



A Coalition of Organizations Protecting Michigan's People and the Environment



PHOTO RON AUSTING

The Kirtland's warbler nests only in young jack pine stands. The population has rebounded from fewer than 200 pairs to close to 2,000.

## Is it time to take the Kirtland's warbler off the Endangered list?

The Kirtland's warbler is North America's rarest songbird. They winter in the Bahamas, and more than 90 percent return to jack pine forests in northern Michigan each spring.

Sounds like a pretty nice life, but the warbler has had a rough go of it. Twice in the past 40 years its population has dipped below 170 breeding pairs as modern forest fire suppression changed its habitat by eliminating the newly grown jack pine scrub forests that emerge from fire-scarred landscapes.

However, thanks to the efforts of government agencies, nonprofits and concerned citizens, there are now roughly 2,000 breeding

pairs. Conservation leaders say that means it's time to remove Kirtland's warbler from the federal Endangered Species list, where it's been since 1973.

We checked in with Abigail Ertel from Huron Pines, a Gaylord-based nonprofit whose mission is to conserve the forests, lakes and streams of northeast Michigan. She's the coordinator for the effort to ensure that the Kirtland's warbler continues to survive and thrive after leaving behind the protections and funding of the Endangered Species Act.

See **Kirtland's warbler success**, page 4

### Message for the governor

This University of Michigan PhD and 133 of his colleagues have a pointed message for Gov. Rick Snyder.

But they hope they never have to deliver it to him. Find out why on page 6 inside.





602 W. Ionia Street  
 Lansing, MI 48933-1015  
 (517) 487-9539  
 E-mail: [info@environmentalcouncil.org](mailto:info@environmentalcouncil.org)  
 Website: [www.environmentalcouncil.org](http://www.environmentalcouncil.org)  
[twitter.com/MichEnvCouncil](https://twitter.com/MichEnvCouncil)  
[facebook.com/MichiganEnvironmentalCouncil](https://facebook.com/MichiganEnvironmentalCouncil)

**PURPOSE**

Founded in 1980, MEC is a coalition of over 60 environmental and public health organizations with more than 200,000 individual members. For 33 years, MEC has provided a voice for the environment at the State Capital. In addition to serving as a clearinghouse of environmental information, MEC develops public policy, educates elected officials and the public, and provides training and support to member organizations.

*Michigan Environmental Report* is an official publication of the **Michigan Environmental Council**. Copyright 2013.

**OFFICERS**

- Chair** Christine Green, At-Large Member
- Vice Chair** Alexander (Sandy) Lipsey, At-Large Member
- Vice Chair** Terry Miller, Lone Tree Council
- Vice Chair** Pamela Smith, At-Large Member
- Treasurer** Tom Bissonnette, At-Large Member
- Secretary** Christopher Graham, Michigan Natural Areas Council

**BOARD MEMBERS**

- Lisa Brush, Stewardship Network
- Rick Bunch, At-Large Member
- Keith Cooley, At-Large Member
- Rachel Hood, West Michigan Environmental Action Council
- Robert Martel, At-Large Member
- Gloria Rivera, Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
- Phil Roos, At-Large Member
- Jamie Scripps, At-Large Member
- Grenetta Thomassey, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council
- Yvonne White, NAACP-Michigan State Conference
- Lisa Wozniak, Michigan League of Conservation Voters Education Fund

**STAFF**

- President & CEO** Chris Kolb
- Office Manager & Assistant to the President** Judy Bearup
- Policy Director** James Clift
- Director of Finance & Development** Andy Draheim
- Communications Specialist** Elizabeth Fedorchuk
- Deputy Policy Director** Tim Fischer
- Energy Program Director** David Gard
- Director of Conservation & Emerging Issues** Brad Garmon
- Development Specialist** Kate Madigan
- Communications Director** Hugh McDiarmid, Jr.
- Development & Communications Associate** Andy McGlashen
- Health Policy Director** Tina Reynolds
- Special Projects Assistant** Kim Rustem
- Policy Associate** Dan Sommerville
- Community Outreach Director** Sandra Turner-Handy

**AFFILIATED STAFF**

- Transportation for Michigan Coordinator** Kathryn Gray
- Zero Waste Detroit Organizer** Ahmina Maxey

**MER Design & Layout** Rose Homa Design

Printed on 100% post-consumer content paper with vegetable-based ink.



**QUOTABLE**

**“Without biodiversity, the world could not sustain basic life-support processes such as the production of breathable air or the purification of water.”**

*—Bradley Cardinale, PhD, professor at the University of Michigan School of Natural Resources*

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

**FEATURE STORIES**

- 1 Is it time to take the Kirtland’s warbler off the Endangered list?
- 1 Message for the governor

**PRESIDENT’S COLUMN**

- 3 2013: Could this be the Year of Climate Change Action?
- 3 Bell ringers: Environmental successes won in recent weeks

**FEATURE STORIES - CONTINUED**

- 4 Is it time to take the Kirtland’s warbler off the Endangered list?
- 4 Warbler tours, presentations and more!
- 5 Michigan Quiz: What do you know about the Kirtland’s warbler?
- 6 133 Michigan scientists have a message for Governor Rick Snyder: Just say no

**LAND STEWARDSHIP**

- 7 Transportation for Michigan blog: Simplifying wonky policy work so the rest of us understand what’s going on

**AWARDS CELEBRATION HIGHLIGHTS**

- 8 Governor Milliken joins honorees at MEC’s 15<sup>th</sup> annual awards event

**MEC IN THE NEWS**

- 10 MEC overheard in the news

**PRESIDENT’S COLUMN - CONTINUED**

- 11 Could this be the year?

