



Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network
The Conservation Fund
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News Release

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Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network Awards \$91,800 in Grants

Access sites, recreation and education are among the quality of life improvements in this round – Bay, Clare and Gladwin Counties a focus

Four new projects received nearly \$92,000 in funding awards this week from the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN). WIN is a collaborative, community driven quality of life initiative created by a variety of environmental, business and community interests in 1996. WIN was formed to create a more sustainable future for all who live, work and play within the 22-county Saginaw Bay watershed. One of the ways in which WIN accomplishes this objective is by providing financial support to projects that link the economic, environmental and social needs of the region. Key WIN funding partners include: 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, the C.S. Mott Foundation and the Saginaw Bay Foundation.

Projects in Gladwin, Clare, and Bay counties – along with a regional project focusing on outdoor education at schools throughout the Saginaw Bay watershed will receive funding. “We’re excited about these projects. Communities throughout our region are continuing to focus on access to our natural resources, explaining why nature is important, and providing opportunities to demonstrate sustainability – that relationship between our economy, the environment and the community:” said Mike Kelly of The Conservation Fund. The Conservation Fund administers the WIN program. “We’re thrilled to see communities across our region continue to invest in those things that make the area so special. We’re happy that Saginaw Bay WIN can play a role in getting these projects from the concept stage to the implementation stage”, continued Kelly.

Since its inception, WIN has awarded in excess of \$6 million to more than 300 projects across the region.

A full list of the funded projects is attached and can also be found at www.saginawbaywin.org.

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Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network
June 2019 Project List

1. **Project: Beaverton Trailhead** - Proposed by the City of Beaverton, in cooperation with the City of Gladwin and the Gladwin County Recreational Authority. The communities have all prepared pedestrian and bicycle trail master plans that include connecting to the Gladwin to Beaverton trail. The proposed trail head will be the southern end of the trail where it will provide a 6' wide concrete sidewalk, an HMA (hot mix asphalt) paved parking lot, parking striping and barrier free signs, a boat ramp, floating dock, rail replacement for kayak launch, picnic tables, bench, waste receptacles, and an information kiosk. The Beaverton Trail Head project consists of two phases. Phase I will connect to the trail from Beaverton to Gladwin and will include the following: A hard surface (hot mix asphalt) area for parking and gathering, portage for canoes, kayaks, and tubers to have access to the Tobacco River, leading to Wixom Lake. This project proposes to use environmentally friendly construction methods for the trail head by incorporating recycled asphalt into the paving mix, solar powered lights, an environmentally friendly storm water management design including curb and gutter to keep prohibited waters from the lake, and the use of recycled materials in the construction of furnishings. Key components:

- Six foot wide concrete sidewalk.
- Parking striping and barrier free signs.
- A boat ramp, floating dock, rail replacement for kayak launch, picnic tables, bench, and waste receptacles.
- An interpretive kiosk will be installed with information regarding the fish and wildlife in existence within the project area.

Local Champion: City of Beaverton
Tax Status: Government Subdivision
Partners: MDNR, Community Foundation
Contact: Heath Kaplan, City Manager 989-435-3511
WIN Approval: \$20,000
Match: \$113,663

2. **Project: The Emerald Isle Recreation Complex** - Proposed by the City of Clare, the Emerald Isle Recreation Complex is currently being constructed on 26 acres of vacant, city owned property. This property was purchased by the city in 2012, to serve as a new park area. The multi-purpose complex will be complete with a universal design, incorporating ten varied size soccer fields, paved walking/hiking paths, exercise stations, a playground, concession building with bathrooms, two pavilions that will be used for family/group gatherings and for educational workshops, a paved parking lot, and a skate and bike park. The complex project will also incorporate conservation elements of a butterfly/pollen garden and a wetland area with interpretive signage. The focus of the WIN grant is the pollinator garden area and a portion of the nature playground. WIN funding is proposed as part of a local match against a pending application for state funding as well.

Local Champion: The City of Clare and Clare Parks
Tax Status: Government
Partners: Space Monkey Alliance, MDNR, Clare County Community Foundation
Contact: Joy Simmer, Parks Director 989-386-7541 ext 213
WIN Approval: \$20,000
Match: \$70,000

3. **Project: Linwood Scenic Access Site Improvements** are proposed by a coalition of agencies including Bay County, Fraser Township and the Linwood Civic Improvement board. A rare, public waterfront scenic access site exists at the shoreline of Saginaw Bay which is used by hundreds of ice fishers daily throughout the winter to access the winter ice. Heavy winter time use at the site results in parking being backed up a mile on each side of Linwood Road. In summer however, this rare scenic waterfront site sits empty except for the occasional, short slow drive through by bay viewers, they don't stop as the site lacks any amenities for public engagement. This project is innovative as it will convert a portion of the existing (expansive) paved parking lot into a "Green Space" to create a scenic public waterfront park providing for a rare Saginaw Bay viewing area, a restful, grassed gathering location with benches, picnic tables and spotting scopes. Beyond the green space extending into the Saginaw Bay, a 60' seasonal fishing dock will be installed to create shore-based fishing access with an adjacent ADA kayak launch for direct water access into the bay. The proposal also includes a student intern component to better measure use and interview users about experience and economic impact.

Local Champion: Bay County
 Tax Status: Government Subdivision
 Partners: Fraser Township, Linwood Civic Improvement Board
 Contact: Laura Ogar, Bay County 989-895-4135
 WIN Approval: \$27,000
 Match: \$133,020

4. **Outdoor Education Partnership** - Multiple organizations, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ducks Unlimited and Chippewa Nature Center to develop and expand place-based environmental and sustainability education at schools. The project will provide support for the creation of outdoor education areas provided local public and private schools can utilize project areas in their curriculum. Habitat will be restored through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program with financial assistance from Ducks Unlimited and Chippewa Nature Center will lead the curriculum and program development for each site. A similar project was funded by Saginaw Bay WIN in 2004 and 10 schools successfully received habitat work and study materials. This project proposes to add Chippewa Nature Center (CNC) as an expert partner for outdoor education. CNC educates thousands of school children every year and have staff with the necessary expertise to tailor each project to the State of Michigan curriculum and the school's preferences for subject matter. In addition to curriculum development, CNC will provide a staff facilitated program for up to 8 classrooms at each school to ensure that all educators have the resources they need to educate students and encourage new land stewards for several years to come. We estimate approximately 3,000+ students will be educated in the outdoor classrooms every year.

Local Champion: Chippewa Nature Center
 Tax Status: Nonprofit
 Partners: US Fish and Wildlife Service, Ducks Unlimited
 Contact: Dennis Pilaske, Chippewa Nature Center 989-631-0830
 WIN Approval: \$24,800
 Match: \$22,400

