

NORTH OAKLAND HEADWATERS LAND CONSERVANCY

2014 Annual Report



The North Oakland Headwaters Land Conservancy (NOHLC) is a private, non-profit, donor supported organization with 42 years of experience in preserving open space in northwest Oakland County. 1,500 acres have been preserved, with parcels ranging from 1/2 acre to over 250 acres.

NOHLC's mission is to conserve the woods, fields, streams and other natural resources in the headwaters area of the Clinton, Shiawassee, Huron and Flint Rivers.

Table of Contents

<i>Table of Contents</i>	<i>i</i>
Introduction/Letter	1
Board of Directors and Staff	2
Summary of 2014 Activities.....	3
Sale of Trade Land	3
The Carls Foundation Match	3
Student Involvement.....	3
Growing the Stewardship Program	3
Staffing Increases	3
SEMIWild Collaboration	4
Expanded Work in a Smaller Location.....	4
Financial Status of Conservancy	5
List of all Properties and Interest in Properties.....	6
Nature and Purpose of all Leases	7

Introduction

Dear Conservation Supporters,

This was an important transitional year for NOHLC. Like watching the prairie landscape at Knorr change from the snowy fields of December to the beautiful wildflowers of August, NOHLC has transformed as well. In 2014, Executive Director Sue Julian built a part time staff designed to increase NOHLC's reach in fundraising, volunteerism and community outreach, although the void left by longtime Administrative Assistant Penny Mason's departure will never truly be filled.

The work done by NOHLC with your support is more important than ever. In November of 2014, the Poweshiek Skipperling was listed as a federally endangered species. This tiny butterfly is found in fens in only a few places including Oakland County, Michigan! NOHLC preserves two fens already, the Bridge Valley Fen and Eaton Hanging Fen, and continues to manage them for diversity of both flora and fauna. A new endangered species makes our stewardship in North Oakland County even more important.

NOHLC staff, board members and volunteers worked diligently in 2014 to make the Mud Lake donation from the heirs of the John McGrath estate a success in early 2015. As a conservancy, NOHLC continues to strategically preserve land which has significant impact on local habitat and helps protect water quality throughout the watersheds NOHLC serves. Mud Lake is one of the headwaters of Kearsley Creek, a waterbody of the utmost importance to Ortonville and Brandon Township. We were all very excited to be working in Brandon Township again!

There truly is strength in numbers and NOHLC joined forces with other conservation-minded groups in 2014 to increase the impact NOHLC has on the environment. Almost 20 partners came together to write an invasive species control grant reaching multiple townships and including several non-profit organizations. SEMIWILD, a group of 9 conservancies in Michigan, launched a project in the Huron River watershed to protect 500 new acres by the end of 2016. Our conservancy will continue to look for collaborations that match our mission.

As NOHLC extends its conservation reach with new projects and complicated land acquisitions, your support means more than ever. Volunteers are providing more and different kinds of project support. When the Carls Foundation offered a matching grant to increase capacity, your generous donations helped us exceed the required match, making it possible to transition to a paid executive director in 2015.

It can't be said enough how grateful we are for our amazing supporters and volunteers. My personal thanks extend also to our energetic, enthusiastic staff as well as our Board members past and present, all of whom put incredible amounts time and effort into ensuring the mission of conservation is carried out with the ethics and efficiency NOHLC's supporters deserve.

