



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Tihart Preserve (site visit)
1000 Tihart Road | Okemos, MI
Wednesday, June 12, 2024, 6 PM

PRESENT: Board Members: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay, Mark Stephens, Yu Man Lee.
ABSENT: Trustee Marna Wilson
STAFF: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator
TOWNSHIP: None.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Hiller called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

A. June 12, 2024

Vice Chair Thomas moved to approve the June 12, 2024 Agenda to place on file. Board member Fay seconded.

Voice vote: unanimous.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

A. April 10, 2024

Commissioner Stephens makes a motion to place the April 10, 2024 minutes on file as amended. Board member Fay seconded.

Voice vote: Unanimous.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

A. None.

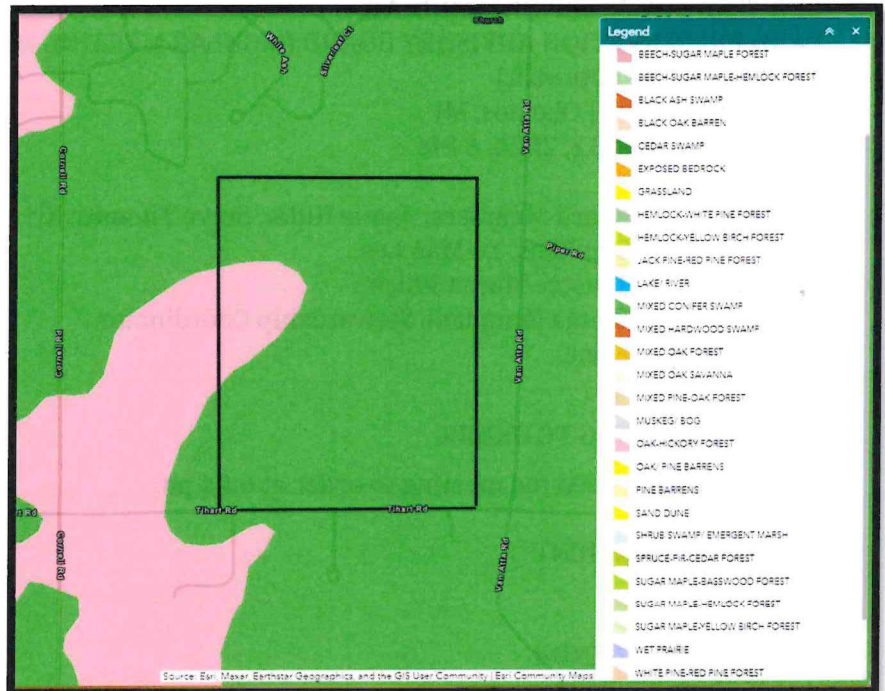
7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Tihart Preserve

a. Land use history

i. Michigan Natural Features Inventory, Michigan Vegetation Map Circa 1800

1. Shows historic vegetation in Tihart Preserve to be majority mixed conifer swamp with a smaller portion oak-hickory forest



2.
 - ii. Historic map (See Exhibit A) shows farmed areas, as well as drains and ditches that intersect the property
 - iii. Tihart Preserve Overview (from acquisition files)

Survey/Land

- 133.51 acres
- **According to Ms. Linn**
 - 48.5+ acres of rolling uplands
 - 64.24 acres of wetland
 - 5.68 acres of drains/storm ditch rows
 - High hilltop vista with steep ridges
 - Older growth woodlot
 - Major wildlife corridor
- Federally Designated Floodplain???
- **Soils** (from a map):

Boyer Spinks Loamy Sand	Houghton Muck	Oshtemo Spinks Loamy Sand	Capac Loam
Matherton Sandy Loam	Spinks	Marlette Loam	

- **Yankee Appraisal**
 - Mixed uplands and lowlands

Land History

- Previous owner: Judy A. Linn
- This land was the original site of the George B VanAtta's homeplace (1879)
- 1926ish owned by Peter and Julia Tihart
- Land had appraised for \$2,120,000.00
- Farm land used to be mint and soybeans

Previous Management Plan

1.
 - None found

Minutes – Land Preservation Advisory Board

June 12, 2024

Page 3 of 7

- b. Past & present stewardship efforts
 - i. See document in Exhibit B for summaries
- c. Future goals & projects
 - i. See document in Exhibit B for summaries
 - ii. Commissioner Lee would like to add that the property (especially when viewed post brush hogging) is very suitable turtle nesting habitat
 - 1. Commissioner Lee recommends that May-June are observed as turtle nesting times in case there are indeed turtles nesting at the site. Staff can utilize this timeline to plan mowing for native plantings

