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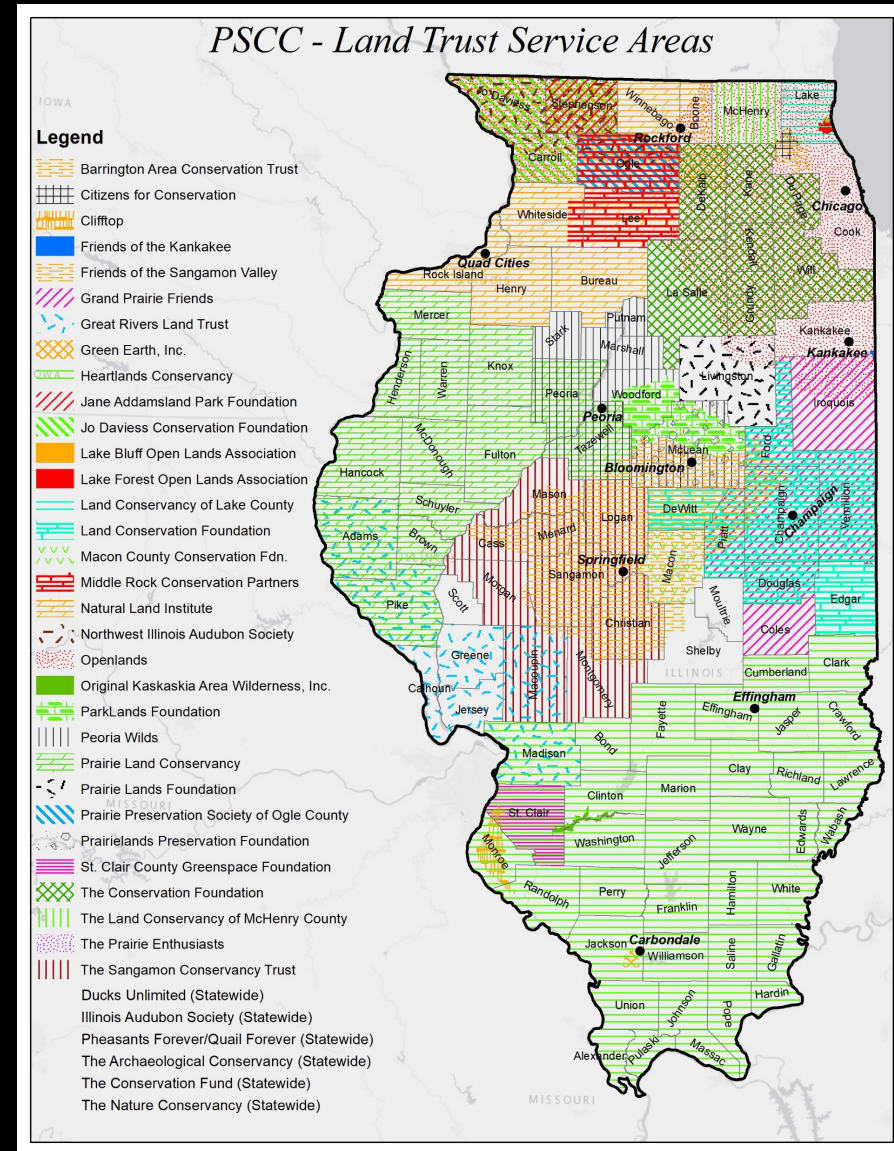
**ONSERVA**

**ALITION**

**Prairie State Conservation Coalition  
A Collective Voice for Land Conservation in Illinois**

# Conservation Land Trusts...and more!

- A COALITION OF ILLINOIS CONSERVATION LAND TRUSTS AND OTHER LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION GROUPS AND AGENCIES THAT PRESERVE AND STEWARD OUR NATURAL LANDSCAPE AND BIODIVERSITY FOREVER.





# Board of Directors

# 2024- 2026 Strategic Plan





# Working and Building Together



# OUR VALUES

*As a coalition of conservation organizations we champion the values of consistency, kindness, leadership, optimism, respect and teamwork in our commitment to:*

