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*Promoting restoration and stewardship of the Rouge River since 1986*

## PRESS RELEASE

May 16, 2019

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

*FRED A. AND BARBARA M. ERB FAMILY FOUNDATION TOTAL DONATIONS TO FRIENDS OF THE ROUGE EXCEEDS \$1 MILLION*

### **Sustained Financial Support Transformational for the Rouge River**

PLYMOUTH, Mich. – The Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation recently approved a generous grant to Friends of the Rouge (FOTR) in the amount of \$126,000 for continued general operational support from 2019 - 2021. The Foundation has gifted over \$1 million to FOTR since 2009 to help protect and improve the health of the Rouge River, through individual and community actions.

The funding provides critical support and enhances FOTR's environmental education and stewardship efforts including flagship programs like Rouge Rescue, the Rouge Education Project and the Benthic Macro-Invertebrate Monitoring Program (Bug Hunts) as well as projects that help residents in the watershed plan and plant rain gardens.

"The Erb Family Foundation's support provides pivotal funding to maintain and grow our mission to restore, protect and enhance the Rouge River," said Marie McCormick, FOTR executive director. "The progress we've made over the past decade in cleaning and protecting the entire Rouge watershed would not be possible without our generous donors."

"The Foundation is very pleased to support the Friends of the Rouge," stated Neil Hawkins, President of the Erb Family Foundation. "FOTR has very thoughtfully invested to explore innovative program areas with new partners, including Rain Gardens to the Rescue, Land + Water WORKS, and the Rouge River Water Trail. We look forward to partnering to accelerate FOTR's impact."

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The Friends of the Rouge is a local, community driven nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1986 to raise awareness about the need to clean up the Rouge River in southeast Michigan. To learn more about Friends of the Rouge, visit us at [www.therouge.org](http://www.therouge.org).

The Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation's mission is to nurture environmentally healthy and culturally vibrant communities in Metropolitan Detroit, consistent with sustainable business models, and to support initiatives to restore the Great Lakes Ecosystem. Since its inception in 2009, the Foundation has awarded over \$92 million, including over \$4.5 million to watershed organizations in southeast Michigan. For more information, visit [www.erbff.org](http://www.erbff.org).

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