

2011 | 2012

ANNUAL REPORT



FRESHWATER™
F U T U R E

FISCAL YEARS OCTOBER 1, 2010 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2012

at a GLANCE

Mission

- ▶ To ensure the healthy future of our waters in the Great Lakes region.

Vision

- ▶ A strong and effective environmental community working to protect and restore the Great Lakes and its many waters by involving residents in civic decision-making. This community will be coordinated among citizens, community groups, state/provincial, regional and national groups in a way that creates synergy for the protection and restoration of our Great Lakes region.
- ▶ A healthy Great Lakes ecosystem that supports the economic well-being of the people of the region, provides a sustainable supply of clean drinking water, a sustainable fishery that provides fish that are healthy to eat and clean beaches where it is safe to swim.

Values

- ▶ Freshwater Future sees itself as a collaborative and entrepreneurial organization that seeks opinions and partnerships from diverse communities and collaborators, values citizen knowledge and abilities and understands the importance of our natural environment for current and future generations.

Leadership

- ▶ Jill Ryan, Executive Director; Kristy Meyer, President of the Board; Annoesjka Steinman, former President of the Board

Highlights

- ▶ 139 Grants Given
- ▶ 536.5 consulting hours provided
- ▶ \$682,426.25 total grants given
- ▶ Freshwater Future is a not-for-profit organization that has been proudly serving the Great Lakes region since 1996.



Freshwater Future received the GuideStar Exchange Silver Participation Level, a leading symbol of transparency and accountability provided by GuideStar USA, Inc., the premier source of nonprofit information.

from the PRESIDENT and EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The past two years have been extraordinary for Freshwater Future in both the mission-related work accomplished and the increased capacity of the organization. By focusing on critical issues facing the waters in the Great Lakes region, we have been able to make progress regionally on preventing the establishment of Asian carp, securing continued funding for Great Lakes Restoration from Congress and coordinating efforts to protect water from resource extraction activities, while providing critical assistance to individual groups working on these and other issues.

As in years past, we make progress by working collaboratively with a wide variety of partners. These partners include local groups meeting around their kitchen tables because of a local concern, groups of sportsmen and boat captains concerned about their local fishing waters, religious groups concerned about our lasting impact on the earth, staffed groups working on a specific watershed or region, conservancy groups working to protect water through the protection of land, and state, regional and national groups working on water policy. By coordinating with such a wide variety of partners, we are able to strengthen individual voices as well as develop state-wide and region-wide voices on particular issues.

The truism that there is strength in numbers clearly applies here, so let's review a few numbers that stand out over the past two years. Communication to over 350,000 households resulted in over 20,000 contacts with Congress, and the passage of the Stop Invasive Species Act of 2012, which reduced the timeline for the initial study to stop Asian carp by 18 months. Five grant programs awarded nearly a half million dollars in 139 grants, resulting in projects to help communities adapt to the impacts of climate change, protect wetlands, protect groundwater, and many more. Additionally, our Healing Our Waters grants have leveraged over \$4 million in federal funding for high priority areas to restore water resources in the Great Lakes region. Finally, our staff provided 535 hours of direct assistance to 28 groups to help build their capacity to achieve their missions. This assistance included board training, fundraising training, strategic planning, issue strategy development and more.

We are proud of the work our entrepreneurial team has done, and know the future holds even more excellent work to ensure a healthy future for our waters!

Sincerely,

Kristy Meyer,
Board President



Jill Ryan,
Executive Director



Growing Strong Leaders and Environmental Organizations

Freshwater Future was able to provide 139 grants totaling \$682,426.25. These grants help to leverage even more investment to improve the health of our communities.



In Detroit, Michigan, **West Grand Boulevard Collaborative** members and partners installed a beautiful and functional rain garden to reduce stormwater runoff and pollution as well as demonstrate how it can be done in neighborhood yards. The success of this grant helped spark additional ideas and funding to further West Grand Boulevard Collaborative's efforts.



In Syracuse, New York, the **Onondaga Creek Conservation Council** built a diverse partnership to help restore the health of the creek corridor and make it more adaptable to climate change impacts. The project site is a community park in a disadvantaged part of town and residents of the neighborhood are involved and helping with the effort.

The **Saugatuck Dunes Coastal Alliance** faced years of zoning battles and lawsuits to protect nearly 500 acres of sensitive coastal dunes along the southern Lake Michigan coast from a nine-story hotel, 66-slip marina, and golf course. Despite the challenges, the volunteer led Saugatuck Dunes Coastal Alliance has used creativity and strategy to achieve significant wins.



