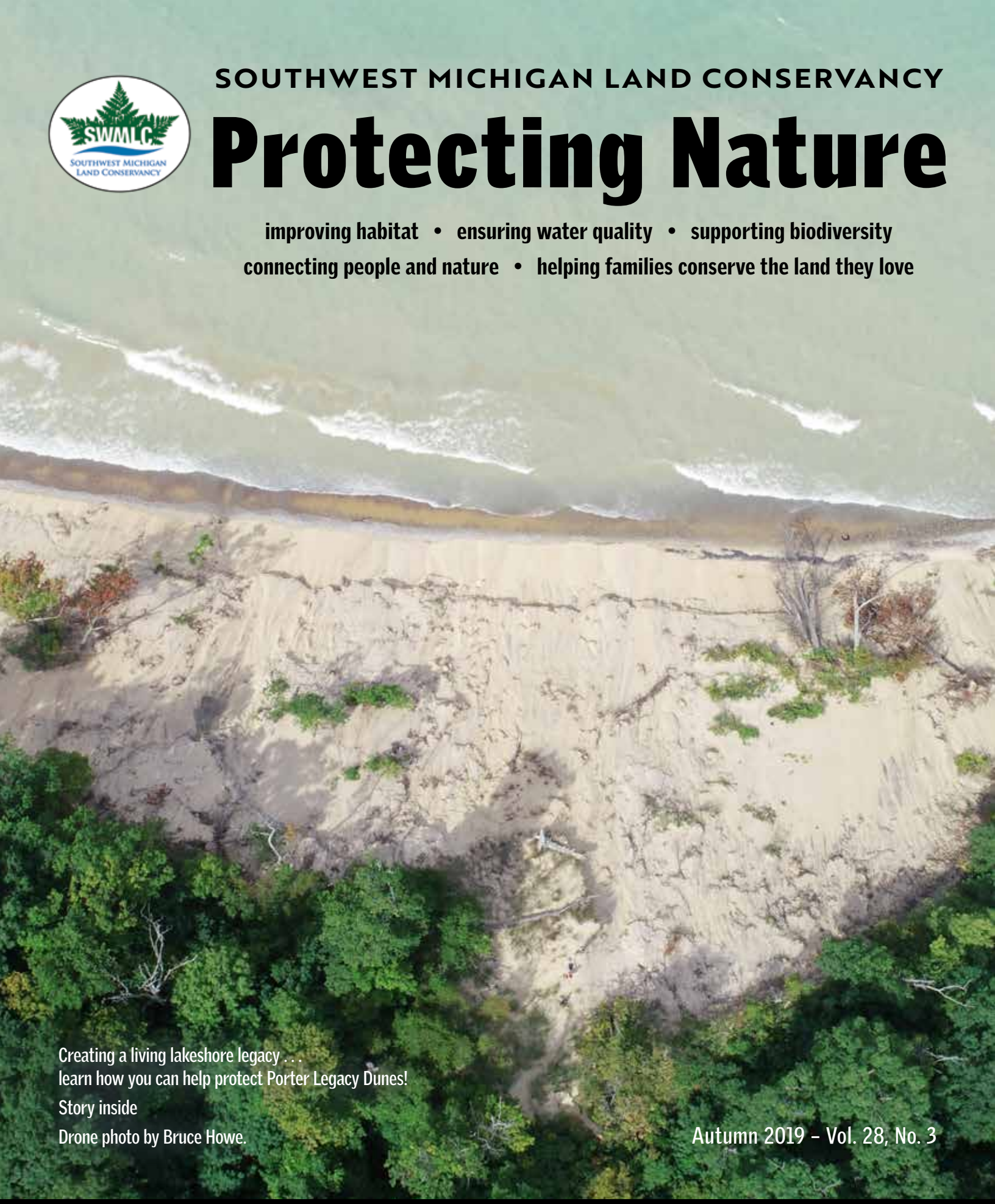
SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN LAND CONSERVANCY

Protecting Nature

improving habitat • ensuring water quality • supporting biodiversity
connecting people and nature • helping families conserve the land they love



Creating a living lakeshore legacy . . .
learn how you can help protect Porter Legacy Dunes!
Story inside
Drone photo by Bruce Howe.

Autumn 2019 – Vol. 28, No. 3

If we, the people of southwest Michigan, don't protect our land and water – who will?

For the Love of the Dunes

Peter Ter Louw, President and Executive Director

I discovered Lake Michigan and its sandy beaches early in my freshman year at Hope College. Unlike most of my childhood friends in New Jersey, I knew you couldn't see Milwaukee across the lake, but I had no idea how beautiful and majestic this globally unique freshwater dune ecosystem really is. I've been blessed to have a career in conservation that protects the incredible diversity of habitats in southwest Michigan, but the lakeshore and dunes have always been extra special to me.

This year, Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy has the opportunity to protect a spectacular, forested dune property right across the street from Pilgrim Haven Natural Area, what we're calling Porter Legacy Dunes. The same family has owned this 48-acre property since the 1880's and its incredible plant and animal diversity remains unspoiled, offering the perfect natural complement to Pilgrim Haven's public access amenities. So we have partnered with the South Haven Area Recreation Authority (SHARA) – which manages and maintains Pilgrim Haven – to apply for a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant that will provide the lion's share of the funding necessary to purchase the property.