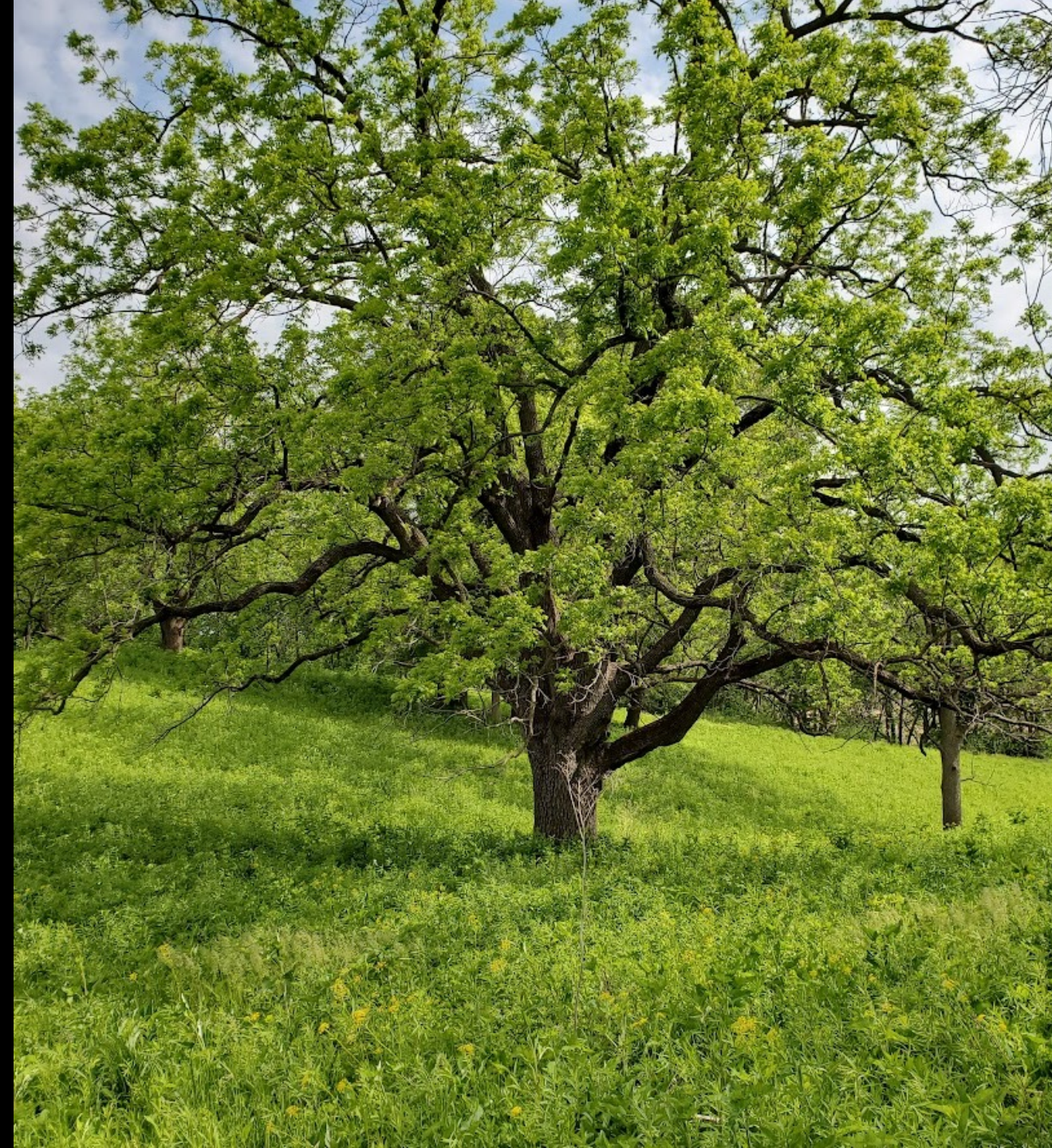
- Bringing land and water conservation & stewardship to the forefront
- Supporting all of our member organizations equally
- Developing sound policies that support natural areas
- Collaborating with diverse communities within Illinois
- Sharing expertise, energy and passion
- Honoring partners
- Bridging divides

# OUR FOCUS AND GOALS

Focus Area	Goals
Identity & Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marketing and outreach</li><li>• Identify audiences and target messaging</li><li>• Develop shared language and library</li><li>• Redefine and communicate vision, mission and values</li></ul>
Belonging & Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cultivate leadership for an inclusive coalition</li><li>• DEIJA education through learning and training</li><li>• Expand PSCC network and partnerships</li><li>• Develop a model for land repatriation to tribes</li><li>• Strengthen the infrastructure for conservation land trusts</li><li>• Build a vast coalition for conservation and stewardship</li></ul>
Leadership & Longevity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Align, access and pursue all initiatives and funding</li><li>• Develop an annual policy platform</li><li>• Build capacity for organizational longevity</li><li>• Be a leader for permanent, sustainable funding sources for conservation</li><li>• Cultivate a culture of private philanthropy for conservation</li></ul>



# Photologue 2023 Places



*Natural Land*

*Institute's*



**CARL &**

**MYRNA**



**NYGREN**

**WETLAND PRESERVE**



A project to restore natural areas in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources - Conservation 2000 Program and the USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service - Wetland Reserve Program.



