In 2010, the ARC received a grant from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) to restore Valley Woods Wetland. Valley Woods is a significant source of pollution to the Great Rouge River and has historically been identified as a reproductive area for mottled sculpin. Valley Woods consists of large areas of high-quality habitat as well as riparian wetlands. The main goal of the project was to restore the Valley Woods Wetlands by removing invasive species, recreating plant diversity, and restoring wetland hydrology.

**Project activities:**
- The open wetland area was burned and re-vegetated. A controlled burn was conducted to provide optimum conditions for the establishment and restoration of native wetland vegetation. The burn was planned in accordance with methods outlined in a guidance document developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Riparian vegetation was burned to re-seed the upland.
- First controlled burn, to be conducted within the Valley Woods project area. The re-vegetation was chosen to create a diverse environment of native species and wetland setting and plots were proposed throughout the wetland.
- Two ditches in the vicinity of the site were filled and their outfalls were stabilized with riprap resulting in a restored hydrology within the wetland.
- The burned area was burned and re-vegetated. The burn was conducted to provide optimum conditions for the establishment and restoration of native wetland vegetation. The burn was planned in accordance with methods outlined in a guidance document developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Riparian vegetation was burned to re-seed the upland.

**Benefits and results in the Rouge River AOC:**
- Increased focus on the benefit of native areas and habitat. A Detroit Public Schools program for the local partnership has increased from 8 to 24 classrooms (10 to 12 classrooms in Detroit’s Rouge Park since 2012) to 20 classrooms (up to 10 classrooms in Eliza Howell Park since 2012). Students studied the restored riparian corridor throughout the school year to document changes. At the annual Rouge River restored wetland event on June 1, 2013, 4-5th grade students participated in activities related to Rouge River restoration including species management and tree planting.
- Increased wildlife. Wild turkeys and coyotes were observed in Eliza Howell Park in 2012 and a Blue Heron was noted in Rouge River Park. At the Valley Woods Wetland Restoration project, a female wild turkey was observed. The project site was a wetland. White-tailed deer, garter snake, and blue herons have also been observed. Wildlife will increase in the future.
- Increased butterflies and birds. There is an increase in butterflies in Detroit’s Eliza Howell and Rouge parks. The Rouge was restored and native areas planted. There are more butterfly and bird watching events in Eliza Howell Park. In February 2013, Leonard Weidler, the president of the Detroit Audubon Society wrote: “I think you might be interested in the number of birds that grow this year in Eliza Howell in the area of the lake have been very popular with local folks and will continue to be this winter. Most days when I go there, there are quite a diverse number of birds (usually at least three different species feeding for the birds. There have probably been more birds in that area of the lake in the period from October to February this year than in any of the previous months we have been going there.”
- Praying mantis observed. At an annual Rouge River Rouge Park restoration project, a 7th-grade student from the Rouge River School group captured and released a praying mantis in October 2012.
- Beneficial insects observed. Beneficial insects were observed. Beneficial insects were observed in the Rouge River. The Rouge River School group captured and released several praying mantises in October 2012.

**Eliza Howell Park and Rouge Park**
- The Rouge River Park is home to varied wildlife and has over 15 acres of restored native prairie and native areas. Eliza Howell Park is a 200-acre park with 3.77 linear miles of the Rouge River and contains the largest undisturbed corridor of the Rouge River’s Main Branch and Main Rouge River. Both parks are the focus of neighborhood efforts to maintain and restore the parks.

**Lola Valley, Venoy Park & Inkster CWA**
- Wayne County is the single largest riparian corridor in the Rouge River watershed approximately 4,200 acres of riparian corridor and has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on the past 20 years to help restore the river. The parkland along the Rouge River protects the riparian corridor. This project converted 15 acres of upland and riparian property into habitat for wildlife. The project was funded by a local stewardship group expanded from two students to 15 students. The project was funded by students participating in activities related to Rouge River restoration including species management and tree planting.