Equally significant is the generous donation that owner Scott Royle has committed to help turn this property into a public nature preserve. Scott inherited this special place with the forested dune from his fiancée Catherine Porter Arini, whose family owned and loved it for five generations. Today, Scott characterizes himself as a steward and caretaker of the Porter family's beloved land. He is honoring Catherine and her family by working with Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy and SHARA to ensure that this special land is protected forever.

Catherine Porter Arini and Scott Royle on their boat in California. | Courtesy of Scott Royle

We hope you will join Scott and us in honoring the Porter Family and their commitment to conservation.

Please consider giving a gift to help us protect the Porter Legacy Dunes for current and future generations of people who value and love nature the way the Porters did.

Grace through Purgatory

A new one-mile, public trail through Jones State Game Area was the perfect golden-hour setting for Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy's Hayride though Purgatory this past August. The tractor, driven by Scott Wyman, Director of Cass County Parks and Recreation, rumbled through woods, fields, and woodlands – giving participants a glimpse of the Game Area's large size and demonstrating why protecting land at its edges will vastly increase wildlife habitat. Led by Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy Land Protection Specialist Bruce Howe and Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Biologist Ken Kesson, the event was one of four that SWMLC co-created this past summer for landowners and other stakeholders in Cass and St. Joseph Counties. Thanks to partnerships like these, our shared work is creating an exceptional green space that will benefit people and wildlife alike.

Jones State Game Area | Peter Ter Louw

Thinking Like a River

Land protection staff are researching new conservation prospects in the Paw Paw and Black River watersheds through a collaboration with the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission. Using new data that has recently become available, Western Michigan University's W.E. Upjohn Center for the Study of Geographical Change will create sophisticated, water-centric maps to find important areas to protect. Later this winter, we will invite landowners in these watersheds to one of the fun and informative community outreach events we plan to hold, where they can learn how to help protect water quality on their own property.

"We must begin thinking like a river if we are to leave a legacy of beauty and life for future generations."

— David Brower, environmentalist

Paw Paw River | Peter Ter Louw

Help us protect one of the rarest ecosystems on the planet.

"Those dunes are to the Midwest what the Grand Canyon is to Arizona and the Yosemite to California. They constitute a signature of time and eternity. Once lost, the loss would be irrevocable."

— Carl Sandburg, 1958

Drone photo | Bruce Howe

Welcome to Porter Legacy Dunes.

Located right across the street from Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy's Pilgrim Haven Natural Area near South Haven, Michigan, the Porter Family has owned this striking piece of land since the 1880's.

We now have the unique opportunity to conserve this 48 acres of rare, healthy backdune forest, carpets of native spring wildflowers, a quarter mile of winding Dyckman Creek, 1,100 feet of frontage on the Lake Michigan shoreline, and a spectacular natural dune that rises more than 120 feet above a narrow beach.

Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy is working in a public-private partnership with the South Haven Area Recreation Authority to raise the funds needed to acquire the Porter Legacy Dunes and protect it forever as a public nature preserve.

Learn more on our website: www.swmlc.org/protect-porter-legacy-dunes

Foster healthy habitats, create the perfect natural complement to Pilgrim Haven Natural Area, and enlarge a vision of dune conservation . . .

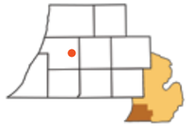
You can be part of creating this living lakeshore legacy.

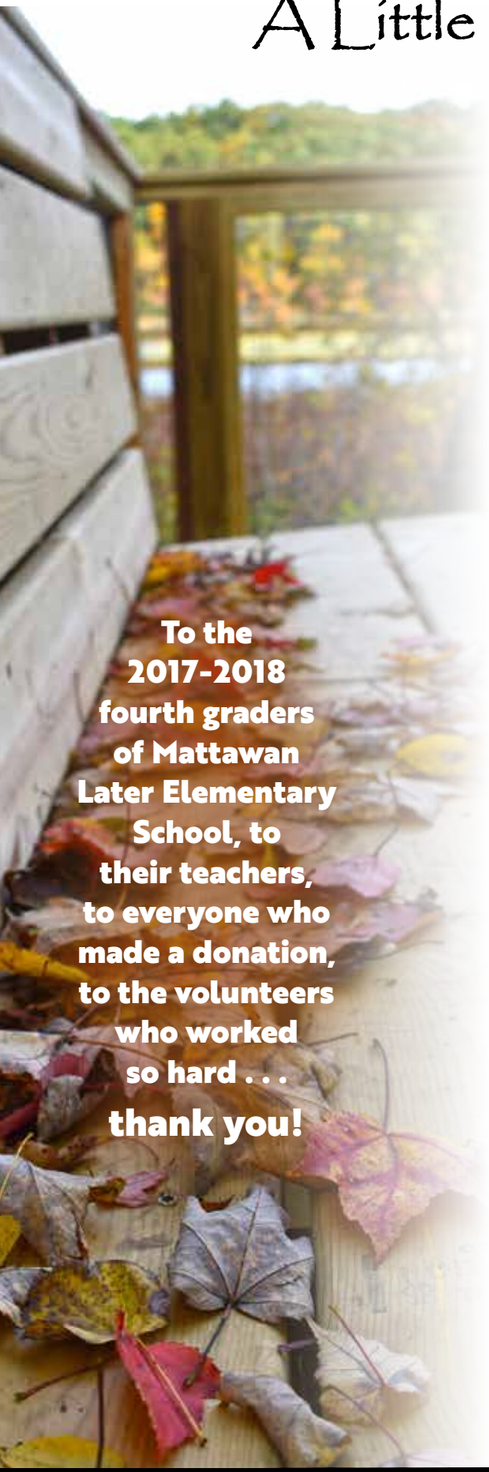
Please donate today to help protect Porter Legacy Dunes nature preserve.

