American Water Newsroom

Red-Tail Land Conservancy Receives $75,000 Grant from the American Water Charitable Foundation to Protect Boston Creek Forest in Wayne County

New nature preserve will safeguard water quality, wildlife habitat and expand community access to nature

MUNCIE, Ind. and RICHMOND, Ind., June 12, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Red-Tail Land Conservancy, based in Muncie, Indiana, announced today it has been awarded a $75,000 Water and Environment grant from the American Water Charitable Foundation, supporting the acquisition and permanent protection of 39 acres of mature woodland along Boston Creek in Wayne County, just south of Richmond.

The property, known as Buskirk Falls Preserve, represents a rare opportunity to protect a high-quality riparian forest in the East Fork Whitewater River watershed—an area critical to maintaining water quality, supporting wildlife habitat and strengthening regional conservation efforts.

"We had this amazing opportunity to permanently protect and preserve these 39 acres," said Julie Borgmann, executive director of Red-Tail Land Conservancy. "It's an incredible piece of property, not just because of the beautiful waterfall that's here, but really because of this large riparian forested corridor along Boston Creek and Cream Run."

The grant provides essential early funding to move the project forward, helping Red-Tail secure the property while building momentum to raise additional funds for long-term stewardship and public access.

"Our mission is twofold—we protect land for biodiversity and wildlife, but also for people," Borgmann said. "This project allows us to do both, creating a space where the community can connect with nature while protecting resources that benefit everyone."

Red-Tail Land Conservancy closed on the property on May 21, 2026, and will be permanently protected and cared for as a nature preserve, helping to safeguard a headwater stream that plays a vital role in maintaining downstream water quality. The forested landscape will filter pollutants, reduce erosion, absorb stormwater and contribute to long-term watershed health throughout the East Fork of the White River basin. Watch a video about this pristine property on YouTube: https://youtu.be/GkTg9oKAnNk.

In addition to its environmental impact, the preserve will provide opportunities for outdoor education, scientific research and community engagement. Adjacent to Earlham College's field station and located within a growing network of conserved lands, the property will serve as a resource for students, educators and residents alike.

The American Water Charitable Foundation's Water and Environment Grant Program support innovative, community-based projects focused on clean water, conservation, environmental education and water-based recreation. Red-Tail Land Conservancy's project was supported locally by Indiana American Water as part of its ongoing commitment to protecting water resources and strengthening communities across the state.

"Protecting water resources starts upstream, and projects like this demonstrate how local partnerships can create lasting benefits for entire communities," said Barry L. Suits, president of Indiana American Water. "By supporting Red-Tail's efforts, we're helping protect a critical watershed, preserve valuable habitat and ensure this land serves Indiana communities for generations to come."

"The American Water Charitable Foundation is proud to support organizations like Red-Tail Land Conservancy that are making a meaningful impact in the communities we serve," said Carrie Williams, president of the American Water Charitable Foundation. "These grants support projects that protect water quality, promote conservation and create lasting environmental benefits."

The Boston Creek Falls project also strengthens habitat connectivity in a region where forests are increasingly fragmented, supporting migratory birds and other wildlife while preserving a diverse and resilient ecosystem.

Once complete, the preserve will be protected in perpetuity—ensuring the land continues to improve water quality, provide wildlife habitat and offer meaningful opportunities for people to experience and learn from nature.

About Red-Tail Land Conservancy
Red-Tail Land Conservancy is dedicated to protecting and restoring land and habitats in East Central Indiana while engaging the community with nature and conservation. Through land preservation, stewardship, education and community partnerships, Red-Tail works to ensure natural spaces are protected for wildlife, clean water and future generations.

About American Water
American Water (NYSE: AWK) is the largest regulated water and wastewater utility company in the United States. With a history dating back to 1886 and celebrating 140 years in 2026, We Keep Life Flowing® by providing safe, clean, reliable and affordable drinking water and wastewater services to approximately 14 million people with regulated operations in 14 states and on 18 military installations. American Water's approximately 7,000 talented professionals leverage their significant expertise and the company's national size and scale to achieve excellent outcomes for the benefit of customers, employees, investors and other stakeholders. For more information, visit amwater.com and join American Water on LinkedIn, Facebook, X and Instagram.

About American Water Charitable Foundation
The American Water Charitable Foundation, a philanthropic non-profit organization established by American Water, focuses on three pillars of giving: Water, People, and Communities. Since 2012, the Foundation has invested over $25 million in funding through grants and matching gifts to support eligible organizations in communities served by American Water. The Foundation is funded by American Water shareholders and has no impact on customer rates. For more information, visit amwater.com/awcf.

About Indiana American Water
Indiana American Water, a subsidiary of American Water, is the largest regulated water utility in the state, providing safe, clean, reliable and affordable water and wastewater services to approximately 1.4 million people.

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For further information: Joel Reuter, External Affairs Manager, Indiana American Water, joel.reuter@amwater.com, (317) 885-2434

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