

TheMackinac

PUBLICATION OF THE SIERRA CLUB'S MICHIGAN CHAPTER • SPRING/SUMMER 2023

Sierra Club Remains Committed to Our Environmental Future

By Elayne Elliott, Chapter Director

As I write this, I am looking at the Detroit River and reflecting on all the vantage points from which I've witnessed Michigan's beauty. We are fortunate to live in a state that allows us to explore the great outdoors, whether at Belle Isle State Park in Detroit, the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge in Grosse Ile, Tahquamenon Falls State Park in Paradise or Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. Our multi-acre parks, lakes and 3,288 miles of freshwater shoreline – the longest in the nation – are often taken for granted. They shouldn't be. Our parks exist because of tenacious people like you who recognize the beauty of our state and urge local, state and federal officials to protect them for generations to come.

Time and time again, the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter has been inspired by Congresswoman Debbie Dingell's commitment to protecting the environment, and we are grateful for her partnership in this fight. She doesn't shy away from fights with big corporations like BASF, whose Wyandotte facility leaked PFAS into the Detroit River, or the EPA, who she has repeatedly urged to take action against bad actors. In 2022, Congresswoman Dingell proved herself as one of the strongest advocates for the Inflation Reduction Act, the largest piece of climate legislation ever passed by Congress.

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) will give local governments access to federal dollars to invest in renewable energy infrastructure and reduce carbon emissions. The IRA allocated \$369 billion for renewable energy, clean transportation, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. This legislation is a monumental investment that will help us reach President Biden's 2030 goal to reduce climate pollution by 50

percent from 2005 levels and uphold the values outlined in Biden's Justice40 commitment.

Sierra Club Michigan Chapter's role in this fight was made clear when I received an invitation to a small, private meeting with Vice President Kamala Harris and other grassroots environmental leaders in January. The vice president called on the Michigan Chapter to do what we've always done - make sure that federal dollars from the IRA benefit people like you and secure the environmental safety of our state.

With your help, we can fight back against polluters and keep Michigan beautiful. To join us in this fight, email elayne.elliott@sierraclub.org.



Elayne Elliott
Michigan Chapter Director



The Detroit River, just one spot to enjoy Michigan's wonders.

Sierra Club Photo



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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet.

TheMackinac

SPRING/SUMMER
2022-23

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Michigan's Beauty Keeps Us Motivated

By Anne Woiwode, Executive Committee Chair

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the Sierra Club, the largest grass-roots environmental organization in the world. And what the volunteers who lead this amazing, diverse and effective organization say is that often their journey started with enjoying and exploring Michigan's magnificent environment. Whether it is the breathtaking beauty of the Great Lakes, the joy of camping in Michigan's parks, the excitement of kayaking, hiking or cross-country skiing on a Sierra Club outing, or the satisfaction of watching birds at feeders and growing a garden at home, Sierra Club leaders bring a deep connection to the people and places of our state.

That passion for protecting our exceptional natural resources and improving the lives of everyone in our state by fighting



Sierra Club volunteers often get involved after experiencing nature's wonders. Photo by John Rebers

climate disruption and environmental injustices inspire and energize us all. And that passion is vital because Sierra Club's volunteers and staff know this is not a time to rest on our laurels.

In this issue of the Mackinac, you'll learn about Chapter Director Elayne Elliott's vision and priorities as she steps up to the challenges ahead. The work reported in the articles here, like the on-the-ground efforts to support clean energy investments, the celebration of the successful recovery of the gray wolf in our region, the growing campaign to shut down Enbridge's Line 5, and the momentum from the electoral victories in 2022 transitioning to robust staff and volunteer legislative lobbying efforts, reflect our successes to date but also the continuing challenges of building a better world for everyone's children and grandchildren.

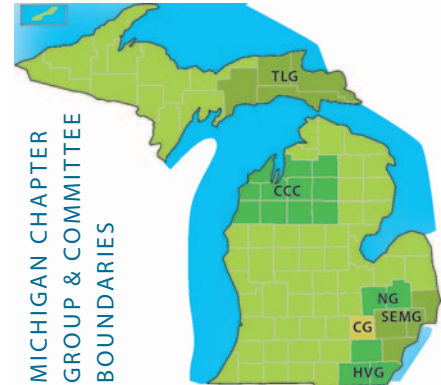
It is a tremendous privilege to be associated with so many of Sierra Club's dedicated and determined members. I encourage you to find your niche in the greatest movement of our time to secure a clean, healthy and just future for all. This newsletter offers opportunities and the Michigan Chapter's online sites for you to take the next step, whether you start by joining an outing to a beautiful place in Michigan or show up to join your voice with thousands across the Great Lakes state calling for a better future. You'll be happy you did.

VOTE IN THE SIERRA CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION

All Sierra Club members are encouraged to vote in the national Board of Directors election this spring. Members should receive notice either in the mail or electronically with details on voting for up to five candidates. The Michigan Chapter recommends a vote for David Holtz in the upcoming election for the Sierra Club's Board of Directors.

THINK GLOBALLY AND GET ACTIVE WITH YOUR LOCAL SIERRA CLUB GROUP!

Sierra Club is the largest grassroots environmental organization in the country and the Michigan Chapter's 6 regional Groups and Committees host outings, political and conservation activities and informational programs. Members and supporters are invited to attend outings and meetings — everyone is welcome! For inquiries about activities in your area, you can also contact sarah.tresedder@sierraclub.org.



