

County Administrator's Digest

March 25, 2013

Alan G. Vanderberg, County Administrator

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WOLVERINE PIPELINE

The Wolverine Pipeline Company owns and operates a liquid petroleum pipeline that runs through significant portions of Illinois and Michigan including the western portion of Ottawa County up to Grand Haven. Representatives of Wolverine recently met with myself and Rick VandeKerkoff to discuss a much needed right of way maintenance project that will impact many County homeowners. I asked them to provide an article for the Digest and a map ([click here to view map](#)) which they have gladly done the article follows below:

Right-of-Way Reclamation, Scope of Work

The 2010 Pipelines and Informed Planning Alliance (PIPA) Report, sponsored by the United

States Department of Transportation, has shown and described the damage that trees and tree roots can cause to pipelines. In light of the PIPA Report and its recommended best practices,

Wolverine Pipe Line Company has revised its policy of allowing some trees to remain within its pipeline right-of-way, It has been documented that trees left growing in the right-of-way not only hinder the regulatory required surveillance of the right-of-way but tree roots can cause damage to pipeline coatings, which allows corrosion to occur. Trees can damage the pipeline if uprooted in a storm and can allow lightning to follow the roots and damage the pipeline. Furthermore, trees in the right-of-way hinder the response to an emergency and increase the danger to the public, the responders and the environment. This policy change will help protect the integrity of Wolverine's pipeline and enhance the safety of our neighbors and Wolverine's employees.

Beginning about April 1, 2013, Wolverine Pipe Line Company will employ Conestoga Rovers and Associates (CRA) to remove all trees from Wolverine's pipeline right-of-way along its Niles, Michigan to Grand Haven, Michigan pipeline. The pipeline traverses through the City of Holland, Holland Township, Park Township and Port Sheldon Township in Ottawa County. This pipeline right-of-way was last cleared in 2009, before the PIPA Report was published, and some trees were left within the right-of-way at the request of the landowners. Those trees will be re-



moved during this 2013 project, and any overhanging branches from trees outside the right-of-way will be cut back to open the right-of-way for viewing from the sky.

Most of Wolverine's pipeline right-of-ways allow the clearing of all trees and other obstructions that exist within 25 feet of the pipeline. Some easements vary in width from this standard, and

Wolverine will only remove trees that it has the legal right to remove. The easement for each parcel of land will be carefully reviewed to determine the width that must be cleared.

Every effort will be made to contact the landowner before any trees are removed from their property. Wolverine will provide a copy of the easement at the request of the landowner. The details of the work for each parcel will be explained to the landowner. The pipeline will be positively located, the easement boundaries will be measured and marked, and all trees subject to removal will be identified to the landowner before any clearing commences.

If the trees are in a wooded area not maintained as a lawn, the stumps will be cut off within 2 inches of ground level. All brush and logs will be removed from the easement and, at the landowner's choice, either stacked alongside the easement or removed from the property entirely. If the trees are in an area maintained as a lawn, the stumps will be ground down 6 inches below the surface of the ground, and the stump grindings will be removed from the property and replaced with clean topsoil. Additional topsoil will be used as necessary to fill any ruts or other damage left by the clearing activity. Finally, the affected lawn area will be leveled, fertilized and seeded with an appropriate lawn mixture.

Because outdoor work is weather dependent, it is impossible to know for certain when the project will be complete. It is expected that all clearing will be completed within 90 days after starting in the Holland area, and all lawns should be repaired within 30 days after the clearing is complete.

Before the project begins, Wolverine will send a letter to all affected residents and will begin personal, face-to-face contact. Any questions or concerns should be referred to Wolverine's Right-of-Way and Claims Agent at the following phone numbers. Office: 269-323-2491, extension 24, or Cell Phone: 269-217-5158.

CREDIT RATING

Bob Spaman and I did an interview with a ratings analyst from Moody Ratings for the \$2,320,000 Wastewater Treatment System Bonds (Grand Haven – Spring Lake Sewer Authority 2013 Improvements) a couple of weeks ago. The top Credit Rating of Aaa that Ottawa has from Moody's was reaffirmed and the bonds sold received an amazing 2.67% interest rate.

The press release from Moody's is included with the digest, [click here](#) to read.

MEDIA RELATIONS: (Submitted by Shannon Felgner)

Reaching every resident in Ottawa County is a big job. We intend to try. One method of reaching the public is through media relations. Below are links to recent press coverage of the County generated by County staff. Harnessing earned media is powerful. Doing it well can build the reputation of the County, form and influence public opinion, and engage citizens.

