



North Central Ohio Land Conservancy 2018 Annual Report

The North Central Ohio Land Conservancy protects nature preserves for YOUR health and enjoyment. We hold legal title or conservation easements on over 1,600 acres in North Central Ohio. Consider our preserves like a “Living History Museum,” so you, your children and grandchildren can experience more of what Ohio was like over 200 years ago.



With support from our donors, volunteers and staff, NCOLC made significant progress in 2018. Together, we improved the quality of our nature preserves, extended and mapped the Clear Fork Valley Scenic Trail, and connected with more people.

NCOLC's **MISSION** is... to permanently protect the natural heritage of North Central Ohio and educate the public about the importance of natural areas.

Planning for the Future: NCOLC strengthened our sustainability in 2018 with the help of the Richland County Foundation's *Osborne Meese Academy*, a year-long class taught by top-notch instructors. Utilizing best practices shared in the class, NCOLC Director Jean Taddie led concurrent planning activities that resulted in a new 5-year plan and the formation of a NCOLC Advisory Council.

Many thanks to our new **Advisory Council Members** for volunteering their time and expertise:

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| * Ellen Claiborne | * Annette McCormick | * Larry Smith |
| * Trevor Dunlap | * Bob Nye | * Mark Smith |
| * Cheryl Harner | * Kate Peresie | * Nancy Solon |
| * Jason Larson | * Nelson Shogren | |

Watch us on YouTube! See Hemlock Falls rushing, butterflies dancing and stories from the heart on our new YouTube channel!

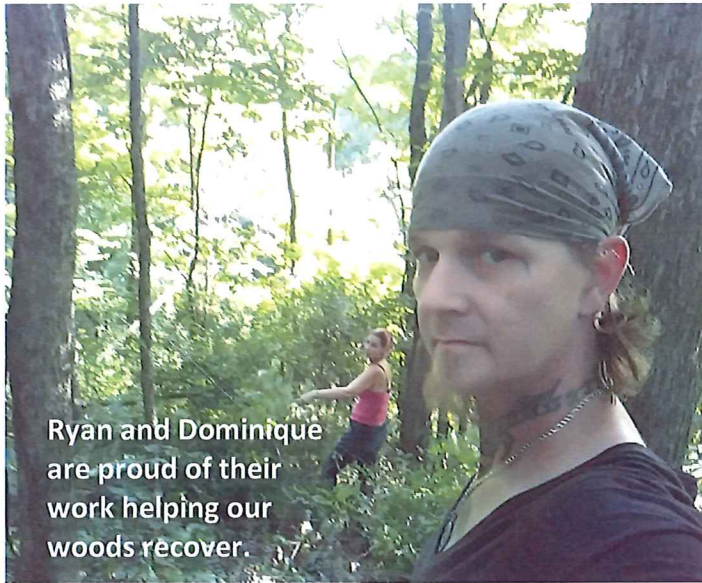


In Memorium

On May 10, 2018, NCOLC received a \$1,000 memorial gift from **J. Glenn Maxwell in honor of his wife of 51 years, Gladys Maxwell**. She was a birder and a nature lover. We put her gift toward the start of an endowment fund at the Richland County Foundation in keeping with her and her husband's belief in protecting nature for the long run.

Healing Land & People

About 30 acres of wooded nature preserves along the CFVST are now even more native. In 2018 NCOLC expanded our efforts to remove non-native invasive plants by employing people recovering from addiction to remove invasives and prevent erosion in our preserves.



Ryan and Dominique are proud of their work helping our woods recover.

THE PEOPLE: “Our workers went from not knowing about invasive plants to being true Invasive Control Specialists,” said Trustee Eric Miller, who volunteered over 500 hours to train and mentor the team. Along the way, our workers learned about our native plants and were eager to share that knowledge. They are now sincere advocates for nature preserves and for the mental health benefits of spending time in the forest. You can view their stories on our YouTube channel.

Thank you!

Supporters of NCOLC’s **Healing Land and People** campaign donated \$15,000 for this effort, which was matched 2-to-1 by a generous \$30,000 grant from the **Richland County Foundation - Robert and Esther Black Family Fund Foundation**.

Hikers on the CFVST will now be able to walk through preserves that better represent the natural history of North Central Ohio, thanks to our workers, volunteers and supporters.



Native Skunk Cabbage & Marsh Marigold

THE LAND: Our crew pulled, cut, dug or otherwise removed eight species of invasive plants: garlic mustard, multi-flora rose, privet, dame’s rocket, Japanese barberry, burning bush, tree of heaven and autumn olive.

