



An Urban Land Trust Serving  
Greater Cleveland

2017



# Report to the Community

Enriching the lives of people in  
Greater Cleveland

» 20-year timeline inside

Conserving natural  
habitat

Restoring the ecological  
value and sustainability  
of urban lands

Expanding neighborhood  
opportunities to  
experience nature



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**Peter Bode, Central Lake Erie Project Manager**

## Dear Friend of Conservation

At West Creek Conservancy, we love doing our part to make Cleveland the best location in the nation. We are proud to serve you – the people of Greater Cleveland – and honored to earn your support. That support has fueled tremendous projects in greenspace protection, habitat renewal, and the connection of lands and parks to neighborhoods throughout our community. We are happy to say that your support has also propelled West Creek

Conservancy to its 20th anniversary. In this 2017 Report to the Community, we highlight for you our conservation accomplishments of the past year. We also invite you to share in the celebration of West Creek Conservancy's landmark anniversary. We hope this special 20th Anniversary issue provides you with a taste of the work, the people, and the milestones that have made and continue to make West Creek Conservancy what it is – one of Ohio's highly regarded land trusts.

The need for conservation in our urban landscape remains high. Greater Cleveland continues to lose natural areas and greenspace, a bitter trend in light of our region's population decline. But we can all do something.

Commit to making our community strong and vital, with abundant nature accessible to all. Join West Creek Conservancy and propel our conservation work into the next 20 years. With your generous support, they'll be the best years yet. Thank you!



**Jeff Lennartz, Chair Board of Directors**  
**Derek Schafer, Executive Director**

## Mission

West Creek Conservancy was founded to enrich the lives of people in Greater Cleveland by conserving natural habitats, restoring the ecological value and sustainability of urban lands, and expanding neighborhood opportunities to experience nature.

#### On the Cover:

Tri-C Assistant Professor and future Conservancy board member Terry Greathouse takes inventory of aquatic plants in 2003. Terry planned and oversaw creation of the wetlands at West Creek Preserve in 2001-2002 after being invited by Parma Park Advisory Committee to improve water quality on the property. Under Terry's enthusiastic leadership, funding to build the wetlands was obtained from the Ohio Lake Erie Commission in partnership with the City of Parma, Cuyahoga Community College, and West Creek Conservancy. Today known as Greathouse Wetlands, the wetlands are a unique educational part of what is now Cleveland Metroparks West Creek Reservation.

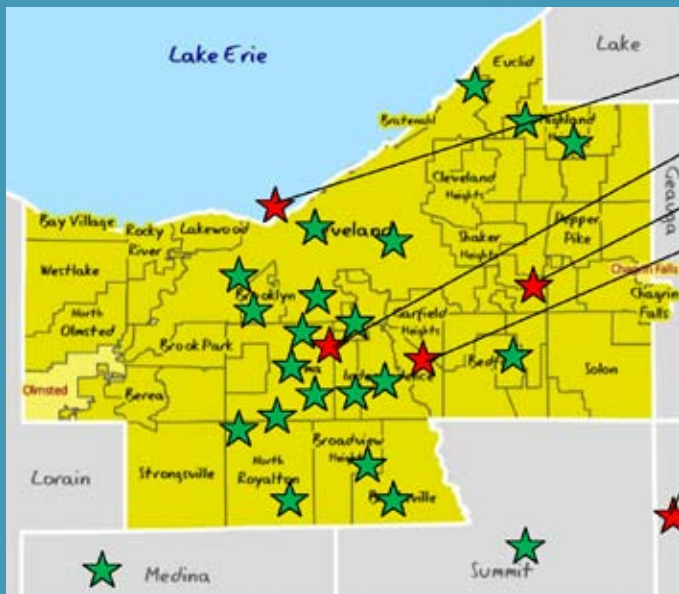


#### Board of Advisors

**Dean DePiero, McDonald Hopkins LLC; former Mayor, City of Parma**  
**Chuck Germana, Former District Councilman, Cuyahoga County Council**  
**Jim Kastelic, Former Program Director, The Trust for Public Land**  
**Herbert Mausser, Assistant Dean, Cuyahoga Community College**  
**David Nedrich, President & CEO, Parma Area Chamber of Commerce**  
**Rory Robinson, Outdoor Recreation Planner, National Park Service**  
**Matt Scharver, Watershed Team Leader, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District**  
**Philena Seldon, Outreach & Education Coordinator, Office of Sustainability, City of Cleveland**  
**David Vasarhelyi, Project Manager, The Trust for Public Land; Founder, West Creek Conservancy**



## Protecting Land Where People Live



### 2016 Projects Featured in this Issue:

- CLE Collaborative – page 8
- West Creek Greenway – pages 14-15
- Hawthorne Creek – page 7
- Valley View – page 6
- Aurora Wetlands – page 9

