

Ontario Funding Innovative Microplastic Capture Project in Thunder Bay

Province reinvesting environmental penalties paid by polluters to support local environmental project

NEWS

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THUNDER BAY — The Ontario government is providing nearly **\$45,000** to EcoSuperior to lead a prevention-focused project designed to keep plastic pollution out of local waterways and Lake Superior.

“The Ontario Community Environment Fund taps into the creativity, dedication and experience of local organizations who know where and how best to tackle the impacts of pollution in their communities,” **said Andrea Khanjin, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.** “The innovative microplastics capture work, led by EcoSuperior will help protect our precious water resources for future generations.”

In partnership with the City of Thunder Bay, EcoSuperior will install [LittaTraps](#), a cutting-edge catch basin filter, in storm drains across the city. The devices are designed to capture small fragments of plastics known as microplastics, preventing them from entering water ecosystems, and harming aquatic life, and the many species of birds and wildlife that depend on them. By strategically placing these traps near city parks, waterfront areas and parking lots, the project aims to identify and address plastic pollution hotspots.

“Our mission is 'Building a Healthy Future for People and the Planet'. Through the support of the Government of Ontario, we are able to continue to reduce litter in our waterways and educate our community on the importance of waste reduction,” **said Erin Moir, Co-Executive Director, EcoSuperior Environmental Programs.** “Through this project we will capture litter debris and microplastics before they reach our waterways, making a tangible difference in preserving the health of Lake Superior.”

EcoSuperior will compile a comprehensive report for the City of Thunder Bay to help inform local solutions to plastic waste, which could include trash cleanups, better waste management infrastructure, increased garbage collection in key areas, and improved signage. EcoSuperior will also extend the impact of the collected data by connecting with the International Trash Trapping Network to contribute to the global fight against plastic pollution.

Funding for this project is being provided through the 2023 [Ontario Community Environment Fund](#), which uses environmental penalties paid by polluters to support locally-driven activities that protect and restore areas impacted by pollution. This year, Ontario will invest nearly **\$1.5 million** in these projects, which may include activities like shoreline

cleanups, habitat restoration and tree planting. The EcoSuperior project is one of the first such projects to receive funds in 2024.

Quotes

“Our government’s support for EcoSuperior’s project to divert microplastics from our waterways is an important commitment to the region. Funding from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks through their Ontario Community Environment Fund contributes to safeguarding clean water for generations to come.”

**- Kevin Holland
MPP for Thunder Bay–Atikokan**

"It is our duty to protect Lake Superior and all of our surrounding waterways. Through the Ontario Community Environment Fund, EcoSuperior will be able to help address the plastic pollution that enters our waterways and help protect the resources and ecosystems that depend on them. This is fantastic news for our community."

**- Ken Boshcoff
Mayor, City of Thunder Bay**

QUICK FACTS

- Lake Superior, which provides the City of Thunder Bay and region’s drinking water, is the world’s largest freshwater lake by surface area, and the deepest of the Great Lakes.
- Annually over 70,000 pounds of plastic debris ends up in Lake Superior, impacting water quality.
- Plastic litter and microplastics that enter waterways through storm drains typically come from careless littering, tire rubber from our vehicles and most commonly cigarette butts.
- Since 2010, the Ontario Community Environment Fund has committed nearly \$2.4 million to 97 projects that have planted over 390,000 trees, restored over 50 kilometres of shoreline, collected 1,000 bags of garbage and resulted in the logging of over 11,000 volunteer hours.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Learn more about the OCEF program](#)
[Environmental Penalty Annual Reports](#)

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