



KANSAS CITY'S LINE CREEK FOREST ISSUE AT A GLANCE

**OUR GOAL:
MAKE THE LINE CREEK FOREST A
CONSERVATION AREA IN THE
KC NORTHLAND**

ABOUT THE FOREST

The Line Creek Forest is a large, old & historic (unprotected) forest in the Kansas City Northland roughly the size of Central Park and home to the popular Line Creek Trail. The forest is some of the last remaining original woodland forest within KC in Platte County and is surrounded by development. And now the forest itself is under threat for development.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE FOREST?

Part of the forest is being developed by the largest landowner, the Park Hill School District, however much of the remaining forest can still be protected from future development.

OUR GOAL:

Make the Line Creek Forest a conservation area in the KC Northland and protect it for future generations.

WHY IT SHOULD BE PROTECTED

Our valuable green space in KC's Northland is disappearing. And old forests like the Line Creek Forest deserve to be protected.

Today, many people use the Line Creek Trail and enjoy the peaceful serenity of the forest. But even if you've never stepped foot in the Line Creek Forest, it makes your life better. The forest provides water & flooding management, improved air quality, a habitat for important wildlife and countless benefits to our community.

Remember, the forest isn't something that needs to be built and constantly maintained by taxpayer dollars, like a park, community center or ball field. And when we try to bring back green space, it can cost hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars. Why not just protect what we have?

This forest has existed for hundreds of years and is mostly self-sustaining. Let's protect it for the next generation of Kansas City community members.

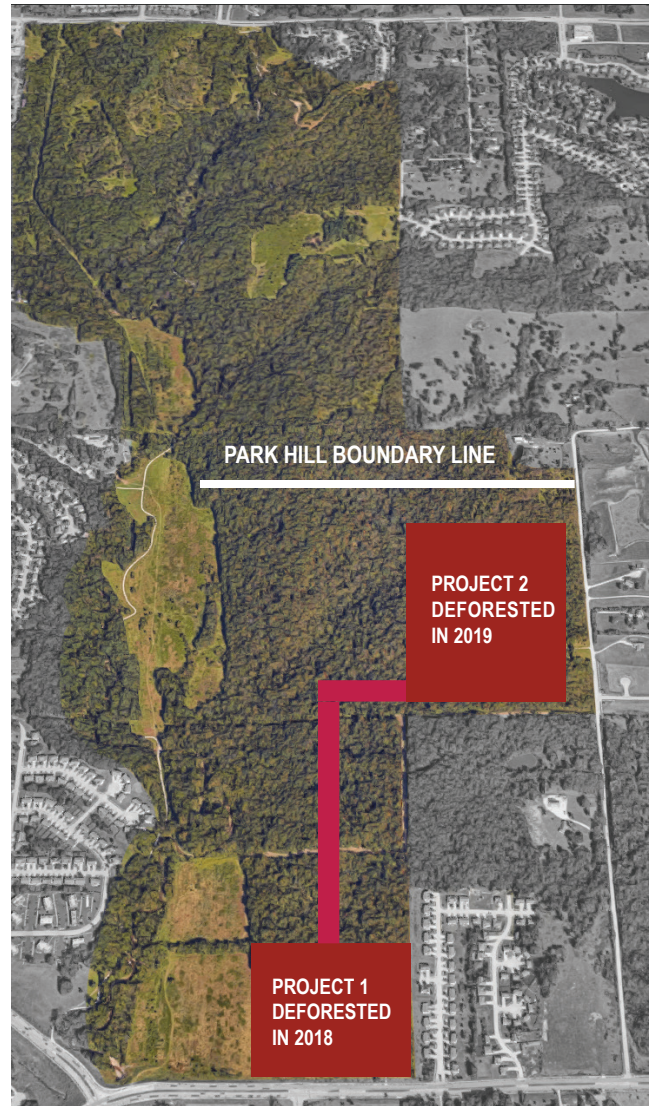
Together with thousands of community members, we are asking our local elected officials, Missouri Department of Conservation and government agencies to act on behalf of our citizens and the next generation, to permanently conserve this valuable and limited resource in the Kansas City Northland.