[Pigeon Creek on WZZM](#)

[Teen Pregnancy Rates Improve on MLive](#)

[Pigeon Creek in The Press](#)

[Teen Pregnancy Rates Improve in the Sentinel](#)

[Friend of the Court on WZZM](#)

[County Health Rankings on MLive](#)

[State of the County on WZZM](#)

[County Health Rankings in the Sentinel](#)

[State of the County on MLive](#)

[County Health Rankings in the Grand Rapids Business Journal](#)

[State of the County in the Tribune](#)

[County Health Rankings in the Tribune](#)

[Dog Licensing on WZZM](#)

[Park Astronomy Program on MLive \(And another\)](#)

[Ground Water on WZZM](#)

[Park Spring Walk Series on MLive](#)

[MI Works Ready NOW! Series on WOOD](#)

SHERIFF'S OFFICE IN THE NEWS (Gary Rosema)

The Grand Haven Tribune highlighted two Sheriff Department functions: K-9 Training and a social media parent workshop that was done recently in partnership with Circuit Court Treatment Services and Pathways. The links to these articles follow:

[Take a Bite Out of Crime in the Tribune](#)

[Social Media Workshop in the Tribune](#)

NACO and MAC LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCES

Commissioner Phil Kuyers and I represented the County at the National Association of Counties (NACO) Legislative Conference in Washington DC in early March. I focused on sessions regarding many of the federal financial -budget issues of the day including the projected impacts of sequestration, the continuing resolution set to expire on Wednesday, and Medicaid expansion. I also learned more about the proposal by some federal legislators to end the practice of allowing the sale of tax-exempt municipal bonds, a practice that began in the 1860's and benefits most of the states, counties, cities, townships, villages, schools and many other organizations across the nation.

Commissioner Denny Van Dam paid to attend the conference on his own dime due to limited budget funds. It was a very challenging week in its own right as Denny was called home early to the bedside of his ailing father, who has since passed and Phil's mother passed while we were in Washington. Add to that the shutdown of the Dulles and Reagan airports and subsequently delay getting home by two days. I did pay to take my wife Leslie along this year and she enjoyed DC for the first time.

Congressman Huizenga *tweeted* the photo below toward the end of our meeting with him while we were in Washington, DC. We sat in on his Financial Services Committee meeting for about a half hour after our meeting and that was informative as well.



Ottawa County was well represented at the Michigan Association of Counties (MAC) Legislative Conference in Lansing for about a day and a half last week with the following in attendance: Commissioner Al Dannenberg; Commissioner Roger Bergman; Commissioner Matt Fenske; Commissioner Dennis Van Dam; Commissioner Don

From Left: Dennis Van Dam, Al Vanderberg, Al Dannenberg, Phil Kuyers, Keith Van Beek, Bob Spaman, Matt Fenske, and Roger Bergman



Disselkoen; Commissioner Phil Kuyers and Board Chair Jim Holtrop. Keith Van Beek, Bob Spaman, and I also attended.

Some of the Information in the conference sessions included court reform, Drain Commission, budgeting, health care, social media, Public Act 329 bonding, and enhancing access to dental care. Many speakers from the Senate and House, Senate and Democratic causes, and the Governors' Office spoke on various topics.

The roving photographer captured quite a few of us in the photo above.

MORE ON TAX-FREE MUNICIPAL BONDS

Keith passed on this article that Governing recently put out on this issue and it follows below;

[Muni Bonds' Tax Exemption Likely to Stay](#)

LOWEST RECORDED GREAT LAKES WATER LEVELS BASIS FOR GREAT LAKES LEVELS 101 PROGRAM (Kelly Goward, Macatawa Watershed Coordinator, Macatawa Area Coordinating Council)

Michigan Sea Grant, Michigan State University Extension and the MACC will host a **FREE** public program on Lake Michigan water levels with the US Army Corp of Engineers and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). [Click here](#) to view the flyer.

