

Grand River Ravines (updated 01.17.11)

This project involves purchase of 100 acres in Georgetown Township with 1,100 feet on the Grand River. The property is adjacent to Grand Valley State University's southern border and includes deep wooded ravines similar to those that extend along GVSU's riverfront. The ravine system in this area ranked among the County's highest quality natural lands in a 1988 survey by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory.

The total cost of the property is \$1,688,750. Ottawa County secured an option on the property in the fall of 2008 and paid an option fee of \$280,000 at that time. Park millage funds will be used to match a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant to pay the remaining acquisition costs.

The property connects with the 68 acre Fillmore at the Bend Open Space which was acquired in 1999. When the acquisition is completed, the properties will be combined to form a new unified 168 acre county park. Ideas to be considered in the planning process include trails for hiking and cross-country skiing as well as paved pathway for biking, roller-blading and other non-motorized uses. The paved pathway will be part of a future Grand River Greenway trail which is proposed to link GVSU to Kent County and ultimately connect to Grand Haven. Hiking trails are proposed to connect with trails through GVSU ravines providing significant hiking opportunities. Fishing access and docks are proposed along the waterfront as is a canoe/kayak landing and livery. Nature interpretation will focus on the ravines. The existing home, with its open floor plan and fully accessible design (including elevator), will be used as a multi-purpose building for interpretive programs and group rentals including meetings and retreats. A formal public master planning process is scheduled to begin in late 2011.

