



## City Forest Credits Preservation Project Application

### 1. Project Name

Winton Preserve and Westmark Woods Forest Preservation Project

### 2. Project Operator

Organization/Entity: Cardinal Land Conservancy

Address: 790 Garfield Avenue

City: Milford

State: Ohio

Zip: 45150

Primary and/or secondary contact(s):

Jack Stenger

Phone: 513-752-2828

Email: [jack@cardinallandconservancy.org](mailto:jack@cardinallandconservancy.org)

Andy Dickerson

Phone: 513-752-2828

Email: [andy@cardinallandconservancy.org](mailto:andy@cardinallandconservancy.org)

### 3. Project Location

The Winton Preserve and Westmark Woods Forest Preservation Project (“Project”) consists of two disjunct properties, which will be called Winton Nature Preserve and Westmark Woods Nature Preserve once protected. The Project meets the urban area criteria as the Winton Nature Preserve is within the City of Cincinnati, Ohio, and Westmark Woods Nature Preserve is within an Urban Area as designated by the U.S. Census Bureau, specifically in Springfield Township, Ohio. Specific location information for each is included in the table below.

	Winton Nature Preserve	Westmark Woods Nature Preserve
County, State	Hamilton County, Ohio	Hamilton County, Ohio
Municipality	City of Cincinnati	Springfield Township
Urban Area per Census Bureau?	Yes	Yes
Address	5929 Winton Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45232	914 Compton Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45231
Parcel Number	023700020016	059002300031
Approximate Centroid	39.19585, -84.524481	39.236750, -84.514504

#### 4. Project Description

*Provide short narrative of the project goals, Project Area acreage, land ownership, forest characteristics, and land use/zoning. Provide details about when the property was acquired or potential timeline for acquisition. Include information about when carbon crediting was first introduced into the overall project scope.*

The Winton Preserve and Westmark Woods Forest Preservation Project aims to preserve 37.14 acres of forest across two properties (totaling 44.44 acres) located on the urban, north side of Cincinnati. Cardinal Land Conservancy (“Cardinal”) is seeking to preserve the Project for numerous community and environmental benefits, including carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, and passive recreation for underserved communities. Cardinal owns both properties and they are protected from development in perpetuity by deed restrictions recorded in November 2021 and September 2022.

At Winton Nature Preserve, 11.62 forested acres of the 18.92-acre property will be enrolled in the Project. The parcel is zoned SF-6 (Single Family Residential – 6,000 square foot lots). Cardinal acquired the property on 9/19/2022. It was identified as an area suitable for carbon crediting before purchase.

Historic aerial imagery shows that Winton Nature Preserve has been forested since at least the 1930s, so the stands are about 95 years old. The forest is predominately closed-canopied, but canopy gaps do exist where individual trees have recently died, such as white ash (*Fraxinus americana*) trees from emerald ash borer. The forest is classified as mixed-mesophytic. The canopy consists of more than twenty species of trees, including a mix of maple, oak, and beech.

At Westmark Woods Nature Preserve, all 25.52 acres of the parcel is a part of the Project. The parcel is zoned as a Residential Planned Unit Development District (R-PUD). Cardinal acquired the property on 11/16/2021. It was identified as an area suitable for carbon crediting before purchase. A perennial tributary of West Fork Mill Creek flows through the property and is associated with an 8.03-acre regulatory floodway.

Historic aerial imagery shows that the Westmark Woods was predominately open pastureland with scattered large groves of trees in 1932. The area began natural succession in the 1940s and a close-canopied forest formed across the parcel by 1975; therefore, we estimate the forest age to be about 65 years old. The forest is classified as mixed-mesophytic. The canopy is closed with most trees less than 100 years old. However, there are larger “wolf trees” throughout the property including a 62-inch DBH (diameter at breast height) sycamore and a 44.5-inch DBH white oak. The canopy consists of more than twenty species of trees, including a mix of oak, maple, hickory, sycamore, and beech.

#### 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 well-being, improved recreation opportunities, or protects bird and wildlife habitat.*

**Increased access to green spaces for under-resourced communities:** Cardinal Land Conservancy aims to provide access to green space for people and communities that lack significant access to natural areas. According to the Environmental Protection Agency’s Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool

(Version 2.2), the Project is located within or adjacent to communities that are above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile in the nation for asthma prevalence, proportion of individuals in low-income households, and percent of the population that is a person of color. Cardinal plans to provide free public access to both preserves by creating a natural-surface nature trail in each. Both preserves can be accessed by pedestrians from public sidewalks and are within a quarter mile of public bus stops. This will increase the opportunity for the surrounding communities to experience the health and wellness benefits that passive recreation in a natural area can provide.

