

2022 - 2023


# ANNUAL REPORT

MICHIGAN TRAILS & GREENWAYS ALLIANCE



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A person wearing a blue jacket, black helmet, and sunglasses is riding a mountain bike through a snowy forest. They are smiling and looking forward. In the background, other riders are visible, including one in a bright yellow-green jacket. Snow is falling around them.

Michigan Trails & Greenways Alliance is the statewide voice for non-motorized trail users, helping people build, connect and promote trails for a healthier and more prosperous Michigan.



# MTGA CATALYST FUND

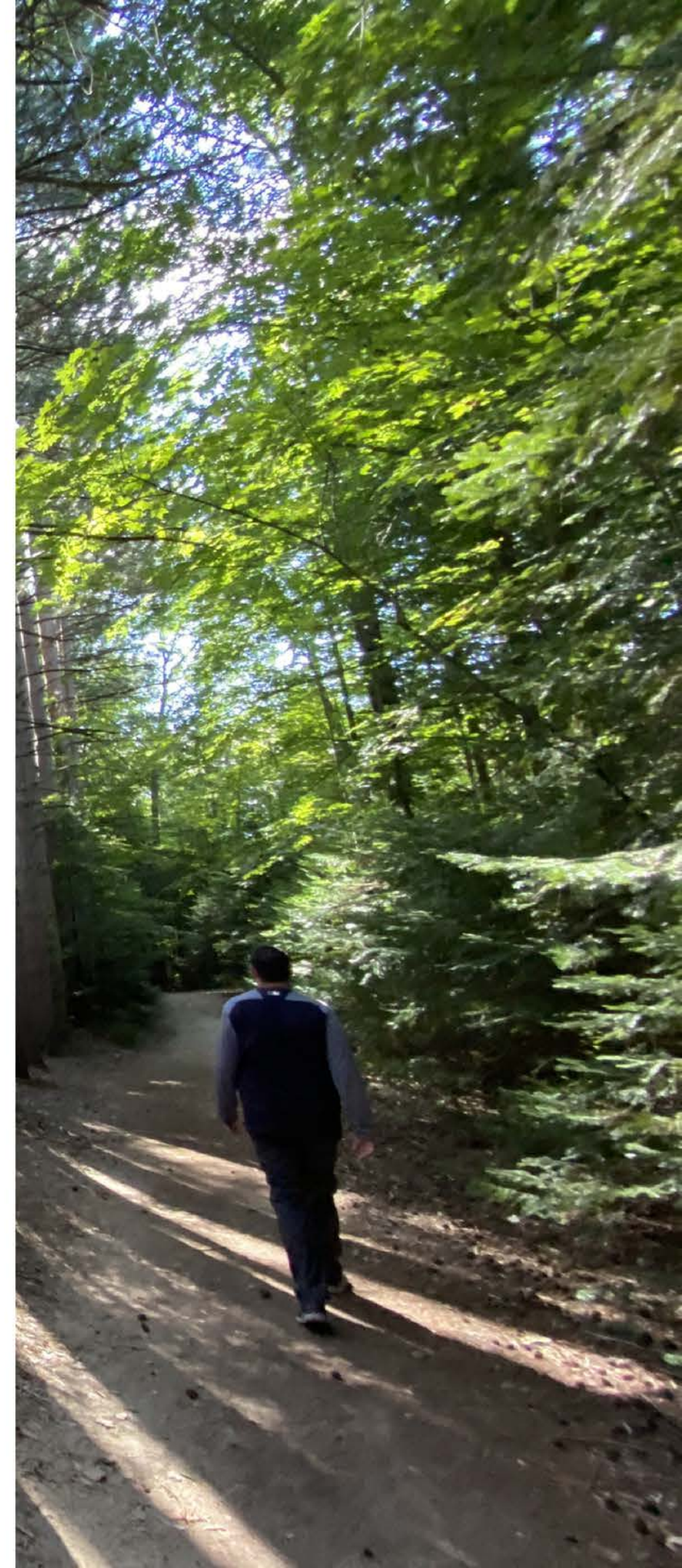


## SPURRING TRAIL COMPLETION

The MTGA Catalytic Fund was established last summer thanks to an anonymous donor's generosity. This commitment underscores the donor's dedication to transparency and accountability in supporting the infancy stages of trail projects.

The Fund emphasizes capacity building, providing much-needed support for organizations embarking on trail development or improvement efforts. It supports projects like feasibility analyses and preliminary studies, enabling organizations to identify potential challenges and opportunities in their trail initiatives.

