



WETLAND *matters*

Published bi-monthly for the Friends and Members of Oxbow, Inc.

ownership of the remaining 750 acres of so. The Mullins property goes back into history a long way. At the closing, Phyllis Mullins showed an old document that revealed the property had been deeded through action of President Thomas Jefferson and Secretary of State John Madison in 1807 before Indiana had become a state.

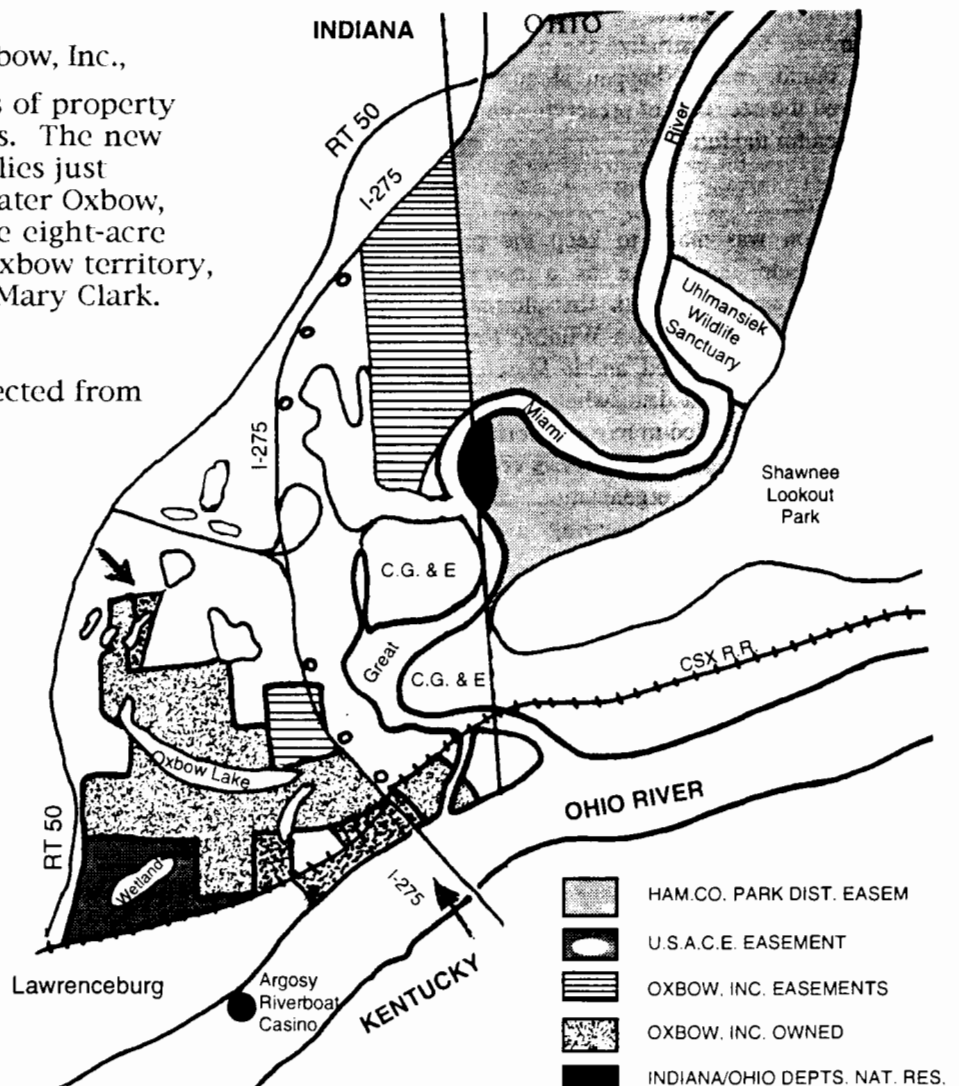
Purchases of Mullins, Clark Properties Are Completed

On December 8, 1999, Oxbow, Inc., closed on its purchase of 32 acres of property owned by Earl and Phyllis Mullins. The new addition to Oxbow, Inc., holdings lies just beyond the Ohio River. Six days later Oxbow, Inc., closed on its purchase of the eight-acre lake at the northern end of the Oxbow territory, which was owned by Ralph and Mary Clark. (See adjoining map.)

