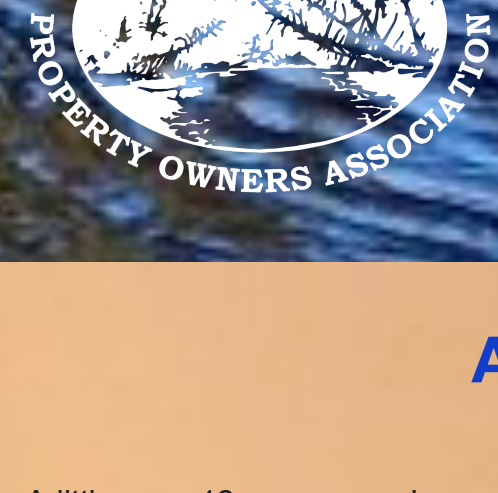


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# THE RIVER GUARDIAN

## FALL 2022

### A Farewell Message

David Smith

A little over 12 years ago, I was elected to be president of the ARPOA board of directors. This fall, I am stepping down from that position. A number of things have happened over the last year or so that have convinced me that this is the right time to do although it's not been an easy decision to make.

During my time as president, I have seen the Association change greatly. The membership is the largest it's been in 12 years and plans are underway to grow it even more. The board has been in a position to offer grants that help other river non-profits further our mission. Projects that address our mission including Cedars for the Au Sable, our invasive efforts, and, most recently, our River Etiquette signs have been very successful. The Wine and Cheese Gathering format of our annual meeting has resulted in record high attendance. I've been proud to have had a part in all of these.

Even though this is titled a farewell, I'm not leaving. I still live on the banks of the Au Sable and I'll still serve on the ARPOA board, but I'll be playing a different role moving forward. And I'll still look forward to seeing you on the river.

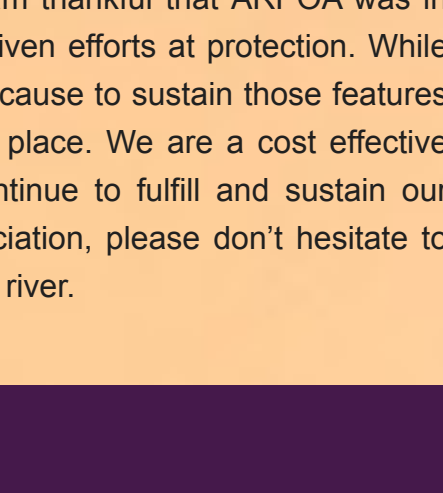


### From the President

Adolph "Dolph" Greenberg

I want to thank David Smith for all the good work he has done in running and growing ARPOA, and for his unceasing efforts in protecting the river we all cherish. The transition is going well thanks to David, and the exceptional folks who serve on your Board.

Some of you know that my professional background is in academic teaching and applied research. To be specific, I have worked as an applied environmental anthropologist for over 50 years assisting American Indian nations and Canadian First Nations communities in gaining access to and protecting their sacred areas and traditional cultural properties often located in protected areas such as national parks, wildlife refuges etc. In addition, I chaired the Three Valley Conservation Trust Board of Trustees for several years. In the course of this work, I have learned something about protection, protected areas, conservation and resource management. Early on it was conventional wisdom that by designating an environmental or cultural feature as protected meant that it was immunized against adverse impacts. While labeling the Au Sable River as a "Natural and Scenic River" was a good beginning and provided a modicum of protection, we have learned over the years that protection on paper without the vigilance of stakeholders can have serious consequences. The noted naturalist, John Muir, once remarked: "Nothing dollarably is safe, however guarded." Thus, we have seen that activities seemingly external to the Au Sable River such as oil extraction, PFOAS use, introduction of invasive species (Purple Loosestrife), a fish farm, and the possibility of expanding military operations have or can adversely impact the river and nullify any "official" protections. I am thankful that ARPOA was in place to give voice to us, the stakeholders and provide for community driven efforts at protection. While ARPOA's members come from all walks of life, we are united in common cause to sustain those features of our properties that caused us to invest in river real estate in the first place. We are a cost effective organization with no permanent paid staff. With your help we can continue to fulfill and sustain our mission. If you have any questions for me and/or want to join our association, please don't hesitate to contact me at [greenbam@miamich.edu](mailto:greenbam@miamich.edu). It's an honor to serve you and the river.



### Season Update

Annual Meeting, Purple Loosestrife, Invasives

David Smith

#### Annual Meeting

On July 16, the Association held their 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting (and 9<sup>th</sup> Wine and Cheese gathering) at Gates Au Sable Lodge with nearly 80 members in attendance. After a social time, a short business meeting was called to order by president David Smith. The main order of business was to reelect Margot Surridge and Dave Long and elect new directors Linda Kaleita and Cris Jones to three year terms on the ARPOA board. The business meeting was adjourned, and the president gave an update on the Cedars for the Au Sable project, River User Etiquette signs, Purple Loosestrife, and the Camp Grayling expansion status. The formal part of the annual meeting ended with Susan Thiel from the Camp Grayling Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) reporting on the PFAS situation and Tom Barnes from the Michigan DNR answering questions regarding this year's logging in the watershed. Based on comments from many attendees, the annual meeting was a success.

#### Purple Loosestrife

Unfortunately, the two volunteer events planned for August to treat Purple Loosestrife in the river corridor had to be cancelled because of the small number of volunteers. Next year, please consider volunteering to help control this aggressive invasive.

In spite of the cancellations, Purple Loosestrife was not ignored. Six Association members, on their own, spent a few days cutting plants from Burton's Landing to McMasters Bridge. A big "thank you" goes to Diane Capen, Scott Stener, Linda and Gary Kalita, Marie Harrington and David Smith. As a testament to the success of this project, during a 45-minute float to Wakeley Landing, only one plant was found. That wouldn't have been the case five years ago. We are making a difference!

#### Invasives

As regular readers of this newsletter know, the Association has been working to control the invasive Purple Loosestrife for over a decade. However, PL is not the only invasive plant to be found in the watershed.

I walk my dog, Django, every morning on the road I live on. It's only half a mile long but I've counted six different invasive species on my walks. I've seen Spotted knapweed which comes from eastern Europe. It has an evil superpower—allelopathy. This means it exudes a substance that stunts the growth of neighboring plants. Also Flat pea from Africa and the Middle East. It uses other plants as a trellis and can completely cover the host. Curly dock from Europe and Asia is considered an invasive in Michigan. It produces a huge number of seeds and thrives in disturbed areas. Canada thistle, also from Europe and Asia but not Canada despite its name, left untreated will form dense stands that displace native plants. It is best removed by cutting at the ground but wear thick gloves because it is very prickly. Autumn olive is a tree from East Asia that produces berries that birds eat and spread. It can out-compete native plants and produce dense shade that interferes with natural plant succession. Finally, narrow-leaf cattails: these plants may have come from Europe or the eastern coast of North America but it is considered an invasive in Michigan. With leaves about half an inch wide, it can create a monoculture that displaces native plants and limits food for birds and other animals.

The best response for these and every other invasive is to eliminate them before the numbers get too great.

### Camp Grayling Expansion: Our Position

The Au Sable River Property Owners Association (ARPOA) is strongly opposed to the proposed Camp Grayling lease expansion from an area of 230 square miles to that of 480 square miles. The ARPOA Board of Directors voted to take this position at a special meeting after gathering information from listening to various public hearings with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and the National Guard at Camp Grayling (NGCG); learning about resolutions against the expansion by townships affected; and discussions with our members, affected property owners, and other conservation groups. The expansion is a threat to the future health and enjoyment of the Manistee, Muskegon, and Au Sable rivers and would be a significant deviation from the mission statement of the MDNR; which is the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations.

The information gathered revealed various negative impacts threatening the watersheds that include economic impacts; decreased property values; reduced recreational accessibility; subleasing of the lands for private business testing, a practice mostly unknown to the public; impact on infrastructure; habitat disruption; pollution (both current like PFAS, from the increasing training, and those that have yet to be discovered); and impacts of Electronic Warfare on the ecosystem and public communications.

In sum, ARPOA strongly opposes the expansion, a position not taken lightly as we support a fully ready military. But the proposed expansion request by the NGCG is egregious, posing a significant threat to the headwaters and land surrounding the Au Sable, Manistee, Muskegon Rivers and is unjustified. Our opposition is directly in line with the mission of ARPOA to preserve, protect and enhance the Au Sable River watershed's great natural endowments of wilderness scenery, unpolluted cold-water, and stable forest habitat for the enjoyment of future generations. It is also in line with the positions taken by our companion associations such as the Anglers of the Au Sable, North Branch Area Foundation, and the Michigan United Conservation Clubs as well as the resolutions from the various townships.

We have sent letters of our position to Mr. Daniel Eichinger (Director, MDNR) with cc's to Governor Gretchen Whitmer; Mr. Thomas Barnes, MDNR Unit Manager, Grayling; U.S. Senators Debbie Stabenow and Gary Peters; U.S. Representatives Elissa Slotkin, Jack Bergman, and John Moorman; State Representatives Dale Rendon, State Senators Curt VanderWall and Curtis Hertel, and Col. Scott Meyers (Commander Camp Grayling).

For resources regarding this statement of our position, please go to <https://arpoa-mi.org/camp-grayling-expansion/>

### From the Treasurer

Margot Surridge

Another fiscal year has passed and our membership numbers are slowly growing. At the end of July 2021 we had a total of 229 members and this year the number grew to 232! So given that slow rate of growth we are going to start a membership drive campaign in this upcoming year. More information on the details of the campaign will be forthcoming. In the meantime, anything you can do to promote our organization is greatly appreciated. If your neighbor or friend lives or vacations on the River or even supports the mission of our organization and you are not comfortable contacting them just send an email to [arpoa.m@gmail.com](mailto:arpoa.m@gmail.com) or via snail mail to our PO Box and we will contact them directly. We can also provide you with membership brochures on ARPOA.

In FY21/22 we generated \$16,140. Membership income was \$12,000 and we received \$4,000 in donations. We contributed \$5600 to charitable organizations who support our mission. In addition, thanks to the hard work of Howard Johnson and his Signage Committee we funded the River signage campaign this past year.

For all of you Amazon shoppers please do not forget to name ARPOA on Amazon Smile as your charity of choice. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me via our email address or PO Box. We greatly appreciate your feedback and support.