Sometimes people participate in a Chapter Group other than the one serving the county in which they live. If this is true for you, it's important we have this information because 1) Groups get funds based on their member numbers and 2) Groups send info to their members through lists based on their member home addresses. To change your designated Group, please contact Sierra Club National's Member Care 415.977.5653 or member.care@sierraclub.org

Clearwater Conservation Committee / CCC

COUNTIES: Antrim, Benzie, Crawford, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, Otsego, Roscommon and Wexford
FACEBOOK: Clearwater Conservation Committee
TWITTER: @NCMIClearwater
CHAIR: Vicki Olsen • cvolsen17@yahoo.com
OUTINGS CHAIR: Vicki Olsen • cvolsen17@yahoo.com

Crossroads Group / CG

COUNTIES: Livingston and western Oakland
MEETS: at group leader homes in Livingston County or West Oakland Counties (first Thurs of the month)
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads
FACEBOOK: Crossroads Group Sierra Club
CHAIR: Lee Anzicek • leeanzicek@gmail.com
VICE CHAIR: Lee Burton, 810-231-9045 • lee.burton@michigan.sierraclub.org

Huron Valley Group / HVG

COUNTIES: Washtenaw, Lenawee and Monroe
MEETS: in Ann Arbor
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/huron
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Huron Valley Group
EMAIL: HVGSierraClub@gmail.com
CHAIR: Jason Frenzel • a2jasonfrenzel@gmail.com
VICE CHAIR: Anne Brown • aasbrown@gmail.com
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OUTINGS CO-CHAIR: Shonda Thoms • sktohm@gmail.com

Nepessing Group / NG

COUNTIES: Genesee, Lapeer, and North Oakland
MEETS: at Mott Community College in Flint
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/nepessing
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Nepessing Group - MI
CHAIR: Mike Buza • theoriginalzuba@yahoo.com
VICE CHAIR: Suzanne Lossing • slissing@hotmail.com

Southeast Michigan Group / SEMG

COUNTIES: Wayne, St. Clair, Macomb, Oakland
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/semg
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Southeast Michigan Group
CO-CHAIR: Garrett Dempsey • garrett.dempsey@sierraclub.org
CO-CHAIR: Jerry Hasspacher • jhasspac@gmail.com

Southwest Michigan Group - In Process of Restructuring

The Sierra Club Michigan Chapter is planning on updating its structure and is reviewing the status and structure of the Southwest Michigan Group. If you are interested in being a part of the discussion, please contact Mary Ann Renz at or 269-743-7023.

Three Lakes Group / TLG

COUNTIES: Chippewa, Mackinac, Luce and Schoolcraft
MEETS: in Sault Ste. Marie
WEBSITE: tlgsierraclub.org
FACEBOOK: Three Lakes Group of Sierra Club
CHAIR: Roger Blanchard • blanchardclimate@gmail.com

Meetup With the Sierra Club

Meetup is a great way to view the latest events sponsored by your local Sierra Club entity. Find the meetup page for your local group or committee below:

www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Three-Lakes-Group/
www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Huron-Valley/
www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Nepessing-Group-Michigan/

www.meetup.com/Metro-Detroit-Outdoors-Hiking/ (SEM Group)
www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Crossroads-Group/
www.meetup.com/SierraClubClearwaterGroup/

Wolves Thrive In The Great Lakes State

By Marvin Roberson, Forest Ecologist

Gray Wolves (Canis lupus) are native to every county in Michigan.

When I moved to the Upper Peninsula in 1989, the confirmed number of wolves in the state was zero. Since then, conservation efforts have steadily increased the number of wolves in the state.

The most recent wolf population estimate indicates that there are approximately 650 wolves in the state, all in the Upper Peninsula. The population has been stable for almost ten years, leading the Department of Natural Resources to conclude that wolves have expanded into their entire range in the UP and have reached "biological carrying capacity".

In other words, wolves are at about the maximum number for a sustainable habitat.

Michigan's Wolf Management Plan set a goal of a sustainable habitat. Rather than set an arbitrary target or limit on wolf numbers, the plan allows the number of wolves to be limited by habitat and prey base, rather than a number. Full disclosure: I was a member of the Wolf Management Roundtable, which made the recommendations underpinning the management plan.

However, while wolves and wolf management are doing well in Michigan, this is not the case in much of the country. Wolves were native to nearly every state in the U.S. Now wolves are found in only seven of the lower 48 states. These are Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

Consequently, even though wolves are doing well in Michigan, they have nowhere near recovered across their national range. In fact, most states that were once home to native wolves do not have a single wolf.



Gray wolf in the forest:

Photo by canva.com

As a result of this lack of wolves across their historic range nationally, Gray Wolves are still listed as "Endangered" and thus protected nationwide, including in Michigan.

Seeing a wolf in the wild is an electrifying experience. A few years ago, a friend and I drove on a backwoods road in the UP. Suddenly, a huge black wolf crossed the road in front of us, loped next to the car for a few yards, and turned off into the woods.

My friend had never seen a wolf before. He was speechless. "Was that? Did we just see? Was that a WOLF?" he sputtered.

It was, and we are working to ensure that our children and grandchildren have the opportunity our parents and grandparents did not – the opportunity to see a wolf in the wild in Michigan.

SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE SIERRA CLUB MICHIGAN CHAPTER

Enclosed is my/our gift to the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter:
_____ \$250 _____ \$100 _____ \$50 \$_____ Other

Give online at www.tinyurl.com/supportMISC

Your donation helps provide the flexible funding Sierra Club needs to successfully advocate for Michigan's Great Lakes, wild heritage and clean energy future.

Your contribution to Sierra Club is not tax-deductible; it supports our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. If you prefer to make a tax-deductible gift to support our work, contact Elayne Elliott at elayne.elliott@sierraclub.org.

Please send your gift to Sierra Club Michigan Chapter,
109 E. Cesar Chavez Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906

Instead of a check, please charge my credit card
(VISA or MC) \$_____.

Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

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Address: _____

Phone _____

Email: _____

Protect & Restore Great Lakes Ecosystem

Michigan is Moving Beyond Coal to Clean Energy

By Mike Berkowitz, Beyond Coal Campaign Representative

As a direct result of Sierra Club's legal interventions and public advocacy, Michigan's largest utilities are moving beyond coal toward clean energy and making deeper investments in efficiency and storage.

- Consumers Energy committed to building eight GigaWatts (GW) of renewables and retiring their J.H. Campbell plant in 2025, 15 years earlier than previously planned. The company also rejected three gas plants, expedited their energy storage buildout, and provided over \$30 million in shareholder money for low-income bill assistance.(1)
- DTE gave \$8 million to Environmental Justice (EJ) community projects and retired their River Rouge, St. Clair and Trenton Channel coal plants.(2) The utility recently proposed building more than 15 GW of renewables, repowering their Belle River coal plant to gas in 2026 (which was scheduled to retire in 2028) and retiring two units of the Monroe coal plant in 2028 (12 years earlier than previously planned). However, they plan to keep burning coal at the other two Monroe units until 2035.(3)
- We persuaded DTE and Consumers Energy to better address energy burden disparities, specifically in Detroit(4) and Flint(5)



The DTE Monroe Coal Plant is scheduled to close in 2028.