Over the year, we covered approximately 30 acres, mainly in the 172-acre Hammon Woods, but also in the Hemlock Falls area.

We estimate pulling more than 400,000 invasive plants, so erosion control to protect the Clear Fork River watershed was handled simultaneously.

Usually native wildflowers rebound the year after invasives are removed, but some populations were already rebounding within a few months. The resurgence of Dutchman’s Breeches, Marsh Marigold, Skunk Cabbage and Swamp Saxifrage were especially notable in areas where we pulled invasives this past year. Plus, stopping the propagation of invasive seeds will benefit our preserves for years to come.



Showy Orchis



Clear Fork Valley Scenic Trail

The Clear Fork Valley Scenic Trail (CFVST) offers public access to over 600 acres of nature preserves in Southern Richland County, including Hemlock Falls, Hammon Old Growth Woods, and the Cole Road and Tugend Prairies. In 2018, NCOLC and Kyle Bailey remapped the 5.3 mile CFVST, plus about 4 miles of spur trails.

GROUP HIKES: NCOLC and partners hosted nature walks, thru hikes, youth education and other group activities. Hikers get health benefits and also learn the value of protecting special places. Here's the count for 2018:

CFVST Group Walks	Totals
# of group walks/activities held	25
# of those walks/activities that offered a nature education component	20
# of groups that hosted walks	12
# of children	229
Total attendance	676



Janet Ellsworth and Kate Peresie organized the largest program, a Hemlock Falls field trip for 200+ students from Mansfield Malabar's 5th grade class.



On Aug. 4 Larry Smith led 24 walkers to experience the Cole Road Prairie up close, with the help of Richland County Volunteer Naturalists



NCOLC Trustee Steve McKee drew a crowd of 50 to his March 10th nature walk featuring Eagle Rock.

Volunteer Power!

The CFVST is maintained by dedicated volunteers who built bridges, installed benches, cut through fallen trees, weed whacked, pruned and mowed.

A special shout out goes to **Mark Smith, Jeff Painter, Les Spring** and **Larry Smith** who took great care of the trail throughout 2018!



Special Projects

NCOLC, with the help of our partners and volunteers, accomplished projects that protected and enhanced habitat on our preserves. Most of these are one-time projects that have long-term impact.



Benedict Road Embankment Project

- **Partners:** Eugene and Sara Goin Family Fund of the Richland County Foundation (RCF) granted \$9,000
- **Results:** Reinforced a 240-foot stretch of embankment on Benedict Road that was in danger of collapsing into the lovely creek that lies below our Hammon Woods. Limestone pieces were carefully placed to protect the road and the aesthetics of our preserve.

Cole Road Prairie Prescribed Burn

- **Partners:** Organizers Jason Larson, Larry Smith and Al Brown, with the help of 25 volunteers
- **Results:** Half of the Cole Road Prairie received its first prescribed burn to reduce woody invasives and other non-prairie plants.

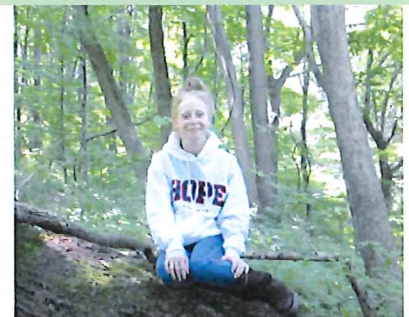


Purple Martin Project

- **Partners:** Ohio Ornithological Society (\$1,900 Conservation Grant) & Friends of Gorman Nature Center
- **Results:** Volunteers installed two Purple Martin condos, a 12-unit rig at the Tugend Prairie and a 24-unit rig at the Gorman Nature Center. The rigs were sited at martin-friendly locations that are easily viewable from public hiking trails.

Oral History Video Project

- **Partners:** Kyra Brandt, GoFundMe supporters & NCOLC interviewees
- **Results:** Art and anthropology graduate Kyra Brandt video recorded interviews with NCOLC workers, trustees and volunteers, which helped archive our history and capture stories of hope from our workers in recovery. You can view three of the Healing Land and People interviews on NCOLC's new YouTube channel.



Warm Season Meadow & CFVST Extension

- **Partners:** Larry & Elaine Smith (over \$7,000 & 250 hours), Fred B. and Marian J. Hout Fund of RCF (\$1,000), RCF Competitive Grant (\$3,714)
- **Results:** A new 14-acre short-grass prairie has been planted, and a planned trail extension will take walkers across the highpoint starting in July 2019. The RCF Competitive Grant also helped us replace two CFVST bridges.