

**Welcome**



**December 13, 2023**

**Port Sheldon Township Board of Trustees**

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*Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission  
Focus on the Pigeon River Greenway*

*Conservation/Redevelopment focus of the JH Campbell Site  
Balancing public access with nature conservation*



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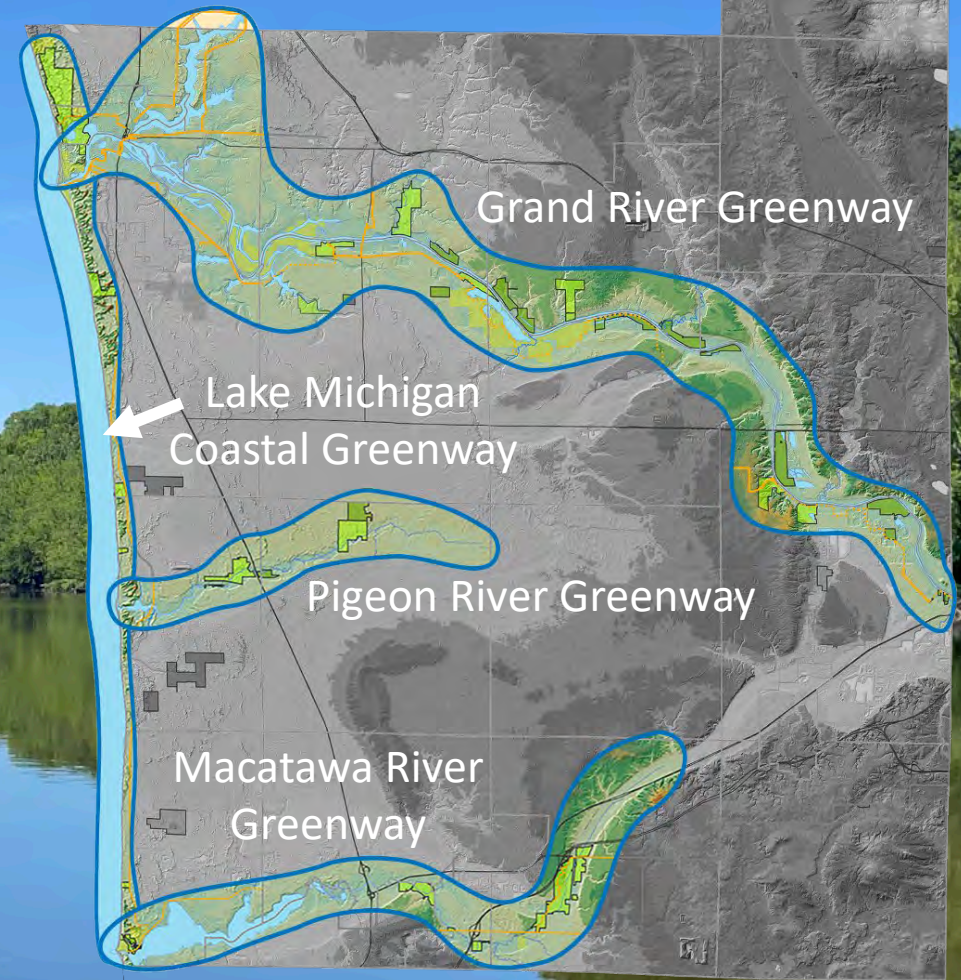
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## What is a Greenway?

A greenway is a corridor of connected green spaces with ecological significance. Typically, near an urban area, set aside for recreational use or environmental protection.

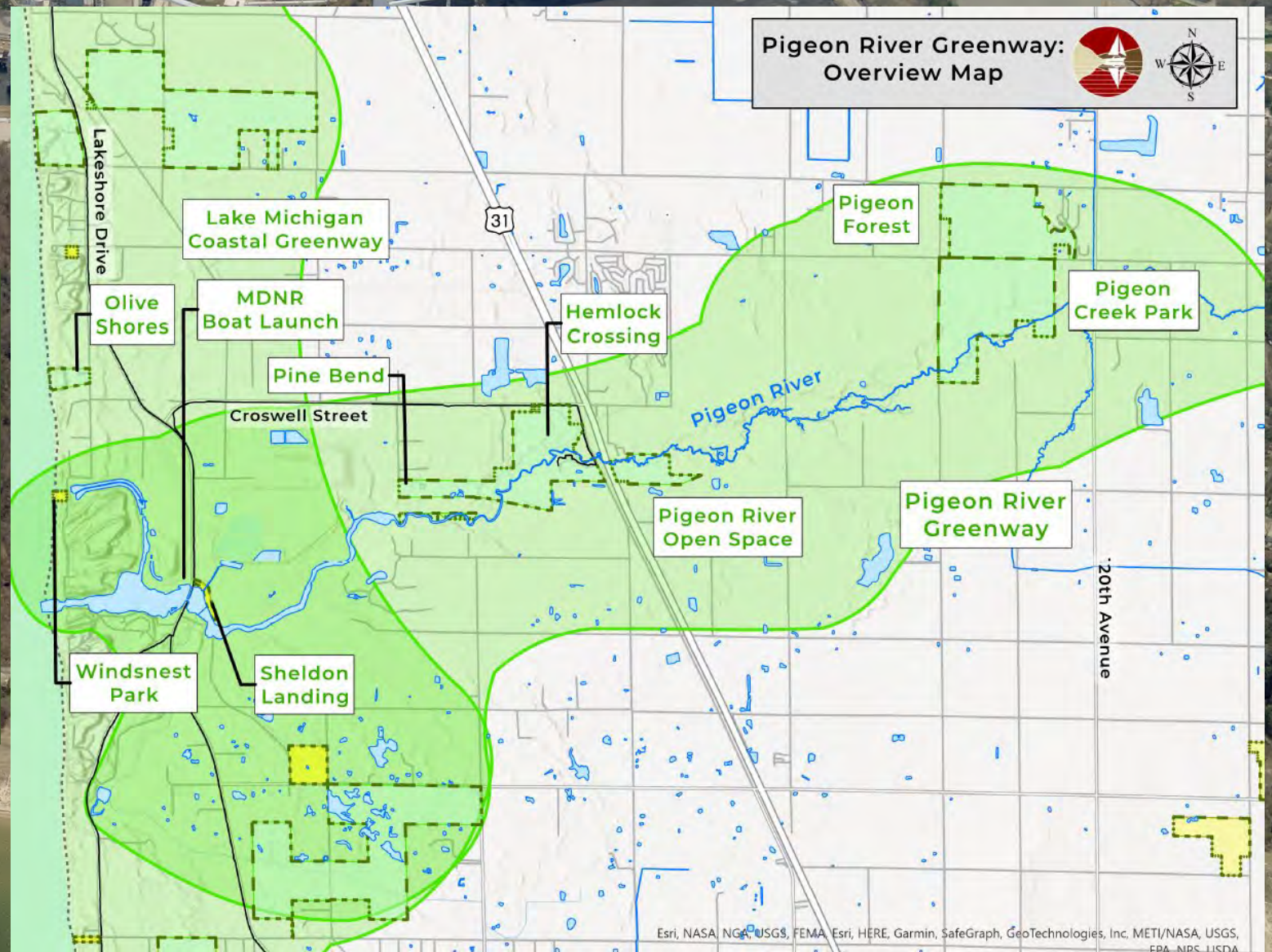
There are four greenways in Ottawa County, each different and special in their own way.