Checks may be mailed to SWMLC, 8395 E. Main St., Galesburg, MI 49053

Donate securely online with your credit card by using this QR code to go to www.swmlc.org/protect-porter-legacy-dunes

A Little Closer to the Water





Everyone wants to get closer to the water . . . to look for snoozing turtles, see little birds flit through the buttonbush, and watch dragonflies zoom over the water's surface. The shoreline is a natural classroom, offering lessons in science, math, music, literature, and art.

Students from the 2017-2018 fourth grade class of Mattawan Later Elementary School saw that potential, so they started a fund drive and raised more than $516 toward building an observation deck on the shores of Mud Lake at Portman Nature Preserve. Admiring the kids' initiative, anonymous donors kindly provided matching funds.

This past spring, an effective group of volunteers began construction on that deck. Jay Bonsignore and Bruce Jaksa generously shared experience, stamina, and expertise – putting in long hours that included design and off-site construction. A steadfast bunch joined them – Lyle Davis, Bill McNulty, Thom Coder, and Pete Boerma – braving heat and mosquitoes to get the job done. It turned out beautifully.

This past October, retired Mattawan Schools principal Bill McNulty and teacher Cheryl VanEngen organized a deck dedication. A small ceremony included local dignitaries, a handful of former fourth graders (now in middle school), and some of the teachers who built curriculum around Portman's woods and wetlands. A colorful sign now graces the deck, which says, "Dedicated to the Mattawan fourth grade students who initiated, inspired, and helped fund this viewing deck."

We are touched, inspired, and very appreciative when we see how much people care about making Portman Nature Preserve better for the entire community.

Thank you!

Mattawan teacher Cheryl Van Engen presents the deck dedication sign. | Amelia Hansen

MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR Satyrs

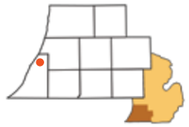
Placing a New Conservation Easement at Sarett Nature Center

The summer fen at Sarett Nature Center is so hot and steamy that the cold water flooding your shoes is almost refreshing. The sun winks bright from the wet ground while lush sedges and colorful wildflowers prosper in the tropical atmosphere. Then you notice your co-worker's excited wave. She points toward a tiny, brown butterfly with eyespots, just before it disappears into the greenery: a Mitchell's satyr butterfly!

It's estimated that Mitchell's satyrs live and reproduce in fewer than 15 places on earth, making them one of the world's rarest creatures. Here in southwest Michigan, we're privileged to be stewards of some of the best satyr habitat on the planet.

Last year, nature-lovers like you matched funding that was provided by a US Fish & Wildlife Service Endangered Species Grant. Your generosity helped protect habitat where one of the last populations of Mitchell's satyrs lives, and allowed us to continue the effort this year by working with Sarett Nature Center to place an easement on 164 acres of their property in northern Berrien County.

It's estimated that Mitchell's satyrs live and reproduce in fewer than 15 places on earth, making them one of the world's rarest creatures.



The easement not only provides permanent protection for Mitchell's satyr habitat, it also benefits many other plant and animal species, including the threatened Eastern massasauga rattlesnake. The wet, wild property includes springfed prairie fens, sunny marshes, and mysterious wooded bottomlands that give floodwater a safe, natural place to go. The Paw Paw River flows right through the easement, with both banks protected for nearly a mile.

Sarett's Executive Director, Nate Fuller, said, "Sarett Nature Center and its Board of Directors are excited to complete another step towards permanently protecting its beloved natural areas. Most people would assume a nature center's properties are already under protection, but in reality, they are usually no more restricted than any other non-profit, like a university or church. This project was particularly exciting for Sarett in that the grant provided funding to establish a long-term habitat management fund for the nature center."

Drone photo | Nate Fuller

Don't let winter cramp your style!

Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy's public preserves are free and open from dawn to dusk – year-round – for hiking, snowshoeing, wildlife watching, making snow angels, cross-country skiing, savoring landscapes, catching up with friends, sketching, building snow people, following animal tracks . . . and more!

Check our website at www.swmlc.org for details, maps, and directions.