Photo by Analicia Hazelby / AMH Creative LLC

In 2023, we're focused on pushing the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) to improve DTE's recently filed energy plan. Their Monroe coal-burning plant is the third largest climate polluter in the nation and we've got an opportunity to retire it this decade and replace it with truly clean energy.

Want to learn more or get involved? Email: mike.berkowitz@sierraclub.org.

Footnotes

1-<https://tinyurl.com/52bnrkr5> • 2-<https://tinyurl.com/k8jhn94k> • 3-<https://tinyurl.com/mpz83erk> • 4-<https://tinyurl.com/msvm6kyy> • 5-<https://tinyurl.com/59thr4mn>

Healing Our Waters Great Lakes Coalition

By Erma Leaphart-Gouch, Healing Our Waters Coalition Michigan Co-Lead

Ask any Michigander what our state's most precious natural resource and the answer will be the Great Lakes. People ask what makes them "great?" Well, the Great Lakes are visible from the space station, over 200 million miles away. In addition to their size and beauty, they provide drinking water for 40 million people and support a recreational and tourist industry valued at billions of dollars. <https://mucc.org/about-us/economic-impact-study-2019/>

Visitors from all over the world travel to enjoy their majestic shores to swim, fish, hunt, kayak, canoe, rest, relax and rejuvenate.

Unfortunately, years of industrial pollution and more recently climate change threatens the health of the Great Lakes. But thanks to advocacy efforts from groups like the Sierra Club's Great Lakes Program, the Healing Our Waters Great Lakes Coalition, a group of over 170 regional organizations, and a strong bi-partisan Great Lakes Task Force, Federal dollars have been dedicated to restoration efforts to assure the health of the Great Lakes ecosystem and the people that live here. In Areas of Concern, fish and wildlife habitat are being restored and contaminated sediment is being removed. Funds from the Great Lakes Legacy Act and Great Lakes Restoration Initiative are major initiatives helping to make this happen.

Sierra Club Michigan Chapter is working to protect the land and waters in the Great Lakes basin through our green infrastructure programs and by joining other advocates from the eight Great Lakes states traveling to Washington, D.C. to meet with legislative offices. We will share the many restoration success stories but also remind our congressional members that we are not done, as there is more work to do.

To learn more visit: www.healthylakes.org

Factory Farms = Toxic Water and Greenhouse Gases

By Cheryl Ruble, MD, and Marguerite Clevenger, Sierra Club Michigan Chapter Volunteer Members

Too much manure

Michigan's elected officials, agricultural agencies, and the Michigan Department of Environment Energy & Great Lakes (EGLE) must address the dairy cow in the room – too much manure. For more than 20 years, Michigan agribusinesses have fought every effort to require Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) to meet the same pollution standards as every other polluter. The Farm Bureau has sued the state to stop meaningful pollution restrictions for CAFO operators. While this lawsuit churns through the courts, the frequency of harmful algal blooms is increasing and manure runoff still fills our waterways.

Greenhouse gas emissions

Agriculture's contribution to U.S. greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and climate change is substantial—over 30% of methane emissions and 80% of nitrous oxide emissions can be attributed to CAFO operations. Stored manure, animal emissions and chemical fertilizers are the main sources of these GHG emissions.

Ninety-nine percent of animal food products in the U.S. come from CAFOs. About two-thirds of U.S. crops are grown to feed CAFO livestock. CAFOs and feed crops for CAFO animals are responsible for most agricultural GHG emissions.

Failing and false solutions

The intensive livestock industry touts nutrient management plans designed to optimize crop yields and voluntary conservation practices as solutions to keep manure pollutants from reaching waterways. Such measures have a poor real-world track record. They aren't working.

Furthermore, we now see a push for commercial manure biogas production as a solution to GHG emissions from agriculture. Biogas is a false climate change solution – biogas digesters don't cut GHG emissions. Large-scale CAFO-anaerobic digester



Algae blooms threaten both wildlife and humans, in large part created by CAFO runoff. Photo by depositphoto.com

projects have sucked up taxpayer-funded subsidies and even qualified for renewable energy credits. However, reclassifying manure as renewable energy incentivizes CAFO expansions, which amplifies their environmental, public health and environmental justice harms. The amount of polluting nutrients in manure is unchanged after anaerobic digestion. Dairy cows produce more methane than anaerobic biodigesters capture. Increasing herd sizes to capitalize on renewable energy credits and run anaerobic biodigesters creates more manure overall, more waterway pollution, and an overall increase in GHG emissions.

So far, Michigan's "plan" to reduce CAFO pollution in Lake Erie is in lockstep with industry-proposed false solutions and even recommends manure biodigesters, promoting the misconception that they will reduce polluting nutrient runoff.

Take action: Demand a Better Farm Bill

We should put in place CAFO moratoriums in watersheds impaired by agricultural pollution. We should restore the right of local communities to protect themselves by enacting zoning ordinances limiting CAFO numbers and size. We should promote climate-friendly farming methods that confer additional ecological benefits like improved soil health and water quality. We must stop propping up CAFOs and commercial anaerobic biodigester projects.

Join the CAFO sub-team with fellow leaders here in Michigan. We will call on Senator Debbie Stabenow, chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry to increase Farm Bill funding for nutritious food grown and raised using eco-friendly farming practices. We demand support for local and regional food systems that help smaller independent farmers and ranchers, including beginning, socially disadvantaged and urban producers, thrive alongside their communities by increasing access to affordable healthy food. Join us in opposing subsidies for CAFOs, commodity/feed crops, and commercial manure biogas produced by anaerobic biodigesters.