**PRESERVE THE LINE CREEK FOREST FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS
LASTKCFORREST.COM**

FOREST IN 2017



FOREST TODAY



AERIAL VIEW OF PROJECT 1

Trees were burned on ozone alert day leading to citation by the city.

No archaeological survey was done for project 1 in advance of starting construction.

At our urging, an archaeological survey was done in advance of project 2, and artifacts were found.



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

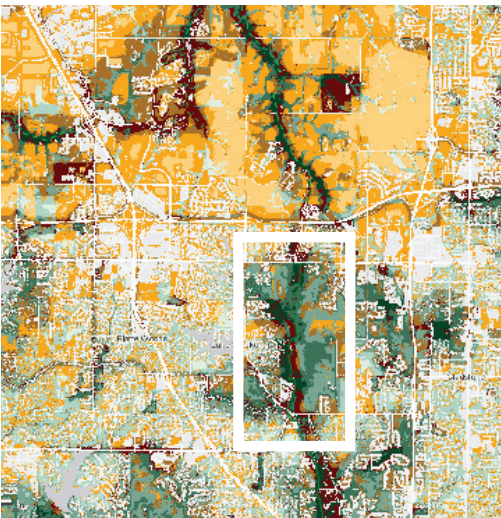
A FOREST WORTH SAVING



Pictured left, The Line Creek Forest and Trail

The Mid-America Regional Council has designated the Line Creek Forest as **medium-to-high priority for forest conservation and restoration**, according to their Natural Resource Inventory and ArcGIS mapping.

Missouri Department of Conservation has said, “because of its relatively healthy condition and its location, the area is **an important piece of property for conservation**,” describing the area as a combination of bottomland forest and upland forests and woodlands, and saying, “several species of oaks and hickories, some quite old, can be found in the more upland parts of the corridor. Among other benefits, this contiguous green space offers valuable wildlife habitat, improved water quality, and outdoor recreation.”



Above: Mid-America Regional Council ArcGIS mapping. Dark and light green indicates priority for forest conservation and restoration. White rectangle indicates Line Creek Forest.

When the city developed the trail, the forest surrounding the trail was evaluated as “... **untouched wilderness areas with substantial natural and archaeological resources and wildlife habitat**...” and “... **some of the last remaining original woodland forest within Kansas City in Platte County**,” according to KC Ordinance 090697.

Using its size, health and age for comparison, there are only two other similar green spaces in the KC Northland, and the Line Creek Forest is **the last unprotected one (this is why we refer to it as the lastKCforest.com)**. In other words, there is no mulligan. If we eradicate the Line Creek Forest, there is not another comparable forested area to preserve in the future.



KANSAS CITY'S LINE CREEK FOREST



SUPPORTS GREATER KC INITIATIVES

According to the Greater Kansas City Regional Forestry Initiative, less than 2 percent of our city's trees are 18" in diameter or more. But in the Line Creek Forest, ancient oaks exist in a complex and symbiotic ecosystem.

Taxpayers spent money supporting the local research of the Greater KC Regional Forestry Initiatives, where findings conclude, quote, "Local leaders, planners and residents (that's us) can use the study results to develop a regional forestry framework improved long-term management plans and policies that will protect and preserve our trees for future generations"



Saving our trees improves our quality of life. The Greater KC Forestry Initiative dictates, "Increasing our tree cover by just 10% would: Remove 1 million more tons of air pollution/year; Remove 3.1 million tons more VOC* emissions/year; Sequester 9.4 million more tons of carbon/year."

