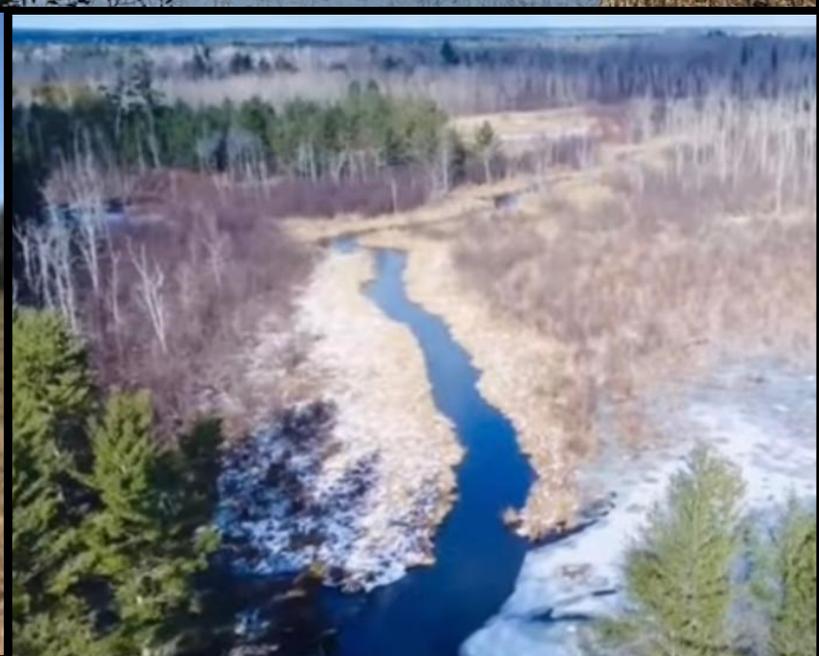




**Saginaw
Chippewa
Indian Tribe
Environmental
Team: 2020
Annual Report**



Environmental Team Program Overview

“The mission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe's Environmental Team is to support Tribal Council's relations with governmental and non-governmental organizations, to ensure Tribal representation in environmental issues, protect Tribal natural resources, and facilitate sustainable development. Our guiding principle is to follow our cultural teachings that tell us, "As human beings, our original responsibility is to care for our Mother Earth in the same way she cares for us." By working together to protect Mother Earth, we keep her beautiful and healthy. In turn, she keeps us all healthy, both for our generation and the next seven generations to come.”

