

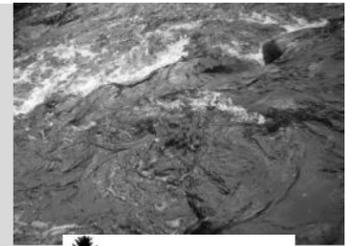


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Marengo Riffles

A newsletter for the Marengo River Watershed Partnership
A project of the Bad River Watershed Association



Fall 2012

“POND”ERING WAYS LANDOWNERS CAN HELP THE MARENGO RIVER

Marengo River Valley landowner Elmer Lippo wanted ponds on his 80-acre parcel because his nephew wanted ponds- for deer. Lippo also wanted ponds- for ducks, mostly- and to do something to help the Marengo River. Rain runs through his fields and down a series of ravines that eventually flows to the Marengo.

Sediment is the number one pollutant affecting the Marengo River. To address this issue, in 2009 the Bad River Watershed Association (BRWA) began developing a Watershed Action Plan for the Marengo River via the Marengo River Watershed Partnership, a group of local citizens, governments, and natural resource agencies.

The “action” of the Watershed Action Plan identifies potential solutions to problems for the Marengo, such as excess sediment. (See Page 2 for more information about the Watershed Action Plan).

One of the best ways we can reduce sediment to the Marengo River is by “slowing the flow” of water running off the land and into streams, and restoring wetlands is a great way to slow the flow.



Matt Hudson of BRWA talks with Marengo River landowner Elmer Lippo about his wetland project. “I wanted some ponds for ducks and to help the river,” said Elmer.

Lippo learned how he could install his ponds, meet his goals as a property owner, and also help the Marengo by hearing how his neighbors,

Charlie and Claire Ylitalo, were able to do the same thing the year before.

Lippo and the Ylitalo’s have been actively involved in the Marengo River Watershed Partnership, and are examples of landowners who have benefited from the Partnership to help meet their goals as property owners and take care of the river.

“Restoring wetlands like Charlie’s and Elmer’s are an important tool to reducing sediment, and are an example of how local citizens can help take care of the watershed” said



Marengo landowners Charlie and Claire Ylitalo are all smiles about their new ponds. “I’ve always wanted ponds but needed help,” said Charlie.

Matt Hudson, BRWA Watershed Action Director.

The BRWA will be hosting a hayride and potluck at the Ylitalo’s farm September 18 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. “It’s a chance for area landowners to get to see a finished wetland restoration project and learn how they can go about doing the same thing on their property,” Hudson said.

Ylitalo, a Marengo River Valley farmer, created three wetland ponds in one of his hayfields that held water. “Truth is, I wanted to make less hay,” he said. Once he retired from dairy farming six years ago, he just didn’t need as much. “I’ve always wanted ponds but needed help.”

BRWA will be hosting a hayride and potluck at the Ylitalo’s farm September 18 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. “It’s a chance for area landowners to get to see a finished wetland restoration project and learn how they can go about doing the same thing on their property,” Hudson said.

BRWA helped get the ball rolling by connecting Ylitalo to regional funding for conservation programs. “A lot of these programs are available but people don’t know about them,” Ylitalo said. “We all

have that problem of assuming everyone knows how the system works but us beginners don’t.”

In fact, Ylitalo and Lippo provided the inspiration for a grant to encourage landowner-agency partnerships in improving the health of the land and water the Marengo River, as well as watershed neighbor to the west Fish Creek. **Continued on Page 2**

PLEASE JOIN US!

Hayride and Community Potluck
Ylitalo’s Century Farm
62821 Cty Hwy C, Marengo, WI
September 18, 2012
5:30-7:30p.m.



Take a hay wagon tour of Charlie and Claire Ylitalo’s wetland restoration project, and enjoy some yummy homemade food!

Talk with staff from the Ashland and Bayfield Land and Water Conservation Departments., the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bad River Watershed Association about how you can get help with a wetland project or other conservation projects on your land.

Please bring a dish to pass-- RSVP’s requested to ensure we have enough seating.

Please call Valerie at (715) 682-2669 or email valerie@badriverwatershed.org by September 17, 2012

Coordinated by the:



This material is paid for by support from the US Environmental Protection Agency, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

The Marengo River Watershed Partnership— People Working Together to Take Care of the Marengo

What is the Marengo River Watershed Partnership?

Started in 2009, the Marengo River Watershed Partnership was formed to coordinate watershed improvement and land use planning activities among local citizens, governments, and natural resource agencies in the Marengo River Watershed. This local partnership is coordinated by the Bad River Watershed Association, a non-profit organization based in Ashland.

The Partnership meets 2-3 times per year to discuss issues and concerns about the watershed, provide learning opportunities for citizens about how you can take care of your land and water, tour “on-the-ground” projects to show examples of how people are taking action, and to simply celebrate the Marengo River Watershed.



