Sustainability & Effectiveness

To advance our goals, Heart of the Lakes is financially sustainable, organizationally effective, and has a flexible resource base to fuel the creativity and agility with which we pursue our mission.

- Heart of the Lakes’ funding strategy meets its target of one-third support from members, one third from philanthropic and family foundations, and one-third from individuals.
- Heart of the Lakes’ Board is comprised of engaged and diverse individuals with the knowledge, skills and relationships to help advance Heart of the Lakes’ purpose and programs.
- A driven and talented staff, as well as cutting edge technology and infrastructure, operate efficiently and effectively to meet the changing needs of Heart of the Lakes and Michigan’s land and water conservation community.
- Maintain strong, productive and mutually beneficial relationships with key partner organizations, major stakeholders, and decision makers.

OUR MISSION
Heart of the Lakes strengthens the collective efforts of organizations dedicated to the conservation of Michigan’s environmentally and economically significant land and water. We provide leadership, innovative ideas, and advocate for smart public policy for the benefit of our communities and for generations to come.

WE SHAPE THE LAND, AND THE LAND SHAPES US.

OUR VISION
Michiganders cherish and protect the land and waters of our great state because Heart of the Lakes leads, unites, and sustains a strong, informed, and respected conservation movement.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES
FOR 2015 - 2018
Conservation Support Services
Heart of the Lakes provides a suite of services to strengthen the effectiveness of our members and other organizations to help them reach the highest legal, ethical and technical standards in land and water conservation.

Services are member driven and go beyond to other organizations when there is a strategic intersection with Heart of the Lakes’ mission or where there may be interest from other groups.

- Heart of the Lakes members expect and receive general services that they themselves have helped identify and that directly support their individual organizational work, as well as the community overall.
- Heart of the Lakes members have access to and can consult with professionals or receive mentoring support on a variety of nonprofit organizational and land and water protection topics and issues.
- Heart of the Lakes Fee for Service program is accessed and highly valued by Heart of the Lakes members and non-members alike.

Communications and Outreach

Heart of the Lakes is a statewide thought-leader among Michigan’s conservation organizations and their partners. Heart of the Lakes assures communication within the land conservancy community and increases visibility and support for land and water conservation.

- Land and water conservation is highly visible as reflected in increased support among decision-makers, funders and key stakeholder groups.
- A robust communications network for Heart of the Lakes’ members and their allies encourages partnerships and sharing of ideas, practices, and tools.
- Heart of the Lakes is a strong, well-established champion for its members and for land and water conservation on both statewide and locally significant issues.

To advance our mission and vision for Michigan, we pursue the following programmatic areas, each having a unique set of Outcomes we strive to accomplish.

Policy & Advocacy

Heart of the Lakes engages in advocacy to maintain and strengthen the work of our members, and can result in the conservation of natural resources that provide a clear public benefit for the people of Michigan. Heart of the Lakes keeps members and partners informed about policy issues, provides opportunities to identify and engage in policy matters, and identifies and develops policy strategies to address emerging issues in conservation.

- Key policymakers understand and support the protection of Michigan’s land and water resources and the role of Heart of the Lakes’ members and partners in their protection.
- Michigan’s conservation organizations employ new strategies to access local, state and/or federal funding for land protection and its related benefits, such as water quality, outdoor recreation, and agricultural production.
- Revenues from state-owned mineral development are permanently dedicated to conservation purposes.
- The state of Michigan embraces and fully funds its Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program program because of the economic and environmental benefits that result from farmland preservation.
- Landowners in Michigan have new or expanded incentives for donating both conservation easements and fee simple interest in lands.
- Land and water conservation organizations in Michigan and permanent land conservation are fully supported by public policy.