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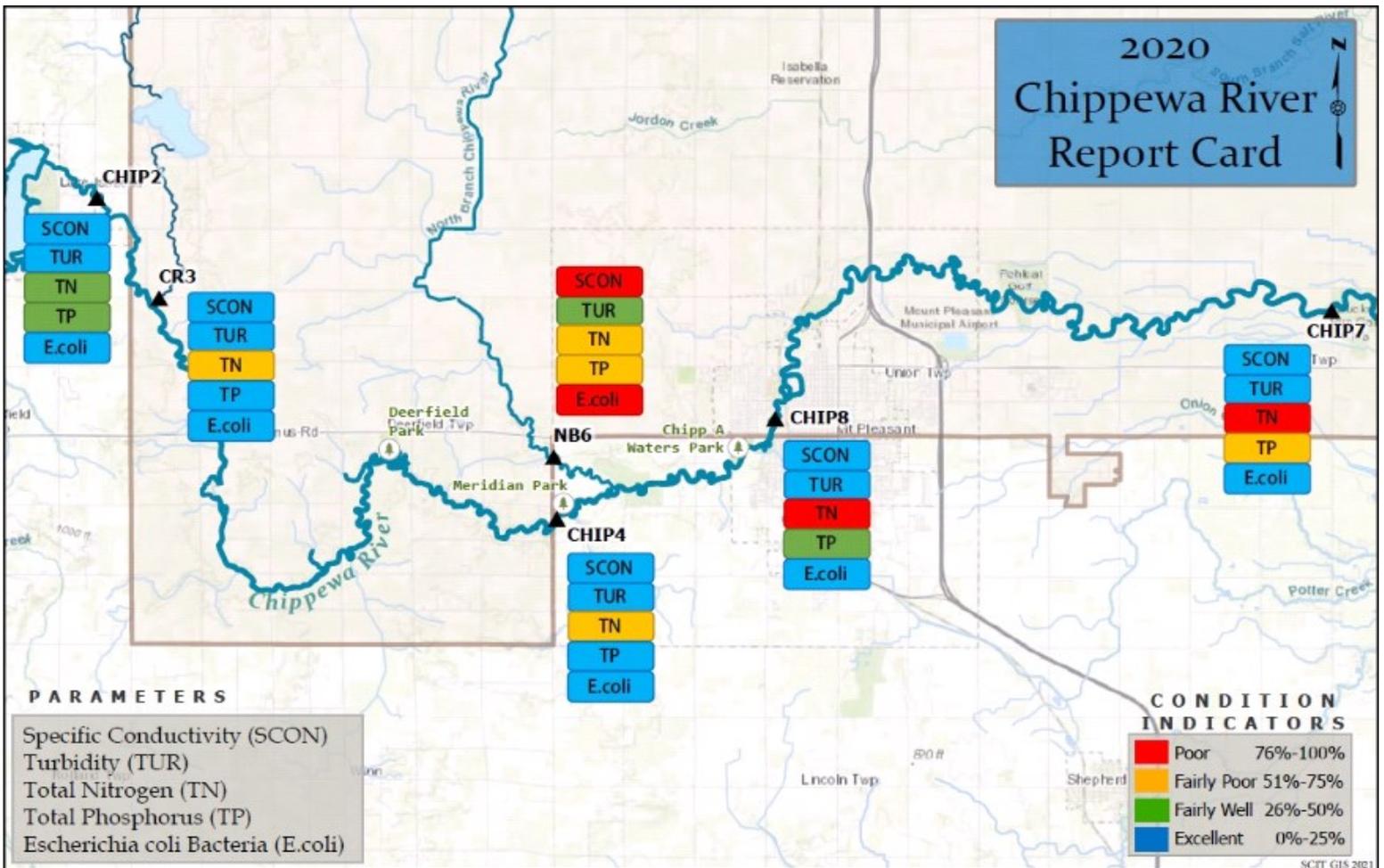
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SCIT Water Program

2020 Coldwater River Summary

The SCIT is concerned about high nutrient levels in the Coldwater River. The Coldwater River shows obvious signs of degradation through data analysis and visual observations. The Coldwater River is adversely affected by impoundments and recreational lakes within its system. The impoundments and lakes are suspected to be the reason for the wide range in parameter levels site to site. The main suspect of nutrient loading is non-point source pollution and antiquated septic systems. The Coldwater Lake Association has agreed to connect to the City of Mount Pleasant's Septic System. Although the construction of this agreement has yet to be implemented, we believe this has raised awareness and concern for the health of the Coldwater River and may be why sites south of Coldwater Lake have seen significant improvements in water quality.



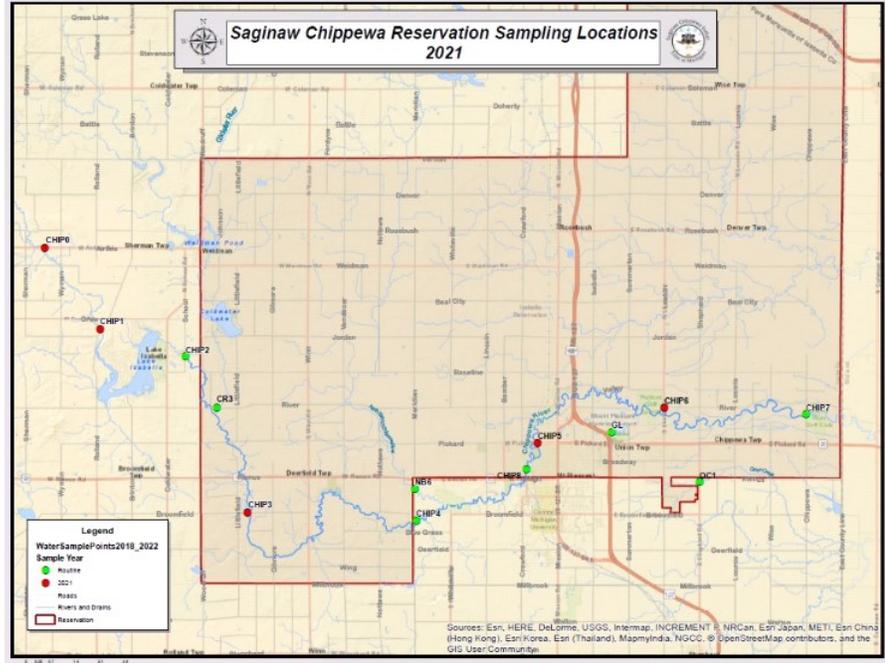
This map depicts the water quality sampling results from the 2020 monitoring year.