- 12 **MEC MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS**

# 2013: Could this be the Year of Climate Change Action?



Chris Kolb

The issue of climate change has remained more or less “in the closet” for the last four years. That changed when President Obama gave his major speech on climate change in June. His platform includes:

- The first ever federal regulations on carbon dioxide emissions from existing power plants;
- Doubling the generation of renewable energy from federal lands; and
- Providing \$8 billion in federal loan guarantees for investment in clean technologies that prevent carbon dioxide emissions from being released into the air.

Then on September 20, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced its proposed rules on carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from new power plants, requiring them to

cut emissions so that they are almost half what existing power plants emit. These proposed Clean Air Act standards will dramatically reduce carbon pollution from new power plants, with the goal to “combat climate change and improve public health,” according to the EPA.

In late September, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was slated to release its *Fifth Assessment Report on Climate Change*. The report provides near certainty that human activity through the burning of fossil fuels is the primary cause of global surface temperature increases. It warns that, if we don't alter our activities, we'll see increasingly dangerous consequences, including extreme heat waves, difficulty growing food, and sea level increases of three feet by the end of this century.

Back in 2008, when interviewing for the MEC president's position, I was asked, “What is the most impor-

tant environmental issue or threat facing us?” My answer was short

and concise (maybe the only one that was that day!), “Climate change.” I have never wavered in my belief that climate change is the greatest environmental challenge and threat we face today.

Listening to Peter Sinclair's lecture titled “Communicating Climate Science in the Disinformation Era” at the U of M Ross School of Business recently, my belief was solidified by one of his statements. “We are at an unprecedented moment in history; our decisions in the next few years will impact our children for 100,000 years—(thousands of) generations of our children.” The decisions we as a country, and globally, make will impact the world that our children

See **Could this be the year?** page 11



## Bell ringers! Environmental successes won in recent weeks

In each issue of the *Michigan Environmental Report*, we celebrate accomplishments by MEC and member groups.

### Hello governor

MEC staffers were humbled that Gov. William Milliken was a last-minute RSVP for our Awards Event July 10. Milliken flew from Traverse City to Willow Run Airport to honor his biographer, Dave Dempsey, who received MEC's Helen & William Milliken Distinguished Service Award (see related photo essay). There's a reason we named the award after the governor and his late wife. Both of them—as well as Dempsey—made significant and ongoing contributions to protection Michigan for future generations.

### Wi-Fi on board

Amtrak trains in Michigan will soon carry onboard Wi-Fi after the Michigan Transportation Commission approved a contract for the service in August. The connection will be provided to passengers at no additional cost and should be available in early 2014, according to Amtrak officials. The service is one more step in making Michigan's transportation system truly diverse and accommodating.

### Bicycles too

Oh yeah, bicycles are now welcome on some Amtrak trains. The Blue Water (Detroit/Chicago) line trains #364 and #365 were slated to start accepting bikes for an additional \$10 charge on Sept. 6. Amtrak expects that other trains and lines will be offering the bike service in the near future. A gradual, but important, step toward fully integrating our transportation systems!

### But we told you!

Remember how critics predicted that renewable electricity would bankrupt Michigan with high costs back in 2008 when the Michigan Legislature passed our renewable energy standard? DTE Energy is dropping its \$3 renewable surcharge to 43 cents. Consumers Energy may eliminate their surcharge altogether. The biggest reason is the continuing drop in the cost to produce electricity from Michigan wind turbines. We won't say we told you so.

### Kirtland's warbler success — from page 1

**MEC: It might seem strange to some people that a conservation group wants to remove a species from the Endangered Species list and the protections and resources it affords. Why is delisting Kirtland's warbler a good thing?**

**Abigail:** In the case of Kirtland's warbler there is a strong, successful history of a variety of partners working together to help the population return from the brink of extinction. State and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations and academic institutions all have worked diligently to determine what the warbler needs on the landscape to survive. The birds need large tracts of dense jack pine aged 5-20 years, with low branches to provide cover for their ground nests. They also need active removal of brown-headed cowbirds from nesting areas because the cowbirds directly decrease the warbler's nesting success. That work has paid off. Last year's census reported more than 2,000 breeding pairs of warblers, and population numbers have been above the recovery goal of 1,000 breeding pairs for over a decade. This success has led the conservation community to recognize that a conversation about the future of Kirtland's warbler needs to be reevaluated.

Huron Pines is working to usher Kirtland's warbler off the Endangered Species list because it's the right next step for the species, for the partners who have been working on its recovery, and for conservation. By transitioning the species from recovery to long-term survival, the objective of the Endangered Species Act is fully achieved. And while Kirtland's warbler continues its adventure away from

the Act's protections, another species whose future is still uncertain can benefit from the funding once dedicated to the warbler.

Delisting isn't the end of the warbler's story or the challenges the species faces to survive. It presents a new opportunity for the public and private sectors to support and sustain the legacy of conservation surrounding the warbler and to help launch a new framework for successful natural resource protection.