### DIG BLUESTEM



Big Bluestem is Illinois' official state grass and is one of the most common prairie grasses found here at Forest Park. It can grow to over 10 feet tall and is easily distinguished from other prairie grasses by its distinctive seed head, which resembles a turkey's foot and earns it the popular nickname "Turkey's Foot". Chippewa Indians used the roots of Big Bluestem to alternate stomach pain, and extracts from the leaf blades were used as a wash for sores and as an analgesic (painkiller). The plants were also used to fasten the support poles of dwellings, and maintained grass was laid on hot stones to prevent steam from escaping during cooking.



Goldenrod is easily recognized by its golden inflorescence made up of many small flowers on spreading branches near the top of the plant. Showy goldenrod may grow up to 6' tall and, along with other goldenrod species, is often blamed for seasonal allergies, a perception which often gives it an undesirable stigma. However, goldenrods in general are insect (as opposed to wind) pollinated and therefore are unlikely to be the cause of allergies. Instead, ragweed, which comes into bloom at the same time as many goldenrod species, is typically the true culprit.



Composite Plant is another in representation to a sunflower and may grow from 3-6' in height. It's stems indicate the boundary for the leaves to stop. Some indicate the boundary in order to minimize the effects of the hot midday sun by reducing the leaf's surface area. The sticky sap from the leaves of this plant, once dried, was often used as glue by Native American children.



Prairie plants have root systems that grow deep into the soil. In fact, some of them, such as Big Bluestem and Compass Plant, have roots that can grow as deep as 15 feet! Many prairie plants also have a web of secondary roots. This network of roots helps hold the soil together when the wind blows or when rain floods the ground. The three major functions of roots are absorbing water and inorganic nutrients, anchoring the plant to the ground and storing food and nutrients. In general, roots grow in the direction of the most suitable environment. Elements such as soil composition, water, and air are all important determinants in this.

### Indian Grass



This native grass was once found in every county in Illinois and was a dominant grass in the tallgrass prairie that covered most of Illinois during historical times. Indian Grass was also common in savannas, black soil prairies, and hill prairies. It can still be found in prairie remnants (original areas of native prairie plants) along railroads and in older, undisturbed cemeteries. Indian grass, along with Big Bluestem, is one of the most common grasses found in Forest Park's prairie plantings.

### Wild Bergamot



A member of the ever-popular mint family, Wild Bergamot is well represented within Forest Park prairie. It is easily identified by its purple flowers, square stems and fragrant leaves. Wild Bergamot is a popular attractant for butterflies and other insect-pollinators. Bergamot tea is used for a variety of medicinal purposes as well as a well-known and well-liked herbal tea.

### White Wild Indigo



White Wild Indigo belongs to the bean family, and reflects the common characteristics of this family in the shape and arrangement of its flowers, as well as the rubbery texture of its leaves, which are divided into leaflets of three. While this native prairie plant is known to be toxic to livestock, it was used by both European settlers and Native Americans for its medicinal properties.

This project was made possible through donations to the

# Illinois Wildlife



# Preservation Fund

















# Illinoisans in Portland





Casper Bluff Land & Water Reserve

Archaic Culture 9500 B.C.—1000 B.C.  
Woodland Culture 1000 B.C.—1100 A.D.  
Mississippian Culture 1100 A.D.—1641 A.D.

Bird Effigy Mound



Aiken Mound Group

The Aiken mound group was originally documented by pioneer archaeologist, William Baker Nickerson. In 1898 Nickerson documented a detailed map showing 51 mounds at this location: 38 long, wall-like structures, 12 conical mounds, and one bird effigy along with an elliptical enclosure. The effigy is the last known intact bird effigy in Illinois. Nickerson recorded the bird as measuring 79' from head to tail with a 216' wingspan, and is 3.5' tall at the center. He noted that the tail was slightly flared, but the flare is now masked by eroded soil that has filled in the area. It is believed that these mounds were constructed by people of the Effigy Mound culture. Effigy mounds were believed to reflect the religious beliefs of the effigy mound culture. This bird effigy probably represents some portion of the upper world. These hunter-gathering people lived in contiguous areas of Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, and Minnesota from approximately A.D. 700 - 1000.











