



County Of Dane
Office Of The County Executive

Joe Parisi
County Executive

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Dane County Awards Nearly \$160,000 Grant to Groundswell Conservancy for Purchase of Black Earth Creek Trail Connector

*The Property will Provide Needed Link for Black Earth Creek Trail,
Enhance Outdoor Recreation Opportunities*

Today, County Executive Joe Parisi announced Dane County will award nearly \$160,000 to Groundswell Conservancy for the purchase of 38 acres of property within the Black Earth Creek Natural Resource Area. Acquisition of this parcel will fill a gap between existing publicly-owned lands and provide a needed link for the Black Earth Creek Trail, also known as the Wolf Run Trail. This purchase advances a larger vision to have the bike trail run from Middleton to Mazomanie and, ultimately, the Wisconsin River crossing.

“We are excited to partner with Groundswell Conservancy to help preserve our natural resources and increase access to recreational activities,” said Dane County Executive Parisi. “The day is nearing when Dane County residents and visitors will be able to safely bike from Middleton to Mazomanie and reach the Wisconsin River. Dane County takes pride in its network of bike trails, and this partnership is our latest effort to heighten the overall experience visitors and residents can have while enjoying the outdoors.”

The property is a mix of farmland and wetland and contains approximately 4,100 feet of Black Earth Creek frontage. Groundswell Conservancy plans to convert the land to prairie in order to reduce erosion, improve water quality, and provide wildlife habitat. Acquisition will also allow for the removal of fence and cables across Black Earth Creek that are currently obstacles to paddlers. The property would be open to the public for activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, and cross-country skiing.

Groundswell Conservancy applied to the Dane County Conservation Fund Grant Program for financial assistance to purchase the property located on both sides of Olson Road in the Town of Black Earth. It lies adjacent to 22 acres of the Wisconsin DNR’s Black Earth Creek Fishery lands and a 178-acre conservation easement held by Groundswell Conservancy. The parcel is south of Wisconsin Heights School, which is the current southern terminus of the Black Earth Creek Trail.

The estimated project costs for the acquisition total \$311,920. Dane County will award Groundswell Conservancy \$159,700 in matching funds from the Black Earth Creek Corridor Fund for the purchase. A resolution to approve this grant to Groundswell Conservancy is expected to be approved by the County Board in the coming weeks.

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