



For more information about the Highland Conservancy contact us at:

- Phone: 248-887-5399
- Email: info@HighlandConservancy.org
- Visit our Website: www.HighlandConservancy.org
- Mail:
Highland Conservancy
205 W. Livingston Road
Highland MI 48357

Our mission is to encourage and facilitate the conservation of land and natural resources to preserve the rural character of Highland Township.

History of the Highland Conservancy by Katheryn Krupa

The Highland Conservancy started in 2004 when concerned Highland citizens decided it was time to preserve our rural character, natural areas and open spaces before they were gobbled up by development. With the support of Oakland Land Conservancy, the Highland Equestrian Conservancy and other conservation groups, we have been working to identify land for various levels of protection and conservation. A key focus is to connect existing parks and open spaces to provide interconnected habitat for wildlife. Another goal is to preserve greenways and parkland thus protecting some of the pristine areas of Highland and surrounding areas for future generations to enjoy.

Some of our current initiatives include:

- Facilitating the development of conservation easements, corridors and green spaces in Highland.
- Educate the public on preservation and care of Highland's fragile resources.
- Partner with other conservancies and organizations to create a Greenway Plan of interconnected parks, trails and natural areas.
- Partner with neighborhood associations to preserve and protect their common open spaces.
- Work with the township to create guidelines for protecting land and habitats.
- Assist in the stewardship of land held in conservancy.
- Work with Highland Township to develop a conservation plan that is linked with other compatible uses such as parks, recreation, trails and equestrian needs.

We cannot afford to sit back and take a complacent approach, hoping development will pass us by. We need to move NOW before Highland loses the natural beauty that still remains. Your help and support is needed so we can continue this important work. Call Katheryn Krupa for more information at 248-887-4643.

"Each of us has a responsibility to be good stewards of our environment. Highland Township's Conservancy is a great way to fulfill that responsibility." —Triscia Pilchowski, Highland Township Supervisor

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"...wild things don't belong to us. It's our job to protect them for everyone to enjoy."

Samantha Ruetenik

Highland's Vanishing Open Spaces by Katheryn Krupa

I was jogging down Dunham Road recently, enjoying the sweet smell of lilacs and listening to the haunting call of a Sandhill crane when suddenly a deer bounded gracefully across the road. Awesome! I continued my slow pace, savoring the beauty around me until I reached Hickory Ridge. Across the road were bulldozers and machines sitting on raw land, stripped of flowers, trees and green. In stark contrast to what

I had just seen, the machines sat waiting to finish their destructive task. As I turned south, I gazed at the vast green fields and realized the beautiful rolling pastures there might soon be replaced with high rise buildings, parking lots, and a senior citizen complex.

Later, driving home from work, I passed a horse farm at M59 and Hickory Ridge and once again wondered how soon it would be before a big box store

would replace the foals and horses grazing in the pastures.

As a child, my mother taught me to respect nature, to admire and protect it. On walks we'd pick up litter or she'd stop to point out wildflowers or a turtle sunning on a rock. "Leave it alone" she'd say, "wild things don't belong to us. It's our job to protect them for everyone to enjoy." Let's do what we can to protect Highland and leave a legacy for our children to enjoy.

Vital Connections for Wildlife adapted from Observer Eccentric

When we think about the protection of high-quality natural areas and the wildlife they support, we usually think of large parcels of land. It's true the wildlife we love need plenty of elbow-room to thrive, but another way wildlife can be encouraged to stick around is through the concept of green corridors.

As fragmentation of open land continues at a frantic pace, wildlife, whose ranges often exceed boundaries of protected open space, need ways of get-

ting from one protected area to another. Some possibilities for establishing connected corridors include pipeline and electrical easements, old railways, greenbelts, parkways, and conservation easements to link large undeveloped parcels. River corridors, where well-vegetated buffers line the riverbanks, offer corridors for a wide variety of wildlife, including fish. Marshes and fens act as buffers to filter out pollutants from the water and prevent erosion. Abandoned railroad beds har-

bor native plants that haven't been seen in years in other places. So what can we do? Many townships including Highland are working on a Greenway plan to link up these natural areas into a connected network. Even those who live on small parcels or lots can be involved in preserving wildlife habitat simply by not cutting down trees, planting native plants and hedgerows, or using non-phosphorous fertilizer on lawns bordering lakes and streams. Log onto www.oakgov.com/es for more info on open space and greenway planning.



Woodlands and connected green spaces are important for all wildlife.

*Teach your children what we have
Taught our children,
That the earth is our mother. What-
ever
Befalls the earth
Befalls the sons of the earth.
Man did not weave the web of life,
He is merely a strand in it.
Whatever he does to the web,
He does to himself.
Chief Seattle*

Highland Conservancy Efforts

In the two short years of its existence, the Highland Conservancy was instrumental in creating Highland Oaks, a pristine 250-acre park currently awaiting final funding approval. We hosted a series of Discovery Hikes to acquaint people with some of the hidden jewels of Highland

such as Dunham Lake's greenbelt and fens and trails deep within Highland State Rec. park. We drafted a Tree Preservation Ordinance which is close to implementation and pulled together key stakeholders to work with the Oakland County Environmental Planning Department to create

an interconnected Greenway Infrastructure Plan. Three of our members just completed extensive training in the Michigan Conservation Stewards Program, developed by the Michigan DNR Wildlife Division, MSU Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and the Michigan Nature Features Inventory.



Go out and explore some new areas of Highland— there are many hidden jewels!

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MEMBERSHIP GIVE AWAYS!

Show your support for the Highland Conservancy: With your donation of \$25 you'll receive a decal and Enewsletter. For \$50 or more you'll receive a tote bag, decal, Enewsletter and the satisfaction you've done something to help keep Highland rural and natural for future generations.

Our mission is to encourage and facilitate the conservation of land and natural resources to preserve the rural character of Highland Township.

JOIN US! You are always welcome to join us or just drop in on our meetings. Whether you like to be outdoors or are more comfortable behind a keyboard, there's always something to do. We meet at 7 pm on the first Tuesday of the month at the Huron Valley Council of the Arts building, 205 W. Livingston Road. Or contact Mick Bell at 248-887-5399.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

We can use your help! Become a member today by sending in your tax free donation.

Send your name, address and EMAIL along with your check made payable to:

Highland Conservancy
205 W. Livingston Road
Highland, MI 48357

Together we can make a difference for Highland Township!

WE'RE ON THE WEB:

WWW.HIGHLANDCONSERVANCY.ORG