



2018

Report to the Community

Extreme Makeover for an Old Campus



Story on pg. 8

An Urban Land Trust Serving Greater Cleveland

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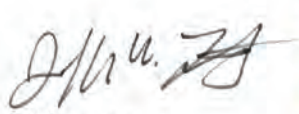
Dear Friend of Conservation,

"It's so peaceful! I LOVE this!" Those words were overheard during a recent walk. It happened to be on a winter day in West Creek Reservation in Parma. But it could have been anytime, in countless other places around Greater Cleveland, including places that are small and not so obviously parklike: a meadow left wild between industrial sites; a wooded lot behind a suburban cul-de-sac; or along the banks of the Cuyahoga River near downtown Cleveland.

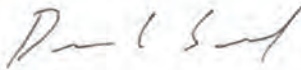
Thanks to your support, West Creek Conservancy has now protected over 1500 acres and 250 parcels in places just like those. Together, we are working to steward these lands and restore their natural ability to serve the needs of people and our planet. With each new protected property, the Conservancy is making our region a healthier and more vibrant place to live and work.

Let us quickly mention two exciting projects for 2018. West Creek Conservancy recently acquired 80 acres of the former Parmadale campus, the largest single acquisition in our organization's history. Removal of the old campus structures should begin later this year. Read more about it on page 8. The Conservancy is also assisting in the creation of Irishtown Bend Park in downtown Cleveland. This 17-acre park will enable the final trail link between Cleveland's lakefront and the Towpath Trail – some 30 years in the making. Consider that a spoiler alert for next year's report!

West Creek Conservancy brings conservation to where you live – in your city, in your neighborhood, a few steps from your doorstep. We think everyone deserves a nearby place to enjoy peace, a nature-filled place to love. Join us in making nature abundant and accessible throughout Greater Cleveland. With your generous support, we'll make it happen together. Thank you!



Jeff Lennartz
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Executive Director



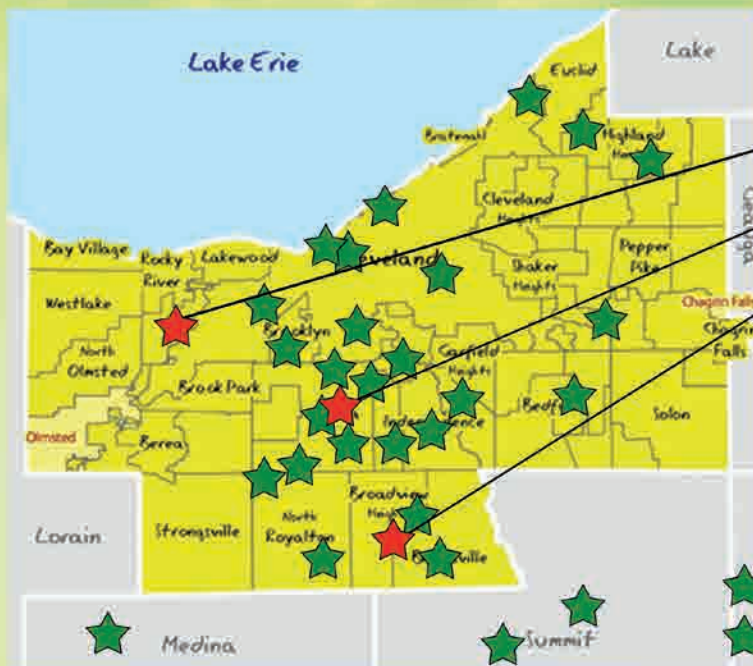
OUR MISSION

To enrich the lives of people in Greater Cleveland by conserving natural habitat, restoring the ecological value and sustainability of urban land, and expanding neighborhood opportunities to experience nature



ABOVE: - Employees from KeyBank (left) and CSA Group (right) volunteer on West Creek Conservancy rain garden and planting projects.

ON THE COVER: - Aerial view of the former Parmadale campus in Parma. The 1920s buildings and surrounding forest were acquired by West Creek Conservancy in 2017. Before opening the area to the public, most structures will be removed. Story on page 8.



PROJECTS FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

Coe Creek - Pg. 4

Parmadale - Pg. 8

Chippewa Creek - Pg. 5

Protecting Land Where People Live

Since its founding in 1997, West Creek Conservancy has completed or enabled over 130 conservation projects in 20 communities across Greater Cleveland. At left, each star indicates one or more projects. The red stars show three 2017 projects that are highlighted in this report.