Turn off the factory farm manure spigot – reduce GHG emissions and put the blue back in Lake Erie. Protect Saginaw Bay, the Thumb Coast and all of Michigan's water resources. For more information contact: carmdp11c@gmail.com or sullo1@sbcglobal.net



Photo by Jorge Maya, courtesy of Unsplash

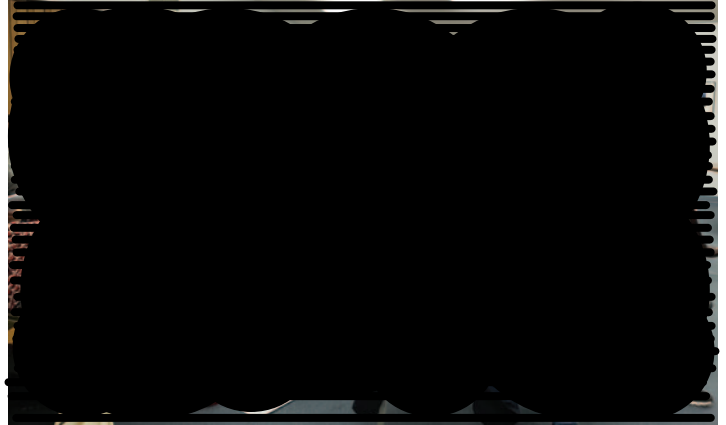
Community Members Take Pride in Michigan Solar Energy

By Tamara Horne, West Michigan Organizer

Residents of the beautiful, rural White River Township are coming together to support a 1,700-acre solar farm in their community as an important step toward meeting clean energy needs for Michigan and their area. They've learned about solar energy, written letters, and spoken up at township board meetings to advocate for the project. They feel pride in the possibility of having a solar farm nearby for several reasons:

- **Transition to Clean Energy** - The 200-megawatt project will offset approximately 213,850 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions each year. That's the equivalent of removing about 46,200 cars off the road.
- **Pollinator Habitat and Improving the Soil** - The solar farm plans for dual-use of the land. The participating farmers would opt for pollinator plants around the solar panels. These plants will provide habitat to important insects and other small critters that pollinate food crops. The soil health will also improve because the organic matter will rebuild and natural water filtration is enhanced.
- **Funds for Education** - The local community and Muskegon County will benefit from tax revenue paid on the project. Local schools would gain over \$1 million in annual revenue at the current project size.
- **Supports Local Farmers** - Farmers will be supported, bringing in much-needed income to allow them to pass their land on to their families and offset the need to turn to developers or industrial agriculture to pay the bills.

These community members in the White River Township area are taking action to address climate change and keep their community healthy and beautiful. For more information and to get involved in supporting this solar farm and others like it, please email tamara.horne@sierraclub.org.



White River citizens turned out for Township board meetings in support of a 1,700 acre solar farm. Photo By Tamara Horne, West Michigan



Township community members are taking action to fight climate change. Photo By Tamara Horne, West Michigan

SUPPORT THE WORK OF SIERRA CLUB MICHIGAN LEGISLATIVE CAMPAIGN

Enclosed is my/our gift to the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter:
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Give online at bit.ly/SCMILegFund23

Your donation helps support our Legislative work at the Capitol and across the state.

Your contribution to Sierra Club is not tax-deductible; it supports our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts.

Please send your gift to Sierra Club Michigan Chapter,
109 E. Cesar Chavez Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip

Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

Employer: _____

Occupation: _____

Mitigate Climate Change

Michigan Tackles Climate Change Dangers

By Jan O'Connell, Senior Energy Issues Organizer

Michigan has its share of hot, humid and dry summer days but nothing compared to the 23-year mega-drought in Southwestern U.S. making it the region's driest prolonged period since 800 A.D. The drought has devastated farmers, reduced water availability, and fueled thousands of wildfires across the region. Out of 15 states in the U.S. that are the most impacted by wildfires, 13 are Western states along with Alaska and Florida.

Estimates suggest climate change may lead to 50 million Americans relocating to climate havens in the U.S. in the coming decade. Michigan is a climate haven/refuge in a warming world.

Michigan has its own climate challenges. West Michigan's first weeks of 2023 experienced the highest January temperatures on record. Across the state, we also suffered a lack of snowfall, warmer winters, and less ice formation on our lakes. In the summer of 2022 by mid-July, the Detroit area had ten days at or above 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

A newly released study by the University of Michigan shows the deadly effects of climate change on nine Michigan tree species: the Paper Birch, two oak, two maple, and four pine species which includes Michigan's State Tree, the Eastern White Pine.

In Michigan, our cities and townships, small and large, need to get serious and set up sustainability, resiliency and energy plans to prepare and get ahead of the severe challenges we face and are about to face in the future. As Sierra Club members, we can help push our communities for an Earth-friendly, sustainable future to keep our state "Michigan the Beautiful."

In West Michigan, plans to create Grand Rapid's first climate action and adaptation plan are underway. Additionally, the city is developing its next 20 year master plan. This past summer, Grand Haven created the City Sustainability and Energy Commission to get out in front of climate change. The city is working hard to chart a positive, sustainable course for the Grand Haven region. For more information and ideas on where to begin in your community, contact jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org or call Jan at 616-956-6646.



Tobin Harbor, Isle Royal National Park

Photo by Anne Woiwode

Whitmer Commits to Michigan's Future in Latest Budget

By Tim Minotas, Legislative and Political Coordinator and Chapter Compliance Officer

Governor Gretchen Whitmer proposed a \$79 billion state budget, making it the largest state budget in Michigan history thanks to historic investments from the federal government and record state revenues. We are at the perfect inflection point to build a stronger, more prosperous, and equitable state as we take on the great challenge of climate change.

Overall, the proposed budget includes billions toward climate, clean energy, electric vehicles, job training, housing, and clean water efforts. The budget also includes millions more focused on contamination testing in food products, forestry management, state parks, and recreation programs.