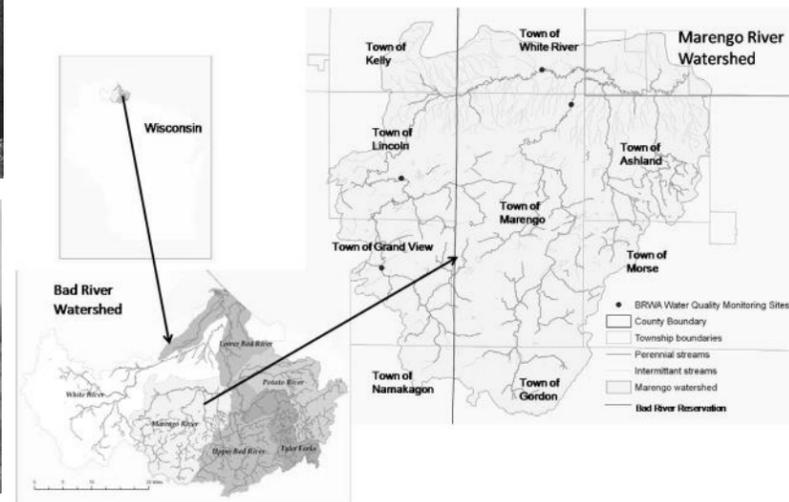
What is the Marengo River Watershed Action Plan?

The Marengo River Watershed Action Plan can be described as a “road map” to what local citizens would like to see for the future of the land and water of the Marengo River Watershed.

It includes an assessment of watershed issues and concerns, an inventory of water resources in the watershed, and identification of projects that should occur to improve watershed health, who will do them, and how to pay for them.

The Marengo River Watershed Action Plan was developed for the watershed by participants in the Marengo River Watershed Partnership.

A copy of the Marengo River Watershed Action Plan can be downloaded here: <http://basineducation.uwex.edu/lakesuperior/pdf/MarengoWatershedActionPlan-DRAFT.pdf>



ARE YOU ON OUR MAILING LIST?

If you'd like to be notified regularly of meetings or special events of the Marengo River Watershed Partnership, please contact Valerie at (715) 682-2669 or valerie@badriverwatershed.org to express your interest and get added to our list!

Continued from Front Page:

BRWA is part of a regional group called the Chequamegon Bay Area Partnership (CBAP), a coalition of agencies, government and non-profits working together to take care of the natural resources of Chequamegon Bay. This group applied for funding through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), a federal program to restore and protect the Great Lakes.

A combination of funding from the GLRI as well as the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Ashland County Land and Water Conservation Department, and Ducks Unlimited funded Ylitalo and Lippo's ponds and other wetland projects in the Marengo River and the Fish Creek watersheds.

“Caring for the land and water is something most property owners want to do. What's often missing is people don't often know there are resources to help them,” Hudson said.

For more information about BRWA and their work in the Marengo River Watershed, please visit www.badriverwatershed.org. To learn more about the CBAP, please visit www.northland.edu/cbap.

Let's Learn More About: Wetland Restoration

What is a wetland?

Wetlands are areas where the land meets the water on the landscape. There are a wide variety of wetland types, but three characteristics are common to all:

- The presence of water at or just below the surface of the land for at least a portion of the year
- Specific types of soils that develop under wet conditions, and
- Distinctive plants adapted to wet conditions.



Photo: dnr.wi.gov

What are the functions and values of wetlands?

Scientists investigating wetland ecosystems have found that wetlands have many functions and provide numerous benefits to the environment and us. These benefits vary, depending on the type of wetland, its size, proximity to other wetlands, and a number of other factors. However, some of the typical wetlands functions include:

- Habitat for wildlife and plants
- Fish spawning and nursery areas
- Water filtration and cleansing
- Flood reduction, and
- Anchoring shorelines and stream banks

Many of the values that we place on wetlands are associated with these functions. Hunting, fishing, bird watching and aesthetic enjoyment are direct wetland values with immediate benefits. The primary wetland values include ecological, aesthetic, recreational, economic, and environmental “services”.



Photo: Carol Seago



Photo: Ann Wray

How does restoring wetlands on my property help the Marengo River?

Sediment is the number one pollutant affecting the Marengo River. This fine sand or sediment running over the surface of the land and into the river fills in the cobble stream bed that is used by fish for spawning and makes the stream shallower.



Wetlands help this problem by retaining water and slowing the flow of runoff off the land. Wetlands also trap the sediments coming from up-land areas and keep it from entering the river.



Photo: www.water.epa.gov

As a plus, these wetlands also provide additional habitat for wildlife, such as waterfowl and amphibians.

Where can I learn more about restoring wetlands on my property?

Ashland County Land and Water Conservation

Dept: (715) 682-7187

Bayfield County Land and Water Conservation

Dept: (715) 373-6167

Ashland US Fish and Wildlife Service

Conservation Office:

(715) 682-6185, ext. 15

Bad River Watershed Association: (715) 682-2003



Wisconsin Wetlands Association:

www.wisconsinwetlands.org

US Fish and Wildlife Service– Wisconsin Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program: www.fws.gov/midwest/WisconsinPartners/

Source: “Restoration Handbook for Wisconsin Landowners” by Thompson and Luthin, a publication of the Wisconsin Wetlands Association– **Download a FREE copy here: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Wetlands/handbook>**