

# THE TRUST *for* PUBLIC LAND

CONSERVING LAND FOR PEOPLE



## NORTHERN OHIO: *Online Conservation Gateway*

When The Trust for Public Land looked to the future of its work in Ohio, staff targeted a 20-county area within the Lake Erie and Ohio River Basins. The Lake Erie Basin is part of the Great Lakes Basin, which feeds into the Atlantic Ocean. The Ohio River Basin, including the river and its tributaries, provides 60 percent of the water that flows into the mighty Mississippi River. Both are critical for wildlife habitat and drinking water, as well as recreational, commercial, and industrial uses—and both are threatened by the spread of development, a shift that corresponds with the conversion of farmlands and increased urban runoff.

### **TPL's role**

TPL knew it needed to work strategically to make an impact at the watershed scale— success required strong partnerships with local governments, land trusts,

conservation organizations, and funders. The goal was a one-stop conservation resource that consolidated data from multiple sources, prioritized land parcels based on organizational goals, and shared resources for informed decision-making.

TPL's GIS developers created a password-protected, online gateway for data on demographics, natural heritage, flood plain boundaries, political and governmental jurisdictions, parcel attributes, and ownership information—all in one place. This Gateway enables TPL and its partners to assess landscape-level and parcel-based data and identify high-priority land for conservation. Criteria filters also allow Gateway users to determine the best local, state, and federal funding sources to support each project.

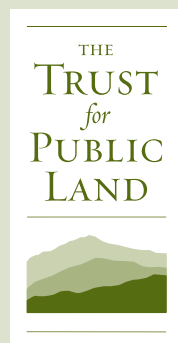
## Project highlights

One success story involves the Neighborhood Progress Group (NPG), a 21-year-old community redevelopment organization in Cleveland. Recognizing that the foreclosure crisis had increased the number of vacant homes and lots in the city, NPG partnered with the Center for Urban Design at Kent State to re-imagine these properties as urban gardens, farms, and neighborhood parks.

A fundraising campaign yielded \$700,000 to support grassroots pilot projects to revitalize struggling areas. NPG used some of these funds to work with TPL's GIS developers, incorporating grant criteria into the data sets and training community development and environmental group representatives to use the Gateway in neighborhood planning.

## Results

The Gateway integrates spatial data and facilitates collaboration to aid in planning and conservation. Cities and towns can share information and resources across jurisdictional boundaries, which promotes dialogue among organizations working to improve the urban environment.



*The Trust for Public Land conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, and other natural places, ensuring livable communities for generations to come.*

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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