This past year has brought significant transitions for Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance as we embarked on new directions with our board, staff and financial administration. After many years of support from our affiliate the Michigan Fitness Foundation, we are proud to announce the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance has become an independent organization, now operating as a separate 501(c)3.

With new opportunities in advocacy; destination trail building; partnerships with mParks and Heart of the Lakes to help increase diversity and membership; co-hosting the biannual, eight-state Mid-America Trails and Greenways Conference and significant new grant and general fund opportunities, we are well on our way to new levels of achievement. We are particularly excited about the trail building opportunities in Southeast Michigan. Our annual meeting featured a public comment period on trail opportunities in this region. I encourage our members, supporters and all those who love trails in Michigan to read on to discover the exciting developments in the Trail State we have helped to cultivate.

Happy trails,

Bob Wilson, Executive Director

Long-Term Trails Funding
Collaborated with Governor Snyder and the conservation community to fashion and pass SJR O. This resolution was adopted by both the Senate and House and will appear on the November 2020 ballot to provide new levels of funding for trail development around the state. MTGA has led and is leading efforts to pass Recreation Passport “Opt Out”. This important package will almost triple the amount of funding for local recreation grants. We have helped to develop and guide this important bipartisan and bicameral package and have presented to both the House and Senate Natural Resources Committees on our organization’s priorities and activities.

Water Trails Promotion
Assisted in the implementation of the state’s first inland water trail program that has resulted in eight new water trail designations in the state with more to come soon.

Pure Michigan Trails Implementation
Helped develop and implement the state’s new Pure Michigan Trails designation process, pursuant to legislation from 2014. We participated in the review committee and co-presented at the first annual Pure Michigan Trails ceremony in South Haven.

White Pine and Water Trails Funding
Collaborated with former State Senator Judy Emmons to secure a $3 million appropriation for paving of the White Pine Trail. Recently worked with Jon Bumstead, Senate MDNR Budgets Chair, to develop amendments to the MDNR budget setting up a new grant program for water trails.

The Huron River is now a state water trail.
MTGA has completed the full transition to a new operating agreement with the Michigan Fitness Foundation as an independent 501(c)3. To better manage finances and operations, we have retained a new bookkeeper Dave Knechtges who has significant experience with nonprofit accounting. We continue to retain a full-year, part-time intern and our full-time Assistant Director Amanda Hathaway Frattarelli who has been instrumental in completing the new Great Lake-to-Lake Trails Route #1 website and Inaugural Ride.

New accounting procedures have been implemented and the finance committee has established a policy to help integrate a series of best financial practices.

Consultants
Andrea LaFontaine, former state representative and Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee is serving as our Great Lake-to-Lake Trails Ambassador and is funded by the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation. Terry Barnes, former national Sea to Sea Bicycle Tour Director, served as Ride Director of the Inaugural Great Lake-to-Lake Trails Route #1 Bicycle Tour.

Focus
The MTGA board of directors has identified state advocacy and destination trail building; local advocacy and trail assistance; self-sustaining events and local partnerships as areas of focus.

Board Development
Ann Conklin has taken over for previous chair Dennis Pace who served MTGA for 15 years, with Julie Clark stepping in as Vice Chair. MTGA said goodbye to long-term board members Steve Shults and Jim Dickie. We welcomed Jason Church as the new treasurer and new members Mindy Bradish-Orta, Julie Metty Bennett, Elizabeth Riggs, George Hayhoe and Jim Kelts. Changes implemented by the board include term limits, consent reporting, a new generative discussion time and creation of new finance, fundraising and strategic visioning committees.

Membership
After exhaustive research we have implemented a new membership program called Salesforce. We have also retained and are currently working with a well-recognized Salesforce consultant to maximize our use of this program. The old database has been fully vetted with the help of our partners at mParks, and staff are being trained to administer the program. This will lead to a more functional and effective outreach program for you!
**Grants and Gifts**

MTGA is connecting people and communities through trails with several ongoing grants and gifts.

**Mike Levine Great Lake-to-Lake Trails Route #1 - $160,000**
Provides funding for our work on Route #1 to include advocacy; planning and carrying out regional trail summits; developing and implementing the Great Lake-to-Lake Trails website; conducting an inaugural ride and promoting the trail.

**Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation - Capacity and Trail Building Grant, Great Lake-to-Lake Trail - $255,000**
Provides funding for a Great Lake-to-Lake Trails Ambassador, building a trail management council and helping to build trails in SE Michigan in conjunction with the new Southeast Michigan Trails Action Team, or SEMTAT.

**Mike Levine History Telling Grant - $100,000**
Provides funding to work with Dan Spegel and the Michigan History Center’s Heritage Trail Program to fund local history telling on trails. Provides scholarships to graduate students at Wayne State and Eastern Michigan University.

**REI - Southeast Michigan Regional Trail Maintenance Collaboration Grant - $15,000**
Provides funding for badly-needed trail maintenance in Macomb, Washtenaw, Oakland, Livingston and St. Clair Counties.

**The Mike Levine Connecting Communities Gift - $100,000**
Provides funds to support general fund activities of our organization.

**The Meijer Foundation Heritage Trail Grant - $50,000**
Provides funding to augment history telling scholarships for the Michigan Heritage Trail Program.

**Media Partnerships**
Partnered with Interlochen Public Radio, WKAR and WCMU Public Radio and TV, MLive.com and American Cycle and Fitness to help promote our mission. We crafted and distributed several new videos with MLive to promote the Great Lake-to-Lake Trails, the Michigander and MTGA, emphasizing our advocacy efforts at both the state and local levels. View the videos at michigantrails.org.

**Detroit Bike To Work Day**
Partnered with Sen. Bullock and Todd Scott, Executive Director of Detroit Greenways, to help organize and sponsor the Detroit Bike to Work Day on May 17.

**Michigan Mountain Biking Day**
Partnered with Rep. Cambencey to create the first Michigan Mountain Biking Day on June 22.

**Michigan Trails Advisory Council**
Executive Director Bob Wilson was appointed by Gov. Whitmer to the MTAC to represent all nonmotorized trail users. He has advanced trails funding, destination trail building and user rights during his tenure.

**Trail Awards**
Partnered with Rep. Brixie, Rep. Coleman, Sen. McCann and trail managers across the state to host our second Annual Trail Awards in the Capitol which now includes all trail user groups.

**Legislative Hike & Kayak Outings**
Partnered with Rep. Albert and Sen. Brinks to host the first annual Legislative Hike on the North Country Trail with the NCTA on June 7. MTGA also partnered with Sen. Lauwers and Lori Eschenburg of Blueways of St. Clair to organize our 3rd Annual Legislative Kayak Outing and the first-ever Michigan Water Trails Day.

**Mid-America Trails & Greenways Conference**
Partnered with mParks and West Michigan Trails & Greenways Coalition to secure host status of the 2020 Biannual Conference in Grand Rapids from 8/30-9/2.
MTGA concentrated work efforts upon developing relationships of trust with area trail managers, businesses, local public officials and residents to complete Route #1. We have successfully organized and managed a series of six summits from one end of the trail to the next and have begun to lay the foundation for effective long-term management of the trail. Our work included a series of gap analyses for the trail, hosting a trails manager workshop on gap analysis, discussing and developing a professional signage plan, listening and learning from local trail managers about their needs and developing an exciting new website that provides information for trail users and trail managers alike. Over 50 riders participated in an Inaugural Ride Sept. 13-18.

Routes #2 and #3
We are also developing a confidence signage plan with the Top of Michigan Trails Council and the MDNR for Route #3 and have explored ways to finalize the few remaining gaps in Route #2.

Routes #4 and #5
The MTGA team met with U.P. trail managers to look at ways to complete routes #4 and #5. There are opportunities to develop both trails working in concert with the MDNR, local trail managers and members of the motorized and nonmotorized community.

The Michigander
MTGA hosted our 28th Annual Michigander Bicycle Tour in Tawas City, Lupton, Higgins Lake, Cadillac and Evart areas utilizing key connections with the Iron Belle Trail and the Iosco Exploration Trail, while celebrating the 100th anniversary of our Michigan State Park System with 300 cyclists on the Sunrise Side.