



AGENDA
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday April 12, 2025 6:00 pm
Township Service Center
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos MI

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. PUBLIC COMMENT
3. APPROVE AGENDA
 - A. April 9, 2025
4. APPROVE MINUTES
 - A. March 12, 2025
5. COMMUNICATIONS
 - A. None.
6. DISCUSSION ITEMS
 - A. Sledding hill at Okemos Preserve
 - B. Acquisition Prioritization
 - I. Part 1: Current Land Preservation inventory & management efforts
(BEGIN CLOSED SESSION)
 - C. Parcels for Acquisition Consideration
 - I. Parcel A
 - II. Parcel B**(END CLOSED SESSION)**
7. REPORTS
 - A. STAFF REPORT: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator
 - I. Davis Foster Preserve Prescribed Burn Update
 - II. Wetland Signage Installation
 - III. MCC April Stewardship Calendar
 - B. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Yu Man Lee
 - C. PARK COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Mark Stephens
8. PUBLIC COMMENT
9. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS
10. ANNOUNCEMENTS
 - A. Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, June 11, 2025 at 6 pm at The Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos, Michigan 48864.
11. ADJOURNMENT

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Land Preservation Advisory Board by contacting: Director Courtney Wisinski, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4600 - Ten Day Notice is Required.

Meeting Location: 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Haslett, MI 48840

Providing a safe and welcoming, sustainable prime community.



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CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Township Service Center
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court | Haslett, MI
Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 6 PM

PRESENT: Board Members: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay, Yu Man Lee.
ABSENT: Mark Stephens.
STAFF: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator
TOWNSHIP: Township Clerk, Angela Demas

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Hiller called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Tim Potter, Township Resident proposed two sledding hills to be implemented at Okemos Road Preserve, asking for an exemption to the Land Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 22-110, to allow for sledding to provide winter recreation.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

- a. March 12, 2025

Chair Hiller moves to make a motion to amend the Agenda to include Communications Item 5C and add Items 6A and 6B to a Closed Session. Board Member Parnell seconded.

Commissioner Stephens moved to approve the amended March 12, 2025 Agenda to place on file. Board Member Parnell seconded.

Voice vote: Unanimous

4. APPROVE MINUTES

- a. January 8, 2025

Board member Fay makes a motion to add a correction to the January 8, 2025 minutes in the 2024 Land Preservation Annual Report. Commissioner Stephens seconded.

Chair Hiller makes a motion to place the amended January 8, 2025 minutes on file. Board Member Parnell seconded.

Voice vote: Unanimous

5. COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Review of Board Member Expectations
- b. New Parks and Recreation Department Administrative Assistant, Hannah Pachucki
- c. Tim Potter, township resident provided a written proposal for Sledding Hill in Okemos Road Preserve (Exhibit A)

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Commissioner Stephens makes a motion to place Communications on file. Board Member Fay seconded.

Board Member Fay makes a motion to move into closed session. Commissioner Stephens seconded.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Mark Stephens, Yu Man Lee, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay.

Nays: None.

(BEGIN CLOSED SESSION)

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Parcels for Acquisition Consideration (Exhibit B)
 - i. Parcel A
 - ii. Parcel B
 - iii. Parcel C

Board Member Fay makes a motion to move out of closed session. Commissioner Stephens seconded.

Roll Call:

Yayes: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Yu Man Lee, Mark Stephens, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay.

Nays: None.

(END CLOSED SESSION)

Vice Chair Thomas moved to take action on what was discussed in closed session. Board Member Parnell seconded.

Roll Call:

Yayes: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Yu Man Lee, Mark Stephens, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay.

Nays: None.

b. Acquisition Prioritization

- i. Chair Hiller introduces this issue to address how the board will move forward in considering future land preservation acquisitions.
- ii. Chair Hiller would like to introduce sub-committees for this issue at the April 9th meeting for more detailed discussion for this issue.
- iii. Ecological Screening Criteria; modify the existing ecological screening criteria to create a more accurate scoring for potential acquisition sites.
 - 1. A verbal score in combination with a numerical score may be a more explainable way to measure this criteria. Taxpayers should be able to

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- understand the criteria.
2. Include a 'why' reason for each of these measurements.
3. Board members proposed a checkbox system to check off certain landscape features such as water, connectivity, invasive species, etc.
4. Once the form is completed the board can take it to a preserve that we already own and complete the ecological screening criteria.

