

WHO BENEFITS?  
WHAT IS DONE?  
WHY DO WE DO IT?

Extensive conservation efforts are underway throughout Northwest Indiana. In Hobart, these efforts improve water quality conditions throughout Hobart Marsh and protect the Lake George watershed.

WHO

We all benefit from conservation no matter how involved or removed you are from the process. Conservation practices affect everything from our food supply, air quality, climate, water quality, and our mental and physical well-being.

- Individuals
- Municipalities
- Communities
- Developers
- Farmers
- Government

WHAT

The earth is made up of fundamental natural resources including air, water, soil, minerals, plants, and animals. Conservation is the practice of nurturing these resources to ensure that all living things can benefit from them, now and in the future.

- Land Stewardship

Care and management of the land and its resources.
- Tree Planting (Reforestation)

Establishing trees in areas adapted to woodlands.
- Mitigation Banking

Replacement of wetland functions through the creation or restoration of wetlands.
- Soil Conservation & Erosion Control

Preventing the loss of soil particles due to rain, wind, or water-flow.
- Seed Collection (Seed Banks)

Collecting and storing seeds of valuable plant species for protection from extinction.
- Stormwater Management

Water conservation practice to increase permeability and ground water recharge.

WHY

Humans rely on natural resources for sustenance. Engaging in conservation not only establishes a connection to the natural world, it helps us live healthier more productive lives while preserving these resources for future generations.

- Water

Removes pollutants, provides flood control, and increases ground water recharge.
- Biodiversity

Improves native plant and animal habitat.
- Infrastructure

Prevents natural disasters from damaging bridges, roads, and buildings.
- Smart Growth

Enables higher density development among high functioning open spaces.
- Education

Introduces students and residents to environmental education and stewardship.
- Human Connection

Fosters an emotional connection with the natural world while improving physical health.
- Aesthetic Improvement

Creates scenic open spaces that improve our health and reduce stress.
- Increased Property Value

Provides numerous economic benefits for communities.
- Air Quality

Removes pollutants through plant storage and oxygen production.
- Climate Regulation

Increases carbon sequestration and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.
- Provides Habitat

Creates biologically diverse natural open space.
- Recreation Opportunities

Creates open spaces and trails for active exploration.





# WHAT MAKES THIS PLACE SPECIAL? ANIMALS

*The natural areas in Hobart are home to unique and often rare plant and animal species.*



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**

Lithobates pipiens

**STATUS:**

State Species of Special Concern

**HABITAT:**

Permanent ponds, swamps, marshes, and slow-moving streams throughout forest, open, and urban areas

**FUN FACT:**

The northern leopard frog produces enzymes that are potential treatments for cancer.



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**

Emydoidea blandingii

**STATUS:**

State Endangered, Federal Candidate

**HABITAT:**

Wetlands with clean shallow water.

**FUN FACT:**

These turtles show no common signs of aging and are active and reproductive for up to 90 years.



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**

Rallus elegans

**STATUS:**

State Endangered

**HABITAT:**

Breeds in marshes, the nest is a raised platform built with marsh vegetation and covered by a canopy.

**FUN FACT:**

When it catches food on land, it often takes the item to water and dunks it before eating it.



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**

Cistothorus palustris

**STATUS:**

State Endangered

**HABITAT:**

Marsh wrens occupy wetlands year-round, using brushy thickets in the winter.

**FUN FACT:**

These birds cling to stems of wetland vegetation, shimmying up and down and belting out a series of gurgling, buzzy trills.



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**

Nycticorax nycticorax

**STATUS:**

State Endangered

**HABITAT:**

Common in wetlands, where they require aquatic habitat for foraging and terrestrial vegetation for cover.

**FUN FACT:**

A breeding Black Crowned Night-Heron will brood any chick that is placed in its nest—they don't distinguish between their own offspring and nestlings from other parents.





# WHAT MAKES THIS PLACE SPECIAL?

## PLANTS & NATURAL AREAS

*The natural areas in Hobart are home to unique and often rare plant and animal species.*



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**  
Agalinis auriculata

**STATUS:**  
State threatened,  
Globally rare and uncommon

**HABITAT:**  
Prairies, disturbed sites, prairie remnants along railroad rights-of-way, and open upland woods.

**FUN FACT:**  
Studies suggest this species is capable of self-pollination. It is believed it can obtain part of its nutrients from the roots of other plants.



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**  
Lathyrus venosus

**STATUS:**  
State threatened

**HABITAT:**  
Wet to dry habitats, prairies, disturbed sites, woods, riverbanks, slopes and shores.

**FUN FACT:**  
The dried roots are considered a lucky charm and can be used as a stimulant or tonic to treat convulsions and internal bleeding.



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**  
Viola pedatifida

**STATUS:**  
State threatened

**HABITAT:**  
Mesic to slightly dry black soil prairies, savannas, and loess hill prairies. Can indicate high quality prairie remnants.

**FUN FACT:**  
Seeds are released by natural mechanical ejection, falling to the ground several inches away from the mother plant.



**DESCRIPTION:**  
Areas featuring widely scattered trees with a grass-dominated ground layer on seasonally saturated, somewhat poorly drained to well-drained loam soils.

**PLANT COMMUNITIES:**  
Graminoids, forbs, woody plants, and deciduous trees.

**LOCAL EXAMPLE:**  
McMloskey's Burr Oak Savanna Nature Preserve



**DESCRIPTION:**  
Complex communities of dense tall grass species and other herbaceous plants. The term mesic indicates a moderate amount of moisture content in the black-soil (silt-loam) profile of these prairie.