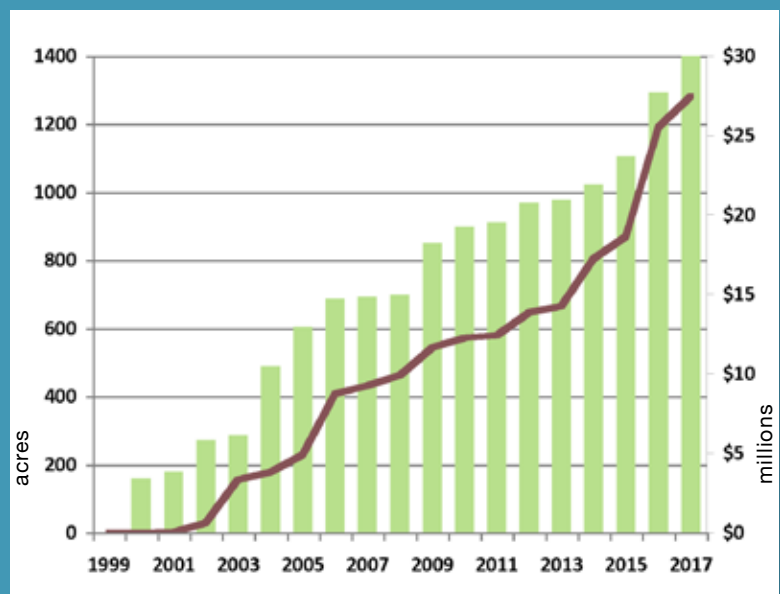
West Creek Conservancy has completed or enabled over 100 conservation projects in 20 communities across Greater Cleveland. Each star on the map indicates the location of one or more of the Conservancy's projects. Red stars represent a few of our 2016 projects that are highlighted in this report.

## Delivering the Value of Urban Conservation to Greater Cleveland

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The solid line at right shows the number of accumulated acres protected by West Creek Conservancy over its 20-year history. Acreage in 2017 topped 1,300.

The vertical bars depict the amount of accumulated project funding leveraged by the Conservancy over the same period to carry out its land protection and habitat restoration services.



### » Timeline

#### 1997

To protect part of West Creek Valley in Parma, concerned citizens form West Creek Preservation Committee, later renamed **West Creek Conservancy**.

#### 1998

The Conservancy develops the vision for the **West Creek Preserve and Greenway**.



#### 1998

Following a Conservancy initiative petition drive, **Parma voters** save 162 acres of city land as West Creek Preserve.

# Coming Together

In March of 1997 a handful of citizens gathered to discuss ways to save a small valley facing development. The land – part woodland, part closed landfill – lay along the valley of West Creek in the city of Parma, Ohio's 7th largest city, on the southern edge of Cleveland. Some shared their memories of adventure in the valley's wilderness as children. Others came to preserve it sight unseen in response to dwindling natural areas in our world. All were energized by a vision that this piece of nature, scarred as it was, could be saved.

More meetings followed. From them emerged West Creek Preservation Committee, later renamed West Creek Conservancy. The citizen conservationists, led for many years by the group's founder, Dave Vasarhelyi, spearheaded initiatives to advance community greenspace, first in the West Creek watershed and then beyond. Under its volunteer leadership, West Creek Conservancy

ventured into uncharted conservation waters. The group learned by doing and in short time accumulated an array of accomplishments. As their expertise in urban land protection grew, so did opportunities. The group received funding to hire staff. Now supported by an expanding base of members, agencies, foundations, and other partners, the Conservancy grew to carry out land protection, habitat restoration, and greenway development throughout Greater Cleveland.

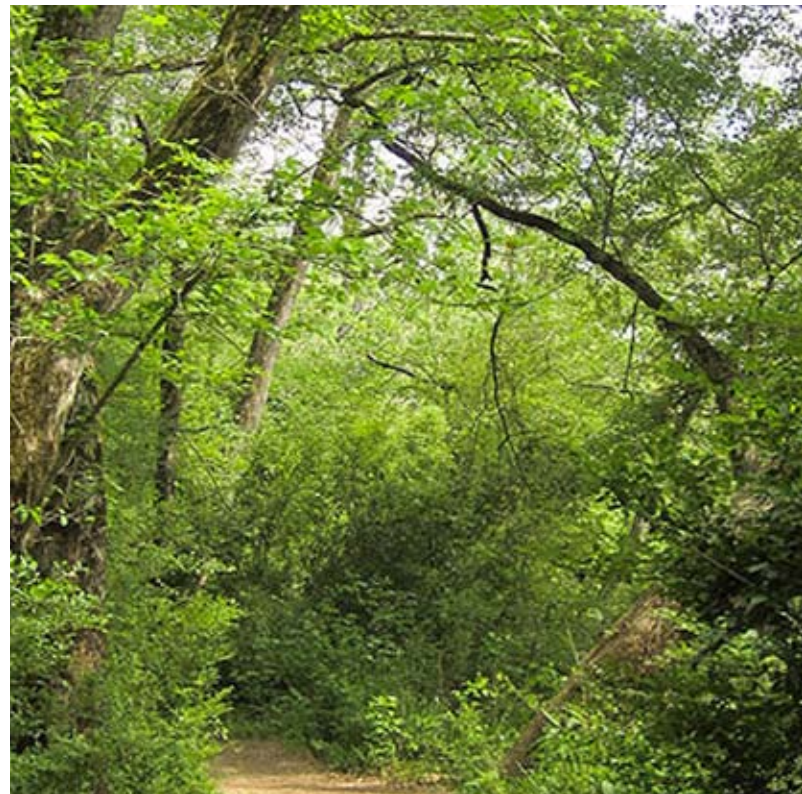
It became clear West that Creek Conservancy was filling a critical gap and an unmet need for urban land conservation in Greater Cleveland. Today the Conservancy continues to fill this gap, one defined largely by the strips and parcels of green tucked between housing developments, unseen behind shopping plazas, and running beside business parks and utility corridors. In Cuyahoga County, these unprotected spaces amount to tens of thousands of acres, nearly 10% of the county.

Although Cuyahoga County is the most urbanized county in Ohio, the 1.5 million residents of Greater Cleveland benefit greatly from these ubiquitous but too-often ignored pockets of urban greenspace. In partnership with agencies and organizations throughout the region, West Creek Conservancy began to help ensuring their protection. The lands conserved and consolidated by West

Creek Conservancy often become public parks. With the support of voters, its members, and partners, the Conservancy ended up saving that West Creek Valley land – part woodland, part old landfill – in Parma. It is now managed by Cleveland Metroparks as West Creek Reservation, enjoyed by over 100,000 visitors annually and soon to exceed 400 acres due to the ongoing efforts of the Conservancy.