PLEASE NOTE: ACCESS TO SOME PRESERVE PARKING AREAS MAY BE LIMITED DURING HEAVY SNOW EVENTS

BARRIER-FREE ACCESS · CANOEING/KAYAKING · CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING · FALL COLOR · FISHING · HIKING · SCENIC VIEWS · SNOWSHOEING · SPRING WILDFLOWERS · SUMMER WILDFLOWERS · SWIMMING BEACH · TRAIL RUNNING · WILDLIFE VIEWING

Allegan County

1. Wau-Ke-Na, William Erby Smith Preserve, 365 acres
3 miles of mowed walking trails through forest and grassland to Lake Michigan.

Barry County

2. Carter Lake Preserve, 57 acres
1 ½ miles of moderate-to-difficult trails through wetlands and forest. Trail begins with a steep stairway down into wetlands.

3. Gertrude McPharlin Bauer Nature Sanctuary, 20 acres
1 ½ miles of easy-to-difficult trails through forest to river valley overlook. A steep footpath leads down into the floodplain.

4. Hidden Pond Preserve, 67 acres
½ mile of moderate trails through grassland and forest edges, over a stream to a hilltop pond.

Berrien County

5. Hickory Creek Preserve, 32 acres
⅓ mile of easy trail along old railroad bed with side trails into forest; links to trail leading to Lake Michigan.

6. Kesling Nature Preserve, 55 acres
Popular for bird watching, 1 ¼ miles of easy, forested trails along the Galien River.

7. Topinabee Lake Preserve, 71 acres
Popular for bird watching, a short walk takes one to a viewing platform that overlooks a shallow lake.

Cass County

8. Spirit Springs Sanctuary, 124 acres
2 ¼ miles of moderate trails through forest with views of ponds and wetlands.

Kalamazoo County

9. Bow in the Clouds Preserve, 60 acres
One mile of moderate trails and boardwalk through forest and wetlands, includes a short barrier-free loop trail to a scenic marsh overlook

10. Chipman Preserve, 228 acres
6 miles of moderate trails through rolling savanna, forest, and grassland habitat. It's a popular place to cross-country ski.

11. Wolf Tree Nature Trails, 69 acres
Two ¾ mile loops of moderate trails wind through forest and meadow, affording scenic vistas.

St. Joseph County

12. Coon Hollow Preserve, 9 acres
300-foot moderate walk along the edge of a scenic wetland to a short boardwalk.

13. Corey Lake North Point Preserve, 17 acres
A short loop trail through an oak woods offers beautiful views of Corey Lake and an impressive show of summer wildflowers.

14. Hidden Marsh Sanctuary, 38 acres
⅓ mile of easy, forested trails along the banks of Portage River and Hoffman Pond.

Van Buren County

15. Black River Preserve, 121 acres
1 ⅓ miles of easy-to-difficult trails through forest and wetland. Some trails are steep.

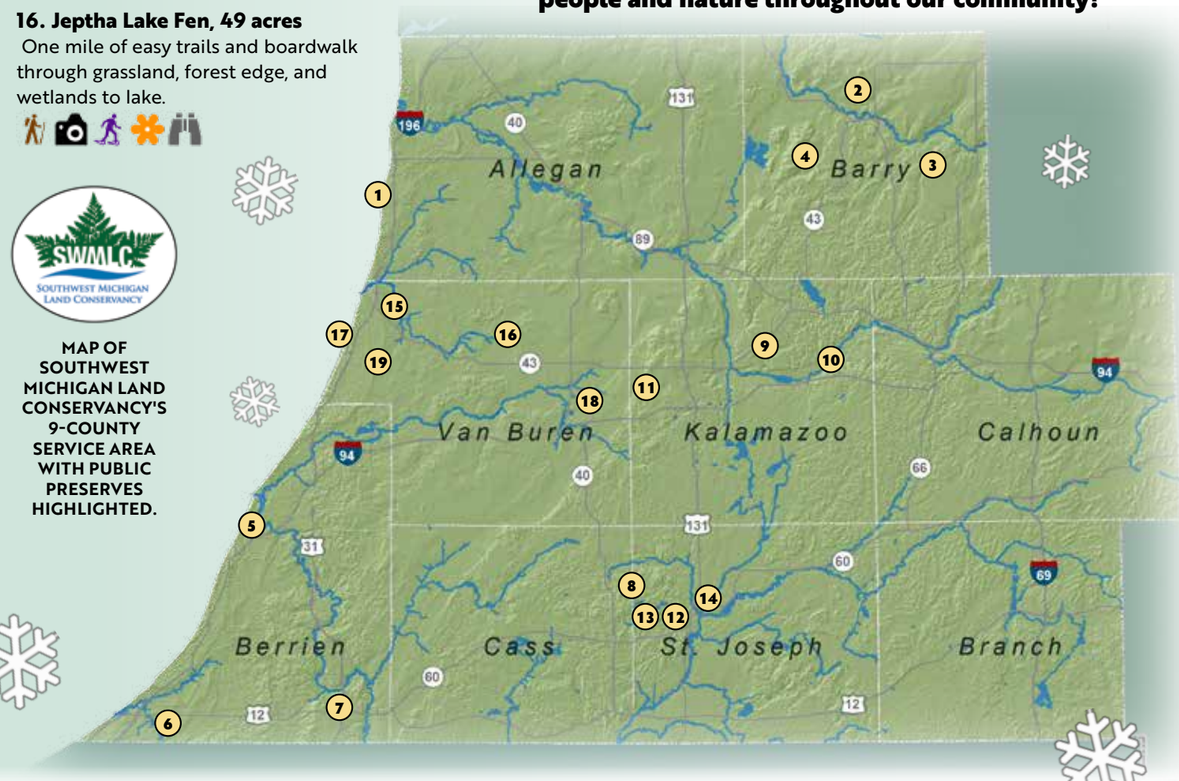
16. Jeptha Lake Fen, 49 acres
One mile of easy trails and boardwalk through grassland, forest edge, and wetlands to lake.