7. REPORTS

- a. STAFF REPORT: Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell
 - i. Update on current preservation projects and issues (Exhibit C)
 1. Financial Statement
 - a. Reserve fund (218) is not accessible to the board
 - b. Land Acquisition Fund (217) is accessible to the board for acquisition
 - c. Land Preservation Millage (217) is accessible to staff for management activities and staff salaries
 2. Meridian Conservation Corps 2024 Annual Corps Report
 3. February & March Stewardship Calendar
 - ii. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Yu Man Lee
 - i. Commissioner Lee reports an update on the Climate sustainability plan (CSP). The Environmental Commission would like track goals from the CSP. A spreadsheet is being created to track objectives for the CSP. Commissioner Lee will bring this one a future LPAB meeting to see how the Land Preservation Program has contributed to these goals.
 - ii. Township Green Grant Program for 2025. Funding for Wetland Education got rolled together into Climate Sustainability Funds, totaling \$30,000 to have grants awarded for any projects aligning with the CSP.
 1. We can apply for this with any projects we feel would be worthy.
 - iii. Green Burial Program; they did a feasibility study to see how likely the Township Board would be to approve this idea.
 - iii. PARK COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Mark Stephens
 - i. Looking for a place to put a cricket field, and there are some options they are looking into.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. None.

9. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

- a. None.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 at 6 pm at the Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos, Michigan 48864.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Stephens moved to adjourn the meeting. Board Member Fay seconded.

Chair Hiller adjourned the meeting at 8:11 pm.

Exhibit A



Request to be on Land Preservation Advisory Board meetg agenda

From Tim Potter <flyingdutchman63@gmail.com>

Date Sat 3/8/2025 9:33 PM

To Emma Campbell <ecampbell@meridian.mi.us>

Hello Emma,

I'd like to request to have the following item put on the agenda of this week's Land Preservation Advisory Board meeting. Please let me know if it does get added to the agenda and if I can expect to hear any discussion by the board members.

Proposal to Establish & Maintain Two New Sledding Hills in the Township

This past January I explored the MSU to Lk. Lansing Pathway/ Trail on XC skis on a snowy day and discovered/ realized that the construction of the Phase 2 segment left behind 2 ideal sledding hills, one smaller and safer for younger kids and one larger for older kids. The only other sledding hill in the township that I'm aware of is the one in the N. Meridian Rd. Park which is a long way from the core of the township where these 2 hills are located.

I conducted an [informal poll](#) on the [Friends of Meridian Township Pathways](#) group to gauge community support for my proposal. It was posted on January 15th and as of March 8 there is 81% (29 people) in strong support, another 17% (6) who support and 2% (1) in opposition.

I grew up in this township and my backyard was the neighborhood sledding hill. I have many fond memories of sledding over the years of my youth and with my children and now grandchildren as well since I live next door to my childhood home. This is a very fun and wholesome activity which gives kids and adults good exercise along with the fun.

Since many people are concerned about getting our kids and young adults out of their bedrooms and off their smart phones to "feel the grass", reunite with reality, I believe these two hills are a classic example of "low hanging fruit" which are already built and only require ongoing maintenance (mowing) and some signage to explain things, list rules, etc. Sledding on an existing grassy slope will cause next to zero damage (and if it does, it's damage to common field grass).

Since these two hills are so close (walking distance) to the homes of many residents I don't believe car parking needs to be a concern; that can work itself out. The Twp. has many facilities for people to recreate outdoors that doesn't provide car parking for all the users, so I don't believe that should be a requirement.

Reference photos/ video /maps for proposed sledding hills:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/euL64dsWCXHsecgG7>

Official Land Preserve map for the exact location of this property (the Okemos Road Preserve, no. 9 on the map):

<https://www.meridian.mi.us/home/showdocument?id=14448&t=638393672447813602>

I understand the ordinance language (§ 22-110 Skating and sledding [Ord. No. 2007-15, 12-16-2007]) , that sledding isn't allowed "Unless posted otherwise..." That exception gives me hope that you will give this proposal a fair hearing for a possible exception to this rule.

