



Vital Lands Illinois - A New Land Protection Program

Southwestern Illinois

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Steve Black, Coordinator
Linda Wegrzyn, Marketing Mngr.

Steve Black and Dave Eustis from the Southwestern Illinois RC&D attended a two-day workshop in July to help develop plans for the new Vital Lands Illinois program that is being developed by the Grand Victoria Foundation. This program will provide funding to local land trusts and non-profit groups to help purchase land and conservation easements to provide for natural habitats and open space. The workshop focused on developing the criteria that should be a part of the new program and the procedures that should be developed to help implement the effort. We look forward to this new initiative to help protect farms, forests, and other natural areas in Illinois.



Tax Incentives for Conservation Easements

The expanded federal income tax incentives for donated conservation easements are now available for the next two years. The provisions allow:

√ **A deduction of up to 50% (100% for farmers) of adjusted gross income for a maximum of 16 years.**

This basically would eliminate federal income taxes for qualifying farmers for the period of the deduction. Contact our office to find out more about this significant benefit.

IL-255 Corridor Natural Resource Assessment Completed

A study of the natural, cultural, and historic resource assets and issues within the IL-255 corridor has been completed by the Southwestern Illinois RC&D. The study used GIS data to complete the analysis and also conduct a stormwater runoff analysis, comparing existing land use with proposed land use. Madison County, who funded the study, has committed to use this analysis to facilitate planning for and with natural resources in an opportunistic way.

Although wetlands cover about only five percent of the land surface in the lower 48 states, they are home to 31 percent of plant species (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service)

The Land Conservancy

Willoughby Heritage Farm & Conservation Reserve Outing & Fundraiser



Fall 2008 - Willoughby Heritage Farm & Conservation Reserve Outing & Fundraiser

Discussion on Open Space Preservation / Wine & Cheese Tasting
Tours of Natural Areas & Restored Farmstead

Please join The Land Conservancy, a division of Southwestern Illinois Resource Conservation and Development, in a community event dedicated to discussing the importance of the preservation of open space right here in southwestern Illinois. This event will be an opportunity to meet with others that are interested in the conservation of open space, as well as to discover what tools and programs are available for land conservation within the region.

Since 2001 The Land Conservancy has assisted in the protection of over 4,000 acres within southwestern Illinois. These acres, whether in public ownership or private, will provide long-term benefits to a region that is rapidly losing greenspace to urban and commercial development. Ensuring that citizens and community leaders understand the importance of greenspace preservation to the quality of life for future generations is very important to The Land Conservancy. We therefore greatly value your attendance at this event.

Please join The Land Conservancy during its Willoughby Heritage Farm & Conservation Reserve Outing & Fundraiser:

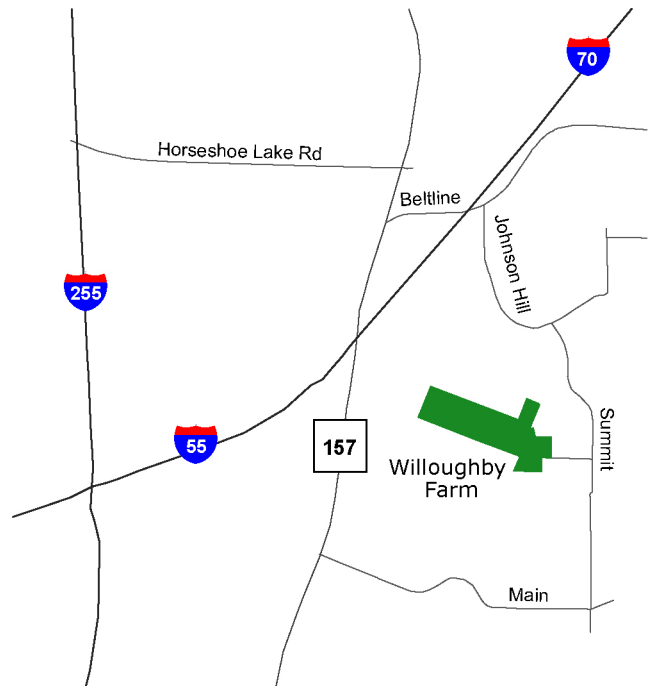
Date: October 25, 2008
3:00 - 4:30 Tours of Willoughby Heritage Farm & Conservation Reserve
4:30 - 5:30 Presentations
5:30 - 6:00 Social

Location: Willoughby Heritage Farm
Collinsville, Illinois

RSVP instructions below.

Willoughby Heritage Farm & Conservation Reserve, a facility of the Collinsville Area Recreation District, is an effort to recreate a 1940s era working farm along with a 30 acre conservation area. The Land Conservancy holds a perpetual conservation easement on the conservation area.

Casual attire suggested; appropriate footwear recommended for hiking on nature trails.



Willoughby Farm is located in Collinsville, behind Summit Elementary. Directions: From Route 157 take the Beltline to Johnson Hill, turn right at the stop sign onto Summit. Go one mile and follow the Willoughby Farm signs.

R.S.V.P. CARD

Dear Open Space Supporter: Thank you for your generous contribution to protecting open space within southwestern Illinois. Please include your response card as well as a check or credit card information within the enclosed envelope, or mail to: Southwestern Illinois Resource Conservation and Development, 406 East Main Street, Mascoutah, Illinois 62258.

Yes, I plan to attend the Willoughby Heritage Farm & Conservation Reserve Outing, sponsored by The Land Conservancy.

\$50 per person

\$80 per couple (R.S.V.P. by October 20 only; \$50 per person at door)

No, I cannot attend this event, however I have enclosed a contribution in the amount of \$.

No, I cannot attend this event, however I would like to receive additional information on conserving open space in southwestern Illinois.

Name/Business Name:

If Business, Contact Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone:

Total Amount Enclosed: Check No. *

Credit Card No:

Exp. Date Verification No.

Signature

* Please make check payable to: Southwestern Illinois Resource Conservation and Development



**MISSION OF THE
LAND CONSERVANCY**

To work regionally to protect agricultural, forest, and other natural lands in order to provide for open space, landscape diversity, sustainable agriculture, wildlife habitat, and conservation benefits for present and future generations.

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Environmental Resource Plan for Highland

The Southwestern Illinois Resource Conservation and Development recently began developing an environmental Resource Plan for the City of Highland. We are analyzing the agricultural, cultural, historic and natural resource conditions and opportunities for the community. Based upon this analysis, recommendations will be made for the protection of key resources defined by the study. This plan will provide the City of Highland with an important resource conservation tool that can easily be incorporated into the city's future planning processes.



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(618) 566-4451
www.swilrcd.org/tlc.htm
steve.black@rcdnet.net*

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*The Land Conservancy
A Division of Southwestern Illinois RCD
406 E. Main
Mascoutah, IL 62258*