Where two rivers meet; a convergence. The work of Six Rivers is centered in the convergence of personal values and action for stewardship of the natural world we are part of. These values are both at the root of, and have evolved from, the mores that underlie the public trust doctrine, which recognizes that nature affects everyone. We all have rights to access and responsibilities for stewardship. Public policy established to conserve and protect the nature we are part of has developed over millennia; in the last couple of centuries beginning to acknowledge the intrinsic value of natural systems and really only in the last century beginning to recognize the importance of preserving their functions as is, rather than treating them as assets to be parcelled out among the populace.

The core of Six Rivers’ mission is focused on working in the private sector with people who share our connection to nature and choose to invest their time and resources in protecting and experiencing it. This work is extremely rewarding, putting us in constant connection with others who share our commitments and values. It allows us to lead by example—our supporters act on their values, letting their actions be the statement they make to the larger world.

This is not enough. Individual action is powerful and critical to accomplishing our conservation mission. Public policy is also required to ensure that individually and collectively, people behave in a manner that preserves the integrity of the world we inhabit; for our benefit, the benefit of future generations, and for the benefit of its other inhabitants.

It is from this platform that we occasionally engage in public policy. Our work in this arena takes many forms; from assisting public partners with acquiring land for preserves and parks, to making sure elected officials know that we are here, what we are doing and what our supporters care about,

Continued on page 2
to sharing expertise on the impacts of potential public policies. Since we are not a typical advocacy organization, and because there are strict rules governing lobbying for non-profits, our public policy work is focused on education and engagement. The fact that our actions and the actions of our donors and supporters all result in conserving and providing access to more of our natural world provides powerful backing to our efforts.

Our work with the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) provides direct benefits to projects we are involved with, like the pending acquisition of 70+ acres of natural area preserve for White Lake Township in the headwaters region of the Huron River. It also has much larger benefits to our broader conservation and recreation interests, providing funding for acquisition and development of parks and preserves to communities throughout the region and the state. This is why we were excited in 2020, there will be a statewide ballot initiative to remove the cap from the MNRTF. This will ensure royalties from non-renewable resources on state lands — oil and gas and mineral production — will always be used to secure and permanently protect renewable resources on state lands.

Our congressional delegation was pleased to hear about the progress being made, grateful to be acknowledged for their role in this work, and all committed to ensuring the program remains a viable asset to support this public trust work. In the same vein, we shared our support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), a federal version of the MNRTF, which uses royalties from offshore oil and gas production to fund acquisition and development of land for conservation and recreation. As it turned out, just after we returned, congress acted to not only renew the LWCF but make it permanent, and shortly thereafter the President signed the bill into law.

On a side note but parallel track, I went to Denver in January to attend the Outdoor Industry Association’s winter show. The purpose here was two-fold—to meet with some of the representatives of both Michigan and national outdoor retailers and manufacturers to begin developing relationships to support our work, and understand efforts to create both national and state outdoor industry associations in support of conservation and outdoor recreation. There is a long history of collaboration among organizations and industry stemming from the hunting and fishing communities, but until recently there has been little cohesiveness among those always be used the growing field of outdoor recreation activities. This new effort is a big tent approach, intending to capture the users and those who supply them as well as organizations like ours, that work to ensure there are natural areas to explore and enjoy. It promises to be another powerful voice supporting our shared values.

The core of our work will always be focused on assisting landowners, community groups, and supporters who work to permanently protect and provide access to the natural and agricultural lands we cherish. As we go about this mission, we will continue to work at the confluence of public policy and private action.

Thank You!
Christopher Bunch, Executive Director

SIX RIVERS WELCOMES NEW DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Six Rivers is pleased to announce the appointment of Kristen Bunch as Development Director. Kristen joined the team last fall after working for the Michigan Land Use and Development and the Michigan Association of Counties. She also worked for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and now specializes in public relations, event planning and coordination, grant writing, website development, and community outreach. She provided executive level assistance to an eighteen-member intergovernmental organization and was the staff liaison for five local communities and Oakland County. She produced and implemented two Paint Creek Trail Recreation Master Plans that enhanced the trail experience and project management. Through her grant writing efforts, she raised over $750,000 for Paint Creek Trail improvements. She has served as Chair of the Oakland County Trail, Water, and Land Alliance (TWLA) for over seven years, and was awarded the 2012 TWLA Service Award for demonstrating significant and consistent support of improving the quality of life in Oakland County through strong leadership and legislative efforts. Most recently, Kristen represented Six Rivers and the Heart of the Lakes by testifying about land conservation, farmland preservation, and the outdoor recreation industry at the Michigan Senate’s Natural Resources Committees.

