

Thumb Land Conservancy

2014 Annual Report and Organizational Summary



Yellow Trout-lily in bloom, Dead End Woods Sanctuary, TLC Annual Meeting, 2014 May 4



Thumb Land Conservancy

4975 Maple Valley Road, Marlette, Michigan 48453
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2015 February 03

2014 was a “building year” for the Thumb Land Conservancy, with some progress. We have made continued administrative improvements. We have increased public awareness and outreach efforts through distribution of the TLC brochure and TLC land protection guide, the TLC Facebook page, and events such as our annual meeting and preserve walks. We have continued and expanded our preserve stewardship activities.

In 2015, our focus will be on increasing our membership and fundraising. Through this and improved administration, the TLC will be better prepared to commence major land acquisition projects and to serve residents of the Thumb wanting to preserve natural areas around them.

We are also hopeful for good news soon about a major addition to the TLC Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary and other new preserves in Saint Clair County.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Collins".

William Collins
Executive Director



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TLC Land Protection Guide

In early 2014, the TLC produced a 6-page land protection guide to be distributed to landowners and others interested in protecting natural areas and other lands in the Thumb. The guide includes a basic description and benefits of routine protection methods such as land donation, donation by will, reserved life estates, conservation easements, and bargain sales. The guide also includes alternative land protection methods such as preservation as wetland mitigation, deeded access, access and use leases, access and use fees, preserve clubs, and sustainable resource development. Copies are available in print, as PDF or MS Word files, and on the TLC web site.

DTE Energy Foundation Grant

On March 21 of 2014, the DTE Energy Foundation awarded the TLC a grant of \$2,500 for preserve stewardship support. This is the first corporate grant that the TLC has received since our formation in 2008 and we are thankful to DTE Energy. This money will be used primarily to organize and conduct invasive weed control on TLC sanctuaries, along with other stewardship activities.

Both the Dead End Woods Sanctuary and the Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary have extensive areas of invasive Garlic Mustard – *Alliaria petiolata*, an invasive culinary herb brought to North America in the late 1800's from Eurasia and North Africa. TLC board members have been steadily working each spring on pulling the main patches of Garlic Mustard from the Dead End Woods but we definitely need more help if we are going to completely get rid of it.



Garlic Mustard

The Dead End Woods also has Yellow Archangel - *Lamium galeobdolon* and Periwinkle – *Vinca minor*, two ornamental ground cover species native to Eurasia that spread from residences in the adjoining subdivision. Both species are difficult to eradicate.



Yellow Archangel

The Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary has dense patches of Tartarian Honeysuckle – *Lonicera tatarica*, native to northeast Asia, and Common Privet – *Ligustrum vulgare*, another invasive shrub native to Eurasia and North Africa. Both of these invasive shrubs require hand-pulling, followed by repeated burns to kill seeds on and in the soil.



Tartarian Honeysuckle

Other stewardship issues to be addressed on all of the TLC sanctuaries include neighborhood dumping of grass clippings, leaves, and occasionally, scrap materials like treated lumber or shingles. This has been a big problem on the Dead End Woods Sanctuary, although we are making progress.

Michigan Road Preserve Stewardship

Since 2011, the Thumb Land Conservancy has been under contract with the Saint Clair County Drain Commissioner, Saint Clair County Road Commission, and Pro-Tel Development to monitor and steward a 51-acre preserve along the east side of Michigan Road, north of Dove Road and south of the Canadian National Railway tracks in Port Huron Township. The preserve includes two parcels; the 13-acre north parcel placed under a State conservation easement by the Road Commission, and the 38.4-acre south parcel placed under a State conservation easement by Pro-Tel Development.

The preserve is just a small part of a large remnant of northern forest complex characteristic of the Port Huron area, an extensive lakeplain wetland crossed by upland sand ridges left by higher waters of the early Great Lakes. The land was preserved as wetland mitigation for two separate projects permitted by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Ownership of the land was then transferred to the SCCDC. As a condition of the two permits, the MDEQ required monitoring and stewardship of both parcels for 5 years by a third party conservation organization.



The Michigan Road preserve is a valuable piece of the Port Huron area's natural history. It's a fascinating complex of forested swamp and upland sand ridges bordering an almost impenetrable shrub swamp. The forest is largely a second-growth northern community composed of northern species like Red Maple, Paper Birch, Black Ash, Blueberry, Wintergreen, Bunchberry, Bracken Fern, Wild Sarsaparilla, Starflower, and Canada Mayflower. Michigan Endangered Painted Trillium is known from nearby locations with similar northern forest habitat and is likely on the preserve. Interior portions of the preserve are covered by northern shrub swamp dominated by dense thickets of Tag Alder, Black Chokeberry, and Nannyberry, mixed with invasive Glossy Buckthorn and Common Reed. Marsh Saint John's-wort, an uncommon northern species, has also been found in the shrub swamp. While these species occur throughout Michigan, their distribution is generally concentrated north of Michigan's Transition Zone, the broad division between northern and southern flora in Michigan running roughly from Muskegon east to the Saginaw Bay and across the Thumb. The northern plant community on the preserve is somewhat disjunct from its usual location north of the Transition Zone, but this is characteristic of the flora in the Port Huron area, influenced by the cooler growing season and extensive sand soils near Lake Huron. Historic fire disturbance may also have been another important factor in maintaining the northern flora.

A further unique aspect of the vegetation on the preserve is the occurrence of southern species, especially on the sand ridges, that enhance the vegetative diversity and create a blend of northern and southern flora unique to Saint Clair County. Distinctly southern species on the preserve include Black Oak and Pin Oak hybrids, Black Gum, Sassafras, Juneberry, and Smooth Highbush Blueberry. This north-south quality of the area's vegetation was described about 100 years ago by noted Port Huron botanist Charles K. Dodge.



Swamp forest wetland with tip-up mounds on the Pro-Tel Development parcel. This is very good habitat for Michigan Endangered Painted Trillium.

In 2014, the TLC completed its fourth year of monitoring and stewardship. Monitoring includes inspection of the preserve over the course of a few days in July and August to observe the general condition, photographically document the site, collect specific vegetative data to be used as a baseline for management, determine whether there are any new impacts that need to be addressed, and to help ensure that the conditions of the conservation easements are not violated. The TLC typically visits the preserve at least 4 to 5 days each year to conduct monitoring and stewardship activities. The annual monitoring and stewardship reports produced for each of the two parcels in the preserve are fairly extensive documents that usually require at least a week to complete. These must be submitted to the MDEQ by January 31 of the following year.



Sand ridge on Pro-Tel Development parcel.

Since taking over stewardship of the Michigan Road preserve in 2011, it was clear that the primary management issue is control of invasive Glossy Buckthorn – *Frangula alnus*, is native to Eurasia and North Africa. The best control for Glossy Buckthorn is pulling the smaller plants and cutting the larger, usually combined with herbicide applications. Some land managers have had tremendous success in controlling Glossy Buckthorn in shrub swamps by burning. The northern plant community on the Michigan Road preserve is probably fire-dependent and should benefit from burning in terms of restoring natural structure, density, and species composition, among other benefits.

The TLC wrote burn plans for the preserve, with the help of the Michigan Prescribed Fire Council and burn consultants, Mike Appel and David Borneman. These were submitted to the Port Huron Township Fire Department in the winter of 2013. The TLC received permission for two small test burns, but due to poor weather, we were unable to conduct the burns until April 12 of 2014. The results of the burning appeared positive, but will be clearer in the 2015 monitoring due to delayed resprouting of some stems. It appears that burning under a forest canopy, combined with hand-pulling and cutting, is likely to be effective in helping to control Glossy Buckthorn.



Controlled burn on the Saint Clair County Road Commission parcel.

TLC 2014 Annual Meeting

On May 4, the TLC held its 2014 annual meeting at the residence of executive board member Dorothy Craig, adjacent to our Dead End Woods Sanctuary in Fort Gratiot. A few people from the neighborhood and nearby attended the half-day event. First, the TLC executive board conducted its quarterly meeting. Food and drink were available throughout.



