SWMLC
Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy

Landscapes

Winter/Spring 2019 • Vol. 28, No. 1

Eggerstedt Conservation Easement

Story on page 4

Photo: Bruce Howe, Land Protection Specialist, Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy

Black River Preserve, Geneva Township, Van Buren County
Amelia Hansen

Word from the President

Peter Ter Louw, President and Executive Director

I took some time off at the end of the year to clear my head and seek perspective on work and life, first heading east to visit family and friends, followed by a venture to the deserts of Arizona and California where I soaked up the sun and warmth. The trip gave me time to reflect on my past 17 years with Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy (SWMLC), the organization's growth, the projects I've worked on, and the people I've been honored to work with and gotten to know. My involvement in SWMLC has been incredibly fulfilling both professionally and personally.

The desert's emptiness and permanence provided a perspective on SWMLC that took me far beyond daily problems. We have been so fortunate to work with so many individuals and organizations who share our conservation spirit. Opportunities to work together on high quality projects continue to grow, even as our approach and abilities evolve and strengthen.

We face challenges, too. One of the most important is ensuring that SWMLC is a sustainable organization, capable of stewarding the land we have protected in perpetuity.

We face challenges, too. One of the most important is ensuring that SWMLC is a sustainable organization, capable of stewarding the land we have protected in perpetuity. No small feat, in that we have protected over 26 square miles in our 28 years of work in southwest Michigan. But we can do it. My travels through the desert reconfirmed my own focus and commitment to building – along with staff and board – a sustainable land conservancy that supports our conservation work far into the future.

As part of that commitment to the future, we are focused on developing our endowment, the Sustain SWMLC Fund, and are grateful for and honored by your generous response to last spring's campaign. Thank you. Equally important are the planned gifts that many of you have made, or are considering, as part of your will. As people who love the land of southwest Michigan, I encourage everyone to consider a planned gift as part of your legacy. Your gift will help ensure that SWMLC will be here forever to nurture and share this region's landscapes.

Magically, my warm weather walkabout coincided with the Polar Vortex . . . sometimes you're just lucky.

If you're interested in discussing how you can accomplish your goals to leave a lasting gift, please call Peter Ter Louw for a confidential conversation at 269-324-1600.

The satyr needed a hero . . . and it was you.

We can't tell you how deeply thankful we are for your support!

We wish to extend our deepest and most heartfelt gratitude for the incredible love and generosity you've all shown for our little friend, the endangered Mitchell's satyr butterfly.

You far-exceeded our $35,000 goal, donating a total of over $47,000 to date.

In fact, your overwhelming generosity will enable us to cover unexpected expenses at closing that could have otherwise derailed the project. We're still working out the final details, but with your support we now have the financial resources needed to protect this Mitchell's satyr habitat in perpetuity. Because of your support, these butterflies will hopefully be around for many future generations to enjoy. And any funds we don't need to use to acquire the property will go directly toward keeping it healthy over the long-term.

Thank you.

Please stay tuned for the fairy tale ending of the Mitchell's satyr story in an upcoming issue of *Landscapes.*

Mark your calendars for *Unveil the Trail!*

Saturday, May 11, 1 - 3 pm
Celebrating barrier-free access at Bow in the Clouds Preserve

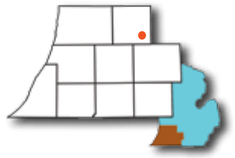
It's been years in the making, but with your help, we're finally ready to "Unveil the Trail" at Bow in the Clouds Preserve. We hope you'll join us on Saturday, May 11, for the official opening of the new, universal access, barrier-free trail at this very special preserve in the heart of urban Kalamazoo.

At Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, we know how important access to nature is for everyone, so we wanted to create a place in nature that all people could visit, no matter their age, ability, or background. Conveniently located near Comstock Northwest and Kalamazoo's Burke Acres and Eastside Neighborhoods, the new barrier-free trail at Bow in the Clouds Preserve will be a place where the entire community can enjoy the life-giving benefits of nature.

Thanks to generous donations from the Kalamazoo Community Foundation and many individual private donors like you, the universal access, barrier-free loop trail through the grassy upland and a viewing platform overlooking the fen wetland are finished. And with support from Landscape Forms, there will soon be several benches along the trail where people can relax and enjoy this beautiful natural area.

