



County Road Association
OF MICHIGAN

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For the love of fish: Newaygo County Road Commission and Trout Unlimited join forces

LANSING, MI – It's not often that a road agency gets to utilize a partnership that lands at the crossroads of a hobby and improving the community. But that's exactly what happened for the Newaygo County Road Commission (NCRC) through its partnership with Trout Unlimited (TU).

A desire to improve fish movement through undersized culverts along the Bigelow Creek near the city of Newaygo is how their partnership began.

The Bigelow Creek Watershed, a primary cold-water tributary that connects to the Muskegon River, is home to many species of trout and other migratory fish. According to TU, nine culvert crossings along the river were too small for proper fish migration, in addition to increasing flood resiliency issues.

TU and NCRC partnered to split costs and combine work forces to quickly replace the culverts. So far, six culvert replacements have been completed. NCRC Manager Derek Wawsczyk views the partnership as an affordable, win-win situation that prioritizes both fish movement and culvert crossing improvements.

On a personal level, Wawsczyk says the Bigelow Creek project was meaningful for him, "As a kid, I played down in the creek and watched the salmon when they came in the fall." His son, an avid fisherman, now gets to experience the same fish migration all thanks to this collaborative project.

To learn more about NCRC and TU's collaboration, read the winter issue of *Crossroads* magazine, which can be viewed digitally or downloaded at micountyroads.org/Crossroads.

The 83 members of the County Road Association of Michigan represent the unified voice for a safe and efficient county transportation infrastructure system in Michigan, including appropriate stewardship of the public's right-of-way in rural and urban Michigan. Collectively, Michigan's county road agencies manage 75% of all roads in the state, including 90,000 miles of roads and 5,700 bridges. County road agencies also maintain the state's highway system in 63 counties. Michigan has the nation's fourth-largest local road system.

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