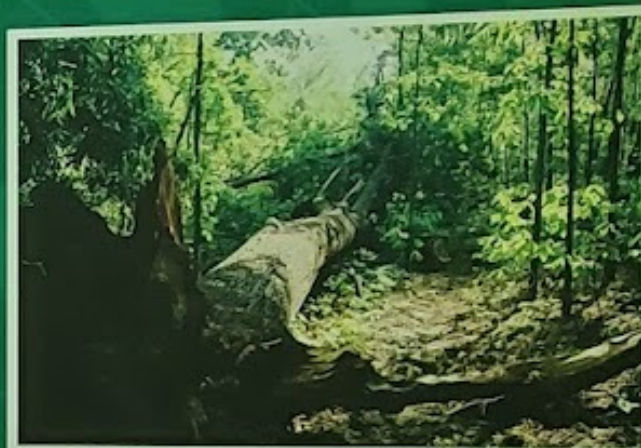


## A Recovering Landscape: *The Derecho*

May 8, 2009, brought widespread destruction to southern Illinois and Carbondale. A storm, initially referred to as an "inland hurricane," or derecho, produced heavy rains, large hail, and straight-line winds in excess of 100 miles per hour. The storm hit an area that spanned seven states and caused millions of dollars in damage, travelling more than a thousand miles in 24 hours.

Thousands of homes throughout the region were left without power for days or even weeks. Carbondale was nearly impassable for days due to fallen trees and debris left in the storm's wake, and cleanup efforts took months to restore a sense of normalcy to the city's streets. Compared to other derechos, the May 8 storm was of unusual intensity and is often called a "super" derecho.

The Brush Hill Preserve suffered extensive damage in the derecho, instantly changing the face of this forest. Due to the high number of fallen and hazardous trees, the preserve was closed for months until the trail could be cleared or completely rebuilt in some places. Though many trees were lost and damaged that day, the devastation set the stage for a new generation of trees that will fill in the gaps made by the derecho.



Snapped off at the roots, this black oak was the largest tree on the preserve, measuring over 45 inches in diameter. While falling, this massive tree crushed several others, creating a large gap in the canopy. Due to the rot resistant nature of this species, the remains of this tree will likely be visible for decades.















## AN ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVE

# ILLINOIS BEACH

Illinois Beach Nature Preserve has been formally dedicated as a sanctuary for native plants and animals. It is maintained in its natural condition so that present and future generations can see the Illinois landscape as it appeared in the past. This living example of our natural heritage is valuable for scientific studies and also provides habitat for rare plants and animals.

Illinois Beach was the first dedicated Illinois Nature Preserve. It is part of the Lake Michigan Lake Plain and is a prime example of "dune and swale" topography. A series of dry, sandy ridges and low, wet swales are the result of an actively moving lake shore following the retreat of the historic Wisconsin ice sheet. These localized features have resulted in highly variable soil and moisture conditions. The lower areas support marshes, sedge meadows and wet prairies. Pannes also are found here — globally rare wetlands dominated by twig rushes and other unusual plants. The drier ridges support sand savannas and dry prairies, while the foredunes nearest the shoreline provide habitat for plants that can survive extreme heat and drought.

Visitors are encouraged to experience this fragile preserve, but must remain on designated trails. Access south of the Dead River is prohibited because of many sensitive species and ongoing scientific research. Please respect the importance of this nature preserve by not disturbing or removing anything. All features are protected by law.



Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission







# People







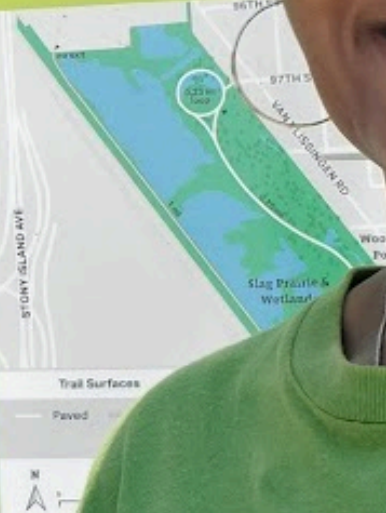








# Marian R. Byrnes Natural Area



Named for local environmental activist Marian R. Byrnes, this park contains one of Chicago's largest natural areas. With over 140 acres of wetland, prairie, and savanna, this is a great place to observe wildlife such as marshbirds, frogs, turtles, and deer.

After extensive ecological restoration and the construction of a multipurpose trail, Marian R. Byrnes Park now provides residents and visitors with a peaceful space to relax and connect with nature.

For more information about Chicago Park District Natural Areas, visit our website: [www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/nature](http://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/nature)

Special thanks to the following for the use of their photos: Allen American blog garden, Chelsea/Graceland's Looking for a Frog, Scott Lewis (flickr), Chicago MacGowan/My Range (flickr), Robert, Kent McFarland (flickr), Vanessa, Kyle/Reservoir (flickr), Dan's (flickr), and...