8. REPORTS

B. STAFF REPORT: Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell

- a. Update on current preservation projects & issues
 - i. Introduce Rachel Mickey as the newest Stewardship Field Assistant staff. Rachel is in her senior year at Michigan State University studying plant biology and environmental sustainability.
 - ii. Staff updates the board on preserve signage ribbon cutting event to take place during the August 14 board meeting at 6:00 pm. The ribbon cutting will take place at Davis Foster Preserve and put an emphasis on preserve rules and ordinances, as well as sustainable recreation of these sites.
 - 1. Issues that the board will focus on will include dogs off leash, picking up pet feces, and motorized vehicles on the preserves.
 - 2. A native wildflower walk will take place after the ribbon cutting to discuss the benefits of stewarding land preserves.
 - iii. MCC June Stewardship Calendar

JULY CONNECT LEARN CONSERVE MCC

STEWARDSHIP SATURDAYS
These workdays occur every other Saturday year round

- July 13th, Native Planting at Davis Foster Preserve (5120 Van Atta Road)
- July 27th, Native Planting at Tihart Preserve (1000 Tihart Road)
We will be transplanting wintergreen, bristly greenbrier, showy goldenrod & smooth blue aster

WEEKDAY WARRIORS: Occurs every other Thursday

- July 18th, hand pull Japanese hedge parsley from along the trail at Red Cedar Glen Preserve (End of Sylvan Glen Drive in Okemos)

TRAILSIDE ECOLOGY RIVER WALK EDITION
Learn about our local flora & fauna, get to know our parks & preserves personally!

- Meet at Red Cedar Natural Area (1455 Oscoda Road) and take a river walk with us as we identify wildlife, plants, fungi, and insects! Get up close with a local native plant called green dragon - This is one you won't want to miss!

STEWARDSHIP

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4 STEWARDSHIP OFFICES CLOSED	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30-12PM
14	15	16 TRAILSIDE ECOLOGY 6-7:30 PM	17	18 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30-12 PM
28	29	30	31			

ALL EVENTS ARE WEATHER DEPENDENT & MAY BE CANCELLED THE DAY OF

1.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Yu Man Lee

- a. The commission discussed green grant proposals at the May meeting. Wetland educational signage should be funded for 2024, stewardship staff can begin

Minutes – Land Preservation Advisory Board

June 12, 2024

Page 4 of 7

working on ordering said signage.

D. PARK COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Mark Stephens

- a. Park Commission is currently developing a plan and generating ideas for the Okemos Road parcel recently acquired in 2022. Currently an assessment for land use is being completed.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

- A. None.

10. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

- A. Board member Parnell mentioned a 1 acre wetland is for sale on Van Atta Road, for a potential acquisition. Staff will check on property.

***Note: Chair Hiller had to leave the board meeting.**

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, June 12, 2024 at 6 pm at the Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Haslett, MI 48840 (unless a site visit is scheduled. Location changes will be made within the 24 hours prior to the July meeting).

12. ADJOURNMENT

Board member Fay moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Stephens seconded.