17. Pilgrim Haven Natural Area, 26 acres
⅓ mile of easy trail through woods and meadows that lead to Lake Michigan overlooks and a short, paved, barrier-free path down to the beach.

18. Portman Nature Preserve, 188 acres
2 miles of moderate trails through rolling hills and oak forests, with scenic views of three lakes and a large fen-wetland boardwalk.

19. Winterberry Woods, 15 acres
500-foot, easy trail leads through forest to pond.

Thank you to our supporters for helping to connect people and nature throughout our community!



MAP OF SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN LAND CONSERVANCY'S 9-COUNTY SERVICE AREA WITH PUBLIC PRESERVES HIGHLIGHTED.

DOG POLICY: PLEASE BE A GOOD CITIZEN

Dogs are welcome at SWMLC's public preserves but must be kept on a 6-foot leash at all times.
Children, adults, and leashed dogs may feel threatened when approached by a loose dog.
In addition, wildlife can be upset by loose dogs and may abandon eggs or babies if disturbed.
Dog waste must be removed from the preserve. We have many canine trail-users and, though dog waste ***is*** biodegradable, undesirable quantities often accumulate along the trails.

The Golden Spike

Black River Preserve is well known for its “flashy” waterways that rise rapidly during storms, carrying silt and pollution in a mad rush that has historically overwhelmed the preserve's outdated concrete culverts that were meant to direct its flow.

Over time, fast-running storm water gouged away the dirt around the culvert pipes, which were just too small to handle the flow. Eventually, this created problems: stagnant backwater pools, “perched” pipes that prevented fish from swimming up and down the stream, even the Big Blowout of 2013 that blasted the pipe out from under the Mainstem Trail and shot it 70 feet down the creek.

Beginning in 2016 with a grant from Entergy Corporation that replaced that Mainstem Trail pipe, Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy has been working to improve stream quality by replacing or removing these old culverts at Black River Preserve – with significant help from volunteers.

Amelia Hansen

In the past year, volunteers John Mitchell, Chuck Moore, Kevin Haight, and their hardy team of Black River Stewards have made generous contributions of expertise, wisdom, enthusiasm, and sweat, making huge strides in fixing the other two stream crossings while simultaneously making significant trail improvements. They've built several boardwalks to traverse squishy spots and a sturdy bridge now spans a stream where erosion had exposed the old culvert.

Now (with help from SWMLC Stewardship Team Megan Martin and Allyson Wentela), they’re building a large bridge over a steep, eight-foot drop that fills with rushing water during storms. Like the Golden Spike that joined the east and west lines of the first transcontinental railroad, this bridge will link Black River Preserve's lengthy trail system into one continuous route, the product of seven years of planning and development. Hikers will be able to safely climb the steep ravines, stay dry while crossing wetlands and creeks, and completely enjoy all that this big, wild preserve has to offer in any season.

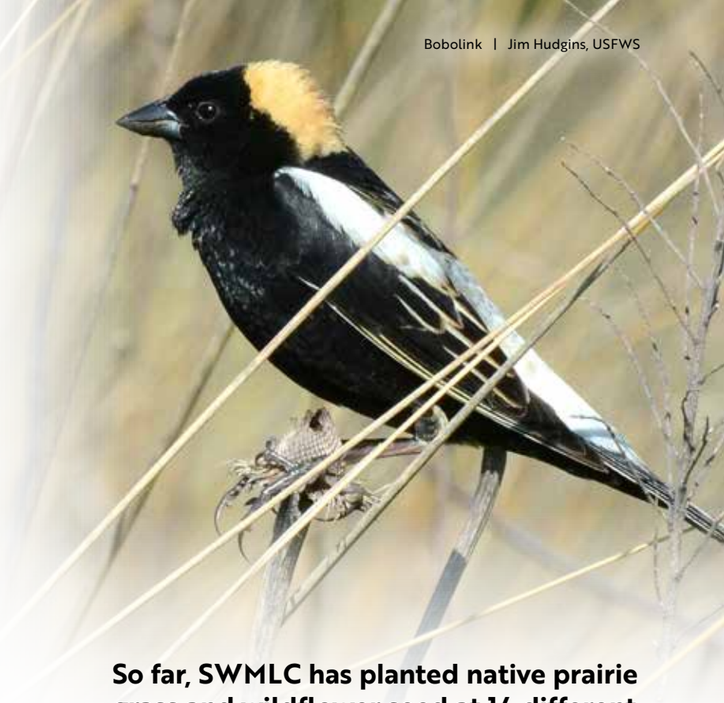
Bridge building at Black River Preserve | LEFT: John Mitchell, photo by Allyson Wentela | RIGHT: Chuck Moore, photo by John Mitchell

Success inspires success.

