

**Saginaw Bay Coastal Initiative  
State of Michigan  
Current Activities in the Saginaw Bay Coastal Area  
August 31, 2006**

The following are projects or programs currently taking place or planned for the Saginaw Bay coastal counties (Arenac, Bay, Saginaw, Tuscola and Huron):

**Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)**

**State Revolving Fund/Drinking Water Revolving Fund Loans** - The DEQ has awarded over \$181,825,000 in loans for water and wastewater treatment facility upgrades. Communities receiving loans were the cities of Bay City, Essexville, Saginaw, Frankenmuth, Caro, and Elkton, Carrolton Township, Monitor Township, and Buena Vista Township,

**Public Access and Historic Restoration** - The DEQ has awarded the following grants:

- Huron County (\$10,000) - Renovation of historic light keeper's residence at Pointe Aux Barques, roof and chimney repair.
- Tawas Point State Park (\$9,000) - Tawas Point Light exterior and interior renovations.
- City of Alpena (\$20,000) - Waterfront planning grant to link parks.
- Bay Sail, Inc. (\$27,000) - Site design for Bay Sail Environmental Education Center in Essexville.
- Western Michigan University (\$24,000) - Development of a blueway (water trail, kayak and canoe access) heritage trail in Huron and Tuscola Counties.
- Hampton Township (\$50,000) - Jones Road/Finn Road trailway, Phase I.

**Habitat Protection** - The DEQ has awarded the following habitat protection grants:

- The Conservation Fund (\$20,000) - Outreach campaign to publicize the work of land conservancies in the Lake Huron Basin, and advertise the financial benefits of conservation easements to property owners, accountants, attorneys, and financial planners.
- Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) - Michigan State University (MSU) (\$35,000 per year, Phases 1-3) - Inventory of critical nesting habitat for wetland birds along Lake Huron and the Straights of Mackinac.
- MNFI-MSU - Conservation value maps for Cheboygan, Presque Isle, Alpena and Emmet Counties.
- From 2002-2005, provided Section 309 Coastal Zone Management funding to MSU (Dr. Tom Burton), Grand Valley State University (Dr. Don Uzarski) and MNFI (Denny Albert) to characterize and assess coastal wetlands (environmental areas) along Saginaw Bay. This research provided the foundation for, and transitioned into, our Great Lakes Coastal Restoration (GLCR) grant to these same researchers to look at the effects of fragmentation (beach grooming) on the biodiversity of these same coastal wetlands. The last year of that research was funded as a subgrant by the DEQ, Land and Water Management Division, under the GLCR grant that we provided directly to them.

**State Funded Cleanup Initiatives** – Since the early 1990s, the DEQ has overseen the expenditure of millions of dollars statewide for the purpose of achieving needed environmental and brownfield redevelopment objectives. During the past 15 years, over \$15,000,000 has been specifically directed to Saginaw Bay coastal communities to fund nearly 100 environmental cleanup initiatives within Arenac, Bay, Huron, Saginaw, and Tuscola Counties.

**Environmental and Watershed Planning** - The DEQ has awarded the following grants:

- AuGres Township (\$25,000) - Master plan, zoning ordinance, and sewer and water feasibility study seeking alternatives to septic systems.

- Baldwin Township (\$20,500) - Master plan and zoning ordinance update - natural features inventory.
- Lake Township (\$5,000) - Zoning ordinance for waterfront district to get handle on development of large homes, septic systems, etc. Collaborative project with MSU Sea Grant and possibly MSU Landscape on small town design standards.

**Coastal Hazards** - The DEQ has awarded the following grant:

- University of Michigan (\$46,000) - Study of Tawas Point for cumulative impacts and recurve spit dynamics.

**Brownfield Redevelopment** – The DEQ has awarded the following Brownfield Redevelopment grants:

- City of Saginaw - \$50,000 grant for due care costs at the former Aubrey Cleaners. This project is in Saginaw's Cool Cities neighborhood and received a Cool Cities grant to help with other redevelopment costs.
- City of Bay City - \$1,477,750 grant for due care activities at a riverfront site that is now the home of the Doubletree Hotel and Conference Center. The property was formerly a car dealership and motel.
- Saginaw County - \$208,995 loan for due care activities at a former grain elevator in Hemlock. The property is being redeveloped as a residential neighborhood.
- Saginaw County - \$230,000 loan for demolition of a grain elevator in Merrill and due care activities to enable site reuse for offices and warehousing.
- Saginaw County - \$60,775 grant for due care at SBS Products in Saginaw, a former soap manufacturer, to allow reuse for other light manufacturing.
- City of Saginaw - \$222,000 for due care activities at property formerly occupied by a tuberculosis hospital. The site was reused by an adjacent nursing home for its expansion.
- City of Saginaw - loan of \$50,000 for due care at sites evaluated with the assessment funds above.
- Rifkin Metal - grant request (not yet awarded) for \$1,000,000 to assist in the relocation of an existing scrap metal facility, Rifkin Metal, from its current waterfront location to the site of a former scrap metal facility, Ferro-Met, in the City of Saginaw. The grant will be used to perform demolition of existing buildings, removal and disposal of large piles of PCB contaminated soil, and due care activities associated with the redevelopment. With the relocation of Rifkin Metal, this project will create green space along the Saginaw River. This project will retain 35 jobs and will create approximately 5 additional jobs and will bring in approximately \$8 million in private investment to the community.
- Port Hope - loan requested (not yet awarded) for \$750,000 to redevelop 9 parcels in the village of Port Hope. The planned redevelopment incorporates lakeside condominiums along with a retail/commercial area. Due to liability concerns this project is being recommended as a \$750,000 Clean Michigan Initiative (CMI) Brownfield Loan. The loan monies will be used to perform investigations, baseline environmental assessments, demolition, and due care activities associated with the redevelopment. This project will bring in approximately 25 jobs and \$19 million in private investment to a community of 301 people.

