



Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund 2022 Annual Report



Message from DNR Director Dan Eichinger



Participation in outdoor recreation is at an all-time high, proving to be a driving economic and social force in our beautiful state. It contributes more than \$10.8 billion to our economy and supports 109,000 jobs and \$5 billion in wages, according to 2021 statistics released by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

The numbers prove its economic impact, yet the social gains of access to the outdoors are unquantifiable. Whether biking to work on a trail, birdwatching in a pristine forest or discovering an accessible playground, such gains add immensely to the quality of life of Michigan residents and visitors. Participating in outdoor recreation brings us closer to nature, yields many psychological benefits and provides a break from typical routines – all key factors in creating better physical and mental health.

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, with the tradition of leveraging critical match dollars, plays a vital role in helping local governments and recreation authorities acquire land and develop recreation amenities. Since its establishment in 1976, the Trust Fund has awarded over \$1.3 billion in grants to local units of government and state agencies for projects throughout all 83 Michigan counties.

The Trust Fund, along with local governments, recreation authorities and other partners, is vital to continuing Michigan's unmatched legacy as a superb place to live, work and play. Congratulations to this year's grant awardees, and thank you for your commitment to making our state a welcoming wonderland of public outdoor recreation opportunities.

Message from MNRTF Chair Sam Cummings



A critical sand dune along Lake Michigan, a trail to a spectacular Upper Peninsula waterfall, a universally accessible playground in the heart of Detroit; these are just a few extraordinary conservation and outdoor recreation projects made possible by the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund over the past 46 years.

Because of our stunning natural resources, Michigan is unique. We place great value on conserving these spaces and encouraging residents and guests to experience them. One way we do this is through grants provided by the Trust Fund.

These grants are the result of years of strategic stewardship and thoughtful management. The financial resources of the Trust Fund, which contributed more than \$1.3 billion to conservation and outdoor public recreation since the program's start in 1976, are realized through the leasing revenue from land that belongs to the people of Michigan. It is fitting then, that the benefits of said stewardship are returned to the people through reinvestment in public land – very often leveraging additional state and local contributions.

Thank you to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and local partners who have facilitated this year's grants. Their enthusiasm and dedication, each and every year, are remarkable and inspiring.

It has been one of the greatest experiences and honors of my life to be part of this program for the past 12 years. I have learned from and befriended so many incredible people including my fellow board members, DNR staff, conservation leaders and advocates, and state and local officials from all over Michigan who are devoted to and passionate about this work. Thank you all. It truly is proof that Michigan not only has some of the most beautiful land and water in the world, it is also home to some of the most beautiful people.

Congratulations to the 2022 grant recipients!

Trust Fund history

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund was established under the Kammer Recreational Land Trust Fund Act of 1976 to provide a permanent funding source for the public acquisition of land for resource protection and public outdoor recreation. Funding was provided by revenue derived from royalties on the sale and lease of state-owned oil, gas and mineral rights.

In 1984, the Trust Fund was expanded to allow funding of development of public land. Per the state constitution, the maximum amount of the accumulation of nonrenewable mineral royalties in the Trust Fund is \$500 million. This level was reached in 2011 and represents the permanent investment corpus. Today, the Trust Fund functions as a permanent endowment and funds grants, administration and payments in lieu of taxes (PILT).

With the passage of Proposal 1 in 2020, the Trust Fund board is now able to exercise greater flexibility in balancing funding between acquisition and development projects. This allows the board to respond to the state's changing recreation needs by acting more nimbly in its annual project selections. That's because acquisition and development grants each receive a minimum of 25% of total funding, allowing the remaining 50% to go toward either acquisition or development projects based on the greatest needs and benefits rather than a stipulated amount.

The Trust Fund has awarded over \$1.3 billion in grants to local units of government and state agencies for projects throughout all 83 Michigan counties. Of this total, \$280 million has been invested in trails. In excess of 1,000 public parks have been acquired, developed or both. Other projects funded include ball fields, boat launches, trailheads, restrooms and other amenities, for a total of 2,832 Trust Fund-assisted projects since 1976. To learn more about the Trust Fund visit Michigan.gov/MNRTF.