Yours,



Chris Benedict, NOHLC Board President

NOHLC BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

2014	2015
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Interim Executive Director</u> Susan Julian</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Interim Executive Director</u> Susan Julian</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Administrative Assistant</u> Katie Chumack</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Administrative Assistant</u> Katie Chumack</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Board President</u> Kirk Falvay</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Development Administrator</u> Casey Foote</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Vice-President</u> Chris Benedict</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Database Administrator</u> Mary Herzenstiel</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Secretary</u> Emily Duthinh</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Bookkeeper</u> Sheri Trout</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Treasurer</u> Marilyn Zigarac</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Board President</u> Chris Benedict</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Past President</u> Chris Benedict</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Secretary</u> Emily Duthinh</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Directors</u> Melanie Foose Sharon Gardner Susan Julian Bette Moen Paul Rabaut</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Treasurer</u> Marilyn Zigarac</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Performance Auditors</u> Mary Blanchard Sue Topping</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Past President</u> Kirk Falvay</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Bookkeeper/Consultant</u> Penny S. Mason</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Directors</u> Mike Dougherty Sharon Gardner Jean Gramlich Susan Julian Greg Kazmierski Bette Moen Paul Rabaut</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Performance Auditors</u> Mary Blanchard Sue Topping</p>

SUMMARY OF 2014 ACTIVITIES

1. Sale of Trade Land

The 0.9 acre lot donated to NOHLC in December 2013 was sold, per the donor's wishes, for \$30,300. To prepare the land for sale, Executive Director Sue Julian led volunteers and stewardship workers in a massive clean-up of the property; firewood and other woody debris were removed, as well as old fencing and stumps. This first time "trade land" endeavor was a success.

At the same time, donations of land for permanent preservation continued through the year with the expectation of completion of acquisition in early 2015 and continued stewardship *in perpetuity*.

2. The Carls Foundation Match

Fundraising efforts in 2014 to raise \$20,000 to be matched 1:1 by The Carls Foundation exceeded our goal. Total eligible donations actually reached \$25,000 thanks to the generous gifts from both new and existing NOHLC supporters. Donations were given in response to multiple mailed appeals, email appeals and fundraising events like Wild Night Out. There were also contributions earmarked for a specific property or fund in addition to the calculation of the match. We all thank the Carls Foundation for the grant which will be used for the salary of a new executive director in 2015.

3. Student Involvement

K-12 and college students have joined NOHLC in 2014 both as volunteers and part-time staff members. As a part of NOHLC's growing stewardship program, college students studying environmental science and biology worked in the field this summer removing invasive species, doing surveys and installing native plants. A college student helped co-write a successful grant application from the Michigan Department of Natural Resource's Urban Forestry Program to plant trees at the Kimball Preserve in Clarkston, Michigan. Students from both middle and high schools in the area have come to NOHLC to complete service hours for the International Baccalaureate program, National Honor Societies and Middle School Student Leadership programs. Younger students often help out in the office but are welcome to work on stewardship projects outdoors as well.

4. Growing the Stewardship Program

The Stewardship Committee remains active and seeking new opportunities to care for NOHLC preserves. 2014 included stewardship at 18 different preserves in addition to the annual inspection completed for every NOHLC holding. In addition to student stewardship employees, NOHLC also contracted with multiple conservation professionals to work on invasive species removal and baseline documentation.

Collaboration continues to be an important part of the stewardship program. Both municipal, non-profit and professional entities came together to apply for an Oakland County Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Awards should be posted in March of 2015 and this money will be used by almost 20 partners to fight invasive species in Oakland County over multiple years. NOHLC will concentrate on phragmites (giant reed) and black swallow wort, both threats to plants and animals native to our area.

5. Staffing Increases

Susan Julian continued her volunteer work as Executive Director in 2014. She is supported by four part-timers in the areas of development, database administration and bookkeeping. Casey Foote is working 15 hours per week as a Development Director building a strong fundraising and community

outreach program, a continuation of her work as an intern for NOHLC in summer 2014. To help maintain an accurate database of volunteers, supporters, corporate sponsors and prospective supporters, NOHLC hired Mary Herzenstiel under contract. Sheri Trout is also a contract part-time employee focusing on bookkeeping under direction from NOHLC Treasurer Marilyn Zigarac. Katie Chumack remains the administrative assistant and coordinates volunteer activities, assists with stewardship and provides assistance to the Executive Director 20 to 25 hours per week.