**Site Assessment** - The DEQ has awarded the following Site Assessment grants:

- City of Saginaw – grants of \$201,538 and \$200,000, for site assessments at properties proposed for redevelopment and pay for new developers' baseline environmental assessment and due care planning costs. To date, the grants have helped redevelop 24 properties in downtown Saginaw.

**Waterfront Redevelopment** - The DEQ has awarded the following waterfront redevelopment grants:

- City of Bay City - \$150,000 grant for Waterfall Park, construction of a paved area, waterfall, and pier to access the Saginaw River in downtown Bay City. The grant area is within Bay City's Cool Cities neighborhood.

- City of Saginaw – \$980,000 for property acquisition for the Michigan Cardio-Vascular Institute, a heart center located across from St. Mary's Medical Center on the Saginaw River. The project includes a public walkway along the riverfront.
- City of Bay City - \$3,063,000 for infrastructure needed to relocate an industrial business from the downtown Bay City waterfront to another waterfront location in a more industrial area, so the downtown site could be developed for a more appropriate use.
- Huron County - \$70,000 grant for restoration of the Pointe aux Barques lighthouse near Port Austin.

**Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Grants** - Since 2004, more than \$400,000 in CZM grants have been awarded for projects that directly benefit Saginaw Bay communities. These projects increase public access and recreational opportunities, restore historical sites, and improve management and protection of coastal lands and waters. In Bay County, CZM grants have made a number of projects possible over the past several years, for example:

- Bay County, new and updated land use layers for county GIS (\$8,000)
- Bay City, Veteran's Memorial Park, boat launch ramp and handicapped-accessible floating dock (\$30,500)
- Hampton Township, multiple phases of waterfront park and trailway projects (\$60,000 since 2002, additional funds prior to that year)
- City of Essexville, waterfront and park redevelopment planning (\$31,500)
- Bay Area Community Foundation, Saginaw Bay watershed natural history and social studies K-12 curriculum (\$42,000)
- DEQ, Office of Geological Survey, GIS mapping of Bay County abandoned mineral wells (\$30,000)

**Small Business Pollution Prevention Loans** - The DEQ has awarded Small Business Pollution Prevention Loans to Easy Laundry, Jacobs Cleaning Village, Country Club Cleaners and TBF Graphics (loan pending).

**Water Quality Monitoring** - The DEQ is responsible for monitoring, assessing, and managing the state's surface water and groundwater resources for their use and enjoyment by current and future generations of Michigan citizens and others who choose to visit Michigan.

- Saginaw River - Intensive monitoring of the Saginaw River is conducted each year at the mouth of the river. This location is sampled 12 times per year on a flow-stratified schedule beginning with the first significant snowmelt or spring rain event and continuing through November. Twenty-one various nutrients, physical characteristics and conventional pollutants are measured at this location during each sampling event. Samples from the Saginaw River are also collected and analyzed for mercury, PCB, trace metals (Cd, Cr, Cu, Pb, Ni, Zn), methyl-tert-butyl ether, benzene, toluene, ethyl benzene, and xylene. This analytical information is then used to calculate loading rates for the Saginaw River. Further information regarding this monitoring effort can be located in DEQ report number MI/DEQ/WB-06/045.
- Saginaw Bay - The DEQ contracts with a consulting firm to do fixed station monitoring in Saginaw Bay along with other locations throughout the state. Monitoring is conducted at seven locations in Saginaw Bay primarily, to assess temporal water quality trends at sites of particular interest.
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) - Michigan's CREP was created to reduce sediment, phosphorus, and nitrogen loading to the Saginaw Bay watershed. The CREP establishes financial incentives for landowners to install filter strips, riparian buffers, windbreaks, permanent vegetative cover on erosion-prone cropland near streams and exclusionary fencing for livestock, and restore wetlands and create shallow water areas for wildlife. Currently, CREP practices have been primarily implemented in the Saginaw Bay watershed, with 37,854 acres. The DEQ, Water Bureau,

Surface Water Assessment Section is currently working with a contractor to model the runoff at 10 CREP implementation sites to determine the quantity of sediment, phosphorus and nitrogen that is controlled or prevented from running off into surface water by the CREP practices. The DEQ is also managing a Clean Michigan Initiative (CMI) grant to develop a computer system that will eventually record the exact location of all CREP practices in a geographic information system that is coupled with the drainage network.

- Fish Monitoring Program - The DEQ monitoring program collects and summarizes data to provide the public with information about the suitability for eating fish and swimming at beaches. Once every five years, fish are collected from selected water bodies (generally, though not always, consistent with the 5-year rotating basin schedule) and analyzed for a variety of bioaccumulative contaminants, including PCBs, mercury, DDT, and dioxins/furans. The results are used by the Department of Community Health as the basis for setting fish consumption advisories. Fish have been collected for this purpose from Saginaw Bay and the Saginaw Bay watershed periodically, once every 3 to 4 years.

The DEQ, Water Bureau uses caged fish to identify sources of bioaccumulative contaminants and identify spatial trends in contaminant concentrations. An intensive caged fish study was conducted in the Saginaw River watershed in 2002 with results from that study presented in the Fish Contaminant Monitoring Program (FCMP) 2004 Annual Report. Cages were set in the Pine, Chippewa, Tittabawassee, Shiawassee, Flint, Cass, and Saginaw Rivers. An intensive caged-fish study was conducted in the Flint River watershed in 2003, and results will be presented in the FCMP 2005 Annual Report (in draft). Most recently, an intensive caged-fish study was conducted in the lower Saginaw River in 2005 to better evaluate the sediment remediation completed in 2001. Results of that study are expected to be included in the FCMP 2006 Annual Report.

