

Diversifying the Local Economy – What Do Birds Have to Do With It?

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<http://naturechange.org/2016/12/17/diversifying-the-local-economy-what-do-birds-have-to-do-with-it/>

This is a story about a Northern Michigan community responding to the economic challenges brought on by changes in the region's natural resources, shifting public interests, and a changing climate. It's also a story about cooperation between community leaders and many different organizations to protect critical habitats while diversifying the local economy.

As described by Eliot Nelson, Michigan SeaGrant Educator and noted bird ecologist, the community has worked with the [Little Traverse Conservancy](#), The Nature Conservancy and several other organizations to diversify the nature-based recreation offerings available in the Les Cheneaux Region. In addition to a new water trail for paddlers and mountain-biking options, the community has launched the [North Lake Huron Birding Trail](#).

By diversifying their nature-based recreation opportunities, this community is making an intentional shift toward greater economic resilience. Greater resilience will help this community cope with continuing changes and even unexpected changes in the future.

Topics Covered

Birds; Ornithology; Biology; Economics; Ecosystems; Climate Change; Conservation

Next Generation Science Standards

- HS-LS4-6. Create or revise a simulation to test a solution to mitigate adverse impacts of human activity on biodiversity.
- HS-ESS3-3. Create a computational simulation to illustrate the relationships among management of natural resources, the sustainability of human populations, and biodiversity.
- HS-ESS3-4. Evaluate or refine a technological solution that reduces impacts of human activities on natural systems.