*"Everyone needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul."*

**– John Muir**



## 1999

The Conservancy persuades the **U.S. Congress** to include most of the West Creek Watershed within the Ohio and Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor.

## 2000

The Conservancy spearheads a **Parma voter drive** for a \$3 million bond levy to buy 72 private acres to enlarge West Creek Preserve.



## 2001

The Conservancy acquires its **first conservation property**, 1.5 acres at Pleasant Valley Road in Parma.

Like the old landfill, few properties are acquired in pristine condition. And so it is also part of the Conservancy's mission to heal these damaged habitats so they can fulfill their vital roles in the environment and within our communities.

The story of West Creek Conservancy, begun 20 years ago with a handful of people who cared enough to act, continues today with you – community members who care about the land around them and its value as greenspace and who share a vision for a greener and

more vibrant Greater Cleveland. We invite you to consider your community, your home, and your city – and be inspired to act. Join us. Help create the next chapter of wondrous things that are possible

in Greater Cleveland when we choose to come together to make nature plentiful and accessible to all.



## Board of Directors, Past & Present 1997-2017

» Citizen volunteers have led West Creek Conservancy since its inception, contributing remarkable measures of time and talent. From the earliest meetings held round kitchen tables to the present day, these community members have shared an enduring passion for urban conservation in Greater Cleveland and the mission of West Creek Conservancy. We recognize these individuals for their service on the West Creek Conservancy Board of Directors:

Jennie Vasarhelyi	pre-2000*	Frank Dessoiffy	2004 to 2005
Delores Montaro	pre-2000*	Shellie Robb	2004 to 2006
Diane Montaro	pre-2000*	Stacey Allen	2004 to 2007
Jim Szpak	pre-2000*	David Gellner	2005 to 2006
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Patricia Mueller	pre-2000* to 2001	Kristin Oswick	2006 to 2007
Pamela Lincheck	pre-2000* to 2002	Denis Zaharija	2006 to 2009
David Lincheck	pre-2000* to 2010	John Palivoda	2007 to 2007
David Vasarhelyi	pre-2000* to 2012	Erik Ranker	2007 to 2007
Brian Scanlon	pre-2000*, 2011 to 2012	Kenneth Perry	2007 to 2008
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Dorothy Hazel	pre-2000* to present	Neal Hess	2008 to 2011
Irvin Hazel	pre-2000* to present	Lynn Garrity	2009 to 2009
Jeffrey Lennartz	pre-2000* to present	Bill Billik	2009 to 2010
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Robert Schwartzberg	2000 to 2001	Joe Consolo	2011 to 2011
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Kevin Skerl	2000 to 2002	Sara Tackett	2011 to 2012
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Dorothy Ornas	2001 to 2003	Terry Greathouse	2014 to 2016
Tom Kalish	2002 to 2003	Michael Craig	2014 to present
Walter Allen	2002 to 2005	Rich Weiser	2014 to present
Bob Greytak	2002 to 2006, 2010 to 2013	Maria Curcio	2015 to present
Laura McShane	2002 to 2008	Eric Sluss	2015 to present
Audrine Finnerty	2002 to 2010	Maribeth Feke	2017 to present
Barbara Hermes	2003 to present	Bryan Gacka	2017 to present
Irene Toth	2003 to present	Connor Redman	2017 to present
Alan Bodner	2004 to 2005	Tracey Rock	2017 to present

\* Indicates leadership in West Creek Conservancy in the period 1997 to 1999, prior to board formation in 2000.

### 2002

The Conservancy protects 40 more acres in **West Creek Valley** and is awarded Clean Ohio funding for over 60 acres of the West Creek Greenway.



### 2003

The Conservancy, with the Village of Brooklyn Heights, protects the 27-acre **Eagle Glen** parcel, doubling the size of Brooklyn Heights Park.

### 2003

The Conservancy hires its **first staff member**, Watershed Coordinator Greg Kutsko.



## Expanding Public Parks

Increasing opportunities to experience nature in Valley View

### The Challenge:

Private and public lands throughout Greater Cleveland host pockets of high-quality forests, wetlands, and other natural habitats that are vulnerable to development. Most lie hidden from casual view with the public rarely aware of their natural and ecological value. In the Village of Valley View, near the community's main park, sizable wooded lots stood unprotected.

### Our Action:

Aware of several adjoining properties, West Creek Conservancy contacted the landowners, negotiated terms of sale, sought out and received acquisition funds, and in 2016 acquired the land. Ownership was transferred to the Village with the Conservancy retaining conservation easements. Similarly, a nearby 26-acre property in the Village was acquired adjacent to Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

### The Impact:

Residents of Valley View have for generations enjoyed Valley View Woods, a 160-acre park established on the high ground east of the Cuyahoga River featuring ball fields, picnic pavilions, walking trails, and other recreational facilities. West Creek Conservancy accepted from the Village an easement covering 75 acres of this existing park. The new 80-acre acquisition by the Conservancy enlarged the park by

50%. In addition to the impressive stand of older-growth forest, the acquisition protects 5 acres of high-quality wetland and 2 miles of stream. Visitors can now experience, explore, and enjoy a far greater expanse of nature in their neighborhood.