**MEC: Kirtland's warbler is considered a conservation-reliant species. Can you talk a little about what that means, and what special challenges it creates for protecting the bird after delisting?**

**Abigail:** A conservation-reliant species is one that depends on human actions to provide what it needs to survive and thrive. There are varying degrees of this reliance, but in the case of the Kirtland's warbler, every element of its success is dependent on management decisions and priorities set by people. This is because it chooses to nest in a very particular type of habitat, and its small population size is particularly susceptible to threats. That a 100% conservation-reliant species like the warbler is a candidate for delisting is really exciting.

Although Kirtland's warbler nests in some areas of Wisconsin and southern Ontario, the vast majority of the population nests in the jack pine forests of Michigan—a habitat that itself is rare, existing in a restricted range. The jack pine forest depends on fire for re-growth. Fires allow the cones of the jack pine to open, and the freshly burned soil provides the right growing conditions for the seeds. In recent decades, wildfires have been suppressed, leaving resource managers to mimic this natural process primarily through harvesting and replanting young jack pine seedlings. This practice provides the necessary nesting conditions for Kirtland's warbler to reproduce successfully while also ensuring that other wildlife and plants that are part of the jack pine forest thrive without the presence of fire.

Brown-headed cowbirds, not native to Michigan, pose the largest threat to Kirtland's warbler. Cowbirds lay their eggs in the nests of other birds. Some species can recognize the foreign egg, but the warbler cannot, so it ends up raising the cowbird nestling to the detriment of its own young. Recognizing the impact this was having, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began trapping and removing cowbirds from Kirtland's warbler nesting sites. Prior to this effort, fewer than one warbler nestling survived per nest on average. That figure has since increased to over three per nest.

Without continued habitat management and cowbird trapping, there is significant potential for the warbler

## Warbler tours and more!

To get involved by going on a Kirtland's warbler tour, scheduling a presentation for your group, making a contribution or joining the Kirtland's Warbler Network mailing list, please visit [kirtlandswarbler.org](http://kirtlandswarbler.org) or contact Abigail Ertel at (989) 448-2293 ext. 14 or [abby@huronpines.org](mailto:abby@huronpines.org).



Abigail Ertel

Michigan Audubon, which supports the delisting effort, provides guided tours each year from May 15 to July 4 with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Information on those tours is available at [www.michiganaudubon.org/kirtlandswarbler](http://www.michiganaudubon.org/kirtlandswarbler) or by calling 517-641-4277.

population to decline once more. Both programs take time, money and people to make them happen. Those resources now are provided in part through Endangered Species Act funding that will cease when the species is delisted.

Huron Pines is working to broaden the base of support to make sure conservation for the warbler and jack pine forest continues to be a priority after delisting. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, with the support of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, awarded Huron Pines \$200,000 in 2012 to begin building a community stakeholder group and developing a fundraising campaign. The group—the Kirtland’s Warbler Alliance—will have the responsibility of advocating for the warbler with legislators, community leaders and people across the nation so that programs critical to its survival remain a priority. This initiative will provide a strong model for other Endangered Species efforts across the country.

**MEC: OK, now for a little devil’s advocate: Why should we continue putting so much money, time and effort into protecting this one species? Why should people who aren’t bird enthusiasts care about the warbler?**

**Abigail:** Management for Kirtland’s warbler doesn’t just benefit the warbler—it is important for the health of the entire jack pine forest. Areas of jack pine are clear-cut and replanted on a 50-year schedule so young forest continues to grow and support species like white-tailed deer, wild turkey, bear, and snowshoe hare, all of which are important species biologically and economically. Outdoor recreationists, hunters, economic leaders, business owners and representatives from the timber industry—just to name a few—have a stake in seeing management

for Kirtland’s warbler continue into the future.

It’s also important for the people and communities of northeast Michigan to understand that jack pine is what our region has because of the sandy soils left here 14,000 years ago after the retreat of the glaciers.

Because of these soils, this region has things like cold, clear groundwater-fed trout streams, jack pine and Kirtland’s warbler. Working to protect the warbler ensures this region’s unique and defining natural resources are afforded long-term protection.

—By *Andy McGlashen, MEC*

MICHIGAN QUIZ

What do you know about the Kirtland’s warbler?

- 1 The first Kirtland’s warbler was identified from a specimen collected on Dr. Jared Kirtland’s farm in 1851. The farm was near:
  - a. Mio, MI
  - b. Roscommon, MI
  - c. Cleveland, OH
  - d. Windsor, CAN
- 2 A pair of Kirtland’s warblers needs eight acres of what kind of habitat to nest?
  - a. Inshore sand dunes
  - b. Old growth white pine
  - c. Young jack pine
  - d. Suburban chemically treated lawn
- 3 Until 1995, the warblers were known to nest only in the northern Lower Peninsula of Michigan. Today, they also nest where?
  - a. The Upper Peninsula
  - b. Wisconsin
  - c. Canada
  - d. All of the above
- 4 Kirtland’s warblers declined to 167 nesting pairs in 1987. The primary cause was what?
  - a. Fire suppression-created habitat loss
  - b. Fire retardants in the food chain
  - c. Poaching
  - d. Invasive warbler mites from Europe
- 5 The number of nesting pairs in 2011 was?
  - a. 355
  - b. 900
  - c. 1,828
  - d. 5,543
- 6 Warblers nest:
  - a. On the ground
  - b. In tree branches
  - c. On fence posts and stumps
  - d. All of the above
- 7 In 1985, a wayward tank driver from the Michigan National Guard’s Camp Grayling crashed through restricted warbler habitat. What happened?
  - a. Protesters forced him to move out of state.
  - b. He was issued a \$105 ticket by a DNR conservation officer.
  - c. He was jailed for 90 days and released after 8 days.
  - d. He received 45 stitches after angry warblers attacked.
- 8 Kirtland’s warblers spend the winter in:
  - a. Semi-hibernation
  - b. Hollow trees
  - c. Bahamas and in the Turks, Caicos, and Hispaniola islands
  - d. Brazil
- 9 Cowbirds are a threat to Kirtland’s warblers because:
  - a. They kill warblers to defend territory.
  - b. They lay eggs in warbler nests.
  - c. They out-compete warblers for food.
  - d. They are just plain mean.
- 10 The Kirtland’s warbler is not the state bird. Why?
  - a. It’s a conspiracy of the powerful robin lobby in Lansing.
  - b. We honestly are dumbfounded.
  - c. Because that would make too much sense.
  - d. Discrimination against dull colored birds.