Spring nature walk in the Dead End Woods Sanctuary. TLC Annual Meeting, 2014 May 4.

Mike Connell, well-known writer for the Port Huron Times Herald newspaper, gave a very interesting and thorough presentation about the Native American history of our region. Mike is an advocate for natural area protection and has written extensively about the early history of the Blue Water Area. He serves on the board of the Blue Water Land Fund, a part of the Community Foundation of Saint Clair County.

Executive Director, William Collins, gave a brief history of the TLC followed by a visual presentation of the Thumb's varied landscapes, natural communities, and unique species that the TLC hopes to protect.

After the meeting, we had a little nature walk through the Dead End Woods Sanctuary. It was cool but very pleasant after our long winter to see spring finally arrive. Trout-lily was in-bloom and new stalks of Mayapple had just emerged along with other forest wildflowers.

Gerrits Sanctuary Spring Nature Walks

On May 12, 2014 the TLC had a nature walk on the Gerrits Sanctuary for the Rochester Branch of the Women's National Farm and Garden Association. Because the preserve donor's daughter, Susan Gerrits, is a member, they had been interested in seeing the sanctuary and looking at the native forest plants.

Then on May 18, 2014, we had a special day on the Gerrits Sanctuary to celebrate the 12th birthday of Rose Gerrits, granddaughter of Dr. James and Lois Gerrits, and daughter of Susan Gerrits. Rose invited her friends and family to spend the day on the land once owned by her grandparents. We had great weather and a fun time. It was the perfect time to be in the forest to see all the new spring wildflowers and hear the woodland birds that had just arrived north for the summer.



Group photo under an American Beech tree. Gerrits Sanctuary. 2014 May 18.

Garlic Mustard Pull at Dead End Woods

On May 16, 2014, the TLC conducted another Garlic Mustard pull near the dead end of Wilson Drive where the largest concentration of Garlic Mustard plants have been found. This was the third year that Garlic Mustard was removed from this area. We seem to be making progress in gradually reducing the number of new plants in this area as the seed bed becomes exhausted.



Dr. Scott Ferguson bagging Garlic Mustard from the Dead End Woods Sanctuary during our first official pull in 2012.

Garlic Mustard – *Alliaria petiolata* was brought to North America as a culinary herb in the late 1800's. It's native to Eurasia and North Africa, and like so many introduced species, became an invasive weed here. It seems like we didn't see much of it in the area until the 1990's, but since then it's invaded a lot of our forests.

Sanctuary Monitoring Reports

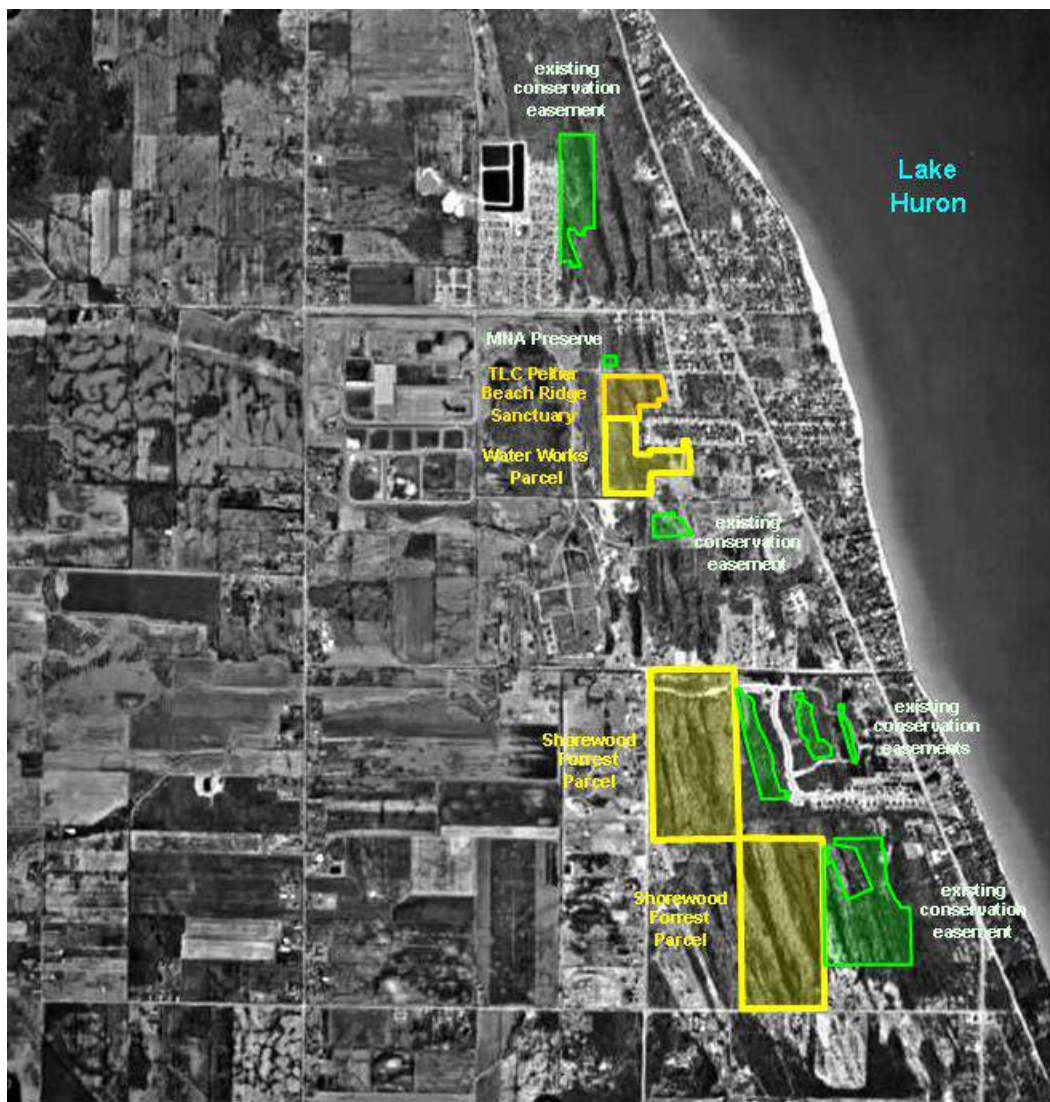
In 2014, the TLC completed its fourth of five years of monitoring the Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary, and fifth of five years of monitoring the Dead End Woods Sanctuary, required by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality as a condition of preserving these two sites as mitigation for permitted wetland impacts. Monitoring includes inspection of the preserve over the course of a few days in July or August to observe the general condition, to photographically document the site, to identify new impacts that need to be addressed, and to help ensure that the conditions of the conservation easements are not violated. The TLC typically visits each preserve at least 2 to 3 days each year to conduct monitoring and stewardship activities. The annual monitoring and stewardship reports produced for each of these two preserves must be submitted to the MDEQ by January 31 of the following year.

The required monitoring and management of the Dead End Woods Sanctuary and Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary are a little less stringent than the requirements for the Michigan Road preserve in Port Huron Township that the TLC provides monitoring and stewardship for. This is because, in 2008 and 2010 when the permits were issued for these projects, the MDEQ and MDNRE (now the MDEQ again) were just beginning to require management plans and long-term stewardship, but were not so specific about those requirements as they are now.

The monitoring and stewardship of these two preserves by the TLC will certainly not end, but the requirement to provide detailed reports to the MDEQ does end on the fifth year. The TLC will be monitoring and caring for all of its preserves for as long as the TLC owns them or otherwise has an interest in them. As with most preserves, it appears that invasive weeds, minor encroaching uses, removal of dead or otherwise dangerous trees along the boundaries, and the effects of habitat fragmentation will be the primary ongoing stewardship issues.

