



gathering waters conservancy



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nature photos: Gil Gribb



Rally in the Heartland

Land conservation has been a hot topic here in Wisconsin. From October 14th – 17th Madison hosted more than 1,800 land conservation professionals from around the country at the annual Land Trust Alliance National Rally.

This national land conservation conference is centered on the theme of “Conservation in the Heartland” – a topic we know a lot about here in Wisconsin. As participants enjoyed the crisp days and brilliant colors of Midwestern fall, they explored some protected areas throughout the state and learned important conservation skills from nationally-acclaimed trainers.

Rally got underway with two days of field trips to some of Wisconsin’s natural jewels. The trips ranged from relaxing to strenuous to suit all tastes. From a boat cruise around Lake Geneva, to wine tasting at Botham Vineyards, to a thirty-mile bike trek through the Driftless Area, these trips gave Rally participants a chance to see Wisconsin in its entire autumnal splendor.

On Sunday, Rally really got rolling with a keynote address by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. This renowned environmental defender enlivened the crowd and proposed that because of the connections we make between people and places, land trusts are “perhaps the most important part of the environmental movement.”

After this engaging kickoff, attendees dispersed to participate in their choice of the more than 130 seminars and training sessions that were offered throughout the following two days. These seminars highlighted the latest land protection tools, trend setting projects, and new legal and legislative developments affecting land conservation. In addition to the scheduled seminars, participants had the opportunity to network, sample local microbrews and organic produce, and listen to the poetry of Ellen Kort, Wisconsin’s former poet laureate.

During the closing plenary session, UW professor Bill Cronon left Rally attendees with an inspiring message that put our work in a broader context, “What I want to offer you as we prepare to depart is that land trusts are in the business not just of conserving lands, but of conserving the human values those lands embody... We protect preserves and natural areas and open space because they stand for some of our most dearly held values.”

At the end of this four-day extravaganza participants went home exhausted but energized, and equipped with new tools, contacts, and ideas to help them save the special places here in the Heartland and throughout the country. For more post-Rally follow-up, see the Land Trust Alliance website: www.lta.org.

~Julia Solomon , Program Coordinator

Gaylord Nelson Leaves a Legacy of Stewardship

With the passing of Gaylord Nelson, the environmental community bids a sad goodbye to a conservation champion. Nelson’s leadership on environmental issues is well-known. It is Nelson who in 1961 authorized the Outdoor Recreation Act Program (ORAP), Wisconsin’s first comprehensive, long-term land acquisition program. Over 31 years, the Program provided funding for protection of 54,000 acres of land. The Outdoor Recreation Act Program was the fore-runner of the Stewardship Fund, which was named to honor the bipartisan work of Governors Nelson and Knowles. As Governor of Wisconsin, Nelson’s leadership created a legacy that all of us can enjoy today. He inspires us to move forward, purposefully, to continue to protect Wisconsin’s amazing natural heritage.



Gathering Waters Conservancy's mission is to help the people and communities of Wisconsin protect their land and water resources by strengthening the state's land trust movement. As a statewide coalition and service center for Wisconsin's growing land trust community, Gathering Waters' goals are to increase the professionalism and build the capacity of the state's private, non-profit conservation organizations through technical assistance, training and continuing education.

Gathering Waters Conservancy
211 S. Paterson Street, Suite 270
Madison, WI 53703
Phone: (608) 251-9131
Fax: (608) 663-5971
www.gatheringwaters.org

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From the Executive Director's Desk...

When I returned to work this fall after my maternity leave, I came back to several empty spaces in the conservation community. The first among these belongs to Senator Gaylord Nelson, who passed away in July. Like so many others, I feel a little less anchored without him. It will be hard to visit the Apostles Islands, speak in support of the Stewardship Fund, or celebrate Earth Day without thinking of Nelson and his lifetime of work. His legacy of conservation provides the foundation for the work we do today. Looking forward, it's hard to imagine who among us will fill his shoes.