- Beach Monitoring - Local health departments, using federal, CMI, and/or local funds, collect samples each year to assess bacteria levels at Saginaw Bay beaches. The data are used to determine whether beaches should be closed due to high *E. coli* levels, and all results are posted on the DEQ's beach web site.

**Area of Concern (AOC)** - The Saginaw River/Bay is considered one of 43 AOCs, or one of the most seriously polluted areas in the Great Lakes region. The Saginaw River/Bay AOC has 12 Beneficial Use Impairments (BUIs) listed, as determined under the Annex 2 of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Of the listed BUIs, the DEQ AOC staff is currently working closely with the Partnership for the Saginaw Bay Watershed (the recognized Public Advisory Council for the AOC) and other stakeholders to evaluate the status of the restrictions on drinking water and tainting of fish and wildlife flavor BUIs to determine whether or not these impairments have been restored and may be ready for removal in the near future.

**Municipal Stormwater Watershed Permits** - DEQ district staff are currently working with Bay and Saginaw Counties, Bay City and the City of Saginaw, and associated townships to implement stormwater control programs along the Saginaw and Kawkawlin Rivers through their storm water Phase II Permits. The DEQ grants have been awarded to the storm water authorities in Saginaw and Bay Counties to identify and correct illicit discharges to their storm sewer systems.

**Watershed Project** - DEQ district staff are overseeing DEQ funded watershed projects on the Pinnebog River (Huron County), Sebewaing River (Huron County), Coldwater River (Isabella County), Cedar River (Gladwin County), and Sturgeon Creek (Midland County). These projects involve the identification of pollution sources, development of a watershed management plan, and implementation of corrective measures.

**Sanitary Surveys** - Sanitary surveys are completed by DEQ district staff to detect and/or confirm the discharge of raw or inadequately treated sewage from on-site septic systems in a community to waters of

the state. These community-wide surveys are conducted in conjunction with the local health department sanitarians. Since 1990, 14 sanitary surveys have been conducted in the Saginaw Bay District.

**Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs)** - All municipalities along the Saginaw River are evaluating their treatment of CSOs to determine if they are meeting the design standards established in their National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permits.

**Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)** - DEQ district staff are actively inspecting large CAFOs, and responding to complaints on small to medium size CAFOs. Enforcement actions are taken when necessary. It has been the experience in this district that the small to medium sized animal feeding operations are experiencing more environmental problems than the large CAFOs.

**Air Quality Management** - The DEQ is responsible for monitoring, assessing, and managing the state's air resources.

- As part of a state and national network, the DEQ monitors ozone (a smog pollutant) in Harbor Beach and particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) in Bay City. Data from these monitors contribute to hourly updates of real-time air quality reports and to forecast projections for the Saginaw region on the internet. These reports and forecasts serve as aids for the public to tell how polluted the air may be and what associated health effects may be a concern. Through subscription to EnviroFlash, one may receive these forecasts automatically, along with ozone "Action!" day notices, by e-mail or mobile text message.
- Huron County is currently designated as an ozone nonattainment area. The DEQ has submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) a request for changing that designation to attainment due to improved air quality. After EPA approval, requirements for obtaining an air permit for new, large industrial sources, and modifications to existing sources will be eased. Federal requirements for transportation plans to conform to air quality goals will remain.
- The DEQ conducts routine complaint investigations and inspections of various stationary sources of air pollution to assure compliance with emission regulations and federal air quality standards. Follow-up actions which contribute to mitigating visible emissions, blowing dust, and odors enhance local quality of life.
- The DEQ, together with the Michigan Mercury Rules Workgroup, is developing rules to reduce mercury emissions from Michigan's coal fired electric utilities by 90 percent by 2015.

**Scrap Tire Cleanup Grants** - Over the past decade, the DEQ has awarded over \$500,000 in grants for scrap tire pile removal and disposal in the Saginaw Bay coastal counties. This fund is financed through the Secretary of State vehicle title transfer fees. Land owners remove the scrap tires and properly disposed of them. Often the tires are used for tire derived fuel at electrical power generating plants, or recycled for other beneficial uses of tire rubber material. Scrap tire pile removal from private and public lands benefits the local areas by eliminating potential threats of tire pile fires, disease transmission by mosquitoes, and other threats to the environment and water quality. Cleanup also reduces blight and impairment of land and neighborhood values and uses. The communities receiving grants through FY06 included: Arenac County (3 projects, \$309,700), Bay County (4 projects, \$69,065), Huron County (2 projects, \$109,525), and Tuscola County (3 projects, \$59,775).

### **Department of Natural Resources (DNR)**

**Andersen Nature Trail Extension** - The Andersen Nature Trail Extension is under construction, and will connect the Bay City State Recreation Area to the Bangor Township and Bay City rail trail system.

This project is funded with approximately \$140,000 in recreation improvement fund grant monies and a \$10,000 grant from the Andersen Foundation. It includes a paved trail head parking lot where the trail extension connects to the Bangor Township Trail. Project completion is anticipated by mid-September 2006, with a kickoff special event to follow.

**Boating Access** - The DNR boating access site at the mouth of the Saginaw River underwent expansion of the ramp area and dredging in the spring of 2006. This site, with capacity for 100 trailers, is one of the most important sites on the Saginaw River due to its close proximity to Saginaw Bay. It has filled to capacity numerous times this summer, even on weekdays. The DNR is exploring possibilities for the purchase of additional property to further enlarge the parking area.

**Saginaw Bay Walleye Recovery Plan** - Consistent with international fishery objectives for Lake Huron, the DNR seeks to restore walleye, the keystone predator of Saginaw Bay, to historic levels of abundance. To achieve this goal, we need to achieve a better predator/prey balance; to work with stakeholders and partner agencies to rehabilitate nearshore reefs and reduce sediment delivery to the Bay; and to provide fish passage or pursue dam removal where appropriate. These efforts will result in a more resilient fish community that includes native species such as yellow perch, northern pike, and sturgeon, and a more valuable sport fishery.

