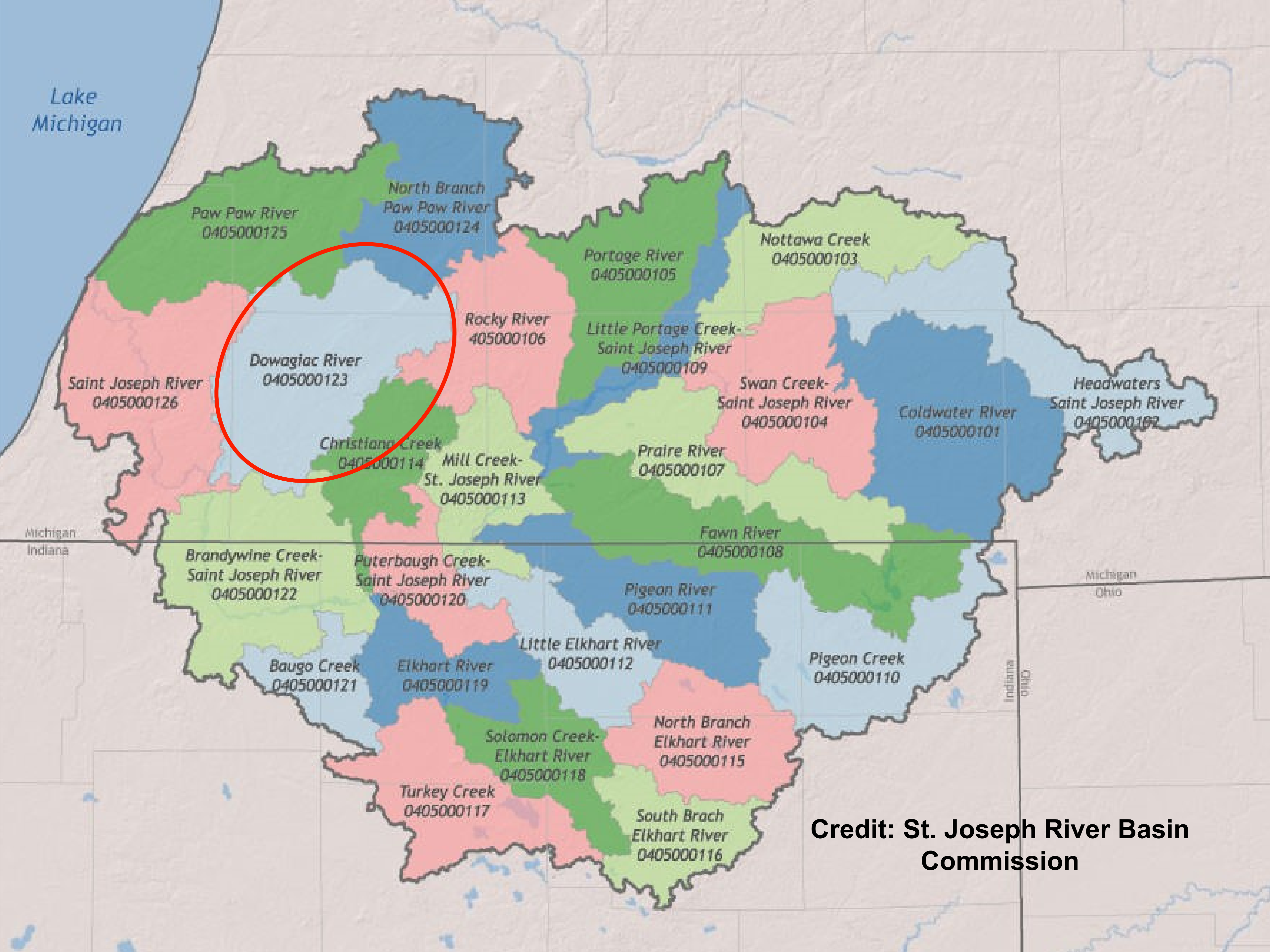


A grayscale map of the Dowagiac River watershed in Michigan. The map shows the river's course from the northwest to the southeast, with various townships and roads labeled. Two dams are highlighted with boxes: 'Lower Mill Pond Dam' near Dowagiac and 'Pucker Street Dam' near the southwest corner. The text 'Making Connections Dowagiac River' is centered in the upper half, and 'Marcy Hamilton' is centered below it. At the bottom, it says 'Southwest Michigan Planning Commission' and '5/14/2021'.