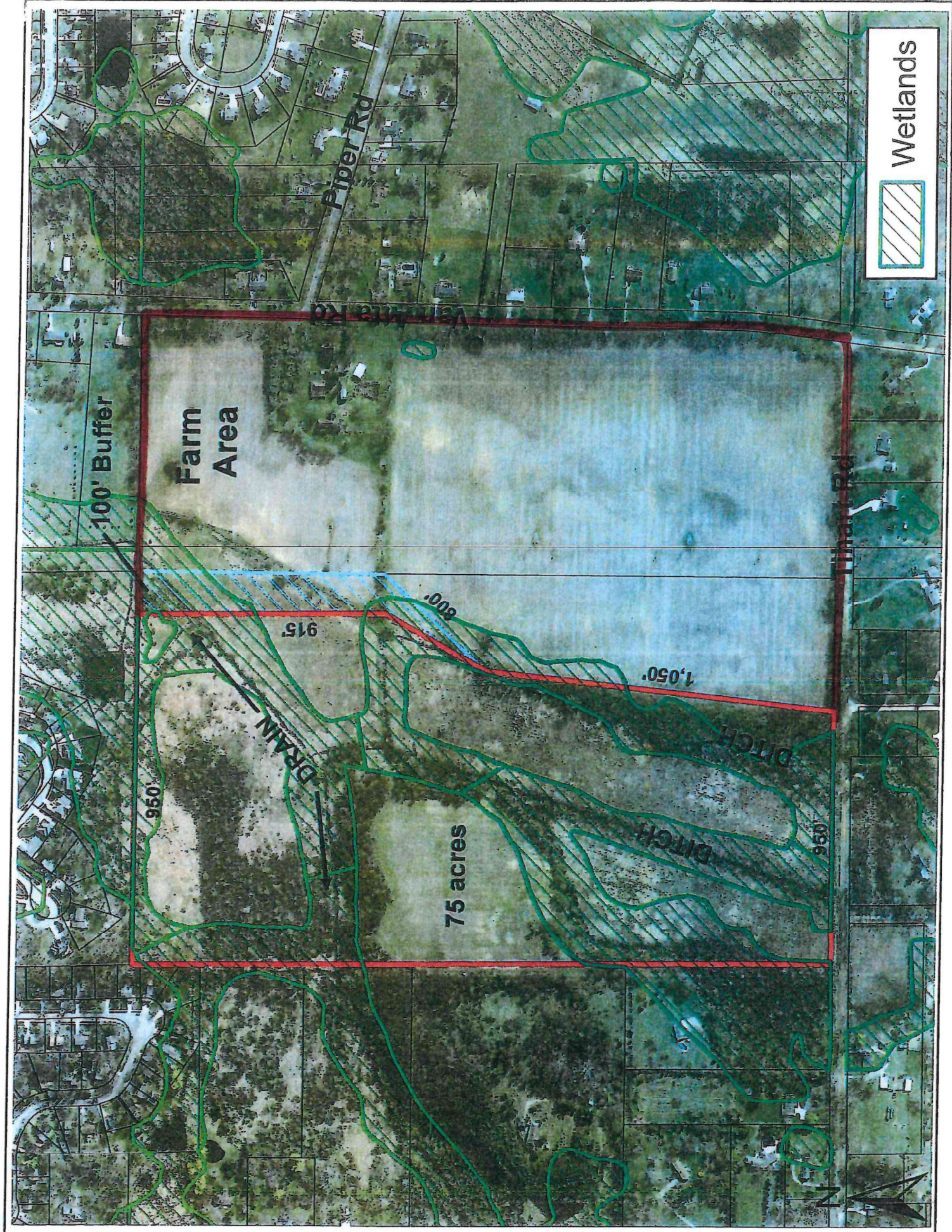
Voice vote: Unanimous

Vice Chair Thomas adjourned the meeting at 7:19 pm.

Exhibit

A

Tihart Property Land Use Map (pre-acquisition)



100' Buffer

Farm Area

75 acres

915

800'

1,050'

950'

DRAIN

DITCH

DITCH

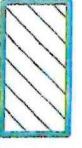
950'

