



**AGENDA**  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
November 10, 2021  
Zoom Meeting

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To view the virtual meeting directly through Zoom, please visit:

<https://zoom.us/join>

Meeting ID: 861 5669 1607

Meeting Password: Preserve

To participate in public comment during the virtual meeting, please call 517.349.1232

If you are unable to access the meeting due to technical difficulties, please contact Director of IT, Stephen Gebes at 517.853.4222 or [gebese@meridian.mi.us](mailto:gebese@meridian.mi.us). Every effort will be made to help you participate in the meeting.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. PUBLIC COMMENT
3. APPROVE AGENDA
  - A. November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021
4. APPROVE MINUTES
  - A. September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021
5. COMMUNICATIONS
  - A. No board meeting in December
6. DISCUSSION ITEMS
  - A. Steven Schultz - Flooding and drainage issue request at Davis-Foster Preserve
    1. Memo for background
    2. Site map with swale & cross-section
7. OLD BUSINESS
  - A. Lake Lansing North Prescribed Burn Update
  - B. Wetland Education Campaign
    1. Mailed letter and brochure to 1460 residents
    2. Tihart-Cornell annual fall wetland cleanup
      - a. November 20<sup>th</sup>
    3. Presentation to Conservation Stewards Program
  - C. Planting a Native Meridian Program Expansion
    1. Fall seed collection and planting
    2. Work with local nurseries
8. REPORTS
  - A. STAFF REPORT: Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell
    1. MCC Workdays
    2. Fall/Winter stewardship plans

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Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Land Preservation Advisory Board by contacting: Director LuAnn Maisner, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4600 - Ten Day Notice is Required.

Meeting Location: 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Ct., Haslett, MI 48840

Providing a safe and welcoming, sustainable prime community.



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- B. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT: Board Member, Kendra Grassesschi
- C. PARK COMMISSION REPORT: Board Member, Mark Stephens

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

10. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, January 12, 2022 at 6 pm, over Zoom.

12. ADJOURNMENT

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CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Zoom Meeting  
Wednesday, September 8th, 2021, 6 PM

PRESENT: Board Members: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Kris Parnell, Yu Man Lee, Kendra Grassesschi, Chanelle Russ.  
ABSENT: Board Members: Mark Stephens. Trustee Opsommer absent after 6:40 pm.  
STAFF: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator  
TOWNSHIP: Township Trustee, Dan Opsommer

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

CHAIR HILLER MOVED TO CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6:04 PM.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

A. NONE.

**3. APPROVE AGENDA**

**TRUSTEE OPSOMMER MOVED TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2021 AGENDA. Board member Parnell seconded.**

**VOICE VOTE:** Motion carried unanimously.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**TRUSTEE OPSOMMER MOVED TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 25TH, 2021 MINUTES. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.**

**VOICE VOTE:** Motion carried unanimously.

**5. COMMUNICATIONS**

A. None.

**6. OLD BUSINESS**

- A. Davis-Foster Preserve maintenance and improvements
  - 1. Bids for wildlife viewing overlook at two different locations
    - a. Coordinator Campbell briefs the board on the bid process and what factors need to be considered for this project:
      - 1. Impact of heavy equipment on preserve land. If the overlook is placed in the middle of the preserve equipment will impact more area. If it is placed in the front at the parking lot, impact from equipment will be minimal.
      - 2. ADA accessibility is a priority: Department staff feel it may be too

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difficult to manage the pathway out to the overlook for ADA accessibility. If the overlook is placed in the parking lot, accessibility will be much easier.

3. A two-story component to the overlook may be considered if it is placed in the parking to give users a better view of the preserve.

b. The board discusses the options: The location of the overlook on the hill will not be considered due to ADA accessibility and impact of equipment on the preserve. Coordinator Campbell will pursue bids for the spring 2022 season at the location in the front parking lot.

### 2. Burn unit pathway revisions

#### a. Mitigate mowing in sensitive areas

1. Coordinator Campbell briefs the board on closure of a burn break at Davis-Foster that has presented safety hazards for the grounds crew. Sinkholes and soft ground at the bottom of the hill have made it unsafe for mowing. There is also unnecessary impact on the soils and plants in that area due to the mowers sinking in to the mud, creating ruts and eroding the soil. This is a very sensitive area with a diverse array of grasses and forbes. The burn breaks will no longer be mowed in this area.
2. Board members question whether or not there are old drains in the Davis-Foster Preserve that may be removed to restore historic hydrology of the area. Coordinator Campbell will report back on this subject.

### B. Renaming of Preserves: Finalized list for new names

1. Board Members vote on finalized list for preserve names. The results are as follows (names with the most votes are highlighted in yellow):

- Lake Lansing South Preserve
  - Pike preserve
    - Voice votes during roll call: None.
  - **Pike crossing preserve**
    - Voice vote unanimous.
- Central Meridian Uplands
  - **Okemos Road Preserve**
    - Voice vote unanimous.
  - Eberly Preserve
    - Voice votes during roll call: None.
  - Pine Lake Preserve
    - Voice votes during roll call: None.
- Meridian Central Wetland Preserve
  - Haslett Marsh Preserve
    - Voice votes during roll call: None.
  - **Inter-Urban Wetland Preserve**
    - Voice vote unanimous.
- North Ridge Preserve
  - **Glacial Ridge Preserve**
    - Voice vote unanimous.
  - North Ridge Preserve
    - Voice votes during roll call: None.