Upcoming Projects

2021 E. coli Sampling Locations

This coming summer the SCIT Water Quality Program will be focusing on the main branch of the Chippewa River, Specifically at the sites in the provided picture. (See map)

In the past the Chippewa river has suffered from high *E. coli* levels downstream of the confluence of the North Branch Chippewa River and high total nitrogen and phosphorus throughout.



Wild Rice Program

The Manoomin (Wild Rice) program focuses on restoration, management, and protection of Wild Rice. The program monitors Wild Rice beds through annual surveys and research for future restoration projects.

- ⇒ 700+ acres of Wild Rice were identified and surveyed within the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe's ceded territories
- ⇒ 78 acres of Eurasian Watermilfoil surveyed on Tawas Lake as baseline data for future invasive species removal project
- ⇒ Acquired diver assisted suction harvesting (DASH) boat through Bureau of Indian Affairs, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant for Eurasian Watermilfoil removal project



Michigan Wild Rice Initiative (MWRI)

The significance of Manoomin to Tribes has been brought to the attention of the State by Tribal governments relentlessly for spiritual, historical, cultural, ceremonial, relationships, food systems, and economies.

MWRI is a collective effort by State and Tribal governments to combine expertise to protect and restore Wild Rice throughout the State. MWRI is not a regulatory body but a collaborative partnership between the State and Tribes. The goal of MWRI is to restore, preserve, and protect Manoomin and the culture.



Events

Food Recovery Meets Cultural Exchange in Partnership Between SCTC & CMU

The Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College and Central Michigan University partnered up on a food recovery pilot project at Andahwod Elder Care Center, prior to the onset of the pandemic.

Reducing food waste in landfills will help address climate change by reducing methane gas production. In addition, composting helps return nutrients to the soil, reducing the need for fertilizers. In just the past couple of months, roughly 4,000 pounds of food waste were collected at Andahwod.

“This is a wonderful opportunity for the students and staff from SCTC, Tribal government, and CMU to get hands-on experience and provide peer-to-peer mentoring for the students,” said Sally Kniffen.



From left to right, Sam Anglin, Jay Kahn, Students: Jeannie Snyder, Elisa Grossman, Magkena Szemak, Eric Urbaniak

New Faces to the Environmental Team

The environmental team would like to welcome Shelby Cain as the environmental outreach coordinator for the Tribe. Shelby will provide the community with information about current environmental issues, successes, and program information. She will be available to attend events and work collaboratively with Tribal Departments to maintain our program partnerships.

The environmental team would like to welcome Phillip Jackson back to the team as the Tribe's new Environmental Resource Technician. Phil will be working on the CERCLA 128 program to assist in land inventory, researching pesticide management, and working on the hazard mitigation plan. He will also take the lead on our Eat Safe Fish project, developing educational materials to assist the community with identifying the fish and water bodies that are safe for consumption.



Nonpoint Source Program Development

The NonPoint Source Pollution Program was initiated in the fall of 2019 with funding through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. Successes achieved in the first year include Natural Resources Specialist – Michael McCreery, attending training for master rain garden development and implementation.

The nonpoint source pollution poster, with Anishanaabe language incorporated, pictured here was developed and distributed throughout the watershed. Relationships with agency staff including the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) were developed to support using best management practices on agricultural lands within the Isabella Reservation. Partnerships have been established with multiple community agencies to develop a committee to address failing and absent septic systems identified throughout the watershed.

The program continues to identify new ways to reduce nutrients and other contaminants running off the ground to our local surface waters.



Nonpoint Source Pollution Poster

Environmental Response Program

With collaboration with US EPA Region 5, coordinate and oversight of leaking underground storage tank clean-up. The environmental response program has taken over monthly underground storage tank inspections for the tribal owned Sagamok stations in Mt. Pleasant and Saganing. With US EPA Region 5 targeted brownfield assessment program, an environmental assessment was completed on the former boarding school. This information will help strengthen future grant proposals for clean-up of the former boarding school.