**Conservation Benefits:** This Project protects natural forest communities that are underrepresented in the urban Cincinnati landscape. More than thirty species of native forest trees grow naturally within the Project area. The Project area occurs in a region of the city that is locally renowned for its density of migratory forest songbirds. The forest is similar in composition to Burnet Woods, a nearby city park that is designated by Audubon Ohio as one of the 70 Important Bird Areas in the state. Preliminary surveys of the project area suggest that they are critical stopover sites for migratory songbirds and will become a highly visited area for local birdwatchers.

**Open Space Conservation:** The region surrounding the Project area sees continued residential and commercial development. This project protects in perpetuity two of the higher quality forests remaining on the north side of Cincinnati. This preservation project will impact thousands of people because it will protect the viewshed along Winton Road, a major north-south arterial road that connects the City of Cincinnati to its northern suburbs.

## **6. Additional Information**

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

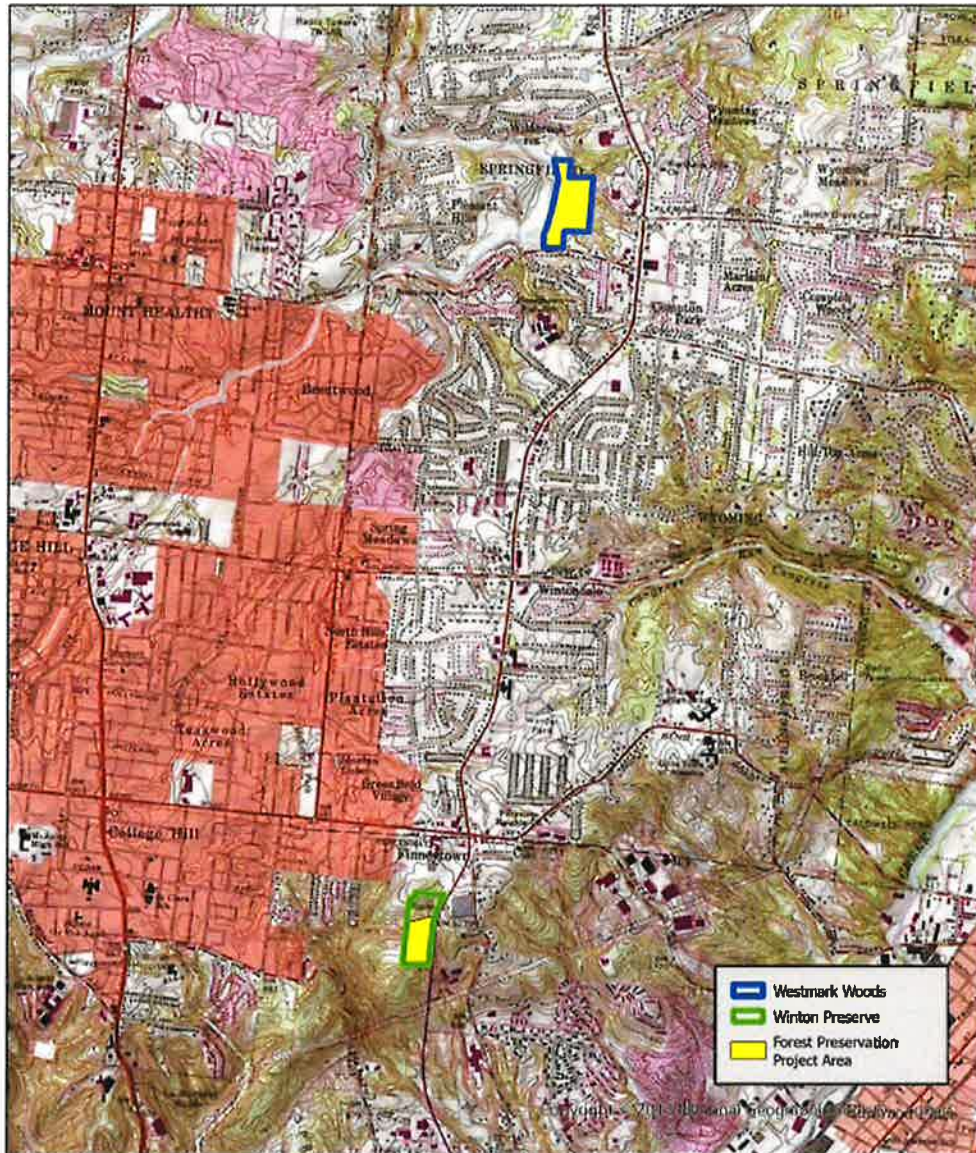
Cardinal Land Conservancy is a member of Green Umbrella's Greenspace Alliance (GUGA), a coalition of Greater Cincinnati conservation and planning organizations that collaborate on efforts to preserve, enhance, and promote the value of greenspace in the region. In 2023, GUGA engaged the regional conservation community to create a Regional Prioritization Plan for greenspace protection. The final products were two maps for the eight-county area. The Conservation Prioritization Plan mapped the highest quality natural areas yet to be preserved. The Restoration Prioritization Plan mapped the areas that were priorities for providing low-income and minority populations equitable access to natural areas and their associated health benefits.

