

# Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network

2013 ANNUAL REPORT



Dear Friends:

On behalf of our many partners, I am pleased to present to you the 2013 Annual Report of the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN).

The WIN program was created to inspire collaboration, create partnerships, develop new solutions to watershed issues, and provide a unique network of organizations that can work together to support sustainability in our region. WIN is the leading organization in this area supporting sustainability – that holistic focus on the environment, the economy, and our communities - and while we are best known for our grant programs, our reach is much broader. We create opportunities to invest in and broaden the dialogue among local organizations and communities to protect our environment, restore places that have been harmed, and develop new ideas that can address some of our most pressing watershed challenges.

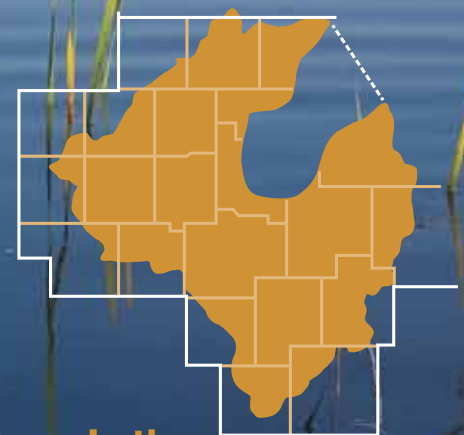
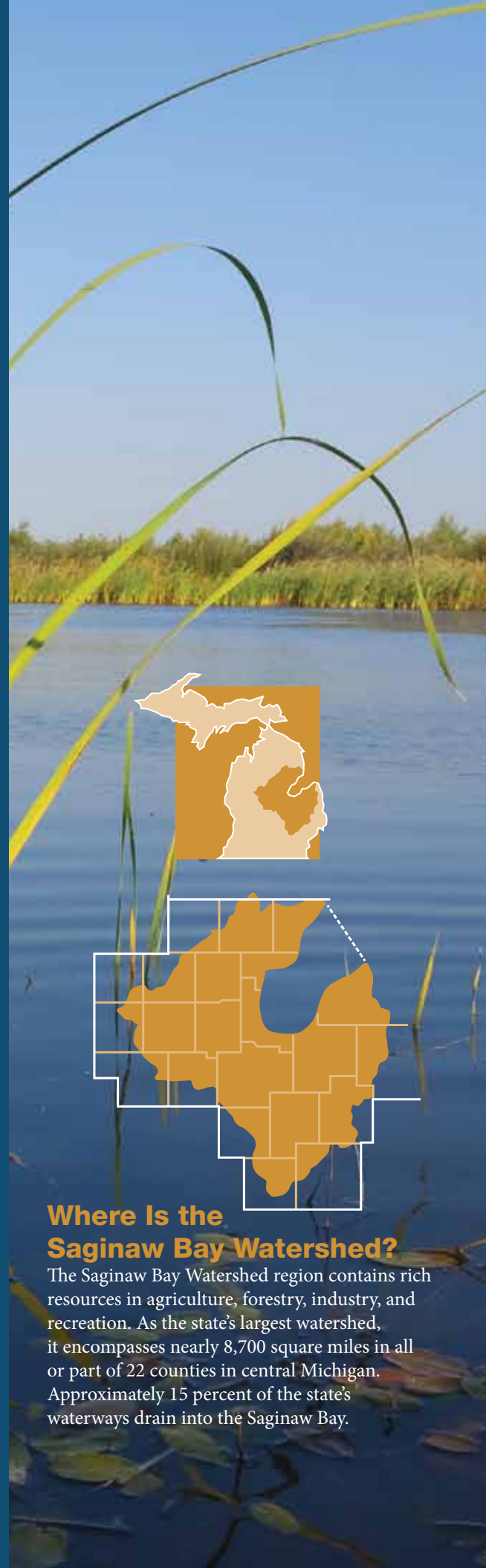
Thanks to a unique funding network made up of 12 partners, WIN has been able to invest more than \$4.5 million in about 250 projects across this region since 1998, leveraging an additional \$9 million. Last year alone, our investments totaled nearly \$300,000. While our focus on sustainability is targeted, our scope of projects is broad.