## What is the Pigeon River Greenway?

- Approximately 7-mile long natural/recreational corridor from central Ottawa County to Lake Michigan along the Pigeon River and Pigeon Lake
- Includes 756 acres of land managed by Ottawa County Parks



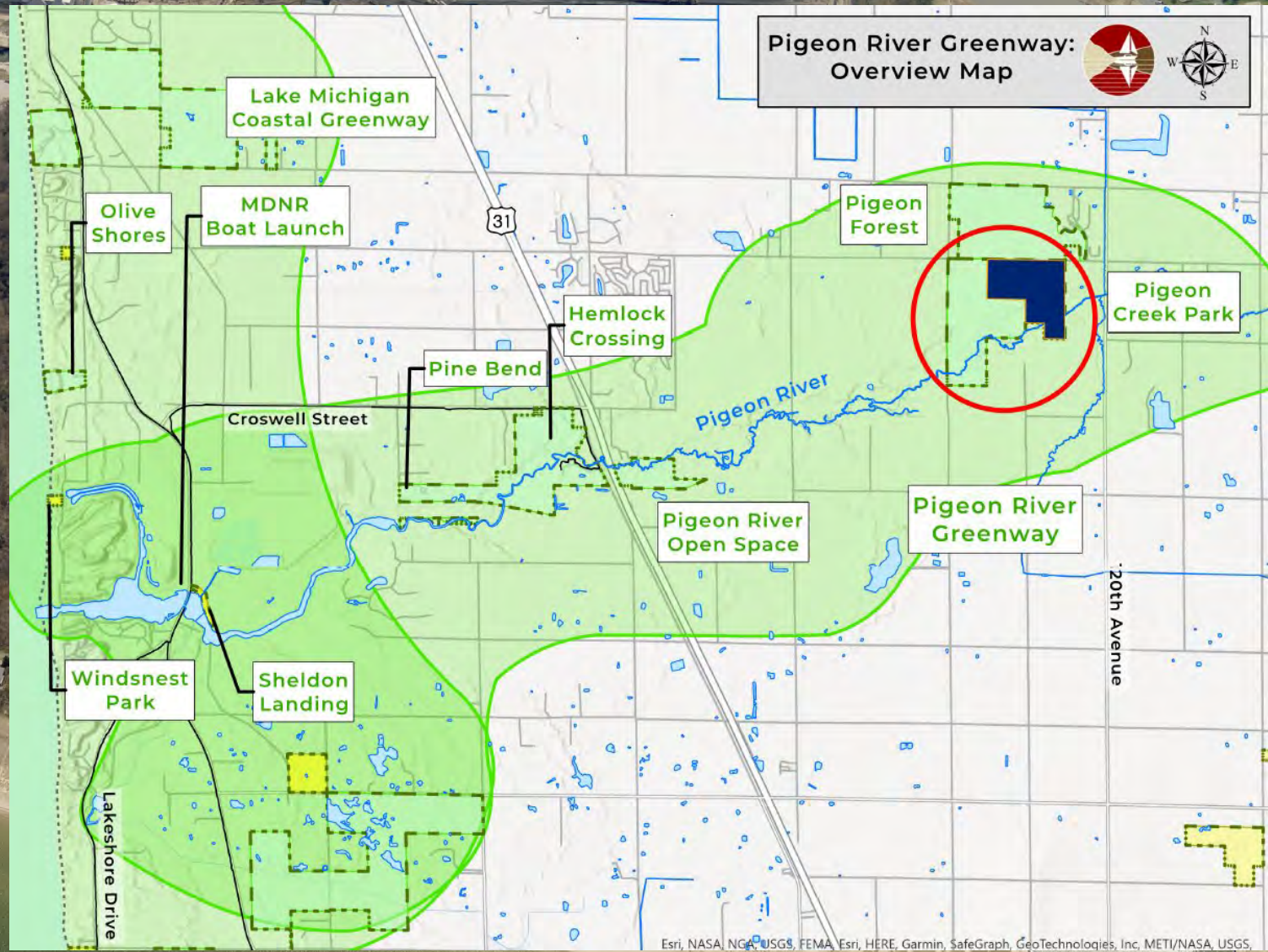
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## History

- Ottawa County's interest in Pigeon River Greenway begins with 1964 acquisition of 112 acres from U.S. Forest Service. (Shown in dark blue at right).
- This land later becomes Pigeon Creek Park.



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## History

- In 1987, the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission is formed by the Board of Commissioners.

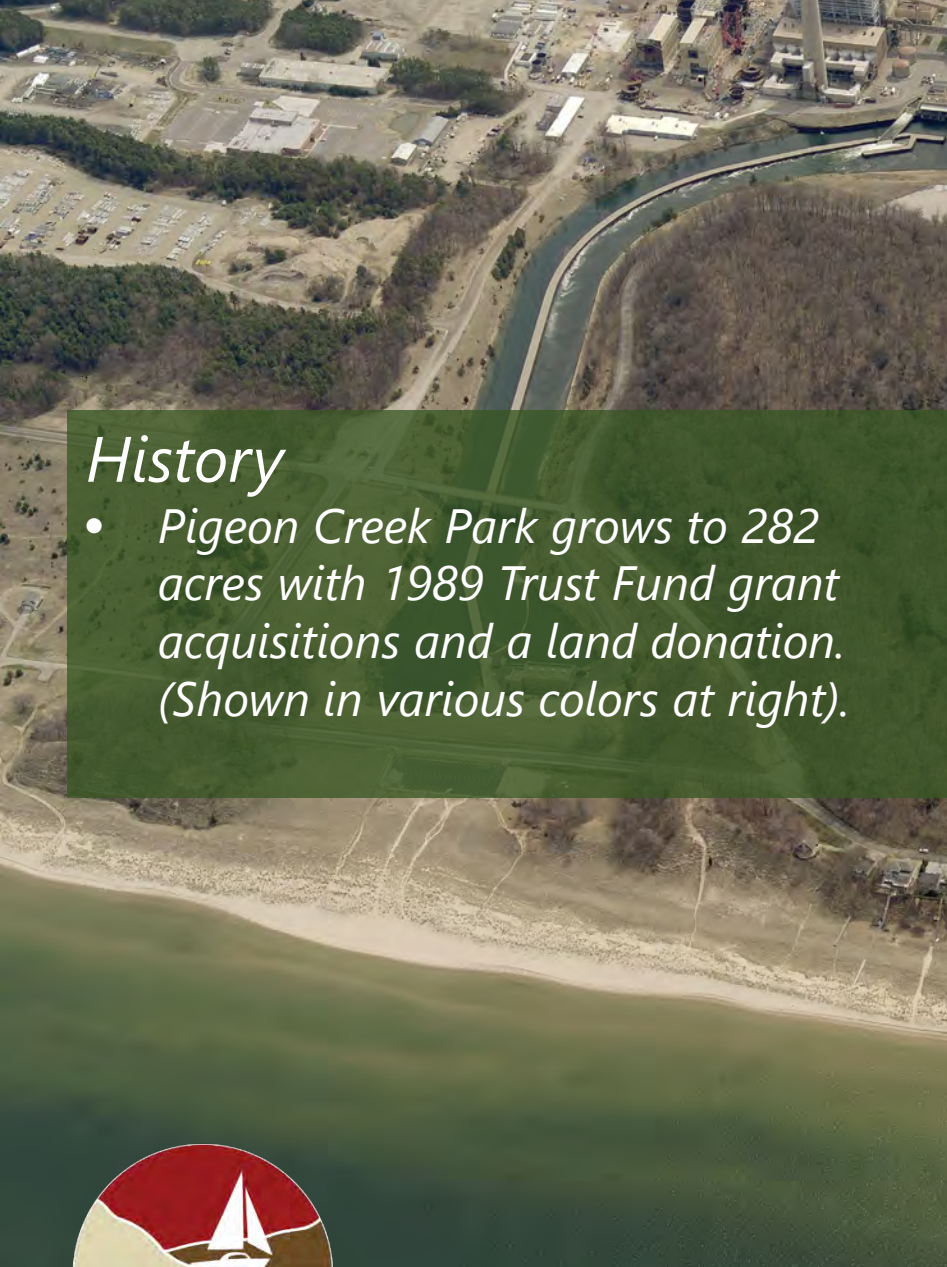
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the County Board does hereby adopt by the required two-thirds vote of its members to organize the existing parks system under Public Act 261, and hereby declare ten (10) vacancies on the new "County Parks & Recreation Commission" of which three (3) seats shall be filled by County Commissioners; and



