

**SUMMER/FALL 2019**



**ISSUE 75**

**PROTECT  
IMPROVE  
LEAD  
INSPIRE**







## RECREATION & CONSERVATION

In June, members of the Michigan Outdoor Recreation Advisory Council (ORAC) spent the day in Midland to learn from various perspectives in the outdoor recreation consumer cycle. After visiting Scientific Anglers and Little Forks Outfitters, our executive director Greg Yankee welcomed the members at our Averill Preserve.

Greg presented an overview of the organization and the vital connection between conservation and outdoor recreation; how protecting our land

and water is invaluable and necessary for the industry and overall impact of our economy.

A staff led tour proceeded after the presentation - highlighting Averill's accessible trail, nature play area, educational signage and rustic trails. The council finished their Midland tour after visiting Chippewa Nature Center and holding their quarterly meeting.

Last year, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Michigan Natural Resources Commission announced the formation of this advisory body to identify new collaborative opportunities and further broaden the base of support for

outdoor recreation and natural resource stewardship within the state.

The Michigan ORAC is composed of leaders in Michigan's outdoor recreation industry, reflecting the manufacturing, retail and service sectors, as well as employers in health, community finance and other leading industries. Many of our supporters may recognize two of the council members: Bo Brines, owner of Little Forks Outfitters, and Jonathan Jarosz, executive director of Heart of the Lakes.

More recently, Governor Whitmer announced the creation of an Office of Outdoor Recreation and Brad Garmon as the office's executive director.



## PUTTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

This summer, the Midland Country Club hosted the first Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational. Dow, along with other sponsors, partnered with Little Forks and 35 other nonprofits, to team up with the world's leading professional female golfers for the Ladies Professional Golfing Association Tour! The 72 teams competing were

divided up into four focus areas: STEM, Sustainability, Inclusion, and Innovation. Promoting sustainability, Little Forks' first team included Michigan native, Elayna Bowser & recent Midland transplant, Chaitra Katammeni!. Our second team included Jenny Shin who has 1 career LPGA win, and Na Yeon Choi who has

9 career LPGA wins.

Both teams performed incredibly and showed real initiative in promoting sustainability in the Great Lakes Bay Region. The Midland Country Club will host the GLBI and LPGA again next year -- July 13 - 18, 2020!



## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Greg Yankee

You will notice an obvious theme throughout each of these updates: partnerships. As a nonprofit with fewer full-time staff than there are workdays in a week, we rely on partners to help us in so many ways. From the physical labor of building a boardwalk, to getting the word out about the healing power of nature, to being promoted as part of a professional sporting event, none of these highlights over the past few months would be possible without our partners.

It isn't just a catchphrase in our office, it is a part of our culture. We are a staff and board comprised of people who believe one of conservation's greatest strengths is the wealth of natural partnerships. Thank you for being one of those partners. If you are a donor, your gift helps us accomplish our mission every day. If you are not a donor, I hope you find some inspiration in these stories and photos to reach out and find a way to renew your partnership - in whatever form - with all of us.

## MISSION

*The Little Forks Conservancy permanently protects and improves natural environments in Mid-Michigan by leading and inspiring actions that conserve vital habitats and waterways for the benefit of our entire community.*

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OUTdoors Together was started in June of 2019, and has been a resounding success! Often, marginalized communities have trouble feeling safe in the woods. Andrea Foster created a program for LGBTQIA+ individuals and allies to come together, and enjoy a nature hike or outdoor excursion.

Family friendly and free of cost, over the summer Little Forks hosted six different hikes at both the Little Forks preserves and the Midland City Forest. Support from organizations like Dow's GLAD and Perceptions has been monumental, as the information to attend was included in their newsletters and e-news.

Volunteers have helped lend educational help, and groups ranging from five to thirty people have joined Andrea for a walk in the woods, rain or shine! Two fall hikes have been announced, and the winter season will hopefully lend opportunities to take the group snowshoeing.

Routine hikes will start again in the spring, and Little Forks will continue to look for ways to fill gaps in the community when it comes to nature and the outdoors!