Come and check out the trail for yourself. *Hope to see you there!*

Eggerstedt Conservation Easement



Amelia Hansen, SWMLC Communications Specialist

Badgers, otters, sandhill cranes . . . mythic, charismatic animals that conjure visions of rugged places that are far from southwest Michigan.

But given enough space and seclusion, these creatures can still thrive right here in their historic habitat, and the Eggerstedt family's Barry County land offers that home. Rye Eggerstedt knows; he's seen them there.

There are no clues to the wild country that lies beyond Rye's wooded backyard but the aerial map on the mantel reveals the big picture. Square wildlife food plots quickly give way to large freeform clumps of forest framing a vast wetland, with the squiggly lines of Ellis and Wanondaga Creeks twisting through. These pristine headwaters feed the Battle Creek River, which flows into the Kalamazoo River, which ultimately empties into Lake Michigan.

The rolling hardwood-covered hills and the marsh that touches the horizon are Rye's stomping grounds, places that he has explored and hunted since he was a kid – and he wants to keep them wild.

"It makes no sense to divide it," he says, glancing out the window. Night has fallen and hides the outdoors but Rye knows what's out there. "The building boom of the 80's was kind of scary, seeing all those little houses popping up everywhere and the land sub-divided down."

He doesn't want to see that happen here.

In protecting the 203-acre property with a conservation easement, Rye, his father Gene, and his brother Tim are creating a large chunk of protected land where water has a clean start and wildlife can flourish. Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy very much appreciates the partnership of the Eggerstedt Family in conserving this important property, and are grateful to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality for their aid in helping to protect it forever.

When asked why he cares so much, Rye explains, "It will be here longer than anyone living here. The land is something that lasts."

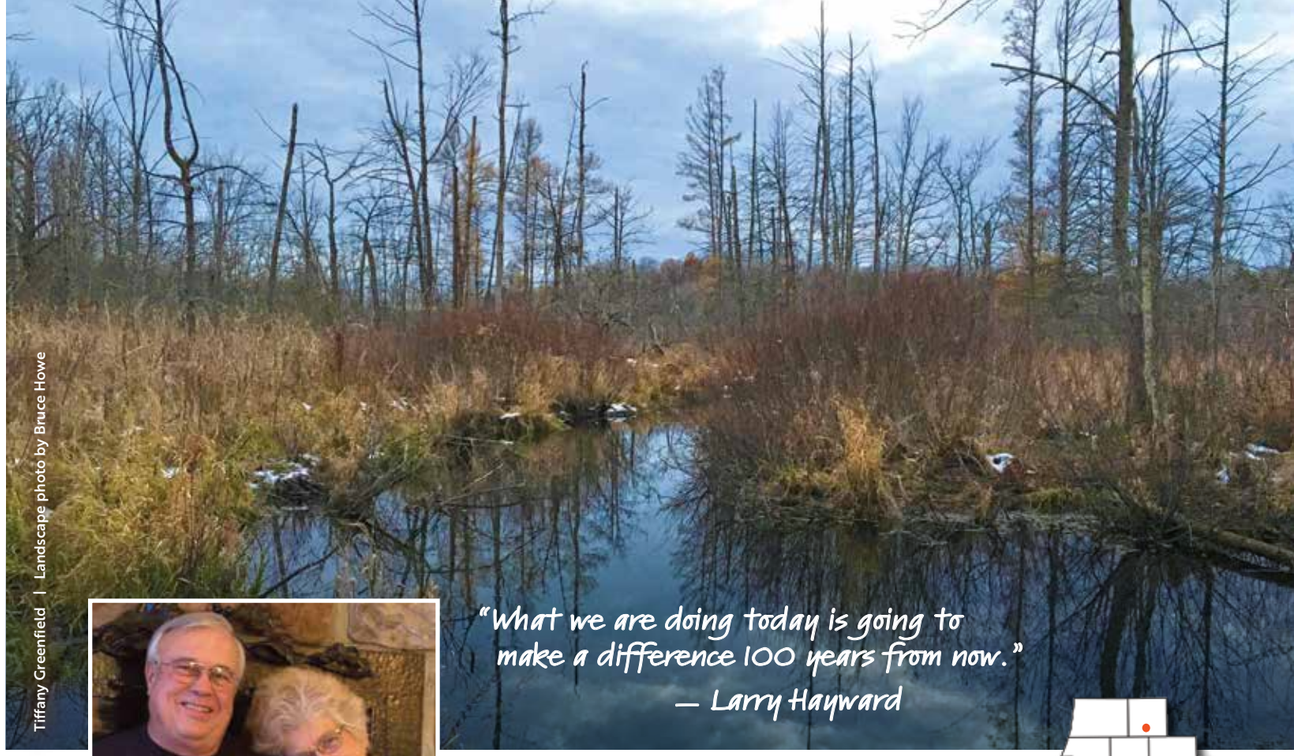
Thank you to the Eggerstedt Family!