By [Mark Breederland, MSU Extension](#) (reprinted with permission)

Visitors and residents to the shoreline of any parts of Lakes Michigan and Huron have noticed the significantly low level of the water and the vast amount of exposed bottomland, formerly covered by water. Since the late 1800s, lake level records have been recorded for Lake Michigan and Lake Huron, and since 1918, the US Army Corps of Engineers has maintained lake level records on a number of gaging stations. Because wind and pressure can set up daily movements of the water, the gage records are averaged to even out for such fluctuations. Each month of the year, thus, has a "lake level average". As it stands, both December 2012 and January 2013 have broken the all-time record lows for each of those months on Lake Michigan. It is highly probable, as well, that February 2013 will be the lowest monthly average ever recorded on Lake Michigan—besting the previous monthly record low recorded in March 1964.

In order to explain lake level variations, hydrologic system inputs and outputs, and historical lake level records, Michigan Sea Grant Extension, Michigan State University Extension and the MACC are hosting a free public seminar on **Great Lakes Levels 101, on April 8, 2013 from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm, at the Fillmore Street Complex main conference room (12220 Fillmore St, West Olive)**. This program is designed to provide information for shoreline owners and interested citizens on current record low lake levels on Lake Michigan. The program includes ample time for moderated questions and answers from state and federal representatives.

The *Levels 101* program is co-sponsored by the US Army Corps of Engineers, and the MDEQ. Speakers for the

event include:

Mark Breederland, Educator, Michigan Sea Grant Extension/MSU Extension, Traverse City

Keith Kompoltowicz, Chief of Watershed Hydrology, US Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit

Luis Saldivia, Michigan DEQ Water Resources Division, Grand Rapids

Jeff Fritsma, US Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory, Grand Haven

State and federal laws and regulations apply to bottomlands below the “ordinary high water mark” and personnel who deal with these issues for the Southwestern Lower Michigan region (from both the US Army Corps of Engineers and the MDEQ) will be on hand to answer regulatory issue questions.

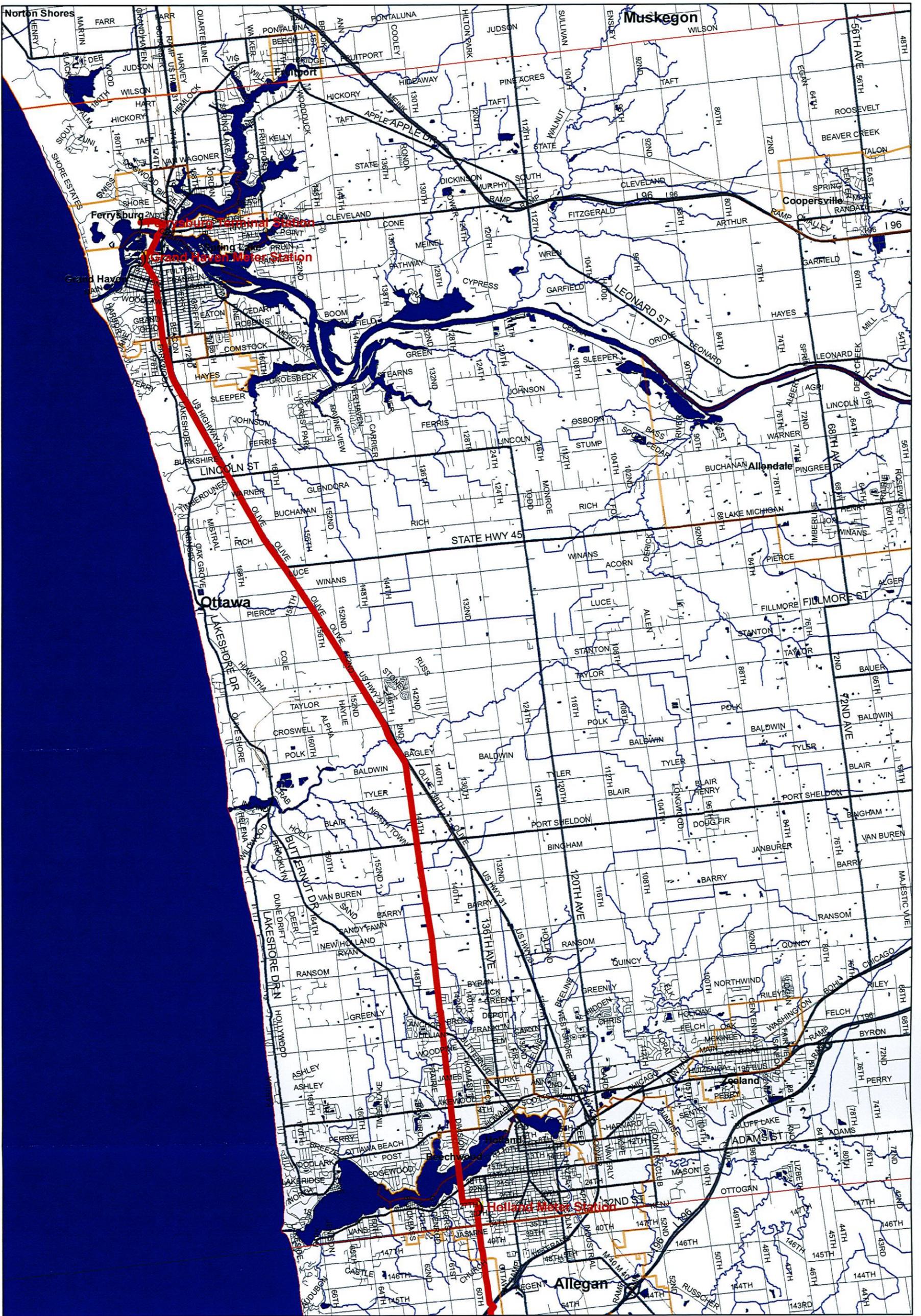
Speakers will also discuss observations from the long-term data set that exists for lake levels information on the Great Lakes. For instance, just four years after the lowest monthly record low in March 1964 and the lowest yearly low in 1964, the Lake Michigan-Huron levels bounced above the long-term yearly average in 1968.