**Phragmites Control at State Game and Wildlife Areas** – The DNR, Wildlife Division is planning to treat approximately 28 acres of dense non-native and invasive Phragmites stands at the Nayanquing Point State Wildlife Area this year. The acreage to be treated lies within the diked emergent wetlands of the area. Aerial application by helicopter will be used to treat the Phragmites stands with an aquatic herbicide. The herbicide application will be followed by a prescribed burn next winter. In 2005, approximately 70 acres were treated at Fish Point and Quanicassee State Wildlife Areas. These locations are also scheduled for prescribed burns to continue control of Phragmites, which out-competes beneficial native wetland vegetation. Additional areas are being identified and prioritized to continue Phragmites control at the State-owned wetlands around the Bay.

**Phragmites Control at Bay City State Recreation Area** - The DEQ permit issued to the DNR in 2005 allowed for expansion of the beach area at Bay City State Recreation Area. As a condition of that permit, the DNR is required to reduce Phragmites to less than 15 percent cover by 2009. Roughly 43 acres have been treated by herbicide and prescribed burning to date, with encouraging results. Control efforts will continue this fall (2006).

**Invasive Species Survey and Control Plans for State Game Areas** - Exotic invasive species are recognized nationally as a serious threat to native ecosystems. If left undiscovered and untreated there is potential for widespread "simplification" of ecosystems on a regional scale, resulting in loss of wildlife habitat and native biodiversity. Control is most economically and efficiently done before these species become widespread. To date, however, there has been little systematic work on the distribution and extent of exotic invasive plant species in state-owned wetland areas around the Bay. The objective of this project is to research and prepare invasive species control plans for these state-owned wetland areas. The goal is a comprehensive invasive species control plan that identifies the major invasive species threatening the area's natural communities, analyzes available control techniques, and provides an integrated approach for the long-term control or eradication of the target species. The Shiawassee River and Crow Island State Game Areas will be the first areas targeted. Many of the natural communities are relatively intact, but increasingly threatened by a number of invasive species. The Michigan Natural Features Inventory will also participate in this effort.

**Warm Season Grassland Restorations at State Game and Wetland Areas** - Through the Saginaw Bay to Lake Erie Coastal North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant, several warm season grassland restorations are planned throughout the Saginaw Bay area. Sites planted or in the planning phase are located at the Fish Point and Quanicassee State Wildlife Areas, Shiawassee River State Game

Area, and several game areas throughout the Thumb. In total, approximately 185 acres of warm season grasses will be planted. These grasslands will provide important breeding habitat for many bird species, as well as cover for many other wildlife species.

**Wetland Restorations at Shiawassee River State Game Area** - Two wetland restoration projects at the Shiawassee River State Game Area, totaling approximately 45 acres, are being sponsored by the Saginaw Bay to Lake Erie Coastal North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant. Planning is underway to restore the hydrology to both areas, which are currently in agricultural production. The resulting seasonal emergent wetlands will provide breeding and spring migration habitat for many wetland wildlife species. These projects are in close proximity to other wetland restorations and large expanses of native warm season grass prairie, and will add value to this already excellent complex.

**Wetland Enhancements at State Wildlife Areas** - The Nayanquing Point State Wildlife Area Coastal Wetland and Grassland Enhancement Project will enhance approximately 865 acres of coastal wetland habitat. This is being accomplished by replacing and improving outdated, failing water delivery and management infrastructure, including a system of pumps, water distribution boxes, pipes, and water control structures. In addition, 46 acres of associated upland grassland will be enhanced through the removal of invasive shrub species. This project will provide the DNR with an infrastructure that will allow for the effective and reliable management of water levels to maintain diverse and productive wetland and upland communities for breeding and migrating waterfowl and other wildlife. Survey and design work are currently underway for a similar project at the Fish Point State Wildlife Area.

**Land Acquisition - Fish Point State Wildlife Area** - The DNR recently purchased a 44-acre tract associated with Fish Point, located in northwestern Tuscola County. The acquisition was funded by the Natural Resources Trust Fund and includes 1,377 feet of undeveloped lakeshore frontage comprised of coastal wetlands and sandy upland ridges with mixed hardwood forest. This addition to the State Wildlife Area has secured valuable wildlife habitat from future development and will increase public recreational opportunities in the area.

### **Department of Community Health (DCH)**

**Saginaw Bay Watershed and City of Saginaw Fish Consumption Advisory Outreach Project** - This project will be completed by December 2006. It has resulted in 3 new fish/wild game consumption advisory brochures for the Saginaw Bay Watershed, a fish consumption patterns survey of people fishing local rivers (e.g., Saginaw River), and small group meetings with health care professionals, local hunters and fishers, and low-income urban fishers of the city of Saginaw. Three outreach events have been conducted in the city of Saginaw to low-income urban fishers that included the distribution of information about how to safely fish the Saginaw River. The DCH distributed information about fish consumption advisories, e-coli advisories, fishing regulations, safety tips when fishing, and the history of the Saginaw River including the issue of chemical contamination.

**Upcoming Saginaw River Health Consultation** – The DCH, in cooperation with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), will conduct a public health consultation to assess the possible pathways of human exposure to dioxin-like chemicals from the Saginaw River and its associated sediment, soil, and biota. The consultation will attempt to quantify human health risks based on the currently available data.

**Tittabawassee River Flood Plain Pilot Exposure Investigation (PEI)** - In July of 2005, DCH, in cooperation with the ATSDR, released a draft of the PEI report for a 60-day public comment period. As part of the PEI, DCH collected blood serum and house dust samples from 20 people who live on properties where dioxin levels in soil exceeded the DEQ residential soil criterion of 90 parts per trillion. Blood serum and house dust samples were analyzed for dioxin/furan and the results were provided to the participants. A final PEI report will be released when results from the CDC NHANES study of background

dioxin/furan levels in the general population are available to be used as a comparison to those found in the PEI participants.