Answers: 1-C; Cleveland (although it was not nesting there); 2-C; Jack pine; 3-D; All of the above; 4-A; Fire suppression; 5-C; 1,828; 6-A; Ground; 7-B; A ticket; 8-C; The Bahamas; 9-B; Nest parasites; 10: They all sound about right.

# 133 Michigan scientists have a message for Governor Rick Snyder: Just say no

This is an edited version of a Q&A originally published on MEC's blog, Michigan Distilled. To read the full version, visit [www.michigandistilled.org](http://www.michigandistilled.org).

We asked University of Michigan School of Natural Resources Professor Bradley Cardinale, PhD, to answer some of our questions about the anti-biodiversity Senate Bill 78. The legislation would redefine the term "biodiversity" in state law and prohibit state agencies from designating public lands to protect biological diversity. The bill passed the State Senate and was pending in the Michigan House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee at press time.



Bradley Cardinale

"If (Gov. Snyder) signs SB 78 into law, he will do so against the best advice of his state's leading academic scientists."

Cardinale, whose work focuses on the challenges of protecting biodiversity, has been working to point out the far-reaching ramifications of the bill. He and 133 other PhD-level professors representing 13 Michigan universities have signed a letter urging Gov. Rick Snyder to veto SB 78 should it reach his desk.

\*\*\*

## Tell us about your letter to the governor. And you have not yet sent it, is that right? When will you?

Very simply, this letter says that SB 78 is scientifically unsound. People have objected to SB 78 for a whole variety of reasons. The 133 scientists who signed this letter object to SB 78 because it would take away our ability to protect biodiversity in Michigan and this would jeopardize the health, productivity, and sustainability of Michigan's public lands. We have prepared this letter in the event that the House of Representatives passes SB 78. At that point, we will submit our letter to Governor Snyder. If he signs SB 78 into law, he will do so against the best advice of his state's leading academic scientists.

## At last count, 133 Michigan scientists have signed the letter. Who are they, and what kinds of knowledge and experience do they represent?

All of the individuals who signed this letter are professors who teach and do research at one of 14 Michigan

universities. All have PhDs and represent fields including ecology, forestry, fisheries and wildlife, economics, and statistics. Several are chairs of their respective schools, and some are decorated emeritus professors. Collectively, this group has thousands of years of professional experience and has published thousands of peer-reviewed scientific articles detailing how people impact nature and how nature impacts people.

## Why do you think this legislation has generated so much concern within Michigan's scientific community? What parts are most problematic to you as a scientist?

Many people may not be aware that all renewable natural resources ultimately come from biodiversity. Without biodiversity, the world could not sustain basic life-support processes such as the production of breathable air or purification of water. Without biodiversity, you could not sustainably produce food, fiber or wood, and you could not control pests and disease. Without biodiversity, you would not have the genetic resources needed to develop renewable sources of energy like biofuels, to develop new crops that are resistant to pests or disease, or to develop microbes that can clean up pollution. Without biodiversity, you wouldn't have the recreational benefits of hiking, fishing or hunting, the tourism dollars from those who want to spend time enjoying the great outdoors, or the health benefits that people get from nature.

## We know many scientists are reticent to get involved in politics. Has this proposed legislation brought some of them out of the shadows? Why?

It has indeed brought many researchers out of the 'shadows.' Historically, professors have been hesitant to translate their science into policy recommendations for fear that it might compromise the objectivity of their research, or be viewed as a conflict of interest. But that perspective is changing as more researchers realize we can no longer afford to sit in the ivory tower and talk to each other. We need to do more 'actionable science' that can solve environmental problems and help people cope with a changing world. And more scientists are realizing they are in the best position to interpret their research and make recommendations to society on how to use it.

Policies like SB 78 foster the feeling among scientists that we need to speak up more. SB 78 is so scientifically illiterate and ill-informed that we had no choice but to tell Governor Snyder that this is a terrible idea for Michigan.

**SB 78 supporters like to say there are more than 20 laws or programs that adequately protect management of state lands for biodiversity. Do you think that's accurate? How might this legislation impact those programs and laws?**

I have repeatedly heard Senator Casperson—sponsor of SB 78—claim that Michigan has 20 or more laws that protect biodiversity, so we don't need any more. His claims are, at best, an exaggeration. At worst, he is intentionally trying to mislead people into thinking his bill won't hinder our ability to protect biodiversity.