Amelia Hansen

"The land is something that lasts."
— Rye Eggerstedt

Watch the video of these sandhill cranes flying over the Eggerstedt Conservation Easement on our website: http://bit.ly/SWMLC-Eggerstedt-CE

Video and landscape photo by Bruce Howe



Tiffany Greenfield | Landscape photo by Bruce Howe

"What we are doing today is going to make a difference 100 years from now."
— Larry Hayward

Ira and Linnea Hall Conservation Easement

Amelia Hansen, SWMLC Communications Specialist

It's December, and the wetlands on Larry and Noel Hayward's property have an austere beauty. It's a sober time of year, but one is quickly cheered in knowing that spring really isn't all that far away, and the marsh will soon be green and lively with frog calls and bird song. Looking toward the future, the Haywards have embodied this same forward-thinking attitude in protecting their land forever with Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy.

Now called the Ira and Linnea Hall Conservation Easement in honor of Noel's parents who once owned and farmed the upland areas, the 150-acre property is a beautiful mix of habitats. Nearly half of it is covered in oak-hickory forest, planted pines, and prime farmland; the other 80 acres contain a variety of wetland types, all in excellent condition.

These high-quality wetlands include over half a mile of frontage on pristine Augusta Creek and surround half of Marshall Lake. The other half of the lake is protected by the 200-acre Ford Farm Conservation Easement, which is also held by Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy. Ford Farm is adjacent to the 160-acre Marshall Farm, owned by Michigan State University Kellogg Biological Station. The combination of the three properties creates a block of 516 acres of protected land, which is vitally important to wildlife.

Several studies have identified the Augusta Creek Watershed as high priority for conservation. It has long been an area of focus for Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy because of its large size, pristine quality, and because it flows directly into the Kalamazoo River.

The Haywards have generously given their Barry Township property's development rights to Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy. Like widening circles in the water, the Hayward's grace not only protects their own property, but also helps to protect wildlife habitat and water quality hundreds of miles away.

Thank you, Larry and Noel!

LAND

They're not making any more of it!

Why do normal, everyday people choose to conserve their land?

To pass down their family's cherished home or family farm to future generations.

To help protect the other animals and birds that also call it home.

To protect its natural beauty, no matter who owns it in the future.

Because they love it and feel connected to it, and cannot bear the thought of it being subdivided or built up with lots of houses or commercial development.

Mostly, people protect the land they love because they know that it's up to them.

"We chose to conserve this property with Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy because there are very few wetlands remaining on Corey Lake, and protecting what remains is important."

— Charlotte Mittler

COREY LAKE NORTH SHORE PRESERVE
ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

The Mittler Family has donated land for one preserve (Corey Lake North Shore Preserve) and two conservation easements (Walnut Farm and Forked Lake Conservation Easements) to Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, protecting important wildlife corridors and wetlands in the process.

Landscape and portrait photos by Peter Ter Louw

How You Can Protect Your Land

There are basically two ways to partner with Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy to protect your land. Both offer significant, but different, benefits for landowners.

Create a conservation easement

You continue to own the land and it remains private, but you agree to conserve it forever. This is a great option for people who still plan to use or live on their land, but are committed to protecting it forever.

If you create a conservation easement, the benefits include:

- Potential lowering of your property tax
- Potential deduction from your federal income tax (if you donate the development rights)
- Sales revenue (if you sell them)
- Avoiding the "pop-up" property tax, which benefits your inheritors or future buyers when the property is transferred.
- Leaving a legacy: naming a conservation easement after your family or in someone's honor
- Contributing toward a healthier environment
- Open space is conserved, rural character is kept intact, and nature is protected forever
- Keeping the land and continuing to use it as you always have

Create a public nature preserve

The land will be owned and managed by Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy and shared with the public to enjoy. This is a great option for people who have land they don't use and want to see protected forever.