New Saint Clair County Preserves

In 2014, the Saint Clair County Drain Commissioner purchased three properties in Fort Gratiot Township to be preserved as mitigation for wetland permits. These include the 19.5-acre Water Works Fort Gratiot LLC parcel, adjacent to the south side of the TLC Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary, and two 80-acre parcels along the west side of the Shorewood Forrest condominium development in Section 9, only a half-mile south.



New preserve land in yellow. Existing preserves in green. TLC Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary in gold.

The Water Works parcel and about 20 acres of the north Shorewood Forrest parcel will serve as partial mitigation for the proposed Stocks Creek Drain Improvement Project in Kimball Township. A 20-acre portion of the south Shorewood Forrest parcel has already been placed under a conservation easement by Saint Clair County for a different wetland permit.

All three of these parcels are part of the forested beach ridge and swale complex along Lake Huron and are critical acquisitions in the eventual establishment of a larger coastal preserve extending from Fort Gratiot, north to Lakeport State Park. The Water Works parcel addition will effectively increase the TLC Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary from 11.5 acres to 31 acres. The 160-acre Shorewood Forrest land is perhaps the most extensive remnant of the beach ridge and swale complex remaining in Saint Clair County.



Wetland swale on the Water Works parcel.



Wetland swale on the north Shorewood Forrest parcel.



One of a few Black Oaks, likely Pin Oak hybrids, on upland ridges of Water Works parcel.



Yellow lady's-slipper orchid on the north Shorewood Forrest parcel.



Magnolia Warbler on the Water Works parcel.

These new land acquisitions are in addition to the 30-acre Marzolf parcel in Kimball Township, purchased by the Drain Commissioner in 2010 as part of the land to be preserved as mitigation for the Stocks creek project. The Marzolf parcel is an exemplary mature northern forest containing Michigan Endangered Painted Trillium. The 9-acre Michigan Nature Association, Sharon Rose Leonatti Memorial Nature Sanctuary is located along the north side of the Marzolf parcel, once thought to contain one of the largest Painted Trillium populations remaining in Michigan. The new preserve will effectively be over 40 acres.



The Marzolf parcel in Kimball Township, along the west side of Range Road.



Mature northern forest on the Marzolf parcel.



Swamp forest on the Marzolf parcel.

Through the unusually extended planning, acquisition, and permitting process for the Stocks Creek project, dating back even before the TLC was formed, Executive Director William Collins, has been working with the Drain Commissioner in his capacity as a wetland consultant, to ensure this preservation moves forward. The summer and fall of 2014 was a critical time for this project as baseline reports, management plans, and a stewardship agreement were drafted, the Stocks Creek wetland permit application was resubmitted to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and nearly 180 acres of new preservation land was acquired.

TLC Board of Directors

Cheryl Collins, President

Cheryl Collins of the Brown City - Marlette area formed the Thumb Land Conservancy in 2008. She has been at the forefront of natural area protection efforts in the region for nearly 20 years. Cheryl was on the board of directors of the Michigan Nature Association from 2003 through 2008, and co-founded the Macomb Land Conservancy in 2000 which has since merged with Oakland Land Conservancy to become Six Rivers Land Conservancy. In 2001 and 2002, she conducted a fundraising campaign as a volunteer on behalf of the Michigan Nature Association to purchase the Sharon Rose Leonatti Memorial Nature Sanctuary in Kimball Township, Saint Clair County, a 9-acre preserve with one of Michigan's largest remaining populations of State Endangered Painted Trillium. Through a combination of grants and individual donations, she raised \$57,000 in less than two years in her spare time. While on the board of the Michigan Nature Association, she developed funding sources that resulted in grant awards of nearly \$500,000 for a statewide land acquisition campaign. Cheryl and her husband, Bill Collins, have worked together on many projects for Huron Ecologic, LLC since 1998. Cheryl served as Project Coordinator, providing assistance to several community groups trying to protect local natural areas across Michigan. She prepared, organized, and presented exhibits and testimony for three Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Contested Case Hearings and two Michigan Environmental Protection Act suits involving State and federally regulated wetland and other natural features. She provided information regarding the Michigan wetland regulatory program and wetland violation files to the Michigan Environmental Council and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. From 1996 through 1998, Cheryl was Assistant Drain Commissioner for Saint Clair County, working along side Drain Commissioner Fred Fuller, who promoted natural watershed management and river restoration. In 2006, she was a Project Assistant for the Sanilac County Economic Development Corporation. She obtained a grant to construct a rain garden in Lexington and worked with the Huron County Economic Development Corporation on a Michigan Department of Transportation plan to identify significant heritage highway features along M-25. From 2006 through 2009, she was the Chairperson of the Sanilac County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. She ran for Sanilac County Drain Commissioner in 2008. As a candidate of the Democratic Party, she received 38% of the vote in a solidly Republican county. Cheryl currently works as a drain inspector and assists with drain maintenance projects for the Saint Clair County Drain Commissioner.

Terry Gill - Treasurer and Secretary

Terry Gill of Greenwood has been Supervisor of Greenwood Township in Saint Clair County since 2004. Terry is a strong advocate for land preservation with over 20 years of volunteer experience in non-profit organizations. She is currently a member of the Saint Clair County Water Quality Board, Saint Clair County Farm Land Preservation Board, and Tri-Hospital EMS Board of Directors. For over 10 years, Terry has coordinated the Mill Creek Volunteer Monitoring Project, an aquatic macroinvertebrate sampling program to assess and monitor the water quality of the Mill Creek, a major tributary of the Black River. She obtained multiple grants to produce and submit an annual Mill Creek monitoring report to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Terry served as President of the Blue Water League of Women Voters and was the Natural Resources Chair for the Michigan League of Women Voters based in Lansing. As Natural Resources Chair, she represented the Michigan League of Women Voters on the board of the Michigan Environmental Council and obtained a grant from the Frey Foundation to produce and distribute a brochure entitled, "Keeping This Land Ours", a citizen guide to protecting natural areas.

Kay Cumbow - Director

Kay Cumbow of the Brown City area is a long-time environmental advocate. For several years, she was a board member and Chair for Citizens for Alternatives to Chemical Contamination, a statewide organization working to protect the health of our communities and the Great Lakes. She is now a member of their Education Committee. Kay also works with Blue Water Sierra Club in Saint Clair County, a Conservation Committee of the Southeast Michigan Group of the Sierra Club covering Wayne, Oakland, Macomb and Saint Clair Counties. Since its inception in 1999, Kay has worked for the Mill Creek Volunteer Monitoring Project, an aquatic macroinvertebrate sampling program to assess and monitor the water quality of the Mill Creek. She volunteers with the Stream Leaders Program of Saint Clair County, which also monitors aquatic macroinvertebrates in streams, including the Black River watershed. Kay has an Associate of Arts degree from Kalamazoo Valley Community College and an Associate of Science degree from Mott Community College. She is a certified respiratory technician.

Traci Brown - Director

Traci Brown of Port Huron is a parent and works as a Secretary II for the Department of Exceptional Children in the Port Huron School District. She previously worked as a paralegal for an established legal firm in Port Huron. Traci serves as the Safety Coordinator and Fundraising Chair for Port Huron Little League. She has volunteered with several organizations such as Lakeshore Legal Aid based in Clinton Township, Macomb County, a not-for-profit law firm providing free civil legal services to low income people and seniors in the region. She served as President of the Parent Teacher Association at Crull Elementary School and was active in local educational programs for kindergarten through sixth grade children. She continues to volunteer her time to fundraise for several local programs. Traci and her family have long enjoyed the Thumb shoreline and are concerned about protecting recreational areas and other natural settings.

