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## **NEW ACCESS SITE NEAR ALMA WILL PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR RECREATION ON PINE RIVER; JOINS NETWORK OF UNIVERSAL ACCESS SITES ACROSS REGION**

*A \$30,000 grant from the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network  
to support site development and installation of universally accessible canoe/kayak  
launch structure at North Luce road location*

A grant from the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) will support the site development, construction, and installation of a new universally accessible canoe/kayak launch along the Pine River in Gratiot County's Arcada Township, near Alma. This \$30,000 investment will support the development of the facility, which is a key site along the new Pine River Canoe Trail. This facility will be designed to Americans with Disability Act (ADA) standards, providing people of all levels of physical ability with the opportunity to access the Pine River. This facility joins others nearby including sites along the Chippewa and Tittabawassee Rivers that provide similar opportunities for river and natural area access. Additional universally accessible sites have been developed on the Cass River system using funding from Saginaw Bay WIN.



"Providing access to our rivers is one of the single, most important ways to encourage people to support their protection and conservation" said Michael Kelly, Director of The Conservation Fund's Great Lakes Office in Bay City. The Conservation Fund ([www.conservationfund.org](http://www.conservationfund.org)) administers the WIN program. "Many of our region's future economic opportunities are tied to the quality of our natural resources and our regional quality of life is enhanced immeasurably by allowing folks to access those resources", continued Kelly. "The great team of people and organizations working to support this effort along the Pine River made this a very interesting project to us, and we are pleased that we are able to provide this investment in its success".

A local land conservancy, the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy, provided the donation of the land for the development of this North Luce road site. "It isn't every day that a small conservancy is able to contribute in such a way to community recreational access and tourism, and we are proud of our association with the Friends of the Pine River and the work that this diverse group of people is doing for the people of Gratiot County, Said Stan Lilley, Executive Director of the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy.

"Gratiot County Parks and Recreation appreciates the opportunity to provide access to the Pine River, the universal access launch is an ideal way to reconnect residents to the river, we look forward to building this new park and many more access points along the Pine River Canoe Trail", said Pete Little, Director of Gratiot County Parks and Recreation. Gratiot County will own and maintain the site.

Eleven area foundations and corporations work together as a network to support WIN projects. This Foundation Network includes: 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, Cook Family Foundation and the C.S. Mott Foundation. These foundations and corporations contribute \$300,000 per year to support WIN projects. To date, WIN and its partners have provided more than \$4.5 million to support projects that help to identify the Saginaw Bay Watershed as a sustainable community. Funding is provided for projects that create opportunities to connect people, resources, organizations and programs. Priority is given to projects that are innovative, cross governmental boundaries, and attempt to balance the environment, economy, and the community. WIN grants have been matched by more than \$8.5 million in other funding.

More information about WIN, is available on its website at [www.saginawbaywin.org](http://www.saginawbaywin.org).