This accomplishment signifies a pivotal investment in early-stage trail development, aiming to accelerate trail completion and provide crucial funding for local nonprofits and "Friends of the Trail" groups. Updates on the developments spurred by the Fund are slated for 2024.





# CATALYST FUND

## 2023 RECIPIENTS



### West Michigan Trails

Awarded \$2,500 to acquire planning services for creating a regional, nonmotorized master trail plan. The plan shall include existing trails, planned trails, improvements, connections, gaps, and an action plan.



### Lowertown Riverfront Conservancy

Awarded \$5,000 to develop and complete Broadway Park West's trail system design documentation. Once completed, the trail system will connect existing Border to Border and Treeline trails while providing a unique destination location with facilities, dining, and recreational activities.



### Muskegon County Bicycle Coalition

Awarded \$5,000 to undertake the Muskegon/Grand Haven Area Greenways Planning process to connect urban and suburban residents to these regional trails through low-stress active transportation routes. Resulting in a comprehensive plan with robust community engagement, identification of a complete network



### Chamber Alliance of Mason County

Awarded \$5,000 for trail segment analysis and prioritization for their Mason County Trails Development Plan. This process would serve as the first phase of their ultimate project: to create a multi-use trail system that will connect with regional trail systems.



# TRAIL ADVOCATES EXPLORE FUNDING SOLUTIONS

This summer, Michigan Trails & Greenways Alliance embarked on a trail tour alongside former Governor Rick Snyder, Michigan Department of Transportation Director Kirk Steudle, and Michigan Department of Natural Resources Director Keith Creagh.

This tour highlighted the Acme Connector, TART Trails, and Boardman Lake Loop, showcasing the tangible outcomes of trail investments made possible by Governor Snyder's vision for Michigan as The Trails State.

MTGA recognizes and expresses gratitude for Governor Snyder's dedication to trail development, acknowledging the importance of thanking those who perceive trails as valuable investments.

The tour not only showcased completed trails but also initiated discussions on long-term funding solutions to sustain and expand these vital networks. MTGA remains enthusiastic about continuing this trail legacy, collaborating with the current administration to enhance Michigan's trail systems further.





# SHAPING AN EV FUTURE

Michigan Trails & Greenways Alliance actively participates in the Ford Blue Table Forum, collaborating with various organizations to shape a zero-emissions transportation future in Michigan. This engagement focuses on electric vehicle (EV) advancements and essential infrastructure, fostering inclusivity, and addressing critical challenges.



For MTGA, this engagement is crucial as it aligns with our commitment to environmental sustainability. We closely track e-bike trends and monitor developments in the transportation sector, aiming to promote eco-friendly transportation options and equitable access to advancements.

Our involvement reflects our dedication to supporting environmentally friendly initiatives and shaping Michigan's more inclusive and sustainable transport system.



# PRIORITIZING TRAILS

Michigan Trails & Greenways Alliance engaged in advocacy efforts to secure funding for 34 shovel-ready projects, but despite the unsuccessful pursuit of appropriations, valuable insights were gained. Legislators continue to need to pay more attention to trails and recreational amenities, considering them elective rather than essential components of community well-being and economic development.

This perception deficit poses a challenge, necessitating a shift in mindset to recognize trails as crucial infrastructure for Michigan's identity and vitality. Moving forward, MTGA aims to reshape this narrative, emphasizing the necessity of investing in trails to improve Michigan's community health, vibrancy, and economic prosperity.

