



2016

ANNUAL REPORT

OUR MISSION

Black Swamp Conservancy is a land trust dedicated to protecting natural areas and family farms, now and for future generations, through land conservation agreements. We do this to preserve the rural heritage, unique natural habitats, and lakes and streams of northwest Ohio.

By protecting our valuable land and water resources, we seek to support healthy communities with strong, sustainable economies including agriculture and ecotourism.

As a nonprofit organization, Black Swamp Conservancy relies on the support of landowners, donors, and partnerships with other conservation organizations. We strive to be a wise investment for our supporters, whether they are giving us their land, time, or money.



A PLACE FOR PEOPLE WHO LOVE THE OUTDOORS



The *U.S. News & World Report* recently named Toledo the #2 city for people who love the outdoors. I wasn't surprised. I have been touting the diversity of our landscape and recreational opportunities for years. I bet you have been too.

With your help, Black Swamp Conservancy is creating a lasting impact on northwest Ohio. Our work supports clean water, local foods, healthy wildlife populations, and ecotourism. It ensures that future generations will have natural spaces on which to come together, or get away.

Forever is a long time, and permanently protecting land is not a responsibility that we take lightly. It is crucial to keeping our promises that the Conservancy holds itself to the highest standards and practices, both in stewarding our protected properties and in every other aspect of our operations.

I am proud to announce that Black Swamp Conservancy has been recognized by the *Land Trust Accreditation Commission*. Over the past 18 months, the Commission has investigated our practices, combed through our records, and just this week, awarded us the accreditation seal.

Earning accreditation is the validation of decades of hard work by so many people - staff, board, volunteers, and supporters alike - to create, build, and professionalize Black Swamp Conservancy. It is an indication that we are doing more than just good conservation work, but also setting the organizational structure to ensure that this important work is permanent.

Thank you for the role that you have played in getting us here. I look forward to working with you as we continue to preserve northwest Ohio's special places - not just for people who love the outdoors today, but for generations to come.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rob Krain'.

Rob Krain
Executive Director, Black Swamp Conservancy

OUR LAND

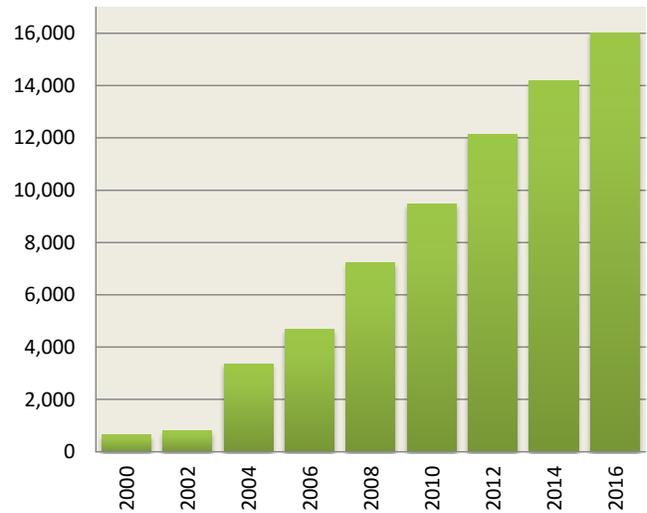
This year, Black Swamp Conservancy achieved the milestone of protecting more than 16,000 acres of land across northwest Ohio.

The Conservancy's properties include farmland to supply food and fiber for a growing global population, wetlands and streamside forests that contribute to water quality and biodiversity retention, and spaces that support healthy outdoor recreation.