Clean Energy

- **\$40 million** for creating renewable-ready communities by providing grants to local communities for the creation of renewable energy facilities at a regional scale
- **\$43 million** for energy grid resiliency to harden Michigan's energy grid against natural disasters
- **\$200 million** in a tax credit for clean energy supply chains to encourage businesses to invest in clean energy and industrial decarbonization projects
- **\$300 million** for residential energy efficiency improvement projects, home repairs, weatherization, and whole home retrofits
- **\$300 million** for air, water, toxin remediation and clean energy at our schools

Water

- **\$40 million** for local water affordability programs
- **\$377 million** towards lead service line replacement, lead testing, and community assistance
- **\$100 million** for environmental justice contaminated site cleanup, \$50 million of which would go toward reducing environmental health burdens within communities located close to sources of pollution
- **\$6.1 million** for emerging contaminants to ensure food safety and protect human and animal health by identifying and reducing PFAS and other toxins in food and feed crops
- **\$25 million** for restoring Michigan's waterways by providing grants for the removal of dams

Transportation

- **\$150 million** for transitioning our school buses to electric vehicles
- **\$45 million** for local governments to start transitioning their fleets to electric vehicles. Another \$10 million will go towards flipping the state fleet
- **\$65 million** to support the deployment of fast chargers, addressing medium and heavy-duty vehicle charging needs and residential chargers
- **\$48 million** for over two years to temporarily suspend the state sales tax on electric vehicles (EVs) on the first 40,000 of their purchase price
- **\$160 million** for intermodal (multiple sources) transportation

Public Lands

- **\$10.3 million** for further orphaned oil and gas well remediation
- **\$4 million** for the "Nature Awaits" program to ensure every 4th grader in Michigan has the opportunity to visit our State parks
- **\$8 million** for community engagement and outreach to increase disadvantaged communities' participation and representation in the state park and cultural museum systems
- **\$10 million** for MI Healthy Climate Corps job training and apprenticeship program focused on the hands-on implementation of sustainability and resilience projects, including hazard mitigation and adaptation plans
- **\$51 million** for conservation officers and funding upgrades at Belle Isle State Park

This budget is a good start in reflecting the needs and priorities of the people of Michigan.

We look forward to working with the governor and the legislature to seize this opportunity to advance clean energy jobs, resiliency, and a sustainable economy that benefits our residents. There is still a way to go until a final budget is agreed upon. As discussions take hold in the legislature, the Sierra Club will advocate hard for investments in water, clean energy, clean transportation, and natural resources protection and access. We know pushing for a far-reaching budget would be a win for our climate, jobs, economy and families at a time when we most need it.

Representative Debbie Dingell is Environmentalist of the Year



Debbie Dingell
2022 Environmentalist
of the Year
Photo courtesy of Rep. Dingell

Sierra Club Michigan Chapter named Congresswoman Debbie Dingell the 2022 Environmentalist of the Year because of her leadership on the Inflation Reduction Act. The award is the Michigan Chapter's highest honor, recognizing one individual annually for their exceptional leadership in environmental protection in Michigan.

Congresswoman Dingell demonstrated her deep commitment to climate advocacy as one of the strongest supporters and key authors for the Inflation Reduction act. Thanks to her dedication, local governments in Michigan will have access to federal dollars that will transition our state to a greener economy and slow climate change. Congresswoman Dingell accepted her award at the Chapter's award ceremony on February 21 at the beautiful Matthaei Botanic Gardens in Ann Arbor.



Congresswoman Debbie Dingell receives her Environmentalist of the Year award, pictured here with Chapter Director Elayne Elliot (l) and Legislative and Political Director Christy McGillivray. Photo by John Metzler

Michigan Chapter recognized ten additional awardees for their outstanding commitments to organization:

Craig Ressler – Chapter Service Awards: For Chapter volunteers and/or leaders who have contributed a significant amount of time and effort to the Club. No Service Awards will be given to active Chapter Executive Committee members except for a specific achievement or contribution.

Ericka Lozana-Buhl – Ed Steinman Digital Excellence Award: This award recognizes outstanding efforts by a volunteer activist to raise awareness and disseminate information about Michigan's environment by the use of electronic media.

Nick Leonard, Great Lakes Environmental Law Center – Bunyan Bryant Award: Awarded to recognize outstanding leadership in the field of environmental justice.

Stephen Colby Brown – Burton V. Barnes Award: Established in 2004 to recognize academic excellence.

The Nepessing Group Student Engagement Committee (Heather Sisto, Kerry Humphery, Larry Petrella, Mike Buza, Cyndie Roberts and Mary Harmon) - Trillium Award: Established in 1993 to recognize outstanding efforts by or with students.

Kelly House, Bridge Magazine – Environmental Journalism Award (Print): For environmental reporting or editorials.

Abby Clark – Helen LeBlanc Excellence Award: Recognizes a Michigan Chapter leader, either volunteer or staff, whose work and commitment has dramatically improved the administrative and/or financial security and success of the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter.

Denise Trabbic-Pointer – Marlene Fluharty Award: This award is given to a Chapter member who has served the Sierra Club on at least two levels (Group, Chapter &/or National) over an extended period of time and has made significant contributions or is responsible for a major project which has significantly benefited the Club.

Fred Miller and Charlie Weaver – Virginia Prentice Award: This award is given to an individual who has made significant contributions to the preservation of wilderness and/or the protection of public lands in Michigan. This award is open to both members and non-members.

Mark Van Putten & the Wege Foundation and The Beyond Coal Campaign's outside counsel: Earthjustice team Shannon Fisk, Mike Soules, Chinyere Osuala, and Hema Lochan – White Pine Award (2): Given to a non-member, organization or group that has shown extraordinary dedication to protection of the environment.

Detroit Outdoors Continues to Connect Youth With Nature

By Garrett Dempsey, Inspiring Connections Outdoors, Detroit

Detroit Outdoors looks forward to an exciting year filled with connecting Detroit youth and communities to the public lands and natural spaces we hold so dear. This is the sixth year of partnership between the Sierra Club, Detroit Parks and Recreation and the YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit. This collaboration began with the reactivation of the Scout Hollow Campground in Detroit's Rouge Park. Since then, it has grown into one of 12 Thrive Outside communities supported by the Outdoor Foundation. Detroit Outdoors and the Thrive Outside initiative will help youth and communities explore, enjoy and protect the environment through meaningful experiences in outdoor recreation and stewardship.

We kicked off the new year by supporting a trip with partners to Michigan Ice Fest in Munising and Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. Detroit Inspiring Connections

Outdoors volunteers and several National Sierra Club staff, including Chris Hill, director of the Our Wild America Campaign, and Lornett Vestal, senior campaign Representative for Military Outdoors, joined thirty adventurous souls for climbing and hiking around the shore of Lake Superior. Highlights of the trip included Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) centered Introduction to Ice Climbing courses led by word class climbers such as Dom Mullins (with guest support from Conrad Anker) and the opportunity to host our own reception for Ice Fest attendees as a way to express gratitude for the event organizers' intention and effort to engage climbers of color and a diverse range of communities at this event and across the sport.