10-year grant history

Grant awards (dollars)

Application Year	Acquisition	Development	Total	Acquisition	Development	Total
2012	14,276,500	9,072,200	23,348,700	22	54	76
2013	19,033,200	8,644,600	27,677,800	32	44	76
2014	18,249,900	6,479,600	24,729,500	25	44	69
2015	19,926,000	8,031,200	27,957,200	26	44	70
2016	27,670,800	19,940,100	47,610,900	27	87	114
2017	28,852,900	21,014,000	49,866,900	34	97	131
2018	18,650,600	7,393,400	26,044,000	30	34	64
2019	17,199,800	11,500,000	28,699,800	18	60	78
2020	27,289,600	10,500,000	37,789,600	30	46	76
2021	22,299,700	23,292,500	45,592,200	22	95	117
Total	213,449,000	125,867,600	339,316,600	266	605	871

Number of grants

Local and state acquisition and development projects, 1976-2021



Trust Fund Board

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board of Trustees, authorized by Public Act 451 of 1994, is composed of five members, including the director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources or a member of the Natural Resources Commission, and four state residents appointed by the governor. The resident members serving in 2022 were Sam Cummings of Grand Rapids, Dr. Brandy Brown of Comstock, Bill Rustem of Mason and Steven Hamp of Ann Arbor. Dan Eichinger represented the DNR in 2022 as director. Board priorities for 2022 included land and water trails, regionally significant projects and acquisition of wildlife habitat, hunting access and lake and river public access.

2022 MNRTF board recommendations - development projects

County	Grantee	Project	Award
Allegan	City of Saugatuck	Blue Star Trail - Washington St. to Maple St.	\$300,000
Bay	Bangor Charter Township	Bangor Township Park and River Access Improvement	\$210,100
Bay	City of Bay City	Riverwalk Trail and Crooked Bridge Restoration	\$300,000
Bay	Hampton Charter Township	Finn Road Park and Lake Access Improvements	\$253,000
Benzie	Benzie County	Railroad Point Water Access	\$300,000
Berrien	City of Buchanan	McCoy Creek Trail Extension to River St. Joe Brewery	\$300,000
Calhoun	Calhoun County	* Ott Preserve Iron Belle Trailhead Improvements	\$250,800
Calhoun	City of Albion	* Albion River Trail Expansion	\$300,000
Clinton	City of East Lansing	Northern Tier Trail Extension to Coolidge Road	\$300,000
Genesee	Genesee County	* Richfield Park Improvements along the Iron Belle Trail	\$300,000
Gladwin	City of Gladwin	Gladwin City Park Improvements	\$300,000
Grand Traverse	City of Traverse City	Bayfront Restroom Amenities	\$200,500
Ingham	Ingham County	Hawk Island Park Boardwalk Replacement	\$300,000
Ingham	Ingham County	MSU to Lake Lansing Connector Trail, Lake Lansing Park North	\$300,000
Iron	Iron County	* Pentoga Park Boat Launch and Iron Belle Trailhead	\$120,700
Jackson	City of Jackson	* Martin Luther King Jr. Equality Trail Project	\$300,000
Kalkaska	Village of Kalkaska	* North Country Trail Connection and Trailhead	\$300,000
Kent	Plainfield Charter Township	Grand Rogue Park - Rogue River Water Access	\$300,000
Livingston	Hamburg Township	Bennett Park Renovations and Huron River Water Trail Access	\$300,000
Manistee	Manistee Township	Orchard Beach State Park Day-use Playground	\$300,000
Marquette	Iron Ore Heritage Recreation Authority	* Iron Ore Heritage Trail Extension to Lakenenland	\$300,000