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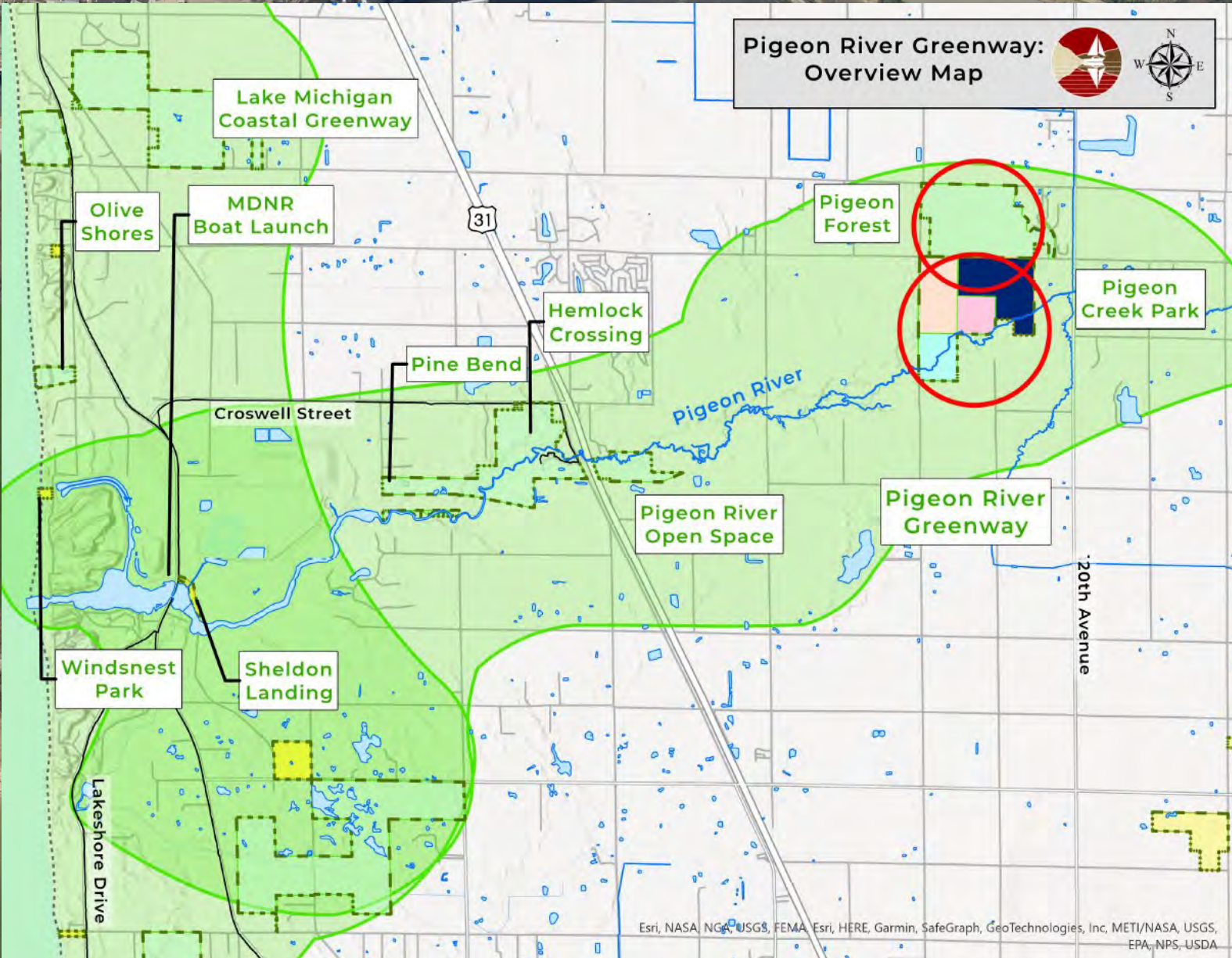
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# History

- Pigeon Creek Park grows to 282 acres with 1989 Trust Fund grant acquisitions and a land donation. (Shown in various colors at right).



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# History

- The Parks Commission identifies the "Pigeon River Greenway" as a "key area of interest" in the 1995 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan

## 4. Pigeon Creek Greenway

The open space analysis presented in Chapter Nine identifies "areas of interest" for concentration of open space planning efforts. Because of the enormity of the task, it is necessary to further narrow the focus of open space protection efforts. **The Pigeon Creek corridor is considered a key area of interest** for several reasons. It is one of the most undeveloped stream corridors with significant adjoining forest lands. The quality of the stream is relatively high compared to similar water resources in Ottawa County. The stream corridor is centrally located in Ottawa County providing good access from all parts of the County. And finally, with existing Pigeon Creek Park anchoring the eastern portion of the stream corridor, and with relatively large land parcels in private ownership west along the corridor toward Lake Michigan, feasibility of the project is enhanced. Figure 11.10 on page 135 shows all mapped criteria for the Pigeon River Corridor illustrating the concentration of open space features found in this area.

It is recommended that a similar concept be explored as with the Grand River Greenway project and that efforts be initiated with establishment of an advisory committee and development of a long range greenway master plan. Extensive public involvement is again recommended as a key to long-range success. See Appendix M for a discussion of land protection methods.

**A Pigeon Creek Greenway could protect valuable open space in Ottawa County including forest lands, wetlands, sensitive plant communities and other key natural features.** Future recreation trail development could expand the concept in place at Pigeon Creek Park with the provision of hiking, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, mountain biking and related trail uses. Provision of a trail easement through the stream corridor would greatly expand available trail opportunities creating tremendous recreation opportunities for future generations.