Piper Rd

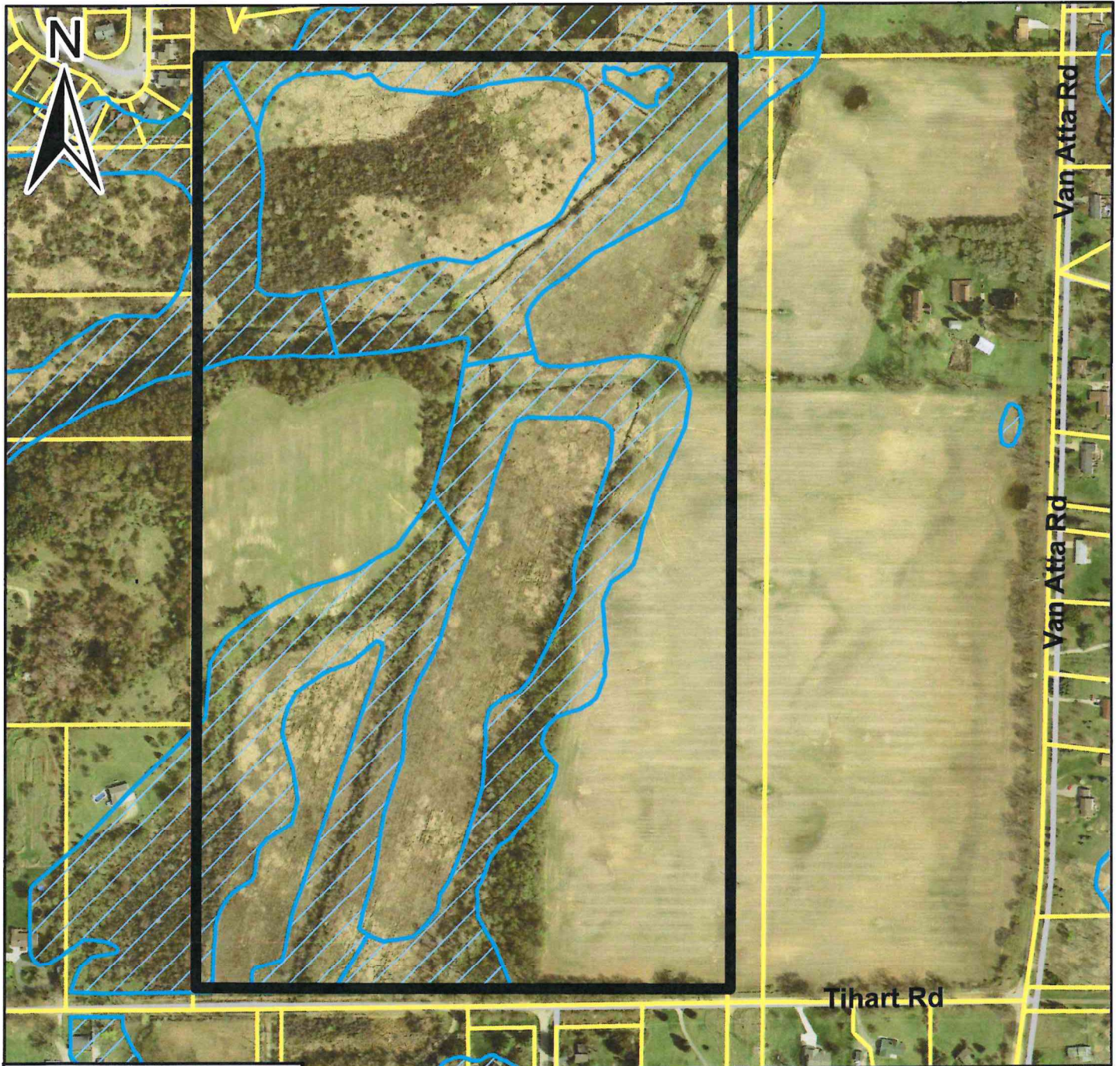
Valley Rd

Willet Rd

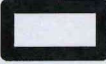
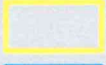


Wetlands

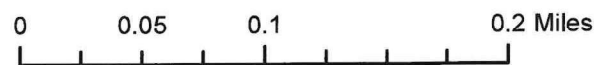


Tihart Preserve



Legend

-  Tihart Preserve
-  Parcels
-  Wetland
-  Roads



Parcel Number: 33-02-02-14-200-006
Area: 90 acres

Exhibit

B

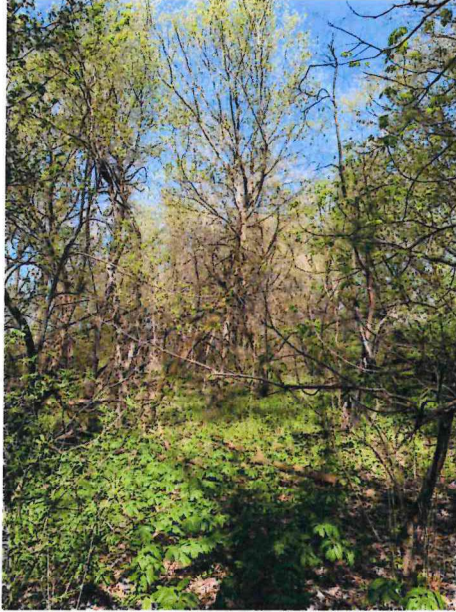
Tihart Preserve Stewardship & Land Management Efforts

Tihart Preserve Management & Stewardship

Invasive Species Management

1. Herbaceous species management:

- a. Garlic mustard; between the farmland and the edge of the wetland. Spring ephemerals are present, May apples, spring beauties, and butter cups.



- i.
- b. Spotted knapweed; located throughout historically farmed areas. Dense patches in some areas, but mostly individuals throughout.
 - i. Mostly prevalent where native species are not yet growing and thriving. A good management method may be to compete with as well as pull knapweed.