LEFT - Hikers pose where the future Hemlock Creek Trail, a proposed part of the West Creek Greenway, will cross the Cuyahoga River in Independence. A new pedestrian bridge will help link West Creek Reservation to the Towpath Trail.



RIGHT - Intrepid entrepreneurs begin the process of harvesting honey at Kinsman Farm, one of Cleveland's largest urban agricultural incubators, established and sustained through a partnership with West Creek Conservancy.

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NATIVE SPECIES - such as these mallard ducks in Rocky River, and people can both thrive in urban environments when land use is thoughtfully planned and key water resources and natural lands are protected. The 12 acres of Coe Creek valley now protected by West Creek Conservancy will help clean the waters entering Rocky River and Lake Erie.

REVITALIZING OUR RIVERS

RESTORING IMPACTED TRIBUTARIES TO IMPROVE THE WATERS OF ROCKY RIVER

The Challenge: Most cities contain pockets of land with no clear future. Encircled by housing, businesses, or other developments, they typically have hillsides or water features that deter easy development. They are often ignored for many years. Too often, they are also subjected to dumping and other abuses. These overlooked lands are everywhere. They have a combined systemic impact on the health of our rivers, our lakes – and us.

Our Action: West Creek Conservancy placed under conservation easement a 12-acre section of Coe Creek valley owned by Fairview Park. The transaction used private funds from a development project on nearby Lorain Road. Coe Creek is a 5-mile tributary of Rocky River, flowing mainly in underground culverts. It runs from Great Northern Mall in North Olmsted, through Bain Park, and across Big Met Golf Course in Rocky River Reservation. Our partners in the project included Rocky River Watershed Council and the City of Fairview Park.

The Impact: Each lake, river, and gulley affects the wellbeing of life downstream – whether plant, animal, person, neighborhood, or city. The health of these waterways is set by how well we care for the land. By acquiring the conservation easement in Coe Creek valley, a section of culvert will be removed and a beautiful 3000-foot length of stream and surrounding woodlands that funnel water to Rocky River and the Reservation will be protected. The acquisition eliminates the threat of future development and provides Fairview Park with extra funds to put toward more stream restoration. The acquisition is also the Conservancy's first step in a larger restoration effort along Coe Creek.

CREATING SPACES FOR NATURE

SECURING NATURAL HABITAT IN THE CHIPPEWA CREEK WATERSHED

The Challenge: Between 1990 and 2018, over 10% of Earth's wilderness was lost. And with this loss of habitat went entire species. One does not need to travel across oceans or even time zones to see this loss. It's happening right here in northeast Ohio. To strengthen the web of life that supports us all, natural lands must be conserved and balanced with the needs of people. Watershed Balanced Growth Plans offer a framework for communities to sustain both economic development and conservation. In 2008, the Chippewa Creek Watershed Balanced Growth Plan became the first to be endorsed by the State of Ohio. It is now one of three endorsed plans in Cuyahoga County, the other two being Chagrin River and Big Creek.

Our Action: West Creek Conservancy acquired 14 acres in Broadview Heights identified in the Chippewa Creek plan as a priority conservation area. A developer had marketed the area for decades without success. The property, obtained through the Cuyahoga County Land Bank, contains a valley whose natural water features and associated permitting requirements made building proposals untenable.

The Impact: The acquired parcel contains 1400 feet of a main branch of Chippewa Creek, which flows through Brecksville Reservation and into the Cuyahoga River. The parcel includes critical streamside habitat, floodplain, bottom-land forest, and open field, all of which provide home to a wide range of native plants and animals. As West Creek Conservancy carries out its ongoing stewardship, the property will be managed to strengthen its natural biological diversity.

"The Balanced Growth concept emphasizes that land use planning and development should recognize watershed functions and other natural processes... Protecting these Priority Conservation Areas will have high impact on the watershed in terms of flooding, erosion, and water quality."

- Chippewa Creek Watershed Balanced Growth Plan, Cuyahoga River Community Planning Organization



As part of the 4th-largest undeveloped area in the Chippewa Creek watershed, this 14-acre property in Broadview Heights, now protected by West Creek Conservancy, hosts a rich variety of habitat and critical soils.



WEST CREEK CONSERVANCY DONORS

YOU – OUR DONORS – MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE! In 2017 your generosity allowed West Creek Conservancy to protect hundreds of properties throughout Greater Cleveland. We are grateful to all the individuals, corporations, foundations, and organizations who have supported our vital work. Contributions received between January 1 and December 31, 2017, are listed here.