Certainly, we do have laws in Michigan that help protect biodiversity, and these are complemented by national laws like the Endangered Species Act. But collectively, these have not done a particularly good job at protecting Michigan's biological heritage. Michigan is one of the world's hotspots for invasive species. Michigan forests have been severely degraded by pests and disease. Michigan has more than 60 highly polluted superfund sites. And we have a long list of imperiled species in this state that are teetering on the edge of extinction. To suggest we are doing a good job of protecting our natural resources and don't need to act further, is just plain silly.

Senator Casperson claims that the intent of his legislation is to stop a specific program—the Michigan Department of Natural Resource's Living Legacies initiative. This initiative is a conservation plan that creates a statewide network of Biological Stewardship Areas (BSAs) intended to protect the diversity of Michigan's flora and fauna. Despite abundant documentation to the contrary, Casperson believes BSAs would limit people's access to public land and curb economic benefits like logging and mining. ■

## Transportation for Michigan blog: Simplifying wonky policy work so the rest of us understand what's going on

**W**ant to know why a Detroit highway widening project is a terrible idea? Or how better public transportation systems could reduce asthma rates? Or why a convoluted proposed transfer of state education dollars to fund public transit was dead on arrival at the State Capitol?

The Transportation for Michigan (Trans4M) coalition's dynamic news blog is the place to find these answers and learn much more about the status of public transportation policy in Michigan (click on "blog" at [www.trans4m.org](http://www.trans4m.org)).

Written by a talented team of Trans4M staffers, fellows and members, the blog has become a go-to resource for Michiganders tracking the progress of key transportation initiatives like the fledgling Southeast Michigan Regional Transit Authority (RTA), legislative proposals to fund road and bridge repairs, and the experience of local Michigan communities in building Complete Streets policies that nurture bike- and pedestrian-friendly towns and neighborhoods.

"The Trans4M blog is one of the key tools we use to spread the word about the vital work going on in Lansing, in local communities, and among transportation advocates across the state," said Kathryn Gray, Trans4M coordinator. "We try to keep it conversational—condensing wonky policy information into something accessible to everybody."

Transportation for Michigan is a statewide coalition working to create a stronger Michigan through transportation policy reform that will revitalize Michigan's cities and towns, reconnect its people to opportunity, and spark a healthier economy. The Michigan Environmental Council is a core and founding partner in Trans4M. Coalition partners include nonprofits, businesses, policymakers, environmental groups, planners, academic institutions and others.

The coalition scored a huge success last year with legislation creating the RTA. Partners are now coordinating efforts to ensure the authority is successful in bringing reliable, safe and affordable transportation choices to residents in the Detroit region.

"For us, passage of the RTA was just a beginning," said Gray. "We're in it for the long haul, and our blog is a fun and important way of keeping supporters and allies up to date on what's happening behind the headlines." ■

## AWARDS CELEBRATION HIGHLIGHTS



### *Governor Milliken joins honorees at MEC's 15<sup>th</sup> annual awards event*

Former Michigan Governor William Milliken headlined a roster of more than 175 friends and supporters who packed the City Club in Ann Arbor this summer for the Michigan Environmental Council's 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Environmental Awards Celebration.

Author, activist, historian and policy expert Dave Dempsey received MEC's *Helen & William Milliken Distinguished Service Award* during the ceremony. Bob Andrus—a tireless volunteer who coordinates river restoration and protection in

the Au Sable River watershed—received MEC's *Petoskey Prize for Environmental Leadership*.

Gov. Milliken—whose career was profiled by Dempsey in the biography *William G. Milliken: Michigan's Passionate Moderate*, flew in from Traverse City to honor his biographer and friend. Attendees included a number of elected officials and members of Gov. Rick Snyder's administration; friends, allies and member group representatives from across the state; and donors, supporters and sponsors of MEC's policy work. ■



Above: Gov. William Milliken and MEC President Chris Kolb with awardees Dave Dempsey (left) and Bob Andrus (right).

At left, Dempsey and wife Jennifer Morris; Andrus receives applause; Kolb with a big check for Andrus; and the crowd was standing room only.

# AWARDS CELEBRATION HIGHLIGHTS

## Special thanks to our 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Celebration Sponsors

### Superior

AT&T Michigan  
The ServiceMaster Company

### Michigan

BOSCH  
Lois R. DeBacker  
Steven & Sheila Hamp  
Jerry & Eve Jung  
Olson, Bzdok & Howard  
Henry & Lana Pollack  
Phil & Kate Roos

### Huron

Joan Binkow  
Vivian Day & John Stroh  
Steve & Judy Dobson  
General Motors  
Christopher & Elaine Graham  
Philip & Christine Green  
Indian Trails, Inc.  
Tom Kinnear  
Betty Jo Kolb  
Chris Kolb & Ken Witherspoon  
David & Martha Krehbiel  
Bob Martel & Lisa Sessa  
Sally & Bill Martin  
Libby Maynard & Olof Karlstrom  
Michael Penskar & Maureen Martin  
Quicken Loans  
Marianne Udow-Phillips & Bill Phillips  
Leonard & Margaret Weber

### Erie

Vic & Michelle Adamo  
America's Natural Gas Alliance  
Anglers of the Au Sable  
Ann Arbor Brewing Company  
Anonymous  
John Austin  
Lisa & Jim Baker  
Doug Bauer  
Rich & Judy Bearup  
Rosina Bierbaum  
Lauren Bigelow & Ron Reed  
Tom & Molly Bissonnette  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan  
Janis Bobrin & Mike Allemang  
Mary C. Brown & Donald J. Brown  
Bunyan Bryant & Jean Carlberg  
Jonathan & Trudy Bulkley  
Byrum Fisk Advocacy Communications  
James Clift & Wendi Tilden  
Columbia Asset Management  
Consumers Energy  
Martha Darling & Gilbert Omenn  
Delta Air Lines  
Jack & Suzanne Dempsey  
Michael Dempsey  
Detroit RiverFront Conservancy  
The Honorable John Dingell & Debbie Dingell