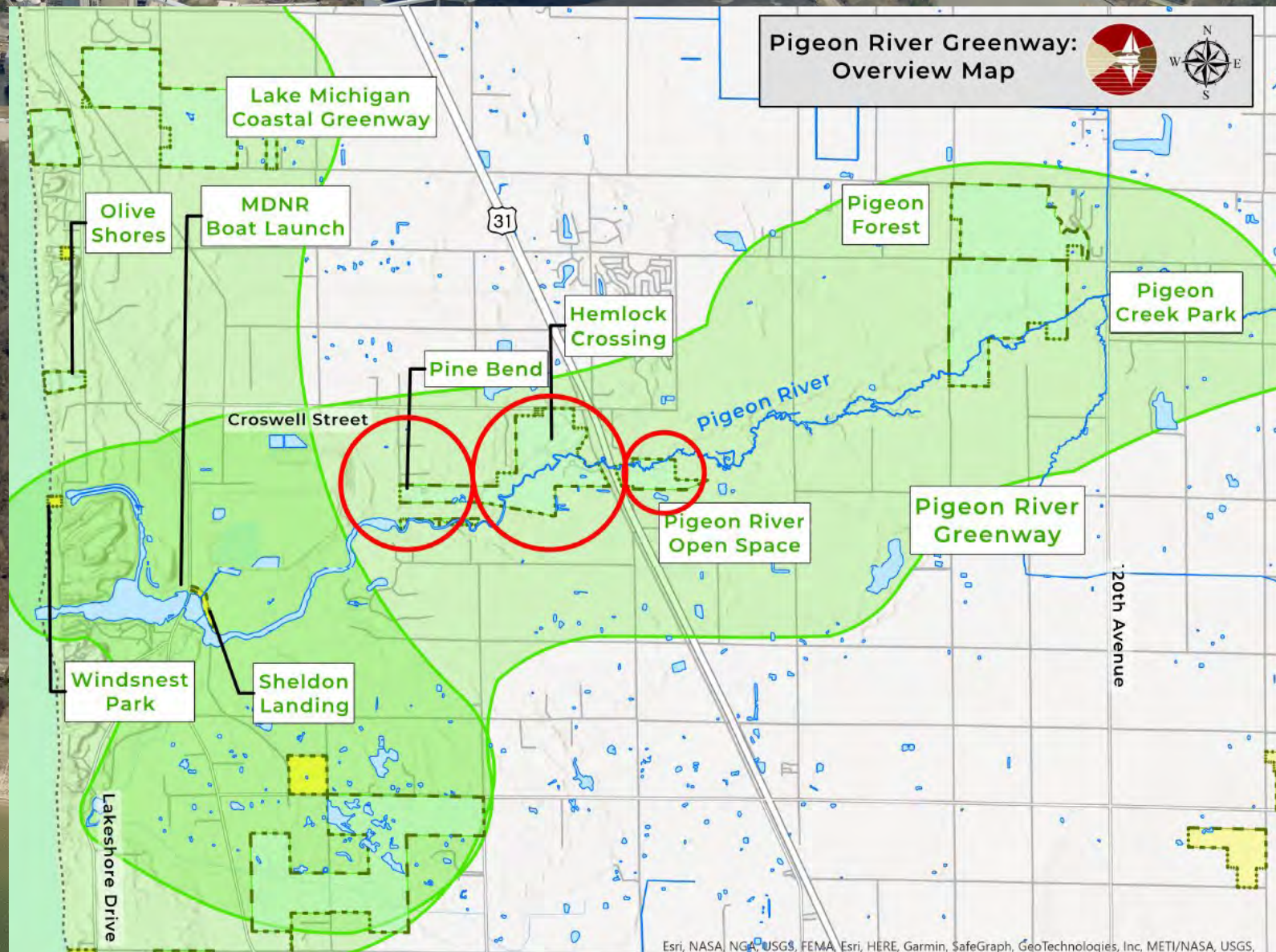


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## History

- In 1997, Ottawa County Parks applies for a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant for acquisitions of property just west of the U.S. 31 along the Pigeon River.
- Acquisitions begin in 1998 for what becomes the 239-acre Hemlock Crossing/Pine Bend County Park
- This includes land directly adjacent to land owned by Consumers Energy.
- The 46-acre Pigeon River Open Space is donated in several transfers 2005 to 2013.



