Western Reserve Land Conservancy
OUR LAND. OUR LEGACY.
www.wrlandconservancy.org

Summer 2011

Landline

A Western Reserve Land Conservancy newsletter celebrating land conservation in Mahoning, Portage and Trumbull counties

Nature offers lesson in planning



Scott Hill
Eastern Field Director

I think it has finally stopped raining.

This spring and early summer has been the rainiest spring in 100 years. Construction projects have been put on hold, lawns have become hayfields, little leagues have struggled to get their games finished and many farmers have resorted to replanting corn that failed to germinate.

The daily news cycle carried multiple stories about flooding across the country and we lost the 100-year-old Gates Mills dam on the

See NATURE page 2

Outdoor club wants to preserve 151 acres

The Land Conservancy is partnering with River Valley Sportsmen, Inc. in the hope of permanently preserving the club's 151-acre tract on the Grand River in Trumbull County.



The proposed project would preserve about a mile of frontage on the Grand River. It is one parcel removed from the state's Grand River Wildlife Area.

The project would be in the center of a growing corridor of protected land along the Grand River in Trumbull County. The property, which contains more than 5,000 feet of river frontage and 100 acres of wetland, is in Mesopotamia Township, one parcel removed from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Grand River Wildlife Area.

Scott Hill, the Land Conservancy's eastern field director, said the club has about 30 members and is very interested in protecting the remote property with a conservation easement. He said the Land Conservancy is pursuing several different funding sources for the project. Hill said the success of the project would hinge on the availability of funding.

"This is a great example of conservation by individuals who hunt and fish," Hill said. "Sportsmen have led the way for conservation over the past 100 years, and they continue to do so today."

CONSERVATION CALENDAR

- **Aug. 6, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.:** Eighth annual Summer Sizzle at Trumbull County Agricultural and Family Education Center, 520 West Main St., Cortland. Free.
- **Aug. 14, 9 a.m.:** The third annual Yoga on the Preserve, sponsored by Cleveland Yoga and the Land Conservancy. Join us at the Geauga Park District's Orchard Hills Preserve. Free.
- **Sept. 9:** EverGreen EverBlue, our annual benefit, in Hunting Valley. For details, visit www.evergreeneverblue.org

For more details, go to:

www.wrlandconservancy.org

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Don't look for him on the beaten path



SPOTLIGHT
Greg Lipps

You might not think there is much demand for a freelance herpetologist.

Greg Lipps would beg to differ.

Lipps, a former Toledo Zoo employee who holds a master's degree in biology from Bowling Green State University, now works as an independent biologist for state agencies and non-governmental organizations such as the Land Conservancy. He has conducted surveys for most of Ohio's rare and endangered amphibians and reptiles, including Green Salamanders, Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnakes and Spotted Turtles.

"In my mind, it has become

See LIPPS page 2

Land Conservancy's new home will be in Moreland Hills



The Land Conservancy plans to add a wing to a restored Century Home in Moreland Hills and relocate its headquarters there in 2012. The Village of Moreland Hills has approved a conditional use permit for the project on Chagrin River Road, across from the Cleveland Metroparks Polo Fields. Construction will start later this year.

The go-ahead for project was made possible by the generosity of a Land Conservancy donor who wishes to remain anonymous. Other friends have provided additional support for the project.

Conversion and expansion of the existing historic home — the core of which was built in the 1830s as one of the first one-room schoolhouses in the Connecticut Western Reserve — will take place on one portion of the 22-acre parcel. Another piece will become a village park, while yet another portion will be added to the adjacent Forest Ridge Preserve, which the Land Conservancy helped preserve.

Land Conservancy President and CEO Rich Cochran said the building will use cost-effective green technologies. Renowned architect Tony Paskevich is designing the entire project. The former owners, the Lang family, helped make the project possible.

Nature

From page 1



Chagrin River.

Some streams such as the Grand River, Pymatuning Creek, Mill Creek in Mahoning County and the Upper Cuyahoga in Geauga and Portage still have intact floodplains that allow these streams to spread out as they flood.

These floodplains act as a release valve for flooding downstream and prevent serious flooding and property.

Land protection efforts at the Land Conservancy have helped to establish these riparian buffers that not only help maintain water quality, but also prevent expensive and sometimes tragic flooding. My colleagues here at the Land Conservancy spend a lot of time and energy figuring out how we can create and preserve these important buffers.

Nature has a way of ignoring our best engineering and reminding us from time to time that sometimes the original design is the best.

Lipps

From page 1

clear that doing research and doing conservation are two different things," Lipps said. "Within the past few years, my passion has shifted to making conservation happen. I enjoy working for people like those at the Land Conservancy, people who can make things happen."

Lipps recently led a group of Land Conservancy employees, volunteers and supporters in a search for Massasaugas in the Grand River Lowlands. He has generously donated his time and energy to help the Land Conservancy preserve habitat for rare and endangered species.

> "In my mind, it has become clear that doing research and doing conservation are two different things."
>
> — Greg Lipps

Lipps is a Cincinnati native who moved to Toledo in 1995 and took a position in the Toledo Zoo's Department of Herpetology before completing his master's degree at BGSU. In addition to his work for state agencies and other organizations, Lipps does some private consulting and is a former co-chair and current advisor to the Midwest Regional Working Group of Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation.

Lipps, his wife Nicole, an animal science teacher, and "a slew of dogs" live in Northwest Ohio's Oak Openings Region, a globally rare ecosystem located southwest of Toledo. Living there has impressed on him the need to protect large swaths of land, not individual parcels.

"It isn't good enough for us to get little fragments. We need to preserve larger corridors with functioning ecosystems," Lipps said.

Conservation Rocks!

May 21, 2011

Beachland Ballroom, Cleveland



An all-star jam capped off the memorable evening.

More than 260 people turned out for the second Conservation Rocks! concert at the Beachland Ballroom. This year's show featured the music of those who work in the field of conservation: the Land Conservancy's Pete McDonald, who performed with Pete McDonald & the Black Oaks.; The Swamp Rattlers (featuring staffers from Geauga Park District), Fat City (with Harvey Webster of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History) and Drake Hollow featuring Steve Madewell (Lake Metroparks) and Al Bonnis (U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service).



Pete McDonald on stage.



Rattlesnakes alive!

In the Grand River lowlands, herpetologist Greg Lipps led a group in search of endangered Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnakes. Two snakes were found, measured, tagged and returned to the exact spot where they were picked up.



Grand River Canoe Cleanup

May 14, 2011



Participants gathered for a group photo.

Have you remembered the Land Conservancy in your will?

Find out how you can make a lasting commitment to future generations by including Western Reserve Land Conservancy in your estate planning. For information on our White Oak Legacy Society, call (440) 729-9621, e-mail rkoonce@wrlandconservancy.org or visit www.wrlandconservancy.org.

White Oak LEGACY SOCIETY

Hike leaders sought

The Land Conservancy is looking for people who are willing to serve as volunteer hike leaders. You do not have to be a naturalist to be a hike leader, just a willingness to help organize walks in your region. The Land Conservancy is also considering formation of a hiking club. To volunteer as a hike leader, please e-mail kbihler@wrlandconservancy.org.

SAVE THE DATE!

EverGreen EverBlue

Sept. 9, 2011

Chagrin River Road

Hunting Valley

For more information, call (440) 729-9621

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Land Conservancy

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Our mission, our vision

Western Reserve Land Conservancy seeks to preserve the scenic beauty, rural character and natural resources of northern Ohio. We want to help create a network of interconnected natural areas, working land and green space throughout the region. We envision northern Ohio as a stunningly beautiful and healthy place to live, work and play.