**Tittabawassee River Petitioned Public Health Assessment** – The DCH, in cooperation with the ATSDR, has released 3 public health consultations that address dioxin/furan contamination in flood plain soil, fish, and wild game in and near-by the Tittabawassee River. The DCH continues to work with the Dow Chemical Company, the DEQ, and other interested stakeholders to effectively investigate dioxin/furan contamination, assess human exposure and health risks associated with this contamination, and design and implement effective health education and remedial plans to protect public health. The DCH will develop additional public health consultations as new data become available and/or when additional questions of public health impacts are presented.

### **Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG)**

**Cool City Neighborhood in Progress** - Saginaw Depot Restoration has received a Cool City Neighborhood in Progress designation granting the Saginaw Depot Preservation Corporation priority access to state resources and technical assistance.

**WIRED Grant** - Saginaw, Bay, Tuscola, and Huron Counties are part of the Mid-Michigan \$15 million Workforce Innovation for Regional Economic Development grant administered by Michigan State University. The grant is intended to expand employment and worker development. The program is intended to encourage regional cooperation. Michigan was the only state to receive two such grants.

**Rural Broadband Initiative** - the Michigan Broadband Development Authority (MBDA) has recently announced the first loan closed under the Governor's Rural Broadband Initiative. The loan will be given to Speednet, a wireless broadband company based in Saginaw. The \$5.6 million loan will assist Speednet in expanding their wireless broadband service to the rural and underserved areas of Bay, Saginaw, Midland, Tuscola, Isabella, Presque Isle, Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Kalkaska, Antrim and Emmett Counties.

**Micro-enterprise** - A joint project with Bay Arenac Behavioral Health and other area community mental health providers to assist Michigan Rehabilitation Services' customers who are interested in exploring small business/self-employment as an option. Micro enterprise projects are very small in scope and generally provide part-time work activities (see page 6, April 2006 Michigan LEGWork).

**Farm Rehabilitation Program** - Agriculture is an important piece of the economic development of the Saginaw-Bay area. When farm families and workers become ill or injured, valuable man-hours crucial to the operation of the farm are lost. DLEG, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, funded with state and federal dollars, can help. Michigan Rehabilitation Services can provide rehabilitation services that may enable an individual to keep farming. Qualified rehabilitation counselors assist individuals in identifying and securing the services and products they need to continue in their occupations. Farm rehabilitation services include modifying farm equipment, modification of barns and outbuildings to increase access, coordination of medical services, and business development services. Originally started in Tuscola and Saginaw Counties, this program is now statewide in scope.

**Job Fair** - Michigan Rehabilitation Services sponsored a job fair in Saginaw with DLEG, Bureau of Workforce Programs, Saginaw Midland Bay Michigan Works, American Legion, and the Michigan Community Blood Center. Seventy employers and over 1000 job seekers attended the Job Fair this year.

**Small Business Development** - Michigan Rehabilitation Services has assisted 11 eligible people with disabilities in Bay, Arenac and Saginaw Counties start a small business this fiscal year.

**State Boundary Commission** – The Commission has received a petition to incorporate the village of Caro as a home rule city (public hearing on August 24, 2006 in Caro). The Commission has also received a petition to incorporate the village of Caseville as a home rule city. A public hearing was held on March 31, 2006, currently in process of preparing 30-day material to be reviewed by involved parties, followed by Commission adjudication and order recommendation to DLEG Director Swanson (before end of year). In addition, the villages of Port Austin and Sebawaing are in the process of preparing petitions to incorporate as home rule cities.

**Unemployment Insurance Agency, Remote Initial Claim Center (RICC)** – A new site has been selected in the city of Saginaw next to a new medical office building. Now that the site has been chosen and the architectural drawings will be getting underway, they will be in contact with the DLEG energy office to work on energy efficiency of the building.

**Reducing Energy Costs While Improving K-12 School Buildings** - Bay City Public Schools enrolled in the Energy Office's Rebuild Michigan program in 2004 and received an introductory energy evaluation that year. They contracted with Johnson Controls, Inc. for a Technical Engineering Analysis (TEA) for 3 buildings, which was completed in early 2005. Bay City public schools then received a \$15,000 TEA Incentive from the Energy Office after their TEA was reviewed and approved. Bay City public schools then implemented an energy efficiency project, which included lighting controls and retrofit, night set-back and shutdown, pipe insulation, steam trap replacement, replace rooftop units and water conservation measures. The project cost just under \$3.2 million and will reduce their annual energy bills by nearly \$400,000, resulting in an 8.1 year payback.

**Producing Biodiesel Fuel on a Small Scale** - Awarded a grant to help Laker Schools (Elkton-Pigeon-Bay Port School District) purchase and demonstrate use of an oilseed press and a small biodiesel processor, and to conduct a community biofuels training workshop.

**Integrating Energy Curriculum & Teacher Training in K-12 Schools** - Awarded a \$6,500 grant to the Huron Intermediate School District (ISD) for an Energy Smart Schools project during the just completed school year. The grant purchased energy efficiency, alternative fuel, and renewable energy curriculum materials. Twenty-one teachers received training in the use of these materials. Huron ISD participated with Laker Schools in planning the "Embracing our Earth II" energy fair. This event focused on environmental stewardship and renewable/sustainable energy and featured displays, energy efficiency and renewable energy speakers, hands-on activities, a children's energy parade and student challenges and competitions. It attracted more than 2,500 participants. Laker Schools also received a \$6,500 grant from the Energy Office to implement an Energy Smart Schools project during the '05-'06 school year. The grant allowed Laker Schools to purchase energy efficiency and renewable energy curriculum materials, conduct teacher training in the use of the curriculum materials and then incorporate the materials into classrooms throughout the district. The grant also helped fund a regional energy fair, which attracted more than 2500 attendees, including teachers, students, and members of the surrounding community.

