



City Forest Credits

Afforestation and Reforestation Project Application

INSTRUCTIONS: Provide information about how the project meets the eligibility criteria as outlined in the City Forest Credits (CFC) Afforestation and Reforestation Protocol Version 11. Submit a draft application in word format to CFC before signing the final version. Include a map of the project area with the application. All project information will be shared on the public-facing project webpage on the Carbon Project Registry.

1. Project Name

Black Fork Planting Project

2. Project Operator

Provide the name of organization/entity and contact information for the Project Lead

Organization/Entity: Western Reserve Land Conservancy
Address: 3850 Chagrin River Road
City: Moreland Hills
State: Ohio
Zip: 44022
Contact(s): Sarah Blakely
Phone: 440-528-4168
Email: sblakely@wrlandconservancy.org

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*
- *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 Mifflin Township, Richland County, Ohio, which is within a planning area for a metropolitan planning agency or entity, Richland County Regional Planning Commission (RCRPC). RCRPC was formed under Section 713.21 of the Revised Code of the State of Ohio and encompasses Richland County, the Cities of Mansfield, Ontario and Shelby, townships and cooperating municipalities. The Bylaws can be found here:

https://www.rcrpc.org/files/ugd/3fa60f_bd440808c3b1463b9b4cc4313873d2b7.pdf.

Address: Property Centroid: 40.797207, -82.409665

Parcel Number(s): 021-17-030-11-000, 021-17-030-08-000, 021-17-030-13-001, 021-17-030-10-000, 021-17-019-13-001, 021-17-030-14-003

4. Project Description

Provide short narrative of the overall project goals, location where trees will be planted, land ownership or eligibility to receive credits, approximate number of trees or acres, main tree species, and project timeframe.

The Black Fork Planting Project is part of the restoration plan for a 480-acre protected property owned by Natural Areas Land Conservancy, a supporting organization of Western Reserve Land Conservancy, with conservation restrictions held by Western Reserve Land Conservancy. The property is located in Mifflin Township, Richland County, Ohio, and the property had been a working farm since 1959 until 2020 when the Land Conservancy acquired the property. Despite portions of the property being systemically cleared and drained for agriculture, it still contains 94 acres of existing high-quality forest which were registered as a preservation carbon credit project in early 2023. The property also contains 115 acres of Category 3 wetlands with the remaining acres consisting of formerly active agricultural fields. The Black Fork Planting Project will reforest a portion of the former agricultural fields as part of restoration efforts to create forest, meadow, and wetland habitat.

The planting project includes approximately 62 acres of upland tree plantings and 26.4 acres of wetland tree and shrub plantings, for a grand total of 88.4 acres planted. The upland areas were planted April 26 and 27 of 2023 with approximately 4,340 trees. Upland species include Ohio buckeye, shellbark hickory, swamp white oak, burr oak, and pin oak. The wetland areas were planted on November 10, 12, and 14 of 2023 with approximately 1,848 trees. Wetland species include pin oak, swamp white oak, eastern cottonwood, sycamore, and black walnut. The trees and shrubs were planted approximately 25 feet apart.

5. Project Impacts

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

The planting project that is part of the larger restoration effort will have significant benefits for the region's water quality. Restoring 160 acres of active farmland to 85 acres of wetland and 75 acres of native upland habitat will eliminate nutrients from onsite farming activity and sequester nutrients from surrounding agricultural runoff from entering into the Black Fork of the Mohican River. Planting trees in the upland and wetland habitats will reduce runoff into waterways by absorbing and slowing the flow of water allowing for increased filtration of pollutants and decreased soil erosion.

In addition to the significant benefits to water quality, the planting will improve biodiversity and benefit wildlife. A stated objective of Ohio's Forest Action Plan is to sustain oak-dominated forests to support biological diversity. A threat to Ohio forests is the shifting composition of species with a relative decline in oak and hickory and an increase in maple and poplar which have lower wildlife value. Nut-producing trees, like oaks and hickories, play a critical nutritional role for wildlife. The planting includes a variety of oak and hickory species.

6. Planting Design and Quantification Method

Provide short narrative about the planting design and quantification method you will use for the project. Refer to Protocol Appendix A for more detail.

- *Single Tree Quantification Method: trees planted in a dispersed or scattered design that are planted at least 16.5 feet apart (i.e. street trees). This method requires tracking of individual trees and tree survival for sampling and quantification.*
- *Clustered Quantification Method: trees planted at least 16.5 feet apart but are relatively contiguous and designed to create canopy over an area (i.e. park-like settings). This method requires tracking change in canopy, not individual tree survival.*
- *Area Reforestation Quantification Method: tree planting areas greater than 5 acres and where many trees are planted closer than 16.5 feet. Higher tree mortality is expected and the goals are to create canopy and a forest ecosystem. Project Operators have several quantification models to choose from, all of which produce a carbon index on a per-acre basis.*

The project will be quantified using the Clustered Quantification Method. Trees were planted approximately 25 feet apart and are relatively contiguous to create canopy in the planted areas. The upland and wetland plantings were designed to establish a forest canopy that will mitigate sunlight-dependent invasive plant species from colonizing the project site long term. The planting design will also support natural succession of species present in the existing high-quality forest stands to the restored fields.