**PLANT COMMUNITIES:**  
Native grasses (big bluestem & switchgrass), and wildflowers (blazing star, rattlesnake master, compass plant)

**LOCAL EXAMPLE:**  
Cressmoor Prairie Nature Preserve

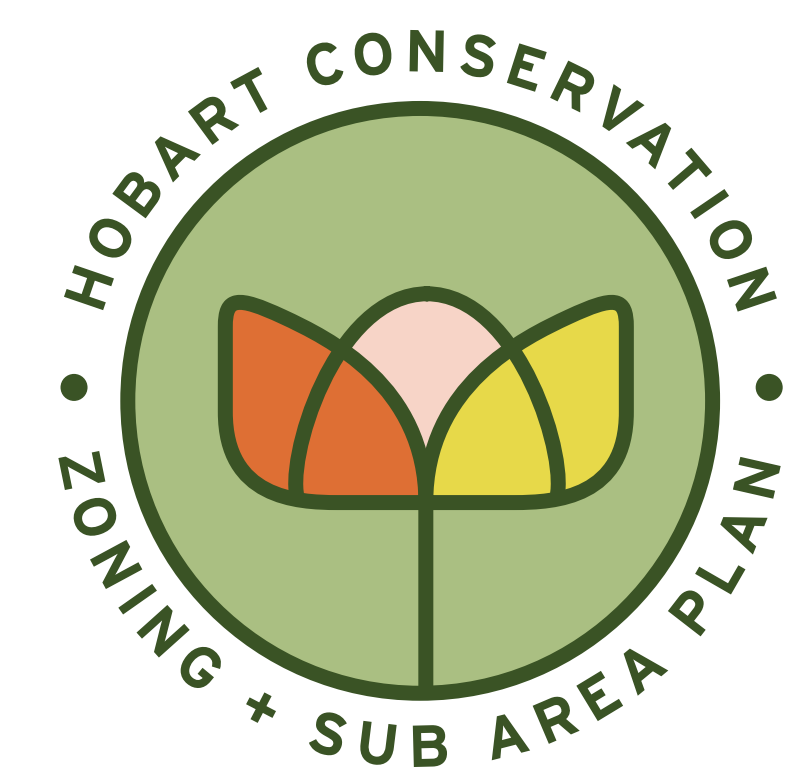


**DESCRIPTION:**  
A community of scattered trees with a canopy that is generally more open than in mesic forests, resulting from intermediate moisture content in the soil profile.

**PLANT COMMUNITIES:**  
Deciduous trees (White, red, and black oak, shagbark and mockernut hickory, flowering dogwood, and hop hornbeam)

**LOCALLY EXAMPLE:**  
Shirley Heinze Land Trust Hidden Prairie







# MYTHS v. FACTS OF CONSERVATION PRACTICES


*There are a number of misconceptions about conservation.  
Let's clear things up by addressing some common myths!*


## MYTH


## FACT


 *Wetlands and natural areas attract unwanted mosquitoes and other pests.*

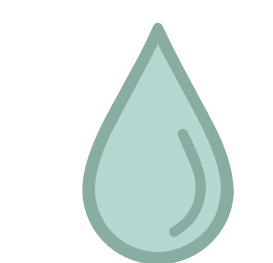
 Mosquito larvae are very important in aquatic ecosystems not only to provide food for many animals and organisms but, in their full-grown form, mosquitoes help to pollinate vital aquatic plants. **These ‘pesky’ insects are the key to species diversity and functional ecosystems.**

 *Unsupervised natural areas and woodlands harbor dangerous criminal activity.*

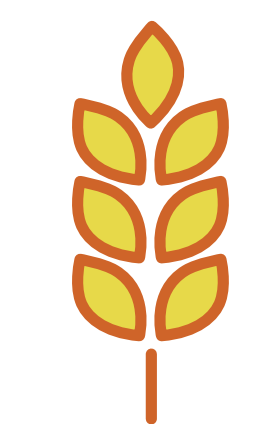
 Studies have shown that contact with nature **promotes stronger community ties and reduced crime rates.** Green space provides opportunities for communities to work together towards a united goal in ways that promotes social connection and discourages local crime.

 *Open burns and brush pile burns are unsafe for neighbors.*


 Controlled or prescribed burns are a land management strategy to reduce hazardous fires, properly manage forest and prairie ecosystems, and promote restoration and greenhouse gas abatement. **They are carefully performed by organized teams of trained individuals.**


 *If you don't see water, it is not a wetland.*


 Certain types of wetlands have **natural wet-dry cycles** such as ephemeral wetlands and fens and therefore may appear dry at the surface. Ephemeral wetlands are isolated ecosystems that temporarily hold water in spring and early summer, while fens are ground water fed and receive their water and nutrients from below the surface.


 *Conservation turns farmland into weeds.*

 Former agricultural lands acquired by conservation groups undergo a series of long-term treatment regimes to restore them to native landscape conditions. Restoration ecologists will repair significant erosion gullies, abandon drainage tiles to **restore native hydrology,** and plant native species to **re-establish native plant communities.**

 *Natural areas encroach on neighbors and reduce property values.*

 Conservationists tend to pay special attention to site boundary conditions as the potential for restoration often depends largely on the degree of degradation and adjacent land uses. Moreover, **evidence suggests that homes adjacent to natural areas and open spaces are valued at 8-20% higher than comparable properties.**

 *Tree removal disrupts natural processes and endangers plant and animal species.*

 Some restoration practices such as tree thinning, removal of invasive species, and clearing and disposal of debris may seem disruptive to the existing ecosystem. However, these practices are vital to re-establish healthy plant communities and species diversity. **Thinning the tree canopy allows light and water to penetrate the under-story and provide nutrients for growing species to thrive.**