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- Whitehills Preserve
  - Voice votes during roll call: None.
- SW Uplands Preserve
  - Heron Creek Preserve
    - Voice vote unanimous.
- Tihart-Cornell Wetland
  - Cornell Wetlands
    - Voice vote unanimous.
  - Mud Lake Wetlands
    - Voice votes during roll call: None.
  - Cornell Oaks Preserve
    - Voice votes during roll call: None.
- Tihart Preserve
  - This was the only option and voice vote was unanimous to keep it Tihart Preserve.

**BOARD MEMBER GRASSESSCHI MADE A MOTION TO RENAME THE SELECTED PRESERVE PROPERTIES AND INSTALL THE CORRECT SIGNAGE. Board member Parnell seconded.**

**VOICE VOTE:** Motion carried unanimously.

### 7. REPORTS

- A. STAFF REPORT: Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell
  - 1. Late summer stewardship: herbicide treatment of invasive species; Japanese knotweed, spotted knapweed, field thistle, and phragmites. Cut-stump management season had started and invasive shrub removal will be the center of volunteer efforts for the rest of the year until spring.
- B. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT: Board Member, Kendra Grassesschi
  - 1. Board Member Grassesschi briefs the board on the 12 month plan for the wetland education campaign. This campaign will focus on the collaboration of Township departments (Engineering, Land Preservation, Environmental Commission, Parks, and Code Enforcement) to educate the community on existing wetland ordinances to protect all wetlands  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an acre and larger in size. It is also meant to educate the community on the environmental and residential benefits that wetlands provide.
- C. PARK COMMISSION REPORT: Board Member, Mark Stephens
  - 1. Board member Stephens was absent, so no Park Commission report.

### 8. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

- A. NONE.

### 9. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

- A. Chair Hiller will be absent from the November 10, 2021 meeting.

### 10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, November 10, 2021 over Zoom.

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**11. ADJOURNMENT**

**BOARD MEMBER PARNELL MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. Board member Grassesschi seconded.**

**VOICE VOTE:** Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting is adjourned at 7:34 pm.

Stephen and Jane Schultz  
730 Knightsford Lane  
Okemos, Michigan 48864

### **INFORMATION AND REQUEST REGARDING DRAINAGE**

To: Land Preservation Advisory Board  
From: Steve and Jane Schultz  
Re: Flooding and Drainage Issue  
Date: October 20, 2021

We are writing to you to request your help in solving a drainage problem on our property and in an adjacent retention area that resulted in the flooding of our basement this past June. This memorandum is to provide the Board with background information to be considered along with drawings and suggestions previously provided to Staff.

#### Background

We built our home in Candlestone Estates No. 2 subdivision in 1986. The subdivision consists of six single family homes on Knightsford Lane. Ours is the easternmost lot in the subdivision. The subdivision and our lot is bordered on the north by the Davis-Foster Preserve. Our lot is bordered on the east and south in part by Candlestone Estates No. 1, which consists of several homes on Chipping Camden Lane.

Immediately south of our home is a one acre out lot dedicated in both plats to receive surface water drainage from the north end of Chipping Camden Lane and the east end of Knightsford Lane. When we constructed our home in 1986, we were also required to install a culvert under our driveway to receive surface water runoff from the south end of the Davis farm, now the Preserve. The out lot has no outlet for excessive water flowing to it. It is a dead end with no relief from the flows it receives.

The subdivision plat indicates that the owner of the former Lyn and Karen Beekman home at 5000 Chipping Camden is responsible for out lot maintenance.

When we constructed our home, surface water and the groundwater table were not a problem. In fact, we did not even need a sump in the basement of our home. All footing drains and eave downspouts simply drained to the out lot. Typically, the out lot would have water of 1 or 2 feet in depth in the Spring and Fall. In the summer, it would be bone dry.

About 15 years ago, we asked Lyn Beekman for permission to dig a small pond in the out lot, which he granted. We sought and obtained a wetland review from the Township, which

determined that due to the small size of the wetland area in the out lot, no wetland permit was required. All-Terrain Excavating dug and contoured the pond and graded the area to retain the required drainage from the Davis farm, Chipping Camden and Knightsford Lane.

The pond and the surrounding area presented no issues until recently. The pond would be up to 2 feet lower in Summer than in the Spring. The swale constructed by All-Terrain to take water from the Davis farm under our driveway and to the pond worked well and was bone dry except for a day or two after a significant rain.

About 3 years ago, we noticed that the pond level was remaining a bit higher each year. Both the swale from the Davis farm and the drainage swale to take water from Chipping Camden to the pond would be wetter for longer periods. In 2019, we noticed on a couple of occasions that the water level of the pond was over the bank of the pond and into our lawn. In 2020, this occurred more frequently, but the water never got so close to the house as to pose a flooding threat to our walk out basement.

Starting this year, the pond water level was outside the pond bank in the Spring on several occasions. When the Township got the 6" - 8" rainfall in late June, the water came up fast and with no time to subside. With no out let, the water flooded our finished basement 2" to 3" deep. In addition, the groundwater pushed up our basement floor such that it cracked in several locations.