Currently, however, the yearly average of Michigan-Huron has not been above the long-term average since 1998, making this a string of 14 consecutive years below average.

For more information about the *Great Lakes Levels 101* program or lake levels, contact Dan O’Keefe at 616-994-4580.

GVMC WEEKLY UPDATE (John Weiss)

[Click here](#) for the most recent updates.



OTTAWA COUNTY, MICHIGAN

**8" NILES TO GRAND HAVEN
8" GRAND HAVEN TO FERRYSBURG 1 & 2**

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CALL COLLECT: (219) 844-9510

1:120,000

- Legend**
- Wolverine Systems
 - Pump/Meter/Terminal Station Location
 - City/Village Boundary
 - County Boundary





New Issue: Moody's assigns Aaa rating to Ottawa County's (MI) \$2.3 million Wastewater Treatment System Bonds, (Grand Haven-Spring Lake Sewer Authority 2013 Improvements, GOLT)

Global Credit Research - 07 Mar 2013

Aaa rating applies to \$133.4 million of post-sale GOLT debt

OTTAWA (COUNTY OF) MI
Counties
MI

Moody's Rating

ISSUE	RATING
Ottawa County Wastewater Treatment System Bonds (Grand Haven-Spring Lake Sewer Authority 2013 Improvements) (GOLT)	Aaa
Sale Amount	\$2,320,000
Expected Sale Date	03/18/13
Rating Description	General Obligation Limited Tax

Moody's Outlook NOO

Opinion

NEW YORK, March 07, 2013 --Moody's Investors Service has assigned a Aaa rating to Ottawa County's (MI) \$2.3M Ottawa County Wastewater Treatment System Bonds, (Grand Haven-Spring Lake Sewer Authority 2013 Improvements), (General Obligation Limited Tax). Concurrently, Moody's has affirmed the Aaa rating on the county's outstanding general obligation limited tax debt. Post-sale, the county will have \$133.4 million of outstanding general obligation limited tax debt outstanding.

SUMMARY RATINGS RATIONALE

The bonds are ultimately secured by the county's general obligation limited tax pledge, which forms the basis of this rating. However, the county expects that debt service on the bonds will be payable from contract payments from the Townships of Grand Haven and Spring Lake. Proceeds of the bonds will finance Grand Haven and Spring Lake Township's 2013 wastewater system improvements. Assignment and affirmation of the Aaa rating reflects the county's substantial, relatively diverse tax base, recent declines in valuations, well managed financial operations that are supported by solid reserves and revenue raising flexibility, and debt levels that are expected to remain affordable.