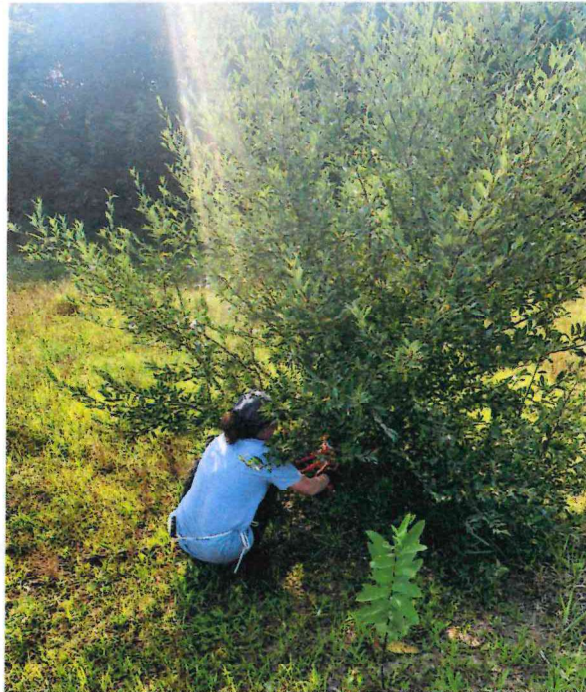


- 1.
- c. Reed canary grass; this is one of the priority species for management.

- i. Not yet fully established, small to medium sized patches throughout historically farmed areas. Surrounding wetlands are inundated and are a seed/spreading source for the rest of the preserve.
- ii. Chemical management is ongoing; contractual management is planned, but stewardship staff may take on the work for the 2024 season.
- d. Non-native thistles; field and bull thistle are establishing, but have responded well to mechanical and chemical management thus far.
 - i. Small to medium dense patches of field thistle. Individuals also scattered throughout the area.

2. Woody Species Management

- a. Autumn Olive; present throughout drier/upland sites of preserve
 - i. Has been managed since 2021 with cut-stump treatment by staff and volunteers. Plants cut will have to be managed again this year with basal bark chemical spray and/or cut-stump treatment.
 - ii. Contractual management desired for back upland area with lots of remnant shrubby St. John's wort present. This stand has matured and is a big job to remove.



1.

- b. Siberian Elm; tree species spreading as a thick dense cluster on the NW edge of the farm field. This species is spreading quickly and densely and will most likely need contractual management for removal.
- c. Common buckthorn; individuals and some small to medium patches along the edge of the wetland areas

- i. Can be managed with basal bark and cut-stump treatment by staff and volunteers

Native Plant Restoration & Management

1. Remnant native species to note - some of these species are included to notate the presence of a remnant wetland seed bank in the historically farmed area of the preserve. *(ongoing list and not comprehensive)*

- Shrubby St. Johns wort (*Hypericum prolificum*)
- Great blue lobelia (*Lobelia siphilitica*)
- Joe pye weed (*Eutrochium maculatum*)
- Wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*)
- Swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)



- Fox sedge (*Carex vulpinoidea*)



- Horsetail/scouring rush

- White and red oak species
 - Hickory species
 - Dogwood species
- 2. 2021-2022 Native plantings** (seed collected from parks and preserves at remnant sites)
- Transplanting site; mountain mint, Joe pye weed, Solidago hispida, Solidago speciosa
 - Lots of deer browse and mortality. Mountain mint was the most successful at this site and is currently thriving.
 - Seed sowing; big bluestem, wafer ash, wild bergamot, mountain mint, bottle brush grass, purple meadow rue, whorled milkweed
- 3. 2023 planting**
- Transplanted area; fencing it in improved species survival
 - Species planted: butterfly weed, golden alexander, showy goldenrod, robin's plantain. Plants are doing very well, high bloom rate.



