

**Little Traverse Conservancy**  
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## **Bringing It to Cheboygan** ***The Duncan Bay Nature Trail***

Little Traverse Conservancy staff and volunteers were busy this fall building one of the largest boardwalk projects the organization has ever undertaken.

Roughly 2,000 feet of boardwalk, a footbridge, and an overlook platform are all planned for the Duncan Bay Nature Preserve located on the edge of the City of Cheboygan. Funding for the boardwalk materials is provided through a grant from the Save Our Great Lakes (SOGL) Program received by Huron Pines out of Gaylord. "This trail is a result of a community appeal by the City of Cheboygan, the local grassroots group Bring IT Cheboygan, and other local citizens who have worked to improve opportunities for outdoor recreation and enjoyment in the region," said LTC Director of Stewardship Derek Shiels. "The new half-mile trail loop already offers a nice opportunity to explore nature along the edge of Duncan Bay. Once completed next year, an overlook platform will offer an excellent destination for bird and wildlife watching overlooking Lake Huron and this beautiful Great Lakes wetland complex."

In addition to Huron Pines, the City of Cheboygan, the SOGL Grant Program, the donors who helped protect the land, and Consumers Energy for donating utility poles for a bridge, LTC thanks the extraordinary volunteers who showed up on a regular basis this fall to get the project well underway. High school students from Straits Area Youth Promotion Academy and volunteers from the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians Youth Conservation Corps were the first to kick-start the project by hauling nearly 400 twelve-foot boards (a total weight of about 20,000 pounds!) a quarter mile in under four hours. Electrical poles were donated by Consumers Energy and moved by these students (by hand!) for the supports for the bridge. These kids worked hard. One of our weekly volunteers, Mike Tiedeck, was instrumental with the bridge construction, providing valuable input and generously donating the use of crucial construction tools, including an aluminium boat. "The permit delay and weather made this project challenging, along with the work of hauling lumber and building boardwalk in wet conditions, but these people continue to be there side by side with our staff. It has certainly been inspiring for us!" Shiels added.

*Little Traverse Conservancy is the regional non-profit working in northern lower and eastern upper Michigan. Call our office to find out more about land protection options that may be available for your land. Community field trips and environmental education programs are offered throughout the year.*

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