Thank you for the consideration for the health and recreational options for our youth and future generations. I plan to attend your Mar. 12th meeting to present this proposal and would appreciate hearing some discussion of it during the meeting if possible.

Tim Potter
4632 Van Atta Rd.
Okemos, MI 48864

[MSU Bike Advisory Comm.](#) member
[TCBA Advocacy Comm.](#) member
[Ride of Silence](#) webmaster
[LCI](#) #5207

Ride of Silence: www.rideofsilence.org

2025 Ride of Silence: Wed. May 21st, 7:00 PM
One day. One time. One world, world wide.
Let the silence roar!

Exhibit C

Item 7.A.a.b



To: Land Preservation Advisory Board Members
From: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator
Date: March 12, 2025
Re: March 2025 Stewardship Staff Report

Staff provides a brief summary of land preserve updates:

1. The 2024 Annual Corps Rapport was released in mid-February, and is included in the March 12th meeting packet. This annual publication from the Stewardship Coordinator is created to highlight the accomplishments of the Meridian Conservation Corps (MCC) and Land Preservation Program.
2. Meridian Township's Deer Management Program concluded on February 3rd, 2025 with a total harvest of 300 white-tailed deer and the donation of over 7,400 pounds of venison locally.
3. Two prescribed burns are planned for the spring 2025 season. Two burn units making up about 15 acres at Davis Foster Preserve will be burned by David Borneman LLC. One burn unit made up of about 5 acres at Red Cedar Glen Preserve will be burned by Stantec Consulting Michigan, Inc.
 - a. Letters of notification were sent this week to neighboring residents to alert them and provide information (letters are included in the meeting packet).
4. Staff will be presenting at the Ohio River Valley Invasive Species Conference hosted by the Midwest Invasive Plant Network, from March 19th through March 20th in Burlington, KY.
 - a. The presentation is called, *Community Conservation: Turning Intention into Action with the Meridian Conservation Corps*. This talk will focus on the creation of the MCC and its many efforts.
5. The March 2025 Stewardship Calendar is included in the meeting packet. Work will focus around native seeding, the last of invasive shrub cutting, litter cleanup, and vernal pool monitoring.
 - a. Management of Lesser Celandine (*Ficaria verna*) will most likely begin the week of March 10th, 2025. This invasive plant is a high priority and is currently being managed at Ted Black Woods Park and Ottawa Hills Park.



CONNECT
LEARN
CONSERVE



STEWARDSHIP

WETLAND LOVE EDITION

STEWARDSHIP SATURDAYS | 9:30 AM - 12 PM

- February 8th, Eastgate Park (4203 Meridian Rd), Invasive bitternsweet removal & scouting
- February 22nd, Sumbal Preserve (4540 Okemos Rd), Invasive shrub removal

WEEKDAY WARRIORS | 1-3PM

- February 13th, Okemos Road Preserve (2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court), Invasive shrub removal & native seeding
- February 27th, Legg Park (3900 Van Atta Rd), wetland buffer invasive shrub removal

TRAILSIDE ECOLOGY | Wetland Exploration

- Join us at Ponderosa Preserve (end of Ponderosa Dr. in Okemos) to learn about wetland hydrology & how we can support these important ecosystems through the changing season. We will explore some vernal pools and document invasive species for future management!



*ALL EVENTS ARE WEATHER DEPENDENT & MAY BE CANCELLED THE DAY OF

S M T W T F S

2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1
World Wetlands Day FEBRUARY 2				13 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	14	15	STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30-12 PM
9	10	11	12		21	22	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
	OFFICES CLOSED	TRAILSIDE ECOLOGY 5-6:30 PM				STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30-12 PM	
23	24	25	26	27	28		
				WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM			

PLEASE CONTACT EMMA AT ECAMPBELL@MERRIDIAN.MI.US, OR 517.853.4614



STEWARDSHIP SATURDAYS | 9:30 AM - 12 PM

These workdays occur every other Saturday year round.