If you create a public nature preserve, the benefits include:

- No more property taxes
- Deduction from your federal income tax (if you donate the property)
- Sales revenue (if you sell the property)
- Leaving a legacy: naming a preserve after your family or in someone's honor
- Contributing toward a healthier environment
- Open space is conserved, rural character is kept intact, and nature is protected forever
- Sharing nature with the community

"I think, many many years from now, someone is going to look back and say, 'By golly, the old man was right.'"

— Harry Conway

CONWAY CONSERVATION EASEMENT
CALHOUN COUNTY

Sadly, Harry Conway passed away last spring but his 60-acre haven along Harper Creek will be protected forever by Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy.

Pam Larson

We wish we could protect them all, but we can't.

We are a small, local, non-profit organization with limited funding – and the costs associated with conserving land in perpetuity are high. Over time, we have had to develop a selection process that is based on a property's size, location, and habitat quality.

To be turned down does **not** mean that your land is no good, it just means that we know that we will not be able to give it the care it will need to protect it forever.

Creating a Conservation Easement:

Own, stay on, or sell your land . . . knowing that it's protected.

What is a conservation easement? Think of a bundle of sticks . . .

What if owning land was like holding a bundle of sticks? Each stick represents a ***right*** – such as the right to transfer the property, construct buildings, graze farm animals, clearcut a forest, or subdivide the land. If you wanted to make sure that some of those activities could never happen (such as clearcutting the forest or building a bunch of houses on it), you could donate or sell some of those sticks (rights) to Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, with the understanding that we will protect them forever.

No matter who owns that property in the future, those permanent restrictions will still apply – *forever.*

What's in the bundle?

What if you want to be able to put up a pole barn, or manage the woodlot with selective cutting? You still can. An area called a "building envelope" may be reserved for future construction when the easement is drawn up, and activities such as agriculture or forest management are typically included in these agreements.

The landowner and SWMLC work together to draft an easement that reflects both the landowner's goals and the conservation values of the property.

Live your life.

Placing a conservation easement on a property means that the landowner may continue to own, live on, and use their private property – while its important natural features are protected forever by Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy.

Who enforces the rules?

Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy is legally bound to uphold the terms of all of our conservation easements, and we do just that through our monitoring program which includes annual visits to the property.

Benefits

Many landowners talk about the peace of mind they feel in knowing that their land is protected forever. On a more practical level, there may be financial benefits as well, such as potential reduction of property tax, income tax, or estate tax (each case is different, so always check with your own tax professional or legal advisor).

Costs

There are costs associated with conserving your land but, in some cases, we're able to receive grants that can offset those costs.

I'm interested in protecting my land!

What do I do now?

If you would like to explore options, please call Bruce Howe or Emily Wilke for a confidential conversation at 269-324-1600.

I don't have any land to conserve . . . are there other ways I can help protect nature in southwest Michigan?

YES! There are lots of ways to help!

Give to the Sustain SWMLC Endowment Fund

Give to the Sustain SWMLC Fund, an endowment fund that will grow year after year, eventually bearing the fruits and dividends that will make certain that, generations from now, Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy will be around to continue to protect and care for southwest Michigan's most wild and scenic places.

Make a gift of real estate

A gift of real estate, such as your primary residence or vacation home, is a very significant contribution. Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy accepts gifts of all types of property – from condos or townhouses that can be sold to further our mission – to land that can be conserved as nature preserves or conservation easements.

Make a planned gift

Join the amazing people who know that today is the time to ensure conservation for tomorrow. There are many options to consider – while still keeping the flexibility to make changes should your circumstances change – such as naming Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy (SWMLC) in your will or trust, naming SWMLC as a primary or contingent beneficiary of your life insurance policy, or naming SWMLC as a full or partial beneficiary of your IRA, 401(k) or other qualified retirement plan.

Become a member of the Blue Green Society

To save the blue, we must protect the green. Join this dedicated group of givers who have made an annual commitment of $1000 or more.

Make a recurring gift

Join the ever-growing group of donors who consistently pledge to support land protection through monthly, quarterly or yearly donation plans setup to bill automatically – and securely – from your credit card.

Become a member

Your membership donation empowers the stewardship of sensitive habitat and wildlife, protection of watersheds, and the creation of natural spaces where a new generation of conservationists can connect with nature.

Volunteer

People make a lasting difference, providing time, wisdom, energy, expertise – allowing us to broaden our resources and protect more natural places.

"I'd like to be here in 50 years to see how things have turned out."
— Woody Boudeman

BOUDEMAN CONSERVATION EASEMENTS
BARRY & KALAMAZOO COUNTIES

The Boudeman Family has conserved over 1,000 acres of land, protecting the water quality of Gull Lake and the rural character of the village of Richland.