Daniel Rhein - Director

Dan Rhein of Port Huron grew up in China Township in Saint Clair County. He is a naturalist, wildlife expert, and a self-taught botanist possessing thorough knowledge of many obscure plant species, especially grasses and shrubs. Dan graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Fisheries and Wildlife. For years, Dan has volunteered his time to provide nature education programs for the Blue Water Council Boy Scouts of America and local school children. Dan has long worked to promote natural areas in the Thumb, especially lakeplain prairie, wetlands, and aquatic habitats. He was a member of the Thumb Bioregional Alliance in the early 1990's, which advocated for the protection of land along the Black River near the Port Huron State Game Area, and the Minden Bog in Sanilac County. He has led several tours through the Minden Bog, being quite familiar with the unique bog vegetation. Dan teaches an edible plants course for Willow Winds school of traditional skills and crafts near Mikado, Michigan. He has been active with the Saint Clair County Parks and Recreation Committee, advising them on park development plans. Dan works for the Saint Clair County Drain Commissioner as a drain inspector and project supervisor.

Dorothy Craig - Director

Dorothy Craig lives near the TLC Dead End Woods Sanctuary in Fort Gratiot Township and joined the TLC board in 2013. Dorothy has cared for animals her whole life and loves nature. Dorothy has encouraged and supported the work of the TLC since its formation in 2008.

Dr. Scott Ferguson - Director

Doctor Scott Ferguson grew up near the TLC Dead End Woods Sanctuary in Fort Gratiot Township and joined the TLC board in 2010. Doctor Ferguson has been in full-time dental practice since 1988, the year he earned his Doctorate of Dental Surgery from the University of Detroit. He is a member of the Thumb District Dental Society, the Michigan Dental Association, the American Dental Association, and the Port Huron Study Club, part of a nationwide network of affiliates under the Seattle Study Club. Doctor Ferguson has completed advanced training through the Misch Institute for Implant Training and is a Fellow in the International Congress of Oral Implantology. A Port Huron native and active supporter of many local associations, Scott lives in North Street with his wife Syeda and their son, Gabriel and daughter, Maya.

Chris Walker - Director

Chris Walker grew up on a small farm near Croswell, where his parents instilled in him a near-reverent appreciation for the land and its natural inhabitants. Chris is currently an Assistant Professor in the School of Communications and Journalism at Minnesota State University, Moorhead. He earned a Master of Fine Arts in Cinema and Photography from Southern Illinois University and a Bachelor of Applied Arts in Journalism from Central Michigan University. As a photography professor, he has fulfilled full-time teaching and research appointments at Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama; Southern Indiana University, Evansville; and Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore. He has worked for several newspapers, including the Toledo Blade, where he and two coworkers earned a finalist spot in the Pulitzers, and has been published worldwide in numerous magazines, books, and journals. For 7 years, he was the Photography Columnist for Camping Life magazine. Chris is a naturalist and has a life-long interest in ecology, particularly through bird biology and stock nature photography. He was a Neotropical Migratory Research Technician for 2 years at Black Swamp Bird Observatory in Oak Harbor, Ohio. Chris is an artist and journalist with deep concerns for social anthropology and our ever-changing environment.

TLC Staff

William Collins - Executive Director

Bill Collins of the Brown City - Marlette area is a naturalist and botanist who grew up in the Port Huron area. He was a nature instructor at Silver Trails Scout Reservation summer camps from 1978 through 1986. He has an Associate of Science degree from Saint Clair County Community College and graduated from Michigan State University in 1987 with a dual Bachelors of Science degree in Botany and Natural Resources Development while also following the engineering program. From 1984 through 1986 he was a Program Assistant with the Michigan Chapter of The Nature Conservancy in East Lansing, and later worked on various contract projects for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Division. He is a Life Member of the Michigan Nature Association and explored natural areas for MNA in 1988 through 1990. Bill has worked as a professional wetland consultant and ecologist since 1990, employed 8 years as a botanist and project manager with SSOE, Inc., a large architectural and engineering firm in Troy, Michigan, and since 1998 with his own consulting firm, Huron Ecologic, LLC. In his capacity as a private consultant, he has encouraged and helped local governments and individuals preserve high quality natural areas. Bill and his wife, Cheryl, have been very active in promoting the protection of natural areas and rare species throughout the region, including Michigan Endangered Painted Trillium, a rare woodland wildflower that is now known only from Saint Clair County in all of Michigan.

TLC Service Providers

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TLC Incorporation Documents

IRS Employer Identification Number: 41-2247569

IRS Employer Identification Number Assigned: 2007 August 13

Michigan Corporation Identification Number: 70398K

Michigan Articles Of Incorporation Filed: 2008 October 29

Michigan Articles Of Incorporation Effective Date Of Approval: 2008 October 29

IRS Effective Date Of Tax Exemption: 2008 October 29

IRS 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt Status Confirmed: 2009 February 26

Michigan Corporate Entity Documents:

http://www.dleg.state.mi.us/bcs_corp/results.asp?ID=70398K&page_name=corp

IRS Search for Charities, Online Version of Publication 78:

<http://www.irs.gov/app/pub-78/>

TLC Properties

Dead End Woods Sanctuary

17.6 Acres, Fort Gratiot Township, Saint Clair County

Acquisition Date: 2008 December 30

North Parcel 74-20-030-2009-000: Beginning North 660.34 Feet From The East Quarter Corner, Thence N89°37'00"W 229.00 Feet; Thence S00°00'00"E 130.17 Feet; Thence N89°37'00"W 189.00 Feet; Thence S00°00'00"E 200.00 Feet; Thence N89°37'00"W 920.79 Feet; Thence N00°00'00"E 330.18 Feet; Thence S89°37'00"E 691.79 Feet; Thence N00°00'00"E 70.00 Feet; Thence S89°37'00"E 647.00 Feet; Thence S00°00'00"E 70.00 Feet To Beginning. Section 30, Town 7 North, Range 17 East, 8.59 Acres.

South Parcel 74-20-030-2012-000: Part Of The Northeast Quarter Of Section 30, Town 7 North, Range 17 East, Fort Gratiot Township, St. Clair County, Michigan; Described As Commencing At The East Quarter Corner Of Said Section; Thence N00°00'00"E 97.00 Feet Along The East Section Line To The Point Of Beginning; Thence N89°44'42"W 225.00 Feet; Thence S00°00'00"E 97.00 Feet; Thence N89°44'42"W 537.54 Feet Along The North Line Of Spruce Village; Thence N89°47'58"W 575.76 Feet Along The North Line Of Ferguson Heights; Thence N00°02'55"E 320.95 Feet Along The East Line Of Angus Campbell Number One; Thence N00°07'02"E 12.77 Feet Along The East Line Of Plat Number 5 Of The Old Farm Subdivision; Thence S89°37'00"E 1113.04 Feet; Thence S00°00'00"W 130.78 Feet; Thence S89°17'00"E 225.00 Feet; Thence S00°00'00"W 101.08 Feet To The Point Of Beginning. Containing 9.01 Acres.

The Dead End Woods Sanctuary was the first preserve acquired by the TLC, in December 2008. The woods is known locally as the “dead end woods” because it is located and accessed at the end of Wilson Drive in Fort Gratiot Township. The preserve is located between Wilson Drive and Blueberry lane to the south, State Road to the east, and Old farm subdivision to the north.



The 17.6-acre Dead End Woods Sanctuary contains about 11.6 acres of swamp forest wetland, part of the headwaters of the Gossman Drain which flows east and south to the Black River. Both the wetland and the upland on the sanctuary were preserved as partial mitigation for wetland impacts permitted by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality for the 2008 Bunce Creek and Huffman Drain project of Saint Clair County Drain Commissioner, Fred Fuller. The Dead End Woods Sanctuary is protected by a conservation easement held by the State of Michigan. As mitigation options for the drain project were being considered, the owner of one of the Dead End Woods parcels offered to sell the land to the Drain Commissioner at a reasonable price. The MDEQ confirmed the presence of a large amount of wetland on the property and determined that it is part of a high quality plant community. The adjacent parcel was then purchased to provide the necessary wetland mitigation for the drain project. To satisfy MDEQ requirements for long-term monitoring and stewardship of the wetland, ownership of the two Dead End Woods parcels was transferred to the TLC, relieving the Drain Commissioner from further responsibility for this land. In accepting ownership of the property, the TLC agreed to be responsible for submittal of an approved management plan to the MDEQ, annual monitoring of the conservation easement, long-term stewardship, and submittal of annual monitoring reports to the MDEQ.



