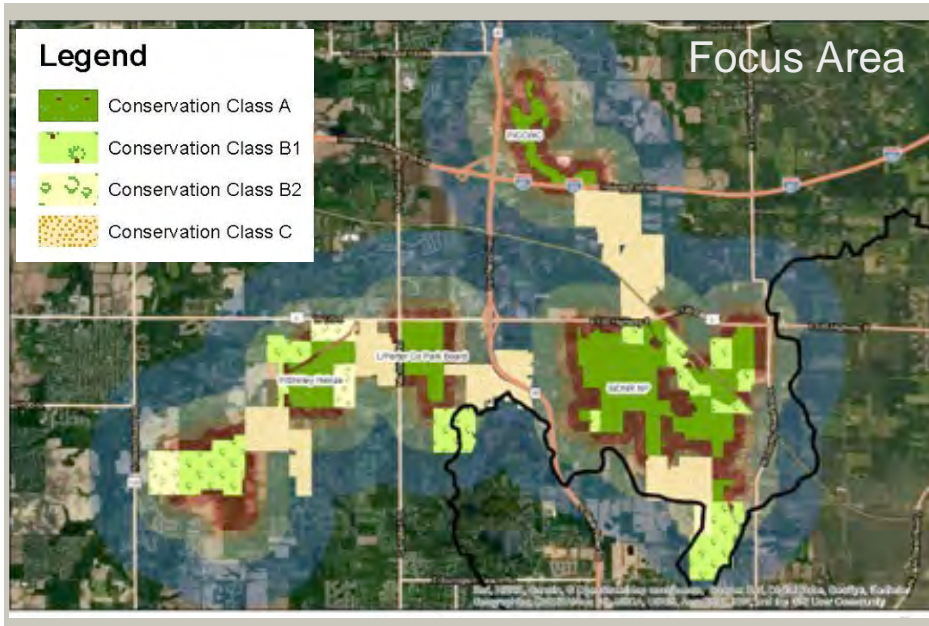


# Moraine

## Conservation Action Plan *Factsheet*



Common cottongrass, trillium and barred owls are among many species that call Moraine home. (Photos by Derek Nimetz, DNR)

### Site Significance

The Moraine/Sunset Hill Complex (i.e. Moraine) covers approximately 1600 acres in north-central Porter County, Indiana. Habitat types such as upland forest, fens, streams and ponds occur here. These habitats protect rare species of birds and amphibians in addition to hosting diverse plant life. Moraine also serves as a wildlife connectivity corridor from the Kankakee River to Lake Michigan.

### Conservation Targets

Conservation targets for Moraine include mesic upland forest, dry-mesic upland forest, fen, natural ponds, and sufficient forest habitat for breeding birds and wetland habitats for breeding amphibians. These targets have high potential for conserving diverse ecosystems and the species they support across the landscape.

### Conservation Threats

There are several threats to conservation in Moraine. They include development, altered hydrology, water pollution, invasive species, herbivory from uncontrolled populations of deer and climate change.

### Conservation Partners

The Moraine/Sunset Hill Complex is managed by several conservation partners including the Department of Natural Resources (DNR)-Division of Nature Preserves, Shirley Heinze Land Trust, Porter County Parks Department, Coffee Creek Watershed Conservancy, NIPSCO and private land owners among others. The conservation action plan that accompanies this factsheet will enable partners to identify strategic priorities and implement conservation action.

*Funding provided by:*



## Conservation Strategies

"Conservation Classes," graded according to their conservation potential, enable land managers to strategize conservation priorities. Utilized here, these rated classes identify opportunities for achieving the best conservation outcomes. They include management and restoration (Class A), land acquisitions (Class B) and increasing connectivity and buffering for existing natural areas (Class C). Additional strategic tools include policy development and stakeholder engagement. Collectively, these strategies are a guide to conserving Moraine.

**Conservation Class A:** Management and restoration of existing protected lands.

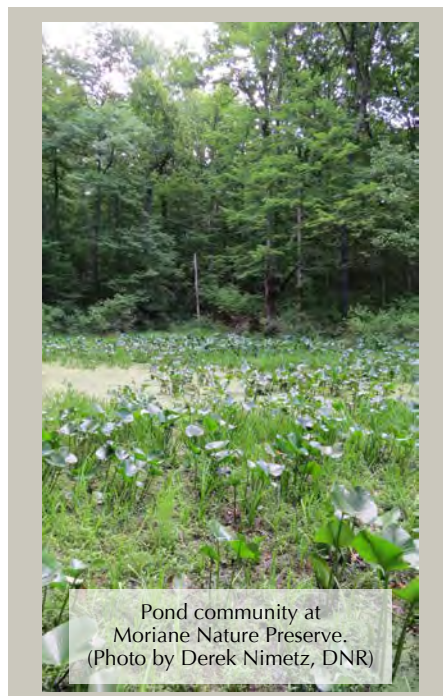
**Conservation Class B1:** Acquisition of land that adds to existing conservation areas or serves as buffer zones that protect conservation priorities from future development.

**Conservation Class B2:** Acquisition or other means of land protection that have the capacity to connect nature preserves, recreation sites and/or trails.

**Conservation Class C:** Incorporate conservation priorities into municipal planning and increase connectivity by incorporating working lands such as ROWs (Right-of-Ways).

### Additional Strategic Tools

Development of policies that protect natural resources and outreach activities that cultivate local land stewards.



Pond community at Moraine Nature Preserve. (Photo by Derek Nimetz, DNR)

The Conservation Action Plan for Moraine was prepared collaboratively by:  
CALUMET COLLABORATIVE | THE FIELD MUSEUM | THE NATURE CONSERVANCY  
INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
NORTHWEST INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
SAVE THE DUNES | SHIRLEY HEINZE LAND TRUST