Amelia Hansen

The Land's "Best Self"

Preserving property on paper only marks the beginning of helping the land become its "best self."

Mitch Lettow, SWMLC Stewardship Specialist

HOP! participants admire the beauty of Mud Lake at Portman Nature Preserve.

Photo courtesy of the Stephens Family

Central to SWMLC's understanding of stewardship is the idea that setting land aside with no one to look after it limits the depth of conservation that we can achieve.

Portman Nature Preserve: well on the way to becoming its Best Self

A decade has passed since SWMLC staffer Nate Fuller first laid eyes on the Portman property and knew it was something special. Ten years of property surveys, grant applications, meetings, emails, phone calls, paperwork, discussions, and community input. Ten years of fundraising: 300 individual donors, 8 different grants, 2 willing landowners, and 4 private foundations raised over 2 million dollars for the purchase, improvement, and care of the Portman property (see ***Landscapes** Fall 2016,* Vol. 25, No. 3). Portman's 190 acres of rolling woods and clear water represent our most complex, challenging, and expensive nature preserve project to date.

Of course, it was all worth it.

At Portman, the land was wonderful "as is," but it was not its best self. With a roaring start to its life as a nature preserve, we wasted no time in helping it achieve that best self. The ink had barely dried on the deed before garbage bags were being filled with garlic mustard, surveyors squelched through wetlands in rubber boots, and brush saws were whacking down invasive autumn olive.

Portman has received more tender loving care in its two years as a nature preserve than we might have hoped it would receive in ten, thanks to the enthusiasm and support of the community. Without it, Portman would not be on such a fast track to becoming its best self.

Members of the Mattawan Environmental Club do battle against invasive autumn olive at Portman Nature Preserve

Nate Fuller

Portman's Best Self (so far):

Fewer invasives An invasive plant survey was conducted on every acre of the preserve and invasive plant management on 86% of the preserve (135 acres!).

Wildlife Better understanding of the preserve's reptile and amphibian life through scientific surveys, including use of "turtle dogs" to locate difficult to find populations.

Greater plant diversity 2.5 acres of restoration plantings including native grasses, wildflowers, and wild plum trees.

Safe homes for endangered species Surveys, habitat restoration, and release of captive-raised caterpillars for Mitchell's satyr butterflies.

Beautiful land for hikers Creation of 2.5 miles of marked trails and construction of a 580-foot elevated boardwalk through Lime Lake's wetlands.

Loving the land Incredible generosity of volunteers, logging over 500 hours towards habitat restoration and trail work.

Learning about the land Dozens of experiential learning trips from Mattawan and Paw Paw students; plus elementary, undergraduate, graduate students, and university researchers conducting projects to increase understanding of the preserve's plant life.

Keeping It Natural

Bruce Howe, SWMLC Land Protection Specialist

It was a couple of days before the public's first chance to see Portman Nature Preserve and I was mowing an open area where a large pavilion tent would be set up. Along I went, unperturbed – until suddenly I felt a tingling sensation moving up my leg, followed shortly after by several sharp pinches. Ground bees! Surely, the bees whose nest I had just ravaged were as unhappy as I was, but the condition of their home never crossed my mind as I scrambled away – simultaneously hopping, running, and swatting.

Ask anyone who has worked on Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy's field crew (as I did) – or volunteered to monitor a conservation easement or remove invasive species at a preserve – and you'll quickly realize that tales like this one are a dime a dozen. Far from the spotlight of press releases and grand opening celebrations, they tell the story of the largely invisible work that staff and volunteers must do to keep natural areas just that way, natural.

Every year we must monitor even the muckiest, buggiest easements. And even our oldest and smallest preserves need looking after.

Acquisition of a new preserve or conservation easement does not signify the end of our work, only the beginning.

Unrecognizable in protective gear, Bruce ignites a prescribed burn at Chipman Preserve. Fire is an important habitat management tool at many of our preserves with prairies or savannas.

Nate Fuller

Volunteering that Lasts Forever

Cindy Mills, SWMLC Conservation Easement Specialist

Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy relies on the dedicated volunteers on our Land Protection Team. With over 100 conservation easements held on privately-owned land all over southwest Michigan, we need their help!

Even before we can accept an easement, Land Protection volunteers play an important role in helping to assess a property's potential: participating in site visits, making lists of the property's plants and animals, attending meetings, and weighing in on discussions.