As we move through the remainder of this year, Detroit Outdoors will work with diverse partners to reduce the nature equity gap and make the outdoors a place for all. Detroit ICO is building a strong relationship with the Hamtramck High School Outdoor Adventure Club. The broader Detroit Outdoors collaborative supports the emergence of Outdoor Adventure Clubs at Detroit Public Schools (DPSCD). Examples include ICO volunteers helping youth learn to ski and snowboard this winter and the YMCA of Metro Detroit hosting an Isle Royale backpacking trip for DPSCD students as part of the Y's Bold & Gold program.



September 2022 Overnight Family Camping Training hosted at Detroit's Historic Fort Wayne with leaders from Detroit, Grand Rapids, and youth-serving organizations nationwide.

Photo by Garrett Dempsey

Community and regional partnerships continue to figure strongly into the work of Detroit Outdoors. Black to the Land Coalition (BttLC) runs an incredibly enriching Family Forest School in Detroit parks and green spaces. The Lands Water Wildlife and Our Wild America Campaigns supported this with grants to help BttLC create Pocket Ecology Guides for Detroit's Rouge Park. The guides will center on Black, Indigenous and other traditional ways of knowing while also providing engaging activities for youth and families to do together in Rouge Park. Support was also directed to BttLC for their successful and growing efforts to connect Detroit Area residents with paddling experiences, including work with Friends of the Rouge on tours of industrial areas of concern within the watershed.

Key to the work of Detroit Outdoors is sharing time and resources to build trust and strength across our network of partners. These relationships allow us to work with individuals and organizations in a spirit of cooperation. The nature equity gap in the United States is rooted in generations of systemic racism and unbridled economic greed. Building community in the outdoors and facilitating meaningful connections to nature shows us the way to live our values in the Sierra Club across all our campaigns. It is vital work, and our lives will be better for it.

2022 Annual Report

By Elayne Elliott, Chapter Director

Thanks to people like you, 2022 was a victorious year. We were able to leverage our political power to secure environmental wins at the polls, ensure our democracy remained in tact, protect the Great Lakes from pollution, and speak up against unsustainable forest management practices. With your support, here's what we were able to accomplish:

Political

We secured the environmental majority in the house and the senate for the first time since 1982. Sierra Club endorsed candidates won 16 of 21 Senate races and 53 of 63 House races. Most notably, our long-term political strategy paid off when Donavan McKinney, an environmental justice champion who we've supported through multiple election cycles, won the HD 14 race. Similarly, in HD 109, Jen Hill defeated an Enbridge-backed candidate in an open primary.

Legislative

We supported a \$4.7 billion supplemental budget bill that included investments to clean up and protect Michigan's water, overhaul outdated water infrastructure, fund state and local parks and clean energy, remove lead pipes, and expand broadband internet and more. We protected our democracy by blocking the 39-bill package to suppress the vote in Michigan, and we put a halt to the bad bottle bill that would have diverted money away from contaminated site clean up.

Climate Change/Clean Energy

Our efforts to shutdown Enbridge's Line 5 took the stage at COP15, the UN Biodiversity Conference, to bring to an international audience the threat of Line 5 to biodiversity of the Great Lakes. On the west side of the state, the Grand Haven City Council unanimously approved the establishment of a Sustainability & Energy Commission and several Sierra Club members were appointed to the commission.

Environmental Justice

We supported groups battling an asphalt plant in two Detroit neighborhoods – northwest Detroit and Core City. We doubled down on our efforts to deepen our impact in environmental justice communities by securing funds from the Our Wild America campaign to support urban farmers and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color interested in exploring the outdoors.

Protecting Great Lakes

It was another successful year for the Rain Gardens to the Rescue program which engaged more than 100 community members and provided nine Detroit residents with free rain gardens. Combined, these gardens have the capacity to hold 5,700 gallons of water each time it rains. Through the Healing Our Waters program we organized citizen lobbying days with federal legislators and reinforced the need for strong policies to protect the Great Lakes.

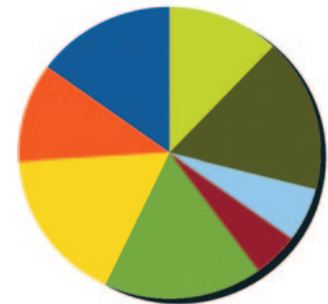
Forests and Biodiversity

Strong forest management practices remain of the utmost importance and we made sure our voice was heard at the state and federal levels. We monitored proposals ranging from new timber sales to cultural resource management to determine their value and

This Annual Statement has not been audited. It includes only financial information about the Michigan Chapter's work and not information from the affiliated Sierra Club Michigan Chapter Political Committee.

EXPENSES TO ADVANCE CONSERVATION PRIORITIES

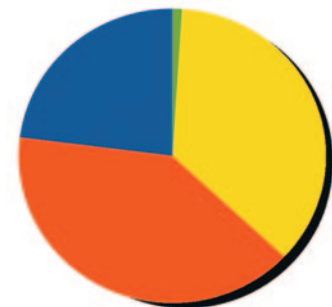
In 2022, the Chapter spent \$1,038,391 to advance conservation priorities. Of that, 71% went directly to pro-environmental activities that you care about. The remainder went to administrative aid for our programs and activities and helped secure funds to ensure the sustainability of the Chapter's critical work.



- Great Lakes 15%
- Forestry 11%
- Clean Energy 17%
- Political & Lobbying 17%
- Environmental Justice 5%
- Membership 6%
- Administration 17%
- Fundraising 12%

INCOME TO SUSTAIN CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

In 2022, the Chapter's income was \$1,213,602 and 3% came from a portion of your annual membership dues. The majority of our support comes from diverse fundraising activities such as direct and online mail appeals that yield donations and grant requests to foundations.