- March 8th, Lake Lansing North Preserve (1000 Wild Ginger Trail), Native seed sowing & invasive shrub cutting
- March 22nd, Hartrick Park (3685 Hulett Rd., Okemos), Scouting & Bagging invasive mustard plants

VERNAL POOL PATROL VIRTUAL TRAINING SERIES

- If you are interested in learning about vernal pools & potentially volunteering to monitor them, consider attending this three part virtual training. We will host a follow up field training on March 29th | 10 am - 12 pm | Location TBD

WEEKDAY WARRIORS | 1 - 3 PM

- March 13th, Marketplace on the Green (1995 Central Park Dr.), trash pickup
- March 27th, Foster Crouse Preserve (Buttercup Ln, Okemos), Invasive mustard pull & native plant inventory

TRAILSIDE ECOLOGY | VERNAL EQUINOX

MARCH 22ND | 2 PM - 3:30 PM

Vernal Pool Discovery Walk at Ponderosa Preserve



- Celebrate the spring equinox by learning about some of our smallest & most valuable wetlands: Vernal Pools! We will do some pool dipping to look for indicator species like fairy shrimp & salamanders! Wear your muck boots and get ready for some magic. *This event is limited to 20 people.



STEWARDSHIP

*ALL EVENTS ARE WEATHER DEPENDENT & MAY BE CANCELLED THE DAY OF

S M T W T F S

2	3	4 VERNAL POOL TRAINING 6-8 PM	5	6	7	8 STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30-12 PM
9	10	11 VERNAL POOL TRAINING 6-8 PM	12	13 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	14	15
16	17	18 VERNAL POOL TRAINING 6-8 PM	19	20	21	22 STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30-12 PM
23 RED CEDAR RIVER CLEANUP 11AM-3 PM	24	25	26	27 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	28	29 VPP FIELD TRAINING 10AM-12 PM

PLEASE CONTACT EMMA AT ECAMPBELL@MERIDIAN.MI.US, OR 517.853.4614





CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN LAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM

LAND PRESERVATION ACQUISITION & STEWARDSHIP RECORD
UPDATED JULY 2024

Land Preserves: 25

Acquisitions: 45

Acres of Current Land Preserves: 980 acres

- The original goal of the program set in 2000 was to acquire 600 acres, or 10% of identified available land; the Land Preservation Program is currently at 17%

Total acquisition costs = \$9,559,708

***Please see in Preserve Bios Document for full descriptions of parcels**

Land Preserves

1. Davis-Foster Preserve

- Location: East and west sides of Van Atta Road approximately ¼ mile south of Tihart Road
- Area: 108.90 acres (2 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2006
- Purchase Price: \$1,650,000
- Description: Former farm; riparian and lowland hardwoods, shrub-scrub and emergent wetlands, and savannah grasslands and woodlands (active management areas)
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Restoration of grasslands funded in part by U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)
 - Regular maintenance of the grassland through prescribed ecological burns and targeted invasive species treatments
 - Staff management of invasive phragmites in remnant wetland along Van Atta Road 2021
 - Contractual management of invasive phragmites in the same area since 2022
 - Contractual management of invasive black locust will commence in fall of 2024-2025 season
 - Native seed collection from remnant seedbank locations as well as seeded areas
 - Seed Sowing and transplanting native species in remnant wetlands as well as seeded grassland area
 - Seeds and transplants are all collected from remnant native seedbank areas. Transplants are grown from seed collected by MCC staff and volunteers and given to local native nurseries to grow for planting back into preserves.
 - Prescribed Burn Program (Burn Unit maps are outlined in the Davis Foster Preserve management Plan)
 - April 2012, 14 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd, Unit 3 on Burn Map
 - Spring 2014, 14 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd, Burn Unit 3, and 5.5 acres on West side of Van Atta Rd., Burn Unit 4
 - March 2016, 17 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd., Burn Unit 2
 - October 2016, 17 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd., Burn Unit 1
 - March 2019, 14 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd., Burn Unit 3. The burn jumped a fire break and also burned almost all of Burn Unit 2.

Land Preservation Advisory Board Agenda Item 6.B.A.