Sandy & Jerry Draheim  
Shanna & Andy Draheim  
DTE Energy Company  
Jeremy Emmi & Karen Meagher  
EQ - The Environmental Quality Company  
Matt & Elizabeth Fedorchuk  
Beverly Ghesquiere  
Elizabeth Goodenough & James (Gil) Leaf  
Paul & Nancy Hillegonds  
Rebecca Humphries  
John Hunting  
Ingham County Drain Commissioner Patrick Lindemann & Deputies Carla Clos & Paul Pratt  
Don Inman & Virginia Pierce  
Issue Media Group  
ITC Holdings Corp.  
Drs. Kent & Mary Johnson  
The Honorable Alexander Lipsey & Anne Wend Lipsey

Elaine Ludwig  
Maner Costerisan  
Meijer  
Michigan Association for Justice  
Michigan State University  
Midwest Strategy Group  
Muchmore Harrington Smalley & Associates, Inc.  
The Nature Babes  
Carol & Wade Peacock  
Petoskey Plastics  
Porter Family Foundation  
Phil & Kathy Power  
Public Sector Consultants  
St. Michael Catholic Community  
Grant & Mary Trigger  
U.S. Steel  
United Auto Workers  
University of Michigan  
Melvin & Gloria Visser  
Western Michigan University  
Tom & Anne Woiwode

Top, clockwise from left: Governor Milliken greets MEC Board Member Keith Cooley; more than a dozen friends and supporters came downstate to honor Bob Andrus; MEC Board Member Tom Bissonnette with wife Molly; sponsors Jerry Jung (left) and Simon Whitelocke.

Below, from left: Dusty Fancher talks with Julie Stoneman; MEC Board members at the event, from left, Rachel Hood, Christopher Graham, Pamela Smith, Phil Roos, Lisa Brush and Tom Bissonnette; Joan Wolfe (r) chats with Mary Lee Orr; jazz musicians set the mood.



### MEC OVERHEARD IN THE NEWS

"Our concern is with the proximity to the Great Lakes. You've got the world's greatest freshwater resource a mile away from this material. If anything should go wrong, it jeopardizes the water that is the lifeblood of Michigan and the Great Lakes region."

—MEC's Hugh McDiarmid in an Aug. 20 Michigan Radio story about a proposed Canadian nuclear waste dump a mile from the Lake Huron shore

"What we are asking of Governor Snyder is that he require Enbridge, the oil company, to immediately replace this old pipeline with the best and safest technology available."

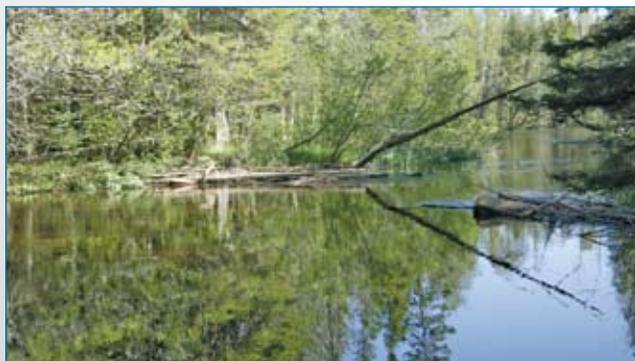
—MEC's Kate Madigan in a July 9 UpNorthLive story on a rally at the Mackinac Bridge calling attention to aging oil pipelines beneath the Straits of Mackinac

"People come from around the world to fish in Michigan—the Au Sable (River), the Pine, the Manistee—in these areas we have to watch it. Too much water out of those aquifers impacts the trout and the state's tourism economy."

—MEC's James Clift discussing water withdrawals for natural gas fracking operations, during WKAR's Aug. 12 Current State radio program

"Rivers like the Au Sable and the Manistee would not be the nationally renowned trout streams they are today without the hard work and dedication of volunteers like Bob. He has truly made a difference."

—MEC President Chris Kolb in a July 20 Ann Arbor Journal story about MEC's 2013 award winners



Michigan's storied Au Sable River requires protection from the dangerous chemicals used to fracture underground natural gas deposits.

"The safest and most fiscally responsible approach we can take is to make sure our transportation dollars are focused on maintaining existing infrastructure and investing in a modern transportation system."

—MEC's Tim Fischer in a June story on MiNBCnews.com on Michigan's aging bridges

"We are looking at fracking wells using 100, 200, even 300 times as much fracking water as previous wells used, and that's a big concern."

—MEC's Hugh McDiarmid on the June 26 City Pulse Live radio show on The Impact 89 FM

"President Obama's call for cuts in carbon pollution, if achieved, will boost the economy, improve public health and protect ratepayers as well as help mitigate the effects of climate change. The initiative also gives Michigan an opportunity to harness the economic opportunities by expanding investments in energy efficiency and clean energy."

—MEC statement quoted in a June 29 Detroit News story on President Obama's climate initiative

"The purpose of the agenda is to hold those who we elect accountable to the residents' agenda and not one of their own. Many of the environmental, economic and social injustice issues Detroiters face can be mitigated through public policies that mandate, promote or lead by example to a healthier, greener and sustainable city."

