White River Watershed Collaborative

December 9, 2025 Meeting Review

Held by Zoom with Jacob Lemon host.

Approximately 30 attending

1. Organizational Reports:

A. Muskegon Conservation District (MCD) —Lance McCarty substituting for Chelsey Lawton.

Update on grants MCD is perusing.

MCD is conducting Watershed Awareness classes

B. White Cloud Dam update—Charles Chandler, former mayor of White Cloud reported on the City of White Cloud Wade Trim Engineers White Cloud Future Dam Planning Process. The City has now pushed off the "preferred project selection" until May through June, with the City Council to approve selection by July 1, 2026. The City's published schedule uses the terminology "Stream Restoration Preliminary Designs" however Chandler is unaware of the course the City will take, and if the approach will include dam removal and fish passage.

C. White River Watershed Partnership—Ray Schinler covered the WRWP's 2025 monitoring activities, which included temperature loggers, macroinvertebrate sampling, Didymo sampling and ongoing use of the five EnviroDIY stations.

D. White Lake Association—Robert Smart, president, gave an update on the installation of a smart buoy that uploads multiple readings from multiple depths every ten minutes.

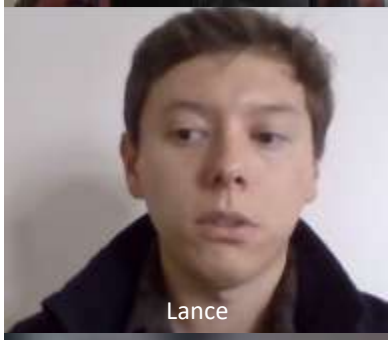
D. Trout Unlimited– Jake Lemon announced that fishing guide Kevin Feenstra is the speaker at the Schrems West Michigan Trout Unlimited event Newaygo Nature Night Out scheduled to start at 6 pm on February 4, 2026 at the River Stop Café in Newaygo.

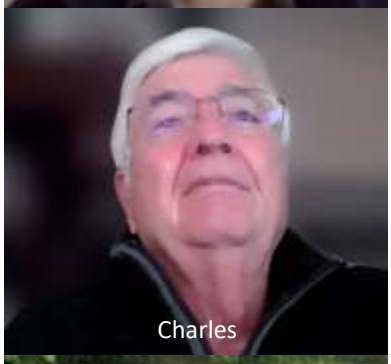
2. White River Fisheries Survey Below Hesperia Dam, July 2025—Mark Tonello, MDNR Fisheries, presented the overview results of tow-barge electrofishing survey of an 1800-foot stretch downstream from W. Michigan Ave., Hesperia (from the access at Vida Weaver Park), In addition to results, Tonello reported that temperature monitors were placed at Vida Weaver Park and 184th Ave. for the entire summer. Result: **HOT HOT HOT!** Going "by the book", way too hot for trout.

3. Update of Trout Unlimited Projects in White River Watershed—Matthias Bonzo, T.U. Project Coordinator, Michigan Lower Peninsula. Overview of the extensive work he is managing within the watershed.

- Culvert Replacements at numerous locations— East of White Cloud, at 4 Mile Rd on Mena Creek, and across Sand Creek at McKinley Rd., 116th Ave., and Arthur Rd., Oceana County.
- Habitat enhancement at five locations of Upper South Branch, Wilcox Township, Newaygo County
- Erosion mitigations on Carlton Creek
- Mena Creek possible USFS removal of Minnie Pond Dam, and the thermal impact study from 2022, Minnie Pond Campground, Lincoln Township, Newaygo, County.
- Improvements with parking for fishers' access at Podunk (184th Ave), Greenwood Township, Oceana County.

Jake


Lance

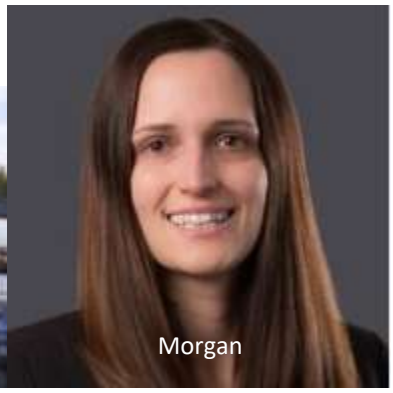

Charles

Mark

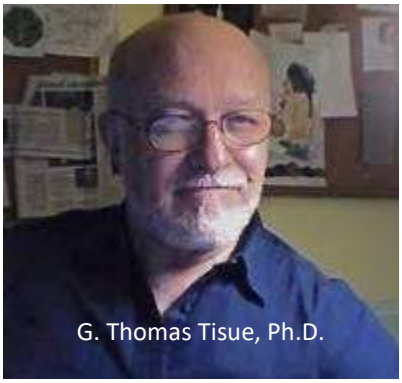
Matthias

4. Hesperia Dam Rehabilitation & Fish Passage Project—Morgan Carden, Project Engineer, GEI Consultants. Update on the project funded with the EGLE Dam Safety Disposition Feasibility Study grant awarded to the Village of Hesperia. Her report included highlights from the September 16, 2025 open house public meeting, and a summary of design alternatives with a cost estimates for the Labyrinth option.

Renderings of proposed design



Morgan



G. Thomas Tisue, Ph.D.

5. Tom Tisue Remembered– John Stivers, WRWP secretary reported on the loss of Tom Tisue, a WRWP's board members who made many contributions to numerous organizations once moving to West Michigan following retirement. Tom died on December 3, 2025 at 85.