

The Lake Huron shoreline is a stunning natural resource, stretching along 200 miles of Michigan's northeastern shore and thumb area. In addition to its magnificent coastline, the Lake Huron basin also includes more than 15,000 square miles of important forested areas, prime agricultural land, inland lakes and thousands of miles of rivers and streams.

Many Michigan residents know the region as the perfect location for fishing, camping, hunting, biking, birding and other outdoor pursuits. With such abundant beauty that is readily accessible, we all have a responsibility to preserve it for today and the future.

Land conservancies can help.



Lake Huron Alliance

Great Lake, Great Land!

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LAND CONSERVATION:

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT



PRESENTED BY THE

Lake Huron Alliance

A Resource for All of Michigan

Lake Huron's coastline contains the largest remaining areas of Great Lakes coastal wetlands and lake plain prairie in existence today. These relatively small patches of land serve as vital pathways for maintaining our rich natural habitats.

Lake Huron itself is the second largest of the Great Lakes and the fifth largest freshwater lake in the world. It has the longest shoreline of all the Great Lakes in addition to the shores provided by 30,000 islands. About 1.5 million people in Michigan get their drinking water from this important source.

The Lake Huron basin is home to thousands of species of birds, waterfowl, plants, fish and animals, including many that are endangered and threatened. The region's open spaces, dense forests, natural wetlands and clean water provide the critical habitat necessary for maintaining these populations. Every year, we lose more natural areas and the habitats of many animals continue to shrink, sometimes disappearing entirely.

As habitat degrades, so does water quality. Lake Huron relies heavily on its tributaries, many of which have been severely degraded because of sedimentation, pollution and poor land use practices. Wetlands serve as natural filters for pollutants. Without these important natural areas, the beauty we know in this region would disappear.

What is the Lake Huron Alliance?

The Lake Huron Alliance is a partnership of land conservancies in Michigan's Lake Huron basin, working together to promote conservation of the region's natural resources, shoreline, open spaces and forests.

Land conservancies are private, non-governmental organizations that work with individuals, families, communities and other organizations to strengthen the public's knowledge of land conservation and protect land with significant natural, aesthetic and/or historic resources. Conservancies help to protect farms and working landscapes, forests, peaceful views, open spaces and other properties that are important to wildlife, our communities and our quality of life. Through the use of conservation easements, land donations and purchase of land, Alliance members ensure that our important resources remain protected – forever.

The Alliance is made up of these organizations:

- Chippewa Watershed Conservancy
- The Conservation Fund
- Headwaters Land Conservancy
- Little Forks Conservancy
- Michigan Karst Conservancy
- The Nature Conservancy
- Oakland Land Conservancy
- Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy

Preserving Our Natural Spaces

Communities that have an interest in preserving natural areas for trails or nature preserves, community parks or wetlands can work cooperatively with Lake Huron Alliance members to identify land use and economic development approaches that benefit the land as well as your residents.

Land conservancies can work with you in many ways to help you achieve your community's goals.

Land Use Planning

Land conservancies can assist with land use planning by:

- Helping to identify or prioritize natural resources in the community that are found worthy of protection.
- Identifying areas that could be preserved through the use of conservation easements by accepting and maintaining donated land. As you know, preserving open space within a community is important because it guarantees that land will not be developed in the future and gives the community an aesthetic quality it might not otherwise maintain. Ultimately this translates to a greater tax base in your community because it is an attractive place to live and work.
- Assisting with site acquisition for parks and recreation, and working in partnership with you for conservation development and other smart growth efforts.

Economic Development

In local government, you realize the importance of economic development and land conservancies can help. The preservation of natural resources is a sign of a healthy community, one that is well planned. This positive community image is a major selling point for attracting businesses and other economic development efforts. We can work with you to meet your community's goals in this area.

How Can We Work Together?

The Lake Huron Alliance, like you, wants the best for the community. Working together may be the key to achieving higher goals. We can help each other by educating local citizens about the natural benefits the region has to offer so we can all promote land use practices that consider the needs of people, communities and natural systems.

For additional information about land stewardship and the Lake Huron Alliance, please contact us at 989-892-9171 or www.lakehuronalliance.org.