6. SEMIWILD – Collaborating in the Huron River Watershed

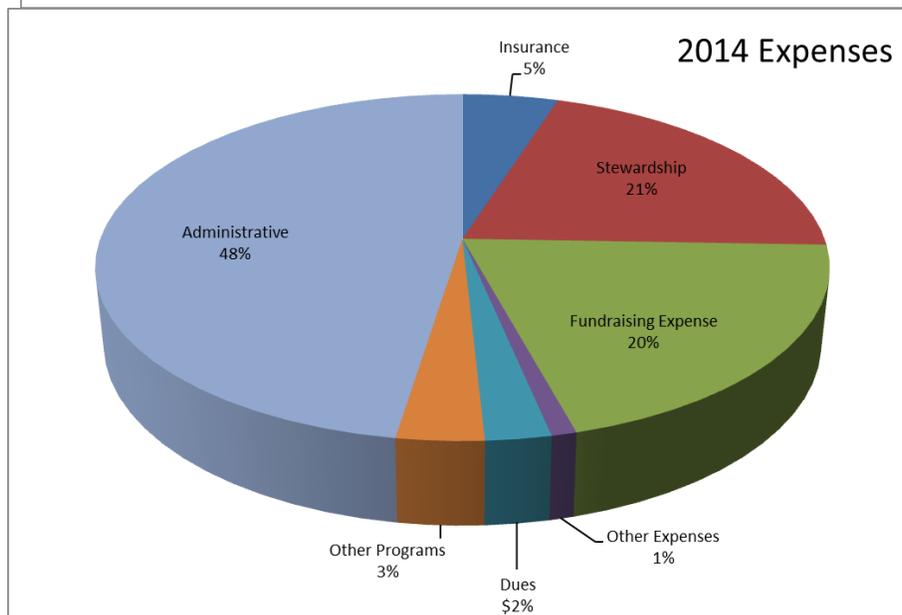
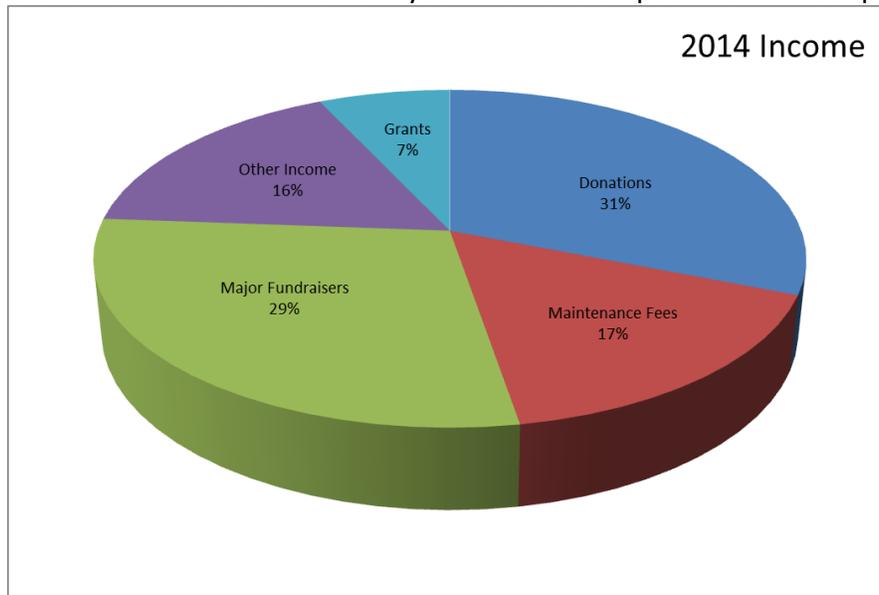
Six conservancies participating in the SEMIWILD collaboration have received funding from The Carls Foundation to launch a land acquisition campaign in the Huron River watershed. Conservancies received funds to pay staff to research properties desirable for conservation and marketing materials informing landowners of the value of their land. The Huron River Watershed Council is collaborating with SEMIWILD and assisting with landowner contacts and baseline assessments of interesting properties. Katie Chumack and Sue Julian have identified 30 potential properties in both Springfield and White Lake Township, north of M-59, whose owners will receive letters presenting the project.