The Oxbow areas now protected from development are as follows:

OXBOW, INC.	
Easements	258 acres
Owned	447 acres
COMBINED	
Oxbow, Inc.	705 acres
U.S.A.C.E.	103 acres
Ham. Co.	
Park Dist.	911 acres
IDNR-ODNR	25 acres
TOTAL	1,744 acres

There are approximately 2,500 acres in what is known as the Oxbow area, the region at the confluence of the Ohio and Great Miami rivers. Thus, Oxbow, Inc., has now set its sights on obtaining either through conservation easement or



Arrows point to new Oxbow property.

FIELD NOTES

BY

MORRIS MERCER

This has been an extra dry and warm fall season around the Oxbow. Our area is a foot below average on rain fall in 1999. I know the Oxbow is as low as I have ever seen it. But, in spite of the low water, the Oxbow has been a haven for much wild life. Just after I had written the field notes for the last newsletter, I stopped in at the Oxbow on a late October evening.

I stood on the bank of the big bend of the Oxbow. There were many great blue herons, but even more green winged teal. I counted 92 of them. Most of the teal were in the shallow water with others on the muddy bank. Many of those in the water were half submerged busy feeding on something. A half dozen shovelers were feeding the same way.

I did notice there were many turtles out on logs catching some of the warm rays of the afternoon sun. One log caught my attention. The log was sticking out of the water at an easy slant. There were eight red eared turtles, each about the size of a dinner plate, sunning on the log. Standing on the end of the log was a double-crested cormorant, which was holding its wings out to dry them in the sun. This made some picture, as the turtles and the cormorant shared the log.

One morning Jim Simpson and I stopped by Jack Pot Pond. We found the water level very low. There wasn't much wildlife to see, but we did see a marsh hawk hunting the high ground above the water hole. On our way back to Beaver Pond we saw a few horned larks. We stopped for a look at Cemetery Lake. Most of the campers were gone from around the lake, but there were a good number of gulls on the water, at least a couple of hundred. But the

surprise was that about 90% of them were Bonaparte's gulls. The others were ring-billed gulls. It is usually the ring-billed gulls in larger numbers.

On one of my trips to the Oxbow I had gotten a late start. In the western sky a heavy dark cloud was all along the horizon. The sun was still bright as I arrived on the bank of the Oxbow. Out before me were a couple of dozen green-winged teal, a half dozen shovelers, several killdeer, and a couple of greater yellow legs. Across the water hole a farmer was busy on his corn picker harvesting the last of the corn in the area. As I stood there, a fat fox squirrel passed very close to me. The squirrel was carrying an ear of corn still in the husk.

The dark clouds soon covered the sun and there was a chill in the air. I heard the cry of the wild geese and looked up to see a nice "V" of Canada geese flying overhead. I couldn't help but think of days long gone by. I thought of autumn days when I was a boy back in Illinois.

I could picture a fall day, Dad, my brother, and I were out on the lake in a boat. The crappie were really hitting the minnows, and we knew there would be fish for supper. A farmer was husking corn in the field next to the lake. We could hear the ears of corn hitting his bank board and falling into the wagon. The farmer had his team of horses pulling the wagon and grabbed the ears of corn off the stalks one at a time and threw them into the wagon. The horses moved slowly along or stopped at verbal commands. That was the way corn was harvested in those days.

We heard the cry of the wild geese and looked up to see a string of Canada geese clear across the autumn sky. We would guess that the geese were on their way to the fields around Cairo, where the Ohio joins the Mississippi River. It seems that the harvest of corn and the fall migration of the water fowl go together.

It was autumn and the days were good. We would head for home and get busy cleaning the fish. Mom would get the skillet hot. Soon she would call us for supper, and there before us would be that platter of golden brown

Field Notes (Cont.)

fried fish. Yes, the days were good, but our boyhood days at home were about over.