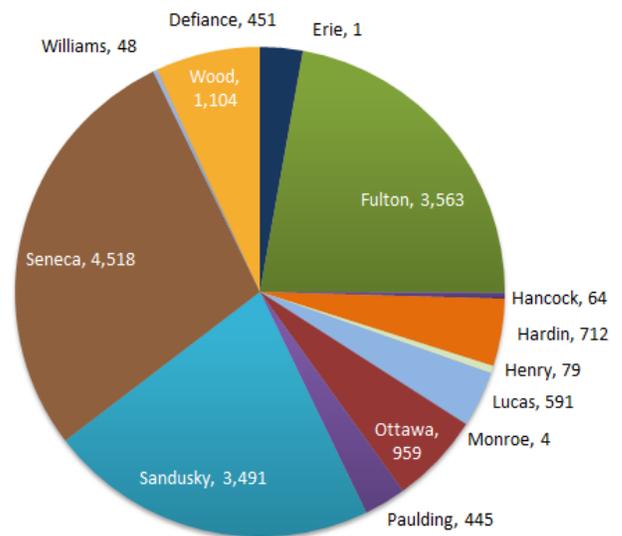
Our land conservation vision benefits virtually every resident of and visitor to our region. Many receive the economic benefit of a job in the agricultural or ecotourism industry. Thousands of others enjoy the improved quality of life that results from having green space.

Simply put, Black Swamp Conservancy helps make northwest Ohio a better place in which to work, live, and play.

ACRES PROTECTED BY YEAR



ACRES PROTECTED BY COUNTY



COMMUNITY SPACES

Black Swamp Conservancy plays a crucial role in ensuring that northwest Ohio has ample open space for public use.

Between our Conservancy-owned nature preserves, and through partnerships with Metroparks of the Toledo Area, Wood County Parks, Sandusky County Park District, Danbury Township, and many others - the Conservancy has played a key role in the establishment of thirteen public parks and nature preserves across northwest Ohio. And, we have many new land projects currently in the works!

This past year, our public lands projects included:

SAWYER QUARRY NATURE PRESERVE

At 1:00 p.m. on August 27th, our friends at Wood County Park District will open Sawyer Quarry Nature Preserve to the public.

The Conservancy proudly partnered with the Sawyer Family to protect their 60-acre family retreat, and help facilitate a donation of land to the Park District. With its dry limestone quarry, this new park offers unique opportunities to the public, including rope rappelling.

FORREST WOODS NATURE PRESERVE

Conservancy-owned Forrest Woods Nature Preserve continues to grow. A recent acquisition brings the preserve up to 350 acres. The new property, located just south of the existing preserve, includes frontage on the Maumee River and will provide river access for public fishing and boating.

Improvements continue at the heart of the property as well, with the installation of a parking area and hiking trail coming soon.



GOING BEYOND SAVING FARMLAND

When Black Swamp Conservancy began working with Dave and Mary Jane Lucius in the spring of 2015, we knew right away we were in for something special.

Fence rows, extensive buffer strips, and thoughtful cover crops were all common practices on their farm - preserving their land forever was just the icing on the cake.

You don't have to look far to see where the Luciuses found the inspiration to protect their 109-acre Seneca County Farm. Within 10 miles of their property there are approximately 4,000 acres of Conservancy protected farmland (not including pending projects).

This conglomeration of protected farms is not by accident either. By conserving large blocks of farmland, like this one, the Conservancy is helping to ensure that agricultural communities will forever remain intact. Conserving these farms not only protects the land, but provides continued business to the grain elevators, seed companies, and equipment suppliers as well.

The Lucius Farm is among a continued trend of farmland protection at the Conservancy. Along with the block of conservation-minded landowners in Seneca County that the Lucius Family are a part of, the Conservancy has groupings of protected farmland in Fulton and Sandusky Counties as well.