- April 2021, 4.5 acres of remnant wetland on East side of Van Atta Rd.
- April 2023, 4.5 acres on of remnant wetland on East side Van Atta Rd.
- April 2024, 17 acres on East side of Van Atta Road, Burn Unit 1

2. Foster-Crouse Preserve

- Location: North side of Newman Road approximately 1 mile north of Grand River Avenue and ¼ mile west of Meridian Road
- Area: 18.08 acres
- Year Acquired: 2002
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: Mixed deciduous upland and lowland forest and emergent wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Trail maintenance to widen trails and manage invasive species trailside.
 - Priority invasive species removal; black swallow-wort, Asiatic bittersweet
 - Black swallow-wort was identified at the site in fall of 2024

3. Hubbel Preserve

- Location: Okemos Road approximately ½ mile north of Grand River Avenue and north of railroad crossing
- Area: 57.66 acres
- Year Acquired: 2003
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: Mixed deciduous lowland forest and shrub-scrub upland

4. Kuzma Preserve

- Location: East side of Carleton Street north of Haslett Road and south of railroad crossing
- Area: 0.32 acres
- Year Acquired: 2003
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: Pond

5. Lake Lansing North Preserve

- Location: Southern additions to Ingham County Lake Lansing North Park
- Area: 120 acres (3 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2010
- Purchase Price: \$675,000 (Township contribution toward DNRE Grant Purchase, approx. \$1.2 million)
- Description: Mixed deciduous upland and lowland forest and forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Prescribed burn on forest floor to encourage spring ephemerals and oaks and discourage invasive species from growing; recent burns in fall of 2021 & 2023
 - Installation of 4 deer exclosures to monitor seedling survival
 - Invasive species removal of autumn olive, Japanese barberry and other invasive shrubs
 - Native seed collection from remnant seedbank locations
 - Seed Sowing and transplanting native species throughout preserve
 - Seeds and transplants are all collected from remnant native seedbank areas. Transplants are grown from seed collected by MCC staff and volunteers and given to local native nurseries to grow for planting back into preserves.

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6. Newman Equities Preserve

- Location: Central Park Drive adjacent to the MSU Credit Union
- Area: 13.41 acres
- Year Acquired: 2004
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: Shrub-scrub wetland and mixed deciduous upland
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Trash pickup since 2021; a large volume of trash blows into this area from surrounding businesses

7. Towar Woods

- Location: Northwest corner of Meridian Township along the northern boundary of the Tower Neighborhood and the western boundary of Walnut Hills Country Club
- Area: 124.8 acres (10 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2004 through 2008
- Purchase Price: TOTAL \$2,351,561:
 - Ranes 11.26 ac. \$300,000 (2006)
 - Ranes 15 ac. \$300,000 (2006)
 - Van Acker 9.2 ac. \$180,000 (2004)
 - Van Acker 9.42 ac. \$180,000 (2004)
 - DNR 3.16 ac. \$4,261 (2002)
 - Whitcomb 3.91 ac. \$19,000 (2008)
 - DNR 8.06 ac. \$300 (2004)
 - East Lansing Schools 24 ac. \$118,000 (2007)
 - Walnut Hills 14.72 ac. \$625,000 (2005)
 - Walnut Hills 25 ac. \$625,000 (2005)
 - Mitroka Addition 1 ac. Donation (2017)
- Description: Mixed deciduous forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Goal is to reforest the eastern part of the preserve with native hardwood species and contain spread of invasive Buckthorn
 - Planted 2,000 red pines and 1,000 white pines in the preserve
 - Planted hundreds of native hardwood trees protected with Blue-X tubes & fencing enclosures
 - 300 planted in 2019
 - 200 planted in 2020
 - 200 planted in 2022
 - Installed a deer exclosure and planted 20-30 native hardwood trees within it
 - Invasive management:
 - 6 total acres of professional shrub clearing (mostly invasive shrubs)
 - Regular herbicide treatments of Buckthorn, Honeysuckle, and Autumn Olive for past 9 years throughout the entire preserve focusing on the eastern portion
 - Contractual brush hogging of common buckthorn on 12 acres of native tree plantation area
 - 2022 & 2024

8. Pike Crossing Preserve

- Location: West side of Carleton Street north of Haslett Road and south of railroad crossing
- Area: 5.5 acres (2 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2010
- Purchase Price: \$25,000 + \$2,507 (winter tax bill) = \$27,507