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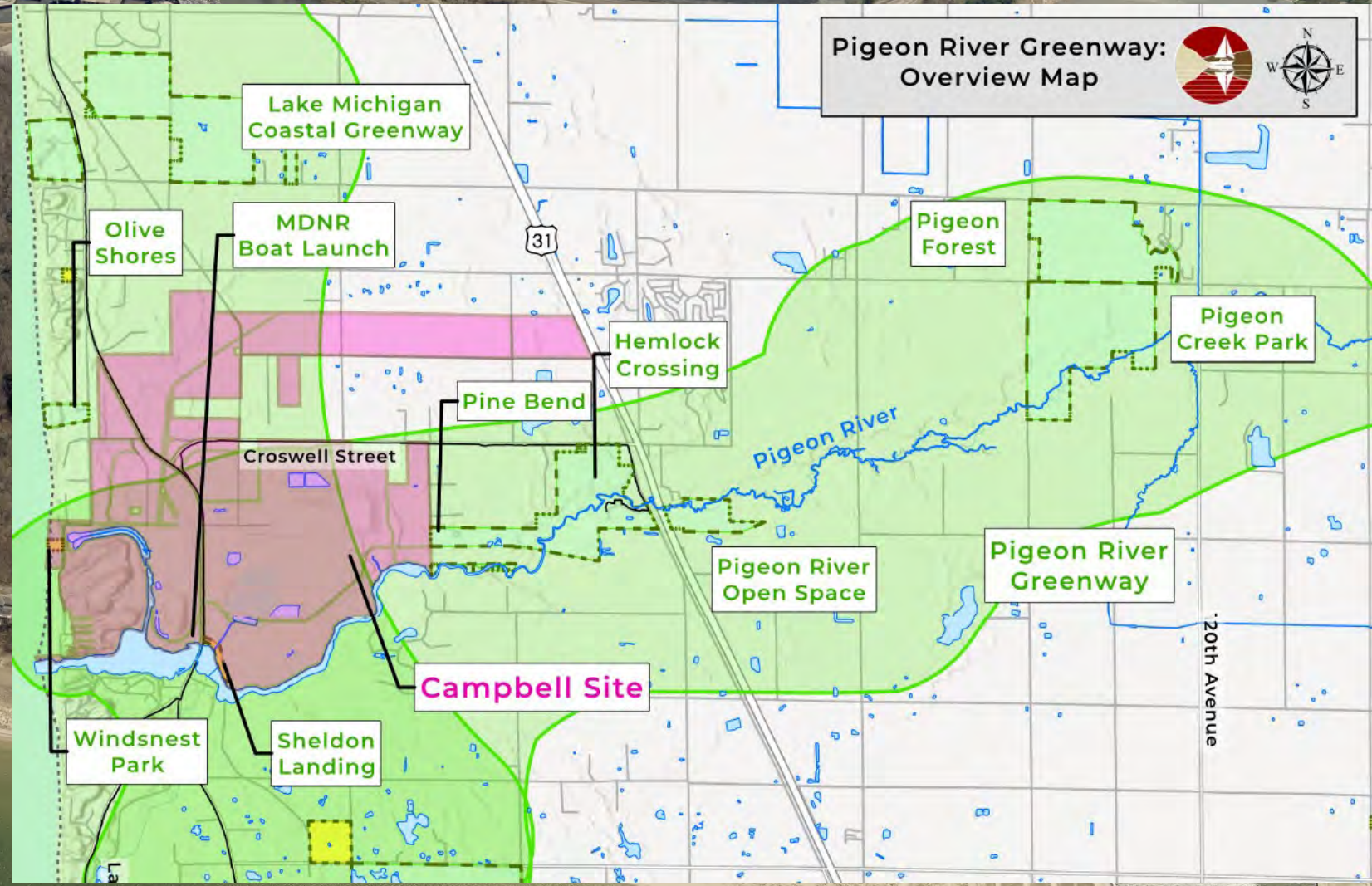
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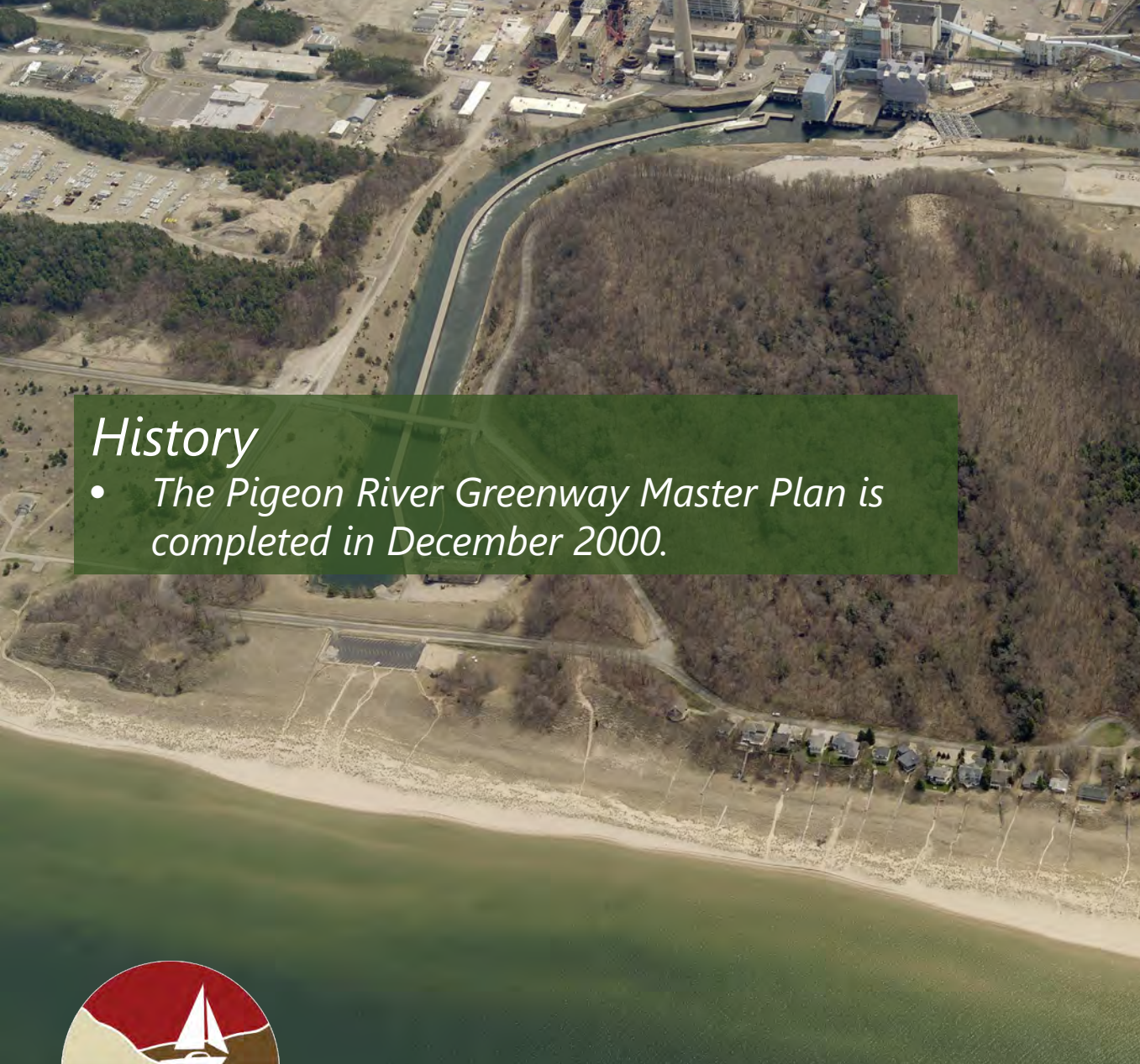
## History – 1999 Master Plan

- With the acquisitions underway for Hemlock Crossing/Pine Bend, Ottawa County Parks engages Consumers Energy to participate in a Pigeon River Greenway planning process
- Consumers Energy property has significant frontage on Pigeon River and Pigeon Lake.



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## History

- The Pigeon River Greenway Master Plan is completed in December 2000.

A Master Plan for the:  
**Pigeon River Greenway**  
Ottawa County, Michigan



Prepared for:



**Ottawa County Parks & Recreation Commission**  
12220 Fillmore  
West Olive, Michigan 49460

Prepared by:

O'Boyle, Cowell, Blalock & Associates, Inc.  
Landscape Architects

with:

Slocum Associates, Inc.  
Architects  
&  
William Martinus & Associates  
Botanist

December 2000



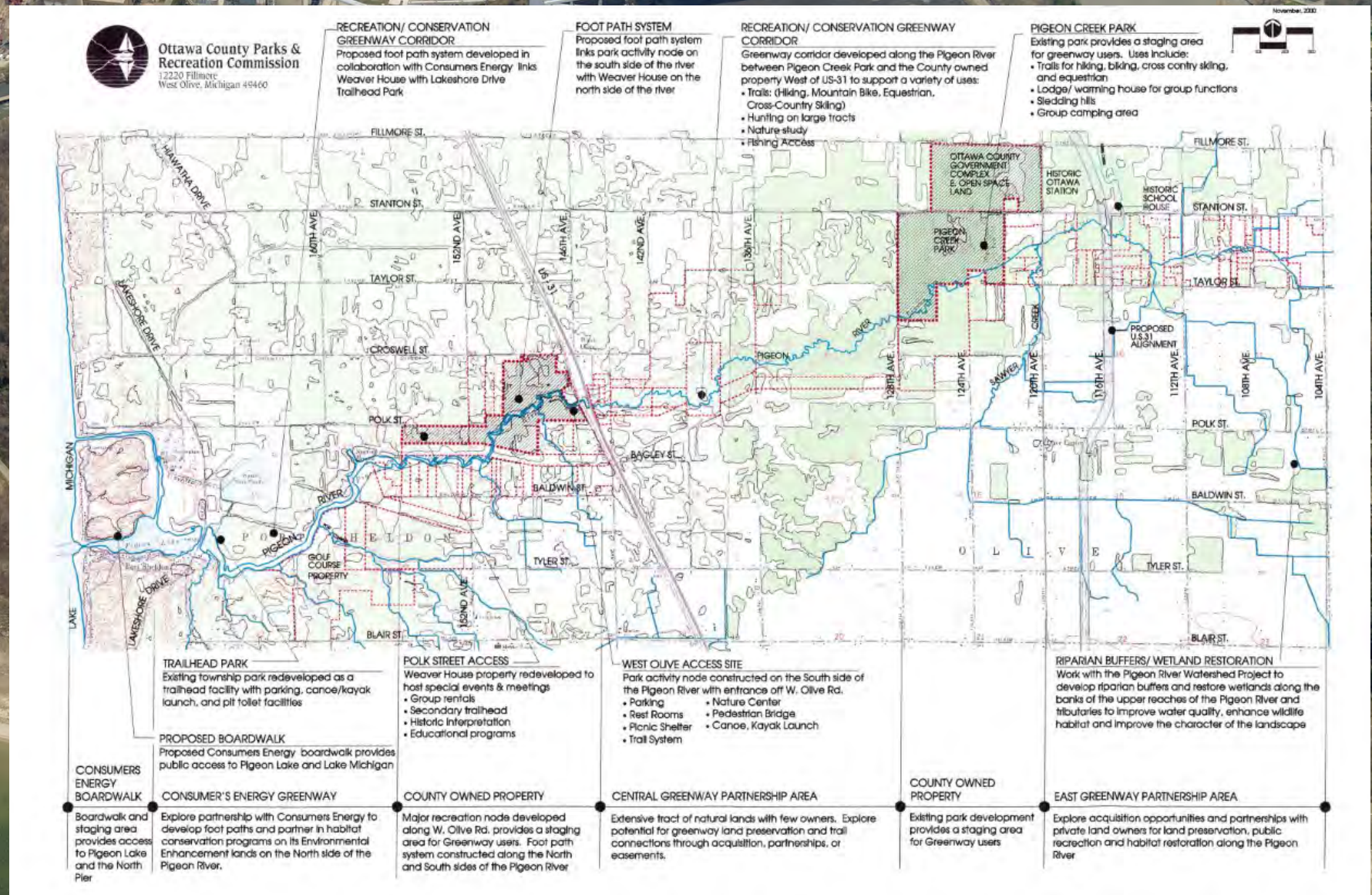
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# History