Making Connections Dowagiac River

Marcy Hamilton

**Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
5/14/2021**

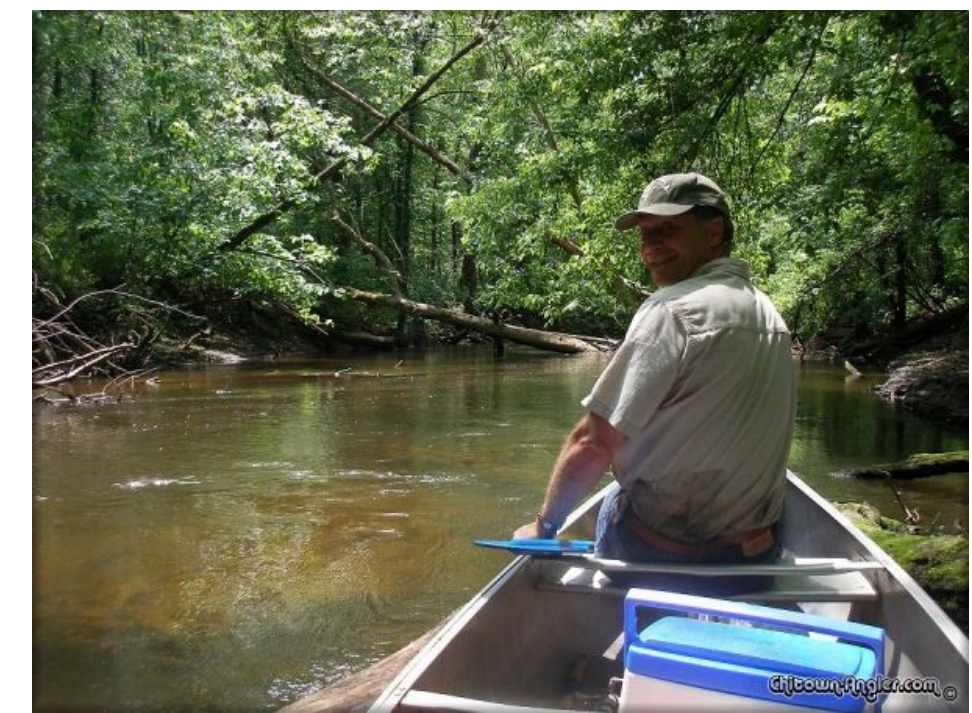


Credit: St. Joseph River Basin Commission

Unique Resource – Quality of Dowagiac River

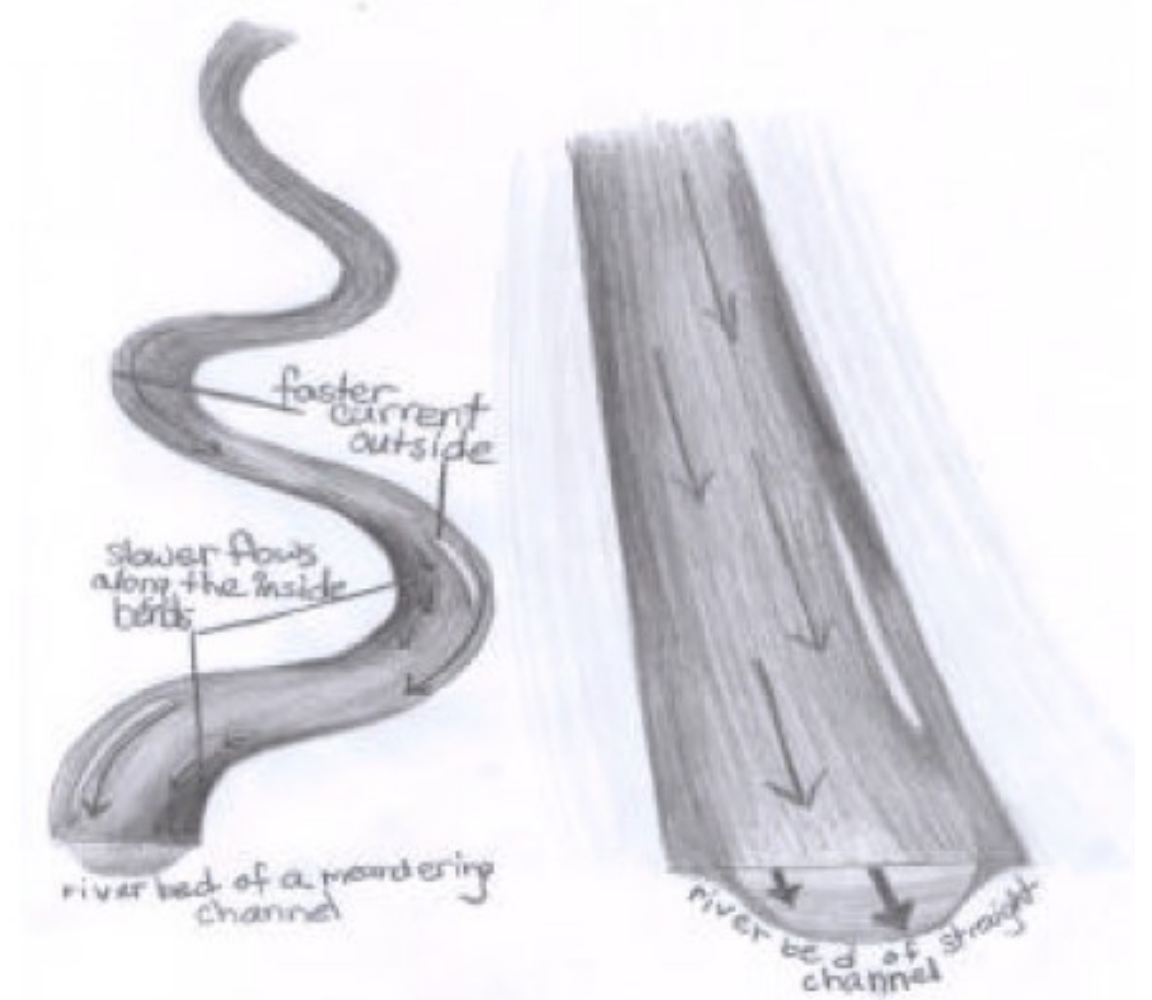
Overall good water quality - Cold /Cool Water System