Thank you, Black River Stewards!

Helping Farmland Get Its Groove Back

A recent study by Cornell University researcher Kenneth Rosenberg found that grassland birds have been hit hard by modern farming practices. Commenting on the study, *Scientific American* magazine states, “More than 700 million birds across 31 species that make their homes in fields and farmlands have vanished since 1970.” Programs like the USDA's Conservation Reserve Program provide real world incentives to farmers to take environmentally sensitive land out of production and, instead, plant native species that will improve local water quality and create new habitat for grassland birds and pollinators. Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy was able to take advantage of this program at two of our preserves this past summer, planting 91 acres of former row crop monoculture with native prairie plant seed at Emmons Augusta Floodplain Forest (Kalamazoo County) and Tamarack Swamp (Cass County) Preserves.



Bobolink | Jim Hudgins, USFWS

So far, SWMLC has planted native prairie grass and wildflower seed at 14 different properties - totaling 489 acres of improved grassland bird habitat.

The Art of Saving Seed

Calling themselves The Pluggers (because a seedling nestled in a little dollop of dirt is called a ‘plug’ and because they keep pluggin' away), the seed collectors’ program at Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy just keeps growing – you might even say it has sprouted! Created and conducted by staff and volunteers, the program regularly harvests native plant seed from productive preserves for sowing at other preserves that might need a boost in biodiversity. Led by volunteers Jeff Fleming, David Riggs, and Lynda Anderson – joined by a rock solid group of regulars – the volunteers keep detailed inventories, clean and process dozens of tubs of seed, and carefully store the harvest. They also plant plenty of tiny, native plugs. Many of the Pluggers are also Wednesday Warriors who enjoy adding the nurturing work of seed collection to their usual whackin' and stackin' of invasive plants. Care to join in? Go to www.swmlc.org/seed-collectors-wanted to get involved.

Thank you for taking action, Pluggers and Wednesday Warriors!

Hidden Pond Preserve | Nate Fuller

SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN LAND CONSERVANCY EVENTS & WORKDAYS

Unless indicated, all events and workdays are free and open to the public. Find details, maps, and directions on our website by entering www.swmlc.org/swmlc-events-workdays or using this QR code.

RSVP: Please help us to plan our events by registering. Use the secure form included in the online event descriptions, or contact Miko by phone at 269-324-1600 x302 or email at cmdargitz@swmlc.org.

Workday: Seed Sorting Soirée
SUNDAY • November 17 • 1:30 - 4:30 pm • CHIPMAN POLEBARN • VOLUNTEER WORKDAY

The all-volunteer "Pluggers" spent hours harvesting native prairie plant seeds this past summer and fall – and now all that bounty needs to be sorted, recorded, cleaned, and stored until it's time to sow. Learn from the best about native plants while helping to boost diversity in our preserves.

Saturday Workday: Join the Pack
SATURDAY • December 7 • 1 - 4 pm • WOLF TREE NATURE TRAILS • VOLUNTEER WORKDAY

Lend a paw for conservation – it's amazing what a big bite one pack of people can take out of a tangle of invasive plants in just a few hours!

Animal Survival Tike Hike
SUNDAY • December 8 • 3:30 pm • CHIPMAN PRESERVE • KIDS & FAMILIES

How do animals handle winter? Look for seasonal animal signs out on the trail, then come inside the Chipman House to make an animal-themed craft.

IN COLLABORATION WITH KALAMAZOO AREA LITTLE ADVENTURERS' CLUB

Chionophiles Love the Cold Hike
SATURDAY • December 14 • 10 am • PORTMAN NATURE PRESERVE • SOCIAL HIKE

Are you a "chionophile" (a lover of the cold)? Join fellow winter aficionados ***(or commiserate with those who don't!)*** for a fun hike that embraces winter.

IN COLLABORATION WITH SIERRA CLUB'S SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN GROUP

Saturday Workday: Cold Snap
SATURDAY • January 11 • 1 - 4 pm • BOW IN THE CLOUDS PRESERVE • VOLUNTEER WORKDAY

Feeling stodgy after all the seasonal festivities? Snap out of it! Put on your warmest work duds and join us for an afternoon of active outdoor work.

Hot Chocolate Tike Hike
SUNDAY • January 12 • 3:30 pm • CHIPMAN PRESERVE • KIDS & FAMILIES

Bundle up the kiddos for a walk through a wintry landscape, then come inside the Chipman House to warm up with hot cocoa.

IN COLLABORATION WITH KALAMAZOO AREA LITTLE ADVENTURERS' CLUB

Keep the Resolution Hike
SATURDAY • January 18 • 10 am • BOW IN THE CLOUDS PRESERVE • SOCIAL HIKE

Get some exercise and feel good about those New Year's resolutions while enjoying this preserve's peaceful vibe with other folk who love walking outside.