- The Master Plan outlines a conceptual plan to connect Pigeon Creek Park to Lake Michigan via a hiking trail.



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# History

- Since the adoption of the Master Plan, Ottawa County Parks has had ongoing discussions with Consumers Energy regarding a partnership for a trail from Pine Bend to Sheldon Landing.
- These discussions were ongoing until the announcement of the Campbell Plant decommissioning

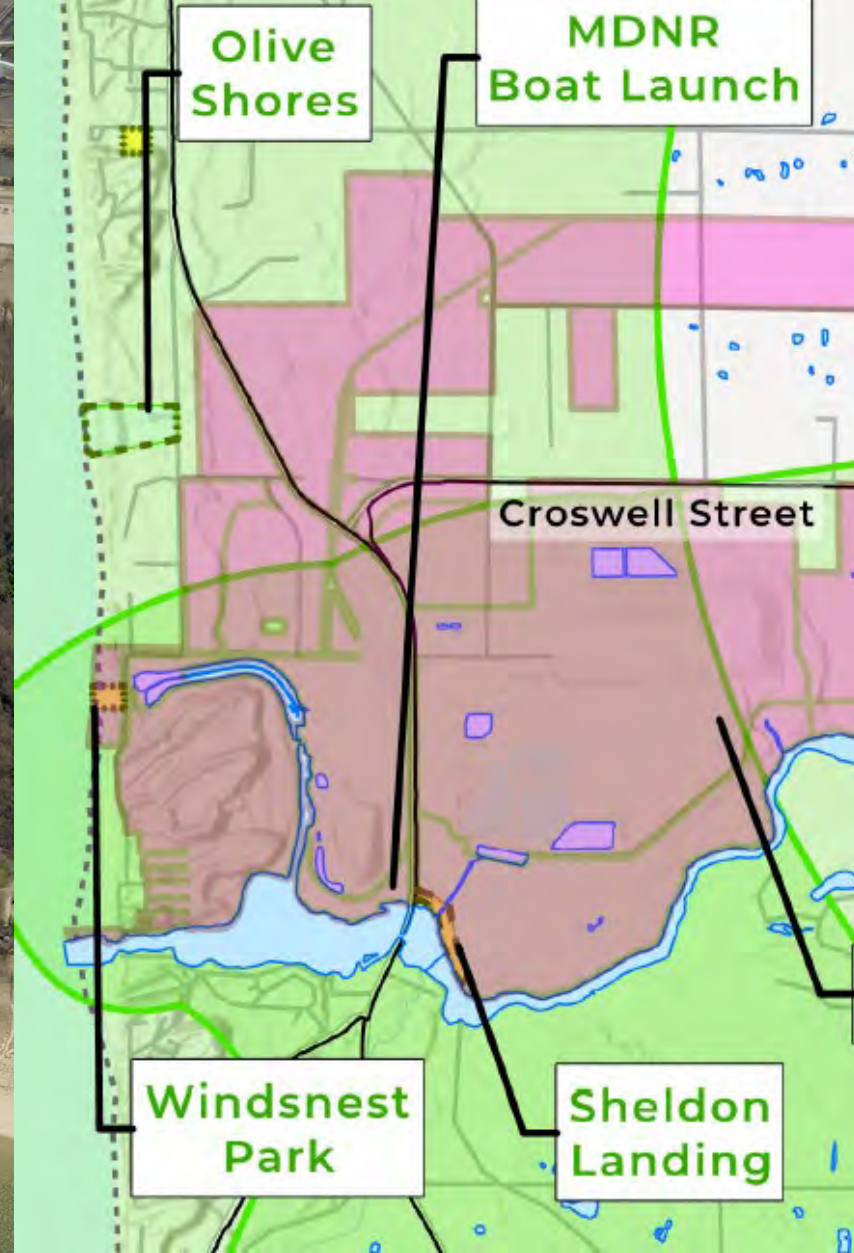


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## Other Notable Context

- Ottawa County Parks also manages the 21-acre Olive Shores County Park with Lake Michigan access
- Ottawa County Parks has a management agreement with Port Sheldon Township to manage Windsnest Park, which is a beach park owned by Consumers Energy
- Over the years, Ottawa County Parks has had various discussions about managing two other Consumer Energy-owned access sites:
  - Sheldon Landing (managed by Port Sheldon Township)
  - Pigeon Lake Boat Launch (managed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources)

