

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SUPERIOR GREENWAY GROWS

Partnership protects an additional 100 acres in Superior Township

Superior Township, MI –The City of Ann Arbor Greenbelt Program, Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy, and Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission announced today that the Superior Greenway, a 2,006 acre wildlife and public recreation corridor, has been expanded through the purchase of an additional 100 acres this week.

Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy (SMLC) acquired the property from Frank Pellerito with help from the City of Ann Arbor Greenbelt Program; and Washtenaw County acquired a conservation easement on the property. After the closing, Frank Pellerito said:

“I was pleased to see the enthusiasm for adding the 100 acres to the beautiful greenbelt park system,” said Mr. Pellerito. “I was just happy to participate.”

Conservation Values

This property is important to protect because:

- Purchase of this 100 acre property, with 1/2 mile along Prospect Road, completes the core of the Superior Greenway--protecting a full 2 miles along the east side of Prospect Road, from Geddes Road to Cherry Hill Road.
- Fowler Creek flows through the property and is a higher-quality tributary of the Rouge River. The property also offers opportunities for wetland restoration which will further benefit water quality and wildlife.
- The property has nice topographical features and will allow for prime wildlife viewing.
- The property has archaeological significance, as a Native American trail ran through this area and numerous artifacts have been found nearby.
- Purchase of this property consolidates 1,237 acres of contiguous protected land, of which 710 acres are open to the public for hiking, bird watching and nature study.

- The woodlot on the property is part of a larger wooded area that extends into both the Meyer Preserve (one of the existing preserves established by the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission (WCPARC) through the Natural Areas Preservation Program) and the SMLC's Conservancy Farm.

Partnership Arrangement

Washtenaw County acquired a conservation easement on the property at the time of fee purchase by SMLC. This arrangement provides two layers of land protection and ensures that the property will always remain a natural area open to the public. In the unlikely event that SMLC would cease to exist, the fee interest in the property will be transferred to Washtenaw County and the conservation easement will be transferred to the City of Ann Arbor or another conservation entity. Likewise, if the County were no longer authorized to hold conservation easements then the easement will become vested in another qualified organization.

"I'm really excited about this innovative project, because it combines the resources of the city, the county, and the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy," said the chairman of the Greenbelt Advisory Commission, Dan Ezekiel. "One thing that makes this property special is that it extends the 1000+-acre Superior Greenway of preserved open space and farmland, has public access, and extends an existing trail system."

Future Goals

The partners intend to establish a miles-long hiking trail through the Superior Greenway and the purchase of this property makes that goal more attainable. In addition, SMLC is exploring possible wildlife habitat restoration projects including wetlands and woodlot restoration as well as continuing local farming on the property for the next couple of years. SMLC Board President, James T. Weiner, indicated:

"SMLC is excited that we could protect this property because it allows us to expand the existing trail network in the Greenway from SMLC's LeFurge Woods Nature Preserve, through WPARC's Meyer Preserve and the Conservancy Farm to the Superior Township Hall for the long term enjoyment and benefit of the public."

Partner Information

The City of Ann Arbor Greenbelt Program is an innovative land preservation program that has protected over 3,400 acres of farmland and open space surrounding the City of Ann Arbor, and has leveraged over \$17 million through grants, landowner donations, and other locally funded programs. www.a2gov.org/greenbelt

Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy, a nonprofit and qualified conservation organization established 24 years ago, has protected more than 2,800 acres across southeast Michigan through the conservation of natural lands and open space to provide wildlife habitat and enrich the lives of people. www.smlcland.org

The Washtenaw County Natural Areas Preservation Program purchases unique natural areas to ensure their preservation for the benefit of all County residents: plants, animals and people! The Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission also partners with other land preservation organizations to find creative ways to protect and preserve natural areas.
www.ewashtenaw.org/urls/napp

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