In December of 2009, working with several other organizations they helped to get a large grant and raise funds to purchase 171 acres of dunes, held by the Land Conservancy of West Michigan. The acquisition is a huge step toward protecting the dunes in this area. Thanks to the efforts of the Saugatuck Dunes Coastal Alliance in May of 2010, the National Trust for Historic Preservation name Saugatuck Dunes one of 11 most endangered historic places. Receiving the listing from the National Trust has brought national attention to the need to protect the valuable dunes.

Nuturing Organizations with Vision and Strategy Development



Small organizations like the **Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve** walk a fine line. The number of tasks is always great, while the resources are generally less than what is needed. That's why having one's organization in tip top shape can be a make or break deal. Working with Freshwater Future through the Insight Grants Program solidified the group's ability to lay out how the work would be accomplished, both in strategy and in funding. Freshwater Future staff helped frame the vision for the group's work from the short term quick action to a longer term, thought out strategy.

FAST FACTS

October 1, 2010 thru
September 30, 2012

- 37 Project Grants, \$97,821.62
- 33 Climate Grants, \$150,000
- 28 Insight Grants, \$30,959.63
- 14 Special Opportunity Grants, \$22,800
- 29 Healing Our Waters Grants, \$380,845



Through Freshwater Future's Insight Services **Saugatuck Dunes Coastal Alliance** raised more than \$15,000 for their organization. With the guidance of our fundraising team, they developed a series of emails for an email campaign, learned how to stage these asks to their members, and set a goal to raise \$5000. With the confidence gained by Freshwater Future's assistance, they were able to surpass their fundraising goals.

Ensuring the Safety of Our Waters—

Freshwater Future works to ensure policies are in place and enforced to safeguard our waters. We stay abreast of threats to our waters, and we do not wait for disaster to happen before taking action.

We are movement-builders. By working on policy, we can connect grassroots groups and efforts to issues like no other group can. Working toward these goals, Freshwater Future achieved the following results:

Closing in on Asian Carp Solutions



The Stop Invasive Species Act of 2012 passed, requiring the Army Corps of Engineers to expedite their Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study, outlining solutions to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes. Freshwater Future played a key role in influencing decision-makers on this need by communicating with over 300,000 households resulting in 3,000 petition signatures and

20,000 postcards delivered to members of congress. This is a critical step in moving towards our ultimate goal—separation of the Great Lakes from the Mississippi River and restoring the natural divide.

Digging Deeper to Prevent Mining Impacts

Freshwater Future Researched and published a scientific paper clarifying the impacts of temperature variations on the production of acid at mining sites. Additionally, we utilized new social media tools to connect citizens and elected officials in an effort to prevent weakening the public input process for mining on public lands.



Flambeau Mine site near Ladysmith, Wisconsin

BOB OLSGARD

Grassroots Advocacy Awards Recipients

2010

► Sandy Bihn | *Citizen Award*

Sandy's involvement with Western Lake Erie Waterkeeper Association started in 1990. In that time, no other individual has done more for Lake Erie. With her accounting background and involvement with city council, she approaches environmental threats to Lake Erie from a "numbers" point of view, emphasizing the economic impacts to promote change. We thank Sandy for her time devoted to protecting this Great Lake!



them for their big victory in late 2009 for raising funds and grant money to buy 171 acres now helped by the Land Conservancy of West Michigan. Thank you for your perseverance!

2011

► Diane Hofner | *Citizen Award*

Diane Hofner of CROP-PLUS (Concerned Residents of Portland—People Like Us Portland) started to notice ash being used on the roads when she retired to her summer home in Portland, NY. Concerned about contamination, Diane started to do research, using her time and resources to provide data on the dangers of using coal ash. As a result, she created enough proof to encourage her community to stop using coal ash on their roads. We love your determination Diane, thank you!



► Saugatuck Dunes Coastal Alliance | *Organization Award*

The Saugatuck Dunes Coastal Alliance, a volunteer led organization, fights hard to protect nearly 500 acres of sensitive coastal area along the coast of southern Lake Michigan. We award



Keeping Abreast of Threats



A Pennsylvania fracking well and the Susquehanna River.
DONALD GILLILAND/HARRISBURG PATRIOT-NEWS

Assisting Communities in Combating Impacts from Climate Change

The development of Freshwater Future's Great Lake Community Climate Program helped us reach over 1,000 citizens. We trained community leaders on climate change concerns and provided toolkits that helped them reduce polluted run-off, decrease flooding in urban communities, protect stream banks, and limit heat impacts by planting trees.



