



# Strategy For A Bright Future

DeVries Nature Conservancy, 2635 N. M-52, Owosso, MI

## Building Overview

- Building owner: DeVries Nature Conservancy
- Building type: One nature center building, two large pole barns
- Year of construction: 1950s

## Planned Upgrades

- DHW Pipe Insulation
- LED Lighting Retrofit
- Ground-Mounted 12KW Solar System Installation

## Project Savings

- Annual savings of 19,653 kWh
  - 4,599 kWh Lighting Retrofit
  - 14,054 kWh Solar System
- Annual savings over \$2,000 after lease period. 70% savings.

## Project Funding

- Energy Audit: C.S. Mott Foundation Grant
- Lighting Retrofit and Solar Installation: Chart House Energy Lease Agreement (6-year lease)
- After Year 6 Solar System Buyout: Cook Family Foundation Grant



The new solar array will provide clean power for DeVries Nature Conservancy, helping to promote its community farm system of agricultural production that is ecologically sustainable, socially responsible, community-oriented, and economically viable.

## Project Summary

As part of a C.S. Mott Foundation Grant and a Nonprofit Capacity Building Energy Efficiency Program offered by the Cook Family Foundation, Michigan Energy Options (MEO) and Elevate Energy identified and selected Shiawassee County nonprofits seeking energy efficiency improvements. MEO and Elevate offered their expertise to expose areas of opportunity for energy and cost savings and assisted nonprofits in becoming financially stable.

DeVries Nature Conservancy works to help people understand local Michigan heritage by cultivating a “sense of place.” The Conservancy consists of one main nature center building, a community farm, and two large pole barns, which are open to the public year-round. Between interior lighting, office

equipment, and wildlife displays, the Conservancy was spending \$230 per month for utility bills.

MEO and Elevate assessed DeVries’ buildings and provided a customized report highlighting the most cost-effective energy efficiency upgrades. The report included estimates of costs, savings, and payback times for the recommended upgrades. Selected upgrades included an LED lighting retrofit and solar installation financed through lease agreement with Chart House Energy with no upfront cost to DeVries Nature Conservancy. Chart House Energy utilized ITC solar tax credit and depreciation of equipment to finance the project. After year six DeVries Nature Conservancy will buyout Chart House Energy and own the system to realize savings for the duration of the equipment lifetime over 25 years.