## CEDAR RIVER CLEANUP

On July 11th The Little Forks Conservancy and the Gladwin Conservation District hosted the 5th annual cleanup of the Cedar River in Gladwin, which was a huge success! Thirty-two volunteers helped us clean the 4.5 mile stretch of river from Chappel Dam to Gladwin City Park.

In addition to the volunteers, local organizations really helped make this event a success with kayaks donated by Ike's Mobile Kayaks and transportation provided by Gladwin City-County Transit. The



Boardman River Clean Sweep group from Traverse City who coordinated the event in its first few years were also a tremendous help, bringing volunteers, extra supplies, and years of experience to help guide the group. Supplies were also purchased using a VRSCCP grant awarded to the conservation district by the Great Lakes Commission.

In the end, 305 pounds of trash were removed from the river, helping to protect this high quality waterway.



# WELCOMES & GOODBYES FOR LITTLE FORKS' BOARD

Little Forks has welcomed three new members to serve on their board.

Paddy Hobohm is a Midland native who currently serves as the Vice President of Operations for SPACE, Inc., a Midland-based company offering commercial and government interior design services, as well as home organization and construction management. An avid fisherman and a graduate of Leadership Midland 2018, Paddy and his wife love getting outdoors whether to hike, bike, golf, fish, or just take their dog for a walk.

Stephanie Richardson is the Horticulturist for the City of Midland. As the mastermind behind the beautiful landscaping and floral arrangements seen around the

cityscape, with her main ambition to help connect people in an urban environment with nature.

Claudia Walecka-Hutchison, Ph.D., is an EH&S Remediation Manager for Dow. Prior to her position with Dow, Claudia was an environmental scientist for a global engineering, construction, and design firm as well as for the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality. She has also served as an instructor at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, AZ. She received a M.S. in Hydrology and a Ph.D. in Environmental Science, both from the University of Arizona.

Little Forks is excited to have these incredible individuals help drive LFC's mission and goals! Little Forks'

board and staff also said goodbye to longtime member, Bill Thomson, who stepped down this summer as he and his family would be spending more time out of state. Bill served on Little Forks' board for 7 consecutive years with 3 years on the executive committee as the board's Treasurer. We thank Bill for his time, commitment and passion for the protection of Mid-Michigan's outdoors.



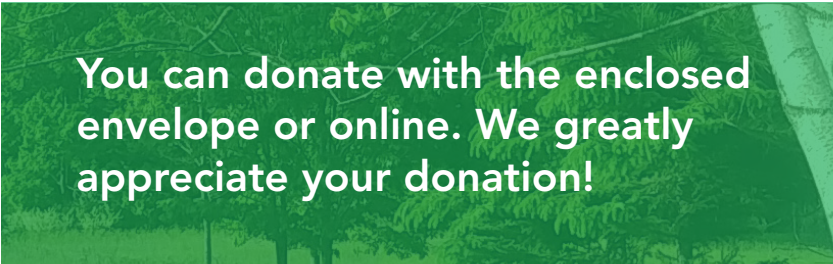




## JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Land conservation benefits our whole community. Your support helps protect forests, wildlife habitat, and farmland, while also connecting people with nature. Your help is needed as we

- continue our outreach efforts to the public on how land conservation benefits our quality of life
- steward the land under our protection
- work with prospective landowners who are interested in conserving their properties
- get people from all ages out to our preserves and engaged in projects that improve our natural surroundings, but also strengthen our ties to the community
- focus on projects that protect the freshwater resources of the Tittabawassee River watershed



**You can donate with the enclosed envelope or online. We greatly appreciate your donation!**



As part of a larger project to improve the trails at Riverview Natural Area, two large boardwalks were built this summer in the northern section beyond the stairway. Each boardwalk is about 238 feet, using a simple design of 4 inch by 6 inch lumber supports and 2 inch by 10 inch platforms that rest on the ground, providing a hard surface above the standing water in the spring time for hikers to easily navigate this beautiful area.

The first boardwalk was built and paid for by Trinseo, as part of their 2019 Volunteer Days coordinated by Trinseo and United Way of Midland. These dedicated volunteers took a four day project and completed it in just two days, contributing 104 volunteer hours! The second boardwalk was built by Little Forks volunteers a few weeks later. This project was accomplished thanks to funding by Lowe's Small Community Grant and an action grant from Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network.

