



News Release

The Little Forks Conservancy
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Little Forks Receives Great Lakes Commission Grant

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The Little Forks Conservancy of Midland, Michigan, has received a grant for \$37,000 from the Great Lakes Commission under the Great Lakes Basin Program for Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control.

The grant will be used to repair a degraded waterway, the L and B Drain, on the Conservancy's Averill Preserve. The L and B Drain was originally a subsurface tile that flowed directly into the Tittabawassee River. The tile was insufficiently sized to handle the increase in water flow that has occurred as the surrounding area continues to be developed from rural to urban. This has resulted in broken tile with water now flowing on the surface causing erosion.

The project will restore the eroded banks with an open stream channel that flows into a wetland before discharging into the Tittabawassee River. The eroded banks downstream of the wetland will be repaired to stabilize the banks and minimize erosion into the river.

"The traditional repair would simply involve replacing the damaged tile, burying it, and creating an outfall at the river's edge. But this could have removed a substantial source of water for the new emerging wetland within the drain boundaries," said Douglas Koop, executive director of The Little Forks Conservancy. "Our desire is to slow the velocity of the runoff and let natural processes cleanse the water, to create additional wetland habitat and to provide a healthy example of a drain system that works with the land to improve water quality."

Additional funding for this project has been provided from the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network. The Midland Area Community Foundation funded the initial preliminary designs of the project and survey of the area.

The Great Lakes Commission is a partnership between eight Great Lakes states and the provinces of Ontario and Québec dedicated to the use, management and protection of the water, land and other natural resources of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system.

The Little Forks Conservancy permanently protects land with natural and cultural resources that add to the quality of life in our community. The Conservancy has helped private landowners protect over 1,280 acres in mid-Michigan, including more than six miles of river shoreline.

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