



## City Forest Credits Carbon Preservation Project Application

### 1. Project Name

Whittlesey Beach Ridge Forest

### 2. Project Type

Preservation

### 3. Project Location

*Project must be in or adjacent to one of the following. Describe which one of the criteria the project meets and provide name of city, town, or jurisdiction where project is located.*

- "Urban Area" per Census Bureau maps; see <https://www.census.gov/geographies/reference-maps/2010/geo/2010-census-urban-areas.html>
- An incorporated or unincorporated city or town
- A planning area for a regional metropolitan planning agency or entity
- Land owned, designated, and used by a municipal or quasi-municipal entity for source water or watershed protection
- A transportation or utility right of way through one of above

The project is located in the City of Mentor & Village of Kirtland Hills, Lake County, Ohio.

Address: Approximate parcels' centroid: 41.65309, -81.33346

Parcel Numbers: Full: 22A0050000120; 22A0050000110; 22A0050000130  
Partial: 16A0130000210; 16A0130000160; 16A0110000010; 16A0110000170; 22A0050000140;  
16A0110000020; 16A0110000030; 16A0110000040; 16A0110000140; 16A0110000150.

A new survey is in process that will consolidate the existing parcels into 2 new parcels.

### 4. Project Operator

*Provide name of organization/entity, and contact information*

Organization: Western Reserve Land Conservancy

Address: 3850 Chagrin River Road

City: Moreland Hills

State: Ohio

Zip: 44022

Contact(s): Sarah Blakely

[sblakely@wrlandconservancy.org](mailto:sblakely@wrlandconservancy.org)

440-528-4168

## 5. Project Description

*Provide short narrative of the overall project goals, project acreage, land ownership, forest characteristics, and land use/zoning*

Western Reserve Land Conservancy (the “Land Conservancy”) is seeking to permanently preserve the 78.2-acre Whittlesey Beach Ridge Forest (the “Project”). The Project includes rare, old-growth forest that appears to have never been logged in an area with increasing development pressure.

Preservation of the Project is critical to protect an extremely unique forest in an urbanized environment. Many of the trees on the Project are of great size, including three which have been identified as among the top five largest of their species in the state of Ohio. The Project contains 13 native Ohio tree species including tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) – the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> largest in Ohio, sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) – the 5<sup>th</sup> largest in Ohio, red oak (*Quercus rubra*), American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), and shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*).

The Project is part of a historic country estate that has been owned by one family for 92 years. The Land Conservancy has worked with the landowner and local community to preserve the old-growth forest in the face of increasing pressures to approve development plans for the estate. The Project is currently zoned to allow for residential development. In order to meet the CFC Tree Preservation Protocol requirements, the Land Conservancy entered into discussions with the landowner and the City of Mentor to conserve the property and prohibit future timber harvest. The Land Conservancy signed a purchase agreement with the landowner on 12/31/2020 with the goal to preserve trees on this property and register the Project for carbon crediting. All parties agreed to re-zone the Project Area of the estate in order to meet those objectives. The future zoning of the Project area will be as a Conservation Zone, and the remainder of the estate will be zoned as Planned Mixed-Use Development for a large-scale, master-planned community development. The portion of the Project that is in the Village of Kirtland Hills remains zoned to allow for residential development. The involvement of the Land Conservancy will provide perpetual preservation of the old-growth forest.

The Land Conservancy’s overall goal is to protect the Project in perpetuity through conservation restrictions and fee ownership. The Land Conservancy will own and manage the Project area and transfer a conservation easement to Natural Areas Land Conservancy (NALC), a supporting organization of the Land Conservancy that is experienced in holding conservation restrictions. The Project will be enrolled into NALC’s diverse portfolio of protected lands, monitoring the Project annually to ensure its natural resources (including mature forest) are upheld to standards identified in conservation restrictions. Layers of legal protection and stewardship monitoring granted through the easement terms will ensure continued provision of conservation benefits for generations to come.

