

Preservation Parks adding land

Parcels total
over 264 acres

By Dillon Davis

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Preservation Parks' network of owned and managed land is set to increase significantly with the acquisition of two additional pieces of land in the county.

In a press release issued Tuesday, Preservation Parks of Delaware County announced a total of 264.4 acres across two separate parcels will soon give way to two new parks.

The new additions include 192 acres along U.S. Route 36 and Old 3C Road in Sunbury and 72.4 acres on Columbus Pike.

According to the release, the funding for the purchases comes, in part, thanks to the Delaware County voters who passed a land acquisition and park improvement levy in November 2021 to acquire land at an accelerated rate.

Sitting south of the city of Delaware and north of Camp Lazarus in Liberty Township, the 72.4 acres on Columbus Pike once belonged to the Crui-kshank family.

The family emigrated to the land along the banks of the Olentangy River in the early 1800s where they cleared several hundred acres of densely forested land and created a farm that supported the family for over 200 years with grain and livestock as the main farming operations.

George Melvin, who owned the land prior to the sale, said he is happy to know his wife's family



Courtesy | Preservation Parks

Pictured is the forested area of the newly purchased property on Columbus Pike.

land will be preserved and developed into park land.

The property features access to the Olentangy River and its wooded banks, which provide habitat for a variety of breeding birds and other animals.

According to Preservation Parks, more than 50 species of native fish can be found in the Olentangy River, as well as freshwater mussels and other rich natural features that will be preserved for

generations thanks to the acquisition. The purchase price for this property was \$3,249,312.

Located in Trenton Township, the property totaling 192 acres was purchased from the Sandel family for \$2,241,364. The Sandel family is also the namesake of the Sandel Legacy Trail, a portion of the Ohio to Erie Trail.

Like the Melvin property, the Sandel property is being purchased at an accelerated rate with new

levy funds. The new addition was funded, in part, through a \$451,210 Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation grant, according to the release.

"The preservation of Ohio's history and its beautiful natural landscape has been a lifelong passion of my husband and I," said Kathy Sandel. "I am so pleased and proud to have found a partner in Preservation Parks of Delaware County

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that shares our vision for the preservation of this property and historical items for generations to come.”

The Sandel property

represents the second of four phases that will eventually total 478 acres of parkland. In July 2021, the first of the phases was finalized with the purchase of 37 acres that included the Perfect family schoolhouse. The schoolhouse operated from 1893-1926 and is

named after William and Elizabeth Perfect, who once lived on the property and built the school. The school has been restored and rehabilitated by Sandel and her late husband, Walt.

Both purchases bring the total Preservation Parks acreage of owned

and managed land, including parks, trails, and easements to 1,945 acres. No timeline is set for the opening of the new parks, and both projects will still need to go through a public planning process.

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