*These natural wetlands are among the over 180 acres in Valley View protected recently by West Creek Conservancy. Much of the newly conserved land was added to Valley View Woods Park.*

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*"On behalf of the Village of Valley View Council and myself, I commend the extraordinary efforts of West Creek Conservancy to expand our community park by nearly 100 acres. As a result, the Village of Valley View is an active partner in the protection and preservation of natural green space for years to come.*

*We were impressed with the Conservancy's ability to bring multiple landowners together for the common goal of preserving an important part of our remaining resources."*

*– Mayor Jerry Piasecki  
Village of Valley View*



### 2003

The Conservancy, The Trust for Public Land, and the City of Parma save the **1849 Henninger House** for a future trailhead along the West Creek Greenway.

### 2005

The Conservancy partners with **Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District** for \$3.5 million in stream restoration projects along West Creek, including removal of two low-head dams.

### 2006

The Conservancy, the City of Parma, and Cleveland Metroparks enter into a lease designating West Creek Preserve as the **Metroparks' 16th reservation**; the Conservancy continues leading efforts to enlarge the park and connect it to the **Towpath Trail**.

## Creating Spaces for Nature

### Saving at-risk natural habitat in Warrensville Heights

#### The Challenge:

Following World War II many Greater Cleveland suburbs experienced a population explosion. Between 1940 and 1960 the population of Warrensville Heights surged from 1,175 to over 23,000. Centuries-old woodlands, wetlands, and streams were hastily replaced with new streets, culverts, houses, stores, and parking lots. But, like other Greater Cleveland communities, while gaining population Warrensville Heights was losing an increasingly fragile connection with a natural environment that by 2016 had dwindled to only 3% – a fragmented 3% remnant still threatened with more development.

#### Our Action:

Upon learning that a still-natural 16 acres within that remaining 3% of Warrensville Heights were being marketed for multi-family living units, West Creek Conservancy promptly partnered with Tinker's Creek Watershed Partners and the City of Warrensville Heights to acquire Clean Ohio funding and negotiated a purchase with the owner. Now owned by the Conservancy, this public natural habitat has been preserved and adjoins 30 acres of additional conservation land in the Village of Orange.

#### The Impact:

Hawthorne Creek is a 6-mile long tributary of Tinker's Creek, extending south from the Eastern campus of Cuyahoga Community College in Highland Hills to the Shadow Lake area of Cleveland Metroparks before reaching Tinker's Creek. The 16-acre property protected by West Creek

Conservancy, located just north of US 422, lies within the Tinker's Creek watershed and contains a section of Hawthorne Creek. An attractive natural habitat, the parcel also contains vernal pools, four acres of wetlands, 500 feet of stream, and a woodland tract dominated by red oak, red maple, beech, black cherry, and shagbark hickory. The area enhances nearby property values, reduces surging stormwater runoff into the Tinker's Creek floodplain, and provides a peaceful public setting where area residents can conveniently disconnect from the hectic demands of their busy lives to reconnect with a remaining bit of that natural heritage that, piece by piece, is being preserved by West Creek Conservancy within neighborhoods throughout Greater Cleveland.

» *Warrensville Heights was losing its connection with a natural environment that by 2016 had dwindled to only 3%.*

"West Creek Conservancy recently guided us through the process of acquiring the 16-acre Warrensville Heights property utilizing Clean Ohio Funding.

The acquisition would not have been possible without their expert knowledge and assistance through the information-gathering and grant-writing process.

We are thankful for their continued support and willingness to help our organization in protecting greenspace in the watershed."

**Harry Stark,**  
Executive Director  
Tinker's Creek  
Watershed Partners



*This massive American beech tree has thrived for generations on land recently protected by West Creek Conservancy in the Hawthorne Creek Valley. The woods and adjacent wetlands perform vital functions including stormwater control and removal of harmful pollutants.*

#### 2007

- The Conservancy aids the City of **Seven Hills** in receiving a Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency grant for one mile of the West Creek Greenway; the trail segment opens by year end.
- The Conservancy, The Trust for Public Land, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, and the City of Independence purchase a closed warehouse (right) and 10 acres to restore the floodplain at the **West Creek-Cuyahoga River confluence**.



#### 2008

The Conservancy acquires a 22-acre conservation easement in the City of Cleveland for **Treadway Creek Greenway & Trail**, the first neighborhood trail west of the Cuyahoga River to join the Towpath Trail.



# Collaborating for a Great Lake

Unifying local efforts to overcome mounting Lake Erie water quality challenges

*“Environmental challenges do not have boundaries; neither should efforts to overcome them.”*

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## The Challenge:

Growing concern for the condition of Lake Erie, the source of drinking water for most of Ohio's shoreline communities, including Greater Cleveland, has spurred the creation of individual regional watershed organizations. The groups strive to carry out effective responses to an increasing number of pollution threats to Lake Erie's water quality. And the threats are myriad.

From the uncontrolled runoff from urban centers and farms, to invasive aquatic species such as zebra mussels and Asian carp, to the persistent fragmentation of natural habitat resulting from population sprawl into the countryside, effective responses to these issues readily overwhelm the capabilities of local volunteer organizations.

## Our Action:

West Creek Conservancy has coordinated a collaborative and unifying response by local organizations along the Central Lake Erie Basin, spanning over 130 miles from the Conneaut River to the Sandusky Bay. The Central Lake Erie Collaborative is a group of 14 regional watershed organizations organized to now work cooperatively on issues, events, programs and projects that address their shared water quality concerns. It has leveraged funding from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, The George Gund Foundation, The Cleveland Foundation, and ArcelorMittal. West Creek Conservancy's leadership role has provided for the hiring of two Central Lake Erie Project Managers, one of which is located at the Conservancy's office.