Annually, they monitor the properties on which we hold conservation easements – thrashing through rose thickets, slogging through swamp water, and braving sunburn – to make sure that the agreement terms are being honored.

It's a lot of work – but it's essential to protecting land forever.

We are endlessly grateful to our Land Protection Team volunteers, who donate their time and energy to exploring forests, wetlands, prairies, streams, and fields throughout our corner of the state.

Thank you, Land Protection Volunteers!

Would you like to join the Land Protection Team? We would love to have you! Please contact Cindy Mills by emailing cmills@swmlc.org or calling 269-324-1600 x306.

Land Protection Team volunteer Lynn Steil stoically wades into thigh-deep water while monitoring a conservation easement.

Bruce Howe

Setting the Stage for Resiliency

Nate Fuller, SWMLC Conservation & Stewardship Director

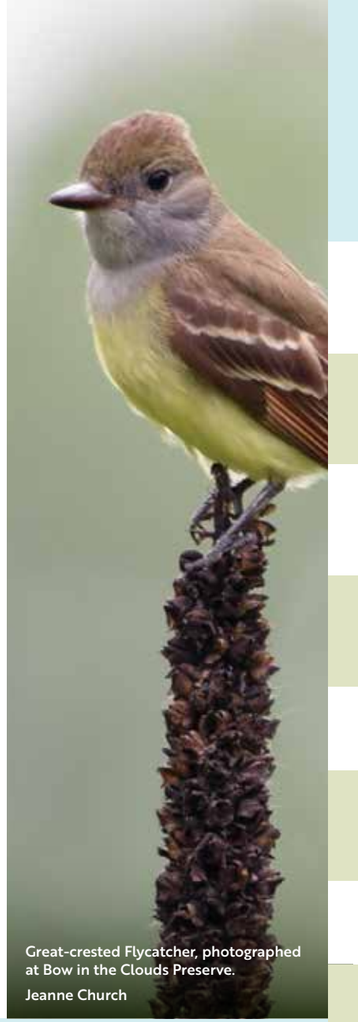
What if we thought of southwest Michigan as a National Park? The nine-county service area of Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy is only a bit larger than Yellowstone National Park. Nature isn't bound by political boundaries and the reality is that southwest Michigan is a three million acre blend of rivers and roads, forests and cities, wetlands and farms, hills and homes.

The time is ripe for a conservation strategy that considers all of southwest Michigan as a single landscape. Over the past decade, Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy has developed many regional plans focused on watersheds and wildlife areas. The collection of plans prioritized the protection of roughly two dozen lands, which we are proud to say were protected with few exceptions. We are now ready to reexamine the region with fresh perspective, scope, and energy.

Over the coming year Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy will be working with partners from throughout the region to identify critical areas for protection. Our goal is to protect the quality of life for our natural and human communities, creating a region of conservation resiliency. "Conservation resiliency" are the buzzwords used these days to talk about how to keep the complexity of our natural heritage intact over the long haul. Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy wants to ensure the land we have protected, and the land we protect in the coming years, is well placed to sustain a rich variety of plants, animals, and habitats in ever changing conditions.

The time is ripe for a conservation strategy that considers all of southwest Michigan as a single landscape.

For some resiliency means retaining our region's rich biodiversity and for others it means ensuring plentiful clean water. Some people look for landscapes that can support a diversity of wildlife in times of drought and flood, while others talk of wildlife corridors. All perspectives are welcome and we anticipate sharing our findings in a Conservation Resiliency Plan by year's end.



Great-crested Flycatcher, photographed at Bow in the Clouds Preserve.
Jeanne Church

Nerd Out in Nature! SWMLC's Healing Our Land Hikes

What does it take to restore ecological health to our landscape?

At Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, we often "talk the talk" about the value of 'stewardship' – taking care of the land. With this summer's Healing Our Land Hikes series, you can "walk the talk" with us, and see how we have put our stewardship philosophy into action at three different Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy nature preserves.

Guided by stewardship staff, we will explore three of our most challenging and successful habitat restoration projects to date. From the successes to the follies, and all of the "how tos" in between, we will offer a chance to see the details and hear the stories behind the habitats – from savannas to streams – that form the backdrop to some of our favorite hiking trails.

