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## **Two Habitat for Humanity Affiliates in Northern Lower Michigan Announce Merger**

**MAY 19, 2025 PETOSKEY, MI** – Habitat for Humanity provides safe, affordable housing through a worldwide network of affiliates. Two of those affiliates — Northwest Michigan and Cheboygan County — have merged to create more housing choices for people in northern Michigan. The merged organization will be known as Northwest Michigan Habitat for Humanity.

“Counties are arbitrary definitions on a map which do not constrain where people live or work,” said Sarah Ulrich, Executive Director. “This region experiences much crossover, as people frequently live in one county and work in another. By creating one organization that serves Emmet, Charlevoix and Cheboygan counties, we will be able to steward resources to serve all communities with what they need most.”

All three of the above-referenced counties are experiencing a housing shortage. By merging operations, the expanded organization hopes to have more options for finding large tracts of affordable land on which to build.

“We received tremendous financial support in 2022, which allowed us to purchase a community-sized plot of land called Meadowlands,” Ulrich said. “We’ve innovated with high-quality modular homes, and increased efficiency by focusing on a single community. We used to complete two or three homes per year. Thanks to the large plot of land and the process changes we have implemented, we are on a pace to build 12-15 homes per year. While we will continue to build single homes on available property, we are working to identify land for our next large project. By eliminating the artificial barriers of county lines, we hope to find land that allows us to maintain or increase this pace of building so that more people can find a safe, permanent home.”

The merged organization will also create efficiencies that allow more dollars to go directly to home builds and services. In addition, the two ReStore locations will have a broader pickup range and more opportunity to share inventory. “We can now offer a more complete shopping experience at both our Petoskey and Cheboygan stores,” Ulrich said.

“Habitat for Humanity affiliates share the same goals of providing a hand up for safe, affordable homes and housing repairs,” said Mandy Martin, former Executive Director in Cheboygan and now Director of Finance for the merged organization. “Our combined efforts will reduce duplication, strengthen our impact, and allow us to build and repair even more homes in more communities.”

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Board chair Nick Moore makes it clear that the entire board is committed to serving all three counties equitably and well. "We will steward resources to serve all communities with what they need most," Moore said. "As a board, we are excited about how we can collaborate to raise funds and do more good."

**About:** Northwest Michigan Habitat for Humanity seeks to put God's love into action by bringing people together to build homes, community and hope in Emmet, Charlevoix and Cheboygan counties. Learn more at [northwestmihabitat.org](http://northwestmihabitat.org).

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