*“Regional collaborations like the one being facilitated by West Creek Conservancy, provide important technical aid and funding access for communities seeking to transform rivers and streams from drainage ways into valuable community assets. The Central Lake Erie Collaborative can provide the catalyst to help local decision makers better manage their community's natural attributes.”*

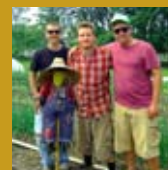
**Russell W. Gibson**, Manager  
Surface Water Improvement Section  
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

## 2009

- The Conservancy adopts a strategic plan to formally expand its service area beyond the West Creek Watershed and Greenway communities to **all of Greater Cleveland**.
- The Conservancy acquires a 55-acre conservation easement in the upper Big Creek Watershed to form **Busch/Snake Hill Conservation Area**.

## 2010

- The Conservancy and Big Creek Connects conceive and co-sponsor the first **Greater Cleveland Trails Conference**, now a highly-regarded biennial event.
- The Conservancy protects its first property in the **Euclid Creek** Watershed in partnership with the City of Cleveland and Friends of Euclid Creek.



## 2011

The Conservancy, with OSU Extension and City of Cleveland, reclaims 6 acres of vacant land to create **Kinsman Farm**, an incubator project for urban farmers and one of the largest in Greater Cleveland.



### The Impact:

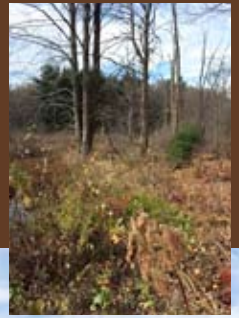
With local expertise and resources now merged throughout members of the Collaborative, established strengths are multiplied, tasks are efficiently disbursed, skills are readily acquired, and knowledge moves to where it is most needed.

Furthermore, assistance from staffed core organizations is available to smaller watershed volunteer groups as well as to previously unserved areas. Facilitating such local watershed initiatives as wetland assessment, restoration planning, bio-retention design, grant application and municipal code review is a primary responsibility of Project Manager Peter Bode, who provides high-quality project consultation to Collaborative members.

Threats to Lake Erie water quality that individual local organizations have found overwhelming are now being met with a unified, collaborative, and effective response. Environmental challenges do not have boundaries; neither should efforts to overcome them.

## Protecting Areas that Sustain Us

Saving an expanse of headwaters in Aurora threatened by new housing



### The Challenge:

Tinker's Creek is the largest tributary of the Cuyahoga River, draining nearly 100 square miles. The creek provides one third of the river's flow into Lake Erie. The headwaters of Tinker's Creek are expansive but steadily being fragmented and consumed by development, degrading not only the local habitat, but the land, lives, and livelihoods of people downstream. Unless protective actions are taken, more headwaters will be transformed from an abundant life-sustaining resource into an impaired source of harmful runoff.

*A major swath of the headwaters of Tinker's Creek is found in the expansive wetlands of Aurora in Portage County. West Creek Conservancy secured a conservation easement to protect 75 acres of this critical habitat from encroaching development.*

### Our Action:

Working with a housing developer in the City of Aurora, a conservation easement was acquired on over 75 acres of greenspace in the upper reaches of Tinker's Creek watershed. The easement protects a mature stand of forest, over 37 acres of high-quality wetlands, and 3000 feet of pristine headwater streams.

### The Impact:

Wetlands play a far-reaching role in supporting life. Acting as nature's kidneys, they purify our surface waters,

recharge our aquifers, control flooding, and serve as home and nursery to countless species. But wetlands are disappearing at an alarming rate. By preserving the high-quality wetland and streams on this property, they now continue to fulfill their many roles that benefit plants, animals, and people. The property will also buffer the adjoining 400-acre Aurora Wetlands Park from the approaching suburban sprawl of new homes and commercial activity.

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## 2012

The Conservancy begins aiding **Cleveland Crops** in securing land for its farming program. Two years later the Conservancy helps create a 16-acre urban farm with Cleveland Crops at Parma's Stearns Homestead through partnership with Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities, the City of Parma, and Parma Area Historical Society.



## 2013

- The Conservancy assists Cleveland Metroparks in preserving 50 acres in the headwaters of **Rocky River Watershed**, containing abundant high-quality streams and wetlands.
- The Conservancy, with Friends of Euclid Creek and Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District, protects 8-acre **Redstone Run** in Richmond Heights. The following year, over 12 acres are added to adjacent Highland Heights Community Park.



# West Creek Conservancy Donors

# Thank You

**YOU – our donors – make it all possible!** In 2016 your generosity enabled West Creek Conservancy to protect hundreds of properties and over 1,200 acres throughout Greater Cleveland. We are grateful to all the individuals, corporations, foundations, and organizations who have supported our vital conservation work. These donors have made contributions between January 1 and December 31, 2016.