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



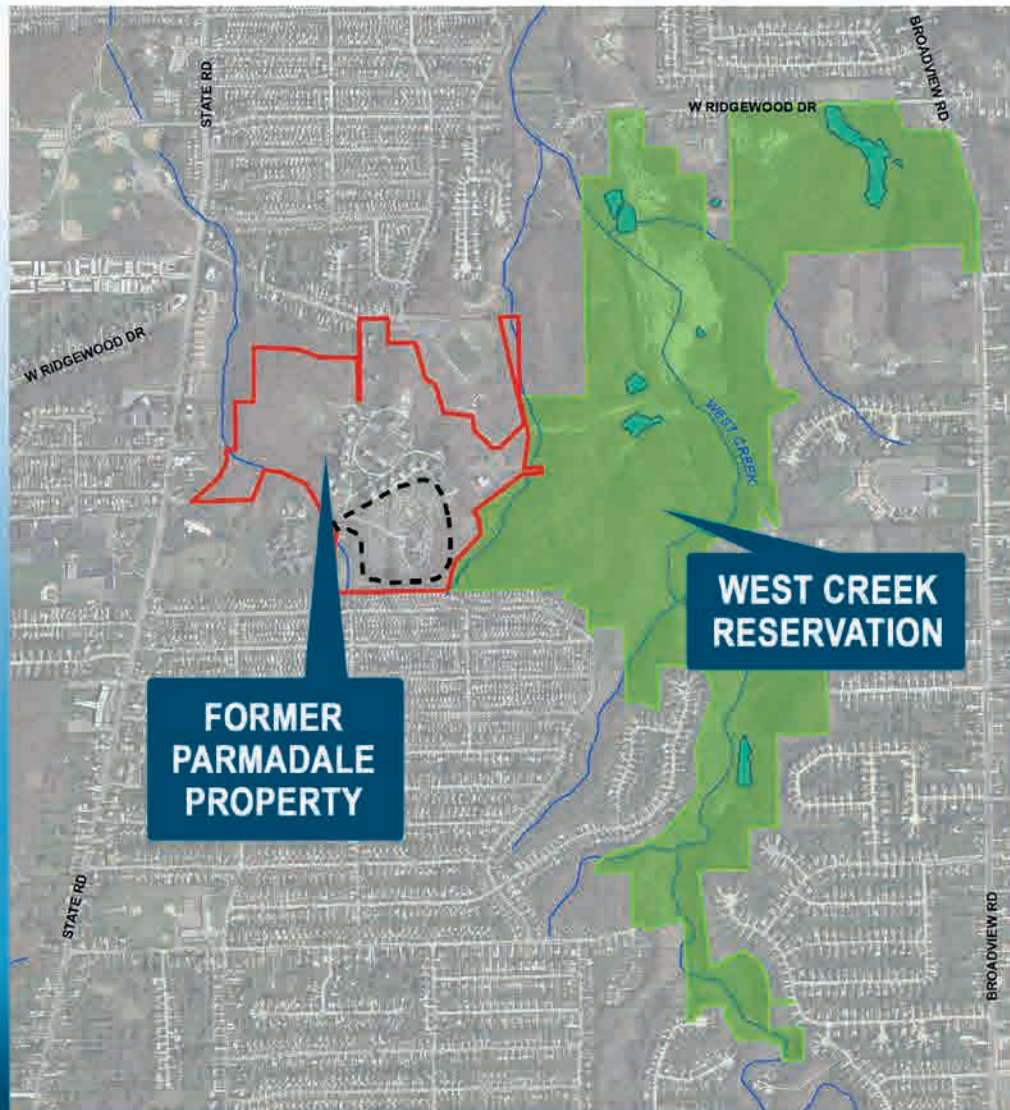
CONNECTING PEOPLE & PLACES TO NATURE

BRINGING NEW PURPOSE TO A HISTORIC CAMPUS

The Challenge: Dedicated in 1925, the cottage-style orphanage called Parmadale Children's Village of St. Vincent de Paul was among the first of its kind in the nation. With over 20 structures spread across its wooded campus, it housed some 450 boys on opening day. It also left intact an expansive forest. After nearly 90 years and serving thousands of in-need children and families from across northeast Ohio, the institution ceased its residential programs in 2014 and vacated most of its campus. With that announcement, the site also became open to developments incompatible with adjoining conservation lands.



Our Action: After long negotiations, and with the support of the City of Parma, West Creek Conservancy used funds from the Ohio Public Works Commission Green Space Conservation Program and Cleveland Metroparks to purchase 80 acres from the Catholic Charities Diocese of Cleveland. The sale agreement with the Diocese may allow the Conservancy to acquire in 2026 the remaining 10 acres that are still in use for adult treatment services.