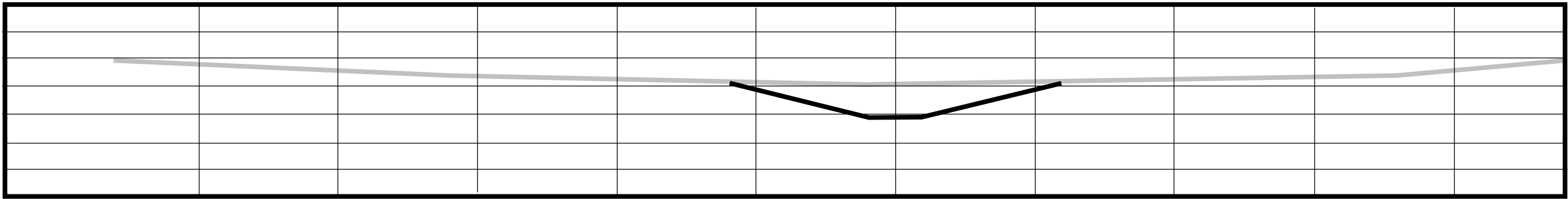
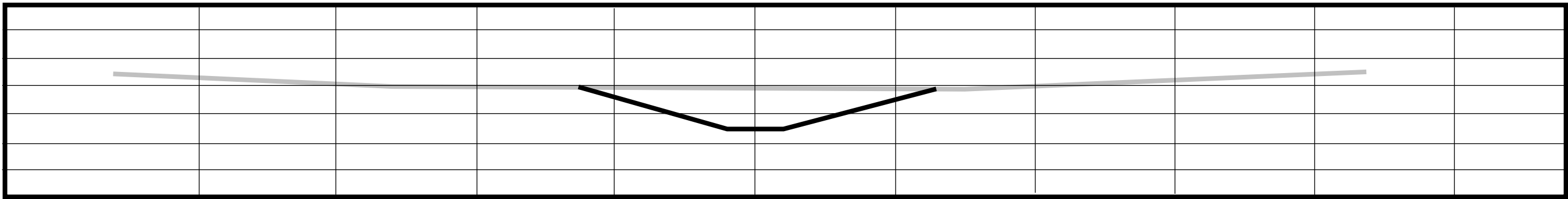
### Investigation

We asked James Ensign, a Certified Floodplain Manager and civil engineer with Bergmann Architects Engineers Planners, to work with us to examine the flooding and hopefully find a solution to the problem we face. We do not want to repair our basement floor and refinish the basement until we address this issue. Mr. Ensign took elevations of the pond, out lot, our surrounding property and driveway, and the Davis-Foster Preserve. He provided drawings to the Township, which we have included with this memorandum. Additional information was provided to the Staff. Mr. Ensign will be at the Board meeting on November 10 to discuss a possible solution to the flooding we suffered.

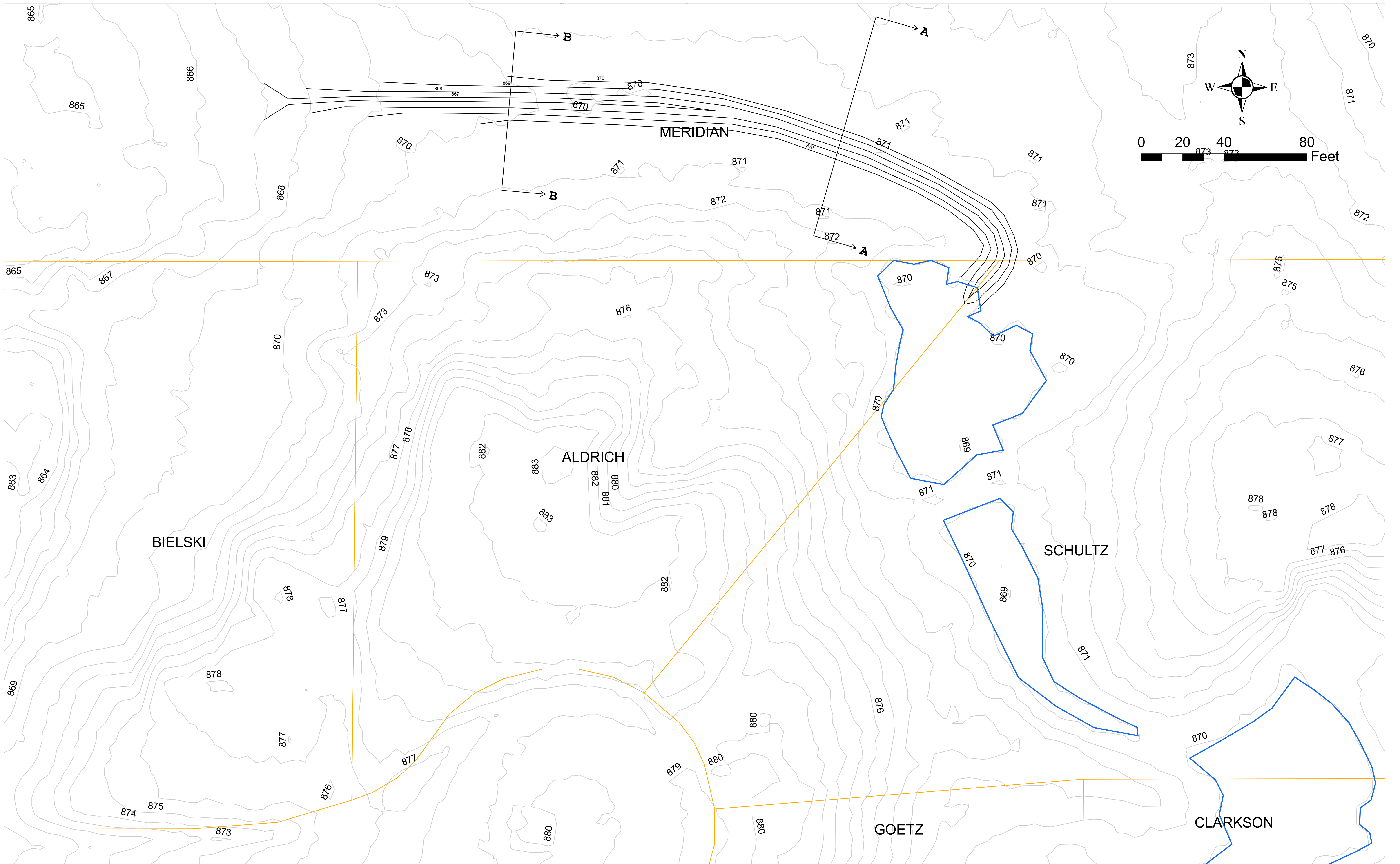
Mr. Ensign's suggested solution to our problem is to create an outlet to provide relief from flooding from a significant rain event. His suggestion is to create a swale that is a couple of feet lower than the current grade along the south boundary of the Davis-Foster Preserve so that in the case of a significant rain event, the out lot would have a relief outlet to the existing drain and wetland along VanAtta Road. Excessive runoff from the Davis-Foster Preserve would also be captured in case of a significant rain event. Except in the case of these significant events, the constructed swale would be dry and under normal circumstances, no additional runoff would flow to the existing wetland in the southwest corner of the Davis-Foster Preserve.