This year, WIN continued our focus on providing public access to our region's unique natural resources, supported non-motorized connections between our communities, invested in ecological restoration and fish passage, and even went to the ballpark – to support energy efficiency. You'll read about those projects and more, in this report.

The Conservation Fund is proud to administer this project, and on their behalf, I want to thank all of WIN's funders, partner organizations, volunteers, and all of those who support sustainability in our region. Thanks to all of them we can look back on another year of success at WIN, and look forward to new opportunities in 2014.



Michael Kelly  
The Conservation Fund



### **Where Is the Saginaw Bay Watershed?**

The Saginaw Bay Watershed region contains rich resources in agriculture, forestry, industry, and recreation. As the state's largest watershed, it encompasses nearly 8,700 square miles in all or part of 22 counties in central Michigan. Approximately 15 percent of the state's waterways drain into the Saginaw Bay.

## A Catalyst for Change

WIN grants are awarded to a variety of projects that on the surface may have little in common. Look a little deeper and an important similarity becomes clear: every project has the commitment of enthusiastic individuals, including citizens, experts, and members of private and governmental organizations. Whether it's a community eager to help with a non-motorized trail system or a nonprofit organization committed to meeting significant environmental goals, people empower and sustain every successful project.

Support early in a project is often an indication of commitment, which is why WIN sponsors and nurtures promising projects

in the early stages of development, sometimes before additional support becomes available. WIN is honored to be among the first champions for many projects it supports, acting as an early catalyst for change.

Grants awarded in 2013 focused on unique community-based projects that created opportunities for environmental, economic, and social growth throughout the Saginaw Bay watershed.

WIN was proud to support 17 projects, four of which are highlighted in the pages of this report. The complete list of projects and champions that received funding in 2013 is as follows:

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**Pine River Canoe Trail Universal Access Site – Gratiot County Parks**

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**Low Maintenance Greening Demonstration Project –  
The Genesee County Land Bank Authority**

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**Dow Diamond LED Light and Occupancy Sensor Additions –  
Michigan Baseball Foundation**

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**Phase II Shiatown Dam Removal: Parks and Habitat Planning and Restoration –  
Friends of the Shiawassee River**

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**Freeland M-47 Pathway / Kochville Trail – Tittabawassee Township**

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**Cass River Kayak Launch – City of Vassar**

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**Delta College Sustainability Center – Delta College**

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**Birch Run Trolley Line Trail North – Friends of the Trolley Line Trail**

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**Pump House Overlook at Midland's Emerson Park – City of Midland**

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### Saginaw Bay WIN Community Action Mini-Grants

The following are the Action Grants:

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**Augres-Sims School District – AGS Elementary Watershed Project**

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**DeVries Nature Conservancy – Community Garden Rain Harvesting**

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**Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy – Sand Point Nature Preserve Boardwalk**

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**Bay Sail - Appledore Tall Ships – Storm Drain Stenciling**

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**Leon Martuch Chapter Trout Unlimited – E-coli Sampling Cedar River**

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**Delta College Sustainability – Sustainability Survival Kits**

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**Village of Chesaning – Showboat Trail Project**

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**Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy – Saginaw Bay Birding Trail**

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### WIN Partners

A committed group of 12 foundations support the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) with financial contributions and technical support. They are:

Bay Area Community Foundation  
Consumers Energy Foundation  
Cook Family Foundation  
C.S. Mott Foundation

The Dow Chemical Company Foundation  
Harry A. and Margaret D. Towsley Foundation  
Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation  
Midland Area Community Foundation  
Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation  
Saginaw Bay Foundation  
S.C. Johnson Fund  
Saginaw Community Foundation



### WIN Vision

As stewards of the Saginaw Bay Watershed, we value our shared, unique resources, and together we will balance economic, environmental, and social priorities to enhance the quality of life for this and future generations.