In addition, the Land Conservancy will operate this Project as one of its Signature Parks, allowing public access to over 1.5 miles of walking trails. Upon completion of acquisition, the Land Conservancy will undergo a park planning process with the goal of opening the Project to public access a few years later. Public access will allow pedestrian use for nature enjoyment, nature study, bird watching and other compatible uses not detrimental to the high-quality habitat. The location of this Project in the City of Mentor, and its high density of residential occupants, will provide perpetual public access and human health benefits to the surrounding community.

## **6. Project Impacts**

*Provide short narrative of the impacts this project will achieve. Examples include how the project addresses increased access to green spaces for under-resourced communities, flood control, watershed protection, human health benefits, recreation or bird and wildlife habitat.*

### **Open space preservation**

With continued encroachment, including the planned mixed-use development for the rest of the estate, it is critical to conserve what is left of the mature forests that once dominated the region. The Project's 78.2 acres of old-growth forest will be preserved in perpetuity through conservation restrictions, to include an environmental covenant and conservation easement held by NALC, thus contributing to the conservation of the natural resources located on the property. Additionally, this will provide a buffer to the expanding development surrounding the Project area.

### **Watershed protection**

The Project's 78.2 acres of mature forest will help mitigate flooding by absorbing rainwater, slowly releasing it back into the watershed. A single large canopy tree can absorb between 500 to 760 gallons of rainwater over the span of a year while stabilizing soil and preventing erosion. The mature forest's stormwater retention capacity will facilitate percolation deep into the ground as opposed to impervious features that cause rainwater to rapidly rush into storm drains, culverts, and waterways carrying pollutants and sediment into the watershed.

### **Human health**

The Project's forest also significantly impacts air quality, as a single mature tree can absorb up to 48 pounds of carbon dioxide per year. In an area with increasing development, the additional benefit of sound absorption provided by the forest is important to reduce noise pollution. These combined air and noise quality benefits will increase over time as protection of the Project will allow for continued maturation of the 78.2-acre forest. The Project's protection of open space will also contribute to the social and psychological quality of life for residents. For the benefit of health and wellbeing, the Trust for Public Land recommends that every American have access to a public park within 10-minute walking distance from their homes, and based on that recommendation, the Property is earmarked as an area in which there is a high need for park space.

### **Bird and wildlife habitat**

The Project is located within a migratory flyway, and its forested habitat provides essential stopover habitat for neotropical migratory birds, species that rely on large, intact stands of deciduous trees in Northeast Ohio along their migration route. The Project's loose-bark trees also serve as prime roosting habitat for bats. Surveys have identified two (2) State-Endangered bat species; five (5) State Species of Concern bat and bird species; and five (5) State Species of Special Interest bird species. The old-growth forest provides these species with critical breeding, nesting, feeding, roosting, and stopover habitat.

## **7. Additional Information**

*Provide additional information about your project. Examples include collaboration with other partners or how this project fits into a larger effort.*

The Project is located in a highly developed area adjacent to major state roads, and its protection will prevent additional development in an area that is quickly losing green space and the associated benefits. The Land Conservancy's efforts in partnership with the landowner and the City of Mentor to update the zoning amid increasing development pressures demonstrates the local commitment to protection of the old-growth trees to complement the conservation easement that will ensure permanent protection.



Western Reserve Land Conservancy, an accredited land trust, is Ohio's largest land trust with over 60,000 acres conserved across 24 Ohio counties. The Land Conservancy preserves natural resources that provide multiple environmental benefits and improve the quality of life for residents of Northeast Ohio. Carbon credits are an excellent extension of the Land Conservancy's mission, furthering conservation goals that will benefit communities, increase valuable open space acreage, and preserve critical wildlife habitat.

Signed on March 22 in 2022, by Alex Czayka, Senior VP for Conservation Transactions for Western Reserve Land Conservancy.



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Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alex Czayka

Printed Name

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440-528-4180

Phone





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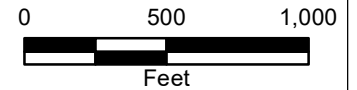
Email





## Aerial View

-  Project Site: 78.23 Acres
-  Interstate
-  State Highways
-  County & Township Roads



Western Reserve  
Land Conservancy  
land • people • community

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