Wisconsin lost two lesser known conservation heroes this year as well: "Fritz" Schmidt and Margaret Lalor. I am honored to have known them both.

Frederick "Fritz" Schmidt was Wisconsin's own Renaissance Man. He was a personal friend of poet Robert Frost, an expert skier with the elite 10th Mountain Division in World War II, and publisher of the first version of "Milwaukee Magazine." Fritz was a lover of nature and served on the original three-person board of the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation. His land in Greenbush, where he skied as a young man, later became part of that wonderful trail system. A few years ago, Fritz donated an easement to the Mississippi Valley Conservancy on 350 beautiful acres in Crawford County.

I was very touched when I received a phone call from Fritz this past June. He was in hospice care, battling cancer, but his mind was on conservation. Only weeks before he passed away, Fritz purchased 60 acres to protect a pristine trout stream in Crawford County.

Margaret Lalor was something of a local legend here in Dane County. A life-long resident of the Town of Dunn, Margaret passed away at the age of 94 in September. Up until a year or two before her death, Margaret delivered meals-on-wheels to the "elderly," served on the town's Plan Commission and lived independently on the 160-acre farm where she was born. She was also one of the first to participate in the town's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program.

While the conservation community will have a difficult time replacing people like Gaylord, Fritz and Margaret, I'm encouraged about the future. There is a new generation of conservation leaders out there, many of whom gathered recently at the National Land Trust Rally here in Madison. How exciting to see so many new faces and emerging leaders gathered together to share their passion and enthusiasm! Though we will miss the leaders we've lost, many stand ready to preserve their legacies and pick up the work they have left behind. I'm excited about being part of a movement that grows stronger by the year.

Vicki Elkin, Executive Director

Representative Tammy Baldwin and other participants on tour the Swamp Lover's Preserve land which completes a section of the Ice Age Trail.



Welcome Baby Andrew!

Gathering Waters' staff fertility trend continues! We are proud to welcome Andrew Gordon Dotzour, born on June 22rd to Althea Dotzour (our Outreach and Policy Coordinator) and her husband Bryan. Andrew arrived in the world about a week ahead of schedule and tipped the scales at a modest 7lbs 3oz, but he has been putting all of his energy into growing, and at four months he is 14 lbs. He is a smiling, healthy baby, and Mama Althea enjoyed spending the summer at home with him. She is now back at work, so be sure to congratulate her next time you see her!

Thanks for all you've done, Roger

We offer a warm send-off to Gathering Waters Conservancy's board member Roger Rickard. Over the past four years, Roger has served Gathering Waters Conservancy well, most recently as Board Secretary. Roger applied his background as a 3M Company human resources executive to help us develop effective personnel policies. Roger has promised to stay connected to Gathering Waters as an advisor, and he will remain active with the Couderay Waters Regional Land Trust, which he helped establish. We hope Roger and his wife Judy find lots of opportunities to enjoy Wisconsin's natural beauty...keep on playing that stumpf fiddle!



Spreading the Word about Easements

Kudos to the Natural Heritage Land Trust, who took the initiative to meet with Tammy Baldwin, their local U.S. Representative, while she was home during the August congressional recess. Natural Heritage Land Trust, along with Madison Audubon Society and Trout Unlimited, met with Baldwin to discuss the importance of conservation easements in their work, and the misguided efforts at easement reform that are currently being considered by the U.S. Senate. Face-to-face meetings like this can really make a difference in generating vital support for land trust work. Thanks to all who have contacted your legislators in the past several months. Please keep up the good work! If you would like information about how to contact your legislator, or talking points for conversation, please contact Althea Dotzour at 608-251-9131 x 13 or althea@gatheringwaters.org.

Stewardship on Parade

Boat trips, hikes, prairie tours—what better way to celebrate summer? Properties protected with the help of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship fund were on display this summer as land trusts throughout the state participated in Gathering Waters Conservancy's Parade of Preserves. The Parade, which highlighted the 15th anniversary of the Stewardship Fund, gave Wisconsin citizens a chance to get out and experience some of the many special places that have been protected with the help of Stewardship.