### Guiding Principles

- Provide a pleasant and healthy environment
- Conserve historic, cultural, and natural resources
- Integrate economic prosperity, ecology, and aesthetics
- Use land and infrastructure effectively
- Continually evaluate and refine shared vision and goals



## Right in the Ballpark

### *Dow Diamond LED Light and Occupancy Sensor Additions*

Environmental stewardship and baseball may seem like an odd pairing. Yet, for the Michigan Baseball Foundation (MBF), a focus on sustainability for the Great Lakes Loons minor league baseball team and Dow Diamond ballpark has become a home field advantage.

In 2012, MBF, a nonprofit organization that owns the ballpark in Midland, Mich., teamed up with The Dow Chemical Company and Dow Corning Corporation to enhance its sustainability practices. Corporate expertise from these two world-class companies helped define priorities for the team and bring sustainability into a whole new light.

“We were challenged to look at our sustainability goals holistically in terms of core areas, or what we call our three P’s: the People and Prosperity of our communities and our Planet,” says Paul Barbeau, president and CEO, Michigan Baseball Foundation.

The result: an ambitious plan to reduce water use, waste, and energy needs in the ballpark by 50 percent by 2020.

Of the three, energy reduction is the toughest target to hit. But WIN’s support is the ace reliever that will help MBF get on the scoreboard.

#### Winning Stats for the Michigan Baseball Foundation

MBF’s sustainability roster has posted big improvements so far, with even better results expected for 2014.



Sustainability Players	2013	2012	Percent Improvement
Cardboard (baled)	21,000 lbs	24,778 lbs	15%
Trash	57.85 tons	82.6 tons	30%
Fuel (for lawn equipment)	1572 gal	2058 gal	24%
Recycled Materials	27,636 lbs	98.5 cubic yards	◆
Food (donated to Hidden Harvest)	961 lbs	297 lbs	220%
Compost	39,000 lbs	0	◆
Water Bottles (refilled)	4772 bottles	0	◆



## Bright Lights, Big Savings

A grant from WIN helped MBF replace large, kilowatt-hungry light bulbs with energy-efficient LED lights and fixtures. In addition, occupancy sensors were added to ensure that these lights are on only when people are present.

LED lights are the most innovative lighting solution currently available. Along with occupancy sensors, they are expected to save 44,538 kilowatt-hours of power and reduce energy use by 2.6 percent annually.

This adds up to an estimated yearly energy savings of more than \$5,000. There also will be savings for light replacement and labor as well, given the longer life of LEDs.

And this is only the beginning. Dow Diamond and the Loons have multi-faceted plans to make other sustainable improvements throughout the ballpark. (See table on page 4.)

“With WIN’s support we can be sustainability trendsetters,” Barbeau says “We hope that our example of simple improvements, like switching to LED lights, encourages other area businesses and our fans to make similar efforts to conserve resources and reduce costs. With more than 240,000 fans attending games at Dow Diamond each year, we have a wonderful platform for sharing the message of sustainability.”



*“The WIN grant allowed us to focus on our most difficult sustainability goal – energy use reduction – in an effective way. And in turn, we can demonstrate to our fans the big difference a simple change can make for the environment.”*

— Paul Barbeau,  
Michigan Baseball Foundation



### LOCAL CHAMPION:

Michigan Baseball Foundation

### PARTNERS:

Consumers Energy, The Dow Chemical Company, Dow Corning Corporation, Chippewa Nature Center, Midland Volunteers for Recycling, Three Rivers Corporation, Blasy Electric, JE Johnson, The Conservation Fund

### WIN GRANT AWARD:

\$33,680





# On Course for the Environment

## Delta College Sustainability Center

If walls could talk, those of a small cottage overlooking the Saginaw Bay would have interesting stories to tell. Given its history as a marina, bait shop, and sailing school, the house's colorful tales would focus on a deep connection to the water.

Now those old walls will have new life – and high-tech sustainability stories to share – as Delta College's new Sustainability Center.

