

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 69

Senator Lauwers offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to designate August 19, 2019, as Michigan Water
2 Trails Day.

3 Whereas, Michigan has more miles of Great Lakes coastline than
4 any other state and thousands of miles of rivers and streams; and

5 Whereas, The use of waterways for transportation in Michigan
6 is not new. Native Americans first used them for sustenance and
7 trade, early European settlers used them to transport goods and
8 timber water. Such resources were the foundation of Michigan's
9 earliest manufacturing and shipping industries; and

10 Whereas, Michigan has over 4,700 miles of water trails,
11 traversing some of Michigan's most remote and natural environments
12 as well as some of the state's most industrial and urban

environments. These water trails exist along Michigan's Great Lakes coastline, connecting to water trails in other states and provinces throughout the Great Lakes basin; and

Whereas, Water trails help support and promote environmental awareness and stewardship of Michigan's waterways and water quality; and

Whereas, A water trail is a designated route on a navigable waterway such as a lake, river, canal, or bay, that is designed and managed to create a positive outdoor recreation experience for the user; and

Whereas, Water trails also feature well-developed access points, often near significant historical, environmental, or cultural points of interest, and often have nearby amenities like restaurants, hotels, and campgrounds; and

Whereas, Paddling Michigan's waterways for recreation and other purposes has been a part of Michigan's long history. Paddle sports are one of the fastest-growing outdoor activities in the nation, contributing more than \$140 million to Michigan's economy; and

Whereas, A formal state water trail and designation program was recently established by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources working in conjunction with local paddle groups, local units of government, the Land and Information Access Association, the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance, and other non-profit partners to designate and support existing water trails and help solidify best practices and standards for future water trail development; and

Whereas, Eight waterways totaling 540-plus miles that flow through more than a dozen counties have been selected as the first

1 state-designated water trails in Michigan, which include all of the
2 following:

3 ·Central River Raisin Water Trail, 11 miles in Monroe County;

4 ·Chain of Lakes Water Trail, more than 80 miles in Antrim and
5 Kalkaska counties;

6 ·Huron River Water Trail, 104 miles in Livingston, Oakland,
7 Washtenaw and Wayne counties;

8 ·Island Loop Route, 10 miles in St. Clair County;

9 ·Flint River Trail, 72 miles in Genesee and Lapeer counties;

10 ·Middle Grand River Water Trail, 87 miles in Clinton, Eaton,
11 Ingham and Ionia counties;

12 ·Shiawassee River Trail, 88 miles in Genesee, Oakland, Saginaw
13 and Shiawassee counties;

14 ·Upper Grand River Water Trail, 91 miles in Eaton, Ingham and
15 Jackson counties; and

16 Whereas, Outdoor recreation-based tourism is experiencing
17 major growth right now. Designating these rivers as official water
18 trails shines an even brighter light on our incredible natural
19 resources; and

20 Whereas, Highlighting water trail opportunities in Michigan
21 will encourage more outdoor recreation and healthier lifestyles and
22 also serve as regional destinations that will give a boost to local
23 economies; and

24 Whereas, With Michigan leading the nation in land-based trail
25 mileage and the unmatched water resources we have, celebrating our
26 water trails is another important step we can take to provide our
27 citizens with a world-class trail system; now, therefore, be it

28 Resolved by the Senate, That the members of this legislative
29 body recognize and celebrate water trails as this new component of

1 the nation's leading trail program, while establishing August 19,
2 2019, as Michigan Water Trails Day.