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Martine Scheuermann	Eric Clark-Schafer	Patricia Jatsek	Ohio Prairie Nursery	Nancy Streichert
Andy Schofield	Marcia Cornelius	David & Mary Jecmen	Elizabeth Olexa	Tim Stys
Jeff & Paulette Skinner	Gary Course	Michelle Johnson	Dennis & Lois O'Neil	Germain & Patricia Suminski
Jim Sprague	Alan Dailey	Cris Jules	Joe & Peggy Osburn	Paul & Valarie Swancer
Paul & Laureen Suhay	Ellen Davis	Jan Julio	Mr. & Mrs. Casimir Osowski	Jim & Beth Szpak
Gladys Swicki	Terry & Laurie Davison	Ms. Geraldine Kaftan	Pete Panizzutti	Mr. & Mrs. Joseph M. Tavano
Anthony & Eleanor Szpak	Brian Day	Key Bank Foundation	George & Marie Patterson	Frank & Elizabeth Terepka
Michael Szpatura	Kathleen Decker	Theresa Kindel	Don & Jenny Peak	Marilyn Thies
United Swiss Society of Cleveland	Barbara Degyansky	James Koney	Ken Murach & Jane Penttila	Phil Thomas
Betty A. Urban	Ruth Skuly & Leo Deininger	Marion Konstant	John & Marguerite Phillips	Greg & Darlene Toth
Christopher Vild	Francine Demyan	Kurt Korfhage	Ken & Joanne Pohlchuck	Steve & Barbara Tucky
Erika Jordan Wagner	Dean DePiero	Virginia A. Kovach	Don Pollack	Lisa Uffman-Kirsch
Diane & Nate Ward	Kathy DiGiovanni	Michelle Kozelka	Elizabeth Prusak	Mark Vasarhelyi
Karen Seawall & Greg Warren	Tim Dobeck	Paula Kramer	Barbara Rajavich	Barbara Von Benken
Watershed Distillery	William & Betty Dodds	Ann Krepps	Kenneth Rapport	Kathleen Wanek
Thomas & Marcia White	Ed Dooner	Matthew Ksenyak	Anne Raspey	Jerry Wasylyszyn
Nancy Wilson	Helene Dreibelbis	Jerry & Marie Laheta	Margaret Rein	David Weiser
Claude Wilson, Jr.	Alice Dugar, SND	Karen Lamoreaux	John J. Riczo	Pam Wetterau
Gene A. Wimmer	Judge Mary L. Dunning	James & Gayle Landers	Karen & Brian Riegel	Joseph & Erika Whitely
Gerald Zemko	Emerald Necklace Garden Club	Catherine Langan	Dennis & Sandra Rohal	Erika Whitley
Sue Zurovchak	Garden Club	Mrs. Mary Ann Lanser	Hilary Rossen	Mary Ann Wiedl
	Lucy Erba	Debbie LeWalk	Elena Roszkowski	Kathryn Wilmer
	Elizabeth Fleming	Carol & Carl Lindblom	Elinor Rowan	Wally & Josie Wolf
	Rick Gates	David & Connie Link	Darlene Sadowski	Blue Yuncher
	Keith Geary	Carole & Donald Lisy	Judy Scheel	Bernard Zagar
	Janice Geho	Mary Ann Loschelder	June Schilens	Dan & Pam Zupancic
	Robert P. & Barbara Glover	Mike & Monica Losneck	Donald & Linda & Becky Schmaltz	
	Dorothy K. Gonda	Jason Lovano	Katherine Schneider	
	Arthur Good	Larry Lowiec	Erika Schnur	
	Jeremy & Nancy Acord-Greathouse	Ed Lukacevic & Resi Sonntag	Cliff & Betty Schuenaman	
	Kathleen Greear	Jim Madej		
	James Hamilton			
	Marianne Hamlescher			
	Alex & Millie Harnocz			
» <b>\$99 AND UNDER</b>				
Anonymous				
Richard J. Babyak				
Sylvia M. Banks & David Slawson				
Donald & Edie Bees				
David & Daneen Bielecki				

Continued

## Honorarium & Memorials

**In Memory of John & Mike Palivoda**  
J. Howard Flower

**In Memory of David Lincheck**  
Katherine Schneider

**In Memory of Robert Petras**  
Geraldine Petras

**In Honor of Candy Ridler**  
William Nixon

## Goods & Services Donors

Acme Fresh Market  
Adventure Zone  
African Safari Wildlife Park  
ArcGIS  
Augie's Pizza & Catering  
AutoZone  
Aveda  
Bearskin Lodge On The River  
Beck Center for the Arts  
Bonefish Grill  
Bruell Catering  
Brunswick Storage  
Buckeye Sales Equipment  
Buffalo Wild Wings  
George Cantor  
Carlo's Barber Shop  
Casamel's Pizza  
Charm Thai  
Cheesecake Factory  
Chick-Fil-A

City of Parma  
Cleveland Botanical Gardens  
Cleveland Brew Bus  
Cleveland Cinemas  
Cleveland Improv  
Cleveland Marriott  
Downtown at Key Center  
Cleveland Metroparks  
Cleveland Museum of Natural History  
Cleveland Orchestra  
Cleveland Pickle  
Cleveland Play House  
Cleveland Whiskey  
Columbus Crew  
Commence Firearms Training Academy  
COSI  
Costco  
Creekside Restaurant & Bar  
Maria Curcio  
Cuyahoga Valley National Park  
Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad  
Danny Boys  
Destiny Derma Spa & Salon  
Dewey's Pizza  
DiBella's Subs  
Domino's Pizza  
Don's Pomeroy House  
Durken's Florist  
Eddie Bauer  
Emma Lee Spring  
Ernest Conservation Seed  
Eye Optical  
Fairview Lanes  
Fathead's Brewery  
Fetch Pet Boutique & Spa  
Fin Feather Fur Outfitters  
Gervasi Vineyard & Italian Bistro  
Giant Eagle  
Go Ape Treetop Adventures  
Great Lakes Brewing Company  
Great Lakes Science Center

Greater Cleveland Aquarium  
Hampton Inn and Suites  
Columbus-Downtown  
Healing Hands Therapy  
Hersh PR & Marketing  
Hibachi Japanese Steakhouse  
Honey Hut  
Humble Wine Bar  
Hungry Bee Catering  
J. Bellas/Bucci's  
Jaworski Meats  
Kitchler Lighting  
Klyn Nurseries Inc.  
Krispy Kreme  
LaCentre Conference & Banquet Facility  
L'Albatros  
Lazer X Tremé  
Levin Furniture  
Litehouse Pools & Spas  
Mario's Barber Shop  
Herb Mausser  
Meiring Borchard's Photography  
Melt Bar & Grilled  
Michael Angelo's Bakery  
Roy Minoff  
Mr. Chicken  
Music Box Supper Club  
Nalu Standup Paddle & Surf  
New Heights In Hair  
Ohio State Landscaping  
Old Carolina BBQ  
Old FireHouse Winery  
Old Lakeshore Charters  
Old School Architectural Harvest