STRENGTHS

- Well managed financial operations with revenue raising flexibility and significant alternate liquidity
- Relatively diverse tax base with stabilizing employment levels
- Low direct debt burden; history of timely contractual payments by underlying entities

WEAKNESSES

- Four consecutive years of declining taxable valuations through 2012
- Size of full valuation lower than comparably rated counties

DETAILED CREDIT DISCUSSION

SUBSTANTIAL, RELATIVELY DIVERSE TAXBASE WITH CONSECUTIVE YEARS OF DECLINES IN VALUATIONS THROUGH 2012; REBOUND OF REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

We expect the county's economy will be stable in the long-term. Located west of Grand Rapids (GOLT rated Aa2/stable outlook) along Lake Michigan, Ottawa County's large \$20.5 billion tax base had previously grown at a steady pace through 2008. However, beginning 2009, the county's full began to decline at a five year average annual rate of 2.8%. Notably, officials report an increase of 1.85% in 2013 and estimate a 2% for 2014, a reversal of previous negative trends.

Despite its industry diversity, the regional economy has close ties to the durable goods industry and experienced significant downsizing in the automotive and furniture manufacturing sectors during the recession. Job loss contributed to a high county unemployment rate of 12.3% in 2009. Officials note that economic activity in 2011 and 2012 has resulted in restoration of some jobs from renewable energy companies, food manufacturers, and various other industries. Officials report that the county gained 5,000 new jobs in 2012. The county's unemployment rate has significantly improved to 5.5% as of October 2012, which was below both the state (8.3%) and the nation (7.5%) for the same time period. A new dairy processing company completed construction in the former Delphi Automotive site is fully operational. The plant created over 200 jobs. The county also benefits from health care and higher education presences. The Holland (GO rated Aa2) Hospital, a large employer, employs 1,983 and is reportedly healthy. Grand Valley University is the county's fourth largest employer with 3,196 employees. Wealth indices are slightly above state medians, though below Aaa rated counties, with per capita and median family income levels at 91.6% and 104% of the nation, respectively. We expect the county's tax base will remain stable in the long term given recent commercial developments and improving employment rates.

WELL MANAGED FINANCIAL OPERATIONS SUPPORTED BY SOLID RESERVES WITH ALTERNATE LIQUIDITY; SOME MARGIN TO RAISE REVENUES UNDER OPERATING LEVY LIMIT

The county's financial operations are expected to remain healthy, supported by conservative budgeting and solid reserves with alternate liquidity. The county has a long history of maintaining healthy General Fund reserves well above the county's policy of keeping unassigned reserves equal to 15% of General Fund revenues. In addition, as a policy, the county budgets 1-2% of General Fund expenditures for contingencies. The General Fund has grown steadily over the last decade with the exception of fiscal 2009, when the county used \$5.3 million of reserves towards the planned construction of a new court house. Overall, the General Fund reserve balance has grown from \$14.6 million in fiscal 2003 (25.9% of revenues) to \$18 million in fiscal 2010 (29.8% of revenues). In fiscal 2011, due to the implementation of GASB 54, several funds were merged into the General Fund, increasing the total General Fund balance to \$21.2 million, or a strong 36% of revenues; the unassigned General Fund balance was \$13.7 million, or 23.2% of revenues. While audited results are not available, officials report another surplus of \$3 million for fiscal 2012. The county passed a balanced budget for fiscal 2013 and report balanced operations year-to-date for fiscal 2013.

The county enjoys significant alternate liquidity in its Stabilization and Delinquent Tax Revolving Funds. The Stabilization Fund had a balance of \$8.3 million and the Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund had an unrestricted cash position of \$23.6 million at the close of fiscal 2011. Notably, going forward, officials plan to maintain reserves in these funds and do not plan to make transfers from these funds to support operations. The county consistently remains below the operating millage rate under the Headlee limit. The current tax rate of 3.6 mills is lower than the maximum allowable rate under the Headlee limit of 4.265 mills, translating into a margin of approximately \$6.2 million of property tax revenue annually available for operations.

DEBT LEVELS EXPECTED TO REMAIN AFFORDABLE

The county's debt levels are likely to remain manageable given modest future borrowing plans. At 0.2% of full value the county's direct debt burden is low. The county's overall debt burden of 4.7% is higher, but is predominately the result of borrowing by overlapping jurisdictions, particularly school districts. Typical of Michigan counties, Ottawa County is a frequent issuer of debt on behalf of underlying municipalities. The low 0.2% direct debt figure accounts for the fact that the majority of the county's direct debt is supported by contractual payments from benefited municipalities. Approximately 75% of the county's long-term general obligation limited tax debt has been issued on behalf of underlying local governments, and, per contractual agreements between the county and the local governments, are repaid from revenues generated within those entities. The principal amortization rate of all county debt, including debt issued on behalf of underlying municipalities is relatively slow with 49.2% of the debt paid in ten years. The county will continue to issue debt annually for water and sewer improvements and

expansions for its underlying entities. All of the county's outstanding debt is fixed rate, and the county is not a party to any interest rate swap agreements.