Parade of Preserves trips were held on Saturdays from May through August, and they attracted a range of legislators, media, and land trust supporters, as well as many new faces—people who heard about the events and went to check out a local Stewardship property for the first time. Attendees visited lakes, bluffs, wetlands, prairies and forests throughout the state. They learned about how land trusts are protecting these places with the help of money from the Stewardship Fund. We are glad that so many people were able to share in the success of Stewardship this summer. In fact, we are so pleased with the success of the Parade of Preserves that we are considering running it again next year!

For more information about the Parade of Preserves, check out our website at www.gatheringwaters.org.

~Julia Solomon, Program Coordinator



Vicki Elkin appointed to Working Lands Task Force

Vicki Elkin, Gathering Waters Conservancy's Executive Director, has been appointed to the Governor's Working Lands Steering Committee. This diverse group is made up of farmers, conservationists, business leaders, local government, and many others. The Steering Committee will be taking a comprehensive look at ways to preserve working land critical for agriculture, forestry, recreation and tourism.

"Agriculture, tourism and forestry are cornerstones of our Wisconsin economy," said Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary Rod Nilsestuen. "Everyday we see more fragmentation of farm and forest land, resulting in significant loss to the economy, the environment and our quality of life."

Visit www.gatheringwaters.org and look under "policy agenda" for more information.

And the Winners Are...

This year's Land Conservation Leadership Award winners are a committed trio who are all working—with different tools and at different scales—to protect special places in Wisconsin. Each one has shown incredible dedication, energy, and personal commitment, and each has made invaluable contributions to the future of conservation in this state. Notably, they are all involved in putting the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund to work to protect our natural heritage.

The 2005 **Conservationist of the Year** award was presented to **Jeanne Behrend**, president of Patrick Marsh Conservancy, for protection of the Patrick Marsh area near Sun Prairie in Dane County. Jeanne's enthusiasm and personal leadership have brought together a diverse coalition to protect this sensitive wetland, which is also an important archaeological site. She envisions Patrick Marsh not only as a natural area with a flourishing wetland ecosystem, but also as a recreational and educational site that is used by local school districts, the University of Wisconsin, and other community groups. Through Jeanne's leadership, two separate parcels totaling 57 acres have been permanently protected with the help of the Stewardship Fund. In addition, over 700 additional acres have been identified for future protection.

The 2005 **Land Trust of the Year Award** went to the **Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation**. The achievements of this land trust are a prime example of the land conservation that has been made possible by the Stewardship Fund, which has provided financing for many of the Foundation's projects. Through the work of over 5,000 members and volunteers, the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation has acquired and managed land for the Ice Age National Scenic Trail all across Wisconsin. Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation is a leader in forging effective partnerships to protect land, and has also set an inspiring example of pro-active land stewardship. In the past several years they have worked hard to systematically document their properties and to create land management plans that ensure the future of these important parcels.

Finally, the **Harold "Bud" Jordahl Stewardship Award** was granted to **Janet Beach Hanson**, long-time Stewardship Grants Manager for the Department of Natural Resources who retired this fall. For more than a decade, Janet has worked closely with Wisconsin's land trusts to help them leverage Stewardship funding for their conservation projects. When she began her position, the land trust movement was in its infancy and the Stewardship program was just getting off the ground. Janet's personal commitment has helped shape the Stewardship Fund into the vital tool that it is today, and has helped Wisconsin's land trusts grow and evolve to meet expanding conservation needs. Janet has also served as a mentor to her colleagues both within the DNR and throughout the broader conservation community. All who care about land conservation in Wisconsin owe Janet a deep debt of gratitude, and she will be missed. We wish her luck and happiness as she embarks on new adventures.

