

CROSSCURRENTS

A NEWSLETTER TO SERVE THE LAND TRUST COMMUNITY OF WISCONSIN

FALL 2000

Exciting News in Conservation Funding

U.S. Congress Considers \$30 Million for Wisconsin Conservation

In 1964, Congress created the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). It was a simple idea—use revenues from one non-renewable resource like offshore oil, to protect another. The resources protected by these revenues include parks, forests, and open spaces to guarantee recreation opportunities and a clean environment. LWCF has been an American success story, responsible for more than 1750 open space projects in Wisconsin. Although LWCF is authorized to receive \$900 million each year, Congress has diverted a significant percentage of the fund for purposes other than conservation and recreation. Every year, Americans lose countless opportunities to conserve precious resources and open space.

There is now pending in Congress legislation, the Conservation and Reinvestment Act, that would revitalize this critical cornerstone of conservation and recreation. It would provide over \$30 million each year for conservation and recreation projects in Wisconsin. This proposal enjoys bipartisan support and has passed every legislative hurdle except two: passage by the Senate, and signing by the President. For those committed to the preservation of open spaces, CARA is must pass legislation this year. ■

—Peter McKeever

Peter is the President of Heart Lake Conservation Associates and is the Midwest Outreach Coordinator for Americans for Our Heritage and Recreation. For more on CARA, call Peter at (608) 223-1275.

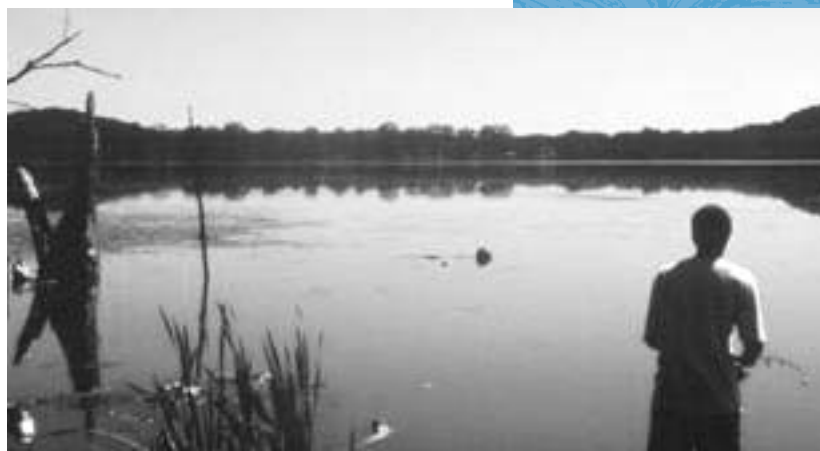
Up to \$6 Million in State Dollars Available for Land Trusts

The Department of Natural Resources Board recently voted to strengthen the land protection partnership between the Stewardship Fund and Wisconsin's land trusts. The Board, which sets policy for the DNR, allocated \$6 million from the Stewardship Fund for match grants to land trusts to acquire conservation land this year. The \$6 million allocation was recommended by DNR Secretary George Meyer after he heard about the needs from land trusts throughout the state. Secretary Meyer's recommendation, and the Board's vote, is a strong endorsement of the vital work of state land trusts.

The new Stewardship 2000 program is a ten-year, \$460 million land acquisition program signed into law last year. The original Stewardship Fund protected over 200,000 acres of conservation land over ten years. The \$6 million, when matched by private funds, will help protect \$12 million of land this year. ■

—Jordy Jordahl

Jordy is the Director of Government Relations of The Nature Conservancy - Wisconsin.



BILL PIELSTOKER

The Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation's purchase of 137 acres of woods, farmland and lakeshore on Fish Lake was supported by the Wisconsin Stewardship Fund.

Gathering Waters

Conservancy mission is to help communities, land trusts and private landowners protect the places that make Wisconsin special. Gathering Waters Conservancy helps individuals, communities, and non-profit conservation organizations to preserve, protect, maintain, and enhance the beauty and ecological integrity of the lands and waters in the state of Wisconsin.

CrossCurrents is published by Gathering Waters Conservancy.

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Gathering Waters' News

Name Change

Gathering Waters is pleased to announce that it has changed its name to Gathering Waters Conservancy. The change was made so that the public would have a better understanding of Gathering Waters' mission of supporting and promoting land conservation.

Upcoming Events

February 2001—Wisconsin Land Trust Staff Retreat

Gathering Waters Conservancy will follow up on last year's success by hosting the second annual retreat for staff of Wisconsin's land trusts. Tentative plans include a full day of training on time management together with informal discussions on issues related to running a small, non-profit conservation organization. The Staff Retreat will once again be held in February allowing us to offer an affordable program using off-season rates. Look for details later this fall.