### Lifelong Learning

The Sustainability Center, when completed, will be a lifelong learning lab for the community, as well as for its students. Built in the 1940s and donated to Delta College in the '70s, the cottage was in need of major renovations and remodeling was the first important step toward sustainability taken by the school.

Now in its second phase, the Sustainability Center recently benefitted from WIN financial support to help expand the project's educational vision far beyond updated walls.

### Living Lab

Once completed in 2014, the Delta Sustainability Center will have the technology needed to teach students about energy-efficient building design, construction, and equipment. Hands-on experience with the latest heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, and insulation solutions will give students a competitive advantage as they enter the workforce.

"The Sustainability Center also supports the growing need for alternative energy education," says Matt Eyre, associate professor, Alternative Energy and Wind

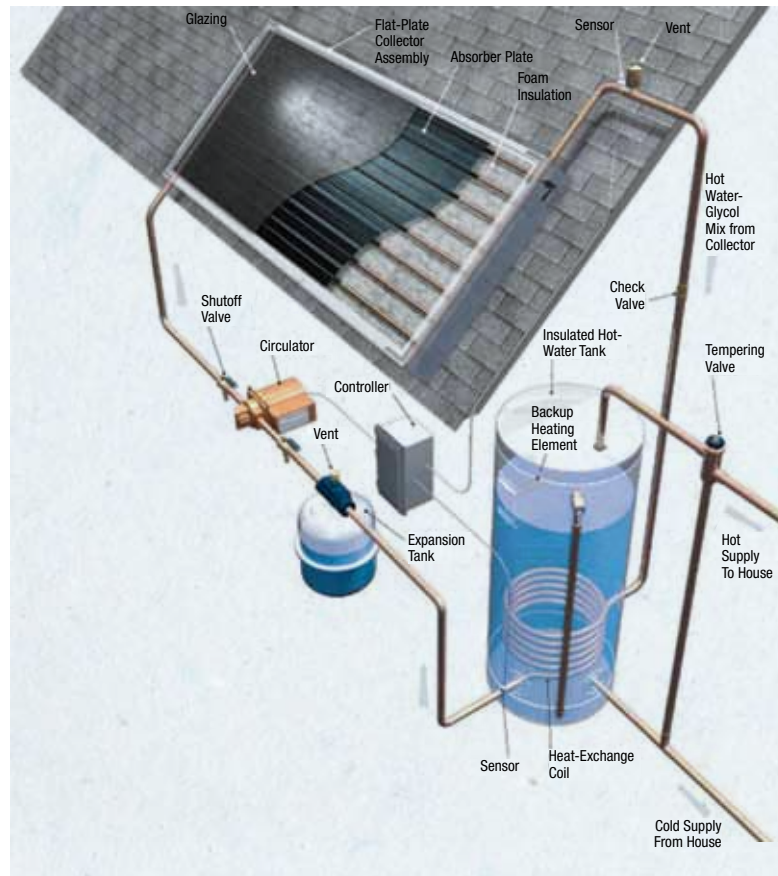
*"WIN was a huge part of the project's success. With WIN's help we broadened the horizons of the project so that more students from Delta and area K-12 schools, as well as adults, can learn more about energy efficient homes and environmental stewardship."*

— Dave Bledsoe,  
Delta College

### WIN Funding Process

WIN follows a unique, interactive process for awarding grants for projects and initiatives. Throughout the community-based review process, individuals from many organizations take part by reviewing project applications and offering their expertise on a variety of topics.

WIN awards funding twice each year; there are no grant deadlines. If you have a project to submit for consideration, contact WIN at (989) 892-9171 for an application.





Turbine Technology. “With the installation of a wind turbine, solar panels, and solar thermal water heating, our students will learn about the design and maintenance of practical alternative energy systems.”

Finally, its location at the mouth of the Saginaw River gives the Delta Sustainability Center a unique perspective for future upgrades. Its phase three focus will be on environmental education. Ongoing student research in areas such as water quality and invasive species – areas of special interest to WIN – will also have a home in the center.