*Iron Belle Trail Projects

Development projects continued

County	Grantee	Project	Award
Midland	Midland County	* Smiths Crossing Historic Bridge Renovation	\$300,000
Muskegon	City of Muskegon	Pere Marquette Park Restroom Concession Building	\$300,000
Muskegon	Muskegon County	Pioneer Park - Bath House	\$300,000
Ottawa	Ottawa County	Ottawa Sands Lake Loop and Idema Explorers Connector	\$300,000
Sanilac	Sanilac County	Evergreen Park - Water Trail Access and Park Improvements	\$300,000
St. Clair	St. Clair County	North Channel County Park Improvements	\$270,000
St. Joseph	City of Three Rivers	Memory Isle Park Improvements	\$97,600
Washtenaw	Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority	Delhi Metropark - Canoe and Kayak Launch Renovation	\$300,000
Wayne	City of Hamtramck	Veterans Park - Hamtramck Stadium Restroom Renovation	\$300,000

2022 MNRTF board recommendations - acquisition projects

County	Grantee	Project	Award
Bay	DNR - Wildlife Division	Crow Island State Game Area Addition	\$1,300,000
Charlevoix	St. James Township	Edward B. Wojan Park Expansion	\$525,000
Genesee	Genesee County	Berston Property Acquisition	\$18,000
Grand Traverse	DNR - Forest Resources Division	Jaxon Creek Headwaters	\$650,000
Ionia	DNR - Wildlife Division	Portland State Game Area Addition	\$700,000
Keweenaw	DNR - Parks and Recreation Division	Fort Wilkins - Keweenaw Point Acquisition	\$5,000,000
Lapeer	Village of Almont	Almont Community Park Expansion	\$75,000
Marquette	Iron Ore Heritage Recreation Authority	Iron Ore Heritage Trail - Single Track Trail Acquisition	\$150,700
Oakland	Village of Beverly Hills	Rouge River Acquisition	\$1,000,000
Otsego	DNR - Forest Resources Division	Sturgeon River Corridor Acquisition	\$1,750,000
Ottawa	Ottawa County	Rosy Mound Acquisition	\$1,650,000
Roscommon	DNR - Wildlife Division	Backus Creek State Game Area Addition	\$398,000
Schoolcraft	City of Manistique	* Lakeshore Campground Acquisition	\$345,000
Van Buren	DNR - Wildlife Division	Paw Paw River Land Acquisition	\$900,000
Washtenaw	Washtenaw County	Saline Preserve Acquisition	\$541,800