We have shared these plans with Staff and have walked the property to discuss this possible solution. We look forward to discussing our problem and proposed solution with the Board on November 10.



SCALE: 1" = 8'







**David  
Borneman** LLC

RestoringNatureWithFire.com

2854 Parkridge Drive • Ann Arbor • Michigan • 48103 • Office 734-994-3475 • Cell 734-845-0634 • Dave@Restoring-Nature.com

## PRESCRIBED BURN PROPOSAL

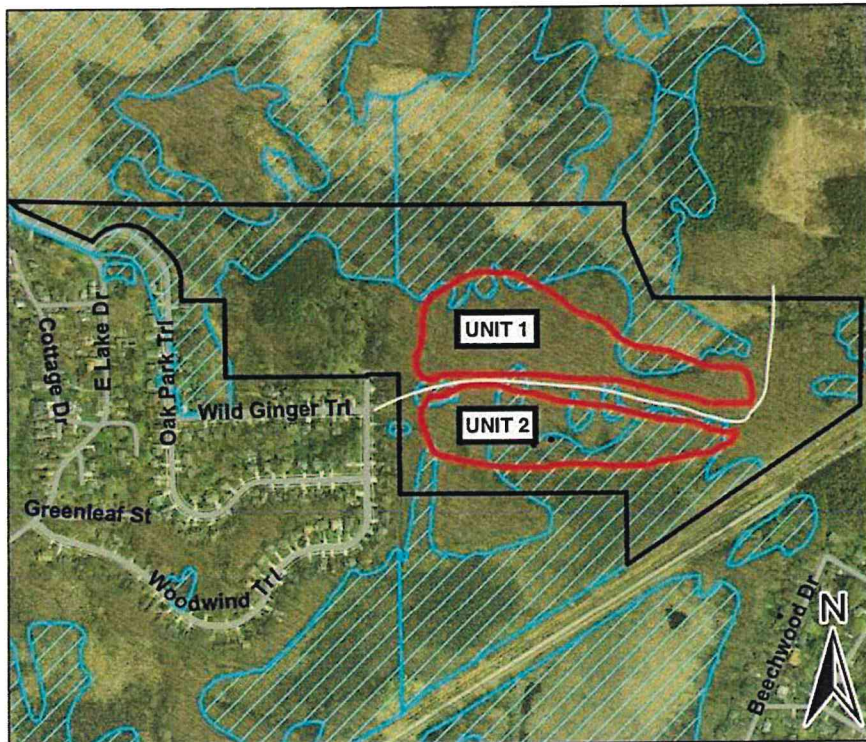
**Prepared for:** Meridian Charter Township

**Contact:** Emma Campbell, Land Stewardship Coordinator  
ecampbell@meridian.mi.us | 517-853-4614

**Prepared by:** David Borneman, LLC  
2854 Parkridge Dr, Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
Office: 734.994.3475, Cell: 734.845.0634  
Dave@Restoring-Nature.com  
FEIN: 37-1566550

**Site:** Approximately 30 acres in two burn units on the Meridian Conservation Easement located at Lake Lansing North.

### Lake Lansing North Land Preserve



**David  
Borneman** LLC

www.RestoringNatureWithFire.com

## **Project Proposal:**

My fee includes the following services:

- Creating a detailed burn plan, including pre-ignition contacts, emergency contacts, maps, appropriate weather conditions, smoke management, site preparation, firing technique, holding plan, wildfire contingency plan, mop up, crew and equipment information.
- Coordinating with Meridian Twp FD Fire Inspector Tavis Millerov and obtaining the appropriate permit (any permit costs incurred will be billed to Meridian Twp).
- Notifying all necessary parties immediately prior to the burn.
- Site Preparation – If needed, using a leaf blower to remove leaves from trails serving as burn breaks around the perimeter of the burn unit.
- Posting “Caution-Smoke Ahead” signs on the nearest road(s) during the burn.
- Conducting the prescribed burn during Fall 2021 or Spring 2022 (no later than April 7, 2022), including provision of all necessary equipment and personnel required to conduct the burn.
  - All personnel assisting me will have prior burn experience and be adequately trained and briefed to participate in this burn safely.
  - All burn personnel will be equipped with the following personal protective equipment: fire retardant clothing, hardhat, face protectors, leather boots, and leather gloves.
  - I will provide one full-size, 4-wheel-drive truck equipped with a 300-gallon water tank and gasoline-powered water pump with hose; *Argo* ATV with mounted 69-gallon water tank, as needed, depending on site.
  - A full complement of additional hand tools and equipment will also be on hand to use as needed, including backpack water sprayers, drip torches, leaf blowers, rakes, two-way radios, cellular phone, etc.

## **Property owner is responsible for:**

- Notifying neighbors and others in the immediate vicinity in advance about the upcoming burn.
- Assisting with “PR” on-site during the burn, if possible.

## **Timing/Conditions:**

I anticipate that the burn would happen sometime in the afternoon/early evening (between 12:00 noon and 7:00 pm.) Fall 2021, if possible, or Spring 2022; but will be completed no later than April 7, 2022.

Please remember that scheduling too far in advance is difficult because of the need for specific weather parameters during the burn. I would try to coordinate schedules with you a day or two in advance, and then confirm plans and exact times on the morning of the burn day.

### **Prescribed Fire Credentials:**

- 32 years of professional experience conducting prescribed, ecological burns on thousands of acres.
- 27 years as Prescribed Burn Leader for City of Ann Arbor, Natural Area Preservation Division. In that capacity I coordinate the City's entire Prescribed Burn Program, including leading burn trainings and overseeing a burn crew of up to 15 members.
- 21 years (over 500 burns on 10,000+ acres) as Private Contractor conducting prescribed burns in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois.
- 22 years on the Michigan Prescribed Fire Council's Steering Committee. Past Chair.
- Certified as a Prescribed Burn Leader in Ohio and Illinois (no certification program exists in Michigan)

### **Prescribed Burn Training:**

#### ***National Wildfire Coordinating Group:***

- Introduction to Incident Command System (S-130)
- Squad Boss Training (S-131)
- Beginning Wildland Fire Behavior (S-190) – Certified at Level I
- Crew Boss/Single Incident Command (S-230)
- Intermediate Wildland Fire Behavior (S-290) – Certified at Level I
- Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior Calculations (S-390) – Certified at Level I
- Smoke Management Techniques (RX 410)
- Introduction to Fire Effects (RX-310)
- Applied Fire Effects (RX-510)

#### ***The Nature Conservancy and Tall Timbers Research Station:***

Ecological Burning for Burn Leaders (10 days: equivalent to RX-300)

### **Insurance:**

***Commercial General Liability*** – \$1,000,000 per occurrence policy/\$2,000,000 general aggregate

***Workers' Compensation*** - \$1,000,000

***Commercial Auto Liability*** - \$1,000,000

**Date of proposal/estimate:** October 29, 2021

**Cost:** \$6,975



## Past Clients Include:

### Private landowners throughout Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana

Barry Conservation District  
Blandford Nature Center  
Black River Ranch Hunt Club  
Boy Scouts of America: Camp Greilick  
Calvin College  
Canada Creek Hunt Club  
Charter Township of Canton  
Charter Township of Chikaming  
Charter Township of Pittsfield  
Charter Township of Plymouth  
Charter Township of Springfield  
Charter Township of Superior  
Charter Township of Oakland  
Charter Township of Williamstown  
City of Auburn Hills  
City of Birmingham  
City of Detroit, Belle Isle Park  
City of Southfield  
Dahlem Nature Centre, Jackson, MI  
Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids  
Ducks Unlimited  
Erie Marsh Hunting and Fishing Club  
Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc.  
First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor  
Golder Associates, Inc.  
Grosse Ile Land Conservancy  
Henry Ford Estate  
Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority (HCMA)  
Hoffman Estates Parks, IL  
Howard Cooper, Inc.  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources:  
Nature Preserves Commission  
Ingham County Drain Commissioner  
Island Lake Homeowners Assn.  
Kanan Gaming Enterprises  
Kresge Foundation  
Land Conservancy of West Michigan  
Land Architects, LLC  
Lawrence Technical University  
Legacy Land Conservancy  
Little Traverse Conservancy  
Meridian Charter Township, MI  
Michigan Department of Natural Resources:  
Landowner Incentive Program  
Michigan Department of Military and Veteran Affairs: Fort Custer Training Center  
Midforest Lodge Hunt Club  
Michigan Audubon Society  
Michigan Nature Association  
Monroe County Parks  
MSU Credit Union  
Niswander Environmental, LLC  
Oakland County Parks  
Oakland County Intermediate School District  
Ottawa County Parks  
Oxford Companies  
Parklands Foundation, IL  
Pfizer, Inc.  
Pall, Inc.  
Plymouth Township  
ProQuest  
Reformed Church of America  
River Bend Gardens  
Sister Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Six Rivers Land Conservancy  
Starr Commonwealth  
Steelcase, Inc.  
Superior Township  
The Nature Conservancy  
Toledo Zoo  
Tournament Players Club of Michigan  
Trinity Lutheran Church  
Turtle Lake Hunt Club  
United States Immigration Building  
University of Michigan  
Walnut Hills Subdivision  
Washtenaw Intermediate School District  
Washtenaw County Parks  
Wayne County Airport Authority, Detroit Metro Airport  
Wayne County Parks  
WH Canon Company