BENEFITS OF GREEN SPACE

The Line Creek Forest is not a park that requires constant upkeep. This forest is, for the most part, self-sustaining and healthy, and for the last 50 years has grown even more so. Even citizens who never step foot on the trail or in the forest reap the benefits of its existence: the forest provides cleaner air and micro-climate control, reduces noise and light pollution, provides a habitat for animals, such as Missouri's songbirds, bats and owls, and provides water run-off management in an area notorious for flooding.

Additionally, there have been countless studies on the impact and benefits of urban green spaces, particularly forests, on human physical and mental health. Parks decrease health costs and support productivity, both through encouraging exercise and reducing air pollution.

Depending on their size (and our forest is relatively the size of Central Park), parks and natural green spaces can boost the economy and increase property values, draw visitors from near and far, bringing tourism revenue to local restaurants, hotels and stores.

Above: Line Creek Forest and Creek

And taxpayers typically pick up the cost for maintaining roads, replanting trees, restoring green space, managing flood issues, etcetera. So, while we appreciate the need for development, we are also very sensitive to the very real side effects felt by surrounding communities, both short- and long-term implications, especially as it relates to our dwindling green spaces in the Northland.

PRESERVE THE LINE CREEK FOREST FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

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KANSAS CITY'S LINE CREEK FOREST

HISTORY

A FOREST WORTH SAVING



Aerials of the Line Creek Valley from 1958 show a dense forest, much of which still stands today

“The Line Creek Valley has a storied history and incredible natural resources. The creek was named Line Creek because it was the line between Missouri and Native American Territory until the Platte Purchase.

Early settlements and primitive roads connected the towns of Barry, Parkville, and Linden. As industrialization occurred, the area was served by the St. Joseph-Kansas City Interurban Railroad, which brought the towns of Northern Heights and Miltonwood in the early 1900’s.

The northern end of the valley was once a resort stop on the Interurban line, and Drennon Lake was a private lake where people would pay to fish or camp. As reflected in the map of the Kansas City region in Mid America Regional Council’s Natural Resource Inventory,

the proposed conservation area is the largest cluster of original growth forest still in private ownership within the I -435 freeway loop.” *(Excerpt from The Line Creek Conservation Area report, published in 2012.)*

THE INTERURBAN RAILROAD

Between 1919-1930 the “Interurban” (an electric railroad line) passed through the area as it ran from Kansas City to St. Joseph. The Drennon stop was in the Line Creek Forest. Parts of the Line Creek Trail follow the old track, and you can still see sections of railway bed in the forest today.

HOPEWELL CULTURE

The Line Creek Valley is home to several archaeological sites from a Native American presence mainly between 1,000 BC to 750 AD. Artifacts and relics related to Native Americans who lived near Line Creek have been found in the area.

From the Riverside City website: “Around the Middle and Late Archaic Periods of 4000-5000 BC, the Nebo Hill People lived on the bluffs that flank the Missouri River while fishing with bone hooks and hunting deer, birds and rabbits. The Black Sand Culture of Early Woodland Period in 1000 BC, were known for their distinctive incised pottery and settled in the Line Creek Valley. The so-called Hopewell culture built the largest Mound Builder community west of the Mississippi in the Line Creek area around 300 BC.” At our urging, Park Hill School District conducted an archaeological survey for their SECOND development project and artifacts were recovered.

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URBAN WILDLIFE

A FOREST WORTH SAVING



There are many plants and animals that call the Line Creek Forest their home: owls, songbirds, bats, foxes, opossums, wildflowers, ancient oaks, insects, bees, and more. As development occurs, these populations dwindle and we lose the benefits these species provide.

THREE FACTS TO KNOW:

1. Nationwide, metropolitan areas are losing about 36 million trees every year. As cities lose their large, old trees, the native wildlife that depends on them for food and shelter are also in danger of disappearing.