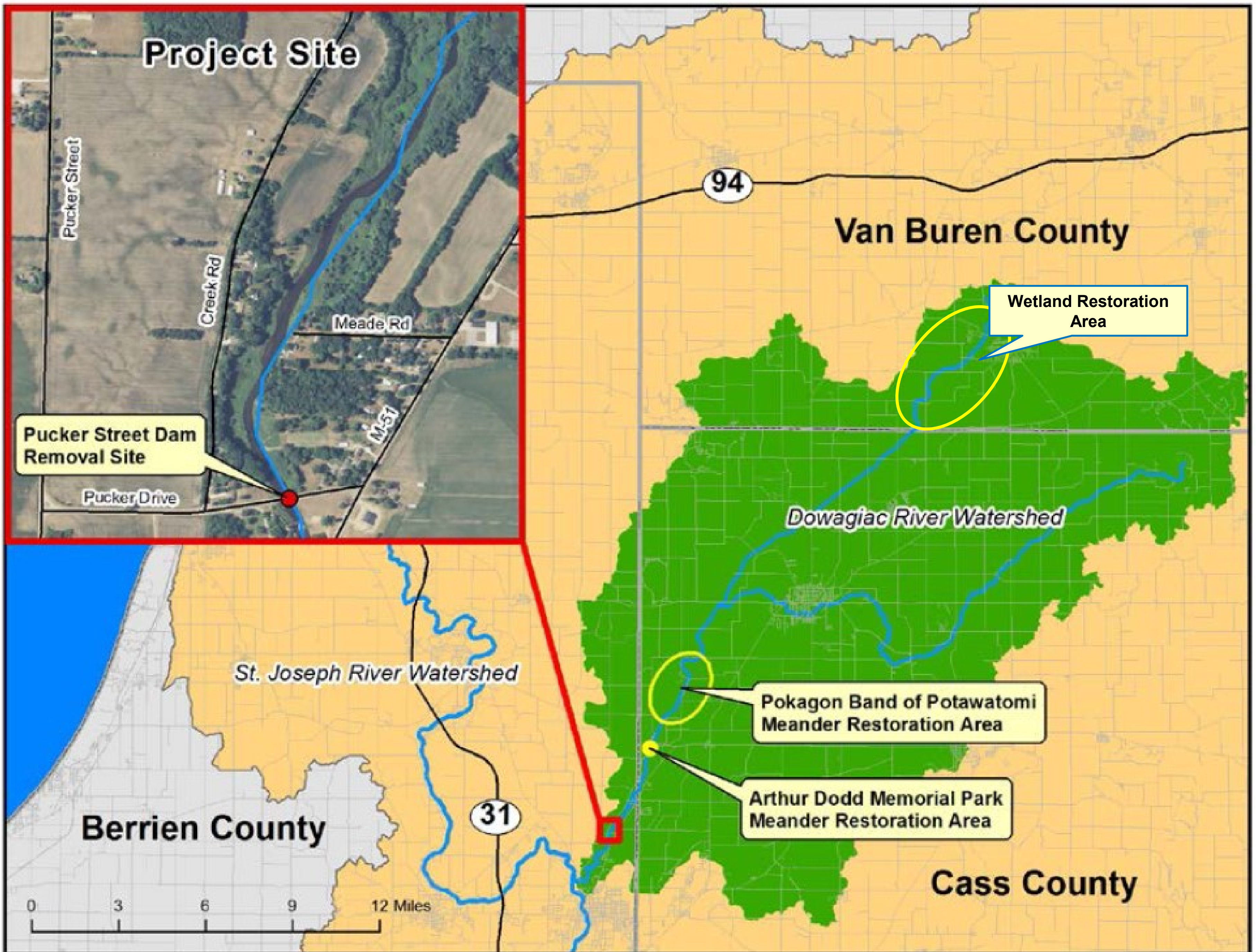
- Fish Diversity - 42 species downstream of dam
-37 native species; 4 salmonid species
- Native Species - Smallmouth bass, walleyes, suckers (white, northern hog, shorthead redhorse, golden redhorse)
- 4 salmonid species (rainbow trout, Chinook, coho, brown trout)
- Historically - Lake Sturgeon - High gradient – spawning area



Historic “Disconnections”

- Pucker St Dam
- Channelization/Wetland Drainage





Pucker Street Dam Draw Down 1999



1938



1999

Schedule



- Started Planning/Applying for Grants/Engineering – 2013
- Prepare Park and Build Access Roads Upstream of Dam – Winter 2020
- Sediment Removal and Dam Removal – Spring 2020– Summer 2021
- Restoration Work – Summer/Fall 2021
- Monitoring for up to 5 years



Powerhouse removed



Dam removed slowly with coffer dams and a series of small drawdowns to lessen sediment movement downstream.

Project Cost ~\$12 million



Total Grants - \$1,961,584

2013 MDNR- Aquatic Habitat -\$200,000

2014 MDNR - Dam Management – \$190,750

2014 Great Lakes Fishery Trust - \$400,000

2014 Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership - \$100,000

2014 NFWF - Sustain our Great Lakes - \$362,854.51

2014 USFWS - Fish Passage - \$200,000

2015 USFWS - Fish Passage - \$300,000

2017 Great Lakes Fish & Wildlife Restoration Act - \$166,115.94

2019 Great Lakes Fish & Wildlife Restoration Act - \$41,865

City of Niles Utility Surcharge and Bond ~\$9million



Project Area



Soil Disturbance – Channel restoration and floodplain construction

Bridge Stabilization

Dam Removal

188,000 yd³ of sediment removed to date (70%)