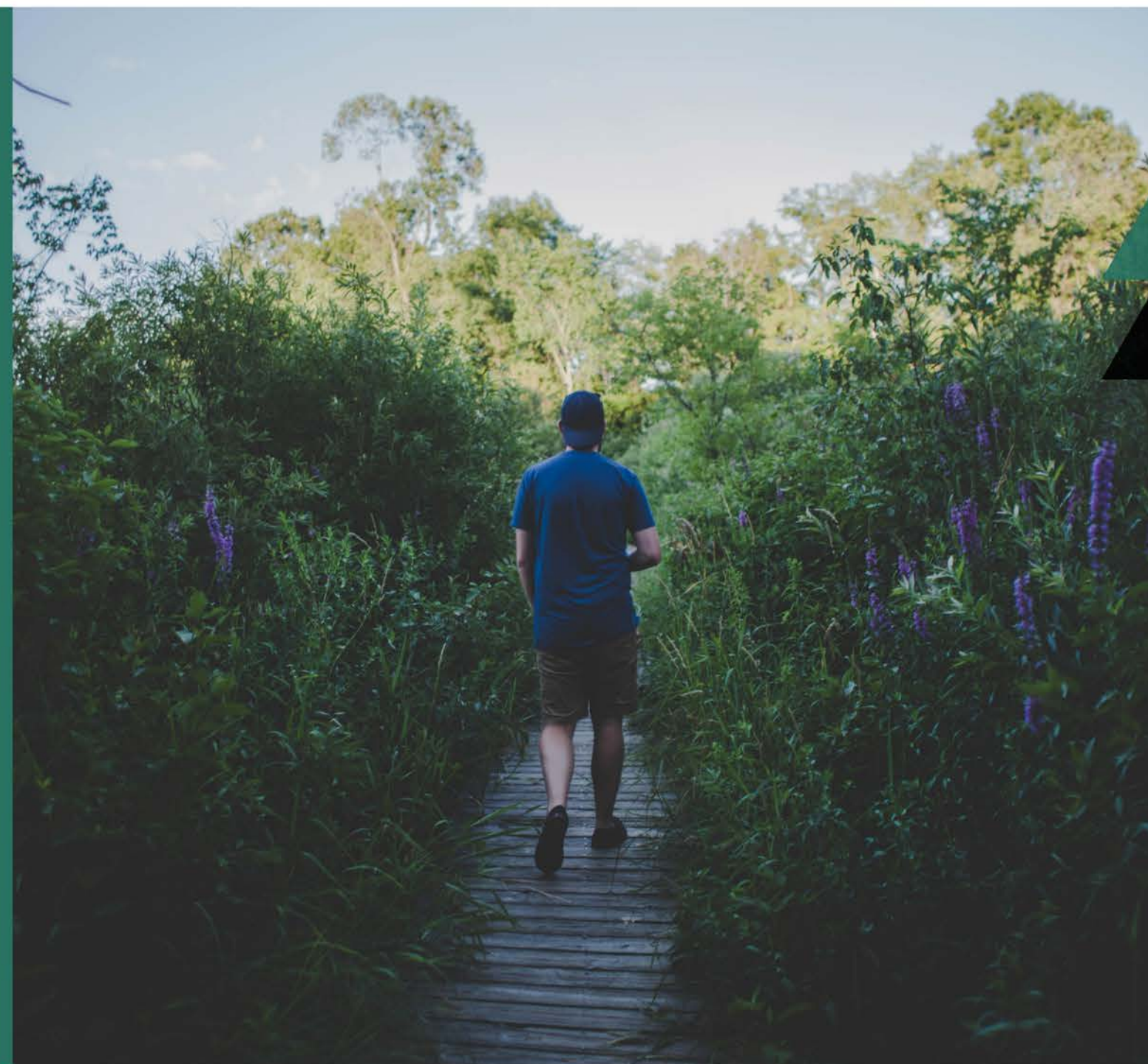


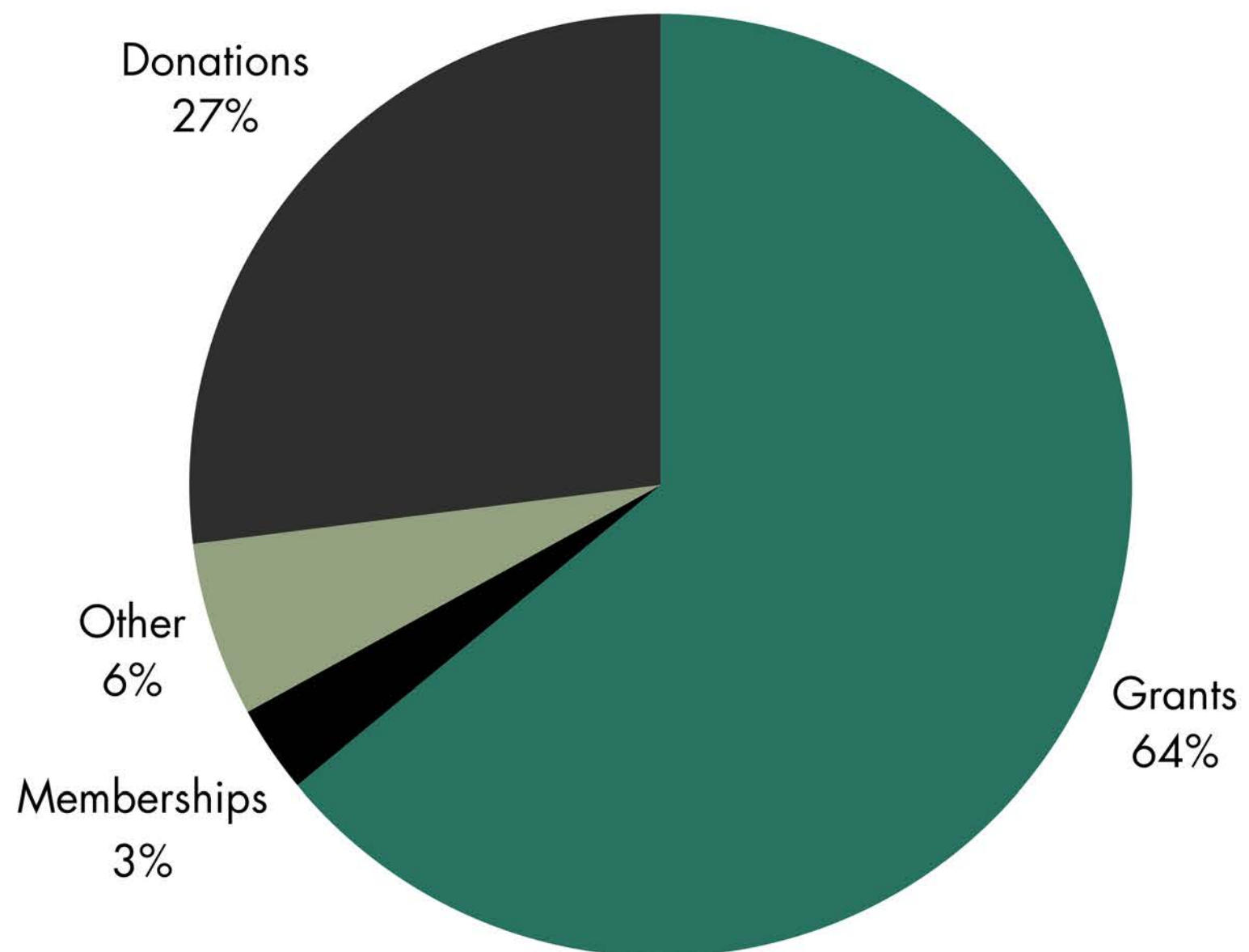


# DIVERSIFYING FUNDING

MTGA worked to revamp its platform, prioritizing member and community needs while diversifying funding sources. Efforts focused on expanding the funding portfolio by growing the membership base and cultivating relationships with private donors. This evolution aligned MTGA's goals with user aspirations, driving the active pursuit of broader financial support.

A notable milestone in 2023 was MTGA securing a \$51,060 grant from the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan. The grant significantly bolstered our capacity-building efforts, enabling expanded work in creating and maintaining trails that enhance community well-being and connectivity statewide. This support ensures communities have access to resources and expertise necessary for environmentally responsible and inclusive trail development, benefiting residents and visitors alike.





# FUNDING OUR EFFORTS

2023 Fiscal Year  
Oct 2022-Sept 2023

**Total Revenue: \$205,430**



# DONORS & MEMBERS

\* Indicates MTGA member

Gerald & Sharon Ambrose\*  
Josh Anderson  
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George Raimer\*  
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George Ritz  
Cheryl Robisch\*  
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Jim Siegel\*  
Jeffrey Smith\*  
Krista Soltis\*  
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Greg Southwell\*  
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Stantec Consulting Services\*  
Diane Steeh  
Jan Stegmann  
Amy Storm\*  
Jeffrey Super  
David Swanson\*  
Kim Tabor  