The Impact: The expanse of open space and natural habitat of the former Parmadale campus is a rare opportunity in a heavily urbanized area. The roadways, rooftops, and parking lots of the campus present over 12 acres of impervious surface whose removal will benefit the quality of nearby headwater streams. To honor the site's history, some structures will be saved and repurposed. Some public work shops have already been held to generate ideas. For now, plans are to manage the woodlands and remove most of the old structures. After 2020, new amenities will be added and the Conservancy will open the area for public use. Eventually the property will join the West Creek Greenway and be added to West Creek Reservation, expanding the latter to over 400 acres.

FACING PAGE TOP - Children playing at Parmadale in 1961. School and clock tower in background.

FACING PAGE BOTTOM - In 2017 West Creek Conservancy secured 80 acres of the former Parmadale property (red outline), located west of West Creek Reservation in Parma. It includes a campus of over 20 buildings nearly a century old. Not part of this initial acquisition were 10 acres still in use by the Catholic Charities Diocese of Cleveland (dotted outline).



ABOVE - A row of the residential cottages as seen in the late 1920s. Each building housed about 40 boys when the facility was opened in 1925.

LEFT - Architectural details from some of the oldest campus structures may be saved for an on-site historic display. This coat-of-arms with Latin motto is one of many details from the cottages.



LEGEND

1. REPURPOSED TOWER FOR REGIONAL OBSERVATION
2. EVENT PLAZA WITH TO-SCALE CUYAHOGA RIVER MODEL
3. INTERGENERATIONAL PLAY
4. NATURAL PLAY
5. COMPOSTING RESTROOM
6. PARKING LOT: 121 STALLS WITH BIORETENTION
7. DOG PARK
8. CAMPING
9. IMPROVED ENTRY ROAD WITH ALL-PURPOSE TRAIL
10. POLLINATOR PRAIRIE / BIOREMEDIATION
11. SALVAGED SETON HALL ENTRY WITH HISTORY OF PARMADALE
12. GREAT LAWN
13. EXTENDED WOODLANDS
14. CONNECTION TO EXISTING BOARDWALK AND ADJACENT PADUA FRANCISCAN PARK
15. POSSIBLE REPURPOSED COTTAGE(S):
-GREEN RETROFIT
-RESTROOM UPGRADES
-NATURE PRESENTATIONS
-STAFF OFFICES
-CONCESSIONS
-INTERN HOUSING
16. EXISTING BROADCAST TOWER AND EASEMENT
17. PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO MOUNT ALVERNA
18. PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO PARK DRIVE
19. CONNECTION GATEWAY TO FUTURE WEST CREEK

KEY

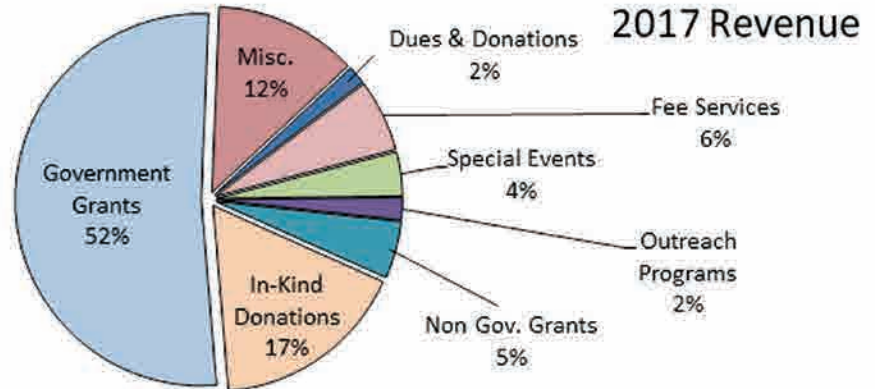
- PAVED ALL-PURPOSE TRAIL
- MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL
- TOP OF SLOPE
- PRIMARY ENTRY+GATEWAY TREATMENT
- VISUAL SCREEN + PHYSICAL BARRIER

SOME CONCEPTS - With ideas generated at public workshops in 2017, West Creek Conservancy has begun planning the future of the former Parmadale campus. Neighborhood points of access, trail connections to the West Creek Greenway, and a range of amenities are envisioned. Although most buildings will be demolished as the first step in reclaiming the campus, not all structures will be removed. The concept plan above, for example, proposes that the clock tower (Legend item 1) be repurposed with an observation deck to give visitors panoramic views.