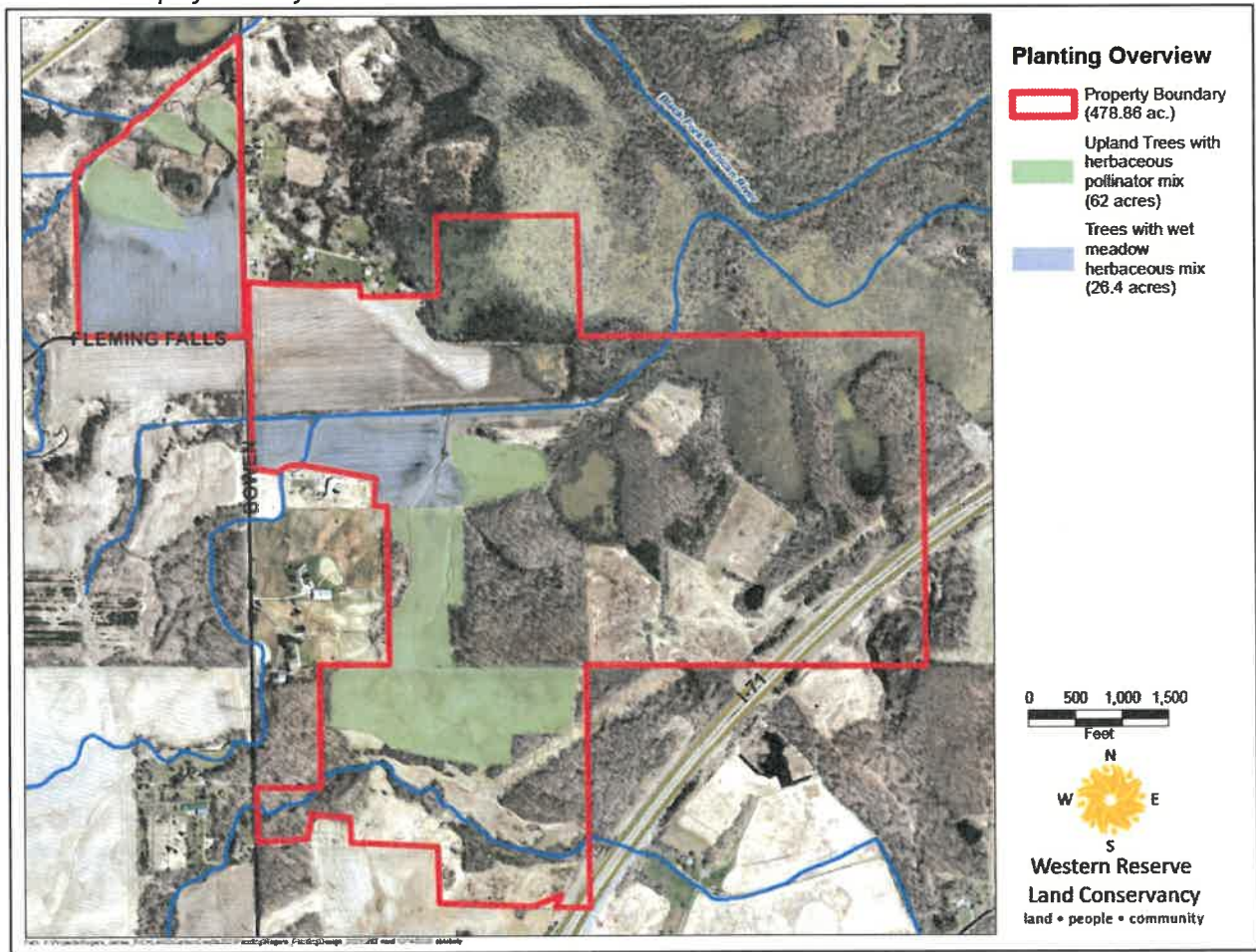
7. Additional Information

Provide additional information about your project. If the Project is part of a larger program or planting effort, include one sentence with more information. Examples include collaboration with other partners or how this project fits into a regional initiative.

The significant conservation effort to acquire and restore the Black Fork property has been made possible through the partnerships and funding support of Ohio EPA's Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program, with sponsorship through Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District; Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District's Partners in Watershed Management; the Ohio Forested Habitat Fund; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; The Conservation Fund; Ohio DNR's H2Ohio Program; and Natural Resource Conservation Service's Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

8. Map

Provide a map of the Project Area.



Signed on December 14th in 2023, by Alex Czayka, Chief Conservation Officer, for Western Reserve Land Conservancy.



Signature

Alex M Czayka

Printed Name

440-813-4664

Phone

aczayka@wrlandconservancy.org

Email