



# *Landmark Leaders*

of the Land Conservancy of West Michigan

*Distinguished leaders committed to supporting the projects that are the essence of the Land Conservancy of West Michigan's work.*

## *Our Vision*

The Land Conservancy of West Michigan has set a goal to annually protect at least 500 additional acres of scenic, natural land important to our community. As the leading open-space conservation organization in West Michigan, the Land Conservancy works directly with landowners and municipalities to permanently protect West Michigan's unique natural landscapes and important wildlife habitat that are so special to all of us.

## *Why is this critical?*

West Michigan is beautiful. We are very fortunate to live near the enchanting Lake Michigan shoreline, the rare oak-pine savannas and prairies of Newaygo County, many natural creeks, rivers and lakes, rolling hills and farms, and neighborhood open space sanctuaries.

The natural landscape provides important habitat for wildlife and places for us to enjoy the great outdoors right where we live and work. Our quality of life is greatly enhanced by the natural features found in West Michigan.



## *The Challenge*

Development pressures threaten to forever alter our natural surroundings and negatively impact our quality of life.

Research by the West Michigan Strategic Alliance tells us that Kent, Ottawa, Muskegon and Allegan Counties are predicted to have a combined 20% population growth rate over the next 25 years. Ottawa County, Michigan's top producing agricultural county, sustained the highest population growth in the Grand Rapids-Muskegon-Holland region over the past five years. Grand Rapids is spreading out in every possible direction and the lakeshore is filling in from Whitehall to Saugatuck.

The Land Conservancy of West Michigan is in a unique position to play a pivotal role. We have emerged as a regional leader and a key player in critical open space efforts in West Michigan. Our efforts have resulted in a growing portfolio of nature preserves and conservation easements in addition to substantial assistance to numerous communities in their efforts to acquire park land and open space.

## *Landmark Leaders*

*An Opportunity to Support the Heart of the Land Conservancy of West Michigan's Efforts*

An annual Landmark Leader investment ensures that the Land Conservancy of West Michigan will remain a regional leader in protecting the special natural areas important to our community. For many of these properties, we will only have one chance. A Landmark Leader investment will ensure that these opportunities are not lost.

### *Examples of how your annual Landmark Leader investment will be used:*

#### **\$10,000 per year**

- ◆ Pays for the landowner negotiations, property evaluation and documentation costs of three conservation easements
- ◆ Covers the costs to identify, map and prioritize natural areas for protection throughout an entire watershed.

#### **\$5,000 per year**

- ◆ Underwrites a stewardship workday at each of our ten nature preserves. Staff and volunteers attack invasive species, erect signs, remove dumped items, clear and mark trails and do whatever is necessary to protect and enhance the integrity of the preserve and make it safe and enjoyable for visitors.
- ◆ Funds a summer crew to eliminate invasive species at a nature preserve. Current nature preserves are threatened by glossy buckthorn, garlic mustard and purple loosestrife.
- ◆ Pays for title insurance, surveys and recording fees of a new nature preserve.



#### **\$2,500 per year**

- ◆ Funds the annual monitoring of 15 conservation easements to ensure the terms of the legal agreement are being adhered to by the landowner and the property and natural assets are protected as planned.
- ◆ Pays for the design, printing and distribution of a brochure to educate landowners about conservation options.



### *Landmark Leaders receive:*

- ◆ Virtual and on-site tours of new projects and potential projects.
- ◆ Exclusive invitations to Landmark Leader events such as naturalist-guided property hikes, special get-togethers and receptions.
- ◆ Recognition as a committed leader to land protection throughout West Michigan.
- ◆ Special updates from the Executive Director.

### *Become a Landmark Leader*

Landmark Leaders are essential to the successful protection of an additional 500 acres of natural land each year in rapidly developing West Michigan. Your investment will truly help *keep nature nearby*.

*To learn more, please contact Julie Stoneman, Executive Director, at 616-451-9476.*