

## GREAT 2010 Annual Report

The GREAT Board is happy to have vigorously pursued its mission by means of diverse activities throughout the 2010 calendar year.

As always, we offered 6 paddles on area rivers in the months from April to October, some of them in conjunction with other groups, such as the Dahlem Center or the Great Lakes Paddlers of southeastern Michigan. We began with a paddle on Sandstone Creek and ended with a trip beginning in Michigan Center, which took us through Jackson to Lions Park. We found that the trips were very well attended by appreciative boaters. They were especially happy about the absence of portages, which is due to GREAT's careful preparations; clearing passages through trouble spots on the river in advance of each outing. Shuttling of vehicles is also offered, and there are no fees charged for any paddle services.

The annual river clean-up involved over 50 members of the Junior Reserve Officers Training Corp at the Jackson Area Career Center, as well as many other volunteers, some from the Detroit area, who showed up to do the usual, challenging work of finding and removing trash. Starting out from our home base at the Consumers' Energy Bandshell, our many "teams" covered the river from East High St., southeast of the city, to Maple Grove Park, in Rives Township. This effort set a record for distance covered in a single clean-up. The citizens involved, including the many young people, help us to achieve our mission, not only by cleaning the river, but by becoming good-will ambassadors, spreading the word about the need for healthy, natural waterways.

Many board members supported and joined in the planning for Expedition 2010 (July), the long-distance adventure which took paddlers from Michigan Center all the way to Grand Haven, on Lake Michigan. A crucial role was played by GREAT in the year previous to this event, as volunteers moved limbs and brush out of the way and as chain-saw crews worked to make sure the many natural blockages in the river contained a passageway cut for the boaters. Many GREAT trustees and members participated, enduring the hardships and enjoying the pleasures of paddling the entire distance.

GREAT continues to be supported by the membership dues of many and the generous contributions of those who sponsor our work with larger contributions; and also those who donate valuable items or services. We are proud of the quarterly newsletter, available by either email or U.S. mail, which features articles of interest and information about our activities.

We achieve our mission with the help of many other area groups and businesses, such as the City of Jackson, the Jackson County Conservation District, the Jackson Area Outdoor Coalition, the Jackson Nonprofit Network and the Upper Grand River Watershed Alliance, to name only a few.

We count the past year a successful one, culminating in a happy celebration. 20 years ago the founders of GREAT set out to clean, improve and protect the upper Grand River watershed. We, their successors, inspired by their collective example, are proud to follow in their footsteps.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Hoover  
President