## REFERENCES

### **Charter Township of Springfield, MI** in cooperation with MI DNR Landowner Incentive Program

*Prescribed Burns:* Burn units of 57-70 acres of fen and woodland

Burned 2005-2011, 2014, 2019, 2021

Contact: **Mike Losey**, Natural Resources Manager, [mlosey@springfield-twp.us](mailto:mlosey@springfield-twp.us); 248-846-6508

### **Cherry Hill Nature Preserve, MI**

*Prescribed Burns:* 20-30 acres of remnant, mature woods

Burned 2005-2021

Contact: **Juan Bradford**, Administrator, [jbradford@superior-twp.org](mailto:jbradford@superior-twp.org), 734.480.5502

### **Hoffman Estates Parks and Recreation, Hoffman Estates, IL**

*Prescribed Burns:* Victoria Park, Black Bear Park, Rohrssen Park and Hunter's Ridge and Wetlands.

Burns of 7-90 acres in dense residential areas of Village of Hoffman Estates from 2015-2019

Contact: **Craig Talsma**, Deputy Director, Director of Finance and Admin, [ctalsma@heparks.org](mailto:ctalsma@heparks.org); 847.310.3607

### **Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority (HCMA), Southeastern Michigan**

*Prescribed Burns:* Multiple parks, including Kensington (25-, 38-, and 45-acre prairies); Stony Creek (11- and 4-acre prairies); Metro Beach (3-acre old field); Oakwoods (3-acre prairie); Indian Springs (2-acre prairie, 5-acre wetland); and Lake Erie (1-acre prairie)

Burned multiple times between 2001-2021

Contact: **Tyler Mitchell**, Chief of Natural Resources and Regulatory Compliance, [tyler.mitchell@metroparks.com](mailto:tyler.mitchell@metroparks.com), 810.494.6019

### **Indiana Nature Preserve Commission (INPC)**

*Prescribed Burns:* Various state parks and habitats, including sites with federally listed species. Burns from 10-30 acres; burned 2009-2021

Contact: **Derek Nimetz**, Regional Ecologist, INDNR, [dnimetz@dnr.in.gov](mailto:dnimetz@dnr.in.gov), 219.928.3997

### **Oakland County Department of Parks, MI**

*Prescribed Burns:* Various county parks and habitats, including Rose Oaks; Orion Oaks; Lyon Oaks, Highland Oaks, Groveland Oaks; and Independence Oaks

Burn units ranging from 10-118 acres; burned 2007-2021

Contact: **Sarah Cook-Maylen**, Natural Resources Coordinator, [maylens@oakgov.com](mailto:maylens@oakgov.com), 248-343-1353

### **Washtenaw Intermediate School District, Ann Arbor, MI**

Native Landscaping Project: Master Planning and Implementation: 2001

*Prescribed Burn:* 4-acre planted prairie and Phragmites

Burned 2002-2010, 2013-2015

Contact: **Laura VanFaasen**, [lvanfaas@wash.k12.mi.us](mailto:lvanfaas@wash.k12.mi.us), O: 734-994-8100 ext. 1210, C: 734.717.5048

### **Wayne County Airport Authority, Detroit, MI**

*Prescribed Burns:* DTW 12-acre prairie; Crosswinds Marsh: 30-acre Threatened Plant Mitigation wetland

Burned 2006-2020

Contact: **Bryan Wagoner**, Environmental Administrator of External Affairs, 734.247.3686

### **Wolverine Lake Village, Commerce Township, MI**

*Prescribed Burns:* Two small areas of Phragmites

Burned 2019

Contact: **Michael Smith**, Administrator, [admin@wolverinelake.com](mailto:admin@wolverinelake.com), O: 248.830.5682, C:248.624.1710

~ Additional detailed references available specific to habitat, burn unit size, or entity. ~





**Prescribed Burn Treatment Company Form**  
**Meridian Township Parks and Recreation**

Business Name: David Borneman, LLC

Contact: David Borneman Email: Dave@Restoring-Nature.com

Address: 2854 Parkridge Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Phone Number: 734-845-0634 Fax: NA

Total Not-to-Exceed Cost: \$ 6,975

Bids will be accepted up until 5:00 pm on October 29<sup>th</sup> 2021.





**Meridian Township**  
5151 Marsh Road  
Okemos, MI 48864

P 517.853.4000  
F 517.853.4096

**Township Board:**

**Ronald J. Styka**  
*Township Supervisor*

**Deborah Guthrie**  
*Township Clerk*

**Phil Deschaine**  
*Township Treasurer*

**Patricia Herring Jackson**  
*Township Trustee*

**Dan Opsommer**  
*Township Trustee*

**Kathy Ann Sundland**  
*Township Trustee*

**Courtney Wisinski**  
*Township Trustee*

**Frank L. Walsh**  
*Township Manager*

October 2021

Dear Meridian Township Resident,

On behalf of the Township Board, Commissions, Staff and neighborhoods of Meridian Township, we invite you to join us in preserving and enhancing one of our community's greatest assets; our wetlands. You are receiving this letter because you have a wetland on or adjacent to your property.