IN COLLABORATION WITH SIERRA CLUB'S SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN GROUP

Workday: Honor Dr. King
MONDAY • January 20 • time to be announced • BOW IN THE CLOUDS PRESERVE • VOLUNTEER WORKDAY

Continue Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's legacy of service while benefiting wildlife, the community, and yourself during this outdoor workday.

Valentine Tike Hike
SUNDAY • February 9 • 3:30 pm • BOW IN THE CLOUDS PRESERVE • KIDS & FAMILIES

You're as sweet as they come! Hearts and chocolate abound during this wintertime walk and celebration of friendship for kids and their loved ones.

IN COLLABORATION WITH KALAMAZOO AREA LITTLE ADVENTURERS' CLUB

Polar Paws Hike
SATURDAY • February 15 • 10 am • PORTMAN NATURE PRESERVE • SOCIAL HIKE

Are you ***and*** your dog suffering from cabin fever? All well-behaved dogs (and humans!) are welcome to join the pack on this canine social hike.
PLEASE NOTE: Dogs must be kept on 6-foot leashes at all times, and please bring – and take away – your dog's poop bag.

IN COLLABORATION WITH SIERRA CLUB'S SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN GROUP

Owl Prowl/Hygge Hike
FRIDAY • February 21 • 6 - 8 pm • CHIPMAN PRESERVE • FAMILY FRIENDLY

Stalk the darkened land while listening for romancing owls, then warm up with cocoa and friends around a cozy bonfire.

SPECIAL GUEST GUIDE: NATE FULLER, MASTER OWL-CALLER

Saturday Workday: Leap into Stewardship
SATURDAY • February 29 • 1 - 4 pm • PORTMAN NATURE PRESERVE • VOLUNTEER WORKDAY

Winter is a great time for removing invasive plants so let's take advantage of the Leap Day to get some much-needed stewardship work done.

Bring On the Bubbles Tike Hike
SUNDAY • March 8 • 3:30 pm • WOLF TREE NATURE TRAILS • KIDS & FAMILIES

Everybody loves bubbles! In honor of National Bubble Week, it's time to celebrate those round, floaty, rainbow-colored globes o' fun!

IN COLLABORATION WITH KALAMAZOO AREA LITTLE ADVENTURERS' CLUB

Going the Extra Mile

When your organization's service area covers nine counties, you end up putting a lot of wear and tear on vehicles. Meeting with landowners, monitoring conservation easements, daily hauling of equipment by the stewardship crew, providing shuttle service during events . . . the miles add up. We do our best to make our vehicles last but, eventually, all good cars go to heaven.

With well over 200,000 miles on her tired old bod, we finally had to say goodbye to our trusty Subaru Forester, donated to us by Kal and Becky Csia way back in 2005. She was an excellent car, and safely carried staff and volunteers for more than 14 years. She had been here longer than most of the current staff!

We made sure that she didn't bump into her replacements on the way out.

Responding to our desperate need for sturdy, reliable transportation, two separate sets of donors generously came forward with vehicles that perfectly fit our needs.

One is a stout 2005 Ford Expedition - a tough, 4-wheel drive workhorse that will handle weather and terrain like a pro. Many thanks to Erkan and Caitlin Eyvaz for donating it, and to Dr. Bradley Sullivan for coordinating our need with their giving spirit!

The other is a sleek Toyota Sienna minivan with new tires, a sparkling clean interior, and nary a scratch. She will carry us in graceful style to meetings, site visits, and outreach events. We are very grateful to the donors (who wish to remain anonymous) for giving us this elegant vehicle.

Thank you! We are humbled by the generosity of these donors and their commitment to conservation.

Did you know that exercising in the cold has been shown to stimulate the release of endorphins, dopamine, and serotonin, the mood-boosting hormones that help fight winter depression?

Don't let the cold get you down . . . winter is a great time to HOP! Beat the winter blues - and help your kids do the same - by participating in SWMLC's Hike Our Preserves (HOP!) program that encourages families to spend time together in nature. Find out more on our website: www.swmlc.org/hop

Courtesy of Andrea Fleuren

In Memory of Shannon Gullion

9/27/1969 – 6/8/2019

It is our hope that this heartbreaking loss will sprout a seed which germinates into the strongest tree and creates a foundation for life in the wildest of places. Let life blossom from tragedy. Please plant a tree to honor a Renaissance man who felt at home among the natural spaces of our world.

Anonymous
William Cochran
Ron and Linda Core
Jack and Mary Denuyl
Libby Greanya
Cheryl Gumper
Robert Linderman
Charlan Otto
Donald and Bette Otto
Paula Siskaninetz
Kathie L. Sutton

In Memory of George Lauff

George Lauff passed away earlier this summer, former board member and retired director of Michigan State University's W.K. Kellogg Biological Station. His close friend and colleague, Mike Klug, shared his thoughts, characterizing George as a humble, self-effacing person who never received credit for his contributions at either the local or national level.

