

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
July 9, 2013

CONTACT: Michael Kelly
Great Lakes Office
The Conservation Fund
989-892-9171

Tom Cook
Friends of the Shiawassee River
989-277-3953

SAGINAW BAY WIN ANNOUNCES GRANT IN SUPPORT OF DAM REMOVAL AND RIVER RESTORATION ON SHIAWASSEE RIVER

\$62,500 grant to the Friends of the Shiawassee River will support dam removal, habitat restoration and park planning at the site of the Shiatown Dam

The Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) has announced a \$62,500 grant to help the Friends of the Shiawassee River restore the area where the Shiatown Dam is being removed. "We are committed to caring for the Shiawassee River, and this assistance will enable us to return the river corridor to its most natural, healthy condition" said Tom Cook, President of the Friends of the Shiawassee River.

The grant will allow for the study of the dam site and help restore the upstream area of a former impoundment. It will allow for further improvements to the Shiawassee County's Shiatown Park that borders the site on both sides. Recreational use of the area for fishing and paddling will also be enhanced. "Saginaw Bay WIN supports activities like this dam removal project that will enhance the environment, boost the economy, and supports the community" said Mike Kelly of The Conservation Fund and Director of the Saginaw Bay WIN effort. "This project joins multiple other investments that WIN has made along the Shiawassee that include additional habitat restoration sites and public access points. We couldn't be happier to make this grant to a long-time, trusted partner in the effort to improve the Saginaw Bay Watershed" continued Kelly.

The restoration actions of the Friends will complement the dam removal work being funded by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). In the fall of 2012, the removal of the Shiatown Dam was begun with a drawdown of the impoundment to minimize the hazard of dam failure. Earlier this year, the DNR announced \$162,700 in additional funding for final removal of the dam. Engineering work has begun and removal is planned for 2014. Restoration will accompany and follow removal. The Friends of the Shiawassee River are seeking public input on the dam removal plans and restoration efforts through several workshops this fall.

A dam was first constructed at Shiatown in 1840 and then replaced in 1904. It ceased operation as a hydroelectric facility in 1955 and eventually became the property of the Michigan Land Bank because of non-payment of taxes. The impoundment behind the dam, which originally was 123 acres, was reduced to less than 50 acres because of earlier dam modifications and siltation.

Eleven area foundations and corporations work together as a network to support WIN projects. This Foundation Network includes: Bay Area Community Foundation, Consumers Energy Foundation, Harry A. and Margaret D. Towsley Foundation, Midland Area Community Foundation, Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation, Saginaw Community Foundation, The Dow Chemical Company Foundation, The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation, S.C. Johnson Fund, the Cook Family Foundation, and the C.S. Mott Foundation.

To date, WIN and its partners have provided more than \$4.5 million to support projects that help to identify the Saginaw Bay Watershed as a sustainable community. Funding is provided for projects that create opportunities to connect people, resources, organizations and programs. Priority is given to projects that are innovative, cross governmental boundaries, and attempt to balance the environment, economy, and the community. WIN grants have been matched by more than \$8.5 million in other funding.

More information about WIN, is available on its website at www.saginawbaywin.org.

WIN is administered by The Conservation Fund, the only national environmental organization to receive an A+ rating from the American Institute of Philanthropy, acts to protect the nation's legacy of land and water resources in partnership with other organizations, public agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals. More information at www.conservationfund.org

