

Letters to the editor: Akron should take deal, protect Theiss Road property from housing

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Protect our Merriman Valley

The League of Women Voters of the Akron Area endorses The Western Reserve Land Conservancy's proposal to purchase 45 acres of city-owned land on Theiss Road in the Merriman Valley for conservation.

We strongly urge the city of Akron to choose conservation of this property above the Cuyahoga River Valley and across from Summit Metro Parks' Hampton Hills Mountain Bike Park on Hardy Road. The ecological and economic reasons for doing so are compelling and are aligned with LWVAA positions for land use, water quality and environment.

More: Editorial — Akron's Theiss Road property: Let the nature lovers win this fight

The Western Reserve Land Conservancy proposes to partner with Summit Metro Parks to create a long-term vision for the properties Summit Metro Parks currently owns and manages that are contiguous natural areas surrounding the Theiss Road property. The Summit County Metro Parks have endorsed this conservation plan as has the Ohio Environmental Council.

Preserving the property would be a boost to Akron's quest to maintain clean water for the Cuyahoga River and help to protect its citizens' \$1 billion investment in the Combined Sewer Overflow project. Those 45 acres of forest capture over 6 million gallons of water annually and according to the WRLC

proposal, save the city an estimated \$49,725 per year in storm water collection treatment.

Since the Valley is seeing an additional seven inches of rainfall per year since the 1960s, this is significant. We are currently seeing more flooding in the Valley and need only to note that the stretch of Akron-Peninsula Road is closed due to erosion of the banks of the Cuyahoga River.

While we are sympathetic to the city needing to grow Akron's population, we cannot support outward growth where there is currently no infrastructure and where the environmental impact is potentially so detrimental.

Rosanne L. Winter, Ph.D., President

League of Women Voters, Akron Area