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**Belle River Park Dedication  
June 18, 2019 at 6:00 pm**

Casco Township, Michigan – On Tuesday, June 18, 2019, Casco Township, St. Clair County Parks and Recreation, St. Clair County officials and Six Rivers Land Conservancy will host a free Belle River Park Dedication and Hike event at the new Casco Township Belle River Park. The park is located on the south side of Fred W. Moore Highway just east of the I-94 interchange—across the road from the MDOT Park & Ride. There will be refreshments, brief remarks and a short hike to explore the property. The event is open to the public, and those hiking should dress appropriately for spring conditions. Some sections of the hike may be muddy and slippery, and there is potential to cross through wetland areas.

The property was initially purchased by Six Rivers Land Conservancy with a loan from The Conservation Fund, and held on behalf of the Township while they applied for a grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) to help pay for the acquisition costs. The MNRTF awarded the grant to the Township in December of 2017, and Casco Township completed the purchase from Six Rivers at the end of 2018. MNRTF funding paid for 74% of the purchase price. Casco Township and a contribution from St. Clair County Parks paid the balance as local match. “Parks and open space are important components of St. Clair County’s Green Infrastructure plan. The new Belle River Park helps us strengthen our green infrastructure and expand recreational opportunities for all county residents,” said Mark Brochu, Director of St. Clair County Parks and Recreation.

Six Rivers Land Conservancy works to preserve natural and agricultural lands and assist local governments in acquiring land for conservation and recreation throughout the northern region of the metro Detroit area. Executive Director Chris Bunch feels the ecological features of the new park will benefit not only Casco Township, but the entire Belle River Watershed region. “The 19.21-acre park, which has 1,397 linear feet of frontage on the Belle River, contains emergent wetlands, scrub-shrub wetlands, and a floodplain which are essential for wildlife habitat, native species, and improved water quality of the Belle River,” he explained.

Casco Township has formed a parks and recreation committee, and planning is underway to develop the property as a natural area, park, and kayak launch. In the meantime, the Township will develop a schedule to open the property for non-motorized uses including hiking, and access to the river. “The community is very excited and eager to participate in the creation of a park with water access that will be a reflection of our love of the outdoors,” said Colleen Stover, Casco Township Treasurer. Patricia Allagreen, Casco Township Clerk, is also excited about Belle River Park. “What an opportunity we’ve been given! The parks in St. Clair County are wonderful and now we will create one of our own!” she said.

Funded by royalties from oil and gas and mineral production on State lands, the MNRTF is a constitutionally protected State fund administered by the DNR that provides funding for acquisition and development of land for parks, recreation, and conservation. Since its inception, it has provided over \$1 billion to communities throughout the State.

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CONSERVING, SUSTAINING, AND  
CONNECTING NATURAL AREAS, LANDS,  
AND WATERS THAT MAKE THE PLACES  
WE LIVE SPECIAL.

## **Casco Township Belle River Park Dedication June 18, 6 pm**

Please Join Casco Township, St. Clair County Parks and St. Clair County officials and Six Rivers Land Conservancy for a dedication and hike event at the new Casco Township Belle River Park on Tuesday, June 18 at 6 pm.

The park is located on the south side of Fred W. Moore Highway just east of the I-94 interchange—across the road from the MDOT Park & Ride. There will be refreshments, brief remarks and a short hike to explore the property. For those hiking, dress appropriately for spring conditions—some sections of the hike may be muddy and slippery, and there is potential to cross through wetland areas.

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## Parks and Recreation Committee News

There will be a Ribbon Cutting ceremony at the newly purchased park property located on Fred Moore Highway (south side of the road about 150' from the BP Gas Station) on Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. The residents of Casco are encouraged to attend and explore the 19 acre site which will be developed for the enjoyment of the community. This property, obtained with the cooperation and guidance of The Six Rivers Land Conservancy and their representative Chris Bunch, will be enhanced with the help of Pamela Blough, PLA, FASLA, the landscape architect who will be working with the Parks and Recreation Committee and the township board. Light refreshments will be served.

The Parks and Recreation Committee will hold an informational session on Tuesday, June 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Casco Township Hall. Pamela Blough will give her thoughts on the recent topographical survey of the Casco Belle River Park and initial steps of land development will be discussed. The public is welcome to come and meet the members of the committee and Ms. Blough. All thoughts on park use and development will be welcome.