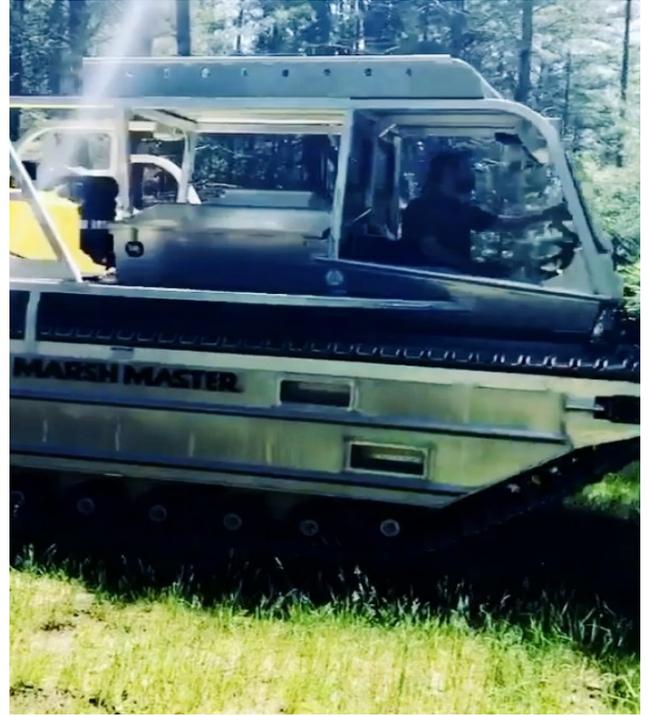


Invasive Species

- ⇒ A total of 3800 acres of Tribal property have been inventoried and mapped for invasive species since the establishment of an invasive species program. Phragmites, frog-bit, autumn olive, and Eurasian milfoil are the major problems on tribal properties currently.
- ⇒ Over 250 acres of Tribal trust land has been cleared of terrestrial invasive species in order to carry out plantings of native tree species.
- ⇒ Over 5000lbs of European frog-bit has been removed from Tribal properties along the Saginaw Bay.



The Planning department submitted a grant to treat the European Frog-bit on the Tribe's property in Saganing.



Over 151 acres has been treated for invasive species at the Tribe's Tawas property. An additional 40 acres will be treated this coming 2021 year utilizing the Marsh Master purchased through BIA funding.

Land Management

- ⇒ Trails maintained on all tribal properties
- ⇒ Dump sites cleaned up: Coughlin, Bliss, Miller, & DNR Loomis property
- ⇒ Fence installed on Bliss property to prevent dumping and trespassing
- ⇒ Bridge and culvert repaired at Tawas
- ⇒ Over 150 fruit trees planted at various tribal properties for community access
- ⇒ Future plans being developed and will be submitted for review and approval



Restoration Project– Coughlin Property

The cleared and treated 40 acres on the Coughlin property located in Mt. Pleasant, District 1. The deliverable was met for the Invasive Species Grand funding that was provided to the Tribe.



Looking Ahead to 2021

- ◆ April tree giveaway
- ◆ 2021 water quality monitoring on main branch of Chippewa River
- ◆ Annual Wild Rice and Eurasian Watermilfoil surveys
- ◆ Wild Rice habitat analysis and restoration project
- ◆ Tawas Lake Eurasian Watermilfoil diver assisted suction harvesting (DASH) project
- ◆ Mobile boat wash station events
- ◆ Restoration work on Coughlin, Assmann, and Tawas properties
- ◆ Conduct *E. coli* source study on North and South Branches of the Salt River

Program Funding

The Environmental Team is funded through several Federal Programs that allow SCIT to monitor, protect, and restore Tribal surface waters. The following funding sources are currently supporting these efforts:

- ◆ Bureau of Indian Affairs
 - ◆ Great Lakes Restoration Initiative
 - ◆ Invasive Species Program and Water Resources Funding
- ◆ Environmental Protection Agency
 - ◆ Clean Water Act
 - ◆ Section 106: Surface Water Monitoring Program
 - ◆ Section 319: Addresses Non-Point Source Pollution within Tribal Boundary
 - ◆ Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, also known as Superfund
 - ◆ 128(a) Tribal Response Program
 - ◆ General Assistance Program
- ◆ Consumer's Energy Funding
- ◆ Saginaw Chippewa Tribe
 - ◆ Land Management Funding Where Grants Cannot Support Activities