



Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council

426 Bay Street • Petoskey, MI 49770 • phone: (231) 347-1181 • fax: (231) 347-5928
email: info@watershedcouncil.org website: www.watershedcouncil.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 23, 2006

Contact: Kevin Cronk

(231) 347-1181 ext. 109

Volunteers Improve the Health of Northern Michigan Streams and Lakes

(Petoskey, MI) – The Watershed Council has coordinated and sponsored the Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program for over 30 years. Presently, volunteers monitor 35 lakes spread throughout Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, and Montmorency Counties, collecting baseline data, characterizing lake ecosystems, identifying specific water quality problems, determining water quality trends, and, most importantly, informing and educating the public regarding water quality issues and aquatic ecology. Monitoring water quality does not ensure clean water, but rather provides valuable information to help protect and improve water quality in the lakes of northern Lower Peninsula of Michigan.

Volunteers are working hard to monitor lake water quality, but what about streams? Because streams potentially impact the water quality of the lakes that they flow into, the Watershed Council applied for and was awarded a two-year grant by the Michigan Clean Water Corps to kick-start the new Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program in early 2005.

“For several months after receiving the grant award, we were busy structuring the program, developing a Quality Assurance Protection Plan, purchasing necessary equipment, and recruiting volunteers,” said Kevin Cronk, Research and Monitoring Coordinator at the Watershed Council. “By September, 2005 everything was in place and volunteers began their maiden voyage into stream ecosystems by first receiving a training provided by Watershed Council Staff at the Freshwater Center in Petoskey and then going into the field to collect data.”

Presently, the program focuses on streams that flow into Mullet Lake, Lake Charlevoix and Torch Lake. A total of 15 sites are being monitored on 7 streams. These represent only a small fraction of the streams found in the Watershed Council service area, but include streams that have potential water quality issues or areas of concern as expressed by local residents. As the program’s foundation strengthens, it will be expanded to include more of the 2500+ miles of streams that crisscross the Tip of the Mitt. If you are interested in learning more or would like to become involved, contact Kevin Cronk at 231.347.1181 ext 109.

About Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council: *Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council speaks for our members including full-time and seasonal residents, lake associations, and businesses. We work to maintain the environmental integrity and economic and aesthetic values of lakes, streams, wetlands, and ground water in Northern Michigan, as well as statewide and throughout the Great Lakes Basin. As the lead organization for*

water resources protection in Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, and Emmet Counties, the Watershed Council is working to preserve the heritage of Northern Michigan – a tradition built around our magnificent waters.