

## EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY CONSERVATION

## UPPER PENINSULA ENVIRONMENTAL COALITION



UPEC provides Upper Peninsula educators with an annual grant program for teachers and youth workers who provide quality environmental education programs to regional children from preschool to high school. The UPEC Environmental Education Fund offers grants of up to \$500 for the 2016 calendar year, with applications due the first week of January.

Teachers, 4-H and Scout leaders, museum staff members, youth service workers, or anyone wishing to start or maintain an environmental education project involving preschool through high school age children are eligible for funding which may be used for all program expenses except salaries.

At the close of the grant period, a written report (in MS Word) with photographs is required by the UPEC Board to document the activities provided under the grant. The report is due December 1.

As the UP's oldest grassroots environmental organization, UPEC is equally willing to fund outstanding projects inside and outside of formal school settings. Opportunities continue this year for projects that blend environmental awareness with the arts, thanks to the Bonnie Miljour Memorial Fund established by Chester Sermak.

To learn more about the program, download a grant application, and obtain mailing information, go to UPEC's website at [upenvironment.org](http://upenvironment.org). The application must be in a single MS Word file, including program description and budget. Completed applications must be received by e-mail or postal mailed no later than Jan. 4, 2016. Funding for successful proposals will be announced by the end of January.

### About UPEC...

For five decades, the Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition has been protecting and seeking to enhance the unique environmental qualities of the UP through public education and monitoring of industry and government. UPEC seeks common ground with diverse individuals and organizations to promote sound planning and management decisions for all the region's natural resources. E-mail us at: [upec@upenvironment.org](mailto:upec@upenvironment.org). Website: [www.upenvironment.org](http://www.upenvironment.org) and [Facebook](#).

The Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition has initiated an annual Community Conservation Grant Program with a call for proposals due each January. The program is in honor of UPEC member Tom Church (Watersmeet) whose 2013 bequest made this new fund possible.

The Community Conservation Grant Program is designed to challenge U.P. communities to promote conservation values within their watershed or local area. In the past short-sighted actions by corporate or individual landowners often degraded the U.P. landscape. Today state and federal environmental regulations as well as the private conservancy movement work to protect natural areas for public benefit and to safeguard significant populations of wildlife, and the ecosystem processes which support them. The Community Conservation Grants initiative focuses on communities that want to step up the protection of conservation values in their locality.

Grants could be awarded for finding ways to enhance native plant and animal life and the systems that support them. It can be starting a community forest or preserve, or restoring a stream or wetland, or putting on a program about local medicinal plants, rare frogs or top predators. These are only examples. Local stakeholders can come up with their own ideas.

UPEC wishes to be more proactive with this new grant program, finding community conservationists who want to improve wildlife habitat, as well as a greater public understanding of how natural systems function in their home communities.

The grants, up to \$10,000 each, are for planning or implementing local conservation projects that engage a variety of stakeholders within a community, from recreational and sportsmen's groups to naturalists, township officials, churches, and schools. The UPEC Board anticipates the program will stimulate grassroots conservation activity in localities throughout the U.P.

More detailed information about the Community Conservation Grants program is available on the UPEC website:

[upenvironment.org/community\\_grants](http://upenvironment.org/community_grants).