



20 Years of Conservation

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Mission

The Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy conserves natural land and open space - including forests, wetlands, meadows, agricultural land, and places of scenic beauty - to provide habitat for wildlife and to enrich the lives of people.

SMLC Community Groups

Monroe County Land Conservancy

Superior Land Conservancy

Southeast Michigan
Land Conservancy
8383 Vreeland Road
Superior Twp, MI 48198

734.484.6565

www.SMLCland.org

December 11, 2008

Dear Members & Friends of Superior Land Conservancy and Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy:

Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy (SMLC) regretfully announces that the Superior Land Conservancy (SLC) Council recently voted to dissolve the council as of December 31, 2008.

For those of you who may not know, SLC is an operating division of SMLC governed by SMLC, and working on behalf of SMLC. For the past 19 years, the Council has been a significant factor in helping SMLC preserve land in Superior Township.

Over the years, SMLC (in part with the good work and assistance of SLC's Council) and its organizational and governmental partners including Washtenaw County and Superior Charter Township have been instrumental in preserving over 1,800 acres in Superior Township at a cost of over \$8 million dollars. These partnerships have accomplished this monumental achievement through several methods including outright acquisition (by purchase or donation) of key properties, conservation easements (that restrict development), donations to the local governmental entities to purchase parkland, and more recently simple pledges of support for land purchases by Washtenaw County.

SMLC's Nature Preserves in Superior and the Conservancy Farm -- along with Superior Township Parks, conservation easements on local farmland, and Washtenaw County Nature Preserves -- comprise what SMLC calls "the Superior Greenway". The Greenway is a wonderful example of what organizational partners and a committed group of individuals can accomplish when we act together to preserve land and open space to benefit the public and future generations. To see a map of the Superior Greenway please review your SMLC Fall 2008 newsletter or call our office and request a copy.

Although there are no immediate plans to replace the Superior Land Conservancy Council, **we assure you that SMLC intends to remain an active force for land protection in Superior Township -- and all of Southeast Michigan.** As part of the SMLC Board's commitment to this goal, your donations to SMLC *that are made in SLC's name* will be used in Superior Township unless you direct otherwise. This includes all 2008 donations and those given in the future.

Even with the past accomplishments detailed above there remains much more work to do in Superior Township and in all of Southeast Michigan to ensure we leave a conservation legacy we all can be proud of. So we must continue to look to the future.

SMLC's look to the future began with a self evaluation in 2005 and we have been attempting to improve our standards and practices ever since. We began

by establishing a formal budgeting process for SMLC and all of its committees and divisions. In early 2007 we elevated SLC to a formal "division" rather than a "committee" of the board. We implemented project planning requirements to ensure that all projects that SMLC engages in fulfill our mission:

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More recently, we reviewed in detail our financial controls and financial reporting to ensure that as the organization grows, and the IRS and State of Michigan increase their legal and financial oversight, SMLC financial reporting requirements are in order.

To continue that self-evaluation, over the next few years SMLC will be pursuing "accreditation" from the Land Trust Alliance (LTA). LTA is a nationwide organization of land conservancies that has established recommended minimum standards and practices for the operation of non-profit land conservancies nationwide. We will begin the accreditation process in early 2009 starting with LTA's "ACE" evaluation program. As part of the ACE program we are eligible for a special grant to help offset the costs of accreditation. We believe that the accreditation process will help SMLC to further improve our internal operations, elevate our land protection program, and - most importantly - position SMLC to protect even more land and open space into the future.

SMLC has also been collaborating with the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancies "working group" to produce a green map of the region. This map will help us with identification of land protection needs in southeast Michigan and ideally it will lead to collaborative efforts with the group's other members. Members of the working group include, but are not limited to, Livingston Land Conservancy, North Oakland Headwaters Land Conservancy, Six Rivers Regional Land Conservancy, Raisin Valley Land Trust and the Washtenaw Land Trust.

Your friendship and support has helped make all of this possible. We hope you will join with us as we move the organization forward to ensure SMLC has the capacity to protect land in Superior Township and the entire Southeast Michigan Region for many years to come.

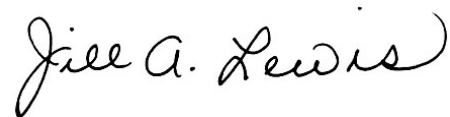
If you have any questions about the recent developments discussed above, please contact us at (734) 484-6565 or via email at info@smlcland.org.

Sincerely,

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN LAND CONSERVANCY



James T. Weiner
Incoming Board President



Jill A. Lewis
Executive Director