

Appendix I



The Kawkawlin River Watershed Property Owners Association (KRWPOA) was formed in 1993 with the goal of raising awareness, promoting safety and addressing issues in the Kawkawlin River Watershed. Its primary focus today is recreation, safety, environmental stewardship, conservation, and water quality issues. To meet these goals, KRWPOA organizes and carries out a number of annual events, and participates in many ongoing activities. For example, KRWPOA promotes public access through the seasonal installation, maintenance, and removal of channel markers and a yearly river cleanup event to remove debris and hazards to navigation. The association also participates in numerous safety issues regarding boating and snowmobiling. Finally, KRWPOA members are active in the storm water management plan, water quality assessments as well as participation in the development of the Kawkawlin River Watershed Plan.

The KRWPOA would like to communicate the following position in regard to the developing watershed plan. Accepting that the following topics are interconnected issues that reflect the complexity of the Kawkawlin River Watershed; we would like to provide the following input.

KRWPOA members are concerned and active in the water quality issue. The KRWPOA has been a driving force in water quality awareness and continue to seek solutions to a myriad of problems associated with it. We accept that there are many contributing factors such as faulty sewer connections and failing

OSST'S (on site septic treatment systems) contributing to the e-coli problem in the watershed. Additionally, we understand that agricultural waste, soil erosion, decaying plant growth, and other causes may be contributing factors. We are certain that this issue can be addressed through inclusion in this new watershed plan.

We also believe that residual sedimentation plays an important role in the high levels of e-coli and many other issues. The accumulated sediment within the Kawkawlin River Watershed has many contributing factors and we believe has a direct influence on the following issues.

Silt sedimentation promotes the growth of additional and existing e-coli contamination. This along with the previously mentioned causes contributes to the very high e-coli count often present. This watershed does not have the sewage overflow issues of the Saginaw River but often has very high e-coli counts generally not connected to these seasonal events.

Weed growth has always been a concern of the KRWPOA. With the assistance of the DEQ and a property owner supported tax assessment the members of this association have attempted to abate the invasive weed growth within the Kawkawlin River and maintain it at a manageable level. We believe the excess plant growth is also propagated by e-coli, chemical nutrient runoff, and unnatural amounts of sedimentation all of which contributes to the algae and muck problems along the Saginaw Bay. The abatement and remediation of this sediment will be an important factor.

Flood control has always been an issue for farmland owners, residents, and Drain Commissioners within the watershed. The remediation of sediment will greatly improve the natural movement of storm water to the Saginaw Bay during catastrophic events. The restoration of former wetlands and creation of new appropriate wetlands will serve dual purpose. The wetland restoration and creation will provide nesting habitat for migratory fowl and

countless natural creatures. This activity will also become a floodwater retention point. The creation of wetlands will also allow sediment to settle into them thus reducing future accumulation within the waterway.

The restoration of fishery habitat is also connected to the sediment issue. After its abatement, gravel beds can be installed and the traditional spawning habitat of fish and other wildlife can be restored.

We fully understand that sediment abatement is not the final answer. This comprehensive watershed plan must also be sustainable. The abatement of sediment is pointless without a means to control future sedimentation. We endorse the promotion of filtration land strips along farm ditches and the Kawkawlin River banks. Many farmers utilize this method as an erosion control method as well as a means to prevent sediment from interfering with their drainage system. These strips also provide habitat for wildlife and contain chemical treatments within the fields.

We also support the proposed installation and maintenance of sediment traps at appropriate points in the watershed. This will serve to minimize further infiltration and contamination by sediment. The previously mentioned wetland restoration will greatly assist in filtering sediment during rain and flood events.

As previously stated the KRWPOA promotes safe access to this and all waterways. All citizens of Bay County have a riparian right to safely utilize the Kawkawlin River. This public resource is a valuable asset that enhances the quality of life in the watershed. A clean, navigable waterway with a high quality fishery promotes tourism and helps support the local economy. Sediment abatement

activities will improve access to a clean waterway, provide for safe navigation, and maintain a healthy fishery.

In conclusion we would like to communicate a summary of issues to be included in this comprehensive watershed plan:

- Sedimentation abatement to address many issues
- Resolution of the e-coli issue from all perspectives
- Habitat restoration for the fisheries, waterfowl, and flood control
- Flood control through sediment abatement and wetland restoration
- Insure the “Sustainability “of the restoration through the use of sediment traps, filter strips, and, other methods.
- Provide safe access for boating, fishing, and other recreation.

The KRWPOA has demonstrated that public access and water quality is an important component of our mission.

We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the development of the Kawkawlin River Watershed Plan.

We would like to thank everyone involved in this very important endeavor.

Representing the Kawkawlin River Watershed Property Owners Association

Tim Banaszak
President