On-Call Waterproofing  
Online Liquidation Auction  
Parkview NiteClub  
Petitti Garden Center  
Potbelly Sandwich Shop  
PPG Industries  
Premier Family Dental - Dr. Koussa  
Pura Vida  
Rafting in the Smokies  
Ridgewood Golf Course  
Rivergate Tavern  
Rock & Roll Hall of Fame  
Romito's Pizza  
Brendalee Salk  
Sear's Hardware and Appliance  
Shooters on the Water  
Shula's Steakhouse  
Skybox Packaging LLC  
Terry Stahurski  
Superelectric Pinball Parlor  
Synergy Woods  
Tarboosh Eatery  
Target - Parma  
Texas Roadhouse  
The Oak Barrel  
The Yardhouse  
Trivs Restaurant & Lounge  
Walt Disney World Co.  
Watershed Distillery  
Western Reserve Rowing Association  
Westin Cleveland Downtown  
Wexler's Tavern  
Y Design Graphics  
Zoup!

We have made every effort to prepare this donor list accurately. We apologize for any mistakes or omissions. If you have any questions regarding this list, please contact Dawn Petkov at (216) 749-3720 or [dpetkov@westcreek.org](mailto:dpetkov@westcreek.org)

### 2014

- The Conservancy protects 22 acres in **Brooklyn Heights** along nearly 3000 feet of Cuyahoga River.
- The Conservancy transfers to Cleveland Metroparks a Cleveland parcel (*right*) critical to completing the **Lake Link Trail**, which will join Cleveland's lakefront to the Towpath Trail.



### 2015

- The Conservancy, in partnership with the Seven Hills landowner, creates **Spring Hill Native Plant Nursery** on 10 acres protected by conservation easement.
- The Conservancy acquires over 30 acres in **upper West Creek Valley** to extend West Creek Reservation; since the 2006 lease, the Conservancy has expanded the parkland by over 100 acres.





## THANK YOU!

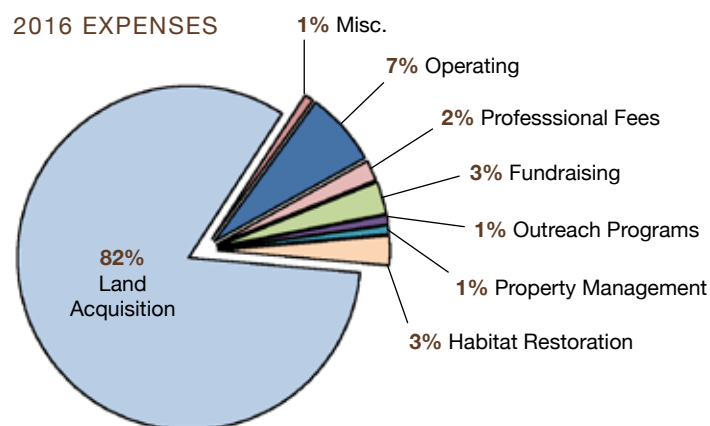
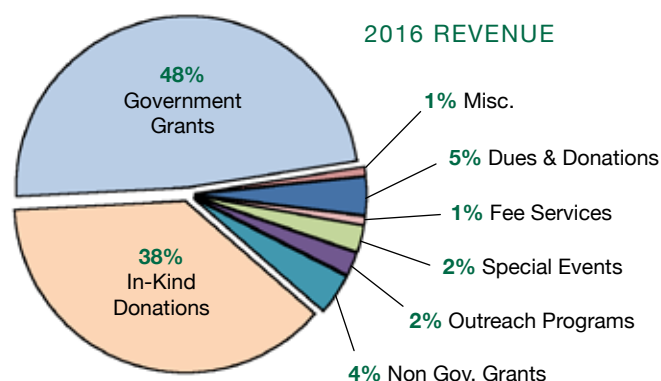
We extend thanks to our many **volunteers** who have given generously of their time and energy in support of our mission in 2016. Thank you!



## Financial Statement

Year ended December 31, 2016,  
accrual basis

2016 REVENUE		
Dues & Donations	\$	151,526
In-Kind Donations	\$	1,613,813
Fee Services	\$	43,012
Special Events	\$	104,962
Outreach Programs	\$	90,191
Non Gov. Grants	\$	165,411
Government Grants	\$	2,072,368
Misc.	\$	31,739
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>4,273,022</b>
2016 EXPENSES		
Operating	\$	288,071
Professional Fees	\$	84,391
Fundraising	\$	123,987
Outreach Programs	\$	34,306
Property Management	\$	37,908
Habitat Restoration	\$	115,095
Land Acquisition	\$	3,443,032
Misc.	\$	34,622
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>4,161,412</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>111,610</b>



### 2016

The Conservancy protects over 180 acres in the **Village of Valley View** connecting to Cuyahoga Valley National Park and Valley View Woods Park.



### 2017

- The Conservancy acquires over 80 acres of the historic **Parmadale** property (left) for eventual incorporation into West Creek Reservation.
- Using funds initiated by the Conservancy, construction begins on the 2-mile **Hemlock Trail** segment of the West Creek Greenway in Independence to connect to the Towpath Trail.
- Since forming in 1997, the Conservancy has protected or facilitated protection of nearly **300 parcels** of land totaling over 1,300 acres across 20 communities and 4 counties.

