

Wetland Restoration Proposed

in support of new EV battery cell facility in Lordstown



130+ acres of high-quality wetlands will be re-established in the Mosquito Creek Wildlife Area to replace wetlands affected by a new electric vehicle battery cell manufacturing plant proposed in Lordstown, OH. The restored wetlands will improve habitat connectivity and diversity in the area.

WHAT: General Motors and LG Chem recently announced plans to build and tool an electric vehicle (EV) battery cell manufacturing plant that would create more than 1,100 jobs in the Mahoning Valley. After evaluating multiple locations to find one with suitable size and access to highways, rail, and infrastructure (among other criteria), the 50/50 joint venture proposed a 158-acre site in Lordstown for the new plant. Several permits are required before construction can begin, including permits under the Clean Water Act to replace or otherwise mitigate affected wetlands.

WHY: Ohio EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have a defined process that companies and property owners must follow when wetlands, streams, or protected species of fish and wildlife may be affected by a building project. The very large size of the proposed manufacturing plant means the entire 158-acre property is needed to house the main plant, several support buildings, and a rail spur, parking lot, and stormwater management features. That site-wide construction will require replacement of the wetlands that are currently on the selected property.

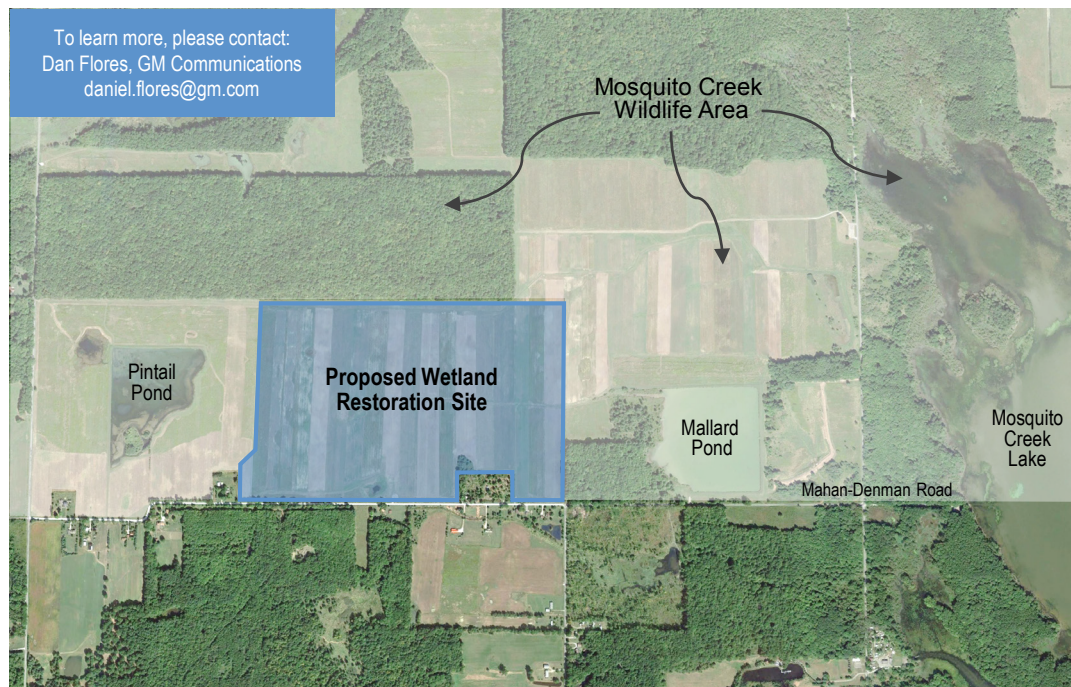
In 2014, the property was mostly woodland and included only about 9 acres of well-established wetlands. By 2015, most of the trees were clear-cut (by the property owner), disrupting drainage and leaving the land heavily rutted. A 2017 survey showed that logging and rutting created wet soils and low-quality wetlands, increasing the total to about 25 acres. A 2019 survey now shows about 66 acres that meet the regulatory definition of wetlands.

HOW: In January 2020, the joint venture submitted wetland and water quality permit applications to Ohio EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, seeking review, public comment, and approval. The applications describe in detail:

- How multiple potential locations for the new plant were evaluated
- How locations were narrowed down to focus on those that best meet project needs while also considering potential environmental impacts
- How and why restoration of 130+ acres of wetlands within the Mosquito Creek Wildlife Area was proposed as the best way to replace the ecological value and function of the 66 acres of wetlands that will be affected by construction of the new plant (based on regulatory requirements and calculations by ecologists and others, the mitigation acreage is usually larger in size than the original wetlands)
- How the restoration will be designed, constructed, and monitored to assure that the current agricultural use at the mitigation site (see map below) is successfully restored to pre-existing wetland conditions

Next steps include Ohio EPA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers review of the mitigation plan. That review includes the agencies hosting a public hearing and seeking public comment on the permit applications and mitigation plan prior to approving the permits or requiring changes to the plan before approval. General Motors and LG Chem welcome all community input during the agency review process.

To learn more, please contact:
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Restoration at a Glance

- 130+ acres of wetlands re-established, improving water quality, habitat diversity, and ecological connectivity within and near Mosquito Creek Wildlife Area
- 88+ acres of marsh and scrub/shrub, plus 41+ acres of forested wetlands restored to pre-agricultural conditions
- Maintenance and monitoring for at least 10 years to assure success in restoring complex habitats that are flourishing, sustainable, and meet all state and federal performance requirements
- Located in the same county and Mahoning River watershed as the proposed new EV battery cell plant