<https://www.nathab.com/blog/losing-urban-trees-and-the-wildlife-that-depends-on-them/>
<https://ufi.ca.uky.edu/wildlife-habitat-tree>



2. According to the World Wildlife Fund, the world's populations of mammals, birds, fish and reptiles have dropped 60 percent since 1970, and human activity is to blame.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/kids/people-places/animal-species-are-disappearing-and-we-the-people-are-the-problem/ar-BBVid5p?%2525252525253Bocid=DELLDHP>
<https://www.worldwildlife.org/habitats/forest-habitat>

3. From Maine to Arizona, America's forest species are in a steady slide towards extinction. Scientists predict that more than 4,600 native plant and animal species will be gone by 2030, an evolutionary blink of the eye.

<https://www.americanforests.org/magazine/article/endangered-forest-species/>

Drone photography of the Line Creek Forest in the summer



COMMUNITY BENEFITS

A FOREST WORTH SAVING



Kids in the Line Creek Forest

surrounding nature makes you feel like you're not in a busy city, but somewhere completely different than you were 10 minutes before.

On any given day, you can find community members, pets, kids and families enjoying the trail. What CAN'T you find in the forest? Today, there are no roads or lights, not a lot of noise. Today kids and pets can run ahead of their parents on the trail without worrying about cars or traffic.

Two miles of the popular Line Creek Trail, a section that cost the taxpayers about 2 million dollars to build, runs through the forest. The section of trail was built to allow community members access to the untouched forest.

The trail is about 8 miles long in total, and the rest of the trail goes alongside a busy highway, through neighborhoods and other developed areas. People from all districts in KC use the trail, and it has become a destination for runners, bikers, walkers and more.

But the two miles in the forest are serene and unique, not simply because of the trees directly next to the trail, but because of how insulated it is. The vastness of the