Katrina Tanner\*  
Robert Tarabula\*  
TART Trails\*  
Robert Teeter\*

Stella Thelen\*  
Stephanie Thompson\*  
Toni Thompson  
Joan Tintera\*  
Jennifer & Ati Tislerics  
Top of Michigan Trails Council\*  
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Larry Tripp\*  
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Michael Unsworth  
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Alan & Norma VanKerckhove\*  
Nancy Volpe  
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Donald Ward\*  
Washtenaw Bicycling & Walking Coalition\*  
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Joyce Weise\*  
Karen Wells\*  
Kathleen Whalen  
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John & Barbara Wilson\*  
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Barbara Winckler\*  
Justin Winslow  
Thomas Woiwode  
Lynn Woolsey  
Ron & Laurie Wurst  
Ellen & Thomas Yax\*  
Joan Zdan\*  
Angie Zill\*



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Elizabeth Iszler - Ann Arbor

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# STAFF

## Executive Director

Andrea LaFontaine

## Communications & Outreach Manager

Alyssa Walters



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Michigan Trails & Greenways Alliance works alongside hundreds of communities and trail users around the state, offering resources and support to build and connect trails. As a result of our work, projects were planned, grants were secured, and trails are being built.

When we create more miles of trail: people are healthier, access is easier, and we can go further together.

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