FACT SHEET

Division of Environmental Response and Revitalization
March 2014

Paddys Run Conservation Project

Using Conservation Easements to Protect Water Resources

The Paddys Run Conservation Project (PRCP) provides funding to purchase development rights through agriculture and conservation easements from landowners in the Fernald area. The easements will help protect water quality in the Paddys Run watershed and the Great Miami Aquifer. The program helps to keep land in private hands while protecting working farms and the environment.

The first easement was signed in November 2012. Since then 2,594 acres from willing landowners are now permanently protected with PRCP easements or fee simple purchases. An additional 300 acres are in process and funding is still available.

Opportunities and Challenges

The PRCP officially launched late in 2010. Nearly 3,000 acres are now either under consideration or have already received a conservation easement using Fernald settlement funds. As partial compensation for damages to the aquifer from Department of Energy's Fernald facility, Ohio received $13 million. A portion of this money is being used to purchase conservation easements in the area. Three Valley Conservation Trust (Three Valley) is partnering with Fernald's Natural Resource Trustees to help acquire and eventually hold the conservation easements.

Extensive documentation and review are required for these real estate transactions. The partners spend considerable time working with landowners to develop applications and address their concerns. For some properties, multiple mortgages, complex ownership issues and family dynamics have delayed closings. Project managers continuously track the progress of nearly 20 separate components necessary to finalize each easement.

Stretching Settlement Funds

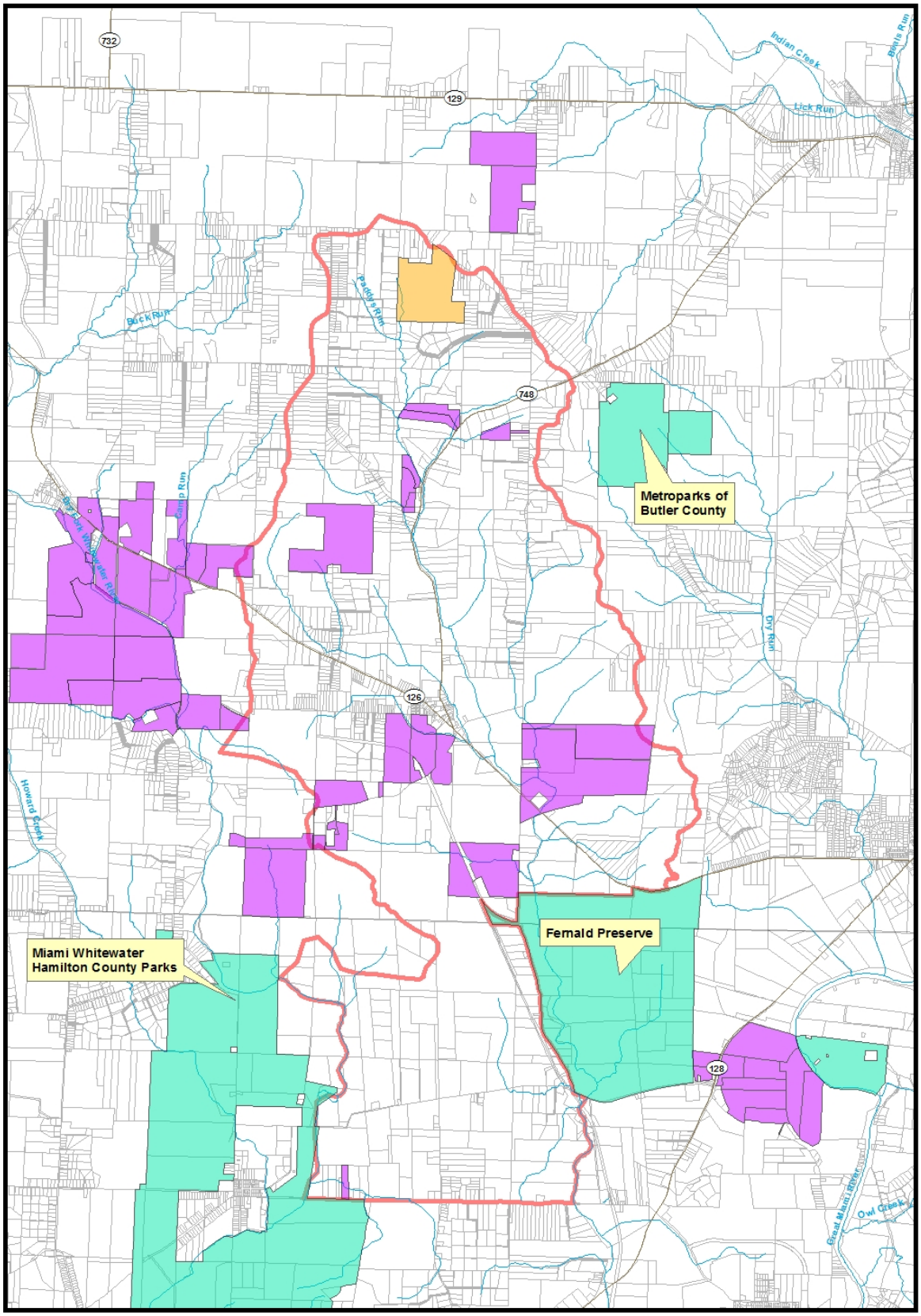
Matching funds from the U. S. Department of Agriculture Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program allow the Fernald settlement funds to go further. More than $4.6 million in additional funds have been leveraged so far. While much of the easement protected land is in the focus area, properties that are adjacent to protected properties are also considered for settlement funding. Conservation easement opportunities will continue to be explored until Natural Resources Damages settlement funds are spent.

Contact

For more information, contact Tom Schneider at thomas.schneider@epa.ohio.gov or (937) 285-6466.

By using conservation easements to preserve current land use, the PRCP will protect water quality in local streams and ground water.

Paddys Run Conservation Project



OhioEPA

March 2014
T.Schneider

Paddys Run Conservation Project

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LEGEND/KEY

- Completed Easements (2468 acres)
- Fee Simple Purchase (125 acres)
- Park Properties
- PRCP Focus Area