

December 18, 2018

Re: SJR O, SB 763, SB 931, SB 932

Dear Chairwoman Cox and members of the Appropriations Committee:

Heart of the Lakes is the collective voice for Michigan's land conservancies. 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 are a part of a large conservation coalition working directly with the Governor and Senator Casperson on his legislation to help ensure that the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and State Parks Endowment Fund are both appropriately used as the citizens of this state intended when they voted to protect these funds in the constitution. We are here today to offer our full support for SJR O, SB 763, SB 931 and SB 932.

We are particularly supportive of two key provisions in Senate Joint Resolution O. Our members would like to see the current cap of not more than 25% of the fund to be used for development projects lifted. They would also like to ensure the proceeds of the MNRTF not be appropriated by the legislature for other uses outside the original intent of the constitutional protection.

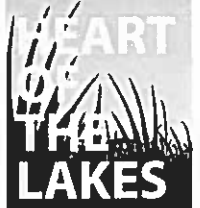
According to a recent statewide survey conducted by MDNR, the most significant recreation need in the state is local trails and parks. By lifting the 25% cap and allowing for up to 75% of the fund to be used for development, the Trust Fund Board working with the Legislature will be in a much better position to address those vital needs.

We are committed to working with a broad array of conservation groups from around the state to help educate the citizens of Michigan about this important proposal to amend the Michigan Constitution and appreciate the committee's prompt action on this legislative package.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Jarosz  
Executive Director



[www.heartofthelakes.org](http://www.heartofthelakes.org)

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