SAVE THE DUNES

2025 UPDATES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2025 was a challenging year as changing federal priorities affected many of the partnerships and programs we rely on. In the face of these challenges, Save the Dunes rose to the occasion—staying focused, flexible, and deeply committed to protecting Indiana's greatest natural treasure.

This year, we took a significant step in deepening our support of the Indiana Dunes National Park by becoming an official philanthropic partner, dedicated to supporting the park's long-term preservation of the Indiana Dunes. We also continued advancing restoration and public access projects within the park and across Northwest Indiana.

Amid shifting political and funding landscapes, we amplified our advocacy for federal investments vital to protecting the Indiana Dunes, Lake Michigan, and surrounding natural areas. From our continued legal defense of the Public Trust to expanded community outreach across Northwest Indiana, 2025 was a monumental year of resilience, impact, and renewed purpose.



Save the Dunes

Official Partner of the Indiana Dunes National Park

INCREASED CAPACITY WITH 1 NEW STAFF POSITION AND 2 SUMMER INTERNS

COMPLETED INTERIOR RENOVATIONS TO BARKER HOUSE AND A MASTER LANDSCAPING PLAN FOR THE GROUNDS



ADVOCACY

- Visited Washington, D.C. three times to advocate for federal funding benefiting the Indiana Dunes and regional conservation initiatives.
- Increased state level advocacy to strengthen PFAS regulations and wetland protections in Indiana.
- Defended the Indiana shoreline through our ongoing legal efforts to uphold the public's right to access the beach.
- Completed an informational series on environmental advocacy for Lake County youth.

ADVOCATED FOR THE GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE AT $368 M

SUBMITTED 12 COMMENT LETTERS ON PROPOSED REGULATIONS THIS YEAR



CONSERVATION

- Strengthened partnerships by launching a regional coastal resiliency initiative focused on community and municipal engagement around shared conservation priorities, supported by a newly created staff position.
- Completed wetland restoration on U.S. Steel's Gary Works property adjacent to Miller Woods in the Indiana Dunes National Park.
- Expanded on-the-ground stewardship, hosting multiple volunteer workdays at the Indiana Dunes National Park and at our Buell Bur Oak Savanna property, where 100 native oak trees were planted. This property is slated to become part of the national park in the future.

OVER 205 ACRES OF RESTORATION ENABLED THROUGH COLLABORATIVE GRANTS

OVER $108K IN FUNDING ADMINISTERED TO PARTNERS FOR HABITAT RESTORATION

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Began development of Volume 3 of our Living in the Dunes Guide series focused on gardening for birds, set for release in early 2026.
- Hosted wellness focused events including winter wellness walks, bike rides, yoga in the garden, and writing workshops in the woods - highlighting the health benefits of spending time in nature.
- Maintained and stewarded our newly established community pollinator garden at our headquarters, which flourished in its first full season after planting hundreds of native plugs last fall.



COORDINATED 42 IN-PERSON OR ONLINE COMMUNITY EVENTS

HOSTED 130 VOLUNTEERS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS, DONORS, & CORPORATE PARTNERS WHO MAKE OUR WORK POSSIBLE!

289 MEMBERS

221 INDIVIDUAL DONORS

42 CORPORATE & FOUNDATION PARTNERS

TOTAL OF $431K IN FUNDRAISING

BETWEEN OCTOBER 31, 2024 - OCTOBER 31, 2025

Save the Dunes

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