

**ALMA**

# Repairs may help deteriorating Pine River

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**By Little Gittleman**  
*For the Morning Sun*

A great deal of work has been completed on Gratiot County's drains but more work still remains.

Drainage tiles or pipes — some 100 years old — have to be replaced and in that way help stem the pollution flowing into the Pine River, Gratiot County Drain Commissioner Bernie Barnes told the Healthy Pine River group Thursday.

This is especially true at the area where the Honeyoye Creek empties into the Pine.

The river in certain areas is clearly and very obviously shrinking, he said.

The good news is that just this week the county's Board of Determination — made up of residents who do not live in the particular drainage district — approved a clean up.

That means the tiles (or pipes) will be replaced, Barnes said, adding that it is possible — only possible — that the river may have to be dredged in that district, an expensive proposition.

Drainage district residents will pay for it, he said.

"By law, (the cost) is based on who benefits," Barnes said.

The petition for the clean up/repairs was filed by a Seville Township farmer and four other district residents also have complained about the problem, he said.

But Barnes noted, too, that he is limited in what he can do.

"All I can do is keep the water moving," he said.

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*— Gratiot County Drain  
Commissioner Bernie Barnes*