# Leelanau & Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail Benefit Study

## Health Benefits

**Health professionals believe the local trail systems are efficient and effective in providing opportunities for valuable and important health benefits.**

**The following themes were identified:**

### 1 TRAILS PROVIDE PREVENTATIVE HEALTH BENEFITS

Health professionals agree that TART Trails are key in providing preventative health benefits to current users of the trails. They also agree that the trails could provide preventative benefits to a wider population, but they struggle to identify how their profession can promote preventative health benefits of the trail to non-users.

### 2 DIRECT HEALTH IMPACTS FROM TRAIL ACTIVITIES

Direct health impacts range from mental and social bonds, to community cohesion, to the well-studied physical benefits, such as, increase in aerobic activity and decreasing diabetes rates in the region.

### 3 BOTH TRAILS HIGHLY ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL

Healthcare professionals believe Leelanau and Sleeping Bear Heritage trails are easily accessible and provide easy opportunities for people to use to improve their health. There are multiple access points, unchallenging terrain, and the trails are affordable to all.

### 4 POTENTIAL FOR PARTNERSHIPS WITH HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS

Health participants highlighted the great potential for more partnerships between diverse organizations to promote trail use among diverse populations.

### 5 INCREASING NUMBER OF CITIZENS DOING AEROBIC EXERCISE

Health participants stressed that use of the trail systems increase the number of citizens receiving important aerobic exercise benefits, which they normally would not be able to attain. The trail systems can provide for other important health benefits (e.g., reducing obesity), but increased promotion is needed.

### FOR THE LEELANAU AND SLEEPING BEAR HERITAGE TRAILS...

Maintaining trails are a cost-effective method to help citizens become more active.

Research shows that ***$104 investment in trail maintenance*** of the LT and SB trails is equivalent to a ***$555 investment in a public health program.***

Abildsco et al., 2012

### ANOTHER STUDY IN LINCOLN, NEBRASKA FOUND...

A cost-benefit ratio of 4.64:1

**Every $1 invested in trails led to $4.64 in direct medical benefit per user/occasion**

Wang et al., 2005 Lincoln, NE

T·A·R·T TRAILS

UF IFAS UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
SFRC School of FOREST RESOURCES & CONSERVATION