

Major funding for this project was provided by:



Michigan Department of Natural Resources *Aquatic Habitat Grant Program*

\$293,000

Golden Lotus, Inc.

\$100,000

Great Lakes Fishery Trust

\$46,000

Pigeon River County Association

\$21,000

Patagonia: World Trout Initiative

\$10,000

Great Lakes Energy: People Fund

\$10,000

Charlevoix County Community Foundation

\$10,000

J.A. Woollam Foundation

\$10,000

Mullett Lake Area Preservation Society

\$5,000

Otsego County Community Foundation:

Dr. Patrick J. McNamara Fund & Scott and Janice Lampert Fund:

\$5,000

Individual Contributions:

\$10,000



The project steering committee consists of representatives from Huron Pines, Golden Lotus, Pigeon River Country Association and Michigan Trout Unlimited.

For questions about the project, contact:

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Huron Pines is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and an equal opportunity provider with a mission to conserve the forests, lakes and streams of Northeast Michigan. Four decades of project management experience have made us a leader in building creative partnerships, acquiring funding and planning sustainable watershed projects that benefit natural resources and communities.

Learn more at www.huronpines.org.



September 2015



January 2016

*Rebirth of the Pigeon River:
Song of the Morning
Dam Removal Project*



Reconnecting the River...

The Pigeon River is a world-class stream that Huron Pines and partners have invested in for a major restoration project. Its clean, icy flows support a thriving coldwater ecosystem that includes brook trout, brown trout and steelhead. The Pigeon River is one of Michigan's premier Blue Ribbon trout streams—a designation bestowed upon only 2% of Michigan's 38,000+ river miles. It's an all-around classic example of what a northern Michigan stream should be.

No other site divided the Pigeon River system like the Song of the Morning Dam. Located approximately 15 miles from the origin of the Pigeon River, this dam disturbed natural ecological functions and disconnected headwater and tributary stream habitat from the rest of the river system. The Song of the Morning Dam had long been identified by natural resource managers as the #1 priority for restoration activities to benefit the Pigeon River and greater Cheboygan River watersheds.

Our community came together to do the right thing for the river and users. We raised \$600,000 in cash and in-kind services for the dam removal project. Drawdown of the 40-acre upstream impoundment was completed in 2014, and in 2015 utilities were rerouted, the dam was removed and a 76' timber bridge was completed in January 2016, allowing the river to flow freely underneath. This project reconnected the Pigeon River system for the first time in more than a century!



The Pigeon River's headwaters begin in the rolling hills of Otsego County and then flow north through large tracts of the Pigeon River Country State Forest and eventually to Lake Huron. This aerial image shows the dam and former impoundment.



Summer 2014: The 40-acre impoundment prior to drawdown



June 2015: Lush native vegetation takes hold on the rich soil of the former impoundment





Rebirth of the Pigeon River

The Pigeon River is a world-class stream

that Huron Pines and partners are investing in for a major restoration project. Its clean, icy flows support a thriving coldwater ecosystem that includes brook trout, brown trout and steelhead. The Pigeon River is a designated Blue Ribbon trout stream and an all-around classic example of what a northern Michigan river should be.

No other site has divided the Pigeon River

system like the Song of the Morning Dam. Located 15 miles from the origin of the Pigeon River, this dam has fragmented headwater and tributary stream habitat from the rest of the watershed. The Song of the Morning Dam has long been identified as the #1 priority for restoration activities to benefit the Pigeon River.

Our community is finally ready to join

together to do the right thing for the river and users. The drawdown of the 40-acre upstream impoundment is complete and Huron Pines is now the lead organization to coordinate partners and manage the dam removal, site restoration and installation of a timber bridge. This project will reconnect the Pigeon River to allow fish passage upstream for the first time in more than a century!

Now that's a Michigan story worth sharing!

Keep informed about this project by viewing updates at:

www.huronpines.org



The Pigeon River's headwaters begin in the rolling hills of Otsego County and then flow north through large tracts of the Pigeon River Country State Forest and eventually to Lake Huron. This aerial image shows the dam and former impoundment.



This project is a wonderful opportunity for teaching and sharing. Credit: Ken Borton



Summer 2014: The 40-acre impoundment prior to drawdown



Summer 2015: Lush native vegetation takes hold on the rich soil of the former impoundment



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Aquatic Habitat Grant Program



Golden Lotus, Inc.



PRCA member contributions



People Fund



Otsego County

community foundation

Dr. Patrick J. McNamara Fund
Scott and Janice Lampert Fund



Huron Pines

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Chris Freiburger
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13 November 2015

Dear Chris,

Because of your support, Song of the Morning Dam is gone and the Pigeon River is now flowing free! On behalf of Huron Pines and the project steering committee, thank you for investing in the restoration of this wild Northern Michigan river. Work is still continuing at the site, but with the river reconnected we want you to know this project wouldn't have been possible without the incredible support of partners like you.

With deep appreciation, thank you!

Lisha Ramsdell, Huron Pines Associate Director





THE REBIRTH OF THE PIGEON RIVER



Huron Pines



Aquatic Habitat Grant Program



Golden Lotus, Inc.



World Trout Grants Council



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
Through the People Fund



Dr. Patrick J. McNamara Fund
Scott and Janice Lampert Fund



Through an anonymous donor



J.A. Woollam Foundation

Contributions from Individual Donors



Rebirth of the Pigeon River

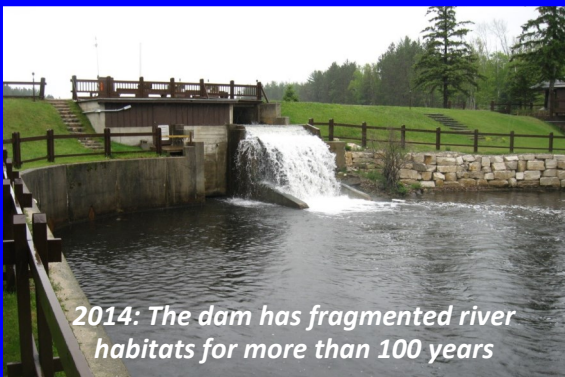
Song of the Morning Dam Removal



June 2015: A new channel has formed in the area previously under water.



A 2013 aerial image shows the dam and former impoundment (Google Earth).



2014: The dam has fragmented river habitats for more than 100 years



Summer 2014: The 40-acre upstream impoundment prior to drawdown



June 2015: Lush native vegetation now grows on the rich soil of the former impoundment

Keeping Current with the Changes Upstream

If you fish, kayak or live along the Pigeon River, you may have noticed changes occurring.

As dam removal proceeds during summer and fall of 2015, the river may appear darker and more turbid similar to what you would see after a heavy rain. Once completed this project will result in long-term benefits for the health and wildlife of the river.

Ongoing monitoring is taking place to ensure that fish and other aquatic organisms are not threatened by this change in appearance. Precautions like silt fencing, temporary control barriers and a sand trap will also be used to minimize construction impacts.

For More Information...

To learn more about this project and the many partners and sponsors making it possible, scan this QR code with your smartphone or visit:

www.huronpines.org