Helping Communities React to Fracking

By pinpointing well locations and overlaying likely gas bearing areas in the region, Freshwater Future developed a tool for citizens to locate wells near their homes. Furthermore, we created legal and other materials to assist communities engaging on the issue of hydrofracking.

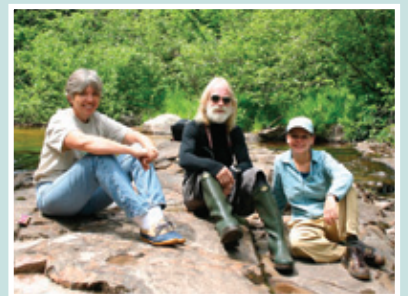
► Cool Learning Experience | Organization Award

Growing the idea that nature is good for the mind, body, and soul, Cool Learning Experience devotes their mission to getting kids outside in Waukegan, Illinois. As a result of their summer programs for upper elementary kids, Barbara Waller and her daughter Kimberly, boast that the students are improving academically, and more importantly sharing with their families the things they are learning about the lakes, streams and waters that surround them. Thank you for spreading the love!



► Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve | Organization Award

Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve received a 2011 Organizational Grassroots Advocate Award for their leadership to build a collaborative effort and partnerships to protect the Salmon Trout River and the negative impacts associated with mining. The dedicated staff monitors operations to ensure the mining company is being accountable. Thank you for watching out for our rivers!





FRESHWATER FUTURE STAFF

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 Becca Turner, *Program Associate*
 Julie O'Leary, *Associate Director*
 Cheryl Kallio, *Associate Director*
 Cathy Brady, *Office Manager*
 Ann Baughman, *Associate Director*
 Michelle Votruba, *Membership Assistant*
 April Weppler, *Program Innovator*
 Vicki Deisner, *Assistant Director*
 Wendy Cooper, *Program Innovator*
 Kara Scheerhorn, *Program Assistant*
 Amber Drews, *Intern*
 Stanley Marx, *Office Assistant*

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 CONSERVATION
 Sarah Winterton
 ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENCE

Fiscal Years 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 Financial Highlights



These past two years have been an exciting time for Freshwater Future. Despite the economic downturn, our organization has experienced steady growth, allowing us to bring on more staff to carry out this critical work. We have expanded our operations in Canada. I am also proud to note that Freshwater Future received the GuideStar Exchange Silver Participation Level, signifying a commitment to transparency and accountability. I am confident that Freshwater Future will be going strong for years to come. Our audited financials show a growing, well managed, financially stable organization that focuses its resources on its critical mission-based work.

Sincerely,
 Terry Swier, *Treasurer*

Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Income:		Fiscal Year 2011-2012 Income:	
	\$822,719		\$829,419
Grants and Contracts	\$ 671,656	Grants and Contracts	\$579,006
Contributions	\$142,243	Contributions	\$235,729
Program Fees	\$ 5,528	Program Fees	\$ 13,263
Investment Income	\$ 3,292	Investments or Interest	\$ 1,421

Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Expenses:		Fiscal Year 2011-2012 Expenses:	
	\$796,867		\$785,044
Grants Program	\$398,452	Grants Program	\$348,889
Policy Program	\$161,122	Policy Program	\$165,658
Services Provided	\$163,692	Services Provided	\$ 151,560
Administration	\$ 35,956	Administration	\$ 47,677
Fundraising	\$ 37,645	Fundraising	\$ 71,260

Freshwater Future's most recently filed annual information returns (Federal 990) are available for review upon request and through GuideStar and our website.

Donors

Freshwater Future extends a thank you to all of our donors. Each donation is vital to supporting our work to ensure the healthy future of our Great Lakes waters.