—MEC's Sandra Turner-Handy in an Aug. 15 Michigan Citizen story on the Detroit Environmental Agenda

"We're one of only two states that run a good enough program to run that program within the state. Virtually the entire regulated community realizes it's a good idea to have to go to the state in one place and get one permit to cover all development activity in wetlands."

—MEC's James Clift in a July Petoskey News-Review story on problems with the state wetlands program

"It's what people in the tri-county region want. They said they want more mobility options that go through the region. This is exactly what people are talking about."

—MEC's Tim Fischer in the Lansing City Pulse, supporting a federal grant for the Michigan Flyer bus service connecting mid-Michigan with the Detroit Metro airport

## Could this be the year?

— continued from page 3

and their children's, children's, children's...will inherit and inhabit.

Ice caps are melting at unprecedented rates, global surface temperatures and our oceans are heating up, and severe weather events grab our headlines. The gravity of the crisis and enormity of the issue can be overwhelming. But we are not without hope; there are solutions available today. And that's where MEC comes in. We focus on solutions versus solely being fixated on the problem.

The good news:

The majority of people understand that climate change is real, and humans have something to do with it. A national survey conducted in April 2013 by the Yale Project on Climate Change Communications and George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communications showed:

- Two out of three Americans believe that climate change is occurring, and half believe it is being caused by human activity.
- 87% of Americans believe that developing sources of clean energy is a priority.
- 70% of Americans believe that global warming should be a very high (16%), high (26%) or medium priority for the president and Congress.

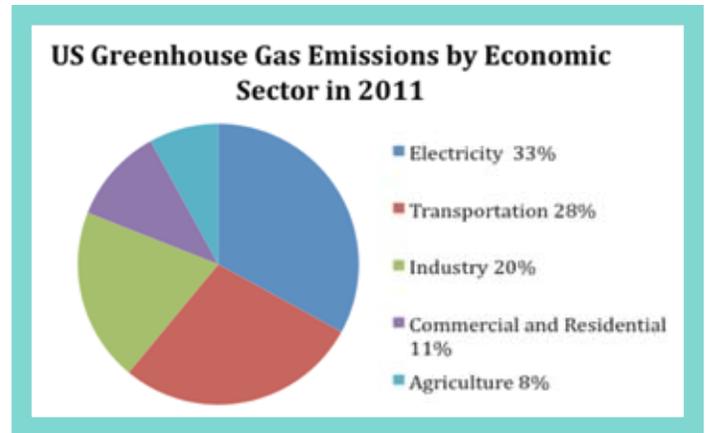
Renewable energy is catching on fast, and the cost is dropping fast:

- From June 2012 to June 2013, renewable energy generation increased 14.9% in the U.S. and 36.7% in Michigan.
- In Michigan, wind prices have fallen 50% in the last four years.

Solar is the new wind:

- Solar power is doubling every two years.
- The price of solar is dropping as well and is expected to drop below traditional energy sources within the next 10 years.

The private sector gets it. They know that they can reduce their carbon footprint, save energy and capture huge financial savings. A case in point is Michigan's own Dow Chemical—not the first name that might come to mind in thinking about green companies. Through its focus on



energy efficiency, from 1994 to 2012, Dow Chemical has saved 1,800 trillion BTUs, which is the energy equivalent to powering all residential buildings in California for one and a half years. Their efforts have prevented more than 95 million metric tons of carbon dioxide from being released into the atmosphere and have saved the company \$9.4 billion.

So what should Michigan do?

- Strengthen existing renewable energy (RPS) and energy efficiency (EO) standards. The RPS can add 1.5% more renewable generation each year for 5-7 years, and the energy efficiency standards can be ramped up by 0.1% per year for 5-7 years.
- Provide incentives to purchase energy efficient/clean fuel vehicles, solar panels.
- Provide R&D credit for clean energy technologies.
- Prepare utility companies and regulatory rules to encourage and incorporate more distributed solar energy into the electric grid.
- Allow for the cooperative investment at the community level in renewable energy.
- Develop a multi-modal, interconnected transportation system.
- Encourage the development of walkable, bikeable communities.

The great thing about these initiatives is that they make all kinds of economic sense for Michigan with or without factoring in reduced carbon emissions. They are stable, low-cost energy options; they improve public health and protect our natural resources; and they create better in-state jobs because we aren't sending Michigan dollars out of state to buy more coal and oil.

So my response to the president's initiative is that it is welcome and long overdue. So, let's do this! ■

# Michigan Environmental Council

602 W. Ionia Street  
Lansing, MI 48933-1015

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Lansing MI  
Permit No. 324

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## MEC MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

4 Towns Citizen Action Team  
(248) 363-6128

Alliance for the Great Lakes  
(616) 850-0745  
www.greatlakes.org

Anglers of the Au Sable  
(248) 651-5751  
www.ausableanglers.org

Arab Community Center for Economic  
and Social Services (ACCESS)  
(313) 842-7010  
www.accesscommunity.org

Au Sable River Watershed Committee  
(989) 859-5822

Brownstown Land Conservancy  
(734) 782-5834

Center for Automotive Research –  
Automotive Communities Partnership  
(734) 929-0488  
acp.cargroup.org

Citizens for Alternatives to Chemical  
Contamination  
(989) 544-3318  
www.caccmi.org

