



Lost Lake Campaign is a Success!



68 acres of forest, wetlands, and Lost Lake frontage will forever be protected as part of Muskegon State Park thanks to a \$50,000 grant from the Alcoa Foundation made possible by the support of Howmet Alcoa plant in Whitehall. The grant put the Campaign to Save Lost Lake over the top of the \$230,000 fundraising goal.

“We believe this addition to Muskegon State Park will benefit the community for generations to come,” said Amy Heisser, Director of Human Resources for Howmet Alcoa. “We are so pleased that we could make this happen for the greater Muskegon area, West Michigan, and all the visitors to the State Park.”

The entire project cost exceeded \$420,000. The State of Michigan had funds for less than half the acquisition costs, so in May 2007 the Land Conservancy of West Michigan embarked on a campaign to raise the balance of approximately \$230,000 and help the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) acquire one of the last, large natural properties adjacent to Muskegon State Park.

Additional funds for the project were donated by more than 350 local individuals and organizations (see page 5). Special thanks to the following foundations and individuals for matching the first \$90,000 in gifts to the campaign: Jerry & Linda Bakke, Carls Foundation, Community Foundation for Muskegon County,

Crane Foundation, and the J.A. Woollam Foundation. The Frey Foundation in Grand Rapids also provided a critical lead gift.

Campaign organizers praised the Mierendorf family for their patience and willingness to sell the property so it could become part of the state park. The Scenic Drive Preservation Group and the Muskegon Conservation District also provided substantial help to the campaign.

“We are fortunate to have such a generous community that recognizes the importance of protecting lands that provide both recreational opportunities and the conservation of important habitat and ecosystems,” said Julie Stoneman, Executive Director of the Land Conservancy. “This is an incredible gift.”

At the western edge of the property is a beautiful small lake known as “Lost Lake.” The southern half of the lake is within the State Park, but the northern half was privately owned by the Mierendorf family. In the past, cross-country skiers and hikers created a trail that circles Lost Lake, including the portion owned by the Mierendorfs, to enjoy the scenic view and connect with other park trails. Now, thanks to the generosity of the Alcoa Foundation and other local donors, this ecological and recreational treasure will be protected forever and can be used and enjoyed by the public for generations to come.

A dedication ceremony for the property will be held in the spring. Please watch www.naturenearby.org and your newsletter for details.



The Campaign to Save Lost Lake successfully raised more than \$230,000 to forever protect the 68-acre Lost Lake property and add the land on to Muskegon State Park. Photos: Danielle Vogel (above), Nancy Tassin (right)