Forest of the Dead End Woods Sanctuary.



Swamp in the Dead End Woods Sanctuary.

Dead End Woods is a highly diverse forest community of southern swamp and mesic upland on Wainola-Deford fine sands deposited on the glacial lakeplain. The swamp is dominated by Silver Maple and Red Maple hybrids, Green Ash, all large ash trees now dead due to the Emerald Ash Borer, American Hornbeam, Spicebush, Sensitive Fern, Royal Fern, Jack-in-the-pulpit, and Marsh-marigold. The upland is dominated by Red Maple, Red Oak, Sassafras, Black Cherry, Witch-hazel, Mayapple, Wild Geranium, and Yellow Trout-lily. At 44.5, the Floristic Quality Index calculated for Dead End Woods is one of the highest in the area and indicates a natural area of statewide significance. The higher quality or interesting species include Maidenhair Fern, Spikenard, Richweed, American Hazelnut, Black Ash, Butternut, Spicebush, Tuliptree, Cardinal Flower, Indian Pipe, Black Gum, Sycamore, Christmas Fern, Broad-leaved Goldenrod, Foamflower, and Eastern Hemlock.



Tuliptree sapling in the Dead End Woods Sanctuary.



Spikenard in the Dead End Woods Sanctuary.

A 1937 aerial photograph shows most of the Dead End Woods forest cover was intact, probably because the land was simply too wet to farm. As a result, many species are relict from before European settlement. In 1997 and 1998, the previous owners selectively cut large trees throughout the forest, which drew protests from neighbors who thought the site was being prepared for residential development. Despite this cutting and heavy soil disturbance, the forest vegetation remained intact. While the opened canopy supported the invasion of Garlic Mustard, it also favored uncommon species like Tuliptree, American Hazelnut, and Spikenard.

Uncommon animal species observed in the Dead End Woods Sanctuary include Flying Squirrels, Barred Owls, Pileated Woodpeckers, Wood Ducks, Spring Peeper frogs, Wood Frogs, and Red-backed Salamanders. Aquatic macroinvertebrates observed in the wetter portions of the swamp include caddisfly larvae, fairy shrimp, crayfish, pond snails, clam shrimp, water striders, and various protozoa, all generally indicating high water quality.

Official entrance to the Dead End Woods Sanctuary is from a shared driveway at 3745 State Road, between the 4th and 5th houses north of Blueberry Lane. However, most people enter at the dead end of Wilson Drive. If parking on Wilson Drive, just be careful not to block driveways are the fire hydrant at the dead end.

Gerrits Sanctuary

38.5 Acres, Ira Township, Saint Clair County

Acquisition Date: 2009 July 16

Parcel 74-23-007-1003-000: The Northwesterly 38.5 Acres Of The Southwesterly ½ Of The Northeasterly ½ Of Private Claim 627. Section 7, Town 3 North, Range 15 East. 38.5 Acres.

On July 16, 2009, the TLC acquired its second nature preserve, the Gerrits Sanctuary, a generous donation from Lois Gerrits, wife of the late Dr. James F. Gerrits. The closing was held at the Law Offices of Timothy J. Lozen, with attorney Anna Kovar and TLC executive board members William Collins and Terry Gill present. Ullenbruch Flowers and Gifts of Port Huron kindly donated a nice bouquet of flowers to express our appreciation to Mrs. Gerrits.

Dr. James Gerrits was well known in Saint Clair County. He was co-pilot of a bomber in World War II, and later a fighter and test pilot. Because of his war experiences, he became an outspoken critic of war. He and Lois twice voluntarily went to Vietnam in the 1960's, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and Catholic Church, to provide civilian medical care to the people of both South and North Vietnam. Lois shared several stories about those times after our closing.



Gerrits family at the 2011 November 26 sanctuary dedication.

The Gerrits Sanctuary is 38.5 acres located along the east boundary of the City of New Baltimore, only about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile north of Anchor Bay and Lake Saint Clair. The southern half of the sanctuary is a complex of mature mesic and swamp forest. The north half is old-field and the Crapaud Creek Drain runs through the north end of the preserve. Years ago, the property was part of the Gerrits family farm.



The forest on the Gerrits Sanctuary is an impressive mix of southern swamp and mesic upland containing plant populations relict from centuries ago. Dominant vegetation in the extensive wetlands includes Silver Maple, Green Ash, all large trees dead due to the Emerald Ash Borer, Eastern Cottonwood, American Elm, Cinnamon Fern, and various sedges. The upland forest is a mature and species-rich southern forest community of American Beech, Sugar Maple, Red Oak, White Oak, Black Cherry, American Basswood, Tuliptree, Yellow Birch, Mayapple, White Trillium, Wild Geranium, Canada Mayflower, Spinulose Woodfern, Jack-in-the-pulpit, Solomon's-seal, Yellow Trout-lily, and Spring Beauty among many other forest herbs. Along the southwestern boundary of the sanctuary, the vegetation on moist sand tip-up mounds is distinctly northern with clubmosses, Wild Sarsaparilla, Starflower, and Goldthread. Some areas look surprisingly like habitat for Michigan Endangered Painted Trillium – *Trillium undulatum*, currently known only from the Port Huron area.



Upland and swamp forest on the Gerrits Sanctuary.



Upland forest with large Black Cherry, American Beech, and Sugar Maple on the Gerrits Sanctuary.

The Gerrits Sanctuary is part of one of the largest and least fragmented forest tracts remaining along the Great Lakes coastline from Ohio north through the Algonac area. The larger forest is nearly 300 acres, of which the Gerrits Sanctuary includes only about 20 acres of that forest, or about 7% of it. At the southern limit of the forest along M-29, it is within 1,000 feet of Anchor Bay. Near-shore natural areas are critical for migratory birds and insects that move along the Great Lakes. The Gerrits Sanctuary provides habitat both for migratory woodland birds and for migratory insects, like butterflies, in the old-field on the north half of the preserve.

Official entrance to the Gerrits Sanctuary is from near the end of Sienna Oaks Drive to the north. With permission from park management, the sanctuary may also be accessed through Hometown Anchor Bay modular park along the east and south boundaries. Residents of the modular park may access the sanctuary freely.

Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary

11.5 Acres, Fort Gratiot Township, Saint Clair County
Acquisition Date: 2010 June 28

Parcel 74-20-004-1058-000: A parcel of land being a part of the Northwest ¼ of Fractional Section 4 and the Northeast ¼ of Fractional Section 5, T7N, R17E, Fort Gratiot Township, St. Clair County, Michigan and described as: Commencing at the East ¼ corner of said Fractional Section 5; thence N. 89° 38' 30" W. 656.67 feet along the East and West ¼ line of said Fractional Section 5; thence N. 00° 12' 07" E. 1145.13 feet to the point of beginning of this description; thence continuing N. 00° 12' 07" E. 648.12 feet; thence N. 89° 59' 07" E. 853.62 feet; thence S. 09° 03' 53" E. 363.81 feet; thence N. 89° 15' 00" W. 101.00 feet; thence S. 09° 03' 53" E. 101.00 feet; thence N. 89° 15' 00" W. 299.26 feet; thence S. 00° 07' 00" E. 200.50 feet; thence N. 89° 15' 00" W. 82.00 feet; thence S. 00° 07' 00" E. 1.00 feet; thence N. 89° 15' 00" W. 447.36 feet to the point of beginning of this description. Said parcel contains 11.47 acres, more or less.