Both the Winton and Westmark Woods properties scored as priorities for both Prioritization Plans. This means that this Project will be protecting high quality natural resources and providing greenspace benefits to communities that have limited access to natural areas.

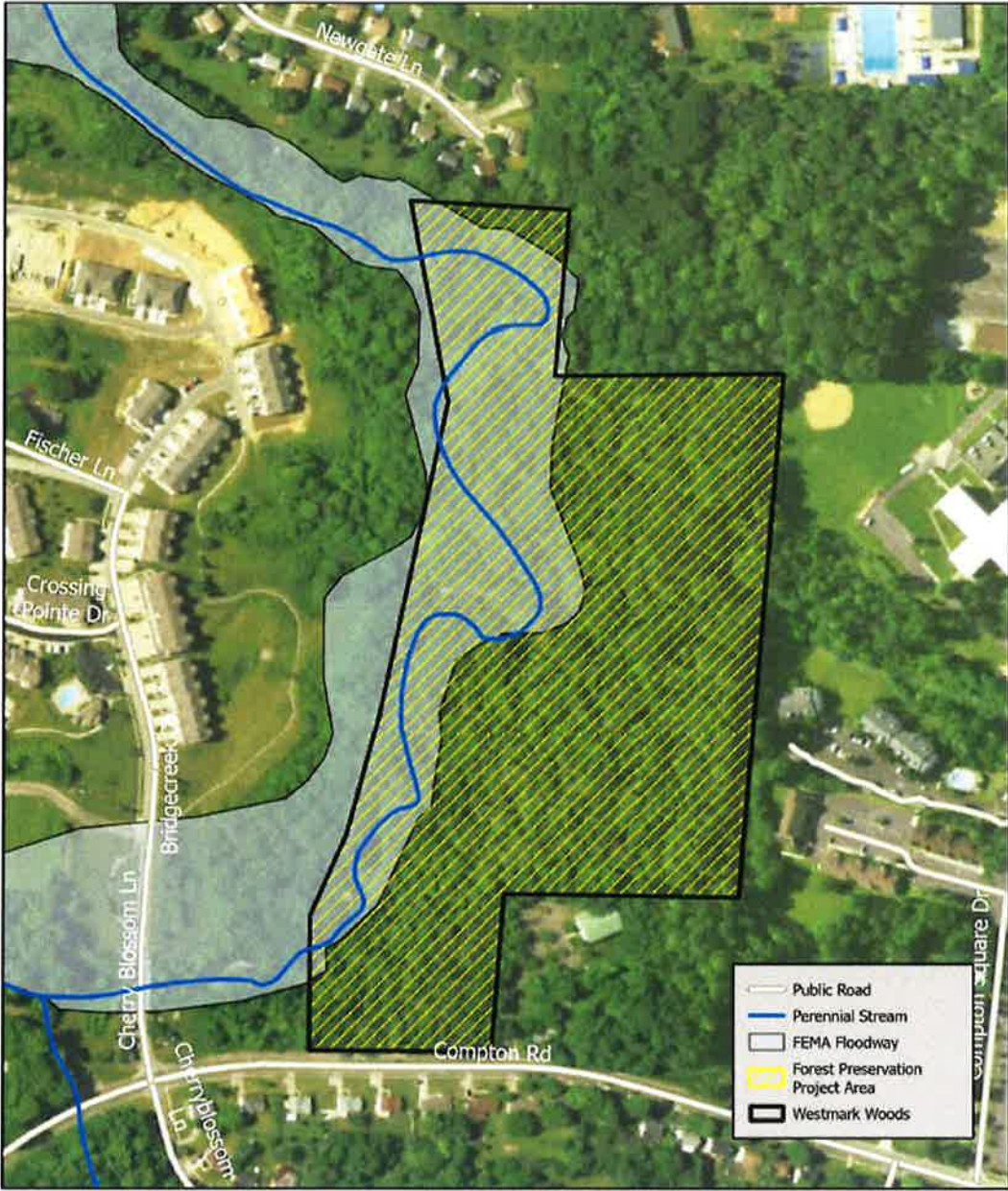
**7. Map**

Provide a map of the Project Area.