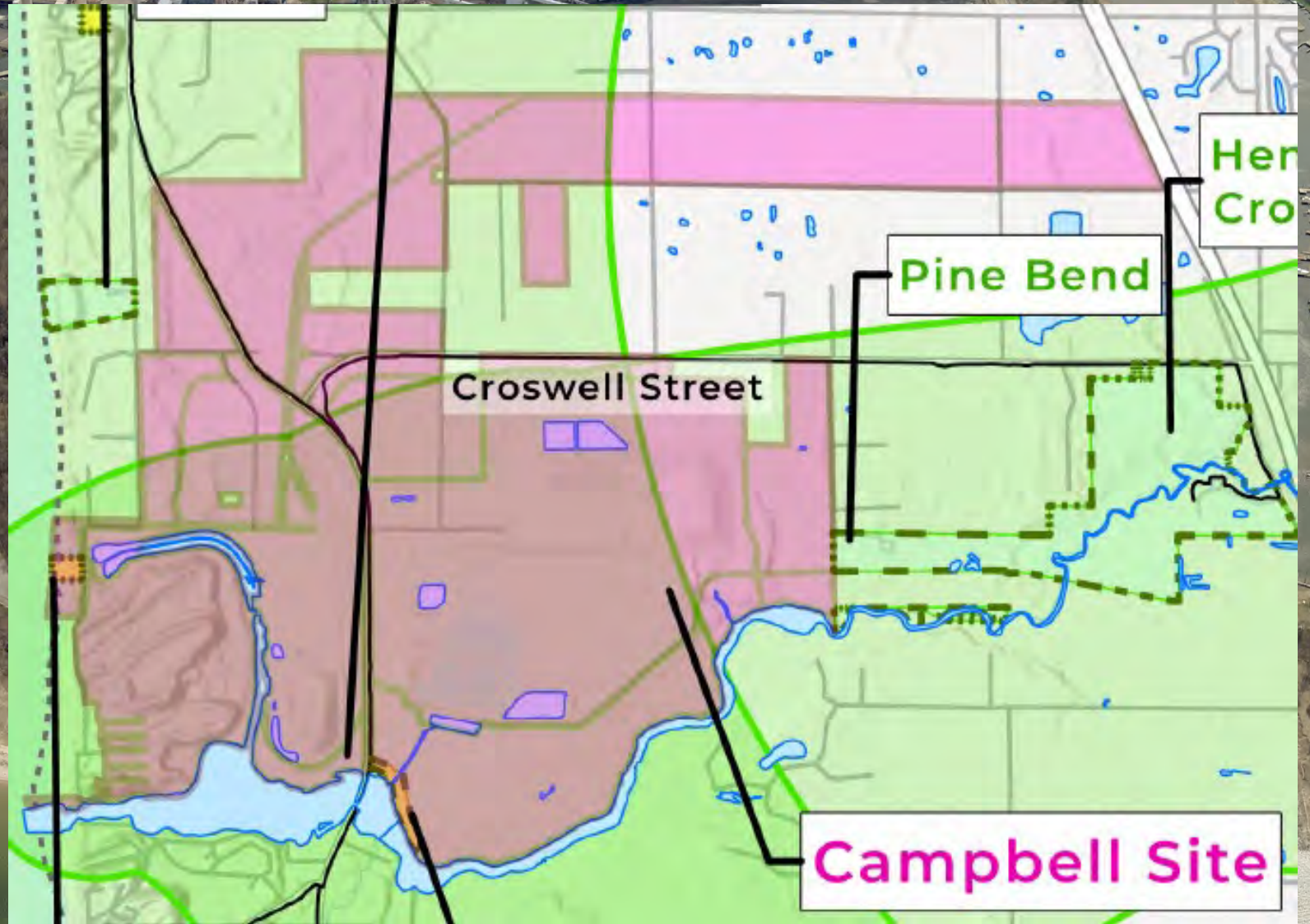


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## *Parks Focus Area*

- *Ottawa County Parks has anticipated possible disposal of at least some of the 2,400-acre plus Campbell Site*
- *Site is key to goals of Pigeon River Greenway and Lake Michigan Coastal Greenway*
- *Release of "Percheron" Consumers Future Use Study confirmed that disposal is possible and recreational uses may be a priority*



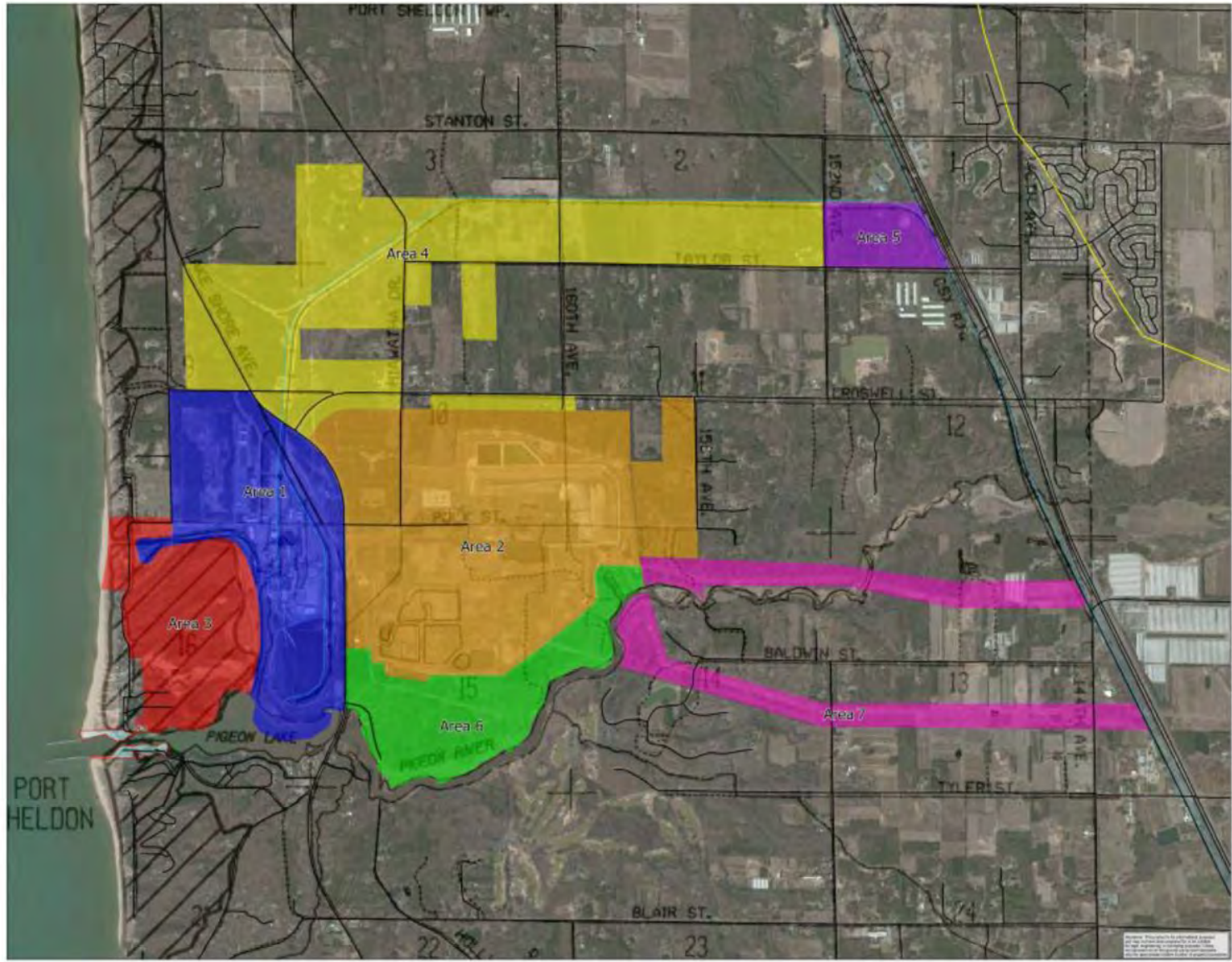
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## Parks Review and Discussions

- In 2023, Ottawa County Park analyzed "Percheron" plan and confirmed that disposal is possible and recreational uses may be a priority.
- Discussions with local leaders, stakeholders from public agencies, and the business community soliciting input.