~Julia Solomon
Program Coordinator



The Gathering Waters Conservancy Staff (from left: Althea Dotzour, Pam Foster Felt, Conor Moran, Karen Bassler, Dara DeKok, Vicki Elkin, and Liz Walsh.) Dana Chabot and Julia Solomon are off mingling with the guests

Our Awards

From top:
Jeanne Behrend,
Christine Thisted, Executive Director of
the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation,
and Janet Beach Hanson

Auction Donors

Anonymous
Agrecol
Applied Ecological Services
Arbor House
Karen Bassler
Darrell Bazzell
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Cargo Café
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Eye Level Framing
Fontana Sports
Pam Foster Felt
Gil Gribb
Chuck Haubrich
Ice Age Park & Trail Foundation
Johnson Outdoors
Bud Jordahl
The Knitting Tree
Steve Kozar

Lakeside Fibers
Renay Leone
Becky Lloyd, Lloyd Pottery
Machinery Row Bicycles
The Meanwell Family
Renee Miller, Renee Glass Factory
Daniel Mortensen
Orange Tree Imports
Overture Center for the Arts
Pacific Cycle
The Perfect Knot

Bill Pielsticker
Tracy & John Porter
Radio Flyer
REI
Judy Rickard
Dick & Laurel Steffes,
Cheshire Cat Gems & Jewelry

Third Annual Awards Celebration Enjoyed by All

On the eve of the National Rally, nearly 300 conservation enthusiasts assembled to celebrate the strides made by Wisconsin's land trusts and the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund.

"Our state is so large and we're all so busy! I love having the opportunity to spend an entertaining evening with others who are working toward the same goal," said one attendee.

Lake Monona provided a beautiful evening backdrop for the event, and party-goers enjoyed perusing the extensive silent auction. Auction highlights this year included two bikes from Pacific Cycle and a weekend vacation package in Door County. Someone even went home the lucky winner of four Packer tickets!

"We are pleased to organize this invigorating annual event," said Gathering Waters Conservancy Executive Director Vicki Elkin. "It gives land conservationists the chance to step back and celebrate our tremendous collective impact." The award winners inspire!

Land Trust Alliance executive director Rand Wentworth started the program with some generous words about Wisconsin land conservation. Gathering Waters Conservancy President Joan Ziegler and Mequon Mayor Christine Nuernberg hosted the evening's festivities.

Next year's celebration will take place on Thursday, October 5. Mark your calendars now! Nomination forms for next-year's awards will be available in early 2006.

Awards Ceremony at a glance »



Vicki Elkin welcomes guest || silent auction featured nearly 60 items from wagons to watercolors || Amy Overb and Nan Fey



Johanna Alex and Joy Gottshalk || Scott Froehlke and Sean Dilwig || Sundee Wislow and Darcy Kind



Co-host Christine Nuernberg presents award to Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation || Julie and Ted Rolfs and Joan Ziegler

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Door County Land Trust
Madison Audubon Society
Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy
Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin

Ozaukee Washington Land Trust
River Alliance of Wisconsin
Stafford Rosenbaum
Walnut Hollow
Wisconsin Wetlands Association

In addition, we would like to thank the members of the Land Legacy Society whose generous support made this event possible.

Thank You

Stefanie Shull and Rebecca Blecke – for volunteering at the awards celebration.

Harley Davidson – for donating pilsner glasses to the Midwest Regional Reception at Rally

Gil Gribb – for donating many nature photos for use in GWC's newsletters and website

Sonya Newenhouse – for playing photographer at Gathering Waters' Land Conservation Leadership Awards Celebration

Christine Nuernberg and Joan Ziegler for co-hosting the Awards Celebration

Jill Rosenberg and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for hosting our website's land trust directory and for working with us to integrate the directory into our redesigned website

New Resources Available Online for Landowners



We have new electronic resources available for landowners!