“The Sustainability Center provides endless possibilities for a variety of on-going, student-driven lessons,” says Mike Finelli, chair of Delta’s Technical, Trades, and Manufacturing Division. “We’re really excited that this project is a long-term one that will involve many of our students from Delta’s construction, energy and environment related curricula.”

These improvements, says Dave Bledsoe, associate professor, Residential Construction, and Program Coordinator, will also feed curiosity from the community and Delta’s students, about sustainability.

“The public often asks us questions about energy-efficient construction, insulation, solar systems, and alternative energy,” he says. “The Sustainability Center will demonstrate realistic home renovation solutions that make sense both environmentally and economically.”



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**LOCAL CHAMPION:**

Delta College

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**PARTNERS:**

SVSU, Dow Building Solutions, Consumers Energy, J&R Trenching, Bond Recycled Equipment, Cobblestone Homes, Sequin Lumber Co., ProBuild, Philips Lighting

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**WIN GRANT AWARD:**

\$24,705

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*“WIN’s show of support for our project – through funding and communications – is immensely helpful, especially as we looked to other local sources for additional support. We appreciate WIN’s dedication to communities in the Great Lakes Bay Region.”*

— Emily Gennrich,  
Tittabawassee Township

# Community Connection

## *M-47-to-Kochville Pathway System*

Drive or walk? That’s not a question many people ask themselves these days. In fact, a recent U.S. Department of Transportation study concluded that most people choose their cars rather than their feet for short trips of three miles or less.

An extensive, three-county project by the Great Lakes Bay Regional Trail Alliance and supported by WIN could change that. The Alliance is in the process of implementing a multi-phase plan to connect Midland, Saginaw and Bay counties via a 100-plus mile system of trails that wind through the region. The focus of this grant, the M-47-to-Kochville Pathway System in Tittabawassee Township, offers a viable choice to walk (or run or bike or skate) rather than drive.

### **A Pathway of Initiative**

The 2.2 mile, non-motorized M-47-to-Kochville Pathway System in Freeland will follow M-47 within the road right-of-way, extending the existing sidewalk system from the city center to the Freeland SportsZone, a popular recreation facility. Several Freeland businesses, schools, and parks are located along the trail, which will offer a safe, auto-free commute.

“We are a growing community right in the middle of the Great Lakes Bay Regional Trail,” says Emily Gennrich, Tittabawassee Township Manager Assistant. “The Freeland M-47 Pathway is a much needed and wanted non-motorized way for our residents and visitors to travel. It will definitely add to our quality of life.”

In addition, Tittabawassee Township’s commitment to the Pathway includes a desire to preserve native wildlife habitat along the trail. WIN’s grant ensures the Freeland M-47 Pathway will include the construction of boardwalks over open

drains and streams rather than enclosures that would hinder the ability of local species to thrive.

The Freeland M-47 Pathway will also include the Freeland-Kochville Trail that connects the Freeland community to Kochville and Saginaw Townships and the existing trails of Saginaw County. Tittabawassee and Kochville Townships are working closely to accomplish this important trail connection.

“When completed, the Great Lakes Bay Regional Trail will be accessible to people of every age, ability, and interest. It will be inclusive and open to residents and visitors to the area,” says Heidi Bolger, chair, GBRT. “The trails symbolize the connection of our three counties, while promoting what is unique and interesting about each.”

### **Leaving a Trail of Benefits**

WIN’s support of the M-47-to-Kochville Pathway System will help Tittabawassee Township realize the many benefits trails offer:

- Safe non-motorized transportation
- More choices for commuting and recreating
- Accessible and affordable method of transportation and exercise
- High quality of life
- Healthier citizens
- Enhanced community aesthetic
- Fewer carbon emissions

“It is exciting to be part of a long-term project that is all about healthy fun. This is a project that is good for people and the environment, connects our communities, and gives residents a chance to experience the region in a way they can’t from inside their cars,” says Gennrich.







