

ENHANCING OUR PARKS AND NATURAL LANDS

Vibrant parks and natural lands are essential to our economy and way of life in Michigan. Through the establishment of Michigan's park system and decades of conservation work, our state has become known as a destination to enjoy the outdoors.

Now it is up to our lawmakers to protect the natural resources we hold dear and use our natural lands to help foster a healthy relationship between our people and our planet:

PROTECTING OUR PARKS AND PUBLIC LANDS

Michigan's forests, lakes, and coastlines are not only known for their recreational and commercial value, but they also provide habitat for a wide range of wildlife. Protecting our parks and forested areas will enhance biodiversity at a time of international ecological collapse, improve and increase recreational opportunities, and bolster Michigan's thriving tourism industry.



THE UNITED STATES **LOSES A FOOTBALL FIELD OF NATURAL AREA** EVERY 30 SECONDS.

- Center for American Progress



MICHIGAN'S RECREATIONAL ECONOMY **EMPLOYS OVER 100,000 MICHIGANDERS.**

- Michigan Outdoor Industry Association



MICHIGAN'S STATE PARKS RECEIVE OVER **35 MILLION VISITORS ANNUALLY** (UP 30% SINCE 2019).

- Michigan DNR



MICHIGAN
LEAGUE OF
CONSERVATION
VOTERS

POLICIES TO PROTECT OUR STATE PARKS AND PUBLIC LANDS:



Robustly implement the global 30x30 initiative to conserve and restore 30% of Michigan's land and 30% of Michigan's water by 2030. MI and local governments should acquire lands in the lower peninsula to provide all Michiganders with 'nature nearby', sink carbon and improve community climate resilience.



Fully capitalize the State Parks Endowment Fund to unlock several stable funding streams for the acquisition and maintenance of DNR properties (including the MNRTF)



Designate more lands as natural, scenic, ecologically significant, or wilderness areas to improve existing protections

ENHANCING OUR WORKING AND DEVELOPED LANDS

Michigan's working and developed lands have an important role to play in our natural environment. Utilized properly, agricultural lands, wetlands, and suburban greenspaces provide critical ecosystem services, act as physical buffers against a host of environmental hazards, and help lessen the impacts of climate change.

AN ANNUAL INCREASE OF 0.4%
IN THE CARBON CONTENT OF
AGRICULTURAL SOILS CAN
**BOOST CORN AND WHEAT
PRODUCTION BY OVER 20%**
DURING THE NEXT 30 YEARS.

— United Nations

PLANTING TREES AND OTHER
NATIVE VEGETATION IN URBAN
AREAS **LOWERS AVERAGE
HEAT INDEXES BY UP TO 5
DEGREES** FAHRENHEIT.

— Environmental Protection Agency

INSTALLING GREEN
INFRASTRUCTURE CAN
**REDUCE THE NUMBER OF
FLOODED MANHOLES BY
15%** IN SUBURBAN AND URBAN
LANDSCAPES.

— Environmental Protection Agency

POLICIES TO IMPROVE OUR WORKING AND DEVELOPED LANDS:



Incentivize regenerative farming practices to increase crop yields, capture additional carbon from the atmosphere, and improve overall soil health and quality.



Incorporate green infrastructure in new MDOT projects, especially along heavily trafficked urban and suburban corridors.



Fund local tree planting initiatives, especially in dense urban centers that are more susceptible to the heat island effect.



Redesign Michigan's aggregate mining policy to include aggregate recycling standards and science-based, ecologically informed mining and land restoration practices.

