



Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy

Trailblazers for SMLC

a Campaign to support local land conservation now

Local land conservation needs your help. Saving and stewarding land requires big money and SMLC's mission of conserving land is a forever endeavor. Once nature preserves and conservation easements are acquired, SMLC is responsible for preserving and monitoring them in perpetuity. However, funding for nonprofit land conservancies, including SMLC, is tighter this year. In addition, environmental giving (including animals) is one of the lowest charitable categories in terms of U.S. giving, receiving only 3% of all charitable gifts as of 2023*. This issue of limited reach is compounded this year by the funding uncertainty at the federal level.

But hope remains because YOU can help!

Campaign goals:

1. To help SMLC stay sustainable in 2025 by supporting local land conservation in the midst of turbulent times.
2. To raise awareness about the importance of land conservation and SMLC's mission.
3. To encourage people to visit SMLC's nature preserves this summer.
4. To move SMLC forward faster through new donor engagement – tell your friends!

Eco-Logical Leadership Club (ELLC) donors, Bill Secret and Misty Callies, will award SMLC a \$10,000 matching donation if SMLC raises \$10,000 from *new donors and new money* by September 28. Because the match purpose is to expand SMLC's outreach with new and current supporters, the campaign's focus is on receiving donations that help increase SMLC's annual giving in 2025.

Therefore, *new donors* are individuals and organizations who have not given to SMLC in the past year. *New money* is the amount of this year's donation from current supporters that is greater than last year's total gift.

Achieving this goal will result in **\$20,000** that is over and above SMLC's typical summer giving returns. This uplift will support SMLC during these challenging times and provide funding for our regular programmatic activities.

The opportunity to help SMLC this summer and have your gift matched is now. You can become **a Trailblazer for SMLC** and help SMLC continue our longstanding and successful land conservation work with your gift today. **Thank You!**



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How to Give:

- To donate online and learn more: www.smlcland.org
- Please make checks payable to "Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy".
- Please note in the memo line that the gift is for "Trailblazers for SMLC".
- Please make your pledge and cash donations prior to 9-28-25.
- Help SMLC Raise Funds: <https://givebutter.com/SMLCTrailblazer/register>

Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy

8383 Vreeland Rd.

Superior Township, MI 48198

734-484-6565

www.smlcland.org

SMLC Land Protection Facts:

- Protecting more than 3,480 acres of woods, wetlands, prairies and farmland
- Stewarding 18 nature preserves and 15 conservation easements located in 7 SE MI counties
- Providing and maintaining nearly 25 miles of existing public trails; planning for more
- Headquartered at the Conservancy Farm in the heart of the 3,536-acre Superior Greenway
- Conducts family-friendly outdoor experiences – see public events calendar at www.smlcland.org

"Parks and nature preserves abound in our state, but often we're unfamiliar with their originators and stewards, even of those we visit frequently. It's past time the rest of the world also knows about, cares about, and supports and promotes SMLC."

--Bill Secrest and Misty Callies, ELLC donors

Photo by Charles Scott

Trailblazers for SMLC: Bill and Misty's Story

Most of us enjoy a good walk outside. We revel in the subtle distinctions that slowly emerge as one season slides—or sometimes races, full-tilt—into the next. We clear our heads after a long day or burn off the high-flung exuberance of dogs and kids. We spot birds, smell the sharp, clean scent following a gentle rain, marvel at the nodding wildflower, take a moment to breathe in and out. Luckily, parks and nature preserves abound in our state, but often we're unfamiliar with their originators and stewards, even of those we visit frequently. And that's a shame, because these unsung heroes are usually in need of our support.

Bill and I have been traipsing about Michigan for most of our lives, particularly in Superior Township where we live and where resides the headquarters of the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy (SMLC). Although it works in and preserves land throughout the seven counties of southeast Michigan, SMLC has its greatest presence in Superior Township. On the busy rushing roads of southeast Michigan, the popular Superior Greenway presents a landscape to view; it also provides an extensive network of trails for us dog walkers and birders and a contiguous corridor for native flora and fauna. But our chats with many of those strolling the local preserves tell us SMLC is not the household name it should be. Folks aren't aware that SMLC is the organization—frequently in partnership—behind the preserved woods, meadows, and ponds, the rare remnants of Michigan's former terrain, the trails and picnic spots. And as with most non-profits, a shortage of funds and volunteers means SMLC often struggles to meet the demands of its mission.

Since helping to establish SMLC over 35 years ago, Bill, in particular, has never ceased enthusiastically championing and funding the organization. (Believe us—his friends and family can recite SMLC's story inside and out.) But it's past time the rest of the world also knows about, cares about, and supports and promotes SMLC. The goal, of course, is SMLC becomes a household name with the staff, volunteers, and funding it needs to fulfill its mission.