18,800 Dump Trucks



57 Olympic pools

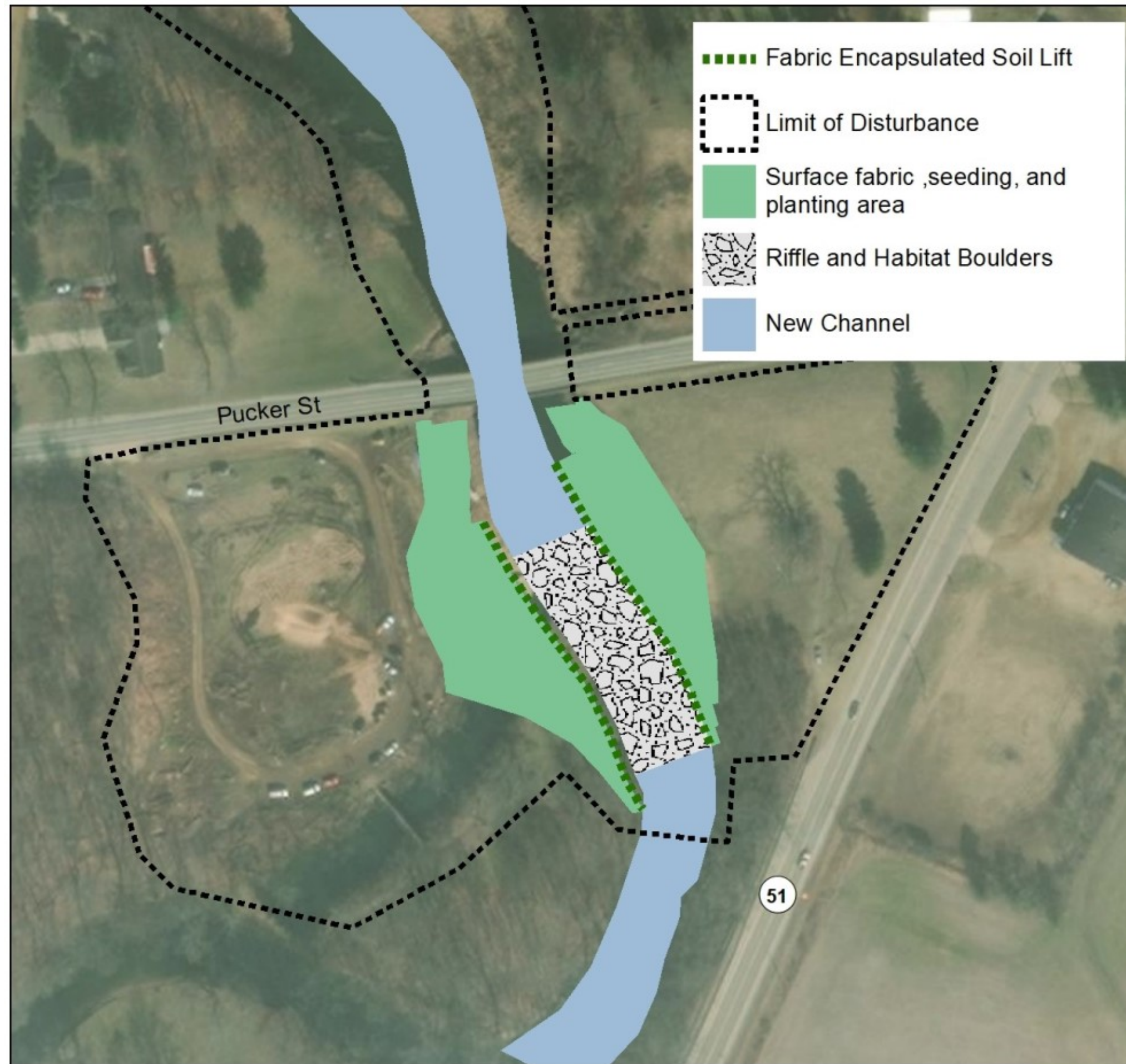


75,000 pickup trucks



**10 story building
the size of a
football field**

Pucker Street Dam Riffle Project – Summer/Fall 2021



Habitat Element	Bid Price
Habitat Boulders	\$27,000
Channel Grade Riffle	\$270,000
Bank Stabilization	\$3,000
Total	\$300,000

Pucker St Dam Removal Habitat Restoration Elements Niles, MI



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane Michigan South FIPS 2113 Feet Intl

THE DOWAGIAC CREEK (RIVER)

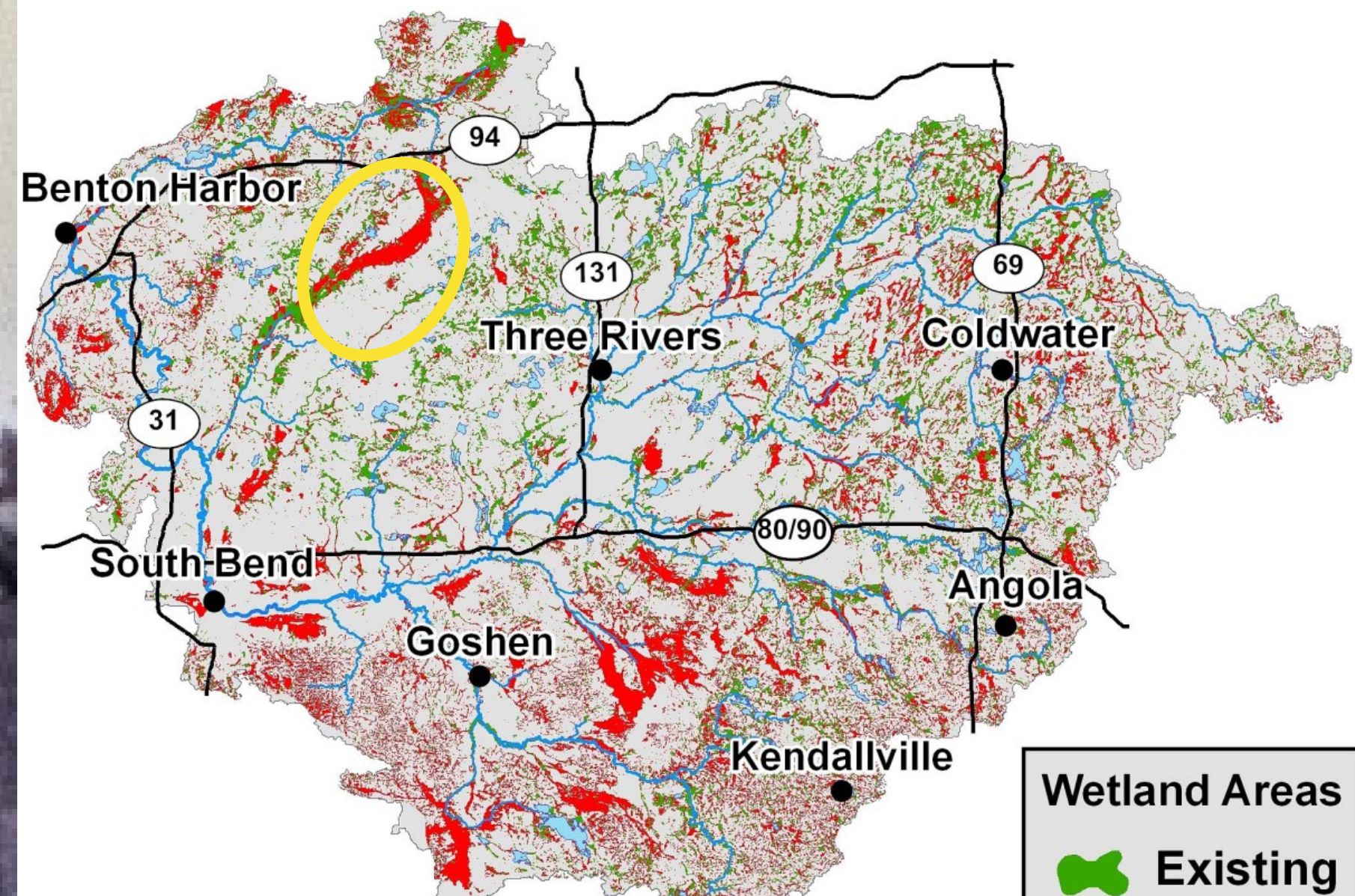
A meeting of citizens took place on November 22, 1874, to hear a report from the engineers engaged to survey the "Dowagiac Swamp" and to consider plans for draining it. This swamp covered a large area and extended from Dowagiac about twelve miles north and west toward Decatur. (M-51 North of Dowagiac cuts across this "swamp.") (Many years ago this area was a hideout for thieves, robbers and highwaymen.) This road was previously known as North Town Line Swamp Road and over two miles of it was of corduroy construction.