Culvert removal at Black River Preserve, September 2018.
Nate Fuller

Watch our newsletter calendar and website for details and registration for these upcoming Healing Our Landscape Hikes.
June 8: Black River Preserve, Van Buren County July 27: Hidden Pond Preserve, Barry County
August 10: Chipman Preserve, Kalamazoo County

Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy Events & Workdays

Unless indicated, all events and workdays have no admission fee and are open to the public. Find details, maps, and directions on our website by using this QR code or entering www.swmlc.org/swmlc-events-workdays.

RSVP: Please help us to plan our events by registering, either using the secure forms included in the online event descriptions, or by contacting Miko at 269-324-1600 x302 or cmdargitz@swmlc.org. ***Thank you!***

Map Hike & Treasure Hunt Tike Hike
SUNDAY • April 14 • 3:30 pm • BLACK RIVER PRESERVE • FAMILY & KIDS

X marks the spot! Using age-appropriate maps, the group will look for hidden treasure.
WITH JULIE COLLARD OF KALAMAZOO LITTLE ADVENTURERS' CLUB and TJ WILKINSON, SWMLC BOARD MEMBER

Early Bird Special Guided Bird Walk
THURSDAY • April 18 • 9 am • CHIPMAN PRESERVE • NATURALIST HIKE

SPACE IS LIMITED, PLEASE REGISTER
Join Nate Fuller, SWMLC Conservation & Stewardship Director, and members of Audubon Society of Kalamazoo in welcoming back the first migrant birds.

Earth Day Workday
SATURDAY • April 20 • 1 - 4 pm • BOW IN THE CLOUDS PRESERVE • VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

SPACE IS LIMITED, PLEASE REGISTER
Pitch in for Mother Earth, then toast our work at Old Dog Tavern with a complimentary pint on Great Lakes Brewing Company!

Explore the History of Wau-Ke-Na
THURSDAY • April 25 • 7 pm • GLENN COMMUNITY CENTER, GLENN, MI • PRESENTATION

SPACE IS LIMITED, PLEASE REGISTER
Nate Fuller will give a lively, thoughtful presentation on the natural and human history of this big, beautiful preserve.

Community Garlic Mustard Pull
DATE TO BE DECIDED • 9 am - 12 pm • PORTMAN NATURE PRESERVE • VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Removing garlic mustard is easy work that improves habitats. Please stay tuned for a May date when the mustard will be at its best (worst) for pulling.

Blue Green Society Brunch
SATURDAY • May 11 • 10:30 am - 12:30 pm • BOW IN THE CLOUDS PRESERVE • BY INVITATION

A special thank you to the dedicated donors who annually give $1000 or more (invitations will go out by mail in mid-April).
Interested in joining the Blue Green Society? Please call the office for details at 269-324-1600 or email us at conserveland@swmlc.org.

Unveil the Trail!
SATURDAY • May 11 • 1 - 3 pm • BOW IN THE CLOUDS PRESERVE • SPECIAL EVENT

Celebrate the completion of the new, universal access, barrier-free trail and overlook that were built with community support.

Make a Card for Mom Tike Hike & HOP! Launch
SUNDAY • May 12 • 3:30 pm • WOLF TREE NATURE TRAILS • FAMILY & KIDS

Kids love to give cards and flowers to their moms and Wolf Tree's savanna trails have plenty to spare.
WITH JULIE COLLARD OF KALAMAZOO LITTLE ADVENTURERS' CLUB and TJ WILKINSON, SWMLC BOARD MEMBER

Songbird Stroll Guided Bird Walk
THURSDAY • May 16 • 9 am • CHIPMAN PRESERVE • NATURALIST HIKE

SPACE IS LIMITED, PLEASE REGISTER
Black River Preserve is a bird magnet! Please join SWMLC's Nate Fuller on a songbird search that's sure to reward.

Behold the Power of Community!
SATURDAY • June 1 • 1 - 3 pm • PORTMAN NATURE PRESERVE • SPECIAL EVENT

Check out new improvements at this popular preserve, made possible by community efforts (including the new Mud Lake viewing platform).

Healing Our Land Hike: Black River Preserve
SATURDAY • June 8 • 9:30 am - 12 pm • NATURALIST HIKE

SPACE IS LIMITED, PLEASE REGISTER
Hike through the literal "ups and downs" of Black River Preserve, while hearing about the history and restoration of its land and water.