### JH Campbell Site – Area Map

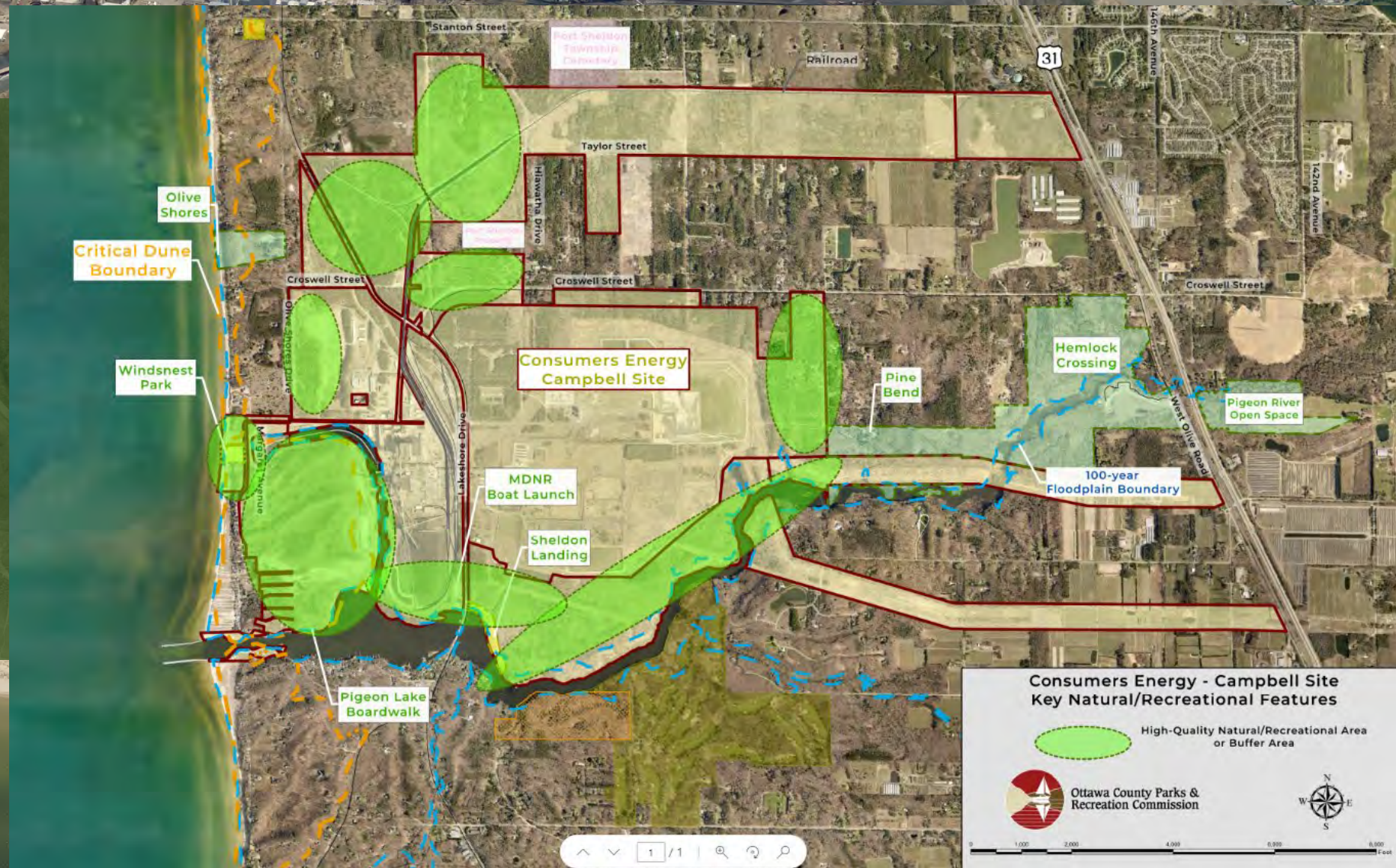


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# Key Findings

- 185 acres of designated critical dunes (the largest area of undeveloped critical dune in Ottawa County under single private ownership)
- 1,505' of Lake Michigan frontage
- 12,496' feet of frontage along the Pigeon Lake & River system.



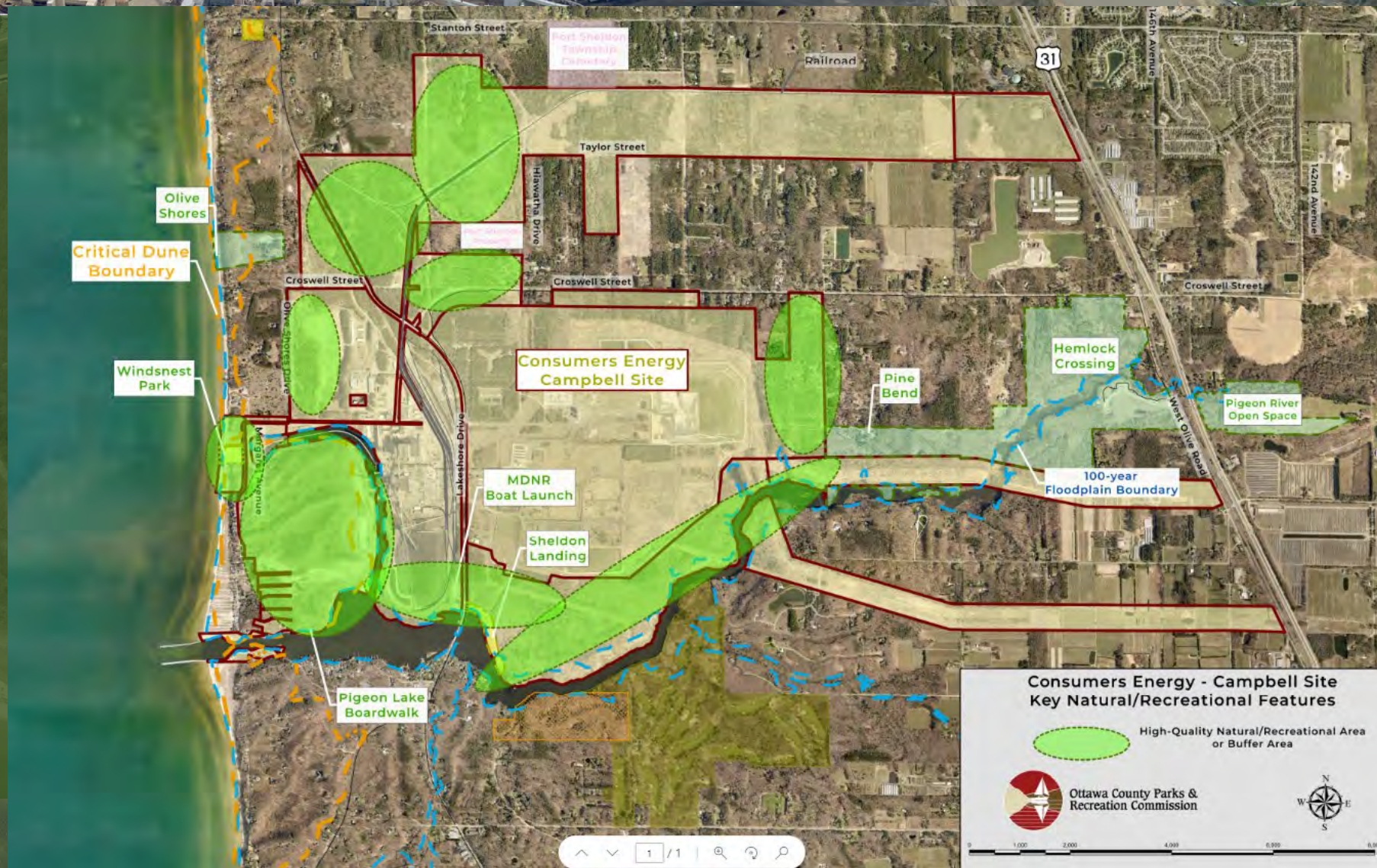
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# Proposal Highlights

- Focused on highest quality natural/recreation land
- Focused on achieving Greenway goals
  - Trail connectivity from Pine Bend to Lake Michigan
- Enhance access to highest quality natural resources
  - Expand access to Pigeon Lake, Pigeon River, Lake Michigan, and Critical Dunes
- Preserve character of area
  - Provide buffers between uses



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