- Allocations 23%
Tax deductible and non deductible funds including bequests and non deductible lobbying
- Donations 40%
Both tax deductible and non tax deductible
- Nat'l SC Shared Project Grants 36%
- Other Grants / Misc 1%

Giving Through Your IRA

We are often asked how to support the Michigan Chapter by giving through an IRA QCD (Individual Retirement Account - Qualified Charitable Distribution), also known as a Charitable IRA Rollover or IRA QCD. IRA donations are an easy and beneficial way to support the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter – when made through the Sierra Club Foundation as a qualifying charity – without incurring federal income tax liability.

Because the Sierra Club, including the Michigan Chapter, is a 501(c)(4) organization, it is not eligible to receive IRA charitable rollovers directly. The Sierra Club Foundation is the 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor of the Sierra Club, Michigan Chapter.

How to Make an IRA QDC Gift:

1. To make a gift from your IRA through the Sierra Club Foundation, contact your IRA administrator to arrange a direct transfer from your account.
2. The Foundation will designate your gift to the Michigan Chapter as long as it receives an award letter stating the Michigan Chapter as the designation. There is no separate account for gifts designated for Michigan Chapter or Michigan Chapter restricted projects.
3. We strongly recommend you instruct your broker to include your name and address as the donor of record with the check and request to be copied on any correspondence in connection to the transfer.
4. Your IRA administrator can send the funds by check to:
Sierra Club Foundation
2101 Webster Street, Suite 1250
Oakland, CA 94612
Or by ACH payment:
Account Name: Sierra Club Foundation
Bank Name: Amalgamated Bank
Account ending in 1586
Tax ID#: 94-6069890
5. Finally, please let the Michigan Chapter know of the transfer so we can follow up with the Foundation. Contact elayne.elliott@sierraclub.org. Laura can also provide a sample letter to share with your IRA administrator and address any questions. Thank you!

To be tax-free, the donation must go directly from your IRA account to the Sierra Club Foundation without passing through your hands. If a distribution check is made payable to you, the distribution will not qualify as a QCD and will be treated as taxable income.

To Qualify:

- You must be 70 ½ years or older when the gift is transferred.
- You may transfer up to a maximum of \$100,000 to qualified charities per year. Gifts must be made by December 31 of each year.
- If you are a joint tax filer, your spouse can also give \$100,000 per year if they are over 70 ½ and has an IRA.
- This only applies to eligible individual retirement accounts.

The Sierra Club Foundation does not provide tax or legal advice. Please consult your tax or legal advisor for additional considerations before making any charitable gift decision. For more information, please contact Elayne Elliott, Chapter Director, at elayne.elliott@sierraclub.org. Thank you!

THANK YOU!

The Sierra Club Michigan Chapter would not exist without the invaluable contributions of time, energy, and donations from our members, volunteers, donors, and supporters across our Great Lakes state. Whether you've been involved for days or decades, thank you for all you do every day to engage in our work and make us Powerful Together!



Photo by Depositphoto.com

LEAVE A LEGACY

You can preserve Michigan's environment for the future by remembering the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter in your estate plans or will. Bequests help us continue the fight to protect our beautiful state and Great Lakes for years to come. If you have named us as a beneficiary or need more information, please contact Elayne Elliott at elayne.elliott@sierraclub.org.



Scan the QR code to donate from your mobile phone!

In Memoriam



Brother Thomas Zerafa
July 30, 1951 - February 13, 2023

Brother Thomas Zerafa (July 30, 1951 - February 13, 2023) was a compassionate soul and a Franciscan monk who dedicated his time to protecting the environment. Tom was a music minister in the Archdiocese of Detroit for many years and served many parishes. Tom was a founding member of Dignity Detroit and an advocate for the LGBTQ community. He even ran for mayor of Oak Park in 2007. Tom was known for his backyard barbecues and holiday gatherings, which brought the community and neighborhood together. He was a longtime advocate for public transit, serving on the board of the Motor City Freedom Riders.

As a Sierra Club activist, he was heavily involved. He lived in Oak Park and was always fighting climate change in Oakland County by advocating that local and county officials adopt more renewable energy. He traveled many times to Washington D.C. to lobby Congress for better environmental protections with both Sierra Club and Citizens' Climate Lobby. He was also a frequent voice at public hearings in Detroit, speaking out against the industrial pollution around 48217 as a volunteer with the Beyond Coal Campaign.

Charlie Weaver, a big man with an even bigger heart, passed away peacefully at home in Kalkaska on January 25. Charlie lived a life of passion for Michigan's natural resources, guiding anglers on outstanding rivers for a living, playing music reflecting his love for this place, and devoting a huge amount of time and energy advocating for Michigan, in particular in the northern lower peninsula.

Charlie was a special education teacher for 20 years in Ann Arbor and earned two degrees in Education from the University of Michigan. Charlie then immigrated north to become a fly fishing river guide. After retiring, he became involved with several environmental organizations—the Anglers of the AuSable, Upper Manistee River Association, Sierra Club-Clearwater Conservation Committee, and NMEAC. He worked on preserving the water quality of Michigan's lakes, streams and groundwater. Below are some of the memories of Sierra Club leaders who came to know him.

Craig Brainard, Emeritus Executive Committee member: "I knew Charlie from the days of fighting fracking in northern Michigan. He taught me much about the area around Grayling and Kalkaska, and the Manistee and Au Sable Rivers.

"Many people don't know that Charlie was a talented guitarist and a fine singer. There is an album with some performances of Charlie's. I'm sorry to say I don't know the name of the album; it's a tribute to a songwriter who was a friend of Charlie's. The album was featured in a book highlighting fishing songs, which I, unknowing, picked up and perused one day at a doctor's office, of all places, only to find my old pal Charlie featured in there. Charlie Weaver was a fine man, who loved fishing and northern Michigan, the natural world and Sierra Club. He will be sorely missed by many friends. Here's a link to one of his best songs, on YouTube." <https://tinyurl.com/4xeydtj9>

David Holtz, Emeritus Executive Committee member: "Charlie was an original member and force from the day the Clearwater Network was established in 2013 while I was chapter chair. Over the past nine years Charlie was engaged in locally important issues, right up to the current controversy over Camp Grayling expansion. He will be missed."

