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**CITY OF PONTIAC PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATELY  
RELEASE  
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**CITY OF PONTIAC AND NTH CONSULTANTS, LTD. – WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES DESIGNED FOR CITY’S CHILDREN**

PONTIAC, MICHIGAN December 15, 2010 – On Thursday, December 9, 2010 the City of Pontiac and NTH Consultants, Ltd. (NTH) jointly unveiled a new environmental educational program designed for 1st through 8th graders in the City of Pontiac. The program, called Otto’s Great Watershed Rescue was funded by a grant through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (MDNRE), and seeks to educate school children on community watershed management principles. The program was unveiled as part of the 2010 Watershed Seminar, sponsored by the Michigan Water Environment Association.

The educational program examines common sources of watershed pollution and how seemingly small, environmentally-friendly behaviors at home can significantly improve the quality of our rivers, lakes, and streams. A comic book and video game featuring Otto the River Otter and three polluting monsters have been developed by the City and NTH. The computer video game, which closely follows the learning discussed in the comic book, can be found on the City of Pontiac’s website by following the link [www.pontiac.mi.us/info/watershedgame.html](http://www.pontiac.mi.us/info/watershedgame.html).

The concept for the comic book and video game was borne from the desire to develop an innovative and creative medium to educate. From historical data, it has demonstrated that the static printed literature and informational meetings did not yield the intended results.

“Educational outreach is a critical step toward improving environmental stewardship in all our communities,” says Leon B. Jukowski, City of Pontiac Mayor, “and reaching school-aged children with this message is an important part of their future too.”

With MDNRE's help, the City of Pontiac and NTH plan to spread their environmental message during 2011 by developing a school-focused marketing program and constructing a traveling Otto exhibit that will reach many of the City's children.

This is the third of three grants the City has been awarded to address watershed management and awareness. The first grant funded through the Clean Michigan Initiative allowed the City to complete a Michigan Department of Natural Resources & Environment approved Watershed Management Plan. The second grant resulted in an implementation of the Watershed Management Plan demonstration project whereby a Rain Garden was constructed at the City's Library.



City of Pontiac Public Library Before:

An existing swale collected runoff from the grounds of the library and parking lot. Storm water discharged directly to the storm drain.



City of Pontiac Public Library After:

The rain garden includes over 15 species of native plants and shrubs. Once established, native plants require little supplemental water or nutrients as their deep root system allow them to withstand dry periods. Thus, native plants are incorporated for optimal infiltration and low maintenance.

*NTH Consultants, Ltd. is a full-service infrastructure and environmental engineering firm, well known and respected for providing innovative solutions for tough engineering challenges in the built and natural environment. Headquartered in Detroit, Michigan, NTH operates eight full service regional offices in Pontiac, Northville, Dearborn, Lansing, Grand Rapids, Cleveland, Ohio, Exton, Pennsylvania, and Indianapolis, Indiana. For additional information about NTH Consultants, Ltd., please visit [www.nthconsultants.com](http://www.nthconsultants.com) or call (800) 736-6842.*

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