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- Description: Old field
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Chemical and mechanical management of Japanese knotweed and teasel

9. Okemos Road Preserve

- Location: Okemos Road approximately ½ mile north of Grand River Avenue and south of railroad crossing
- Area: 60.22 acres (2 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2005
- Purchase Price: Partial Donation, \$80,000
- Description: Mixed shrub-scrub and deciduous woodlands, old field, and forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Removal of common buckthorn, amur honeysuckle, Asiatic bittersweet and autumn olive from wetland mitigation area, and in higher quality woodland areas
 - Vernal Pool monitoring by volunteers
 - Trash removal from College Apartments entrance with boy scout group in 2022 (20 tires removed, and over 3,000 pounds of trash)

10. Sower Woods Preserve

- Location: North and south of Sower Boulevard west of Okemos Road
- Area: 17.97 (5 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2005 through 2008
- Purchase Price: TOTAL \$240,242:
 - 5.43 ac. \$231,000 (2005)
 - 1.36 ac. \$4,261 (2002)
 - 5.166 ac. \$4,261 (2002)
 - 4.038 ac. \$720 (2008)
 - 1.77 ac. \$4,261 (2002)
- Description: Moist upland hardwood forest and lowland mixed hardwoods
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Neighborhood volunteers routinely remove small invasive species by hand and plant native species in their place
 - Once a year since 2021 the Meridian Conservation Corps removes herbaceous invasive plants in the spring, and sows native seeds in the fall

11. Cornell Wetland Preserve

- Location: Southwest corner of Tihart Road and Cornell Road
- Area: 21.26 acres
- Year Acquired: 2006
- Purchase Price: \$206,000
- Description: Mixed shrub-scrub and forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Large trash removal from wetland; 27 tires, over 4,000 pounds of trash
 - Native seed collection from remnant seed collection sites
 - Shrubby invasive removal from upland area on Cornell Road
 - Management of purple loosestrife and phragmites in ditch along Tihart Road

12. Heron Creek & Serafine Preserve

- Location: North of Bennett Road at the eastern boundaries of Champion Woods and Heron Creek neighborhoods and eastern boundary of College Fields Country Club
- Area: 91 acres (4 parcels)

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- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - 2024-25 season will include:
 - Removing large dumping piles of yard waste from preserve entrance at the end of Wilder Court
 - Installing a boundary fence and rule signage at the same entrance
 - Letters to go out to neighbors notifying them of planned stewardship work and reminder of preserve ordinances
 - Managing purple loosestrife in wetland area

16. Inter-Urban Wetland Preserve

- Location: Haslett Road, ¼ mile west of Marsh Road
- Area: 24.78 acres (2 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2003-2004
- Purchase Price: TOTAL= \$93,000 [13.36 ac. (\$50,000); 11.38 ac. (\$43,000)]
- Description: Scrub-shrub, emergent, and forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Native seed collection from middle wetland area
 - Removal of trash from middle wetland area
 - 2024-25 removal of common and glossy buckthorn from bridge over wetland – increase visibility in that area, and begin restoring area around remnant native wetland plants
 - Contractual management of invasive phragmites since 2023 off the Inter-Urban trail

17. Red Cedar River East Preserve

- HOWE (original preserve area)
 - Location: Southwest corner of Grand River Avenue – Meridian Road junction
 - Area: 9.14 acres (2 parcels)
 - Year Acquired: 2010
 - Purchase Price: \$92,000
 - Description: Riparian hardwood forest
- **Wangler addition**
 - Location: Southwest of Grand River Avenue – Meridian Road junction
 - Area: 13.30 acres
 - Year Acquired: 2011
 - Purchase Price: \$13,106.89 (tax- reverted property from Ingham County Land Bank)
 - Description: Adjacent to Red Cedar River, wooded, wetland, floodplains

18. Glacial Ridge (Whitehills) Preserve

- Location: Adjacent to Whitehills Lake subdivision at Whitehills Lake Drive and Fenwick Court
- Area: 25 acres
- Year Acquired: 2010
- Purchase Price: \$400,000
- Description: Mixed hardwood forest and shrub-scrub
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Planting of White Oak trees
 - Contractual management of invasive phragmites from wetland located off Mereford Court since 2021
 - Cutting of invasive phragmites thatch in fall/winter of 2023-24 for neighborhood visibility

