meet at the Wilder Creek Conservation Club and then go out to a site on Wilder Creek. You must register by June 18 to be a part of this fun outdoor learning experience.

This is a great outdoor volunteer project that can provide service hours for college students, and it's a great time outdoors for everyone. Learn about Michigan's water quality while providing an important service.

WHERE: Meet at Wilder Creek Conservation Club, 19833 D Drive South in Marshall

WHEN: Friday June 20, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.




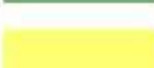



DEADLINE: Registration closes on June 18, 2014.

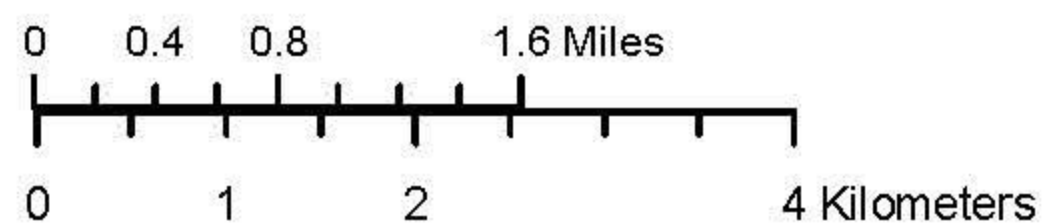
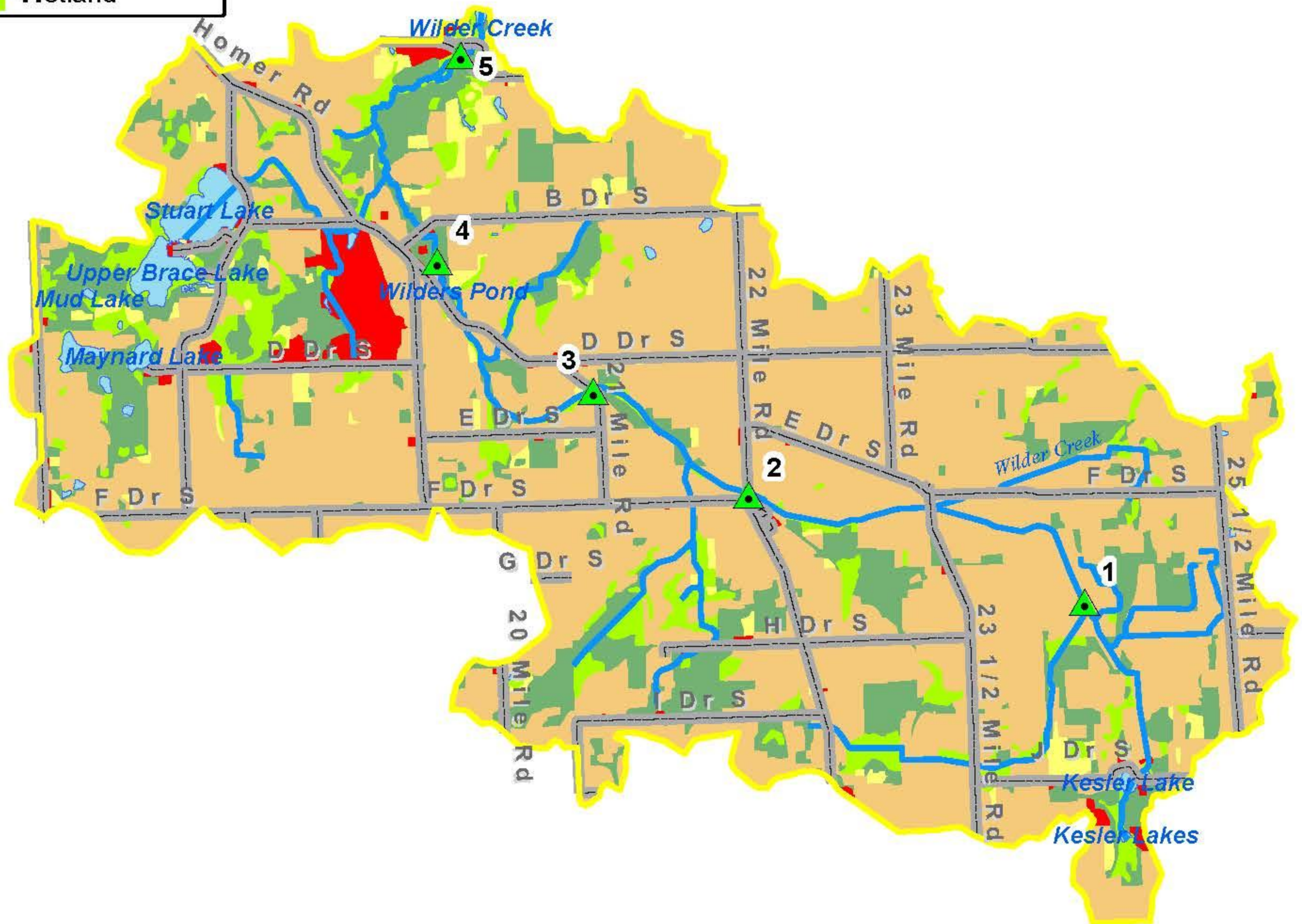
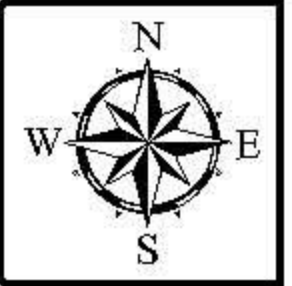
NEXT STEPS: Contact Mike Rubley at mike.rubley@macd.org or (269) 781-4867 Ext:126

MORE INFO: Email or call Mike at mike.rubley@macd.org or (269) 781-4867 Ext:126

Wilder Creek Watershed Monitoring Locations

Key

-  Monitoring_Sites
-  Agricultural
-  Forested
-  Open Field
-  Urban
-  Water
-  Wetland



Id	Latitude	Longitude	Site Name
1	42.191932	84.821641	Lusch
2	42.203703	84.866926	22 Mile Rd.
3	42.214604	84.887777	21 Mile Rd.
4	42.228128	84.908547	Wilder Creek Conservation Club
5	42.248883	84.904595	Division Drive

Legend

-  Roads
-  Streams
-  Lakes
-  Watershed Boundary



Michael Rubley II

Data Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library