Bill and I would like to see SMLC obtain that reach and, more importantly, that sustainability. We would also like to see our community—YOU—help SMLC move forward faster. NOW is the moment. Though not required, you might find it fun to begin by tying on your boots and becoming acquainted or reacquainted with SMLC's many trails. Then spread the word about your favorite spots among your communities—make SMLC known. Finally, since nothing is preserved or remains saved without funding, donate to SMLC, and galvanize your friends, families, and acquaintances to do likewise. Why would you make that extra ask? Because we are offering a one-to-one match of each new dollar and each new donor up to \$10,000, doubling the gift. Three actions completed in a single, short campaign—fantastic!

Take a hike, give a shout-out to SMLC, and donate to preserve.

We hope to see you out there. We hope to hear you. And we hope to hear from you.

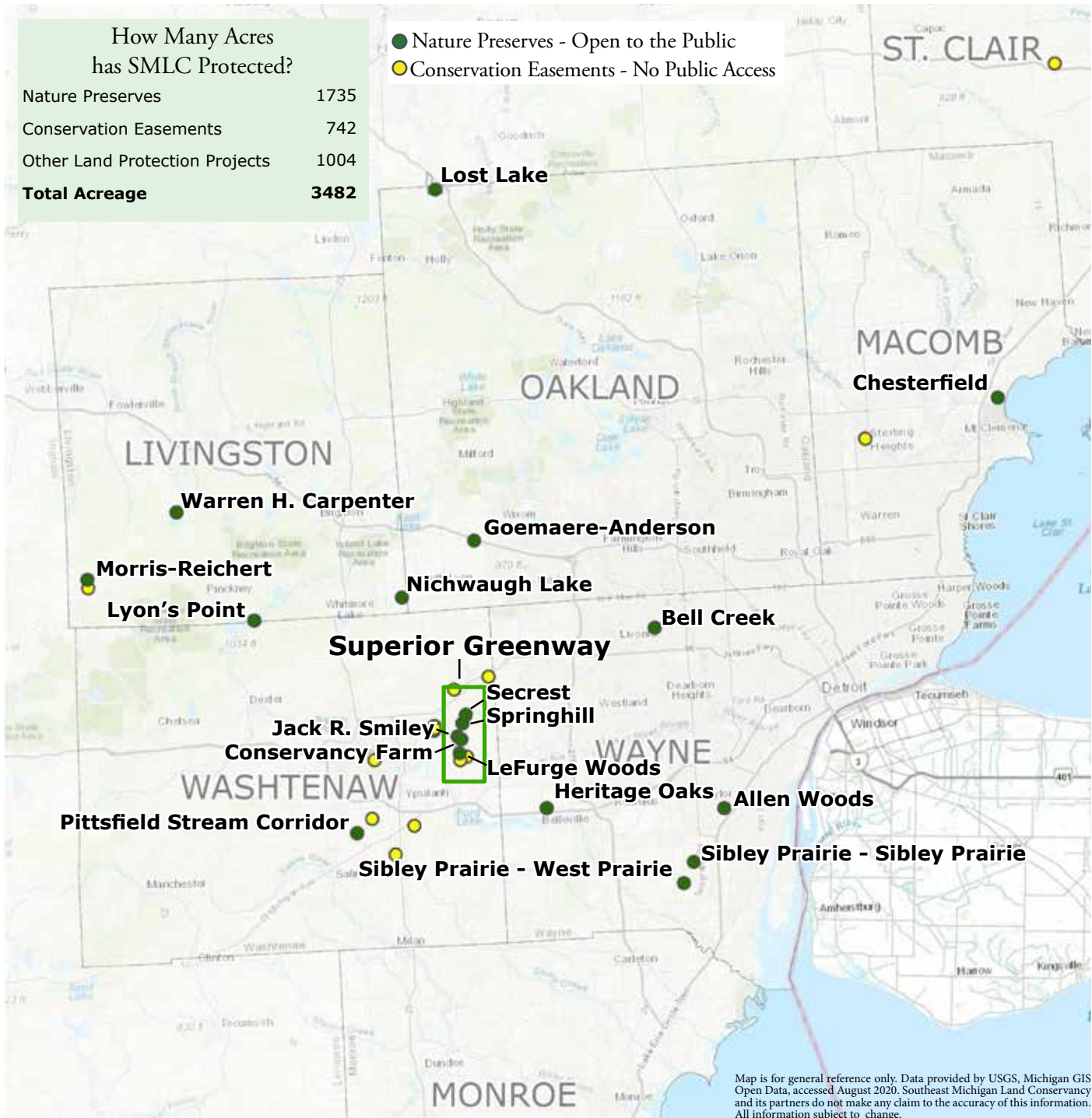
*Thank you,
Misty and Bill*





Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy

Protected Lands



Mission Statement:

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.

SMLC is a 501(c)3 nonprofit and qualified conservation organization that was founded in 1988 to protect land in the 7-county southeast Michigan region: Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties.

SMLC has protected 3,491 acres in 7 counties including Genesee.