

A PETITION TO THE MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION FOR
THE FORMATION OF AN UPPER GRAND RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL
PURSUANT TO ACT 451, PUBLIC ACTS OF 1994

WHEREAS, the cooperating local governments signing this petition recognize a common interest in the water and related resources of the Grand River Basin; and

WHEREAS, certain governmental units in the Watershed depend upon the Grand River for water supply and for assimilation of effluent from wastewater treatment plants; and

WHEREAS, private interests such as Grand River Environmental Action Team (GREAT), as well as governmental interests such as the State of Michigan, the County and the City of Jackson, and others have extensive investments in recreational lands and facilities along the Grand River, and

WHEREAS, the natural fluctuation in the flow of the Grand River has in the past caused problems of flooding on the one hand, and low flow on the other; and

WHEREAS, prior studies have indicated benefits to communities will accrue from further coordinated studies, river management, and augmenting the flow of the Grand River; and

WHEREAS, millions of people at present live and work in the Grand River Watershed Area; and

WHEREAS, the government, employment, industry, and economic development of the Grand River Basin and the health, safety, and general welfare of its population are and will continue to be vitally affected by the use, conservation, management, and control of the water and related resources of the Grand River Basin; and

WHEREAS, demands upon the waters and related resources of the Grand River Basin are expected to increase rapidly because the population of the area is projected to increase, together with the trend of wastewater treatment facilities situated in other adjacent watersheds, finding it less expensive to discharge their phosphates into the Grand River Watershed (as opposed to effectively treating and removing the phosphates prior to discharging into their own watershed); and

WHEREAS, the conservation, use, development, management and control of the water related resources of the Grand River Basin require cooperative studies and action by the local units of government in the Basin; and

WHEREAS, the Grand River Intercounty Drainage Board, and a steering committee comprised of all municipalities situated within the Upper Grand River Watershed, have made investigations, surveys and studies extending over a period of five years, and have concluded that the formation of a Upper Grand River Watershed Council under Act 451, Public Acts of 1994, is advisable and urgently needed;

NOW THEREFORE, the local governments signing this petition, on behalf of several of the communities situated within the Upper Grand River Watershed, respectfully request the Michigan Natural Resources Commission adopt an order establishing the Upper Grand River Watershed Council, said Council to have the following general purposes, functions, area to be served and eligible membership.

DESCRIPTION OF GENERAL PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS TO BE PERFORMED:

1. Conduct, or cause to be conducted studies of water resources of the Upper Grand River Watershed, including investigations of water use, water quality and the reliability of the water resources, and coordinate the studies which have been undertaken by the Upper, Mid and Lower Grand River Watershed Study groups.
2. Prepare periodic reports concerning among other things, trends in water use and availability, emerging water problems and recommendations for appropriate public policies and programs necessary to maintain adequate water resources for the Grand River Watershed area.
3. If determined necessary by the council, request the Michigan Natural Resources Commission to survey the Grand River Watershed for the purpose of determining minimum levels of stream flow necessary for health, welfare and safety as provided in Act No. 451, Public Acts of 1994.
4. Make plans for development and management of water resources and recommend the creation of a river management district or districts in the Grand River Watershed under the provisions of Act 451 Public Acts of 1994, when the needs warrant such an action.
5. Advise agencies of federal, state and local government as to the council's view of the Grand River Watershed's problems and needs.
6. Cooperate with federal, state and local agencies in providing stream gauges, water quality sampling stations, or other water resources data-gathering facilities or programs that aid the council in its responsibility for studying and reporting on water conditions.
7. Adopt by-laws necessary for its operation.
8. Adopt annual operating budgets and establish apportionment of costs.
9. Hold an annual meeting for the election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary-treasurer and such other officers as necessary, submit an annual report to member governments, and hold such other meetings as needed.

10. Employ an executive secretary and such other professional, administrative or clerical staff, including consultants, as may be provided for in an approved budget.
11. Establish such subcommittees or advisory committees as are deemed helpful in the discharge of its functions.
12. Establish special project funds as needed to finance special studies outside its annual budget capacity and for this purpose the council may accept gifts and grants from private individual, corporations and local, state or federal governments.
13. Promote watershed management activities, including: the implementation of the Upper grand River Watershed Plan; the provision of a forum for discussion of watershed issues, and development of recommendations for local land use and ordinance language.

THE GRAND RIVER WATERSHED

The Grand River originates in Somerset Township, Hillsdale County and outlets into Lake Michigan approximately 260 miles downstream at Grand Haven. It drains the second largest watershed in Michigan. The watershed is bounded on the north by the Muskegon River and Saginaw River watersheds, and on the south by the Kalamazoo River, St. Joseph River, and River Rasin watersheds, and to the east by the Huron River Watershed. The watershed has a drainage area of 5,572 square miles and includes all or part of 19 counties.

The drainage area of the Upper Grand River, as defined by the Michigan Water Resources Commission, is approximately 2,840 square miles with a downstream terminus just below the mouth of Prairie Creek at Ionia. As mentioned previously, the planning area for this Watershed Management Plan is defined as starting in northern Hillsdale County and terminating just north (downstream) of the City of Eaton Rapids, an area approximately 700 square miles. This area is referred to as the Upper Grand River Watershed throughout this plan.

This Petition is executed by duly adopted resolutions of the following municipalities: