2009 Annual Report
President’s Commission on the River

Prepared by Dr. Patrick L. Lawrence
Chair, President’s Commission on the River
patrick.lawrence@utoledo.edu

December 2009
Introduction

• This report highlights the ongoing work of the President’s Commission on the River as follow-up to the 2006 Report of the Commission and subsequent activities and projects.

• The focus of the Commission continues to be in the areas of environmental improvements, beautification, education, public awareness, student involvement and community engagement.

• More information on the Commission can be found at:

http://www.utoledo.edu/commissions/river/
River Flooding Events

- During 2009 two weather events resulted in high water levels in the river on main campus:
  - February 10/11
  - March 25/26

- Heavy rainfall and frozen/saturated soils contributed to increased runoff into the river.

- Subsequent flooding occurred in parking lots next to the river and along the banks in the areas of the “flats” and Carlson Library.
Ottawa River Contact Advisory

• A public meeting was hosted by the Commission on March 19th, 2010 to discuss the history of the Contact Advisory posted for the Ottawa River in 1990 – including on the UT Mains campus.

• Aim was to consider prospects for the reassessment of the continued need for the postings given more recent monitoring data and potential water quality improvements.

• Over 20 people attended including representation from Ohio EPA and state/local health departments.

• Discussions are continuing with the regulatory agencies regarding future monitoring and assessment needs for the contact advisory postings.
EC\textsuperscript{3} Education and Environmental Restoration Project

- A $60,000 grant (2009-2012) was awarded to the Commission by the Stranahan Foundation to undertake an education and stream restoration project for a section of the Ottawa River on the UT campus.

- This project will involve the participation of science teachers and students from the TPS Early College High School Program.

- Work will begin with education initiatives in 2010 and lead to the design and construction of a stream restoration project by 2012.
Celebrate Our River Week

• A series of public and community events were held on campus during the 2009 Celebrate Our River week from September 8-12th, 2009.

• A display was placed in the Carlson Library of the planning concepts for the Student River Plaza project.

• A team from the University of Michigan Arts & Earth program exhibited their video/music presentation on the Clinton River.

• UT served as a kickoff location for the 2009 Clean Your Streams Event. (see next page)
2009 Clean Your Streams

• On Saturday September 12th, 2009 a total of 236 volunteers registered at the UT site for this event.

• Representatives participated from 15 UT student organizations.

• Over 100 large bags and several oversize items were removed from the river on and near campus.
Temporary Student Parking Lot issue

• Commission members actively participated in discussions and several meetings to address various concerns with the establishment of a temporary parking lot in the tagging area located next to the Stream Plant.

• Issues raised included public safety and the precedence of locating a temporary parking lot in an area intended for future green space.
Student River Plaza Planning Charrette

- On October 15th, 2009 over 40 students from a joint UT/BGSU planning design class participated in a planning charrette.

- The aim was to develop and share various design concepts for the river in the area of the Carlson Library and Student Union.

- Numerous ideas were proposed and draft materials developments to be shared with the Commission to assist in further future project planning.
**Fund Raising**

- Total income = $79,250.08
  - Grant $60,000 (for 2009-2012)
  - Gifts $12,445
  - New Pledges $5,560
  - Ongoing Pledges $1,245.08

- Total Expenses = $13,536.37

- Net Balance = $65,713.71

- Cash on Hand = $1,693.12

* all values refer to FY 2009: July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009

** other funds are committed to projects or pledges
Education & Outreach

• Featured article on the Ottawa River and work of the Commission in the Fall 2009 issue of the UT Alumina magazine.

• UT Matters internet and T.V. media theme for November 2009 on Sustainability highlighted the Ottawa River and related projects.

• Also mentioned in articles in UT News and the Independent Collegian during 2009.
Other Events & Business

• Posters of the Commission were part of the 2009 Earth Day event at UT.

• Formal dedication of our two rain gardens:
  – May Sue Cave Honors Rain Garden
  – Carolyn Edwards Memorial Rain Garden

• Commission has developed a standard format for informational signage for river projects (first one to be installed at the Edwards Rain Garden near lot 10 parking lot.

• Commission members participated in numerous public events and meetings regarding the Ottawa River.
Commission Members (2009)

- Dr. Patrick Lawrence, UT (chair)
- Page Armstrong, UT
- Mike Cassidy, Community
- Doug Collins, UT
- Don Curtis, UT
- Dick Eastop, UT
- Kurt Erichsen, TMACOG
- Dr. Hans Gottgens, UT
- Ellen Ingram, UT
- Dr. Steve LeBlanc, UT
- Chuck Lehnert, UT
- Dick Meyers, Toledo Design Center
- Heather Slough, UT
- Dr. Carol Stepien, UT
- Arjun Sabarwal, UT Library
- Jay Brewster, Blanchard
- Katie Swartz, American Rivers
- Nicholas Wittenberg
2010 Priorities

• Implementation of year one activities (Education) for EC3 Project with ECHS program.

• Continued support for annual Celebrate Our River week and Clean Your Streams Event (September 2010).

• Participate in ongoing site design for the ARS building.

• Development Informational Signage project and seek funding support.

• Promote continued development of the Student River Plaza project, including working with library on joint funding raising effort.

• Advocate for the consideration of the Ottawa River during main campus facility planning and development.
Acknowledgements

• The work of the Commission in 2009 was supported and assisted by many groups and individuals whom we would like to recognize for their efforts:

  – Chuck Lehnert, Vice President Facilities & Construction
  – Vern Snyder, Vice President Institutional Advancement
  – Doug Collins, Manager, Parking and Grounds
  – President’s Office, University of Toledo
  – UT Institutional Advancement
  – UT Foundation
  – Duane Stranahan Sr. Charitable Fund
  – American Rivers
  – Toledo Rain Garden Initiative
  – Stranahan Foundation
  – UT Campus Beautification Committee
  – Blanchard
  – Ohio EPA
  – Partners for Clean Streams
  – UT Department of Geography & Planning
  – UT Honors Program
For more Information

Please refer to our website at

www.utoledo.edu/commissions/river/