On June 28, 2010, the TLC received its third nature preserve, the 11.5-acre Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary in Fort Gratiot Township, Saint Clair County. The parcel was given to the TLC by Ray and Nancy Peltier to satisfy State of Michigan requirements, then briefly administered through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment, for the long-term protection of 6.3 acres of wetland on the property, preserved as mitigation for 0.63 acre of wetland to be impacted by an expansion of the Hamzavi Dermatology office in Fort Gratiot. The Peltier's worked out a deal with Dr. Syed Hamzavi to preserve the wetland and adjoining upland on their property as mitigation for the Hamzavi Dermatology project. As with our first preserve, the Dead End Woods Sanctuary in Fort Gratiot, the Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary is protected by a State of Michigan conservation easement. In accepting ownership of the mitigation property, the TLC agreed to be responsible for submittal of an approved management plan, annual monitoring of the conservation easement, long-term stewardship, and submittal of annual monitoring reports to the MDNRE, now the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality again.

The Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary is located a few hundred feet south of the end of West Montevista Drive, south of Metcalf Road, and along the east side of the Detroit Water Board property. The intake pipes from Lake Huron for the Detroit Water facility are very near the north property line. Also just north is the Galbraith Plant Preserve owned by the Michigan Nature Association, and four small lots north of the MNA preserve, owned by the Saint Clair County Drain Commissioner to be preserved as wetland mitigation for a future project. Although some people use the Detroit Water line property to enter the sanctuary from East Montevista Drive, the actual entrance is from North Shoreview Drive, just east of the intersection with San Juan Drive.



The Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary is a small part of a much larger and ecologically unique beach ridge and swale landscape formed thousands of years ago along portions of the early Great Lakes shoreline as water levels dropped, rose again, and then dropped to modern levels after the last glacial period. The beach ridge and swale landscape in this part of the Thumb is a long, narrow formation within about 1 mile of the Lake Huron shoreline, extending from Port Huron into Sanilac County. The landscape began forming about 11,500 years ago, as the last stages of the Wisconsin glacier melted back, and early Lake Huron was about 30 feet higher than today. About 1,500 years later, the melting glacier uncovered a new outlet from the Georgian Bay and the water dropped over 400 feet. The massive weight of glacial ice depressed the earth's crust for thousands of years, but as it melted, the crust slowly rose and continues today. By 4,500 years ago, the drainage outlet from Georgian Bay raised such that early Lake Huron filled to the Lake Nipissing stage and back to the old shoreline of 7,000 years previous. Great Lakes drainage was gradually limited to the Mississippi River through the old Chicago outlet, and then to the Saint Clair River which rapidly down-cut and lowered the Great Lakes to modern levels, leaving a series of beach ridges as the water dropped.



In the southern Thumb, the beach ridge and swale landscape is restricted to a narrow strip along Lake Huron in Saint Clair County, in Fort Gratiot and Burtchville Townships, and some small patchy occurrences in Sanilac County. The landscape is much more extensive in Huron and Tuscola Counties along the Saginaw Bay, especially near Port Crescent State Park. In Saint Clair County, it originally covered less than 1% of the total land area, and has since been significantly reduced by commercial and residential development. The landscape consists of a series of upland sand ridges and mucky wetland troughs or swales between. In Saint Clair County, the sand ridges average about 40 to 50 feet wide and 3 to 4 feet above the adjoining swales. The swales are usually about as wide as the ridges, but some are a few hundred feet wide. The largest and oldest beach ridge runs continuously along the western limit of the landscape, furthest inland from Lake Huron. This ridge was over 500 feet wide across most of its extent and may have been over 30 feet high in some areas. Although much of it has been mined out, this big sand ridge is still largely intact through Lakeside Cemetery and into Port Huron near the Blue Water Bridges where it is about 15 feet higher than adjoining land. Centuries ago, this ridge served as a burial ground for Native American inhabitants whose burial mounds have been found near Port Huron. The beach ridge and swale landscape provides not only unique habitat, but also a record of Michigan's post-glacial past.

Most of the Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary is forested, except a large trail that runs through the western part of the site, and portions of the sand ridges in the east of the preserve. Like most of the landscape, the wetland swales are covered by Silver Maple, Green Ash and Black Ash, the larger ash trees now all dead due to the Emerald Ash Borer, Eastern Cottonwood, and American Elm. The upland beach ridges are covered largely by Black Cherry, Bigtooth Aspen, and American Basswood, with scattered Black Oak and a few Northern White-cedar. The lower ridge bases are lined with Paper Birch and covered by an unusual concentration of Alternate-leaved Dogwood.

Much of the beach ridge and swale landscape in Saint Clair County was impacted years ago by logging, clearing, draining, livestock grazing, and sand mining. Because the surrounding forest as a whole has either been degraded or eliminated, subsequent forest species recruitment has been severely diminished, which has limited the return of many forest plants and therefore, the recovery of a mature forest community. The dominance of invasive species like Tartarian Honeysuckle, Common Privet, and Garlic Mustard has further displaced mature forest species.

Despite so many impacts, the landscape still contains high quality habitat with several unique species. Like other parts of the landscape in Saint Clair County, a few sand ridges on the Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary contain small patches of Purple-flowering Raspberry, the Lower Peninsula's equivalent of the Upper Peninsula's Thimbleberry, with large flowers and large raspberry fruits that can actually fit over a finger like a thimble. Purple-flowering Raspberry is thought to be native to only 7 shoreline counties in Michigan. The species is so restricted to this habitat in Saint Clair County that it's symbolic of it.



Purple-flowering Raspberry near the Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary.

Yellow Lady's-slipper orchid grows in a variety of habitats, but in Saint Clair County is largely restricted to the moist ridge bases and mucky swales of this landscape. Several Yellow Lady's-slipper orchids have been found on the Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary.



Yellow Lady's-slipper orchid near the Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary.

The Eastern Hog-nosed Snake is a special reptilian inhabitant that has been found just a few hundred feet south of the Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary. They prefer the more open sand of dunes and disturbed ground such as along the south end of the sanctuary. When aggravated, the snakes flatten their necks like a cobra, and then sometimes rolling over and play dead with their mouths hanging open. They can look imposing, but are harmless. The Eastern Hog-nosed Snake is more common in the southern plains and southeastern US, but is considered to be at some risk of extirpation in the Great Lakes region, Ontario, and New England.



Eastern Hog-nosed Snake just south of the Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary.

One of the most critical functions of this coastal forest habitat is the support it provides to an abundance of migratory birds as they move north and south along the Lake Huron shoreline. The spring and summer breeding bird population is very abundant and diverse in this area, especially the forest warblers. Several species of warblers have been identified on the Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary.



American Redstart warbler just south of the Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary.

The Peltier Beach Ridge Sanctuary is a high quality wetland and upland complex with a unique geologic history, unique plant and animal community, significant Great Lakes coastal habitat, good restoration potential, and a great addition to the TLC preserve lands. The beach ridge and swale landscape is a high priority for the TLC and we continue working to promote preservation of this area.

TLC Mission

TLC Territory

The Thumb Land Conservancy is working to preserve natural areas in the Thumb of Michigan, a post-glacial landscape where northern forest blends with central hardwoods, bordered by Lake Huron, the Saginaw Bay, the Saint Clair River, and Lake Saint Clair. The mission territory of the TLC is Saint Clair, Sanilac, Huron, Tuscola, Lapeer, and Macomb Counties, but we can also work in adjacent areas as opportunities arise. The TLC will seek to work with local partners where our service territory overlaps that of other conservancies and similar organizations.



TLC Purpose and History

The Thumb Land Conservancy was formed in 2008 to provide an organization dedicated to filling the gap of nature preservation in Michigan's Thumb. Although much attention has been given to a few areas near Lake Saint Clair, the Thumb has been largely ignored. In recent years, we are happy to see that some new lands have been preserved, but so much remains unprotected.

There is a popular misconception that little is worth saving north of Detroit because of urban development and agriculture. While much of the landscape has been drastically altered, many high quality natural areas remain. A few places are nearly pristine, resembling conditions that existed before European settlement about 200 years ago.