Financial Statement Year ended December 31, 2017, accrual basis

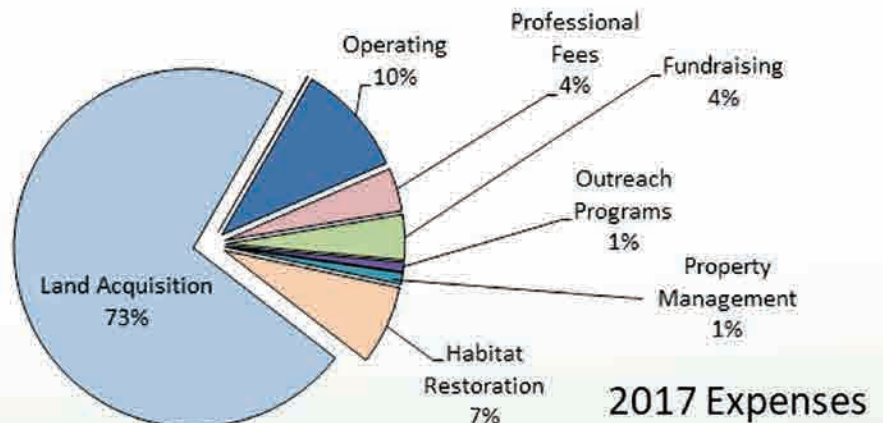
2017 REVENUE

Dues & Donations	\$	55,702
In-Kind Donations	\$	590,409
Fee Services	\$	219,182
Special Events	\$	132,779
Outreach Programs	\$	67,500
Non Gov. Grants	\$	173,000
Government Grants	\$	1,805,533
Misc.	\$	431,915
Total Revenues	\$	3,476,020



2017 EXPENSES

Operating	\$	331,506
Professional Fees	\$	127,949
Fundraising	\$	132,794
Outreach Programs	\$	28,466
Property Management	\$	33,650
Habitat Restoration	\$	234,486
Land Acquisition	\$	2,380,896
Misc.	\$	1,728
Total Expenses	\$	3,271,475
Change in Net Assets	\$	204,545



BEAUTIFUL DAY FOR A CLEAN UP - Forest City employees rest long enough for a group shot before resuming their volunteer work at the former Parmadale site in May. The building behind them is the 1925 former main chapel and school building, which for decades served the educational and spiritual needs of hundreds of resident children. Many tons of debris were removed from the grounds in 2017 thanks to cleanup teams like this.



HELPING YOUNG PLANTS - Employees from Arconic's Cleveland Operations volunteer on a fall day to prepare plants for winter at Spring's Hill Native Plant Nursery. The nursery was created and is overseen by Conservancy members Terry Greathouse and Emma Lee Spring. It supplies plants to help West Creek Conservancy reestablish native populations in its restoration projects.

YES! I Want to Help Make Nature Our Neighbor

☐ **YES! I want to join West Creek Conservancy & help protect green space in Greater Cleveland.**

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:

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

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____
STATE _____ ZIP _____

Please make your check payable to **West Creek Conservancy**, PO Box 347113, Cleveland, OH 44134.

You can also pay by credit card online at www.westcreek.org or by calling 216-749-3720 ext. 10.

- ☐ 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. My email address is _____

CAN YOU DIG IT? Come Out & Join Us!



DIGGING IT FOR TREES - Normandy High School students and NEOCHMM members joined forces during the 2017 RiverSweep event to reforest a site newly conserved by West Creek Conservancy along the West Creek Valley.

In addition to our **Main Events** below, West Creek Conservancy is hosting **Discovery Hikes** and **Public Meetings** throughout 2018. Hear interesting guest speakers and explore new areas on our walks. Activities are free and open to the public unless noted otherwise.

Check out the complete list and latest details at www.westcreek.org or call 216-749-3720 ext 10. We look forward to seeing you!

2018 Main Events

Apr 17 (Tues) at 6:30pm

ANNUAL MEETING at West Creek Reservation Watershed Stewardship Center, Parma

June 22 (Fri) at 7:00pm

TACOS & TEQUILA benefit at West Creek Reservation Watershed Stewardship Center in Parma
TICKETS REQUIRED

Aug 25 (Sat) at 6:30pm

UPI A CREEK Annual Gala at Windows on the River in Cleveland. **ADVANCED TICKETS REQUIRED**

Oct 27 (Sat) at 8:00pm

5K RUN benefit at West Creek Reservation in Parma
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Dec 4 (Tues) at 6:30pm

HOLIDAY PARTY at West Creek Reservation Watershed Stewardship Center in Parma

www.westcreek.org

• 216-749-3720



West Creek Conservancy
P. O. Box 347113
Cleveland, OH 44134