### Welcome to the Board!

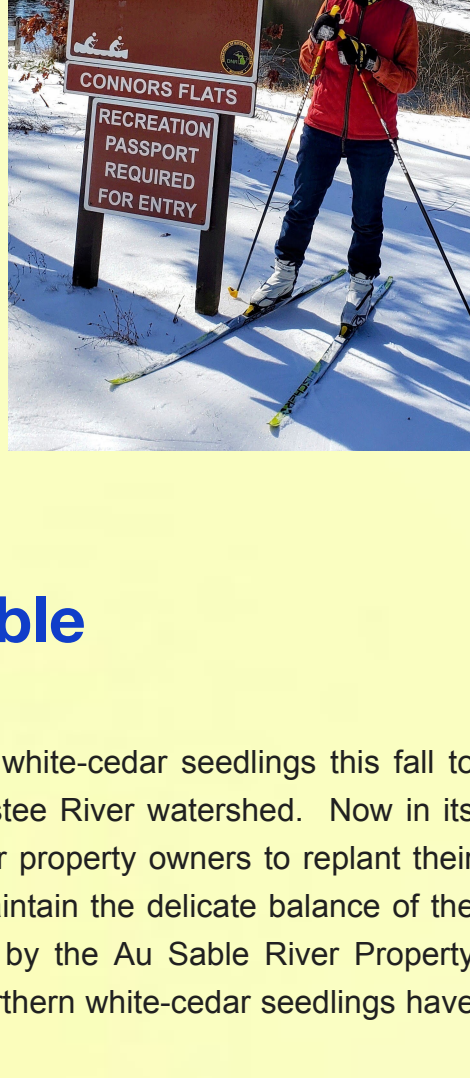
Linda Weeks Kaleita

My father bought the property on the AuSable from Consumers Power in 1978. He had leased the land and owned the "cabin" for a few years prior. It was a place to meet as a family and enjoy wilderness without camping. With some improvements, it became my favorite place in the world. \$28,000 well spent! We loved to canoe and just feel the wilderness even in Winter.

Fast forward, my late husband and I embark to demouse, the mouse house for my Mom to continue coming up. We succeed and continue to enjoy the beauty of the river. I inherited the cabin, lost my husband to cancer, married Gary, who had also lost his wife to cancer. Gary (who loves the area) and I moved here full time. We love to cross country ski in the winter, canoe, paddle-board, and bike in summer. Gary is learning to fly fish again. We are the River Guardians for the Section from Wakely Bridge to McMasters. We are both retired. I spent years working in Traverse City and serving on many boards to hopefully make the city a better place.

I also have a degree in Biology and even spent a summer at the MSU Biotation on Gull Lake, a highpoint in my academic career!

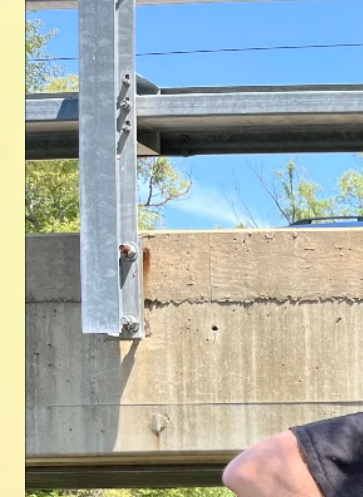
I am looking forward to working with the board to keep our watershed and river healthy for all. I am concurrently serving on the Lake Superior Watershed Conservancy Board.



### Cedars for the Au Sable

Howard N. Johnson

Thirty-eight river property owners planted and protected 5100 northern white-cedar seedlings this fall to preserve and protect the cold-water fishery of the Au Sable and Manistee River watershed. Now in its twenty-sixth year, the Cedars for the Au Sable project encourages river property owners to replant their northern white-cedar seedlings along the river's edge to help maintain the delicate balance of the river's ecological system. Since the beginning of this project in 1997 by the Au Sable River Property Owners Association (ARPOA), over 26,000 northern white-cedar seedlings have been planted and protected in enclosures.



The northern white-cedars along the riverbank provide needed shade to maintain the cold-water fishery of the river. The presence of the cedar sweepers at the water line provides protection for the fish, increases the amount of large woody debris in the water, as well as the preservation of the riverbank by locking in the soil.

There is virtually no natural reforestation of northern white-cedar in northern Michigan and we believe it is mainly due to the tremendous deer populations in our northern counties that consume the tiny cedar seedlings before they have an opportunity to develop.

River property owners have long recognized the complete absence of any young cedars in our area. They have attempted to plant replacement cedar seedlings only to have the deer and hares eat them again. Recognizing that this problem existed, and a solution needed to be found, volunteer members of the ARPOA pre-packaged northern white-cedar seedlings into a planting kit. Included in this planting kit are: 10 northern white-cedar seedlings, protective fencing material, wooden stakes, and complete planting instructions. [Read more...](#)