In addition to boardwalks, the trail has been diverted in many areas to opt for drier land. Once this project is complete, there will be 3 miles of sustainable trail at Riverview Natural Area making it great for day hikes. To make the Natural Area more user friendly, additional signage can be found at the parking lot area; covering the do's and don'ts, a trail blaze key, invasive species and coming soon an updated trail map!

# BUILDING ACCESS FOR ALL



## About Riverview Natural Area

The 419-acre Riverview Natural Area exemplifies the beauty of mid-Michigan's landscape. From the parking area, follow the mile-long trail loop as it winds through the forest to the river. You may see bald eagles soaring above the river. The property boasts beautiful spring wildflowers and colorful autumn leaves.

Learn more about our preserves on our website:  
<https://www.littleforks.org/preserves.html>



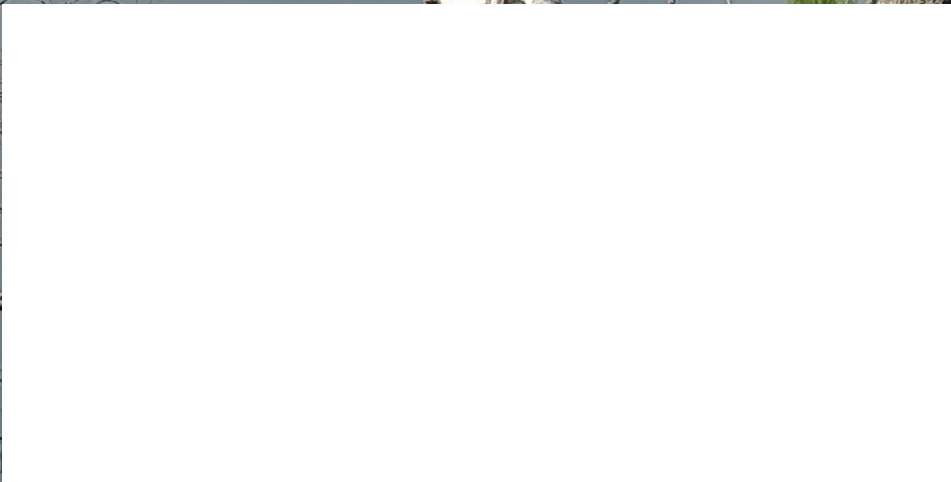
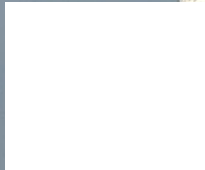








The Little Forks Conservancy  
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## SUMMER/FALL NEWSLETTER

# VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS

Dow has contributed 240 volunteer hours removing 60lbs of trash from Averill Preserve, 1,050lbs of Garlic Mustard from Pine Haven Recreation Area and cut down .25 acres of Autumn Olive at Forestview Natural Area.

Trinseo funded and built 238 feet of boardwalk at Riverview Natural Area; completing 104 volunteer hours. This was part of a larger project to improve Riverview, where funding from Lowe's and Saginaw Bay WIN allowed for another 238 feet of boardwalk to be built, new signage at the parking area and 0.5 miles of trail to be built. Halfway through this project and together we completed 44 volunteer hours!

**Other volunteer work in the nature preserves and Cedar River in 2019 has reached 350 hours, so far!**

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chuck Martin - President  
Roger Garner - Vice President  
Mary Haslam - Secretary  
Robyn Galbraith - Treasurer  
Tim Dyste - At-Large  
Sue Erhardt  
Jon DeGroot  
Sally Hightower  
Paddy Hobohm  
Josh Jones  
Stephanie Richardson  
Claudia Walecka-Hutchison  
Steve Wilkowski

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## MEMORIALS

The following donors have made gifts to Little Forks Conservancy on behalf of friends and family.

### ***In Memory of Jerry Ziarno***

Ann Butzler  
Stan & Pat Lilley

### ***In Memory of Glenn Sanford***

John & Lois Palen  
Floyd Andrick  
Tom & Elsie Misner  
Carol Feider  
Charles & Judith Lubs  
Bernard Jozwiak  
John & Dena Hayden  
Oliver Juengel  
Gary & Michelle Suppes  
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