




**FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT**  
**Brayton Creek at Cleveland Road**  
**Oceana County, Michigan**



***Background/Overview***

1. Briefly summarize the project description as outlined in the original Proposal.

The Project addressed the need to remove the twin perched and failing corrugated metal pipes below Cleveland Road at Brayton Creek. Migratory and non-migratory fish species were unable to move upstream to spawning grounds.

2. Was the project completed as originally intended? If not indicate how the final outcome(s) differed from what was anticipated. Does your experience suggest that original expectations were realistic? What factors hindered or helped progress?

Initially, it was estimated the Project might be built for \$125,000.00. Material price increases of 8-10%, coupled with the Michigan construction industry rebounding and not enough qualified contracting firms to bid and complete back-logged jobs forced postponement. These factors were a blessing, allowing the County to refocus, seek additional stakeholders, and redesign the project as originally envisioned. Looking back, the expectation of the project being built for the budget amount was not realistic. All of the factors noted above both helped and hindered progress.

## *Outcomes*

1. What activities were pursued in relationship to intended outcomes, and to what extent did you achieve the following intended listed in your proposal?

The project goal of removing the twin perched culverts was the targeted activity to achieve the intended outcome of replacement with a bottomless structure that would not impede migratory aquatic species. Additional positive outcomes include unrestricted wildlife migration, improved spawning environment, sediment load elimination and public safety enhancement.

2. What audience(s) were you particularly hopeful of reaching? To what extent did you reach them? Did you receive any feedback?

The OCRC doesn't really have an audience per se. Its Mission Statement is "To provide the public with reasonably safe roads and bridges, financially sound management, respect to the environment, addressing community and developmental sensitivity, and providing dependable and responsive services". Feedback typically is confined to notification of emergency and service personnel of road closure and reopening, adjacent property owners and interested officials often watching the project proceedings. Feedback received to date has been very positive, especially stakeholders that have visited the site.

3. What relationships or opportunities were developed or strengthened through the work?

The OCRC was very glad to again partner with the GLFT after completion of its first successful project in 2012. Because GLFT was the first signatory, it is fitting the organization is credited with drawing in other past grantors to assist the OCRC. Relationships with all the awarding agencies were strengthened.

4. Was an evaluation included as part of this project? If so, what were the key findings?

If there is a standardized evaluation for a project such as this, the OCRC is not aware of it. From this agency's perspective, however, the project is a complete success. Findings are not limited to the following:

- \* A failed road/stream crossing was significantly and sustainably improved,
- \* Motoring and recreational safety has been enhanced, and
- \* Environmental and hydrologic conditions are being restored
- \* Migratory fish passage restored after 30+ years: a Coho Salmon was seen upstream at 200<sup>th</sup> Avenue

5. Whether they were intended or unintended, what do you consider the most important benefits or outcomes of this habitat restoration project?

The most important benefit is the environmental restoration that has/is occurring within the river valley, its impact on/to aquatic species and organisms, the wildlife and hydrology.

### ***Related Efforts***

1. Was this project a stand-alone effort, or was there a broader effort beyond the part funded by the GLFT? Have other funders been involved, either during the time of your GLFT grant or subsequently?

The project had to evolve from a stand-alone to one with numerous stakeholders. The time extension granted by GLFT was instrumental in persuading the 2<sup>nd</sup> funder to also grant a time extension. These extensions were pivotal in bringing in additional funders, without whom the Project would not have been completed.

2. Has there been any spin-off work or follow-up work related to this project? Did this work inspire subsequent, related restoration projects involving you or others?

The success of the project led to Greenwood Township, Road Commission, White River Watershed Partnership, and West Michigan Steelheaders joining to rehabilitate the failed road stream crossing on Brayton just upstream from Cleveland on 200<sup>th</sup> Avenue. In replacing the 1910 (MDOT) bridge deck, a tremendous reduction of roadway sediments has resulted. Fallen trees, woody debris and fieldstone boulders were placed to halt streambank erosion and bridge foundation scouring. With this work also now complete, the Skeels/Cushman/Braton sub-watershed, the worst of the ten (10) sub watersheds in the WRW, should be upgraded from "impaired" status. Additional monitoring is planned.

### ***Communication/Dissemination***

1. List Publications, presentations, websites, and other forms of formal dissemination of the project deliverables, tools, or results, including those that are *planned* or *in process*.

[www.coca-colacompany.com/sustainability](http://www.coca-colacompany.com/sustainability) – 2014/15 Water Stewardship & Sustainability Report  
[www.oceanaroad.org](http://www.oceanaroad.org) – Grant-Funded Culvert Removals power point presentation

2. Please characterize your efforts to distribute and encourage use of products, processes, programs, etc. developed through this grant.

In 2007, I was advised by the OCRC that no culverts would be removed unless grant money was secured to underwrite the efforts. I made a personal commitment to learn to write and administer grants, and met with other concerned professionals from private, local, county, state and federal agencies to begin that process. Bringing nearly 35 years of construction management experience to grant administration has since produced 27 improved road stream crossings in Oceana County. There are another 17 sites for which I have written grant applications that remain unfunded. Without the Great Lakes Fishery Trust, three (3) of these projects could not, would not have been done.

Following the first grant the GLFT awarded OCRC, I was encouraged to continue improving the Carlton/Mud sub-watershed. This resulted in bird-dogging the DNR to ensure that the three (3) Carlton crossings below the William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Rail Trail would be included in its 2015 reconstruction. Repeated meetings with MDOT and the DNR were successful this past spring and summer to assure the desired outcome. The GLFT contributions have provided many opportunities to talk to residents, local and county officials, our state Representative and Senator, and make presentations to other agencies and professionals about GLFT programs. On a near-weekly basis I am able to talk about the donors on the Project, including GLFT.

## ***Reflections***

1. Please describe any unanticipated benefits, challenges or surprises, and/or important lessons learned over the course of the project.

This was the third and largest triple span timber bridge constructed in Oceana County; the additional length and height required additional expenditures for survey and layout of the Project. The peat substrate forced the structure design and type to be changed three (3) times. The awarded contractor, though thoroughly capable, had not constructed a triple span structure prior to this Project. While driving the test pile, the crane's hammer broke, adding an unplanned week in the schedule to find parts. Severe weather impacted the site with washouts, flooding (building in August, September avoids volatile temperature extremes).

2. What recommendations (if any) would you make to other project directors working on similar efforts or to the GLFT?

Project Directors should take advantage of attending events and conferences hosted by GLFT whenever possible. It is often difficult to get away, but well worth the time. It is imperative the Great Lakes Fishery Trust continues to fund projects of many types, especially restoration. It is so gratifying to witness how quickly the environment can be restored, "healed" when sound decisions are made and implemented.

### ***Pictures***

1. Provide at least three (3) photos of the completed project.

See below

2. The Great Lakes Fishery Trust requires each project it funds to have suitable permanent public acknowledgement of GLFT assistance. The GLFT has provided this sign to you (via mail-requested 10-28-2015) and required photo verification of the posting of the sign before it will process your final reimbursement request.

Because of the theft of bronze plaques over the years following bridge dedication ceremonies, the County will hire a sign company to install the plaque in a manner that cannot be vandalized. We would appreciate the final payment not be held up based on the installation. I will also upload a photo of the installed sign as quickly as it is done.

*Attachments*