“I’m very excited to be working for Six Rivers Land Conservancy. It was a natural transition for me, as I was very familiar with the organization and their work. Fundraising is not always easy, but I have accepted the challenge because I believe that our work is important to enhance the quality of life for all citizens and visitors to Michigan; I want to do my part to ensure the natural beauty of our region is here for future generations to enjoy. Kristen holds a B.A. in Political Science from Oakland University and is a member of the Grant Professionals Association, American Association of Fundraising Professionals, the American Planning Association - Michigan Chapter, Michigan Recreation & Parks Association, and the Michigan Trails & Greenways Coalition.

Kristen and her husband, Michael, have two adult daughters and live in Rochester Hills. In her spare time, she likes to walk in nature with her dog, Daisy Mae, hike various parks and trails, read, travel, and teach herself new computer software programs. We welcome Kristen to Six Rivers!

SIX RIVERS AND YOU - Partners in Conservation

STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SPRING 2019 VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Date Location Time
May 3 Bear Creek Nature Park* 740 W. Snell Rd., Rochester, MI 48306 9:00am - 1:00pm
May 10 Blue Heron Environmental Area* 3320 Rochester Rd., Rochester, MI 48306 9:00am - 1:00pm
May 14 Maynard Farm Conservation Easement Email iableson@sixriversrlc.org for sign up and directions
May 17 Paint Creek Trail* 4480 Onion Rd., Rochester, MI 48306 9:00am - 1:00pm
May 22 Nicholson Nature Center 21777 Dunham Rd., Clinton Township, MI 48036 9:30am - 1:30pm
May 23 Cranberry Lake Park* 384 W. Pemrod Rd., Oakland, MI 48362 9:00am - 1:00pm
May 29 Sutherland Nature Sanctuary 3998 Diehl Rd., Metamora, MI 48455 9:00am - 1:00pm

*In partnership with Oakland Township Parks and Recreation

Thanks to Our 2019 Stewardship Sponsors

LOOKING FOR A MEANINGFUL INTERNSHIP?

Six Rivers has internship opportunities for invasive species mapping and eradication, stewardship planning, natural areas assessment, nest box monitoring, and other various experiences.

See www.sixriversrlc.org for more information on internships and other opportunities to contribute to the Nature Near You.
CISMA NEWS (COOPERATIVE INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT AREAS)

Last summer Six Rivers Land Conservancy became the fiduciary for both the Lake St. Clair CISMA operating in Macomb and St. Clair Counties, and the Oakland County CISMA. Six Rivers’ oversight will enhance the mission to conserve, sustain, and connect natural areas, lands, and waters. On February 14th, 2019 partners from both Oakland and Lake St. Clair CISMAs met to discuss the importance of working collectively on invasive species management and address ecological and socio-economic impacts, as well as issues and concerns felt by residents. Special guest speaker Janice Gilbert from the Invasive Poghmites Control Centre in Ontario offered valuable insights about the phragmites control efforts implemented in Canada.

LAKE ST. CLAIR CISMA EVENTS

As part of their continuing efforts to promote public awareness on the impact of invasive species and offer ways to combat their spread, Lake St. Clair CISMA is hosting a series of FREE events in 2019:

May 11: Garlic Mustard Pull, Burgess Shadbush Nature Center
June 15: Invasive Species Mapping Workshop
July 23: Red Swamp Crayfish Event
For details on these and all other Lake St. Clair CISMA events, visit us online at www.sixriversrlc.org/lsc-cisma

LAKE ST. CLAIR CISMA SEEKS GRANT

The Lake St. Clair CISMA is seeking $40,000 of Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding to implement a pilot project to control phragmites in select Macomb County drains. Partners of this grant include Candice Miller of Macomb County Department of Public Works, Oakland University, Shelby Township, Harrison Township, Clinton Township, and Great Lakes Phragmites Collaborative. Funding will be awarded in late spring 2019.

OAKLAND COUNTY CISMA HOSTS SUMMIT

On March 23, the Oakland County CISMA hosted a successful Spring Invasive Species Summit at Waterford Oaks Activity Center. Most of the over 100 attendees were landowners new to the CISMA. Presentations included information on the new aquatic invasive species European Frogbit and Red Swamp Crayfish, as well as the destructive fungus that causes oak wilt.

Emily DuThinh, Oakland County CISMA President, presented a workshop on invasive species identification. Native gardening and procedures for reporting invasive species were also covered.