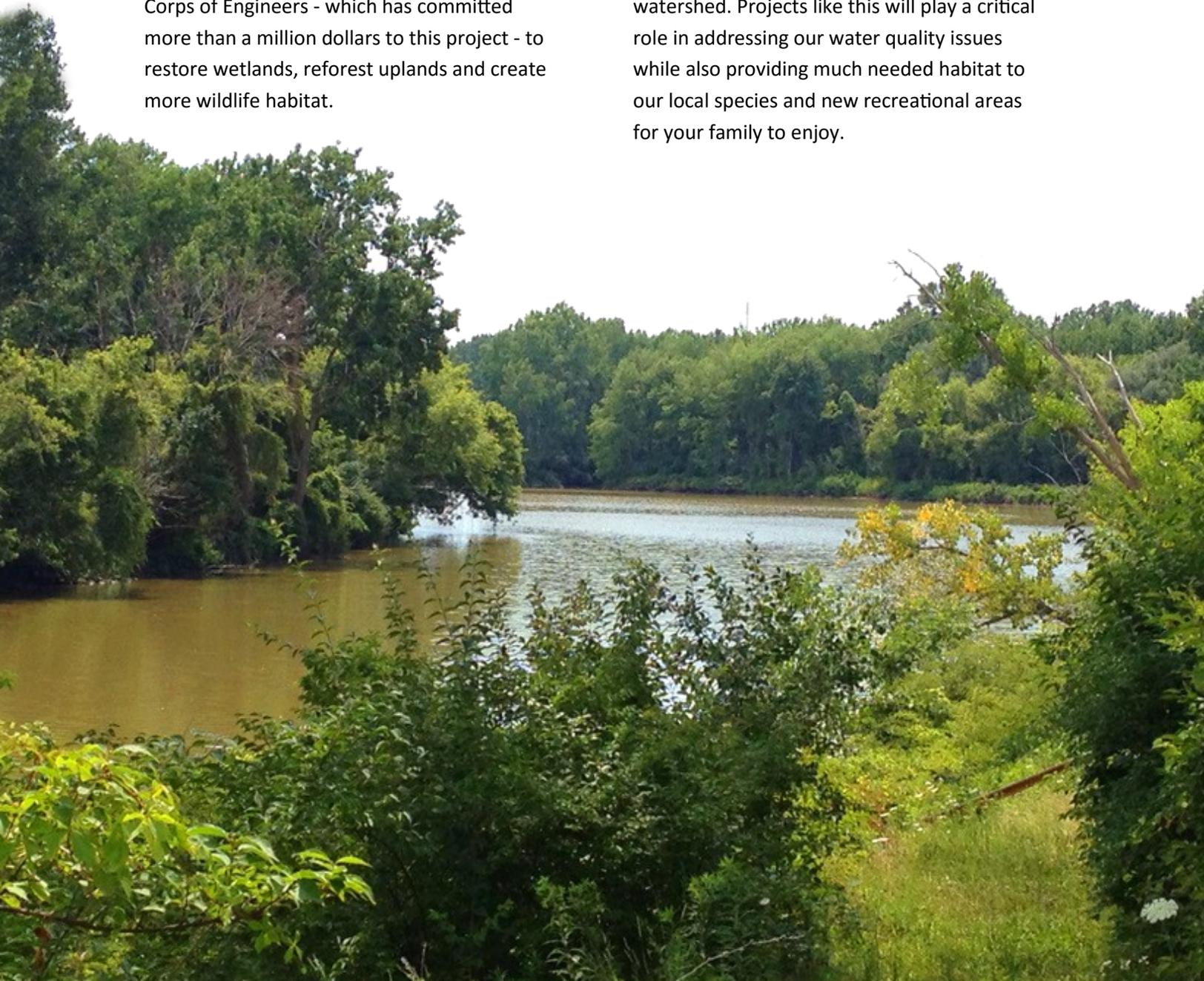
RESTORING WETLANDS AND CREATING PUBLIC PLACES

In 2015, Black Swamp Conservancy received more than \$500,000 in Clean Ohio funds to purchase a strategically sited bottomland field, along the Sandusky River just outside of Fremont, for the purpose of floodplain and wetland restoration.

We recently began a partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers - which has committed more than a million dollars to this project - to restore wetlands, reforest uplands and create more wildlife habitat.

The restoration is slated to be completed in 2018, at which time the Conservancy intends to donate the property to the Sandusky County Park District for use as a public nature preserve complete with hiking trails and river access.

Enhancement and restoration of wetlands is central to improving the health of the Lake Erie watershed. Projects like this will play a critical role in addressing our water quality issues while also providing much needed habitat to our local species and new recreational areas for your family to enjoy.



