Western Reserve Land Conservancy
OUR LAND, OUR LEGACY

A Western Reserve Land Conservancy newsletter

LANDLINE

Our Work

www.wrlandconservancy.org

Fall 2012

Two Kelleys Island properties are permanently preserved



A quarry is the centerpiece of the Huntley-Beatty Preserve.

Two Kelleys Island parcels containing the globally imperiled Great Lakes Alvar ecosystem and a rare mature red cedar forest will be permanently protected as public preserves.

The Kelleys Island Village Park District Recreation Board and Western Reserve Land Conservancy worked together to help the village acquire the 59-acre Huntley-Beatty Preserve and the 18.5-acre Quinn Preserve. In the past year, the Land Conservancy has protected five properties on Kelleys Island totaling 132 acres. More than 800 acres – about a third of the island – have now been preserved by the village, the Land Conservancy, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, the state and others.

The park district plans to open the two newly-acquired parcels to the public as nature preserves, available for passive recreational uses such as bird-watching and hiking. Kelleys Island, the largest U.S. island in Lake Erie, provides stop-over habitat for more than 200 species of migratory birds.

The park district is expected to enter into a cooperative management agreement with the history museum to ensure that both preserves are managed to protect native habitats. The Land Conservancy and the museum will also co-hold a permanent conservation easement on the properties. Such easements prevent or severely restrict development.

The Land Conservancy was able to acquire the property with federal Coastal & Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP), the Rex East Fund and two other funds. The titles were then transferred to the park district.

The Huntley-Beatty Preserve contains globally imperiled Great Lakes Alvar habitat and is home to 12 state-listed plant species. The Quinn Preserve will protect the only red cedar forest habitat in Ohio.

Land Conservancy helps Trumbull MetroParks grow

A 458-acre tract in northern Trumbull County will become a public park as a result of separate agreements between a conservation-minded couple, the Land Conservancy and the county park system.

The property, which is in Bloomfield Township and adjacent to the state's Mosquito Creek Wildlife Area, has been sold by Terrance and Judith Sheridan and subsequently transferred to the Trumbull County MetroParks system. The nonprofit Land Conservancy secured funding for the purchase and arranged the transfer of the property to MetroParks. This single acquisition will raise the park system's total acreage by 40 percent.

The land has exceptional natural resource features, according to park and Land Conservancy officials. It contains 212 acres of wetlands that are classified in the state's highest-rated category and more than three linear miles of tributaries to the State Scenic Grand River. In addition, the Western Reserve Greenway, a 43-mile multi-purpose trail running between the Lake Erie port of Ashtabula and Warren, is located along the eastern edge of the property.



The property contains 212 acres of highly-rated wetlands.

A black bear has been sighted on the property by park staffers.

Trumbull County MetroParks hopes to eventually establish a publicly accessible, passive park on the land, which is located at the corner of state routes 87 and 45. The property will be permanently protected by a conservation easement held by the Land Conservancy.

Scott Hill, the eastern field director for the Land Conservancy, said his organization used a combination of Clean Ohio Conservation Fund money, its own funds and other sources to cover the purchase cost. The land will be owned and managed by MetroParks.

"We thank the Sheridans and the park system for making this possible," Hill said. "This is a rare opportunity to permanently preserve a natural resource-rich property for the enjoyment of future generations."

180-acre farm preserved in Ashtabula County



The farm includes a cold-water tributary to the Grand River.

The Land Conservancy has helped longtime Ashtabula County residents Elmer and Iris Geil permanently preserve their 180-acre farm – one that also contains a cold-water tributary to the Grand River – under the state's Agricultural Easement Purchase Program.

The farm, located along Hoskins Creek in Hartsgrove Township, is adjacent to 517 acres that are already preserved with conservation easements. About half the property now produces corn, beans and hay, while the other half is forested with mature timber.

The Land Conservancy sponsored the Geils' AEPP application.

Scott Hill, eastern field director for the Land Conservancy, said the property is between the preserved Perry Nye farm and across the street from a second potential conservation easement. Together, Hill said, the properties will create an agricultural corridor of more than 1,000 acres along state Route 534 on the western edge of the Grand River Lowlands.

Hill said the Geils wanted to preserve their farm and were a joy to work with.

"You will never meet a couple nicer than Elmer and Iris," he said.

Signs are a hit with landowners, passers-by



Helen Wheeler with the sign on her protected property in Huron County.

The Land Conservancy has launched the first phase of a project in which roadside signs are being installed at protected properties to help promote our work throughout the region.

Initially, signs are being placed on properties located on busy roads with scenic views of preserved land. The ultimate goal is to have a sign on every preserved property over the next few years. The signs were designed by a local artist to be simple, connecting the Land Conservancy's name and logo with a beautiful silhouette image of natural areas and farmland characteristic of our region, according to Director of Stewardship Pete McDonald.

The Land Conservancy sought and received funding for the first phase of the project, and some landowners have been so interested in the signs that they offered to donate the cost in order to have a sign installed on their property.

Firelands Associate Field Director Kate Pilacky said at least three property owners in Huron and Lorain counties have contacted the Land Conservancy about possible preservation projects after seeing the signs. The three contacts could lead to conservation easements on more than 200 acres.

Pilacky said one Huron County landowner had been thinking about preserving his property for awhile. "When he saw a landowner sign on a nearby property, he looked us up and gave us a call," she said.

More Orchard Hills acreage preserved



The property is next to the restored golf course.

The Land Conservancy and Geauga Park District have added 27 acres of permanently protected property to Orchard Hills Park, the former golf course in Chester Township.

The Land Conservancy recently recorded the Orchard Hills-West conservation easement for the property on Walnut Ridge Road, west of the existing 209-acre park. The permanently protected land will be owned and managed by the park district as a nature preserve.

In 2010, the park district and the Land Conservancy completed a transaction in which the former Orchard Hills Golf Course became a public preserve. The course operators, the Patterson family, still own the adjacent Patterson Fruit Farm. The park system, the Land Conservancy and others have since teamed up to restore the land to its natural state.

Both Orchard Hills and Orchard Hills West are located on the edge of the Lake Erie escarpment and provide scenic views of Lake Erie. The eastern portion of the property was converted to a golf course in the 1960s, but the western portion of the property contains 4,500 linear feet of Caves Creek, 12,000 linear feet of tributaries and several acres of wetlands. This is one of the only examples in the country of a former golf course being restored to a natural, passive use as a public park.

Printed on recycled paper with vegetable based inks.

Contact Western Reserve Land Conservancy

Central Office

3850 Chagrin River Road
Moreland Hills, Ohio 44022
(440) 729-9621 or
info@wrlandconservancy.org

Field Offices

Akron Field Office
34 Merz Boulevard, Suite G
Akron, Ohio 44333
Phone: 330-836-2271

Medina Field Office
141 Prospect Street
Medina, Ohio 44256
Phone: 330-722-7313

Firelands Field Office
P.O. Box 174
Oberlin, Ohio 44074
Phone: 440-774-4226

Eastern Field Office
P.O. Box 114
Orwell, Ohio 44076
Phone: 440-773-5582

Painesville Field Office
70 South Park Place
Painesville, Ohio 44077
Phone: 440-357-4837

Wayne County Field Office
140 East Market Street, Suite 150
Orrville, Ohio 44667

Thriving Communities Institute
2012 W. 25th Street, Suite 504
Cleveland, OH 44113
Phone: 216-515-8300

Like us on Facebook

twitter

LinkedIn