## The West Creek Greenway

Creating ribbons of greenspace that connect & renew our communities

The West Creek Greenway is an evolving proposed network of over 25 miles of trail traversing four cities and conserving over 1000 acres of greenspace (see map below). It will connect neighborhoods, schools, employment centers, shopping areas, and other community destinations with West Creek Reservation, city parks, the Ohio & Erie

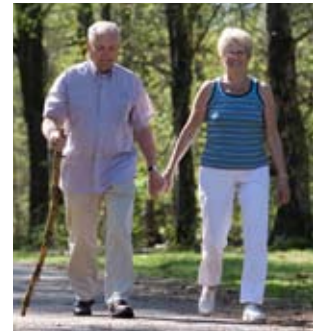
Canal Towpath Trail, and Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

The bold idea of the Greenway was conceived by West Creek Conservancy founders soon after the group's formation. With nearly 80% of the needed properties secured for the main 17-mile trail, the Greenway is steadily nearing reality.

"It's a piecemeal process, but it's really starting to take shape," says Executive Director Derek Schafer. "A beautiful path along West Creek has existed in Brooklyn Heights for decades. In recent years, trail sections in the [West Creek] Reservation and Seven Hills were built. Another scenic piece of trail – the Hemlock Creek leg – begins construction in Summer 2017 in Independence. And additional parts will soon be entering design phase." Urban conservation is often piecemeal. Linking

unrelated parcels into continuous strands of greenspace through the urban environment is not quick or easy. Says Schafer, "Willing property owners and community support are crucial to the success of the Greenway."

*Continued*



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## » Who will benefit from the West Creek Greenway?

In short, everyone benefits – people, cities, businesses, and the environment.

Improving people's health and well-being is a primary goal of the West Creek Greenway. While the population density of Cuyahoga County and the sheer number of property owners make the process of negotiating and assembling urban greenways a challenge, the numbers reveal that the challenge is well worth the effort. Over 40,000 people live within 2000 feet – walking distance – of the proposed West

Creek Greenway. Public access to open space and the recreational opportunities provided by the Greenway will generate major dividends to the well-being of the community, including improved personal health and related savings in medical costs.

Greater protection of local streams and natural habitats is another major benefit of the Greenway. Much of the West Creek Greenway will follow and include West Creek itself. By offering considerable uninterrupted areas of interconnected greenspace, the West Creek Greenway will enable movement of plant and animal species and add resilience to native populations.

Well-planned greenways are embraced as enduring, beautiful, and valuable community assets. They are one of the most cost-effective investments to:

- Improve fitness and mental health of residents through active living.
- Create value and spur economic activity through tourism, civic improvement, and marketability.
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian transportation for recreation and commuting.
- Clear our skies, clean our rivers, and protect wildlife.

- Protect people and property from flood damage.
- Increase property values.
- Enhance cultural awareness and build community identity.

Twenty years in the making, the West Creek Greenway remains a defining project of West Creek Conservancy. Although completion of the trail network is some years away, new sections will continue to open for public use as they are completed.

To learn how you can help to fund a section of trail, contact us at [info@westcreek.org](mailto:info@westcreek.org) or call (216) 749-3720.

### Join Today!

## » I'll Help Make Nature Our Neighbor!

### ☐ YES! I want to join West Creek Conservancy and help protect greenspaces in Greater Cleveland

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000 Watershed Patron | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Woodland Steward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Greenway Champion | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Introductory     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Trail Builder     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____        |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City / State / Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to **West Creek Conservancy**, PO Box 347113, Cleveland, OH 44134. You can also join by credit card online at [www.westcreek.org](http://www.westcreek.org) or by calling **216.749.3720**.

- ☐ Please send me information on making a gift to West Creek Conservancy through my will or estate plan.
- ☐ I have already included West Creek Conservancy in my will or estate plan.
- ☐ Email me updates on programs and member events.

West Creek Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Your generous gift is tax deductible. THANK YOU!





## 2017 Calendar of Events\*

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Tues., April 18</b>  | Annual Meeting, 6:30 p.m.,<br>Watershed Stewardship Center, Parma            |
| <b>Thurs., April 20</b> | Treadway Trail Hike, 5:30 p.m.,<br>Harmondy Park, Cleveland                  |
| <b>Sat., May 13</b>     | RiverSweep Cleanup, 9:00 a.m.,<br>West Creek & Mill Creek areas              |
| <b>Thurs., May 18</b>   | Seven Hills Trail Hike, 5:30 p.m.,<br>Seven Hills Recreation Center          |
| <b>Thurs., June 15</b>  | Hemlock Trail Evening Hike, Independence                                     |
| <b>Wed., June 21</b>    | West Creek Greenway Public Meeting,<br>Watershed Stewardship Center, Parma   |
| <b>Sat., July 15</b>    | Up! A Creek Conservation Gala (fundraiser),<br>West Creek Reservation, Parma |
| <b>Sat., July 22</b>    | Snake Hill Hike, Parma   |
| <b>Thurs., Aug 17</b>   | Hemlock Trail Evening Hike, Independence                                     |
| <b>Thurs., Sept 14</b>  | Seven Hills Trail Hike, Seven Hills<br>Recreation Center                     |
| <b>Sat., Oct 28</b>     | 5K Off-Road Trail Run (fundraiser),<br>West Creek Reservation, Parma         |
| <b>Tues., Dec 5</b>     | Annual Holiday Party, Watershed Stewardship<br>Center, Parma                 |

*\* Events are free and open to the public unless noted otherwise. This is a partial list of activities and is subject to change. For details and the latest information on these and other Conservancy events, please visit [www.westcreek.org](http://www.westcreek.org) or call (216) 749-3720.*

» [www.westcreek.org](http://www.westcreek.org)

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216.749.3720  
[www.westcreek.org](http://www.westcreek.org)