Clean Water Fund  
(517) 203-0754  
www.cleanwater.org/mi/

Clinton River Watershed Council  
(248) 601-0606  
www.crwcc.org

Concerned Citizens of Acme Township  
(616) 485-3749

ConservAmerica  
(269) 651-1808  
www.conservamerica.org

Detroit Audubon Society  
(248) 354-5804  
www.detroitaudubon.org

Detroit RiverFront Conservancy  
(313) 566-8200  
www.detroitriverfront.org

Dwight Lydell Chapter of the Izaak  
Walton League of America  
(616) 866-4769  
www.michiganikes.org

East Michigan Environmental Action Council  
(313) 556-1702  
www.emecac.org

Ecology Center  
(734) 663-2400  
www.ecocenter.org

Environment Michigan Research &  
Policy Center  
(734) 662-9797  
www.environmentmichigan.org

Environmentally Concerned Citizens  
of South Central Michigan  
(517) 383-2261  
www.eccscm.org

Friends of the Au Gres-Rifle Watershed  
(517) 410-8959  
farwatershed.com

Friends of the Cedar River Watershed  
(231) 347-1519

Friends of the Detroit River  
(734) 288-3889  
www.detroitriver.org

Friends of the Rouge  
(313) 792-9900  
www.therouge.org

Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa  
and Chippewa Indians  
(231) 534-7500  
gtbindians.org

Great Lakes Mediation  
(616) 451-2177  
greatlakesmediation.com

HARBOR Inc.  
(231) 526-5060  
www.harborinc.org

Huron River Watershed Council  
(734) 769-5123  
www.hrwc.org

Kalamazoo Environmental Council  
(269) 344-0536  
www.kalamazooenvironmentalcouncil.org

Kalamazoo River Cleanup Coalition  
(269) 382-0490  
www.kalrivercleanup.org

Lapeer Land Conservancy  
(810) 664-5647  
gblc.lapeer.org

League of Michigan Bicyclists  
(517) 334-9100  
www.lmb.org

League of Women Voters of Michigan  
(517) 484-5383  
www.lwvmi.org

Legacy Land Conservancy  
(734) 302-5263  
www.legacylandconservancy.org

Liaison for Inter-Neighborhood  
Cooperation  
(517) 349-6466

Lone Tree Council  
www.lonetreecouncil.com  
(989) 686-6386

Michigan Association of Railroad  
Passengers, Inc.  
(586) 726-9737  
www.marp.org

Michigan Audubon Society  
(517) 641-4277  
www.michiganaudubon.org

Michigan Botanical Club  
(313) 845-9728  
www.michbotclub.org

Michigan Citizens Against Toxic Substances  
(734) 587-3631  
www.mcats.org

Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation  
(231) 972-8856  
www.savemewater.org

Michigan Coalition on the Environment  
and Jewish Life (MI-COEJL)  
(248) 642-5393  
www.mi-coejl.org

Michigan Energy Options  
(517) 337-0422  
www.michiganenergyoptions.org

Michigan Interfaith Power and Light  
(248) 808-2518  
www.miipl.org

Michigan Land Trustees  
(269) 343-4748  
www.michiganlandtrust.org

Michigan Land Use Institute  
(231) 941-6584  
www.mlui.org

Michigan League of Conservation Voters  
Education Fund  
(734) 222-9650  
www.michiganlcv.org

Michigan Mountain Biking Association  
www.mmba.org

Michigan Natural Areas Council  
(734) 975-7800  
www.cyberspace.org/~mnac

Michigan Nature Association  
(517) 655-5655  
www.michigannature.org

Michigan Nurses Association  
(517) 349-5640  
www.minurses.org

Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance  
(MOFFA)  
www.moffa.org

Michigan Recycling Coalition  
(517) 974-3672  
www.michiganrecycles.org

Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance  
(517) 485-6022  
www.michigantrails.org

Michigan Trout Unlimited  
(517) 599-5238  
www.michigantu.org

Michigan Waterfront Alliance, Inc.  
(989) 821-6661  
www.mwai.org

Mid-Michigan Environmental Action  
Council  
(517) 292-3078  
www.midmeac.org

Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance  
(MEEA)  
(312) 587-8390  
www.mwalliance.org

Muskegon Save Our Shoreline  
(231) 670-6059  
www.muskegonsaveourshoreline.org

NAACP-Michigan State Conference  
(313) 835-9671  
www.michigannaacp.org

Northern Michigan Environmental Action  
Council  
(231) 946-6931  
www.nmeac.org

Romulus Environmentalists Care  
About People (RECAP)  
(734) 753-4320

Scenic Michigan  
(231) 347-1171  
www.scenicmichigan.org

Sierra Club, Michigan Chapter  
(517) 484-2372  
michigan.sierraclub.org

Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate  
Heart of Mary  
(734) 240-9700  
www.ihmsisters.org

Six Rivers Regional Land Conservancy  
(248) 601-2816  
www.sixriversrlc.org

Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy  
(734) 484-6565  
www.smlcland.org

Stewardship Network  
(734) 996-3190  
www.stewardshipnetwork.org

Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council  
(231) 347-1181  
www.watershedcouncil.org

Transportation Riders United  
(313) 963-8872  
www.detroittransit.org

Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition  
(906) 524-7899  
www.upenvironment.org

Voices for Earth Justice  
(248) 351-9001  
www.voices4earth.org

West Michigan Environmental Action  
Council  
(616) 451-3051  
www.wmeac.org