RULES





AN ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVE  
**RIDGETOP HILL PRAIRIE**

Ridgetop Hill Prairie Nature Preserve has been formally dedicated as a sanctuary for native plants and animals. It is maintained in its natural condition so that present and future generations can see the Illinois landscape as it appeared in the past. This living example of our natural heritage is valuable for scientific studies and provides habitat for rare plants and animals.

This 17.4-acre preserve contains high-quality glacial drift hill prairies dominated by little bluestem and side oats grama with prairie wildflowers such as purple prairie clover, pale purple coneflower, and blazing star. The preserve also supports upland and bottomland forests and lesser quality prairie communities that are undergoing restoration. The Mackinaw River, noted for its high diversity of mussel, flows along the base of the bluffs.

Visitors are welcome, but please protect and perpetuate the nature preserve by not disturbing or removing anything. All features are protected by law.

Illinois Nature Preserve Commission

 **PARKLANDS FOUNDATION**

**RIDGETOP HILL PRAIRIE PRESERVE**

The central panel of the sign is a display board containing several informational items:
 

- A large white sheet of paper on the left side.
- Two small photographs of birds, one at the top and one in the middle.
- A central green poster with text and images.
- A poster at the bottom left with the heading "OK MAYBE NOT OK" and several circular icons.
- A poster at the bottom right with a large white silhouette of a dog and the text "NO DOGS".
- Other smaller informational cards and maps.





# Central IL Conservation Land Trust Meeting



Story

PRAIRIE LAND CONSERVANCY

mission is to preserve  
and sustainable ag  
Prairie Land Conser  
division of Pr

resource conservation & dev

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are, including

PRAIRIE LAND CONSERVANCY

Screamers









St. Clair County Greenspace  
**Bluff Park**  
trail

KEEP TRAILS TO THE RIGHT





 PRAIRIE STATE  
CONSERVATION  
COALITION

PRAIRIESTATECONSERVATION.ORG



# Welcome!

## Stormont Hauss Nature Preserve

Clifftop acquired this nature preserve from the estate of the late David Stormont in October 2020. This acquisition was made possible through a generous financial grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation.

The preserve has been dedicated as an "open space" preserve through a perpetual easement with the IL Nature Conservancy since March 2021.

The nature preserve is 84 acres in size and protects 64 acres of high quality, mature upland oak-hickory forest with rocky, high gradient intermittent streams with waterfalls, slot canyons and sandstone cliffs.

Clifftop preserves and protects the site's diverse landscapes and associated wildlife for future generations to enjoy. Clifftop has developed a one mile long nature trail for public education and appreciation of this unique high quality natural area.





JOHN DEERE

Clifftop  
White Rock VTP

825









**WELCOME Exploration Garden.**  
AT CLINTON HILLS CONSERVATION PARK

**The Exploration Garden's Beginning**  
With the generous support of many in 2020 Heartlands Conservancy began the construction of the first section of this former golf course that the Clinton Hills Conservation Park has a public demonstration garden and pollinator meadow. The new garden will feature wildflower pollinator meadows, native grasses, invasive resistant shrubs, and the Conservancy's "Learn, Share and Explore" as the site changes through time and continues to progress. Explore, Learn, Grow! We're growing!

**The Pollinator Meadow of a Glance**  
This meadow may look simple, but when you look closer, it is a beautiful place with many different kinds of plants and flowers. The seed mixes for birds, bees, butterflies, and other pollinators.

**Native and Exotic**  
This meadow is a mix of native and exotic plants. Native plants are those that have been in the area for a long time. Exotic plants are those that have been brought in from other places. These plants are chosen for their ability to attract pollinators and to be easy to maintain. Some of the plants in the meadow are: Black-eyed Susan, Red-top, and Yellow Top.

**Providing Native Plants for Native Pollinators**  
Pollinators are important for many reasons. They help plants to reproduce, and they are a part of our ecosystem. Many of the plants in the meadow are native to the area and are important for pollinators. Some of the plants in the meadow are: Black-eyed Susan, Red-top, and Yellow Top.

**Heartlands Conservancy**  
1000 Clinton Hills Road, Clinton, MO 64603  
Phone: 660-884-4444 | Email: info@heartlandsconservancy.org



EDWARD F. VASSALLO  
LAND & WATER RESERVE



# Edward F. Vassallo LAND & WATER RESERVE

EST.  
2014



















# Land Conservation Conference

- SAVE THE DATES FOR 2025: MARCH 5-7.....
- **20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY!!**





**THANK  
YOU!**