

# The Wilderness Corridor

Our vision for the Wilderness Corridor is to preserve enough of its land to control development along its eastern border and to preserve its streams, woodlots and ravines thereby maintaining the wilderness character of the corridor for future generations.

The GMLC has categorized more than 150 acres in this corridor as critical and has targeted them for protection through easement, gift or outright purchase. This corridor also contains a significant portion of the village's vulnerable eastern border along County Line Road. The Conservancy closely monitors the status of the land along this border and has action plans in place to be implemented when the timing indicates such actions are appropriate.

As development continues along County Line Road with removal of large trees and brush, keeping balance in the river valley ecosystem is a challenge. Rain water and natural underground springs that were once absorbed by the root system of the wilderness, are not being mitigated. Ravines that once had trickling brooks are being further eroded by spring torrents.

This is most evident at Sherman Woods. On the south side of Sherman Road are 12 treed acres which were originally destined for development. This purchase was made possible by gifts from neighboring landowners and augmented by Conservancy funds. A large ravine winding through this pristine property, has been so eroded that it has placed neighboring properties to the west along Chagrin River Road at risk of flooding each spring.

It is important to remember that the Wilderness Corridor is an integral part of the overall Chagrin River Watershed. These ridges of land flanking the Chagrin River separate waters flowing through different ravines throughout the village. Because the entire village of Gates Mills is 9 square miles of river and watershed, disruption to this natural ecosystem affects everyone throughout the community. We hope to heighten awareness of this valuable resource and inspire responsible preservation and conservation efforts.