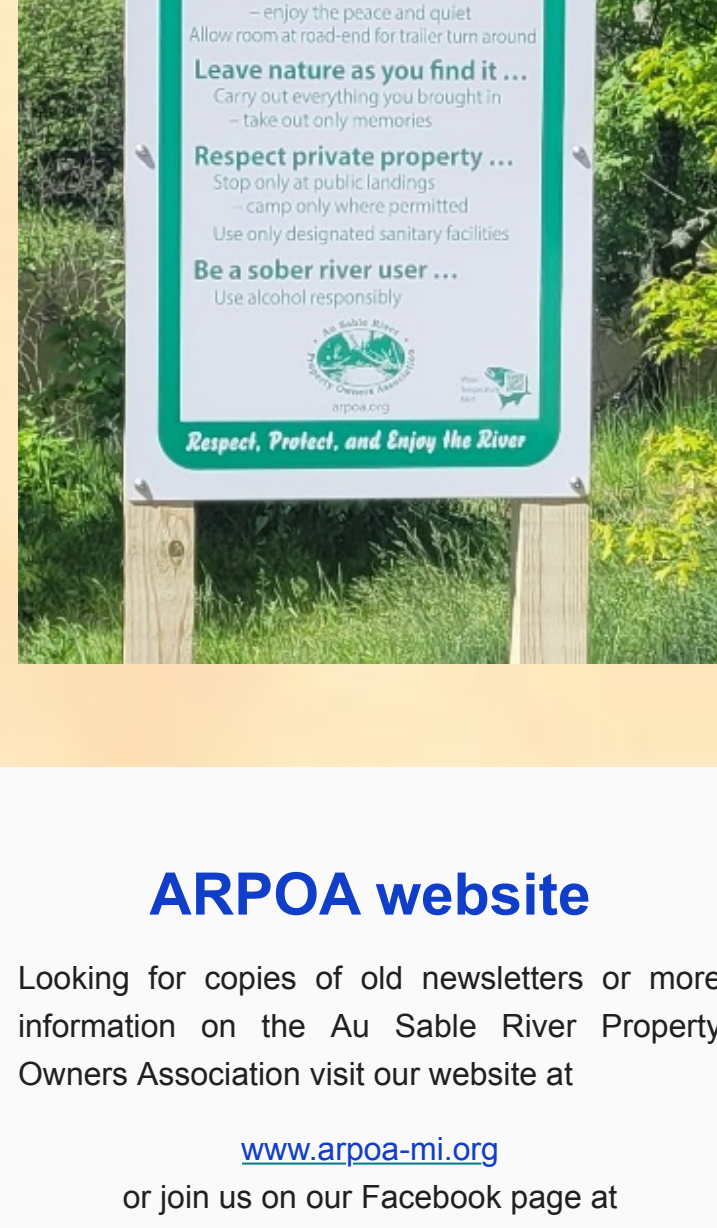
David Smith and Marie Harrington

### River Etiquette Signs

The River Etiquette Sign committee of ARPOA board members Boyd Dillon, Dolph Greenberg, David Smith, and chairman Howard Johnson have completed Phase I of the project by installing 24 signs at river road ends, DNR launch sites, all canoe liveries in both Grayling and Roscommon, and city/county/village launch sites. Later this fall, Phase II will begin with the installation of similar signs in partnership with the North Branch Area Foundation.

The purpose of these signs is to encourage proper behavior by river users and better protect our river property.

Special thanks to the many folks that helped with the installation: David Smith, Marie Harrington, Dolph Greenberg, Boyd Dillon, Jim Lawless, Carolyn Johnson, Micki Levin, Sluvs Loudon, David Fisher, Tom Buhr, Tom Wessels, Tony Molis, Cris Jones, Joe Hemming, and Ralph Rucinski.