WHAT COULD CHANGE THE RATING - DOWN

- Declines in the county's valuation or weakening of the county's socio-economic profile
- Deterioration in General Fund reserves or liquidity;
- Reduction in current levels of financial flexibility

KEY STATISTICS

2010 Census population: 263,801 (10.7% increase from 2000)

2012 Full value: \$20.5 billion

2006 - 2010 Per capita income: 91.6% of nation

2006 - 2010 Median family income: 104% of nation

Ottawa County October 2012 unemployment rate: 5.5%

Fiscal 2011 General Fund balance: \$21.2 million (36% of General Fund revenues)

Fiscal 2011 Unassigned General Fund balance: \$13.7 million (23.2% of General Fund revenues)

Direct debt burden: 0.2%

Overall debt burden: 4.7%

Principal amortization (10 years): 49.2% (includes debt issued by county on behalf of underlying municipalities)

Post-sale general obligation limited tax debt outstanding: \$133.4 million

PRINCIPAL METHODOLOGY

The principal methodology used in this rating was General Obligation Bonds Issued by U.S. Local Governments published in October 2009. Please see the Credit Policy page on www.moodys.com for a copy of this methodology.

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Great Lakes Levels 101

Information for Shoreline Owners and Interested Citizens

Ottawa Co. Fillmore Complex Conference Room

12220 Fillmore St., West Olive, MI 49460

April 8, 2013

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

No Cost

Please RSVP as space is limited:

KGoward@the-macc.org

616-395-2688

Learn info on record low lake levels
& have your questions answered by:

Mark Breederland, MI Sea Grant Extension

Keith Kompoltowicz, US Army Corps of Engineers

Luis Saldiva, Michigan DEQ Water Resources Division

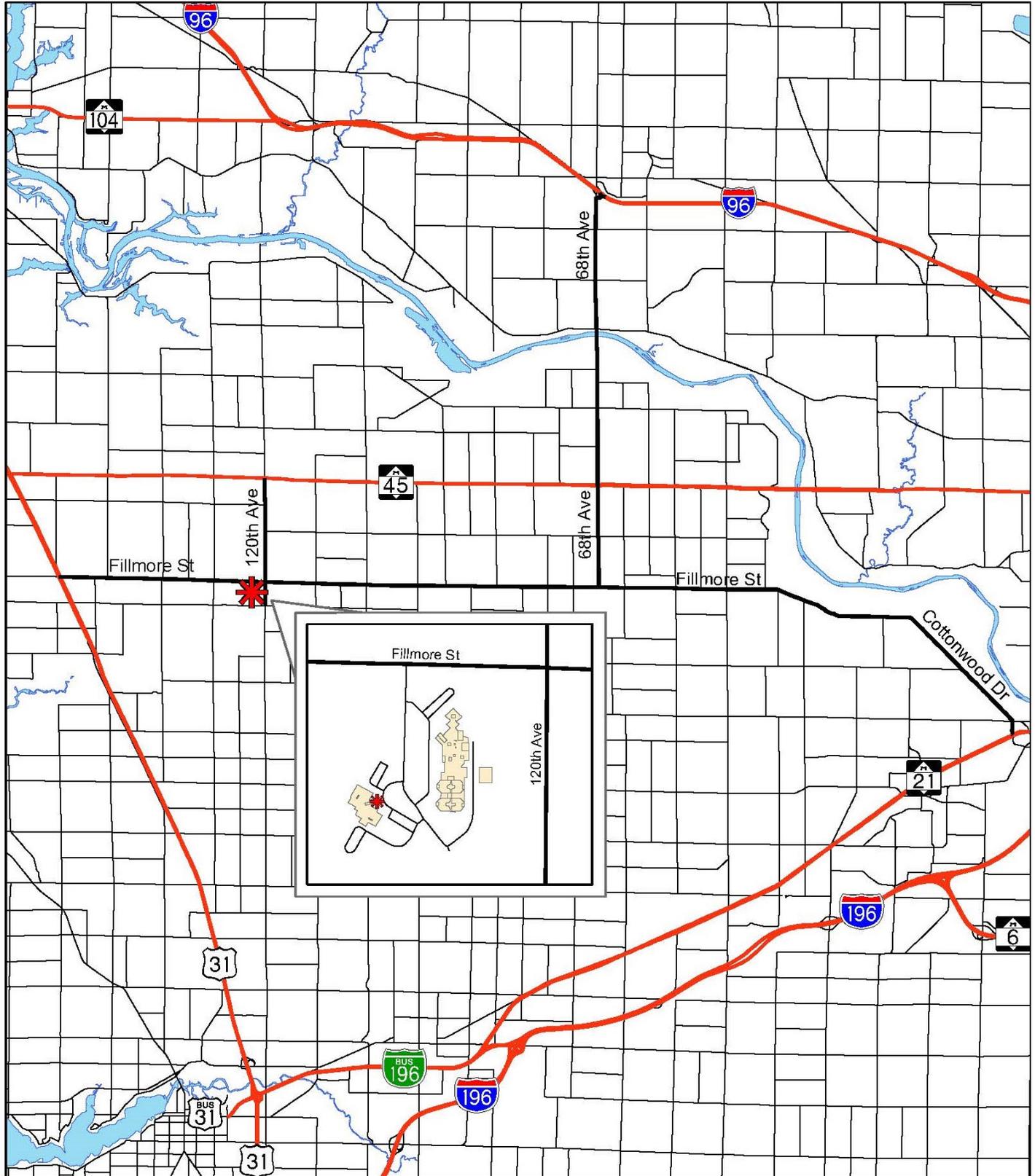
Jeff Fritsma, US Army Corps of Engineers