Protecting wetlands is important for many reasons. Wetlands act like a sponge, protecting us from flooding. They also help recharge our groundwater/drinking water and provide other benefits such as protection of fish, wildlife, and pollinator habitats.

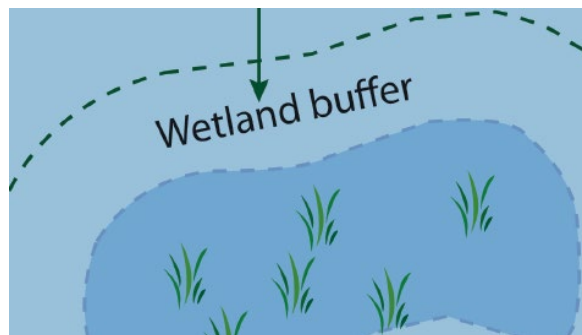
This letter and the enclosed brochure describe these benefits and current laws that may affect your property.

There are different types of wetlands and most are protected. Protected wetlands include:

1. Wetlands, equal to or greater than 1/4 acre and determined to be essential to the preservation of natural resources.
2. Wetlands contiguous to inland lakes, streams, rivers or ponds (or within 500 feet of the ordinary high water mark)\*
3. Wetlands, determined by the State of Michigan, are essential to the preservation of the natural resources of the State from pollution, impairment or destruction.

\* Unless determined by Michigan Department of Energy, Great Lakes, and the Environment (EGLE) that there is no surface or groundwater connection between the wetland and the water body.

A wetland buffer or natural vegetation strip is also protected by law. Wetland buffers/vegetation strips help minimize erosion, stabilize streambanks and wetland edges, protect water quality, preserve wildlife habitat and protect from flooding.



The wetland buffer is typically 20-50 feet wide, depending upon the size and location of wetland, and is treated the same as the wetland.

There are some things that you can and can't do in a protected wetland and wetland buffer/vegetation strip. For example:

Do...	Don't...
<p>Preserve natural ground cover to the fullest extent feasible. Trees, shrubs, and native plants have deep roots which help protect your property from flooding.</p>	<p>Do not alter existing soil and organic matter. Please do not add or remove soil, stones, yard debris, etc. Do not add fertilizers or pesticides.</p>
<p>Plant perennial native species, especially on exposed soil and steep slopes. Lawns have shallow roots and do not protect from flooding.</p>	<p>Do not mow or clear cut more than 10% of the length of the buffer strip. A lawn is not considered a natural vegetation strip.</p>
<p>Minimize pruning and removal of trees, shrubs, and ground covers unless providing access or views to water features, removing hazardous or nuisance exotic vegetation, or improving wildlife habitat.</p>	<p>Do not remove stumps. Live root systems must be maintained to provide erosion control.</p> <p>Do not build structures or grade the soil without contacting the Planning Department.</p>

We hope that this information is helpful in understanding the importance and benefits of our wetlands in reducing flooding, protecting our water resources, and preserving the environmental quality and natural beauty of our community.

If you'd like to learn more about wetlands, natural landscaping, rain/pollinator gardens, land preserves, native plant sales, or the Meridian Conservation Corps, please visit our website at [www.meridian.mi.us/GreenMeridian](http://www.meridian.mi.us/GreenMeridian). For code or construction-related questions, please contact the Community Planning & Development Department at 517.853.4500.

Thank you,



John Sarver, Chair  
Meridian Environmental Commission

## Wetlands in the Township

Most people are familiar with the cattail or lily pad wetland found in areas with standing water, but wetlands can also be grassy meadows, shrubby fields, or mature forests.

Many wetland areas have only a high ground water table and standing water may not be visible.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, over 50% of Michigan's original wetlands have been drained or filled, thereby making the protection of remaining wetlands that much more important.

Over 25% of Meridian Township is covered in wetlands (5778 of 20,160 acres), making wetland stewardship an important responsibility and opportunity in every neighborhood.

The Township has a wetland ordinance that protects wetlands as small as 1/4 acre. This ordinance requires a 20-foot natural vegetation buffer.

### *Want to help protect our wetlands?*

Volunteer with the Meridian Township Conservation Corp! Call Emma Campbell at 517.853.4614 for more info!

Also visit [MyWatersheds.org](http://MyWatersheds.org), [MGROW.org](http://MGROW.org), and [Meridian.mi.us/gogreen](http://Meridian.mi.us/gogreen) to learn more about local water protection efforts.

Your actions can help keep our water clean, reduce pollution, and prevent flooding!