The original survey was concerned with Decatur and Hamilton Townships in Buren County and Wayne and Silver Creek Townships in Cass County, that if the "swamp" could be drained that the land could be more productive and grow corn and grass(hay).

From this meeting a committee was appointed to make further surveys.



In the Spring of 1901 work of clearing a



Restoration of Dowagiac River – Meander Restoration



Arthur Dodd Park, Cass County



RESTORING THE DOWAGIAC RIVER ON TRIBAL LANDS

The word *Dowagiac* comes from the Potawatomi language and means a place to hunt, fish, and forage.

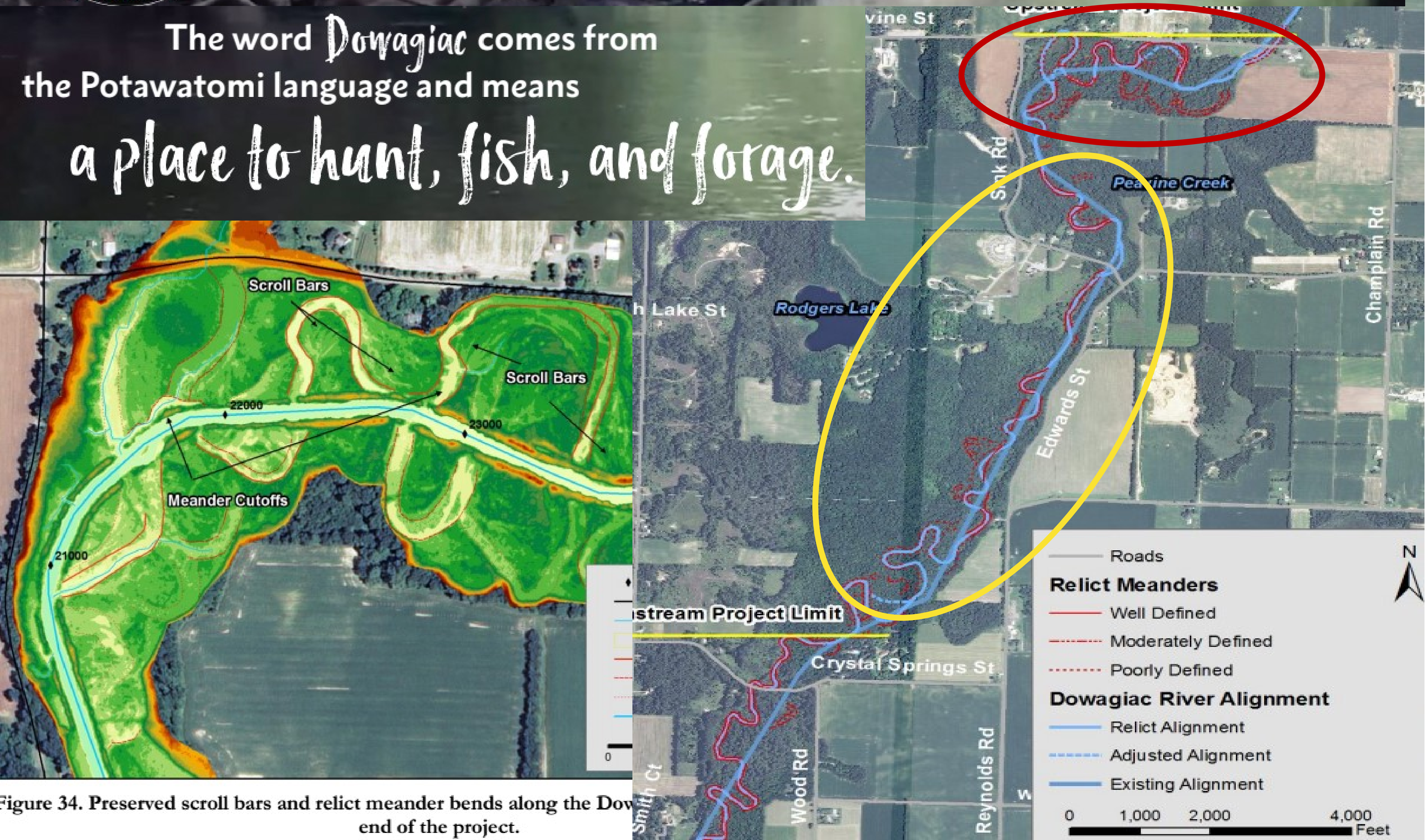
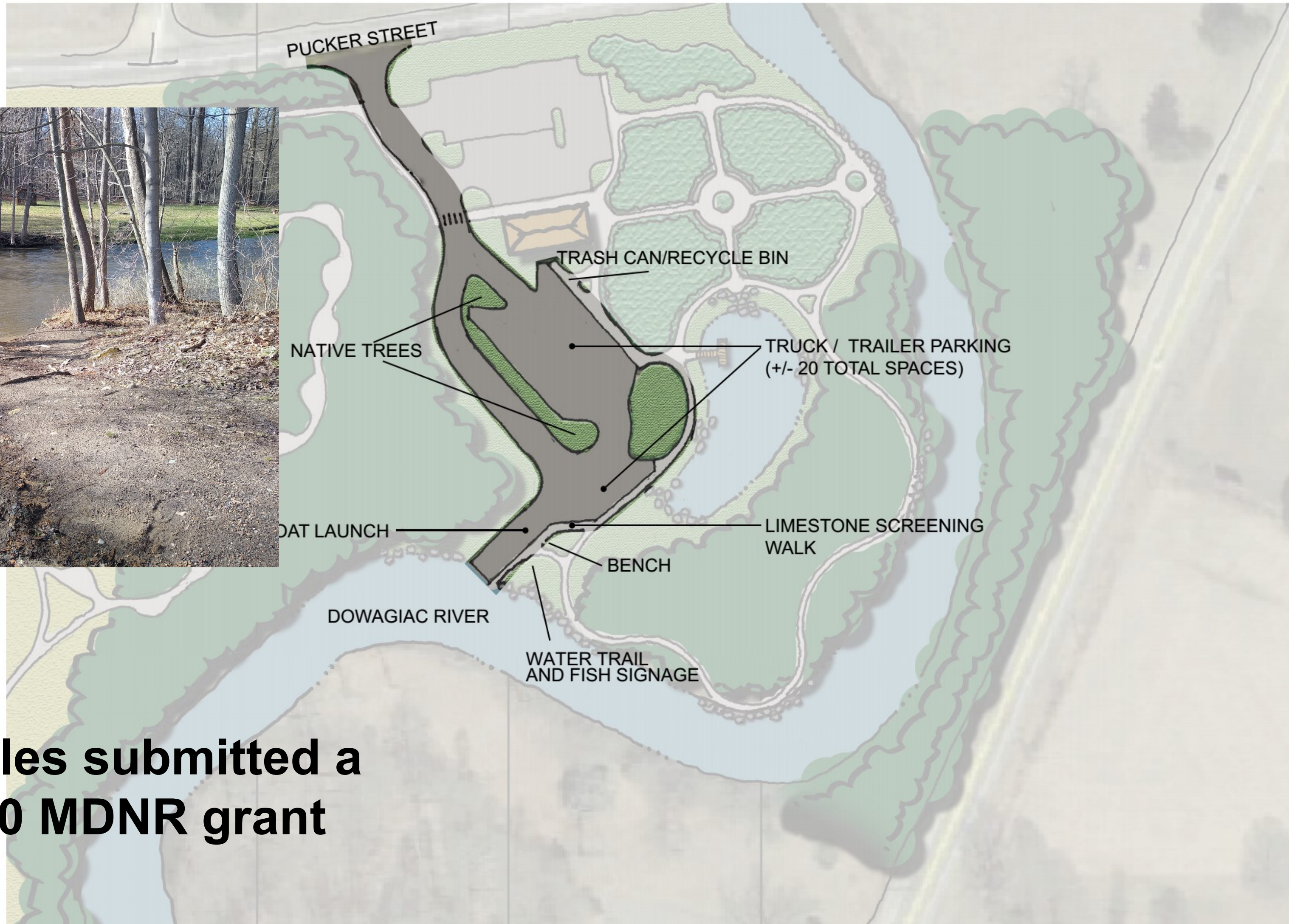


Figure 34. Preserved scroll bars and relict meander bends along the Dowagiac River at the downstream end of the project.

Dowagiac River Water Trail



Pucker Street Boat Launch Project



City of Niles submitted a \$300,000 MDNR grant

PUCKER DAM PARK - PHASE 1 IMPROVEMENTS

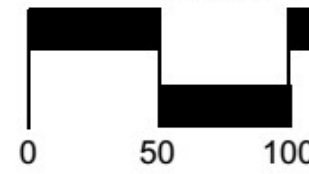
PREPARED FOR: CITY OF NILES, MICHIGAN

DATE: APRIL 2021

PREPARED BY:



SCALE: 1" = 50'