Sponsored by:



Parking available in the lot north of the red asterisk on map inset. Enter on the lower level and follow signs to the conference room.



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Fax (616) 725-4624
www.gis.co.ottawa.mi.us

Ottawa County
Fillmore Street Complex
Administration Building
12220 Fillmore St
West Olive, MI 49460



Dec 20, 2005



March 22, 2013

GVMC Communications Seminar

Last week over 60 GVMC members and friends participated in our seminar on Crisis and Strategic Communications. The seminar was conducted by Kelly Rossman of Truscott Rossman. Considered



Michigan's top communications firm, Truscott Rossman is a leader in helping communities, non-profits and others create and manage their message with the public and the media. The seminar focused on the importance of media relations and new technologies used to communicate with the public.

Kelly stressed the importance of using all methods possible to reach the public. These include not just the normal channels of media, but also Facebook, Twitter and direct email messaging. During times of crisis, it is vital to have a communications strategy or crisis communications plan that is developed in advance and understood by key governmental and community leaders. Developing this plan in advance will allow our communities to anticipate and quickly imple-

ment their crisis communication plan if necessary. Thinking and working in advance will provide tremendous benefits later.

Mark Rambo, Chairman of the Kent County Road Commission commented, "The seminar stressed the importance of digital media in a crisis situation and

showcased a variety of tools to effectively communicate an organizational message. Today's news is presented in real time and it's important we embrace that reality if we expect our information to remain relevant".

Cynthia Porter Fox, Cascade Township Trustee added, "Very informative seminar! It made me realize that we need to continuously review our Township's crisis communication plan to ensure we have up-to-date information available.

Plainfield Township Supervisor, Jay Spencer summed up his impressions of the seminar, "I found the Communications Seminar to be extremely helpful in highlighting the new standards in communication. This is more evidence of the benefits and why we continue to be a part of the Grand Valley Metro Council."

Alpine Township Leadership Breakfast

On Saturday morning, I had the opportunity to participate in the Alpine Township Leadership Breakfast. The breakfast, included Township Board Members, Sheriff Larry Stelma, Senator Mark Jansen, Representative Rob VerHeulen, Walker Mayor Barb Holt, KDL Director Lance Werner along with students, community members and school and business leaders.

Over 50 people attended the breakfast. There were presentations and an open discussion about the past, present and future of the community. While I had the opportunity to discuss GVMC and our activities, I also facilitated the discussion on ideas to improve the community.

I congratulate Alpine Supervisor Alex Arends for his initiative on this event and also the participation of a the elected officials that attended

If you would like more information about the event or would like advice on planning a similar community dialogue please feel free to contact Alex at Alpine Township.

**10th Annual LGROW
Grand River Forum**

April 25th

Everyone is Invited!