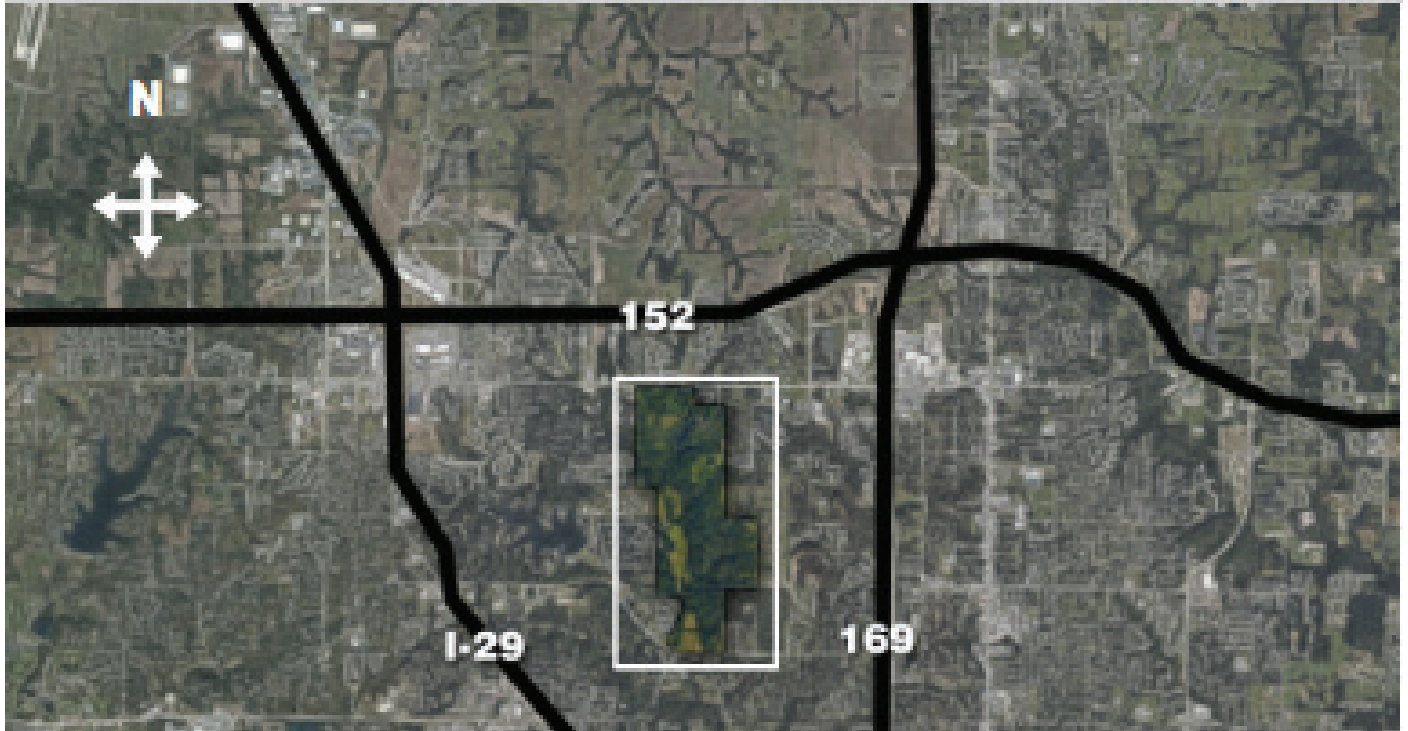


Drone photography of the Line Creek Forest and trail in the fall

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KANSAS CITY'S LINE CREEK FOREST



What's around the forest?

WAU-LIN-CREE APTS
\$600-835 / MO.

APPLEWOOD APTS.
\$600-1100 / MO.

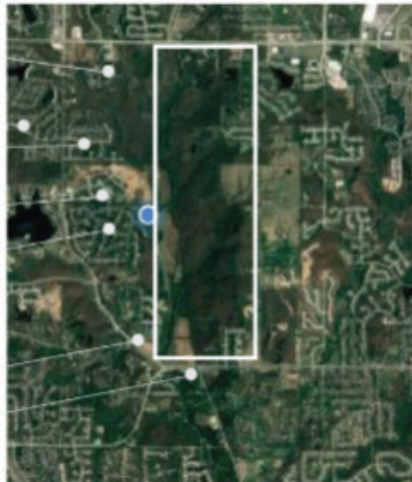
BICYCLE CLUB APTS
\$600-1100 / MO.

SILVERBROOK
\$250K-400Ks

PLATTE BROOKE NORTH &
PLATTE BROOKE \$170Ks-300Ks
DUPLEXES

NORTHWOOD APTS
\$490-550 / MO.

HOMES
\$50K-200K



To the east & north:

NEIGHBORHOODS,
MANY NOT IN THE
PARK HILL
SCHOOL DISTRICT

DUPLEXES

LARGER
PROPERTY
OWNERS

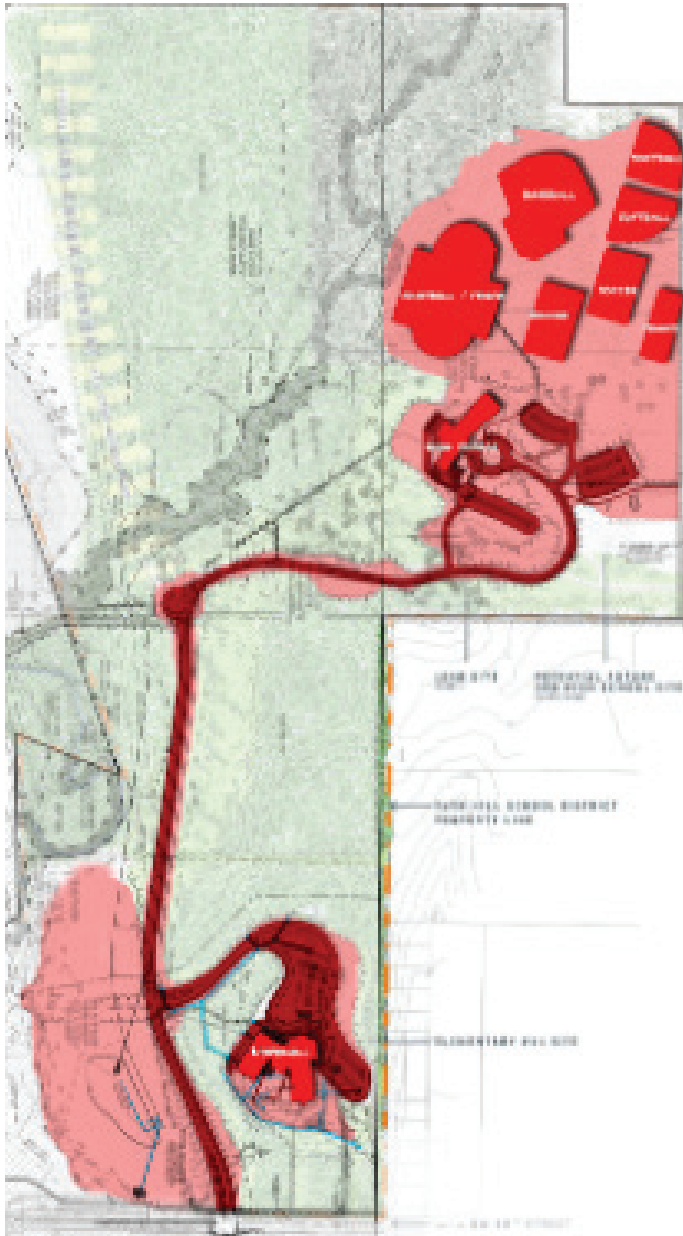
WHAT SURROUNDS THE FOREST?

The forest is located in a busy part of the Kansas City Northland, off Barry Road. Neighborhoods, and some larger properties on the east, surround the forest. Houses range from 50,000 dollars to 450,000 dollars or even higher, as well as duplexes and apartments. Diverse income ranges, diverse families, all who benefit from the nearby urban forest, which helps improve air quality, storm-water management, clean our waterways, help conserve energy and assist with carbon removal and storage.

PRESERVE THE LINE CREEK FOREST FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

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LOWER 272 ACRES OF THE FOREST - PARK HILL SCHOOL DISTRICT PLANS



Remaining 125 acres not needed for the three schools

Our stance: We continue to urge Park Hill to create a conservation plan for some of these remaining acres.

Current status: Park Hill has not yet agreed to any permanent conservation plan.

In 2017, Park Hill School District purchased about 272 acres of the forest in order to build three schools. About 125 remaining acres are earmarked by the district for future development or sale. We are urging the district to make a permanent conservation plan for some of those remaining acres.

Why did we get involved? The district used 110 million of community funds (debt) to build these schools.

School #1 Hopewell Elementary

Our stance: We supported the development of Hopewell Elementary school, however, we urged the district to make environmentally friendly choices.

Current status: Under construction. The Park Hill School District opted to burn the many acres of trees, some on ozone alert days, leading to citations by the city. Additionally, the district did NOT do archaeological surveys prior to beginning construction on Hopewell. At our urging, they did surveys for the next project, and uncovered artifacts.

School #2 LEAD Center

Our stance: We urged the district to explore an alternate forest location for the LEAD school, one that didn't require as the eradication of the some of the older parts of the forest or the development of the Line Creek Parkway, which bisected the forest.

Current status: Under construction. The Park Hill School District opted for the more environmentally damaging plan and burned the trees for this much larger project. However, based on our feedback during the Special Use Permit process at the Board of Zoning Approval and City Plan Commission meeting, Park Hill School District was required to remove sports fields from the permit request, include some conservation language and adhere to several other contingencies.

School #3 Expansion to Full-Fledged High School

Our stance: We are opposed to this plan due to the environmental damage from sports fields and the large footprint in the forest.

Current status: Based on community outcry, Park Hill will need to go back to the BZA and CPC for approval to proceed with this project.