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**LOCAL CHAMPION:**  
Tittabawassee Township

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**PARTNERS:**  
Michigan Department of Transportation, Kochville Township, Saginaw Community Foundation, Great Lakes Bay Regional Trail, Tittabawassee Township Downtown Development Authority, Freeland Community Sports Association

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**WIN GRANT AWARD:**  
\$40,000

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*“WIN’s support was critical for us to move ahead with the project. WIN is funding the engineering assessment that will provide several viable alternatives so that stakeholders can choose the best long-term solution for the community and this precious natural resource. This will also provide a detailed plan for pursuing funding of Phase III, which is the final stream and habitat restoration and public recreation enhancements.”*

—Gary Burk,  
Friends of the Shiawassee River



## Current Changes for Shiawassee River

### *Phase II of the Shiatown Dam Removal*

In the late 1800s, rivers were a natural source of power for residents in our region. Dams were built to feed the demand for growth, powering mills and eventually generating hydroelectricity. Today, these same dams are dilapidated and failing; their reason for being long since obsolete.

One such structure is the Shiatown Dam, located on the Shiawassee River near Corunna, Michigan. The dam had been an important conduit for commerce, generating electricity from 1840 until the 1950s. By the end of those productive years, Shiawassee County found new, more efficient sources of energy and the Shiatown Dam, like many others of its kind, lost its usefulness and fell into disrepair.

In 1999, the dam reverted to ownership by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and later the Michigan Land Bank took over.

“The Michigan Land Bank cites lack of resources to repair and maintain the obsolete structure and concerns for public safety and liability as its primary reasons for pursuing dam removal,” says Gary Burk, Friends of the Shiawassee River Board Member overseeing the project. “Other stakeholders believe restoration of a natural river channel will result in a healthier aquatic and wildlife ecosystem and improved recreational opportunities.”

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is funding the removal of the Shiatown Dam and restoration activities for areas nearby. However, additional attention was needed to ensure the project’s long-term success.



### About the Saginaw Bay Watershed

- Home to more than 90 fish species, 138 endangered or threatened species, and 1.4 million people
- Includes more than 175 inland lakes
- Contains about 7,000 miles of rivers and streams
- Path for migrating song birds and waterfowl on the Mississippi Flyway
- Significant agricultural and industrial resources supporting Michigan’s economy



Series of photos taken during 2012 Shiawassee Town Dam drawdown.



Day 1



Day 2



Day 3



Final Day

## Reclaiming the Shiawassee River

That's where WIN comes in. WIN's support is helping reclaim the river by focusing upstream. The Friends of the Shiawassee River group is using a WIN grant to hire an ecological consulting contractor to design and oversee the restoration of the river's natural habitat and public access points above the dam's location.

By including critical areas upstream in the restoration project, the river channel will be stabilized, providing a natural buffer against runoff and enhancing the beauty, safety, and enjoyment of neighboring parks.

Removal of the Shiatown Dam benefits the region by eliminating safety risks, improving river function, stabilizing banks, increasing aquatic diversity and improving river aesthetics – all of which also enhance recreational opportunities such as shore fishing and small boat access and passage.

Completion of the Shiatown Dam project will be an outstanding example of successful dam removal and will chart the course for future river restoration efforts.

“We understand and appreciate the importance of free-flowing rivers better today than we did 150 years ago,” says Burk. “A natural river channel with wetlands connectivity creates a healthy ecosystem for fish and other wildlife. It is also a strong foundation for a recreation-friendly river that offers something for everyone ... whether walking, fishing, canoeing, or simply enjoying nature.”



July 2013

### LOCAL CHAMPION:

Friends of the Shiawassee River

### PARTNERS:

Michigan Land Bank, Michigan Department of Natural Resources; Michigan Department of Environmental Quality; Shiawassee County Board of Commissioners, Parks and Recreation, and Drain Commissioner; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

### WIN GRANT AWARD:

\$62,500





## Contact Us

For more information about WIN,  
visit [www.saginawbaywin.org](http://www.saginawbaywin.org) or contact:

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The Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network is facilitated through a partnership of The Dow Chemical Company Foundation, The Conservation Fund, and local and regional organizations dedicated to promoting the concepts of sustainability in the Saginaw Bay region.



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