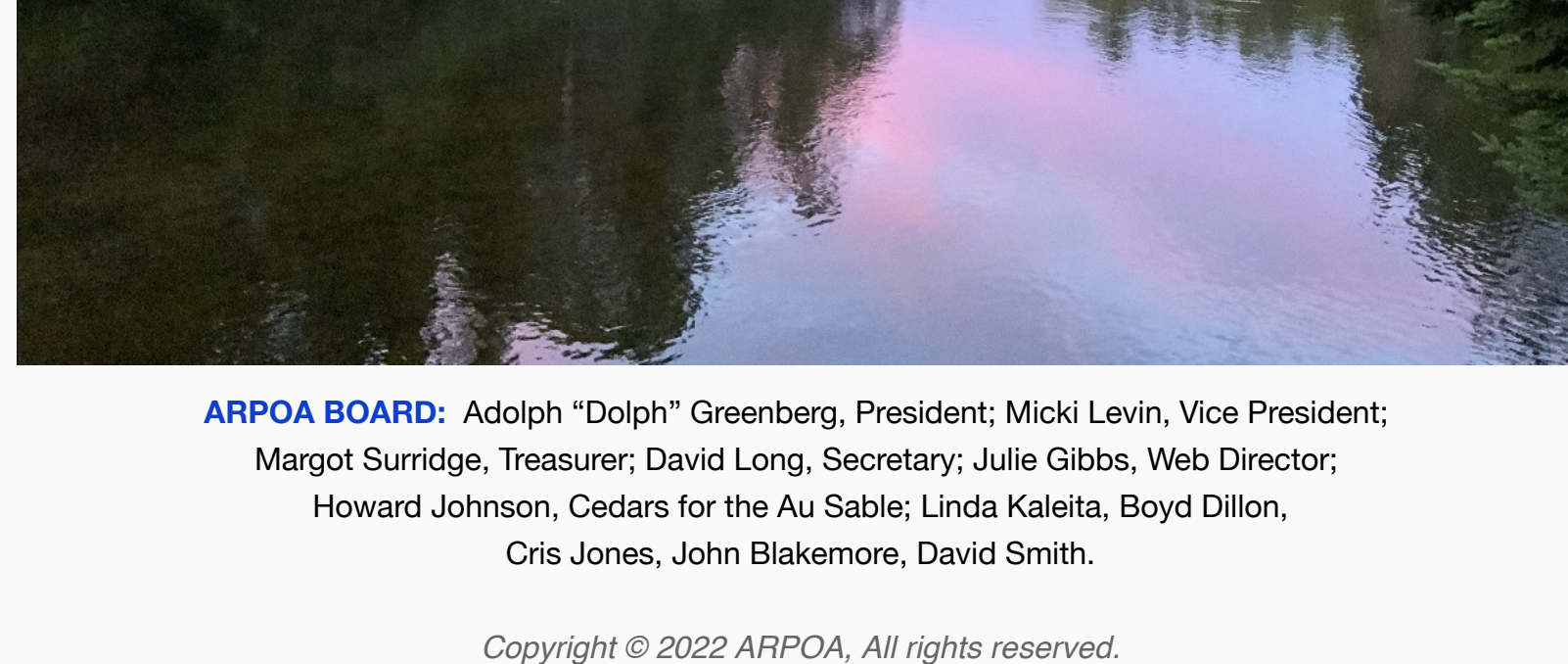


### DO YOU SHOP ON AMAZON?

If you do, here is a great way to donate to the Au Sable River Property Owners Association. Just log on to <https://smile.amazon.com> and choose us. Amazon automatically donates 0.5% of the purchase of eligible products to our organization.

### ARPOA website

Looking for copies of old newsletters or more information on the Au Sable River Property Owners Association visit our website at [www.arpoa-mi.org](http://www.arpoa-mi.org) or join us on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ARPOA.MI/>



ARPOA BOARD: Adolph "Dolph" Greenberg, President; Micki Levin, Vice President; Margot Surridge, Treasurer; David Long, Secretary; Julie Gibbs, Web Director; Howard Johnson, Cedars for the Au Sable; Linda Kaleita, Boyd Dillon, Cris Jones, John Blakemore, David Smith.

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