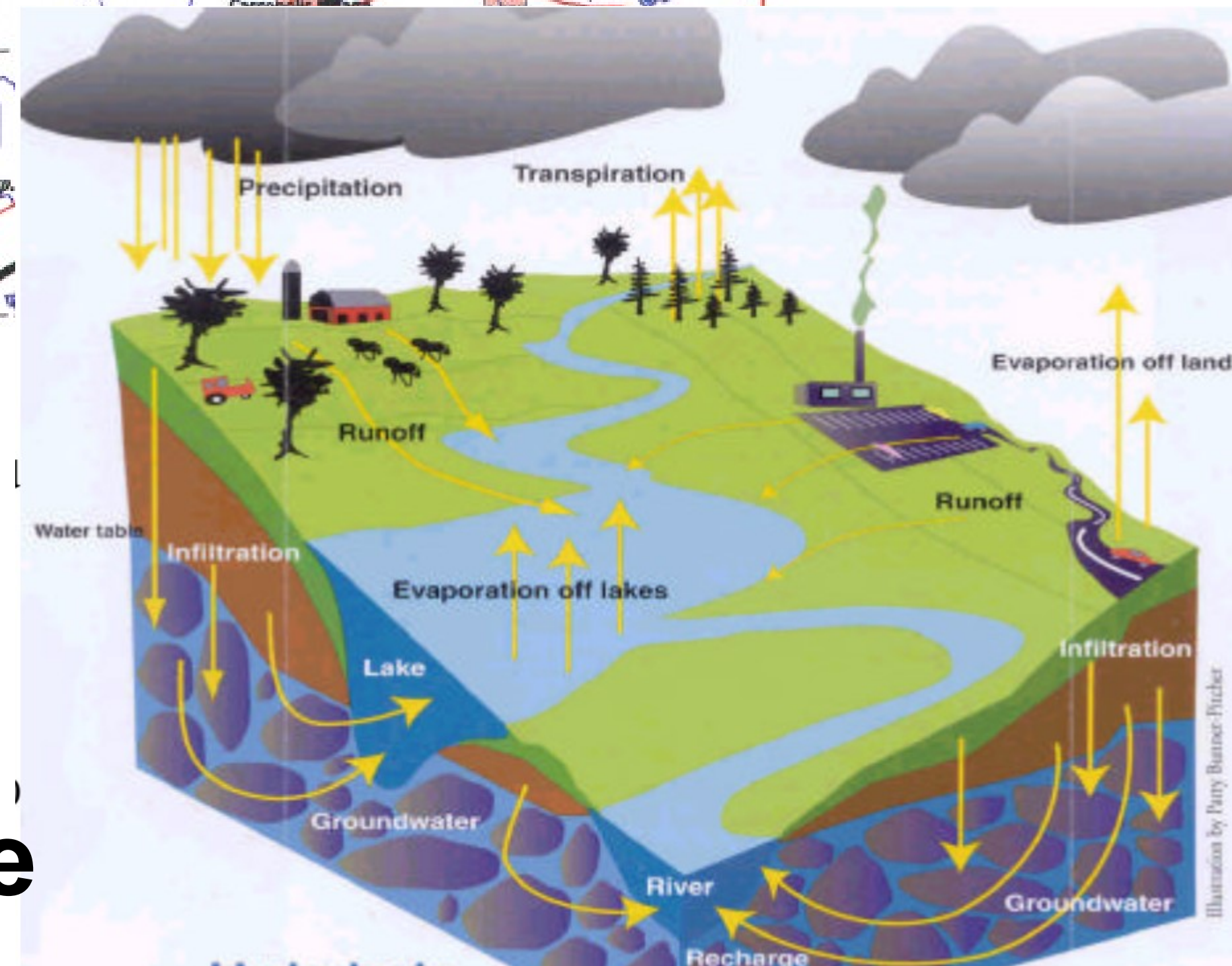
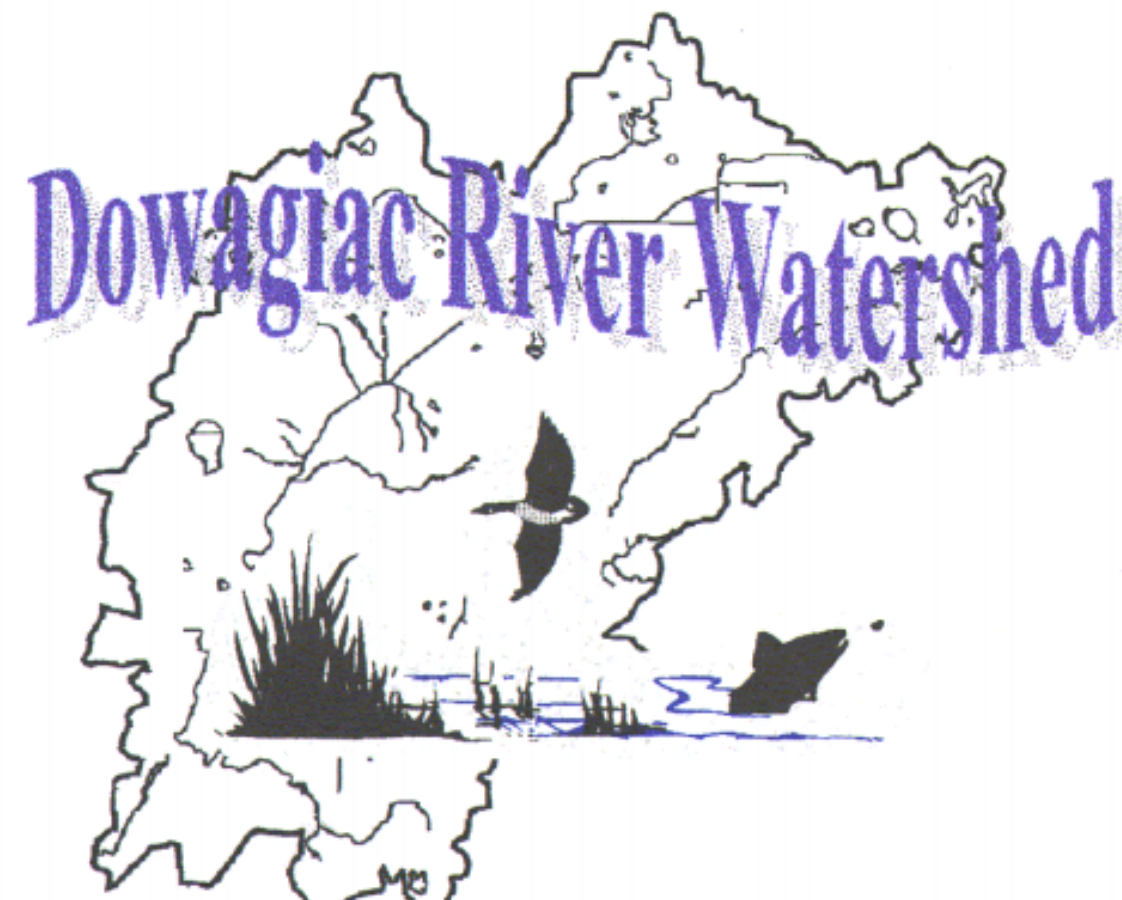
