



BY THE NUMBERS

PUBLIC EDUCATION

LGROW focused on public education and outreach for two targeted messages in 2018: Ultimate stormwater discharge location and potential impacts, and public reporting of illicit discharges. Information was conveyed through LGROW's social media accounts and website, as well as through many of the MS4 communities' news outlets. The LGROW website had 9,000+ unique visitors in 2018.

9,000+
SITE VISITORS

1,000+
FACEBOOK PAGE LIKES

3,000+

STUDENTS LAST SCHOOL YEAR

1,300+

ADDITIONAL STUDENTS FROM AUG - DEC 2018

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Over the 2017-2018 school year, LGROW worked directly with 3,000 students in 14 school districts. Through partnerships with Groundswell and GVSU, LGROW reached over 5,000 students and 100 teachers. Five place-based education projects were implemented. The 2018 school year started off strong with over 1,300 students reached from August through December 2018.

GRANT FUNDING

LGROW received over \$628,000 in grant funding during fiscal year 2018. LGROW worked directly on 18 different grants and partnered on an additional 6 grants by providing in-kind support to partners.

\$628K+

GRANT REVENUE IN FY18

WATERSHED WINS

The **Find My Watershed** tool on LGROW's website was updated and a 30-second video was created and advertised throughout the watershed. The video was viewed 120,419 times.



LGROW, Trout Unlimited, and Plaster Creek Stewards completed 50 site assessments through the **Grand River Rainscaping** program, helping homeowners assess their properties for potential application of green infrastructure practices.

Farmers in the Rogue River Watershed received \$35,000 to put conservation practices on over 50 acres through GVMC's Lower Grand River Habitat Restoration and Farmland Conservation Project - a **Regional Conservation Partnership Program** grant from the USDA.





GVMC is developing a **Watershed Project Plan**, which assesses the environmental and economic impact of the \$5 million Grand River habitat restoration portion of the USDA Regional Conservation Partnership Program.

LGROW inspected about 600 outfalls in **Separate Storm Sewer Systems** (MS4) permitted communities to identify/eliminate illicit connections and discharges. MS4 Permit Applications were submitted to the Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality.



In partnership with Trout Unlimited, LGROW helped educate and engage 72 young girls through Science, Technology, Recreation, Environment, Art and Math (**STREAM**) activities to investigate, record, and analyze data and discuss their empirical findings.

WATERSHED WINS

LGROW, along with MGROW (Middle Grand) and UGRWA (Upper Grand) are working to designate the 252-mile Grand River as a State **Water Trail**, which will feature access points, historical and natural features, mile markers, and trail maps to assist paddlers.



LGROW hosted the first **Watershed Jamboree** on September 13, 2018, bringing together 13 subwatershed groups in the Lower Grand River Watershed. A new citizen-led Friends of Coldbrook Creek group was established as a result of the event.

The West Michigan Watershed Collaborative received \$50,000 from the **Regional Prosperity Initiative**, which allows LGROW and its regional partners to pursue a mechanism to collect voluntary watershed contributions to fund watershed projects.

Grand Rapids Whitewater (GRWW), in partnership with LGROW and the Grand Rapids Public Museum, hosted a **Summer Science and Leadership Program** for 9 high school students, engaging them in hands-on learning for 2 weeks in the Grand River.



LGROW's **Data Repository** is ready for water quality data to be entered into the system. School groups, citizens, and municipalities can collect and submit data to this site, which is then accessible to the community to understand more about their local waterway.

LGROW, Trout Unlimited, Kent Conservation District, and Plainsong Farm initiated **Seasons on the Farm** by engaging students in practical, immersive farm-based environmental education, focused on sustainable agriculture and stewardship practices.



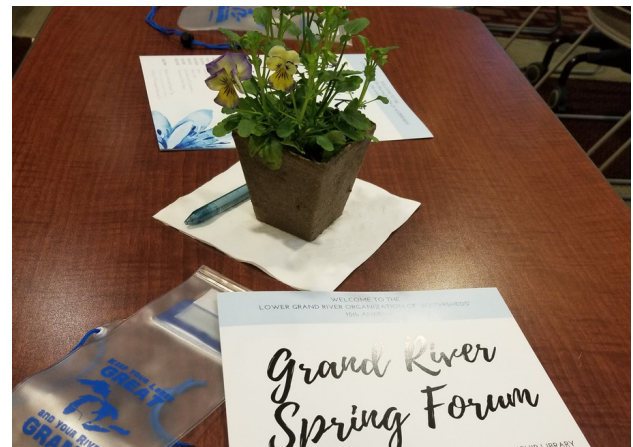
LGROW SPRING FORUM

Friday, May 11th, 2018 LGROW hosted its 15th annual Grand River Spring Forum. With around 100 guests in attendance and 17 speakers, the event was engaging and educational.

Attendees heard from experts, passionate community members, and even students, while learning about the importance of water management. Coming together as a community to talk about these subjects is critical when it comes to improving and maintaining our water quality.

Connections were made and partnerships formed. High School students presented local watershed projects that they are working on as a part of their science curriculum, and a 'Passing of the Paddle' Ceremony was held to transition the LGROW Executive Board (2 year terms).

LGROW's 2019 Spring Forum will be held at Blandford Nature Center on May 17. This event is open to the public! Reserve your seat today at www.lgrow.org.



2019 GOALS

in alignment with the three long-term goals outlined in LGROW's Strategic Plan

Goal #1: Healthy Watersheds

Install practices to manage stormwater runoff
Update Natural Connections maps

Goal #2: Engaged Community

Public Education Focus:
Management of riparian lands
Household hazardous waste management

Goal #3: Robust Organization

Grow our network of partners
Create a Subwatershed Committee

As our team grows and our programs expand, LGROW builds its network with existing partnerships and forges new relationships to ensure that our water resources are safe for swimming, fishing, and drinking, and that everyone is able to experience these benefits. An organization like LGROW is more important than ever in this time of ever-increasing demands and stresses on our water resources. The dedication of our Board of Directors, Committee members, and watershed partners continues to inspire us to meet the mission and vision of LGROW. I'm looking forward to seeing how we "GROW" in 2019!

Wendy Ogilvie

Director of Environmental Programs, GVMC



LGROW IN THE PRESS

Stay up to date with what LGROW is doing by following us on social media, visiting lgrow.org, and by watching and reading about us in the press.

Grand Haven Tribune:
Storm drains tested for illicit discharge
June 2018

Rapid Growth Media:
If you live in West Michigan, these are the people keeping your most valuable resource alive
August 2018

GRTV:
City Connection: LGROW & Grand River
September 2018

Michigan Water Environment Association Magazine:
West Michigan's Regional Approach to Eliminate Illicit Discharge
Fall 2018

LOWER GRAND RIVER
ORGANIZATION *of* **WATERSHEDS**



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LGROW is an agency of the Grand Valley Metro Council, which puts LGROW in a unique position to blend non-governmental organizations with the local governments in the watershed.

GVMC