*Help keep Meridian Township beautiful!  
Find out how and spread the word!*

[Meridian.mi.us/GoGreen](http://Meridian.mi.us/GoGreen)  
[www.MyWatersheds.org](http://www.MyWatersheds.org)



**POLLUTION  
ISN'T PRETTY.**



## Protect Our Wetlands

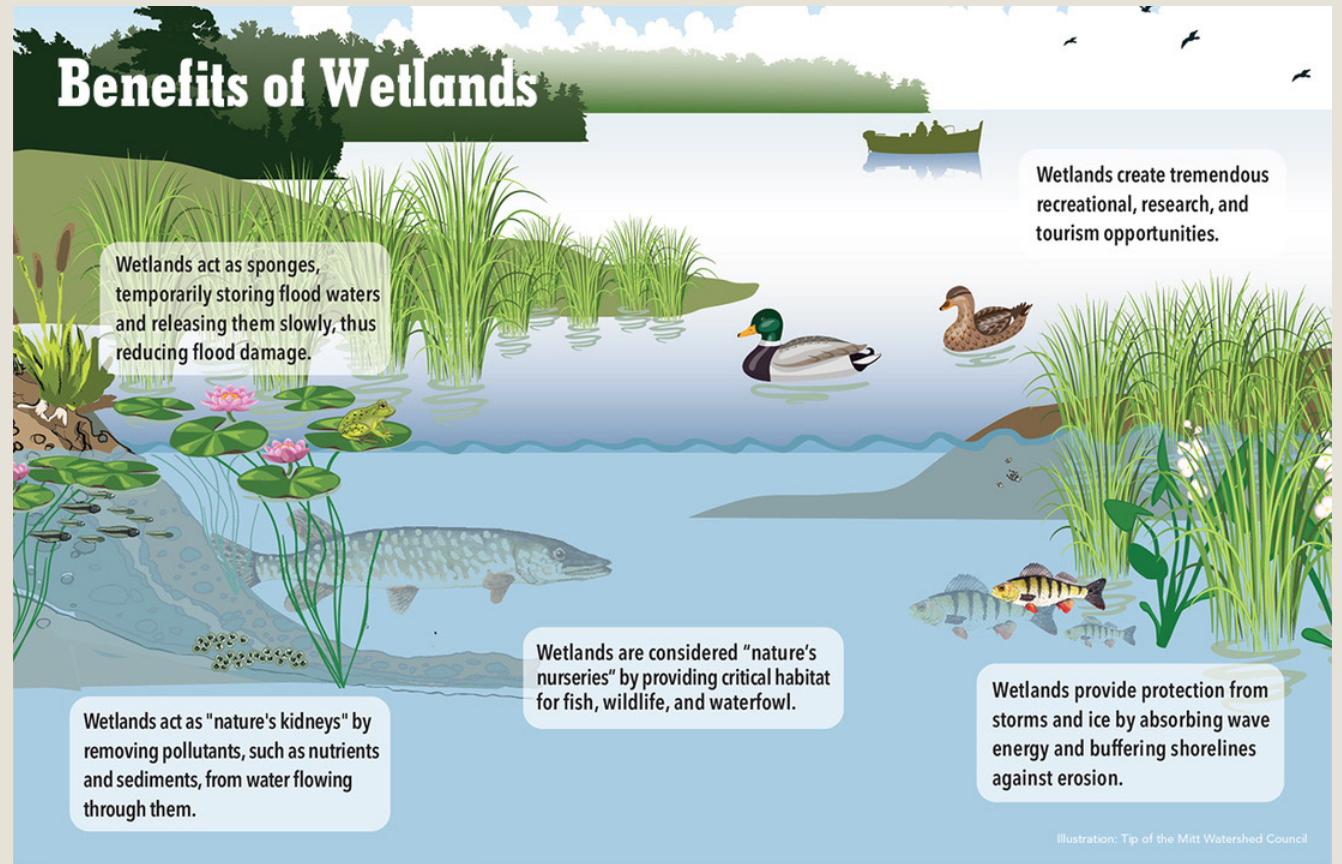
*Your actions can help  
keep our water clean*



## Wetland Services

Wetlands are a critical part of our environment helping reduce flooding, clean water, provide habitat, and offer other benefits:

- **Water storage** – wetlands act as a sponge to absorb water during floods and slowly release the water back during droughts. They also slow down the water's momentum and decrease erosion.
- **Water filtration** – wetlands allow pollutants like sediments and nutrients to be absorbed or settle to improve water quality.
- **Habitat and nurseries**– wetlands are diverse ecosystems that are home to a wide variety of plants and animals.
- **Recreation** – wetlands offer opportunities to hike, birdwatch, canoe and enjoy nature along with educational opportunities for youth and adults alike
- **Reduction of mosquito populations** – a healthy, functioning wetland can actually reduce mosquito populations by providing proper habitat for the natural enemies of mosquitos and by preventing or reducing flooding.



## Together We Can Protect Our Wetlands

- DO plant native vegetation on your property and remove invasive species.
- DO protect the required 20 foot natural vegetation buffer around the wetlands.
- Do not remove trees, stumps, roots and other natural vegetation from the wetlands or buffer.
- Do not mow in the wetlands or within the buffer.
- Use of chemicals, fertilizers and pesticides in the wetlands or the 20 foot natural vegetation buffer is prohibited. For information about invasive species removal, call 517.853.4614.
- Do not put yard waste or "fill material" (soil/ dirt, stones, mulch, etc.) in wetlands or within the 20 foot natural vegetation buffer.
- Contact the Planning Department at 517.853.4560 if you are planning construction or landscaping within 40 feet of a wetland.
- Contact Public Works at 517.853.4440 if you are moving dirt or disturbing soil. A Soil Erosion/ Sedimentation Control Permit may be required.
- Inform neighbors, developers, and state and local decision-makers about the importance of wetlands.