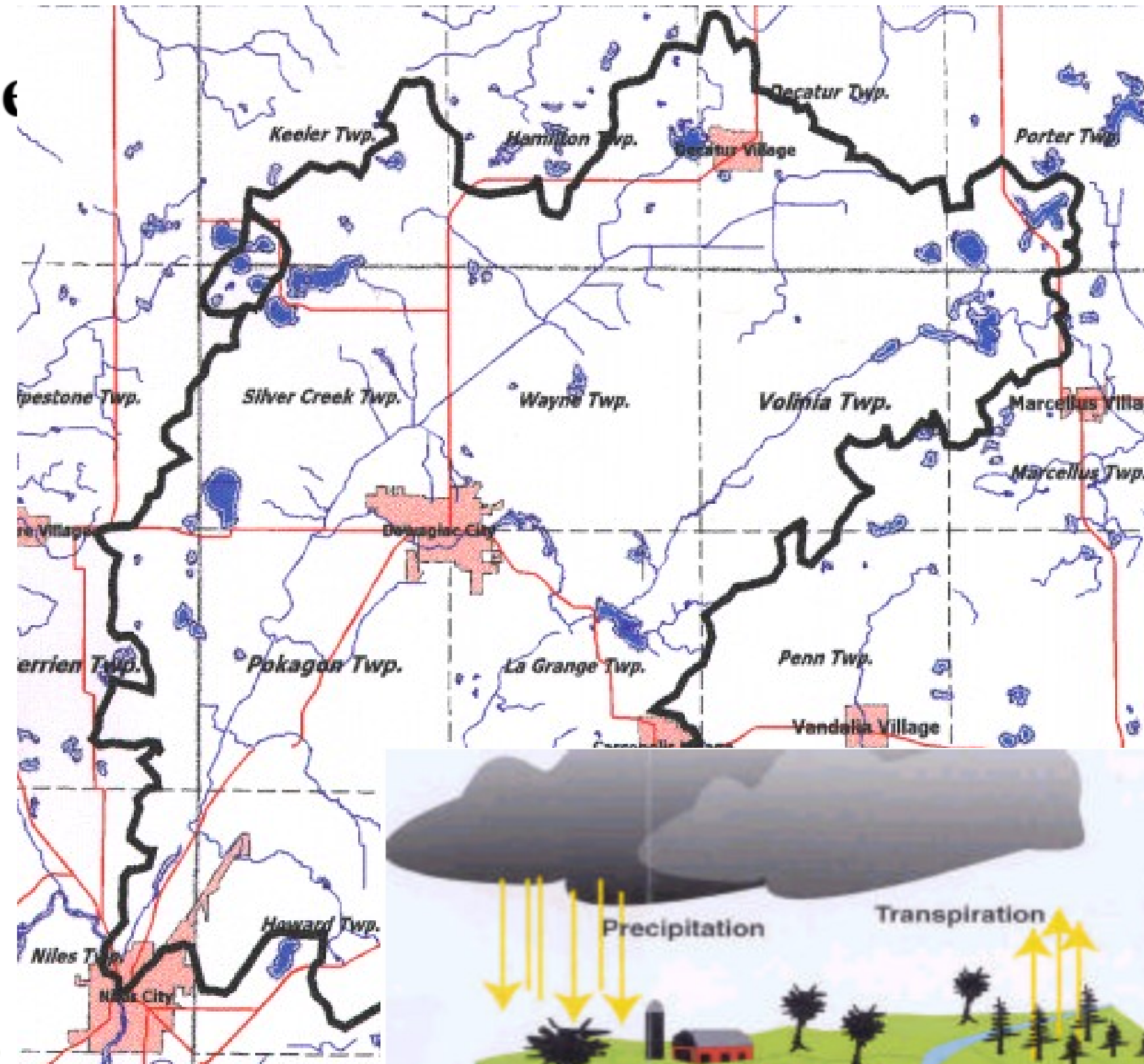
COPYRIGHT 2019 - ABC