19. Forest Grove (White M-78) Preserve

- Location: on the east side of Old M-78 (Saginaw Street), and the west side of Newton Road, north of Lake Lansing Road, and south of Towner Road.
- Area: 20.4 acres
- Year Acquired: 2011
- Purchase Price: \$425,000
- Description: Heavily wooded and much of the property is wetland
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Remnant native plant inventory as a native seed collection site for Planting a Native Meridian program

20. Tank Wetland Preserve

- Location: near Carlton and Lake Drive
- Area: 2.51 acres
- Year Acquired: 2016
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: 100% wetland

21. Tihart Preserve (Linn)

- Location: Tihart Rd.
- Area: 90 acres
- Year Acquired: 2018
- Purchase Price: \$600,000
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Mechanical & chemical management of invasive species such as autumn olive, invasive honeysuckle species, Asiatic bittersweet, reed canary grass, field thistle and bull thistle
 - Chemical management of purple loosestrife and invasive phragmites in the ditch along Tihart Road since 2022
 - Native seed sowing and transplanting in front 'farm field' area since 2021.
 - Seeds and transplants are all collected from remnant native seedbank areas. Transplants are grown from seed collected by MCC staff and volunteers and given to local native nurseries to grow for planting back into preserves.
 - Contractual brush hogging in front 5 acres of 'farm field' planting area in spring of 2024. Goal was to open up more sunlight for seeded areas.

22. Mandenberg Woods

- Location: Hamilton Rd. Okemos
- Area: 4 acres
- Year Acquired: 2018
- Purchase Price: \$63,000
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Native plant inventory and preliminary survey of trash sites completed in spring of 2024
 - Planned trash removal and invasive management will begin in 2025

23. Ponderosa

- 92 acres

Land Preservation Advisory Board Agenda Item 6.B.A.

- Purchase Price: \$485,100 (because we received a \$514,900 MNRTF grant) – Total land value was 1.2 million
- Year Acquired: 2018
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Management of Japanese Knotweed stand
 - Staff has chemically managed the stand since 2022
 - Trail maintenance has been completed since 2021 by MSU students and MCC volunteers, removing invasives such as autumn olive that are crowding the trail
 - Invasive species management in the oak/hickory woodlands
 - 2 vernal pools were identified in 2024 and will be monitored in the 2025 season

24. Nemoke Preserve

- 12 acres
- Year Acquired: 2018
- Purchase price: \$3,547

25. Cornell-Sweetwood Preserve

- 2.97 acres (mostly wetland)
- Year Acquired: 2023
- Purchase Price: \$62,000
- Still implementing boundary markers and preserve signage

Land Screening Criteria

Land Screening Criteria

Meridian Township Land Preservation Advisory Board

Revised June 2010

Property/Parcel:

Reviewer Name:

Date:

Land Preservation Category	Subcategory	Weighting/ Ranking	Point Value	Partial Points	Total
Ecological Value (100 points)	Contains potential populations of protected species or ecosystems of state or regional importance	0.40	40.0		
	Contains overall high diversity of species or ecosystems of local importance	0.30	30.0		
	Contains potential habitat for protected species	0.15	15.0		
	Helps connect greenspace and wildlife corridors	0.10	10.0		
	Other ecological values	0.05	5.0		
Natural/Functional Value (90 points)	Important upland buffer to an area otherwise permanently protected (wetland, riparian area, or shoreline)	0.35	31.5		
	Contains important woodlot or woodland to minimize habitat loss or fragmentation	0.25	22.5		
	Contains prime/unique soils or agricultural values	0.20	18.0		
	Provides ground water recharge and water quality enhancement; enhances flood and storm water control	0.15	13.5		
	Important natural feature not protected by other means	0.05	4.5		
Parcel Size (80 points)	Large land area (> 40 acres) with potential, through succession, to become important natural resource	0.50	40.0		
	Parcel > 5 acres, contiguous to permanently preserved property or one which has PUD/PDR offered	0.25	20.0		
	Parcel > 5 acres	0.15	12.0		
	Parcel < 5 acres having important habitat value	0.10	8.0		
Surrounding Land Uses (70 points)	Contiguous to protected property (e.g., wetland, riparian area, park)	0.35	24.5		
	Open space value of property can be protected after purchase or low probability of encroachment	0.25	17.5		
	Contiguous to agricultural area	0.20	14.0		
	Contiguous to residential area	0.15	10.5		
	Contiguous to mixed use area	0.05	3.5		
Environmental Quality (40 points)	Contains no known environmental contamination	0.80	32.0		
	Contains possible environmental contamination; can be remediated	0.15	6.0		
	Contains known environmental contamination; remediation possible but potentially costly	0.05	2.0		
Aesthetic Value (40 points)	Provides open greenspace to separate incompatible land uses or monotony of same uses	0.55	22.0		
	Provides unique multiple use opportunities	0.30	12.0		
	Aesthetic values exceptional for township	0.15	6.0		
Special Considerations (Maximum of 40 points)	Subcriteria determined on a case-by-case basis				

