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## Chateau Grand Traverse donates \$10,000 to support tree planting in Michigan State Parks

Donation of \$10,000 to DNR will be used to replant diseased trees in parks statewide, celebrates Arbor Day

TRAVERSE CITY, MI - [Chateau Grand Traverse Winery](#) (CGT) has made a donation of \$10,000 to the [Michigan Department of Natural Resources](#) (DNR) with the intended purpose to replace diseased trees in State Parks throughout Michigan. Today's donation is the first in a three-year partnership between the winery and the DNR.

In May 2015, Chateau Grand Traverse introduced the "The Wines of the Great Outdoors" series in partnership with the DNR, with a portion of all proceeds committed to support Michigan's parks, trails, and waterways. The partnership brings together the best of two of Michigan's natural resources - agricultural and recreation - with the goal of generating financial support for the state's parks. CGT has been selling three wines in the outdoors series across Michigan and is sharing approximately 50 percent of the net profits from the sales with the DNR.

In order to best serve the specific interests of outdoor recreationists in the state, the public was asked to vote on how the donated funds would be allocated. Over 1,300 Michigan residents went online to cast their vote among three projects - improving wayfinding trail signage, improving accessibility to Michigan's waterways, or tree replacement. After one year of collecting votes, an overwhelming majority were in favor of replacing trees lost to disease.

On April 28th, one day ahead of Arbor Day, Chateau Grand Traverse President Eddie O'Keefe presented the DNR with a \$10,000 check at [P.J. Hoffmaster State Park](#) in Muskegon. "As wine grape growers, we are committed to being stewards of the land. To be able to support our State Parks with a significant tree planting program, we can enhance the beauty of our natural areas for people to enjoy for many generations to come," said O'Keefe at the presentation.

The \$10,000 donation will fund the planting of nearly 200 trees that were felled due to disease in Michigan State Parks, making an impact statewide. From Belle Isle to the Upper Peninsula, Michigan's forests have been hit with several devastating diseases and infestations, most notably oak wilt and emerald ash borer. Spread by moving firewood into parks, these diseases have forced the DNR to remove thousands of hazardous trees to ensure camper safety. The trees planted in 2016 will be specifically selected to fit the ecoregion and are native species for that area.

Aside from the formal donation, CGT has incurred over \$12,000 in marketing costs in order to produce, develop, and market a new brand in support of the DNR. The "Wines of the Great Outdoors" series was the first new brand introduced by the winery in over nine years, and has seen great success so far. "The positive feedback and support we've received from wine distributors, retailers and restaurants alike shows the value we all place on maintaining the natural beauty of our State Parks," said O'Keefe of the program's first year. Both partners look forward to continued growth and support for the program in the future.

The DNR certainly recognizes the importance of the winery's generous efforts. "We are proud to partner with private businesses like Chateau Grand Traverse who show so much support for public lands," said Ron Olson, Chief of the DNR Parks and Recreation Division. "This relationship will go a long way toward encouraging residents to get out and enjoy Michigan's woods and water, while helping the DNR share the story about real threats to natural resources and opportunities to improve recreation experiences for everyone."

Online voting re-opens today with new recreation funding options. Michigan residents can visit [cgtwines.com/mioutdoors/vote](http://cgtwines.com/mioutdoors/vote) to vote on how future donations should be allocated. The three choices are:

- **Recycling:** Improving recycling options in Michigan State Parks. Funds will purchase additional recycling bins in parks that don't currently recycle.
- **Natural Playgrounds:** Creating playgrounds that celebrate play options in nature, and are designed for children of all physical abilities.
- **Tree Replacement:** The reigning champion! Continuing to replace trees that have been lost to disease or infestation.

The three outdoors-themed wines - appropriately named Woods, Waters, and Picnic - are available statewide at Michigan wine retailers, in the Chateau Grand Traverse Tasting Room, and online store: [store.cgtwines.com](https://store.cgtwines.com).

For more information on the partnership, visit [cgtwines.com/mioutdoors](https://cgtwines.com/mioutdoors).

*Chateau Grand Traverse is a family-owned and operated winery, producing world-class wines on Old Mission Peninsula for over forty years. The winery focuses on making wines from European Vinifera grape varietals with the highest quality, consistency, and environmental sustainability. Visit their Old Mission Peninsula Tasting Room for a complimentary tour of the winery, and taste regionally distinctive, award-winning wines.*