Watershed Management Plan Update


Dowagiac River Watershed Management Plan

October 2002

Cass County Conservation District
1127 E. State Street
Cassopolis, MI 49031
(269) 445-8643 x3



~Connections~
Land, Water and People

A grayscale map of Michigan showing township boundaries and names. The map is overlaid with large, bold, black text. The text reads: "Only by restoring the broken connections can we be healed. Connection is Health." Below this, it says "~Wendell Berry~". At the bottom, there are three blue hyperlinks: "http://www.nilesmi.org/puckerstdam/index.php", "https://www.pokagonband-nsn.gov/dowagiac-river-re-meander-project", and "https://youtu.be/z-NmbyPZapg".

**Only by restoring the
broken connections can
we be healed.
Connection is Health.**

~Wendell Berry~

More information, pictures, drone videos, etc.

<http://www.nilesmi.org/puckerstdam/index.php>

<https://www.pokagonband-nsn.gov/dowagiac-river-re-meander-project>

<https://youtu.be/z-NmbyPZapg>

PROGRESS

Obtained Temporary Construction Easements from ~45 landowners

City hired Milbocker & Sons, Allegan, MI (Aug 2019)

Prepared Park Area – Removed all Electric

Removed Powerhouse & Disposed of Hazardous Wastes

Obtained EGLE permit (early 2020)

Removed most of the structure (2020 – 2021)

Removed 188,000+ cyds of sediment to date (2020-May 2021)

Restore River and Banks – Riffle project (Late summer/fall 2021)