ORGANIZATIONS

Adirondack Communities
Advisory League
Annis Water Resource Institute,
Lake Michigan Center
Ausable Bayfield Conservation
Authority
Bad River Watershed Association
Blanchard River Watershed
Partnership
Blue Mountain Watershed Trust
Foundation
Buckeye Forest Council
Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper
CAN (CAFO Awareness Network)
Cayuga Lake Watershed Network
Center for Environmental
Information
Clean Wisconsin
Concerned Citizens of Big Bay
Concerned Citizens of
Seneca County
Cool Summer Experience
Detroiters Working for
Environmental Justice
Door County Environmental
Council, Inc.
Drink Local. Drink Tap.
East Algoma Stewardship
Council
Ecilibrium3
Economic Development
Corporation of Erie County
Elk-Skegemog Lakes Association
Environment Minnesota
Research & Policy Center
environmentERIE
Faith in Place
Finger Lakes Zero Waste
Coalition, Inc.
Firelands Audubon Society
Flint River Corridor Alliance
Flint River Watershed Coalition
Friends of Arcola Creek
Friends of Big Creek
Friends of Oliphant Coastal
Environments
Friends of the Crooked River
Friends of the Detroit River
Friends of the Jordan River
Watershed
Friends of the Land-Keweenaw
Friends of the Shiawassee River
Friends of the St. Joe River
Association
Friends of the St. Joseph River
Association
Friends of the St. Clair River
Watershed
Front Forty

Great Lakes Lifeways Institute
Green Living Science
Grosse Ile Nature & Land
Conservancy
Highway J. Citizens Group
Horvath
Inland Sea Society
Izaak Walton League of America
McMabe Chp
John G. Shedd Aquarium
Kalamazoo River Cleanup
Coalition
Kalamazoo River Watershed
Council
Kingston Field Naturalists
Lake Erie Waterkeeper
Lake Michigan League of
Women Voters
Lake Superior Watershed
Conservancy
Lakeshore Natural Resource
Partnership, Inc.
Les Cheneaux Watershed
Council
Library of Michigan, Serials
Section
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Lower Thames Valley
Conservation Authority
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Michigan Citizens for Water
Conservation
Michigan Lake & Stream
Associations, Inc.
Mid-Michigan Environmental
Action Council
Midtown Phillips Neighborhood
Association
Milwaukee Riverkeeper
Mining Impact Coalition
of Wisconsin
Minnesota Environmental
Partnership
Minnesota Land Trust
Mullett Lake Area Preservation
Society
Munuscong River Watershed
Association
Native American Educational
Technologies (NAET)
Nature Abounds
New York Sustainable Agriculture
Working Group
Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer
District
Northern Michigan Environmental
Action Council
Northwood Alliance
Oatka Creek Watershed
Committee

Oberlin Stormwater
Management Project
Ohio Chapter Sierra Club
Ohio Coastal Resource
Management Project
Ojibway Defence
Onondaga Creek Conservation
Council
Paradise Lake Association
Pennsylvania Lake Erie
Watershed Association
Plaster Creek Stewards
Protect JKP
Protect Our Water and Environ-
mental Resources (POWER)
Rain Garden Initiative
R-Cause
Religious Coalition for the
Great Lakes
Residents for Responsible
Government
Rideau Valley Conservation
Foundation
River Network
River Raisin Institute
Rocky River Watershed Council
Saugatuck Dunes Coastal
Alliance
Saugeen Field Naturalist
Save Lake Superior Association
Save Our Sky Blue Waters
Save the Wild UP
Schafer
Scugog Lake Stewards, Inc.
Seneca Lake Pure Waters
Association
Sierra Club Ontario-Great
Lakes Section
Sierra Club, Great Lakes Project
Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi
Sled Dogs to Saint Paul
St. Lawrence Land Trust
Sustain Rural Wisconsin
Sweet Water-Southeastern WI
Watersheds Trust
Sweetwater Alliance
The Ecologos Institute
The Lake Huron Centre for
Coastal Conservation
Thornapple River Watershed
Council
Three Lakes Association
Transition Milwaukee Water
Working Group
Two Rivers Coalition
WasteWater Education
WaterLegacy
Waukegan Harbor Citizens'
Advisory Group
WAVE
Wawasee Area Conservancy
Foundation
West Creek Preservation
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West Grand Boulevard
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Western Lake Erie Waterkeeper
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Wild Ones Niagara Falls and
River Region
Wisconsin Interfaith Power
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Wisconsin Land and Water
Conservation Association
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Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve

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Celebrated 15 Years in 2011

15 YEARS OF HIGHLIGHTS

- Provided \$1.8 million dollars in grant funding to grassroots and community groups
- Given over 800 Grants
- More than quadrupled the amount of grant funds we give out
- Welcomed 90 citizens to our three Climate Symposia
- Welcomed 500 citizens to our five Grassroots Symposia
- Distributed 10,000 copies of the Great Lakes Restoration toolkit
- Provided consulting services to over 30 clientss
- Served eight Great Lakes States and one Canadian Province
- Provided 300,000 households with information on the Asian carp threat to our Great Lakes
- Engaged 1600 Organizations in our network

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