Perhaps you have asked yourself the following questions:

- How can I protect my land?
- Will working with a land trust reduce my property taxes?
- If I have an easement on my land, can anyone come hunt there?
- What Wisconsin state programs fund land or easement purchases?
- How can my town incorporate land conservation?

Gathering Waters Conservancy's new Land Protection Fundamentals web page has answers to these and other questions. Check us out at www.gatheringwaters.org!

A Call for Ambassadors

"It would be a shame if that land became a subdivision..."

Have you overheard this comment? Sportsmen, birders, hikers, paddlers and prairie enthusiasts across Wisconsin share the hope that development will respect special natural areas. If you get this newsletter, chances are you are among them.

Many land-lovers don't know that land trusts are here to help steer development around important places, but you do! The next time a friend worries aloud about the future of the land across the lake, mention that conservation options may be available. Does she know her local land trust?

At Gathering Waters Conservancy, we strive to make land trusts community institutions as familiar to citizens as local libraries. You can move us toward that goal, and our updated web page has features that can help you.

If you haven't done so recently, contact your local land trust and learn what they're up to. Visit our on-line **land trust directory** to find them. You might be able to join a group skiing on protected land, or tackle buckthorn with other volunteers. Bring a friend unfamiliar with land trust work; take home some brochures to distribute.

Tell the story of protected land or of your brisk day pulling buckthorn at a holiday party. If friends have questions, let them know that we have answers about conservation easements, land trusts, conservation tax benefits, and where to find professional advice about conservation decisions. Our website provides a large library of **Land Protection Fundamentals**. Anyone is welcome to call us for explanations.

And if politics come up, mention the merits of the State Stewardship Fund! We have current **Policy Updates** posted online, as well.

There are over 50 land trusts in Wisconsin and hundreds of great stories of partners working to restore trout streams, create parks, and protect working farms. Our eight staff can't possibly relate all those stories and all our knowledge without your help!

~Pam Foster Felt, Program Coordinator



Attorney Training to Go!

Gathering Waters has added new tool in our quiver of training resources. Attorneys in the audience take special note! Every two years, we have offered a credentialed seminar for lawyers about land trusts, conservation easements and tax law. These have been successful events, although few and far between. Many attendees have had to invest some travel time, as well.

This year, we videotaped our continuing legal education seminar. After some slick editing and packaging, we now have a CLE course available on DVD. Our training is now mobile, agile and available to interested legal professionals across the state. This course can be shown as either a two or five hour seminar, accredited through the State Board of Bar Examiners. Our staff can proctor a screening and provide course materials for any group of more than two attorneys. We will also make it available to Wisconsin land trusts for their own libraries. To schedule a course or ask any questions, please contact Pam Foster Felt.

Contribute through your Workplace with Community Shares

In 2004, Gathering Waters Conservancy became a member of Community Shares of Wisconsin, the oldest social action fund in the country. Community Shares supports nearly 60 organizations that advocate, educate and seek progressive solutions to problems and issues both locally and statewide. Through workplace giving campaigns and cooperative fundraising, Community Shares connects donors with the organizations that they care about, giving individuals the power to affect change in their own backyard.

Last year alone, Community Shares of Wisconsin raised over \$470,000 for their member organizations, the majority of which was donated through workplace giving campaigns. Workplace giving is a simple process that allows you to make tax-deductible donations to local charities through payroll deduction. These campaigns not only allow you to designate donations to specific member organizations like Gathering Waters Conservancy, but they also enable you to give more than you could with a one-time gift. One hundred percent of the money you give goes directly to the organization...nothing is skimmed off the top!



Implementing automatic payroll deduction for charity is a simple process. If you are unsure if your employer is a participant in a Community Shares of Wisconsin giving campaign or if you would like to know how to start a campaign at your workplace, contact Gathering Waters Conservancy. Workplace giving is easy and efficient and enables companies and their employees to work together to benefit the community.

