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### **Grassroots Effort Restores Another Tributary of Higgins Lake**

*Local partners join forces with Huron Pines to reconnect Little Creek to Higgins Lake, restoring fish habitat and eliminating washout risk.*

**Roscommon County, MI**—A tributary to Higgins Lake is flowing free now that a partially collapsed culvert at Little Creek has been replaced.

The project took place at Albemarle Boulevard in a Lyon Township neighborhood at the northwest end of Higgins Lake. The old culvert where the road meets Little Creek was undersized and crushed, causing road material to wash into the stream and Higgins Lake. The site also posed a risk of road washout during spring thaws and prevented fish from migrating upstream from the lake.

Higgins Lake Property Owners Association (POA) brought this concern to conservation nonprofit Huron Pines, which managed a similar restoration of nearby Big Creek in 2021. Contributions from Higgins Lake POA leveraged additional funding from Lyon Township, Higgins Lake Foundation, Higgins Lake Land Conservancy and the Morley Family Foundation, along with in-kind engineering and labor from the Roscommon County Road Commission.

The old culvert was removed in September and replaced with one that is appropriately sized for the stream, allowing Little Creek to flow naturally through the crossing year round and enabling fish to reach upstream habitat.

"These partners came together in an entirely locally-funded push to restore Big Creek in 2021," said Josh Leisen, Senior Project Manager for Huron Pines. "They built on that success and rallied support for another tributary to reconnect habitat for fish and improve the water quality of Higgins Lake."

"Everyone who saw the success of Big Creek was keen to help out with Little Creek," said Fred Swinehart, a Higgins Lake POA board member who led the charge on both projects.

Total project cost was approximately \$35,000. The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy, and Michigan Department of Natural Resources provided technical input, and Walters Family Foundation also supported the effort.

*Huron Pines is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established in 1973 to conserve and enhance Northern Michigan's natural resources to ensure healthy water, protected places and vibrant communities. With offices in Gaylord and Alpena, Huron Pines strives to improve economic, environmental, educational and recreational opportunities throughout Northern Michigan. To learn more, visit [huronpines.org](http://huronpines.org).*