The extensive destruction of natural areas in the Thumb makes preservation even more critical. Small, degraded fragments can be restored and expanded, and often serve as isolated havens for rare plant species. We believe all natural landscapes are important locally because they reflect a unique combination of history and features particular to that location. Many benefits of nature are obtained and enjoyed only locally. We believe it is especially important for children to have natural areas nearby where they can play, grow, and learn.

We have not forgotten what it's like to see a treasured woods in a neighborhood cut down, or wetlands carved up for more development. The TLC wants to work with any concerned individual before these places are lost.

The TLC is carrying on a legacy in the Thumb. In 1952, Macomb and Saint Clair Counties were the birthplace of what became the Michigan Nature Association, the first statewide land preservation group in Michigan. The MNA was led for many years by the late Bertha Daubendiek of Kenockee Township in Saint Clair County, and is one of a very few organizations that has protected land in the interior of the Thumb, with 18 sanctuaries here. Most of our board members personally knew MNA cofounder Bertha Daubendiek. Some are MNA members and did volunteer work for MNA. TLC President, Cheryl Collins, served on the MNA board from 2003 through 2008.



1970 - The MNA board goes statewide at the office of attorney Frank Giambrone in Mount Clemens. Not exactly a radical looking bunch, but dedicated visionaries. Left to right, front: Bertha Daubendiek, Thelma Sonnenberg, Marie Moran Peter, Julius C. Peter, back: Frank Giambrone, Rita Juckett, and Richard W. Holzman. Photo by Ralph Polovich.

TLC board members have been involved with environmental issues and natural area protection in the Thumb for many years. From 1989 through 2006, as members of the Mill Creek Coalition, we helped protect the Mill Creek, a major tributary of the Black River, from an 18-mile dredging and channelization project. In the 1990's, as members of the Thumb Bioregional Alliance, we opposed development of the roughly 800-acre Wingford Estate along the Black River in the middle of the Port Huron State Game Area, and supported the State of Michigan in protecting the Minden Bog, the upper headwaters of the Black River in Sanilac County, from an expansion of peat mining. Most of the TLC board members were involved in the Painted Trillium Tours in Saint Clair County from 2001 through 2004 and worked to acquire the MNA Sharon Rose Leonatti Memorial Nature Sanctuary in Kimball Township. Working together as Huron Ecologic, Bill and Cheryl Collins co-founded the Macomb Land Conservancy in 2000, monitored Michigan Threatened Pitcher's Thistle in Huron County in the late 1990's, and since 1998, have defended natural areas across the Thumb on behalf of several citizen groups through the enforcement of State and federal environmental regulations.

In most cases, land that we fought to protect never became available for acquisition. However, we sometimes got to a point where we needed the help of a land conservancy. Lack of a conservancy dedicated to the Thumb proved to be a problem. While a few conservancies based outside the region could acquire land in our area, we have found a general lack of interest as they pursue acquisitions elsewhere. For some time, a local conservancy claimed to exist but never materialized. Finally in late 2007, with the potential of a land donation approaching, we decided it was time to form the TLC. Articles of Incorporation were filed with Michigan in October 2008 and the IRS confirmed the tax exempt status of the TLC in February 2009. Since late December 2008, the TLC has acquired three sanctuaries in Saint Clair County through donation.

Thumb Land Conservancy IRS Tax Exempt Confirmation

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: **FEB 26 2009**

THUMB LAND CONSERVANCY
4975 MAPLE VALLEY RD
MARLETTE, MI 48453-8348

Employer Identification Number:
41-2247569
DLN:
17053358350038
Contact Person:
DEL TRIMBLE ID# 31309
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
December 31
Public Charity Status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)
Form 990 Required:
Yes
Effective Date of Exemption:
October 29, 2008
Contribution Deductibility:
Yes
Addendum Applies:
No

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. Because this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined that you are a public charity under the Code section(s) listed in the heading of this letter.

Please see enclosed Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, for some helpful information about your responsibilities as an exempt organization.

Letter 947 (DO/CG)

THUMB LAND CONSERVANCY

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Robert Choi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" and last name "Choi" clearly distinguishable.

Robert Choi
Director, Exempt Organizations
Rulings and Agreements

Enclosures: Publication 4221-PC

2014 Annual Report and Organizational Summary
Thumb Land Conservancy, 4975 Maple Valley Road, Marlette, Michigan 48453
2015 February 03

Thumb Land Conservancy Articles of Incorporation

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH
BUREAU OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES**

Date Received

(FOR BUREAU USE ONLY)

OCT 29 2008

Tran Info: 14361429-1 10/24/08

Chk#: 0199 Amt: \$20.00

ID: CHERYL COLLINS

This document is effective on the date filed, unless a subsequent effective date within 90 days after received date is stated in the document.

Administrator

BUREAU OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Name

Cheryl Collins

Address

4975 Maple Valley road

City

Marlette

State

Michigan

Zip Code

48453

EFFECTIVE DATE:

Document will be returned to the name and address you enter above.
If left blank document will be mailed to the registered office.

70398K**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION****For use by Domestic Nonprofit Corporations**

(Please read information and instructions on the last page)

Pursuant to the provisions of Act 162, Public Acts of 1982, the undersigned corporation executes the following Articles:

ARTICLE I

The name of the corporation is:

Thumb Land Conservancy

ARTICLE II

The purpose or purposes for which the corporation is organized are:

To implement educational programs of natural history and conservation; Acquire, protect, and maintain natural areas and examples of flora and fauna in the Thumb region of Michigan and adjacent areas; and conduct activities as permitted by the Michigan Nonprofit Corporation Act

ARTICLE III

1. The corporation is organized upon a Nonstock basis.
(Stock or Nonstock)

2. If organized on a stock basis, the total number of shares which the corporation has authority to issue is

_____. If the shares are, or are to be, divided into classes, the designation of each class, the number of shares in each class, and the relative rights, preferences and limitations of the shares of each class are as follows:

FK

page 1

ARTICLE III (cont.)

3. a. If organized on a nonstock basis, the description and value of its real property assets are: (if none, insert "none")
none
- b. The description and value of its personal property assets are: (if none, insert "none")
none
- c. The corporation is to be financed under the following general plan:
grants, fundraising, donations, contributions, and gifts from the general public
- d. The corporation is organized on a Directorship basis.
(Membership or Directorship)

ARTICLE IV

1. The address of the registered office is:
4975 Maple Valley Road Marlette, Michigan 48453
(StreetAddress) (City) (ZIP Code)
2. The mailing address of the registered office, if different than above:
_____, Michigan _____
(Street Address or P.O. Box) (City) (ZIP Code)
3. The name of the resident agent at the registered office is:
Cheryl Collins

ARTICLE V

The name(s) and address(es) of the incorporator(s) is (are) as follows:

Name	Residence or Business Address
William Collins	4975 Maple Valley Road, Marlette, MI 48453
Terry Gill	8168 N. Bricker Road, Greenwood, MI 48006
Traci Brown	1707 Whipple Street, Port Huron, MI 48060
Dan Rhein	1327 20th Street, Port Huron, MI 48060

Use space below for additional Articles or for continuation of previous Articles. Please identify any Article being continued or added. Attach additional pages if needed.

ARTICLE VI - EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS

At all times the following shall operate as conditions restricting the operations and activities of the corporation:

1. No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purpose set forth in the purpose clause hereof.
2. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall constitute the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, or any initiative or referendum before the public, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including by publication or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.
3. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future tax code, or by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue code, or corresponding section of any future tax code.