~Julia Solomon, Program Coordinator

GWC's priority items included in Governor's agenda

We're happy to announce that Governor Doyle has included two initiatives in his environmental agenda, Conserve Wisconsin, that are on Gathering Waters Conservancy's priority list. The Governor is calling for legislation creating Managed Forest Law public access grants. This program would use fees from land enrolled in the Managed Forest Law but closed to the public to fund grants with the purpose of acquiring land that could be open to the public. Governor Doyle is also planning to introduce legislation that will establish a State Forest Legacy Program – to be used as a tool in protecting Wisconsin working forests

Member Feature: Jeffrey J. Strobel

Gathering Waters Conservancy is lucky to have many supportive members with a wealth of talent that they are willing to share. One such member is Jeff Strobel, a graphic designer and the Vice President of the Natural Heritage Land Trust, who has generously volunteered his time over the years to help with Gathering Waters' publications. One of his most prominent Gathering Waters designs is our popular booklet, In Their Own Words: Landowners' stories of protecting their land, a collection of 25 personal stories by Wisconsin landowners.

Jeff, an avid hunter, photographer and outdoor recreationist, says that it is important to maintain a relationship with nature that is sustainable. "I want to, in the whole of my life, give back more to the environment than I take out." It is this outlook that has led him to devote so much of his time and energy to Wisconsin's land trust community. "Gathering Waters Conservancy helps land trusts locally and throughout the state to permanently protect our best natural and rural landscapes. In my view, this is the best thing any group can do to directly improve the health of land, and consequently everyone's quality of life."

Last March, Gathering Waters Conservancy nominated Jeff for Community Shares of Wisconsin's Backyard Hero Award – a program that recognizes outstanding volunteers.

Jeff said, "I've chosen to volunteer my time to GWC with publications design because I know that individual contributions add up to a much greater effort."

Thank you, Jeff, for sharing your design expertise and for your commitment to the land trust movement!

If you have talents you would like to share with Gathering Waters Conservancy, please call 608.251.9131.

~Sara DeKok, Membership Coordinator.



2005 Land Legacy Society Donors

We are kicking off the 2006 Land Legacy Society campaign, and we hope you'll consider joining! For more information, visit www.gatheringwaters.org or contact Vicki Elkin at 608.251.9131 x14.

\$10,000 and above

Julie Gallagher & Ted Rolfs
Alice Godfrey
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John Taylor
Rudy & Joy Rasin
Joan R. & Peter Ziegler

\$5,000 - \$9,999

W. Jerome Frautschi & Pleasant Rowland
Wendy McCalvy

\$2,000 - \$4,999

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crosscurrents

a newsletter to serve the land conservation
community of Wisconsin



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Land trusts highlighted on Wisconsin Public Television

We are delighted to announce that land trusts will be featured in a series of television segments on In Wisconsin, a Wisconsin Public Television show that airs Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. The first aired on October 13 and featured farmers Rick and Janet Dale from Bayfield County and Gathering Waters Conservancy Executive Director, Vicki Elkin. Check out the "news" portion of the website at www.gatheringwaters.org for a link to streaming video from this program and for future show times.

A gift ... and a challenge

Gathering Waters Conservancy recently received a gift of \$35,000 from John Taylor. This is the largest personal gift that Gathering Waters has ever received. We will use it to build our land trust programs, which in turn will help land trusts around the state more effectively protect land.

Mr. Taylor has challenged us to use his donation to leverage other funds. If you are inspired by his generosity, please give us a call. What a difference an individual can make!

"I am originally from Minneapolis, and our family has a small cabin on a trout stream just outside of Hudson, Wisconsin (the cabin actually sits on state park land). I live in California now, but home to me always will be that spot on that little river. I returned to the cabin for the first time in a number of years this past June, and standing ankle-deep in that stream, skipping stones and watching the kingfishers dive, I was more at peace than I had been in a very long time. That is some of the richest, most beautiful land in the country. Thank you for the very important work that you do in keeping Wisconsin so beautiful and protected." - Eliza Fischer

personal reflection