**Reducing Energy Costs While Improving K-12 School Buildings** - Huron ISD completed their Introductory Energy Evaluation in December of 2005. Included in this mailing was information on energy savings techniques and technologies for the school to implement in order to reduce their current energy use.

**Building a Pilot-scale Biofuels Plant** - Awarded Saginaw Valley State University funding for a project to build a pilot biofuels plant that could be replicated at many different scales ranging from the single farm level to possibly the level of a regional cooperative. The intent is to demonstrate a practical way for Michigan farmers to diversify their markets through the production of fuel ethanol and biodiesel from sugar beets and oilseeds, thereby providing a tangible means to stabilize and elevate crop prices while securing the state's energy and capital positions.

**Reducing Energy Costs While Improving K-12 School Buildings** - The Energy Office/Rebuild Michigan staff completed a preliminary audit for Birch Run Area Schools and assisted them with entering data for benchmarking their buildings in January of 2006. Merrill Community Schools received an introductory energy evaluation from Rebuild Michigan staff in December, 2005. Also in December the school district received assistance in benchmarking their school buildings and comparing their building data with similar buildings in the nation. Hemlock Public Schools received a preliminary energy audit and information on opportunities for energy savings in February, 2006. They have also worked with Energy Office staff to enter their buildings' data into the DOE/EPA database for EnergyStar Benchmarking. Chesaning Union Schools worked with Rebuild Michigan staff to finish an energy audit and learn more ways to save energy within their district in April, 2006. Energy Office staff helped Chesaning Union Schools determine what steps need to be taken to implement the energy saving technologies.

**Land Bank Fast Track Authority** - Recently awarded the Saginaw Affiliate of Habitat For Humanity, 11 properties for the development of affordable housing. Also, the authority is working on a demolition committee with city of Saginaw, as part of the Cities of Promise to demolish approximately 110 residential structures.

**Michigan Regional Skills Alliances (MiRSAs)** - Four MiRSAs involved are East Central Healthcare Alliance, Michigan's Direct Care Workforce Readiness Training, Sunrise Side Hospitality Industry Coalition RSA, and Thumb Area Employment Manufacturer's. These MiRSAs are focusing on boosting enrollment in health related careers, updating the Certified Nurses Aide curriculum and certification criteria, strengthening the workforce in the hospitality, travel and tourism industry, implementing the Techno-Industrial Training System (TTS) system, and increasing the competitiveness of area employers.

#### **Career & Technical Education –**

- **Entrepreneurship:** Through an initial entrepreneurship grant given to the thumb region (Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, and Tuscola Career Centers), 6 new entrepreneurship programs were developed where students can earn credit toward a degree at Delta College. Because the initial initiative was very successful, the region asked for additional funding in the amount of \$11,300 to expand opportunities for students. The region used these funds to further the entrepreneurship initiative through additional teacher in-service, a summer program for youth, and the development of materials to promote the programs throughout the region.
- **Alternative Energy:** Tuscola will be awarded \$6,000 to develop high school agriscience teaching modules in alternative energy. These modules will include lesson plans, pre-test/post-test, supplemental websites, and other instructional support items and when completed, will be available to be shared with other instructors on topics such as ethanol, biodiesel, and wind power.

**Occupational Education Program Improvement** - Delta College was awarded a total of \$734,894 for 2006-07 as follows: \$188,698 for pupil support and instructional services for special populations students; \$38,975 for career guidance, counseling, and placement services; \$117,074 for program planning and development; \$10,000 for economic development and customized training; \$15,000 for professional development; and \$370,185 for instructional equipment.

**Adult Education** - A total of \$338,107 in adult education grants were awarded to the following counties: (1) Bay-Arenac - \$69,485 for high school completion and GED; (2) Huron - \$15,889 for adult basic education and GED; (3) Saginaw - \$212,304 for adult basic education, EL Civics, high school completion, ESL; and (4) Tuscola - \$40,428 for high school completion.

**Other Department of Labor and Economic Growth Programs** - DLEG has provided funding in the Saginaw Bay coastal area for the following programs: WIA Youth - \$1,210,115; WIA Dislocated Worker - \$2,092,126; WIA Adult - \$1,184,857; WIA Incumbent Worker - \$116,891; WIA 21<sup>st</sup> Century Job Training Scholarships - \$85,667; WIA One-Stop Capacity Building - \$24,000; WIA Service Center Operation -

\$153,744; TAA - \$167,361; WIA Dislocated Worker funds - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Regional Workforce Planning - \$275,000; and Work First/TANF Total – \$5,962,927.

### **Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA)**

**Select Michigan Program** – Ag Development has 225 grant applicants statewide requesting over \$36 million from the Julian-Stille Ag Innovation Fund. Several are from the Saginaw Bay counties. The Joint Evaluation Committee and MDA completes the review process, receives approval, and subsequently should announce grant awards in early October.

**Agriculture Development Division** - Staff is serving on the planning committee for the 2nd annual Agri-Energy Conference which was held in Saginaw this past March and that location is one option being considered for next year's conference. Also, Ag Development staff will be assisting the Saginaw Farmers Market for their event in September.

**Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)** - In the past five years, the State of Michigan through its CREP partnership has restored wetlands and established grass buffer strips on over 40,000 acres in the Saginaw Bay Watershed. These practices reduce sediment delivery to the Saginaw Bay by 65 percent. Phosphorus delivery is reduced by 75 percent. Nitrogen Delivery is reduced by 70 percent. In addition to the water quality benefits, there has been a dramatic resurgence in the upland game bird population in the watershed creating recreational opportunities for Michigan's Sportsman.

**Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program** - The Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program provides service to all counties mentioned. Services include the voluntary identification of environmental risks posed by the agricultural and residential communities, planning to reduce or eliminate the risks, and technical assistance to facilitate the implementation of the plans.

**Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP)** - The MAEAP is active in all counties surrounding the Saginaw Bay. Specifically, groundwater technicians in each of the counties, through the local conservation districts, can provide technical assistance for both MAEAP Farmstead and Cropping Systems. Additionally, Huron County has a MAEAP specialist, who is trained to target small and medium livestock farms through a progressive planning initiative. All counties have locally trained professionals who assist with livestock system components.

**Right to Farm Program (RTF)** - The MDA RTF Program works pro-actively with many farm operations in the Saginaw Bay area that are building new or expanding their existing livestock facilities. Careful RTF site selection provides both the farm and surrounding community with environmental assurance, social compatibility, and sustainable farm operations. The RTF also responds to and resolves the conflicts associated with environmental complaints involving farm operations.

**Intercounty Drains** - Water Resource Program works with county drain commissioners and affected citizens for the establishment, maintenance, or improvement of storm water management facilities involving 2 or more counties. There are 83 intercounty drains in Arenac, Bay, Huron, Saginaw and Tuscola Counties. The MDA is currently working on 10 petition projects and 46 maintenance projects. The drainage network associated with these projects protects property values and reduces insurance expense for over 64 percent of the land area in these five counties.

**Farmland Preservation** - The farmland program preserves agriculture and open space supporting economic diversity and quality of life for current and future needs of citizens of the state. The state may provide income tax credits, purchase development rights, or provide grants to local units of government to purchase development rights. Nearly 12,000 farmland agreements protecting 740,000 acres of farmland are active in the Saginaw Bay area.

**Migrant Labor Housing** – The MDA's Migrant Labor Housing program helps support three important objectives including: migrant worker health, public food safety, and agricultural viability. Quality housing is needed to attract the migrant workers critical to the harvest and packing of 2.1 billion dollars worth of agricultural commodities. Migrant worker health is improved through healthy living conditions and adequate sanitation. This in turn reduces the risk of communicable disease being transmitted via hand harvest fruits and vegetables. Migrant workers in the Saginaw Bay region typically work in cucumber production where they cultivate, harvest, pack, and ship cucumbers for pickles and fresh market.

**Water Use Reporting** - The Governors of each state and Canadian Province with a riparian interest in the Great Lakes have signed a water use charter designed in part to protect the Great Lakes from the impacts of water diversion. Water Resources staff administer the agricultural water-use reporting program required under the Great Lakes Charter and state law. All individuals in the state using over 100,000 gallons of water per day are required to report their water usage. Irrigation accounts for the majority of water use. However, crop cooling and sanitation are other significant water uses. During 2005, 41 agricultural water users in the counties adjacent to the bay reported irrigation on over 8,700 acres.

**Aquifer Protection and Dispute Resolution** - In the Saginaw Bay and some parts of Monroe County there are concerns about high capacity agricultural, industrial, and commercial wells impacting neighboring residential wells. When specific cases arise, the residential well owner may file a complaint with the state which in turn investigates and attempts to resolve the issue. When complaints involve agricultural wells, they are initially investigated by the MDA staff. Seven of the 10 cases investigated by MDA to date have been in the Saginaw County. Four of the 7 complaints were resolved when the grower in question provided alternate water supplies. The 3 remaining cases have been referred to DEQ for resolution.

**Race Horse Breeding Farms and County Fairs** - The five county region is home to 141 registered race horse breeding farms. Tuscola County has the majority of farms with 71 in the area. Thirty-seven reside in Saginaw County followed by Bay County with 17 farms. Huron County hosts 14 of these farms and the remaining 2 are in Arenac County. Also within the region are 5 of Michigan's county fairs. They include the Arenac County Agricultural Society in Standish, the Bay County Fair and Youth Expo in Bay City, the Huron Community Fair Association in Bad Axe, the Saginaw County Agricultural Society in Chesaning, and the Tuscola County Fair Association in Caro. The fairs in Bad Axe and Caro also host harness racing along with a sixth fair in the region, the Vassar Corkpine Fair in Tuscola County. Both the Bad Axe and Caro have voluntarily gone through a water safety study. This study includes an evaluation of water supply, distribution system, cross-connection control, abandoned wells, hand washing and drinking water, sewage collection/treatment, animal washing, manure management and chemical use/storage. The Chesaning fair is a new construction and its design was developed considering water quality recommendations.

**Michigan Fish Contaminant Monitoring Program** - The DEQ, Water Bureau has analyzed over 17,000 fish tissue samples collected since 1980 to address four goals:

- Support the development of the DCH Michigan Fish Advisory,
- Support regulation of commercial fisheries in the waters of the state,
- Identify trends in Michigan's surface water quality, and
- Evaluate whether existing pollution, prevention, regulatory, and remediation programs are effectively reducing chemical contamination in the aquatic environment.

Several state and federal agencies and tribal organizations assist the DEQ in these efforts by collecting or analyzing samples and data. These include the DNR, DCH, MDA, EPA, the United States Fish and Wildlife

Service, the Grand Traverse Bay Band of Chippewa and Ottawa Indians, and the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission.

### **Exotic & Invasive Species Pest Management**

- Emerald Ash Borer - The Emerald Ash Borer was first identified in 2002 in 6 Michigan counties. Preventing the artificial spread of this pest remains a priority for MDA. Pesticide & Plant Pest Management (PPPM) continues to focus on enforcing the state quarantine and increasing compliance. Ongoing regulatory activities include monitoring the movement of ash products, conducting regular inspections, investigating and enforcing quarantine violations and issuing compliance agreements to firms that process or have the potential to process ash wood products.
- Gypsy Moth Suppression - PPPM's Cooperative Gypsy Moth Suppression program provides county governments an opportunity to receive cost-share funding to manage gypsy moth populations on public and private property. In 2006, 1800 acres were sprayed in Bay County as part of this program.
- Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) - Surveys for the detection of exotic terrestrial plants and plant pests are facilitated through PPPM's participation in the Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey program. Through this program, PPPM conducts early detection activities for invasive pests of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, the environment and human health.