RSVP to

Kathrine.Collen@gvmc.org



March 15, 2013

Congressman Bill Huizenga Meets with GVMC Board and Quarterly Luncheon

United States Congressman Bill Huizenga met with our GVMC Board of Directors and spoke at our Quarterly Luncheon on Monday. We were pleased to have him as our guest.

During the informal discussion with the Board, the Congressman answered questions about the federal budget, the current issues with the sequester and our economy. He detailed that the \$85 billion sequester is only 7% of the total amount of federal spending that is over budget for the year. When asked by Board members he detailed that the sequestration is not a matter of, "good choice versus bad choice. It's bad choice versus really bad choice".

After the Board Meeting, over 130

governmental and business leaders attended the GVMC Quarterly Luncheon. At the luncheon, Congressman Huizenga spoke about political, relationship and trust issues that impede compromise and collaboration necessary to find solutions to our nation's problems. He also answered questions from the audience.

Brian Donovan, East Grand Rapids City Manager commented, "

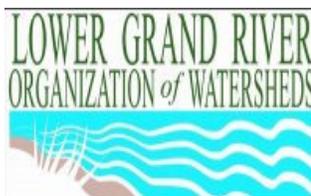
Congressman Huizenga provided us with great insight on the issues and challenges in Washington. Also, by bringing highly powerful speakers to us, GVMC is not only helping us to understand their issues, but it also helps them understand the unified voice our region. This is a learning opportunity for everyone in attendance. These types of meetings and the sharing of ideas and opinions are very beneficial."



LGROW Announces 10th Annual Grand River Forum

LGROW will be hosting it's 10th Annual Grand River Forum and Spring Meeting on **Thursday, April 25th, 2013** at the East Grand Rapids Community Center. Presentations will include the Grand River Restoration Project, City of Grand Rapids Water Quality Index, and changing water levels and what this means for the Lower Grand River Watershed community. There will also be watershed updates and updates on other LGROW activities.

This event will be from 9:00-11:30am and will include breakfast. The event is **free** and open to anyone. If you are interested in attending please RSVP to Katherine.Collen@gvmc.org or 616-776-7601.



GVMC Board of Directors Seeking Candidates for At-Large Member

Due to scheduling conflicts, John Helmholt of the Grand Rapids Public Schools recently resigned from the GVMC Board of Directors. We appreciate John's service and dedication to GVMC.

Anyone interested in serving as an At-Large Member of the Board is encouraged to contact me or Rockford City Manager Michael Young.



March 8, 2013

Board of Directors Meeting
Monday March 11th

Our next Board of Directors Meeting is on Monday, March 11th at 10:30 at the Calvin College Prince Center. Our luncheon guest, Congressman Bill Huizenga will be joining us for the Board meeting.

As in the past, we will have time for members of the Board to ask our guest questions and hear his comments on critical issues that face our country. Our time with the Congressman is planned as an open discussion format so please have your questions ready for the Congressman.

In addition, we will have a financial report from Chris Brown and updates on upcoming events. If you have any questions about Monday's Board Meeting, please feel free to contact me.

Discussion on Long Term
Funding for Roads
Continues

The Legislature and Governor continue to discuss long-term funding for repair of Michigan's Roads and Bridges.

As you know, the Governor has proposed an increase in the gas tax and registration fees to generate additional state dollars for road repairs. Also, some legislative leaders are considering options to increase the state sales tax to 7 or 8 percent which will also require a state-wide vote. The plan would exempt sales tax on gasoline.

Both of these proposals would aim to generate additional revenues to be used to repair Michigan's deteriorating roads and bridges. Studies indicate that our current deficit of \$1.2-\$1.4

billion per year will increase to a total of \$25 billion if we don't take action soon to make necessary maintenance improvements to the system. GVMC and our communities continue to monitor this situation and provide any detailed local information that is requested by the Governor or our legislators.

DEADLINE MONDAY
MARCH 11TH

GVMC FREE SEMINAR
CRISIS AND STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATIONS

Thursday March 14

East Grand Rapids City Hall

10:00-1:30

This Free Seminar will cover Strategic and Crisis Communications. It will be facilitated by Kelly Rossman-McKinney of Truscott Rossman one of Michigan's most successful communications firms. **We invite all GVMC members to attend and bring your Board Members and key staff.**

Lunch will be Provided

RSVP to Gayle at mccrathg@gvmc.org

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