LAKE ST. CLAIR CISMA SEEKS GRANT

Welcome Emily Messick – Oakland County CISMA Technician

Emily has experience in aquatic ecology in Michigan and holds a Bachelor’s degree in Biology. She is also working on her Master’s degree in Biology/Aquatic Ecology from Oakland University. Emily will spend her time with the CISMA surveying for priority invasive species including newly-discovered aquatic invader European Frogbit. In her spare time, Emily likes to travel to Michigan’s parks for camping, hiking, kayaking, biking, and occasional bird watching. Welcome Emily! emessick@sixriversrlc.org

OAKLAND COUNTY CISMA SEEKS GRANT

Lake St. Clair CISMA is hosting a variety of FREE events in 2019:

LAKE ST. CLAIR CISMA SEEKS GRANT

News from Ian Ableson, our Stewardship Technician

ABOUT FROGWATCH

FrogWatch is an environmental monitoring program that trains volunteer citizen scientists to gather data about frog populations by learning and listening for the calls of the various native species. Amphibian populations are excellent indicators of environmental health. Monitoring amphibian populations is vital to understanding the overall status of the ecosystems in which they live. Last February and March, the Detroit Zoo provided free FrogWatch training courses to pre-registered volunteers. While this year’s training opportunities are over, we encourage you to sign up for future FrogWatch training and monitoring sessions by emailing Ian Ableson at iableson@sixriversrlc.org.

CALLING FROGWATCH-TRAINED VOLUNTEERS!

If you were lucky enough to participate in the FrogWatch training courses at the Detroit Zoo last winter, now’s the time to put your acoustic monitoring knowledge to work! Six Rivers Land Conservancy has partnered with the Detroit Zoo to hold three acoustic monitoring events at Six Rivers’ preserves! During these evening events, we will explore some of our preserves in Oakland and Macomb Counties and use our acoustic monitoring skills to identify the species of frogs and bats in the surrounding habitat. For dates and locations, FrogWatch volunteers should email Ian Ableson at iableson@sixriversrlc.org or call 248-601-2816.

BAT MONITORING GOES HIGH-TECH!

Bats, meanwhile, are a little trickier to monitor by sound. Michigan bats use unique high-frequency sounds known as echolocation to locate their insect prey in the darkness. Unlike the frogs, we have yet to develop a method to listen for bats because their echolocation calls are too high for human ears. What we can do is use an Echo Meter—an attachment that plugs into a smartphone. Paired with software from Wildlife Acoustics, the Echo Meter translates echolocation to a frequency audible to human ears. Echo Meter technology is still being refined, but the current technology is capable of narrowing down a bat’s identity to a handful of species.

THREE ACOUSTIC GROUP MONITORING EVENTS COMING LATE SPRING/EARLY SUMMER!

For locations and times, go to www.sixriversrlc.org or contact Ian Ableson, Stewardship Technician. Phone: 248-601-2816 Email: iableson@sixriversrlc.org

From frogs to birds to invasive species, data collection by citizens can vastly improve our understanding and monitor changes in the Nature Near You.
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ROSEANN B. COMSTOCK LIVING TRUST
Last fall, we received notification that long time conservation and Six Rivers Land Conservancy supporter Roseann B. Comstock had passed away, and named Six Rivers as one of many charities to receive a gift from her estate. We are grateful for her charitable spirit and thoughtfulness to leave part of her legacy with us.

Planned giving is a wonderful way to show support for your favorite charities. If you are interested in learning how you can leave a legacy to Six Rivers and the Nature Near You, please contact us.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!
Donate anytime by using the enclosed envelope or securely online at: www.sixriverslc.org/donate
Our mission is to conserve, sustain, and connect natural areas, lands and waters that make the places we live special.

STAFF
Chris Bunch, Executive Director
Danielle Devlin, Land Protection Director
Kristen Myers, Development Director
Julia Owens, Administrative Manager
Ian Ableson, Stewardship Technician
Erica Clites, OC CISMA Coordinator
Emily Messick, OC CISMA Technician
McKenzi Bergmoser, LSC CISMA Coordinator

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Submit up to five photos celebrating the natural environment of southeastern Michigan. Entries will be accepted until September 3, 2019 and must be accompanied by a completed submission form. All photos that meet our guidelines will be eligible and available for public viewing. For complete rules, submission forms, and entry information, go to www.sixriversrlc.org.

JURIED CATEGORY
Submit jpeg files 5MB or greater. First, second, and third place winners will be determined by a distinguished panel of judges.
1st Place ...................... $200
2nd Place ...................... $150
3rd Place ...................... $100
Peoples Choice* ............... $150

ENTHUSIAST CATEGORY
Submit jpeg files less than 5MB. Peoples Choice* .................. $100
*People’s choice finalists will be selected by Six Rivers staff and attendees at Six Rivers’ Fall Celebration will select the winning Juried and Enthusiast entries.