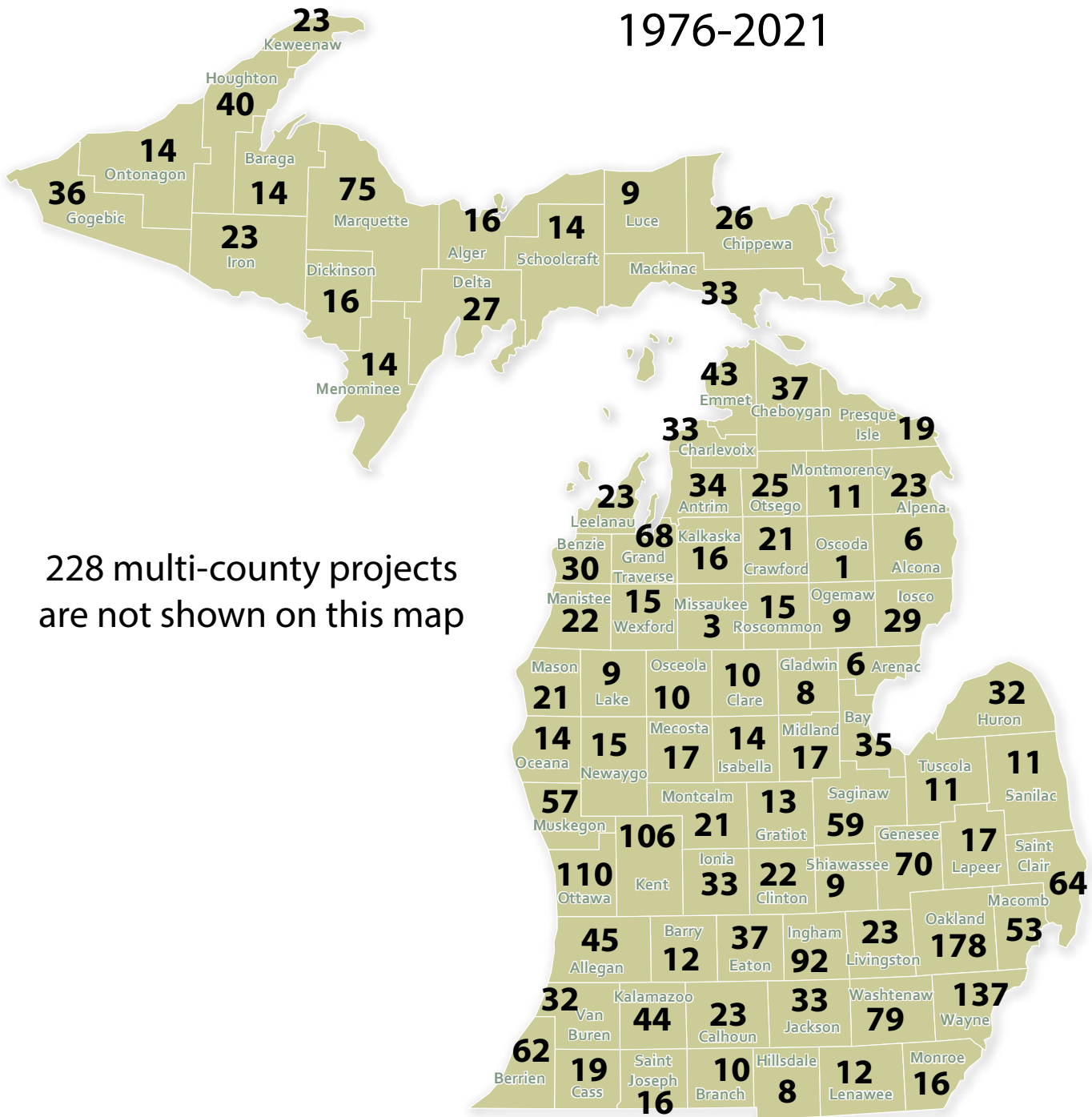
*Iron Belle Trail Projects

A list of all MNRTF projects, 1976 to present, is available online at Michigan.gov/MNRTF.

Keweenaw
(Isle Royale)

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

Projects per County 1976-2021



Enhancing communities, helping citizens

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund was created to provide perpetual outdoor recreation benefits for the people of Michigan for current and future generations. The positive effects of the Trust Fund help Michigan's economy by:

- Leveraging other public and private funding.
- Providing a sense of place for local communities to support tourism.
- Connecting communities locally and regionally through trails.

Understanding how the Trust Fund works

In May 2011, the corpus of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund reached \$500 million and, in accordance with the Michigan Constitution, the funding formula of the Trust Fund changed significantly. New revenue from state-owned oil, gas and other mineral production stopped being deposited into the Trust Fund and started to be deposited in the State Park Endowment Fund. Funds available for grants from the Trust Fund, as well as payments in lieu of taxes and administrative costs, now come from interest and earnings on these invested funds.

The Michigan Department of Treasury manages the investment of the corpus to ensure grants will continue to be available for current and future generations. Adequate fund reserves are present to withstand variations in the market and to allow for continued stability in the fund. This strategy will maintain a vital Trust Fund for years to come. The estimated fiscal year 2022 ending investment balance of the Trust Fund is \$585.1 million.



Iron Ore Heritage Trail, Carp River Marsh, Negaunee Township, Marquette County.

Financial summary

Interest earnings and income:	*(\$64.7) million
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Development project recommendations:	\$8.3 million
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Acquisition project recommendations:	\$15.0 million
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Property taxes paid on state land purchased:	\$2.4 million
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Operating expenditures:	\$2.1 million
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** Includes an unrealized investment loss of \$89 million*



Iron Ore Heritage Trail, accessible fishing platform on the Carp River, Negaunee Township, Marquette County.

About the cover photos

Front: South Haven Splash Pad, City of South Haven, Van Buren County.

Back: O’Kun de Kun Falls, Ontonagon County.



Learn more about the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund at Michigan.gov/MNRTF.

Stay current on the latest Trust Fund news and other DNR information by subscribing to email updates. Visit Michigan.gov/DNREmail to sign up.

Questions: 517-28 GRANT (517-284-7268) or DNR-Grants@Michigan.gov.