Optional: Add property description, observations, and other notes (use reverse side for additional space).

Item 7.A.



To: Land Preservation Advisory Board Members
From: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator
Date: April 9, 2025
Re: April 2025 Stewardship Staff Report

Staff provides a brief summary of land preserve updates:

1. A prescribed burn was successfully completed at Davis Foster Preserve on March 17, 2025. Due to wetter conditions, not all the underlying thatch was burned completely in both units, but most of the vegetation was burned back. No wildlife mortality was found by staff during post-burn surveys.
 - a. A native seeding was completed post-burn on March 27, 2025. Golden alexander, blue vervain, Joe pye weed, and swamp aster were planted among others.
 - b. A burn is still planned for Red Cedar Glen Preserve. Estimated date is the week of April 7th.
2. Educational wetland signage funded by the Wetland Education Fund were installed at the following parks: Nancy Moore, Legg, Hillbrook, Hartrick, and North Meridian Road Park.
3. Staff is currently working on surveying and managing the invasive species, lesser celandine (*Ficaria verna*). Currently this species is found in Ted Black Woods, Ottawa Hills Park and North Meridian Road Park.
4. The April 2025 Stewardship Calendar is included in the meeting packet. Work will focus around native seeding, the last of invasive shrub cutting, litter cleanup, vernal pool monitoring and invasive mustard removal.

APRIL

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STEWARDSHIP SATURDAYS | 9:30 AM - 12 PM

These workdays occur every other Saturday year round.

- April 5th, Eastgate Park, Invasive mustard pull
- April 19th, Earth Day Pull-Pizza-Pull Day!



- 9:30 am - 12 pm | Legg park
- 12:15-1:00 pm Pizza | Legg Park
- 1:15 pm - 3:30 pm | Harris Nature Center



TIMBERDOODLE WALK | 7:30 PM - 9 PM | Davis Foster Preserve

- This special hike at dusk will focus on the American Woodcock, a shorebird that lives in young forests & shrubby old fields. We will watch for its dusk courtship display, called a sky dance.

***Limited to 20 participants.**

WEEKDAY WARRIORS | 1-3 PM | BI-WEEKLY

- April 10th, Foster Crouse Preserve (Buttercup Ln, Okemos), Invasive mustard pull & native plant inventory
- April 24th, Trash pickup along Tihart Rd. (Meet at the intersection of Whitetail Court & Tihart Rd)

TRAILSIDE ECOLOGY | Spring Ephemeral Hike | Eastgate Park

- Join us at 4203 Meridian Rd, Okemos for a walk to talk about spring wildflowers & their important ecology. We will be able to see species such as trillium, trout lily & woodland phlox among others.



STEWARDSHIP

*** ALL EVENTS ARE WEATHER DEPENDENT & MAY BE CANCELLED THE DAY OF**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5 STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30-12 PM
6	7	8	9 TIMBERDOODLE WALK 7:30 - 9 PM	10 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19 EARTHDAY PULL-PIZZA- PULL!
20	21	22 EARTH DAY	23	24 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	25	26
27	28	29 TRAILSIDE ECOLOGY 5:30 - 7 PM	30			

PLEASE CONTACT EMMA AT ECAMPBELL@MERIDIAN.MI.US, OR 517.853.4614