

Board Members

President—Sandy Wright

Vice President—Rosie Kovacs

Secretary—Char Schuman

Treasurer—Tim Adams

Trustees—Nate Fuller, Marian Hancy, Gail Hesse, Jaclyn McLean, Subha Nagarajan, Gary Toll, Elaine Waterfield, Rhonda Watt

Past President—Sandy Burris

Honorary Trustees: Barbara Berg, Sue Cloak, Linda Feix, Pat Krebs, Pam Leszynski, Rich Parilla

Annual Meeting

by Sandy Wright

Our annual meeting on February 26th was held via Zoom, thanks to the efforts of board member, Gail Hesse. It was nice to see people from out of state who would normally not be able to attend in person. The slate of officers and trustees was unanimously accepted. Congratulations and thank you to Rosie Kovacs, vice president, Tim Adams, treasurer, and trustees, Nate Fuller, Gail Hesse, Subha Nagarajan, and Rhonda Watt.

Photo Contest

It is not too early to begin taking photos for our fourth annual photo contest! Photos taken at Old Woman Creek and not previously entered will be accepted via email later this summer. Check our Facebook page or the visitor center at Old Woman Creek for details.



Hungry, Hungry Heron
by Katie Myer

To promote public awareness and appreciation of the uniqueness of the estuary and to support stewardship programs that sustain the ecological integrity of Old Woman Creek.

WATER REPORTER



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PO Box 247
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Stream Data to Report Cards

by Bre Hohman

The watershed report cards for Old Woman Creek, Pipe, Creek and Mills Creek were recently released on World Water Day (March 22nd). These report cards help to communicate water quality monitoring data to watershed residents and local leaders that is collected by volunteers and staff. The use of report cards started in 2012 in response to feedback given by our volunteers, watershed groups, and the public that presentation of data in traditional ways was not being received. The report cards help to make sense of our data by summarizing it into letter grades which most of us have become accustomed to. This year also marks an exciting set of changes for the stream monitoring program. Data can now be explored on an interactive map on the Water Reporter, a data repository for volunteer monitoring groups all over the world. Check out the latest report cards and a link to the Water Reporter Map at [Erieconserves.org/your-home/watershed-report-cards/](https://erieconserves.org/your-home/watershed-report-cards/)



Explore the stream data now on Water Reporter after reading the Report Cards.

Thank you for your donations!

Late last year, we sent a letter to the Friends of OWC asking for help with a special fundraising opportunity through the Erie County Community Foundation. The Dorn Foundation offered to make a 2-1 match up to \$5000 for donations to our endowment fund. Your generous donations helped us raise over \$5300.

FOWC Celebrates 25 Years

Watch for announcements in the August newsletter.

What Makes a Nature Preserve Special?

We get a lot of questions from visitors, ranging from what birds will I see, to do you have a public bathroom, to why can't I walk my dog here. A lot of our answers are based on Old Woman Creek's official designation as a state nature preserve. While Old Woman Creek State Nature Preserve (OWC SNP) is a place for everyone, the same is not true for every activity.

Before we get into what activities are or aren't allowed at OWC SNP, let's learn about what Ohio's state nature preserves are and why we have them. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources is the agency responsible for the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves which was established in 1975. Today that are 140 state nature preserves. These properties are held in trust for the citizens of Ohio and future generations and are our best examples of Ohio's natural heritage. They are diverse areas of land that contain remnants of Ohio's pre-settlement past, rare and endangered species and wondrous geological features. The preservation of these properties allows visitors to experience some of Ohio's unique and fragile habitats like bogs and fens, prairies with endangered plants and one of Ohio's last naturally functioning estuaries.

Each state nature preserve has articles of dedication that contain terms restricting the use of the land that provide for its "preservation and protection against modification, encroachment or other use that would destroy its natural conditions." Turning our attention to OWC SNP, our trail system was established in a small portion of the preserve. The total preserve acreage is 573. However, the public trails only allow access to 60 acres. The remaining 513 acres are set aside for scientific research and preservation of natural habitat. This was done so that human impact would be limited to a small portion of the preserve, and so that visitors could explore and experience.

our coastal wetland and estuary. Like other state nature preserves, you need access permits for activities including kayaking, canoeing, research, and collecting from the preserve. Permitting allows staff to restrict human impact on our ecosystem.

In addition to access permits, there are other rules that are standard for state nature preserves that differ from state or metro parks. Pets are not allowed. This can be hard to understand as we all like to walk our pets in beautiful areas, but excess animal waste and potential wildlife interactions are too much of a disturbance to the preserve ecosystems. Bicycles are also not allowed on trails, as the impact is also potentially too great. There are bicycles racks in the parking lot, so you can ride to the preserve and then explore on foot.

OWC SNP is unique in a couple of ways from the other state nature preserves. Our visitor center was built so visitors could discover more about the preserve and its dual designation as a National Estuarine Research Reserve. The staff programs offer hands-on, science-based learning experiences about OWC SNP, our coastal wetland and estuary and our connections to Lake Erie. These programs provide an understanding of why OWC SNP is special and protected

Please check out the Estuary Explorations calendar of events to find out what programs we are offering this year. Copies will soon be available at the visitor center.



The visitor center is now open weekends from 1-5 p.m.

Can you spare a couple of hours to help with our Nature Shop? We need volunteers. Please contact us at fowc@bex.net.

Welcome Tim Adams

by Marian Hancy



The Friends of Old Woman Creek is delighted to welcome the new treasurer, Tim Adams. Tim reports that he is both happily married and retired after 35 productive years with the US Department of Defense, working in accounting and fiscal management departments. He is the proud dad of two daughters, one living in the Washington DC area and one living in northern France. He and his wife split their time between Olmsted Falls and their condo on the lake in Vermilion. Their French family joins them for several weeks during the summer, thanks to their generous vacation schedule. (Perhaps the US could benefit by copying their terrific system. Hint. Hint.) During his family's visits, excursions to Old Woman Creek and Sheldon Marsh are always a priority.

Tim earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin and an MBA from Cleveland State University. The Friends of Old Woman Creek board is the fourth nonprofit board on which he has served. His previous involvements in nonprofit boards dealt primarily in the area of finances and support systems which will be most appreciated by the FOWC.

Tim's interest in Old Woman Creek comes from a perpetual interest in environmental concerns for the future, particularly in the Great Lakes. He has always championed the inclusion of women in science and is pleased to see evidence of that at OWC and appreciates the many educational issues that are addressed at the Creek. He is also aware of the importance of the NERRS system that is a fundamental part of OWC. Tim is looking forward to helping the Friends of Old Woman Creek support that involvement with NERRS and local environmental concerns and the Friends are looking forward to having Tim on board.