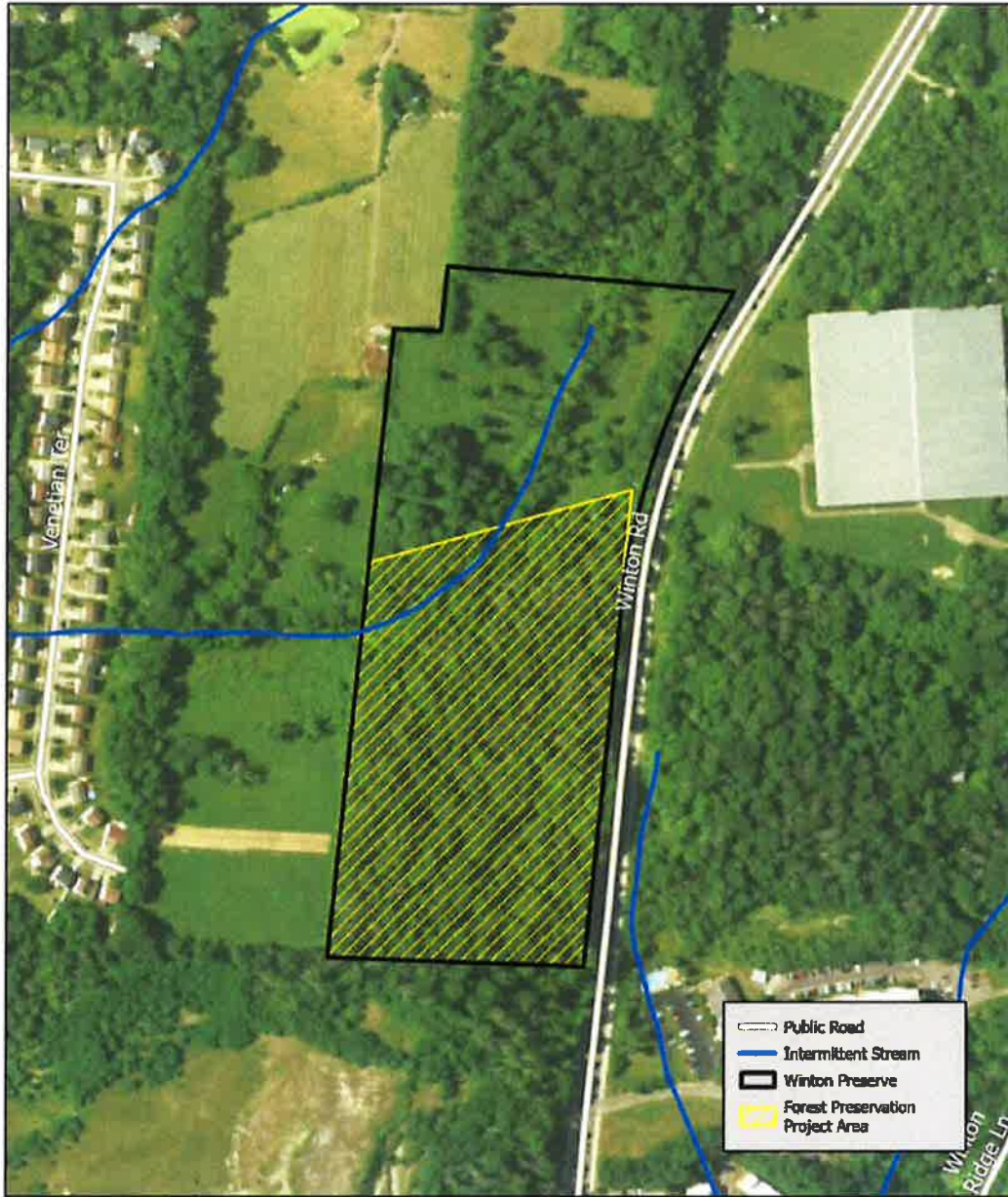
# Winton Preserve and Westmark Woods Forest Preservation Project, Hamilton County, Ohio



# Westmark Woods Nature Preserve Springfield Township, Hamilton County, Ohio



# Winton Nature Preserve City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio



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**PROJECT OPERATOR SIGNATURE**

Signed on November 14<sup>th</sup> in 2023, by Andy Dickerson, Executive Director of Cardinal Land Conservancy, for Cardinal Land Conservancy.

Andy Dickerson  
Signature

Andy Dickerson  
Printed Name

513 207-0700  
Phone

andy@cardinallandconservancy.org  
Email