



**“Less than one percent of historical lakeplain prairie remains in Michigan.”  
- A Survey of Lakeplain Prairie in Michigan (1995, MNFI)**

Dear Friend:

May 2024

In 2014, SMLC acquired a 39-acre property located on West Road in Brownstown Township, Wayne County, that included the “Beech-Daly Road” prairie remnant. This special property is part of the historic “Greater Sibley Road Prairie Complex” identified in the 1995 Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) report, “A Survey of Lakeplain Prairie in Michigan”.

Shortly after SMLC acquired our Sibley Prairie Nature Preserve-West Prairie site, I received calls and emails from scientists and conservationists thanking SMLC for preserving this part of Michigan’s land heritage. Heritage that recalls Michigan’s lost prairies and the small pockets that remain. Since lakeplain prairie is a globally-imperiled habitat that is only found in the upper Midwest, and preserving it had long been a goal for many conservation scientists and practitioners, this accomplishment was bigger than SMLC. Ten years later, we are celebrating West Prairie’s protected status - as an SMLC preserve and an EGLE conservation easement property.

Big bluestem, Indian grass, blazing star, sneezeweed, mountain mint, and boneset – these lyrical names evoke feelings of summer, wind-blown freedom and wild beauty, and they can all be found at West Prairie. This site is also a local favorite especially now that the trailhead begins at the new footbridge crossing just steps from the parking area.

Projects such as West Prairie are made possible through partnerships, donations, and conservation expertise. In this case, SMLC not only partnered with EGLE, but also Redwood Acquisition, who provided the public parking area and funding for short and long-term stewardship. After the acquisition, SMLC partnered with The Nature Conservancy’s (TNC) Lakeplain Prairie Office who immediately began a major restoration initiative. Since then, TNC has provided many years of federally-funded restoration and outreach assistance including but not limited to invasive species removal, a prescribed burn, and demonstration signage.

Your donations make land conservation happen. Without this annual funding, SMLC would not be in a position to take advantage of once-in-a-lifetime opportunities such as protecting and restoring West Prairie. This year, please consider giving generously to support local land conservation and in honor of SMLC’s recent national Accreditation. Thank you for all you do to support SMLC.

Sincerely,

Jill A. Lewis  
Executive Director

PS – **Thank you** for your commitment to nature in 2024. Your contribution helps conserve local woods, wetlands, prairies and farmland. Plan a visit to West Prairie this summer to see the prairie in bloom and contemplate how small pockets of preservation can make a big difference for plants, animals and the planet.



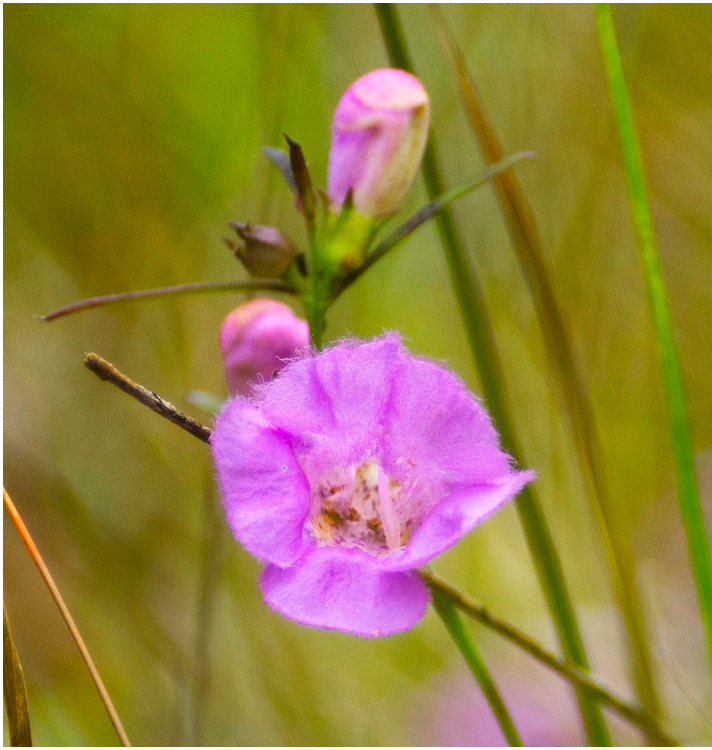


Photo by Jerry Jourdan

## Our Mission...

The Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy conserves natural land and open space - including forests, wetlands, meadows, agricultural lands, and places of scenic beauty - to provide habitat for wildlife and to enrich the lives of people.

## Our Board of Directors...

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## Contact Us...

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Photo by Charles Scott



## What YOU can Do

1. Make a generous donation today. Use the enclosed envelope to mail your gift to SMLC or make a secure credit card donation at [smlcland.org](http://smlcland.org).
2. Make a generous pledge today. Pledges can be payable over the next 2 years starting with a payment on the pledge before 12-31-24. All pledges should be paid in full no later than 12-31-25.
3. Tell your family and friends. Spread the word about SMLC's good work and invite others to join you in participating in "local land conservation".