

## NEWS RELEASE



25 June 2010

Contact: George A. Brown,  
City Manager

Phone: (734) 243-0700 ext. 144

### **A HISTORIC CONNECTION! - MONROE DEDICATES THE RIVER RAISIN HERITAGE TRAIL LINKING THE RIVER RAISIN BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL PARK TO WILLIAM C. STERLING STATE PARK**

*Monroe, Michigan* – Mayor Robert E. Clark welcomed conservationist, NBC and MSNBC correspondent, and host for cable-TV's Animal Planet channel, Jeff Corwin; Senator Carl Levin; Congressman John D. Dingell; and a host of elected officials, dignitaries, and citizens to the official opening and dedication of the 1.5 mile long River Raisin Heritage Trail connecting the City of Monroe and the River Raisin Battlefield National Park to William C. Sterling State Park. The recreation path reflects yet another milestone in the city's efforts to preserve our natural resources and return former industrial sites to new and productive uses.

In anticipation of the Heritage Trail's development, the City of Monroe utilized a \$92,500 federal grant in 2009 to connect the City's existing integrated system of sidewalks, walking paths, and trails, which ended at the River Raisin Battlefield Visitor's Center, to the head of the River Raisin Heritage Trail beginning at East Elm Avenue and I-75. This new section of non-motorized trail incorporated land reclaimed through the clean-up of a former paper manufacturing site. The second phase of the City's project, which is nearing design completion, will raise the intersection at Elm Avenue and Dixie Highway enhancing pedestrian safety and accommodating requirements for cycling. With

approval of the project design, an additional \$640,000 in federal and city funding will be allocated to widen the path through the intersection and improve surface grading.

The City of Monroe was named as one of the top 100 “walkable cities” in America and since 1978 has dedicated funding to create and maintain the river walk and trails that trace the historic River Raisin corridor. Today, the City boasts 150 miles of sidewalks and trails that connect neighborhoods and attractions throughout the community – making the city’s historic downtown, Monroe’s 43 parks and recreational areas, and now the River Raisin Battlefield National Park, Ford Marsh, and William C. Sterling State Park all pedestrian accessible. These projects, reflecting the innovation and leadership of Monroe and the commitment of its partners, have made the city a true leader in efforts to reclaim once unusable and discarded sites and returning them to productive new uses benefitting the entire community and the environment.

At the ceremony, Mayor Clark thanked Mr. Corwin for being a part of today’s dedication and commended him for his work as a conservationist, biologist, author, and, as one of the nation’s leading and best known advocates for the protection of endangered species and ecosystems around the world. He then noted that “With today’s opening of the trail, the city once again can point with pride to the world-class amenities that Monroe has to offer, while retaining our ‘small town’ feel.

###



## CITY OF MONROE

**FACT SHEET:** The East Elm Avenue Greenway (Connecting to the River Raisin Heritage Trail)

### **Project Summary:**

- **Project Name:** The East Elm Avenue Greenway
- **Year Project Completed:** 2009
- **Trail size:** .5 Miles
- **Costs:**
  - Phase I – \$92,500 in Federal Funding was reallocated in 2008 to fund the half mile long connection between the City’s existing sidewalk system, which ended at the River Raisin Battlefield Visitor’s Center, to the River Raisin Heritage Trail accessing Sterling State Park. The DNR funded and created a 1.5 mile pathway within Sterling State Park on lands acquired during the Brownfield reclamation process.
  - Phase II (in design stage) – Once approved an additional \$440,000 in Federal Funding from SAFETEA-LU and \$200,000 in city matching funds will be allocated to raise the intersection and re-stripe Dixie Highway and Winchester Avenue to three lanes with a bike lane. Pedestrian signals and lighting will be incorporated along the path.

### **Project Results:**

The East Elm Greenway now connects the city’s system of sidewalks and non-motorized walking paths and trails to the River Raisin Heritage Trail, which begins at E. Elm Avenue. The new River Raisin Heritage Trail will provide pedestrian access from the City of Monroe and the River Raisin Battlefield National Park to Sterling State Park.



Monroe Recreation Department’s Guided Bike Tour to Sterling State Park, June 4, 2010

Learn more about activities on the new River Raisin Heritage Trail on Facebook at: [City-of-Monroe-MI-Recreation-Department](https://www.facebook.com/City-of-Monroe-MI-Recreation-Department).