

For Immediate Release

Contact: Elise Cleary  
231-946-7255  
[elise@flightpathcreative.com](mailto:elise@flightpathcreative.com)

Todd Kalish  
231.775-9727 ext. 6070  
[kalisht@michigan.gov](mailto:kalisht@michigan.gov)

**\$500,000 in Funding Awarded for the Boardman River Dam Project**  
*An Outcome of Collaboration*

Traverse City, MI (August 4, 2010) – The Conservation Resource Alliance (CRA) and the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians (GTB) announced that nearly \$500,000 in federal funding has been secured to help finance the dam removal project on the Boardman River over the next two years.

The funding comes from two grants: the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Circle of Flight Grant and the US Fish and Wildlife Service Tribal Wildlife Grant. Both will assist in covering costs for all aspects of removing the Sabin, Boardman and Brown Bridge dams and modifying the Union Street dam.

Inland fisheries staff from the Tribe worked with CRA and headed the initial proposal for the grants. “The Boardman River is a globally rare resource that we are all connected to in one way or another, so we are proud to support any efforts for the betterment of the river and it’s surroundings,” said Derek J. Bailey, GTB Tribal Chairman.

In 2005, discussions began on the viability of three of the dams on the Boardman River to continue to produce energy. This led to a detailed decision making process that concluded that the dams would require a high level of maintenance and restoration in order to be in compliance with current regulations. After thorough review and discussion, the decision was made by the dam owners, Grand Traverse County and Traverse City, to remove the Sabin, Boardman and Brown Bridge dams and modify the Union Street dam. This project will allow the Boardman River to return to a more natural state as a free-flowing, cold-water river.

In 2005, the dam owners formed an Implementation Team (IT) to provide project oversight. The IT is comprised of individuals representing dam owners and 14 stakeholder organizations - providing expertise in fisheries biology, dam safety, hydroelectric facility relicensing, local governments, energy generation capacity, wildlife and plant habitat conservation, community leadership and management, area watershed preservation, road system management, environmental conservation and land preservation.

“We are extremely grateful for the hard work and support of the Grand Traverse Band, CRA and other key members of the Implementation Team in securing this funding,” said IT Chair Todd Kalish. “This has been an amazing collaborative effort from a very dedicated group of community leaders and experts.”

These grants are the first officially awarded to the project, but the IT has received positive feedback from other grants that are currently in review. “We are excited about this initial funding and are working to secure additional funding in advance of the initial engineering and design work,” added Kalish.

The scale of the Boardman project is unprecedented in the State of Michigan. At an estimated cost of \$5 - \$8 million, it will be the largest dam removal project in state history, reconnecting over 3.4 miles of stream to the Great Lakes. It is also one of the largest wetland restoration projects to be undertaken in the Great Lakes Basin, involving over 250 acres of wetlands.

To learn more about the project and stay updated, visit [www.TheBoardman.org](http://www.TheBoardman.org).

### **About the Boardman River**

The Boardman River includes 130 miles of river and tributary stream, located in Grand Traverse and Kalkaska Counties in Northwest Michigan. There are a total of 287-square miles in the watershed, producing one-third of the water volume of Grand Traverse Bay in Traverse City and draining 182,800 acres of land. An Estimated 2 million visitors use the Boardman River annually for recreation purposes. The river contains 36 river miles designated as Blue Ribbon river sections and is one of the top ten trout streams in Michigan.

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