> ***"Although George's background and research were primarily on aquatic and marine systems, he had a great appreciation for the importance that the integrity of the surrounding landscape has on them.***
>
> ***On the national scene, he was influential in the development of the National Science Foundation's Long-term Ecological Research program. This program funds research on the structure and function of various ecosystems in order to establish their future management and conservation."***

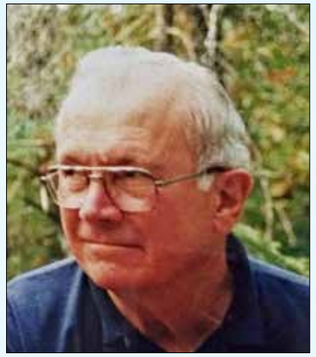
George's commitment to conservation led him to serving on the board of directors of both The Nature Conservancy and Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy. As a SWMLC volunteer, his leadership and vision were focused on land protection, with a strong interest in conserving land and water in the greater Gull Lake region.

George's SWMLC conservation legacy will live on through the establishment of the George Lauff Land & Stewardship Endowment Fund, which he created and funded through his IRA to support our natural areas work.

Mike shared a statement provided at a recent memorial service of family and friends:

"He came as a boy with a love of nature,
Left as a friend who shared with us the nature of love."

Thank you, George.



Courtesy of Dick and Gerry Deighton

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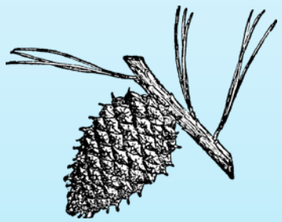

If you would like to donate to the George Lauff Land & Stewardship Endowment Fund, please call Peter Ter Louw for a confidential conversation at 269-324-1600, or send an email to conserveland@swmlc.org

Donations • June 1, 2019 – September 30, 2019

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.

Honor Gifts

Bud and Judi Baldwin
In honor of Woody Boudeman's birthday.

Pam Hjelmquist
In honor of my father, Ken Kirton, for his birthday.

Woodland Elementary Staff
In honor of our co-worker, Amy Lehman, who is retiring from Woodland Elementary School in Portage.

Memorials

In memory of Kay Caskey
"The Cool Group":
Jeanne DeLiefde, Colette Konkle, and Elizabeth Merrill
Mrs. Elizabeth Upjohn Mason
Barbara Walters

In memory of Mitzi Deluca
Richard and Barbara Baker
Patricia Herron
Scott Imel

Dick and Lois Brunvand
In memory of Ron Hartgerink

Dr. and Mrs. A. Gregory Laurell
In memory of Tom McCormack

Jamie and Phil Michael
In memory of Carl Andre
In memory of Bill TenBroek

Debra Stamp
In memory of Elaine McCallister

In-Kind Donations

Anonymous (2)
Material expenses for the Portman viewing platform project

New Memberships

Cerulean Warbler ($250+)
Mark and Gail Brown
Kirk S. Parent

Spotted Turtle ($100+)
Michael Graham

Little Brown Bat ($50+)
Dallas Boudeman
Mary Susan Brill
Matt Diana
Joanne Miller and Paul Rehkopf

Club/Group/Business

Black River Tavern

Gift Memberships

Jon Hoadley
from Nanette & Jack Keiser

Grants

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Birdathon

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Jan Shillito
Steve Tomashefsky and Rebecca Sive
Gail Walter and Tom Nehil

You make our work possible. Thank you!

If we have accidentally 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.

Double Your Impact! Many corporations match contributions made to Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy.

Are you an employee of – or retired from – a company with a matching gift program? Send your company form along with your gift and we'll be happy to follow-up! Call Nicole at 269-324-1600 x307 or email her at nmspeedy@swmlc.org.

Holiday gift-giving that helps protect nature.

A **gift membership to Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy** tells the recipient that you recognize and honor their love for nature - while also helping to protect nature for future generations to enjoy. Call Nicole at 269-324-1600 x307 or send an email to her at nmspeedy@swmlc.org to find out more.

Embrace your inner eco-geek with our new **SWMLC Nature Nerd T-shirts!** They're soft, come in a nice array of heathered colors, and look good on everyone. We also have beautiful, **eco-friendly tote bags, ball caps, magnets - and new SWMLC beanies are on the way!** Stop by the office to shop, find the menu dropdown (*Support Our Work*, then *SWMLC Gear*) on our website, or use this QR code to visit the SWMLC Web Store.

Help nature every time you shop by using Amazon Smile!

Go to amazon.smile.com, designate Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy as your charity of choice, and Amazon will automatically donate 0.5% of the purchase price to us. It can really add up at this time of year!

We're participating in the Target Circle program! Vote for us and help direct Target's giving to benefit Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy. For full program details and restrictions visit Target Circle (circle.target.com).

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"The trouble with pessimism, the trouble with despair as a response is that, not only is it useless, it's also no fun."

— Rick Ridgeway, Vice President of Public Engagement, Patagonia, Inc.

From the video "Earth Optimism: Join the Movement!"
Smithsonian Earth Optimism Summit, earthoptimism.si.edu

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. Federal EIN 38-3038708

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