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Chelsea Woman Fulfills Late Husband's Dream to Protect Their Family Land

CHELSEA, Michigan – November 3, 2025 - Legacy Land Conservancy has permanently protected 26 acres of farmland and forest along Mill Creek in Chelsea, completing a project that began with landowner Craig Maier and was carried forward by his wife, Anastasea (Stacy), in his memory.

"This is the land Craig and I spent our life together on—walking in the woods, swimming in the creek, and gazing at the beautiful views—so I'm pleased to see it permanently protected," landowner Stacy Maier said. "Craig worked on this for years with Legacy, so I know he would be proud of me for seeing his vision through."

Craig began working with Legacy in 2020 after attending a township land protection presentation where he met Susan LaCroix, Legacy's Land Protection Director. "Craig's passion for keeping his family's farmland protected for future generations was inspiring," LaCroix said.

Protecting Maier Farm without Craig is a bittersweet moment, but Legacy is honored to have helped bring his vision to life. Thanks to Stacy's persistence, Maier Farm is now protected through a conservation easement, which offers permanent protection of privately-owned land. A conservation easement conserves the land forever while allowing it to remain in private ownership.

Located in western Washtenaw County, Maier Farm includes 13 acres of farmland keeping rich, fertile soil in production and ensuring Michigan can grow food while sustaining jobs, strengthening rural communities, and supporting an agricultural industry that fuels the state's economy.

It also includes 1,500 feet of natural shoreline along Mill Creek, an important creek that feeds into the Huron River. This protective buffer of trees and plants helps keep the water clean, cool, and healthy for fish, wildlife, and people.

Mill Creek is the largest tributary in the Huron River watershed, and has a large impact on the drinking water of every community upstream—more than 650,000 people.

During a recent site visit, scientists found caddisfly and mayflies living in this portion of Mill Creek, small insects that signal a clean, healthy water ecosystem. Because these species can't survive in polluted or low-oxygen conditions, their presence shows the creek is in sound ecological condition. By protecting the land, Legacy is helping ensure the lush corridor will support the health of this vital waterway forever.

To purchase the Maier Farm conservation easement, Legacy worked over five years to secure a myriad of funding through the Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission (WCPARC) with support from The Carls Foundation.



"Legacy's work is about more than protecting land—it's about helping people achieve their vision for the places they love," Diana Kern Executive Director said. "Stacy's dedication ensures their land will remain now, and always—a lasting tribute to Craig's dream and their shared love for the land."

About Legacy Land Conservancy: Founded in 1971 as Michigan's first local land trust, Legacy is a nonprofit conservation organization that protects land in southern Michigan. Legacy's mission is to safeguard Michigan's land and water to support diverse, resilient, and thriving communities—*forever*. Legacy has helped to protect more than 11,000 acres of land, including eight nature preserves open for all to enjoy. In a testament to over 50 years of successful voluntary conservation, Legacy is accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission for adhering to a set of standards designed to ensure the organization's work will endure forever. Legacy is based in Ann Arbor, Michigan. For more information, visit www.legacylandconservancy.org.

About Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission (WCPARC): WCPARC's mission is to enhance the quality of life in the County by promoting a healthy lifestyle, efficiently providing high quality facilities and programs reflective of current and anticipated recreational needs of County residents and visitors—with particular emphasis on preserving fragile lands, water quality, wildlife habitat, creating pedestrian and greenway connections, and providing high quality services to those of all backgrounds. WCPARC manages Washtenaw County's Natural Area Preservation Program (NAPP) which was established in 2000 by the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners through an ordinance that provides procedures and standards for purchase and protection of natural areas and agricultural land by the County. In 2010, and again in 2020, voters chose to renew the county-wide millage that funds the program. For more information, visit <https://www.washtenaw.org/939/Natural-Areas-Preservation-Program>

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