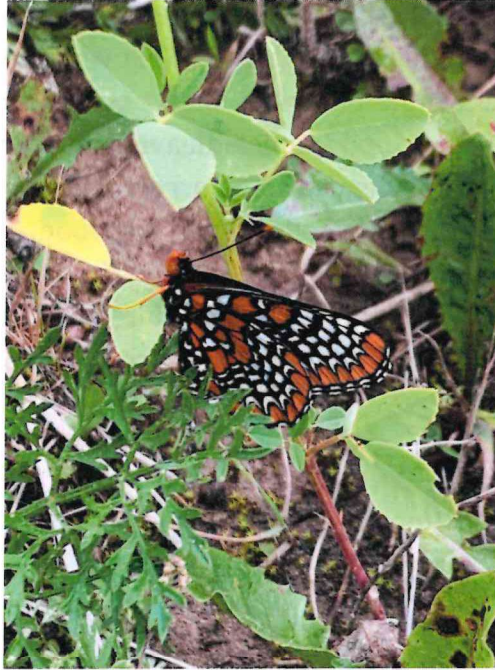
- **2023 Seed Sowing (Table 1);** Butterfly weed, early goldenrod, false Solomon's seal, flat-topped aster, hairy bushclover, hazelnut, common boneset, big bluestem, mountain mint, showy goldenrod, shrubby St. John's wort, thimbleweed, tick trefoil (panickedleaved, pointed-leaved, perplexed), witch hazel, pussytoes, big leaved aster, arrowleaf aster, pignut hickory, white turtlehead, virgin's bower, flowering dogwood, robin's plantain, running strawberry bush, ghost plant, foxglove beardtongue, American plum, Red oak, Carolina rose, black-eyed susan, white blue-eyed grass, bristly greenbrier, blue-stemmed goldenrod, horse gentian, golden alexander



- 4. 2024 brush hogging;** 5 acres of the front SE planting area was brush hogged down to 6 inches
 - This is to open up sunlight for seedlings and plantings from the past three years. Encouraging growth of native seedlings is the priority at this point.

Wildlife & Insect species (ongoing list)

- Baltimore checkerspot



- Monarch butterfly
- Dogbane beetle
- Milkweed beetle
- Spittle beetle
- Eastern tiger swallowtail
- American kestrel
- Eastern meadowlark
- Red tail hawk
- American woodcock
- Eastern towhee

Future Management and Projects

1. The main goal for this preserve is to continue to remove and manage priority invasive species, and plant/sow native species into the area (please see Table 1 for a list of plantings)
 - a. Priority invasive species include: Reed canary grass, phragmites, autumn olive, oriental bittersweet, and siberian elm tree
 - b. Priority native species will be transplanted and seeded in some areas closer to the northern half of the 'farm field' to integrate more native species onto this part of the site.
 - i. Invasive species are more dense in this area, so we will continue to nurture the areas that are doing the best
 - ii. The native seed bank remains strong in some northern areas of the preserve. I.e. large remnant populations of shrubby St. John's wort

(*Hypericum prolificum*) are thriving within a site that is dense with autumn olive. This autumn olive will be managed to aid in the expansion of remnant *Hypericum prolificum*

- c. Prescribed burns will be pursued at this site, but in the meantime brush hogging will be utilized to create more light for native plantings
 - i. A prescribed burn contractor will assess the site prior to any planned burns
- 2. Access trails for staff and stewardship will be created and continue to evolve. These will not be established for walking paths, but for access to complete stewardship work. They will not be maintained year round unless staff needs them maintained.
- 3. Wetland areas will be inventoried and a plan for management will be enacted - these spaces have tougher invasive species to manage, so these are not necessarily priority sites at the moment

Table 1.
2021-23' Native Seed Sowing at Tihart Preserve

<i>Antennaria parlinii</i>	<i>Aster macrophyllus</i>	<i>Aster urophyllum</i>
<i>Carya glabra</i>	<i>Chelone glabra</i>	<i>Clematis virginiana</i>
<i>Cornus florida</i>	<i>Desmodium glutinosum</i>	<i>Desmodium paniculatum</i>
<i>Desmodium perplexum</i>	<i>Erigeron pulchellus</i>	<i>Euonymus obovatus</i>
<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	<i>Lespedeza hirta</i>	<i>Monotropa uniflora</i>
<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	<i>Prunus americana</i>	<i>Prunus virginiana</i>
<i>Quercus rubra</i>	<i>Rosa carolina</i>	<i>Rosa (palustris)?</i>
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	<i>Sisyrinchium albidum</i>	<i>Smilax hispida</i>
<i>Solidago caesia</i>	<i>Solidago juncea</i>	<i>Triostium aurantiacum</i>
<i>Zizia aurea</i>	<i>Andropogon gerardi</i>	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>
<i>Maianthemum racemosum</i>	<i>Doellingeria umbellata</i>	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
<i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i>	<i>Asclepias exaltata</i>	<i>Solidago speciosa</i>
<i>Hypericum prolificum</i>	<i>Anemone virginiana</i>	<i>Asclepias verticillata</i>
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>		