7. Expanded Work in a Smaller Location

The move from the Springfield Township Civic Center to an office building at 1750 Dixie Highway, adjacent to Deer Lake Athletic Club, placed NOHLC in an accessible location, but with higher costs than those the conservancy enjoyed courtesy of Springfield Township's support. The office suite is now shared with Oakland Conservation District and may house OPIS, the coordinating organization for the invasive species initiative described above. Historic and back files as well as stewardship supplies are stored off site. Computer and desk space are shared on alternate days by staff and volunteers. With the commitment to increased preservation in the headwaters region and the increasing imperative to protect the natural resources of this area, NOHLC may be seeking a larger office in the coming years.

FINANCIAL STATUS OF THE CONSERVANCY

Disappointing major fundraisers resulted in lower than expected revenue in 2014. However, staff-driven innovative fundraising efforts such as the Carls Foundation match challenge and the sale of donated trade land allowed NOHLC to finish the year in an overall positive financial position.



ESTIMATION OF VOLUNTEER HOURS-CONTRIBUTIONS

Total Hours—Stewardship:	630	In-kind value:	\$14,175
Total Hours—Land Acquisition:	200	In-kind value:	\$ 4,500
Total Hours—Office Administration*:	2234	In-kind value:	\$50,265
Total Hours—Fundraising Events	<u>241</u>	In-kind value:	<u>\$ 5,422</u>
TOTAL:	3,305		\$74,362*

*Full-time volunteer Executive Director hours included. In-kind value per hour calculated at \$22.50 per Independent Sector data

LIST OF ALL PROPERTIES AND INTEREST IN PROPERTIES

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Waterford Hills | 25. Bald Eagle Lake | 49. Tully Lake |
| 2. Cedar Park I | 26. Pine Knob Country Estates | 50. Long Lake Village |
| 3. Schmude Sanctuary | 27. Schwartz Easement | 51. Oakland Hill II |
| 4. Poquosin I | 28. Haddon Nursery | 52. Gill Landing |
| 5. Poquosin II | 29. Oakland Crest I | 53. Thread Creek Farm |
| 6. Steeple Ridge | 30. Bailey Preserve | 54. Hall's Connector |
| 7. Old Sturbridge | 31. Hummingbird Ridge | 55. Camp Wathana |
| 8. Whipple Tree Lane | 32. Whipple Lake | 56. Buckhorn Complex |
| 9. Nolta-Brennan | 33. Liberty Golf Easement | |
| 10. Kimball Sanctuary | 34. Thomson Preserve | |
| 11. Keller Sanctuary | 35. Hidden Ridge | |
| 12. Cranberry Lake | 36. Ingomar Farms | |
| 13. Robert Shell Fen | 37. Victoria Preserve | |
| 14. Oakhill Hollow | 38. Dixie Preserve | |
| 15. Deerwood Hollow | 39. Princeton Preserve | |
| 16. Village Park | 40. Rattalee Shores | |
| 17. Heather Haven | 41. Forest Pointe | |
| 18. Round Lake Shores | 42. Clarkston Woods | |
| 19. Voorheis-Beardsley | 43. Davis Lake Overlook | |
| 20. Bridge Valley Reserve | 44. Eaton Hanging Fen | |
| 21. Oakland Hill I | 45. Holly Lakeview | |
| 22. Cedar Park II | 46. Oakland Crest II | |
| 23. Springfield Nature Preserve | 47. Campbell Easement | |
| 24. Suzanne G. Knorr Preserve | 48. Waterworks Wetlands | |

NATURE AND PURPOSE OF LEASES

NOHLC has not leased any of its property or property interests in its 42 year existence.

NOHLC does sublet the office within its leased office space at the Deer Lake Center. The office is sublet to the Oakland Conservation District.