Fred Miller, Conservation Committee chair: "I am so sorry to hear of Charlie Weaver's passing. Anne Woiwode put Charlie and I together last year after both of us weighed in on the Camp Grayling expansion on the state Conservation Committee listserv. After that we had a regular email exchange on all things Camp Grayling and its vicinity. I was always primed to hear Charlie's north country news, often accompanied by righteous, and sometimes off-color, indignation. I'm sorry I never got to meet him in person."

Cecilia Garcia-Linz, administrative assistant: "I'll miss our frequent conversations, he called and emailed me during the pandemic often to check on me and keep me from being so lonely in the office alone over the past year. He will be dearly missed by many, indeed. With deepest sympathy"

Christy McGillivray, legislative and political director: "I am heartbroken to hear this. Charlie was one of the first local leaders to welcome me to the Michigan Chapter, and we worked on several PFAS events in Grayling and Traverse City together. He went above and beyond in the work he took on."

Lorne Beatty, Crossroads Group representative: "Charlie was a kind man, a good fishing guide, an excellent birder, and in more recent years a really committed to environmental causes in northern Michigan. I first met Charlie Weaver back in the 90s near Baldwin when he was guiding on the Pere Marquette River during the Fall salmon season. Early in the morning, Charlie backed his boat on its trailer into my fishing buddy's old truck at a motel parking lot. It was just one more dent but he was so concerned, embarrassed and apologetic, that we felt sorry for him! Rest In Peace Charlie."



Charlie Weaver
June 16, 1942 - January 25, 2023



The Sierra Club's members and supporters are 3.8 million of your friends and neighbors. Inspired by nature, we work together to protect our communities and the planet.

The Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization.

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Supporting Your Chapter

Sierra Club's Michigan Legacy Council

Sierra Club established its Michigan Legacy Council to honor individuals, groups and organizations making significant gifts to the Michigan Chapter. Their partnership and commitment to our work leaves a lasting legacy. This list is current as of our publication date. Please join us in thanking the current listing of Michigan Legacy Council members:

FENS & SAPPLINGS \$500-\$999

- Carrie Aikman
- Bradley Arvin
- Andrew Atwood
- Richard Barron
- Charles Stephen Baum Endowment
- Mr Lorne Beatty
- David & Joyce Benjamins
- Peggy Bocks
- Rose Burke
- Martha Brownscombe & Jay Rosen
- Joanne Cantoni
- Laurie Chaney
- Abigail 'Abby' Clark
- Connie Crowenwett
- Estate of Esther Dean
- Larry Deck & Pat Frey
- Gary & Linda Dekock
- Patricia & Gerald DeMaire
- Michelle Deatruck
- Jane Dyer
- Earthshare Chapters
- Aghogho Edevbie
- Elayne Elliott
- Cheryl Evola
- Daniel Farough & Manjola Cabe
- Mary Fielding
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- Elizabeth Goodenough & James G Leaf
- Geraldine & Kenneth Grunow
- Mary Haakenson
- Anne Heacock
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- Franklin Hull
- Margaret Idema
- Julie & Scott Jecmen
- Mary & Kent Johnson
- Judy Judd
- Larry Junck & Roberta Duda
- Kurt & Maura Jung
- David Justin

- Nachy Kanfer
- Elizabeth Keen
- Karen & Joe Kimmell
- Paul & Judy Kindel
- Richard & Patricia Kirschner
- Steven & Kathleen Kopitz
- Jay Korinek
- Jackie Lambka
- Michelle Leveque & Brian Fox
- Herbert & Karla Linkner
- Lawrence & Mary Lockhart
- Estate of Judith McGlenn
- Patrick McGlenn
- Eleanor & James McTiernan
- Paul & Bettie Menchik
- Fred Miller & Grace Hedemann
- Kimberly Miller
- Mindy Miller
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- Dr. Sharon & Richard Nash
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- Anne Remington
- Judy A Robinson
- Michael & Libby Robold
- Rochester High School, GenZ for Green
- Sharon Rosenberg
- Janet & David Scarrow
- Barbara Schmid
- Elizabeth Seabury
- William Secrest
- David & Susan Sheldon
- Claudia Sills
- Antoinette St Pierre
- Anne Remington
- Martha Stanbury & Kenneth Rosenman
- Donald & Karen Stearns
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- Elias Strangas & Jane Turner
- Emma Strebhel & Kathy Klausner
- Bradley & Kathryn Sullivan
- Timon P Tesar
- Dawn Thomas
- Rosemary Tinetti

- Ati & Jennifer Tislerics
- Laura Triezenberg
- Charles Van Zoeren
- Regina & John Wilson
- Kay & Dewey Wobma
- Anonymous Donor (2)

STREAMS & WHITE PINES \$1,000-\$2,499

- Joyce Arakelian
- Stuart Batterman
- Cynthia Berkey & James Berkey (Posthumously)
- David Bolig
- Elaine A Bridges
- Mr Matthew Brown
- Lee Burton & Roberta Shaw-Reeves
- Elizabeth Burns & Roger Zinser
- Margaret Clarke
- Michael R. Clark M.D.
- Alison Cooper
- Larry Deck & Pat Frey
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- Frank & Emily Gobright
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- David & Andrea Hamilton
- Denise Harris
- Susan & David Hoekema
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- Richard & Katherine Kinas
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- Michigan League of Conservation Voters
- Rita Mitchell & Ed Steinman
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- Villabeth Taylor
- Ken & Mary Thompson
- Todd S. Wilkinson
- Anonymous Donors (3)

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- Myrna Hitchman
- Helen & Al LeBlanc
- Gwen Nystuen
- Anonymous Donors (2)

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- Mike Keeler & Sherry Hayden
- Jim Hewitt
- Judith A Lindberg
- Nancy Shiffler
- Kathy Sneden

MARSHES & PRAIRIES \$7,500-\$14,999

- Erb Foundation
- Mr & Mrs Larry Bell
- Jean Gramlich

GREAT LAKES & GREAT FORESTS \$15,000+

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- Thomas Buhr
- Estate of William & Kathleen Davis
- Mr John R Hunting
- Jenkins Foundation
- Estate of Magdalena Herkhof
- Estate of Dorothy MacKay
- Estate of Patricia Teter
- Wege Foundation
- Tom & Anne Woiwode