MEMBER PROGRAMS

Northwest Ohio is an environmental gem. We are fortunate to have such unique natural habitats and ecologically significant waterways to enjoy. Through our *Member Programs*, Black Swamp Conservancy is working to inspire more and more people to care about this landscape and to appreciate our shared responsibility of ensuring that our grandchildren are afforded the same outdoor opportunities we have today. In 2015, the Conservancy held more than 20 programs, events, and volunteer opportunities, serving more than 1,500 people. These included:



NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

In this business, a picture tells way more than a thousand words! In 2015, we kicked off our *Nature Photography Field Trips*, which bring together professionals and amateurs to photograph a few of the special places protected by the Conservancy.



CANOE AND KAYAK PADDLES

Green Creek, Swan Creek, the Maumee and Sandusky Rivers... There are so many waterways in northwest Ohio to explore. Our member paddles give the public an opportunity to get out there and enjoy the water.

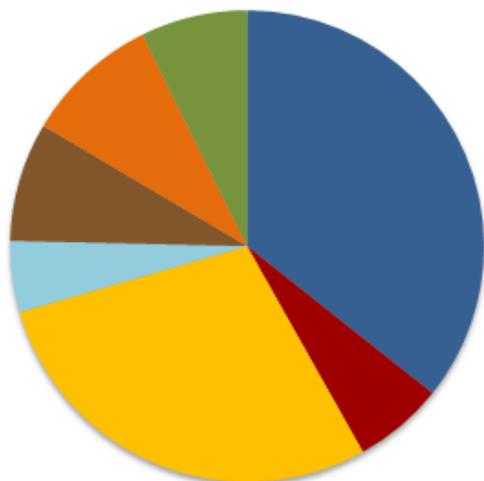


NATURE WALKS

Wildflowers at the Conservancy Homestead in spring, a summer bird walk at the Cedar Meadow Preserve, a winter wonderland at our Forrest Woods Nature Preserve - each season brings new places to explore!

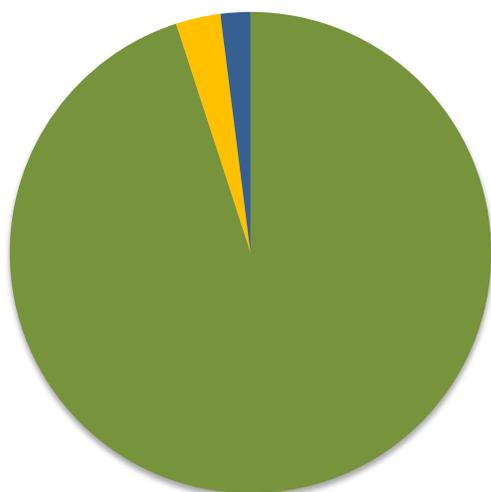
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

2015 OPERATING SUPPORT AND REVENUE



- 35% Individual Donations
- 6% Restricted Gifts (Salaries)
- 29% Charitable Foundations
- 6% Corporate Donations
- 8% Events Net Revenue
- 9% Investments Net Revenue
- 7% Miscellaneous

2015 EXPENSES



- 95% Program Services
- 3% General and Administrative
- 2% Fundraising

Black Swamp Conservancy's statement of financial position for 2015 has been reviewed by the Lublin-Sussman Group LLP, and found to be in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

OUR LAND. OUR WATER. OUR FUTURE.

2016 - 2017 TRUSTEES

Mary Krueger, *President*
Karen Wood, *Vice President*
Brian Kennedy, *Treasurer*
Alec Vogelpohl, *Secretary*
Steve Bowe
Paul Croy
Mary Fedderke
Sally Gladwell
Julie Brotje Higgins
Virginia Keller
Tim Minning
Tom Reed
Katie Rousseau
Tim Schetter
Laurie VonSeggern
Anne Yager

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Sara Jane DeHoff
Don Leary
Clint Mauk
Steve Pollick
Stephen Stranahan
Deke Welles

STAFF

Rob Krain, *Executive Director*
Sarah Brokamp, *Marketing & Outreach Manager*
Chris Collier, *Conservation Manager*
Linda Wegman, *Office Manager*



P.O. BOX 332
PERRYSBURG, OH 43552
419-833-1025
BLACKSWAMP.ORG

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