Pilgrim Haven Rocks! Tike Hike
SUNDAY • June 9 • 3:30 pm • PILGRIM HAVEN NATURAL AREA • FAMILY & KIDS

Search for round rocks, pretty pebbles, and elusive 'lightning stones'.
WITH JULIE COLLARD OF KALAMAZOO LITTLE ADVENTURERS' CLUB and TJ WILKINSON, SWMLC BOARD MEMBER

Native Planting Workday
SATURDAY • June 15 • 9 am - 12 pm • PILGRIM HAVEN NATURAL AREA • VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Spring is a great time to get your hands in the dirt – or the sand, in the case of Pilgrim Haven!

2018 Year End Mitchell's Satyr Appeal Donors

To all of you who cared so much about this little endangered butterfly that you gave from your hearts to help protect its rare fen habitat forever, thank you.

Mitchell's satyr butterfly at Coldwater Fen Preserve
Nate Fuller

Individuals

Anonymous (5)
Jill Allread
Jared Arnold
Ned and Neva Asplundh
Mike Bailey
Lindsy Barton
Alan Baudler
Rebecca Beech
Robert and Janet Beemer
Gerald and Mickey Benson
Harry Bird
Dr. Jack Bley
Melinda J. Bloom
Karen Bondarchuk and Art Winslow
Jeremy and Marleen Bottoms
Robert Bradley and Charlotte Mistretta
William and Victoria Brander
Matt and Mary Brazys
Jo Beth Bridleman
Vance Senecal and Lynne Bruehlman
Jane Bruns
Mr. Jewell D. Burdette
Robin K. Byrn
Larry and Barbara Case
Heather Catania
Judith Kay M. Chase
Vicki Clark
Robert and Elizabeth Code
Mr. Jason Combs
Jeff Conner and Buffy Silverman
Judy Corak
Doug Coulter and Pam Hoppe
Nancy and Ron Crowell
Tamara Crupi
Alica N. Cummings
Peter and Amanda DeBoer
Pamela R. Dewey
Gary and Marjory Dietz
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If we have accidently omitted your name, or you find an error, we apologize.

Please call Nicole at 269-324-1600 x307 so we can correct the mistake.

Thank you.

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The following contributions were made by people who share our vision for southwest Michigan in which clean water and wildlife habitat are protected for future generations.

Look for a complete list of donors in our next Annual Report issue.

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Did you know that you can make a difference for nature every month?

Set up a sustaining membership that will be automatically billed to your credit card and you will provide Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy with a stable source of support.

You decide how much you want to contribute and how often – monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, annually. There's no need to hassle with checks or envelopes any more!

It's easy: set up your account by using this QR code or by typing *www.swmlc.org/become-a-member* and clicking the *join now!* button.

Thank you

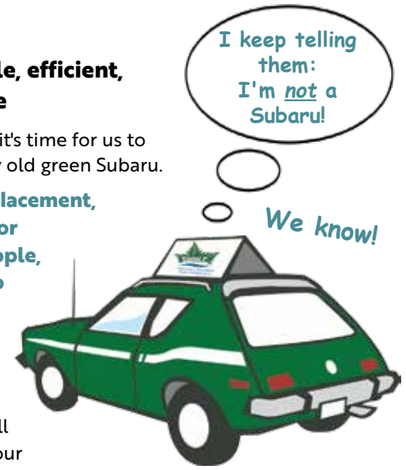
"U-R" part of "NATURE" and YOU ARE making local conservation possible.

Help Wanted: reliable, efficient, hard-working vehicle

After more than 13 years, it's time for us to say goodbye to our trusty old green Subaru.

We're looking for a replacement, a fuel-efficient wagon or SUV that seats 4-5 people, with some space left to haul gear.

If you have a vehicle like this that you would like to donate, or sell for a reasonable price, we will be very grateful – AND your gift will be fully-tax deductible. Please email us at conserveland@swmlc.org or call 269-324-1600. ***Thank you!***



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TJ Wilkinson

Hike all 10, get medallions and more!

HIKE OUR PRESERVES! CHALLENGE

It's nearly spring and that means that Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy's Hike Our Preserves (HOP!) program is about to begin its third season of nature, fitness, and reading for the whole family.

Get your own school of tadpoles (kids) out into nature more often this summer . . . hop on over to our website for all the details: https://swmlc.org/hop

Not a hopper yet? Registrations and hiking sticks will be availabel for purchase at the Little Adventurers' Club Make a Card for Mom Tike Hike on Sunday, May 12.

Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation. Our mission is to conserve ecologically important and scenic landscapes that give our region its natural character — now and for generations to come.

All programs and services are provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.