



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 14, 2021

Contact: Kathleen Hoyle, Director
Parks, Recreation &
Senior Citizen Services
(269) 329-4522

City of Portage and Michigan Department of Natural Resources to Collaborate on Gourneck State Game Area

The City of Portage and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) have signed a Memorandum of Agreement regarding the operation of 377 acres of the Gourneck State Game Area (GSGA) along Centre Avenue, north of Vanderbilt Avenue. This agreement will allow for collaboration with educational programming, facility improvements, recreational activities, and habitat management, and conservation efforts in the area.

The Gourneck State Game Area (GSGA) is unique amongst State Game Areas (SGA) as rapid growth and development surrounding these parcels has occurred. The GSGA was one of the first SGA project areas in Southern Michigan in 1941. Almost entirely within the city limits of the City of Portage, the GSGA has continued to remain a popular destination for hunters and the community and hosts a variety of wildlife and natural communities, including rare species. With a unique combination of good hunting opportunities, species of greatest conservation need, and a location in an urban environment, the GSGA presents many opportunities for nature programming and

- more -

improved access for hunters, wildlife watchers, outdoors enthusiasts, hikers, and people with disabilities.

“The City of Portage is delighted to work with the MDNR to improve access to and programming within the Gourdneck State Game Area,” said Acting City Manager, Adam Herringa. “We are enthusiastic about getting more Portagers out into nature, right here in the heart of the city.”

It is the desire of the Southwest Region of the DNR Wildlife Division and the City of Portage to develop the GSGA as a model for Urban State Game Areas by introducing the community to hunting, fishing, wildlife, and nature. Future enhancements to the GSGA facilities include improved entrances off Centre Avenue and Angling Road, ADA compliant parking, kayak access to Hampton Lake, trail improvements, and other visitor amenities. Volunteer and nature programming will be developed as part of the collaboration including nature interpretation, ranger-guided walks, conservation activities, and school visits.

With this partnership, important infrastructure improvements, meaningful nature experiences and access to Hampton Lake will serve as a wildlife and conservation centerpiece for the community. For more information, please call the Portage Parks & Recreation at (269) 329-4522 or the MDNR Wildlife Division at (989) 965-3333.

#####