ARTICLE VII - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The management of the affairs of the corporation shall be vested in a board of directors, as defined by the corporation's bylaws. No director shall have any right, title, or interest in or to any property of the corporation. the number of directors constituting the initial board of directors is four (4); their names and addresses are as follow:

William Collins, 4975 Maple Valley Road, Marlette, MI 48453
Terry Gill, 8168 N. Bricker road, Greenwood, MI 48006
Traci Brown, 1707 Whipple Street, Port Huron, MI 48060
Daniel Rhein, 1327 20th Street, Port Huron, MI 48060

I, (We), the incorporator(s) sign my (our) name(s) this 18th day of September, 2008.

Traci Brown

Terry A. Diez

William C. Collins

Daniel G Rhein

CONTINUATION SHEET

ARTICLE VII — BOARD OF DIRECTORS, continued

Members of the initial board of directors shall serve until the first annual meeting, at which their successors will be duly elected and qualified, or removed as provided in the bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII — PERSONAL LIABILITY

No member, officer, or director of this corporation shall be personally liable for the debts or obligations of this corporation of any nature whatsoever, nor shall any of the property of the members, officers, or directors be subject to the payment of the debts or obligations of this corporation.

ARTICLE IX - DURATION/DISSOLUTION

The duration of the corporate existence shall be perpetual until dissolution. Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets of the corporation shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

ARTICLE X - INCORPORATORS In witness whereof, we, the undersigned, have hereunto subscribed our names for the purpose of forming the corporation under the laws of the State of Michigan and certify we executed these Articles of Incorporation this September 18 of 2008.

Trace Brown
Signature (Incorporator 1)
1707 Whipple Port Huron, MI 48060
Address, City, State, Zipcode

Terry A. Gier
Signature (Incorporator 2)
8168 Bricker Rd. Greenwood, MI 48006
Address, City, State, Zipcode

William C. Collins
Signature (Incorporator 3)
4975 Maple Valley Road, Marlette, Michigan 48453
Address, City, State, Zipcode

Daniel A Rhein
Signature (Incorporator 4)
1327 20th St Port Huron, MI 48060
Address, City, State, Zipcode

2014 Annual Report and Organizational Summary
Thumb Land Conservancy, 4975 Maple Valley Road, Marlette, Michigan 48453
2015 February 03

Thumb Land Conservancy Bylaws

BYLAWS OF THUMB LAND CONSERVANCY

ARTICLE 1 - NAME

Section 1: The name of the organization shall be Thumb Land Conservancy. It shall be a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan.

ARTICLE 2 - PURPOSE

Section 1: Thumb Land Conservancy is organized exclusively for charitable, scientific and education purposes that will benefit the citizens of the State of Michigan. These purposes include:
To preserve natural areas through negotiation, acquisition, obtaining conservation easements and/or securing development rights;
To educate the public on the importance of maintaining natural areas for environmental protection, wildlife habitat, and for enhancing the quality of life of area residents;
And, overall, to promote, preserve, and maintain our resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

ARTICLE 3 - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Membership shall consist of the Board of Directors

Section 2: The Board shall have the authority to establish and define nonvoting categories of membership.

ARTICLE 4 - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1: The Board is responsible for the overall policy, direction of the association property and business of this non-profit charitable corporation shall be managed by the Board of Directors. The Board may have up to seven members but not fewer than four. The Board receives no compensation other than reasonable expenses.

Section 2: Two founding members shall serve a one-year term and two founding members shall serve two-year terms. Thereafter, terms of office shall be for two-years.

Section 3: If for any reason the position of any Director becomes vacant, nominations for new members may be received from present Board members by the Secretary two weeks in advance of a Board meeting. These nominations shall be sent out to Board members with the regular Board meeting announcement, to be voted upon at the next Board meeting. These vacancies will be filled only to the end of the particular Board member's term.

Section 4: During the last quarter of each fiscal year of the corporation, the Board of Directors shall elect Directors to replace those whose terms will expire at the end of the fiscal year. This election shall take place during an annual meeting of the Board of Directors, called in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws.

Section 5: **Election Procedures**

New directors shall be elected by a majority of directors present at such meeting, provided there is a quorum. Directors so elected shall serve a term beginning on the first day of the next fiscal year.

Section 6: **Quorum**

For the purpose of doing business, a quorum shall constitute a majority of Board members.

Section 7: **Meetings, Special Meetings and Notice**

The Board shall meet at least quarterly, at an agreed upon time and place. An official Board meeting requires that each Board member have either written notice at least 10 days in advance unless it is a Special Meeting. Directors may participate in an official meeting by conference call if they are not able to attend in person.

Special Meetings may be called by either the President or three Board members.

Any action by the Directors may be taken without a meeting if all directors thereto give consent and filed by the Secretary in the permanent record of the Board. Verbal consent or electronic mail shall be considered a valid form of written consent for this purpose. Such consent must be reaffirmed at the next meeting of the Board.

The Annual meeting shall be held in the second quarter of the fiscal year at a time and place determined by the Board.

Section 8: **Resignation, Termination, and Absences of Director**

Resignation from the Board must be in writing and received by the secretary. A Director may be dismissed from office by the Board of Directors if three consecutive Board meetings are missed without due cause. The removal of a Director requires a three-fourths vote of the remaining Directors.

ARTICLE 5 - DUTIES OF DIRECTORS

Section 1: **Officers and Duties**

Officers shall be elected annually by the Board of Directors and shall include President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. All officers shall have a vote on the Board of Directors.

Section 2: **President**

The President shall preside at meetings, work with committees, coordinate strategies of action for the Board to consider, set the agenda for the next board meeting, and represent the Conservancy at public functions, land negotiations, etcetera unless otherwise delegated.

Section 3: **Vice President**

The Vice-President shall assist in the duties of the President and preside in his/her absence.

Section 4: **Secretary**

The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping of records of Board actions, including overseeing the taking of minutes at all Board meetings, sending out meeting announcements, distributing copies of minutes and the agenda to each Board member, and assuring that corporate records are maintained. The Secretary may sign in the name of the corporation for those instances required by law or by position.

Section 5: **Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall make a report at each Board meeting. The Treasurer shall chair the finance committee, assist in the preparation of the budget, help develop fundraising plans, keep track of all assets of the Conservancy, keep a record of all receipts and expenditures and make financial information available to Board members and the public.

Section 6: **Other Positions**

The Board of Directors may establish other officer positions as deemed necessary.

ARTICLE 6 - FISCAL YEAR

Section 1: **Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year shall be the calendar year.

ARTICLE 7 - COMMITTEES

Section 1: **Committee Formation**

The Board may establish committees as needed. Volunteers for committees shall be sought from the general public. Committees shall elect Chairpersons and make recommendations to the Board of Directors.

Section 2: **Executive Committee**

The four officers serve as the members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may meet periodically and discuss recommendations that will be presented to the full Board at either the next regular meeting or special meeting.

Section 3: **Finance Committee**

The treasurer is the chair of the Finance Committee which includes three other Board members. The Finance Committee is responsible for developing and reviewing fiscal procedures, fundraising plan, and annual budget with other Board members. The Board must approve the budget and all expenditures must be within budget. Any major change in the budget must be approved by the Board. Annual reports are required to be submitted to the Board showing income, expenditures, and pending income. The financial records of the organization are public information and shall be made available to Board members and the public.

ARTICLE 8 - BENEFIT

Section 1: Benefit

No part of the earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article 2 hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, this corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes of this corporation.

ARTICLE 9 - AMENDMENTS

Section 1: Amendments

These bylaws may be amended when necessary by two-thirds of the board of directors.

ARTICLE 10 - PROPERTY HOLDINGS

Section 1: Holdings

It will be the policy of the Thumb Land Conservancy not to sell their land once it has been acquired.

ARTICLE 11 - DISSOLUTION

Section 1: Dissolution

In the event of dissolution, all debts and liabilities shall first be paid according to their respective priorities. Any remaining assets shall be contributed to a similar non-profit charitable organization which is exempt from income taxes under Section 501(c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

CERTIFICATION

These bylaws were approved at a meeting of the board of directors by a two-thirds majority vote on

Secretary: 

Date: 11-15-08