9509 West Parkway
Detroit, MI 48239
www.rougepark.org

January 28, 2026

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of Friends of Rouge Park, I am writing to express our strong support for the Coalition to Save Sibley Prairie's work to save 440 acres of the largest and highest-quality lakeplain prairie remaining in the entire state of Michigan.

Friends of Rouge Park is a non-profit organization dedicated to protect, restore, and promote a natural, environmentally healthy, and culturally vibrant Rouge Park, a city of Detroit park. We work to restore and protect natural ecosystems while ensuring that access to nature remains open and meaningful for the diverse communities of Detroit and Wayne County that utilize the park. Rouge Park is home to one of the largest restored tallgrass prairies. We recognize prairies like Sibley not only as rare ecological treasures, but as living classrooms and climate-resilient landscapes that benefit the entire region.

Native prairies are among the most threatened ecosystems in Michigan. Their deep rooted plant communities support biodiversity, stabilize soils, sequester carbon, and manage stormwater—functions that are increasingly critical as our region experiences more extreme weather, heat, and flooding. Protecting Sibley Prairie preserves these benefits while safeguarding habitat for pollinators, birds, and native plant communities that have few remaining strongholds.

This work is especially important in Wayne County, one of the most racially, culturally, and economically diverse counties in the state. Many residents face longstanding inequities in access to high quality green spaces, environmental education, and climate-resilient infrastructure. Protecting and stewarding prairies like Sibley helps ensure that the benefits of conservation like clean air, biodiversity, cooling landscapes, and opportunities for learning and connection are shared equitably across communities.

At Friends of Rouge Park, we operate with a small staff and rely heavily on volunteers, partnerships, and shared stewardship. This cooperative model reflects our belief that caring for public land is a collective responsibility, and that conservation succeeds best when people feel a sense of relationship, accountability, and belonging to place. The Save Sibley Prairie initiative embodies these same public values.

We commend the leadership and commitment behind Save Sibley Prairie and strongly urge continued protection, investment, and long-term stewardship of this irreplaceable landscape. Preserving Sibley Prairie is not only an environmental

imperative—it is an investment in community health, climate resilience, and the people of southeast Michigan.

Thank you for your consideration and for your dedication to protecting Michigan's natural heritage.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Pielack

Lindsay Pielack
Executive Director