My brother was killed in World War II, and many times I wonder what he would think if he were to come back now. Just think how they harvested corn when he was here. Now the farmer drives his corn picker down the rows. It picks eight rows at a time, husks the corn, shells it, loads the shelled corn in a truck, cuts up the stalks and the cobs, and blows them out on the ground for next year's crop. I'm sure my brother would have trouble believing what he was seeing.

All the corn isn't picked on Oxbow property. Oxbow, Inc., has the farmer leave about 50 feet of standing corn all around the fields. You could say, "that grain is for the birds." I wish everyone could see the area in the spring when the corn is flooded. The ducks seem to really enjoy diving down to eat the corn from the cob.. The Oxbow is a fine stopover on migration. I'm so glad we have been able to preserve this much of the area around the Great Miami.

But remember on these warm dry days-- if we don't get some cold weather and some snow, it is going to be pretty tough sledding around here.



Trustees Election To Be Held at January Meeting at the Zoo

Election of Trustees of Oxbow, Inc., will be held at the January 11 meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the Zoo Education Building. Up for reelection are: Anita Buck, Jerry Johnson, Mike Kluesener, Dennis Mason, Richard Pope, Meg Riestenberg and David Styer. Dennis Conover has also been nominated. Nominations will be taken from the floor, or they can be mailed in.

Stock Gifts, Grants, Bequests Received By Oxbow, Inc.

Oxbow, Inc., received munificent donations in 1999. Stock came from George and Margarite Nassaur, Dr. Aaron Perlman, Edward M. Thayer and Charles Noe. (It is the policy of Oxbow, Inc., to sell stock when received.)

Estate bequests were made by William Rowell Chase, and Harold G. Esterman.

Grants were made by the William P. Anderson Foundation and the Bassett Family Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation.

Donations to the Land Trust Fund for the year totaled over \$955,000, sending Oxbow, Inc., into the new Millennium well situated for ongoing land purchases. The Board of Trustees wishes to thank the donors and the families of the Chase and Esterman estates for their generosity to Oxbow, Inc.

Address Correction?

Once a year we ask you to inspect the mailing label on your *Wetland Matters*. Is it correct? Do we have your nine digit Zip Code? If there is an error, please mail your correction to:

Oxbow, Inc.
Mail Department
4137 Jamestown Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45205-2007

If you are relocating, please send us your new address, since the Post Office does not forward third class mail.

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Pauline Myers and Family	Suzanne Roney Sallada
Oxbow, Inc.	Suzanne Roney Sallada

Winter Activities Schedule

MEETINGS

FIELD TRIPS

Tuesday, 11 January 2000, 7:30 pm at the Zoo, Richard Pope describes farming in the flood plain of the Oxbow area.

Thursday, 20 January 2000 at 7:30 pm. Meet John Klein & Morris Mercer at the Shawmee Lookout clubhouse for a night walk.

Tuesday, 8 February 2000, 7:30 pm at the Lawrenceburg Library. Morris Mercer will show some amateur video of the Oxbow area.

Saturday, 26 February 2000 at 9:00 am. Meet Paul Wharton (353-3403) at Gardens Alive for a winter look around the Oxbow.

Oxbow, Inc.

A nonprofit organization formed by conservation groups and concerned citizens of Ohio and Indiana for the purpose of preserving and protecting a wetlands ecosystem known locally as the Oxbow, Hardintown, or Horseshoe Bottoms, from industrial development and to preserve the floodplain at the confluence of the Great Miami and Ohio rivers for use as a staging area for the seasonal migrations of waterfowl. This agricultural is rich in geological, archaeological, and anthropological history.

Help us save this unique wetland ecosystem. Make your state a richer place in which to live by helping us preserve this precious resource. Membership in Oxbow, Inc. is encouraged and solicited.

Individual	\$10	Family	\$15
Contributing	\$25	Supporting	\$50
Patron	\$100	Cornerstone	\$250
Sponsor	\$500	Benefactor	\$1000
Organization/Club	\$25		

Mail to: **Oxbow, Inc.**
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