**Export Certification** – PPPM's Plant Pest and Commodity Certification programs facilitate interstate, intrastate, and foreign trade through inspection and certification of nurseries and plant material. PPPM certifies nursery stock, Christmas trees, logs, hay and bedding plants for interstate shipment. PPPM staff ensures that plant materials meet the quarantine requirements of the receiving states. Of primary importance are 5 major quarantine-significant pests: gypsy moth, pine shoot beetle, emerald ash borer, Japanese beetle, sudden oak death, and black stem rust.

**Foreign Export** - Under a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, commissioned PPPM staff issue federal phytosanitary certificates to facilitate the export of Michigan commodities to over 55 countries worldwide. In FY'05, MDA's dry bean inspector in Saginaw issued 324 certificates and conducted inspections on over 30 million pounds of dry edible beans. Significant quantities of wheat and dry beans are inspected and shipped out of the Saginaw Bay area.

**Pesticides and Agrichemicals** - PPPM conducts a variety of inspections and investigations to ensure that pesticides are used in compliance with state laws and regulations and in a manner that minimizes adverse effects on human health or the environment. Also, PPPM has worked cooperatively with mosquito control districts in Bay and Tuscola Counties to ensure that county-wide mosquito control applications are performed in compliance with state laws and regulations. Township activity in Arenac County is also closely monitored.

**Michigan Clean Sweep** - The proper disposal of unused and unwanted pesticides is the goal of the Clean Sweep program in Michigan. The MDA Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program (MGSP), in cooperation with federal, county and local units of government, has established 15 permanent Clean Sweeps sites located throughout the state. The MGSP provides funding to support the disposal of pesticides, while the host site provides for staffing, scheduling, site maintenance, promotion, vendor selection, etc. The EPA has historically provided funding for site construction, and will often provide additional funding for pesticide disposal. The MGSP expects to spend more than \$230,000 in FY2006 on pesticide disposal costs, and should collect more than 150,000 pounds of pesticides.

## **Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)**

**Wetland Mitigation Banking/Wetland Restoration** - MDOT has a statewide Wetland Mitigation Banking program to help meet state and federal permit requirements by providing a mechanism for the establishment of new wetland areas or "banks" in advance of anticipated losses. Wetlands established in mitigation banks provide MDOT with "credits" which can be used for future transportation projects that impact wetland resources. In the Saginaw Bay coastal area, MDOT is pursuing several wetland mitigation banking projects. Within the next 2 years, MDOT will be restoring over 150 acres of wetland at 2 locations in Spaulding Township. These restoration efforts will benefit the Saginaw Bay ecosystem by providing flood storage, wildlife habitat and increased wetland resources. In addition to wetland restoration, MDOT is currently pursuing the acquisition of 40 acres of historic dune and swale wetland habitat in St. Clair County. If MDOT is successful in acquiring the property, a conservation easement will be placed on the site to protect the wetland resources in perpetuity. MDOT has spoken with township officials about incorporating the site into a planned nature trail system that will be used for public education and outreach.

**Bay Region Non-motorized Plan** - The vision of the Bay Region non-motorized plan is to help establish a network of interconnected, continuous non-motorized facilities throughout the community, including coastal areas. MDOT has developed partnerships with local interest groups, road agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, and transit agencies that will provide leadership in promotion, education and facility development supporting the non-motorized system. The Bay Region is currently working with local trail groups, parks commissions, and non-motorized interests to help identify existing and proposed trails, bike paths and bike lanes. When MDOT identifies future road rehabilitation and restoration projects, we assess traffic volumes for non-motorized suitability and consider the proximity to existing and proposed non-motorized facilities. Where appropriate, the Bay Region will promote the development of non-motorized facilities. MDOT recognizes the importance and attraction to non-motorized facilities close to coastal zones and plans to keep engaging local officials and others in planning and building these facilities. Concurrently, MDOT is also working on the Bay Region non-motorized mapping project through the Policy Planning Division and East Central Michigan Planning & Development Region. The map identifies suitable bike routes across the Bay Region, including coastal zones. MDOT will routinely update this map.

**Heritage Route** – MDOT's Heritage Route program was created in 1983 to identify, preserve, and enhance Michigan's scenic, historic and recreational resources. A major goal of the Heritage Route program is to attract tourists, who bring additional revenues to a given area thereby enhancing the economic activity in the region. The Bay Region already boasts 3 heritage routes, including the US-23 "Sunrise Side Coastal Highway," M-25 through Bay City's "Center Avenue Neighborhood Residential Historic District," and the M-15 Recreational Route from Clarkston to Bay City known as "Miles of Smiles." At least one additional potential heritage route, M-25 from Bay City to Port Huron, has been discussed by some of the municipalities along the route. Heritage route nominations must come from grassroots coalitions or local governments and other organizations.

**Other Bay Region Tourism Boosters** - The Bay Region has either recently completed or will be embarking upon several projects to enhance roadside amenities. White Rock Park along M-25 now features a walking trail, staircase to the lake, viewing platform, and interpretive signage explaining the history and significance of White Rock. Thompson Roadside Park, also on M-25, was recently renovated to provide better access to the beach and showcase two historic grindstones at the park. In addition, non-motorized bike paths on each side of M-25 between Harbor Beach and Port Hope are now open and available for use. Within the next year, more non-motorized bike paths will be constructed along M-25 from Port Hope to Huron City, from M-142 to Caseville Road, and from Huron City to Port Austin. Finally, the former depot in Standish at the junction of M-61 and US-23 will be rehabilitated and opened to the public as the welcome center for the US-23 Heritage Route.