April 20-22, 2001—Statewide Conference—Celebrating Community-based Conservation

Gathering Waters Conservancy and the River Alliance of Wisconsin are proud to announce the 2001 Statewide Conference "Celebrating Community-based Conservation" to be held April 20-22, 2001 at the Pioneer Inn Resort and Marina in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

Land trusts, local river and watershed groups, conservation professionals and volunteers will gather on Earth Day 2001 to celebrate the strides made by locally-based conservation initiatives. The three-day event will offer field trips, courses, workshops, lectures and networking opportunities. Please save the date and plan to spend Earth Day 2001 with conservationists from throughout Wisconsin! Anyone who would like to help with planning should call Cristina Pratt at (608) 251-9131.

Other News

New Office

Gathering Waters Conservancy moved into a new office space in July to accommodate the organization's recent growth in staff. Staff members are busy settling into the new, expanded work-space. Our new address is 211 S. Paterson Street, Suite 180, Madison, WI 53703. Gathering Waters would like to thank the board and staff of the Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation for subletting to us for the past two years.

Welcome New Board Members

Gathering Waters Conservancy is pleased to announce exciting new additions to our Board of Directors. **Bob Bolz, Shawn Miller, and Bryan Pierce** have recently joined Gathering Waters' Board of Directors. Bob is a well known Madison philanthropist who previously served an extended term on the Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation Board of Directors. Shawn is an accountant and supervisor in the real estate department of Suby, Von Haden & Associates located in Madison, Wisconsin. He will serve as Gathering Waters Conservancy's Treasurer. Bryan is the UW-Extension Community Resource Development Agent for Vilas County and will help Gathering Waters Conservancy form a North Woods Land Trust to serve the communities of Northern Wisconsin.

Thank you to departing Board Members

Gathering Waters would like to thank four outgoing members of the Board of Directors for their years of dedicated service to the organization. **Bob Benjamin, Dan Burke, John Lhost, and Heather Mann** retired from the Board during the past year. Each of these individuals made important contributions to the organization during a period of immense growth for Gathering Waters and the land trust community of Wisconsin as a whole. ■

Gathering Waters Expands Role to Coordinate Blufflands Alliance

Founded in 1993, the Blufflands Alliance coordinates land trusts' efforts to protect the vast resource of the "blufflands," or the hilly region adjoining the upper Mississippi River and its tributaries, which extend for 200 miles down the river. The group directs conservation efforts, attracts large-scale funders, and works to build each partner's capacity to fund and carry out blufflands projects. As a group, they've already protected 10,000 acres, and have twice that number in negotiation—significantly more than they could achieve working alone in their individual regions.

On July 1, Gathering Waters Conservancy began a new role with the Blufflands Alliance that parallels its work with land trusts across Wisconsin. Serving as coordinator for the group, Gathering Waters provides resources not possible or practical for individual land trusts to replicate within each organization.

"It is an honor for Gathering Waters to serve in this capacity, and it gives us the opportunity to spotlight the resources provided by a statewide service center," says Cristina Pratt of Gathering Waters, who serves in the coordinator position. "Illinois, Minnesota, and Iowa have no similar resource."

Gathering Waters became involved because three Wisconsin land trusts are part of the Alliance: the Wisconsin Farmland Conservancy; the Mississippi Valley Conservancy; and Standing Cedars Community Land Conservancy. Other Blufflands Alliance members are: the Minnesota Land Trust; the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation; and the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation and Natural Land Institutes, both of Illinois. All Alliance partners are now sponsor members of Gathering Waters Conservancy.

The Blufflands Alliance is not incorporated as a separate agency, and does not compete with its members for funds. Its role is to help member organizations partner to create a vision of the big picture together, then focus on their own specific projects. Through their participation, each group is challenged to meet matching grants, increase their capacities, and share experiences. "We hope to use the Blufflands Alliance model in other regions of the state," says Vicki Elkin, Executive Director of Gathering Waters. ■

"Gathering Waters has been an invaluable resource for our land trust in Wisconsin and I thought they could bring the same skills and resources to the Blufflands Alliance—especially to some of our newer land trust members. Also, it is difficult for some of the smaller partners to coordinate the regional activities—whether these be bringing in speakers for our meetings or organizing trainings—that are extremely beneficial to the Alliance."

—Cynthia Olmstead,
Executive Director,
Mississippi Valley
Conservancy

"The Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation looks forward to utilizing Gathering Waters' experience in facilitating relationships between land trusts and especially in presenting educational programs that can benefit growing organizations such as ours."

—Julie Bruser,
Communications Director,
Jo Daviess Conservation
Foundation

New Staff Added to Ensure Service Levels

To make sure all sponsoring members can expect high levels of service, Gathering Waters Conservancy is adding staff. In August, **Jane de Broux** joined as Director of Development and Communications. She is available to all member land trusts for consulting on marketing, membership, fundraising, and communications projects. At Gathering Waters Conservancy, she is working to raise public awareness of the land trust movement in Wisconsin, and to raise funds to support Gathering Waters Conservancy in its role as service center.

Amanda Goebel has also begun a part-time position as Office Manager. She is currently working on her masters degree in urban and regional planning with a focus on environmental planning at UW - Madison.

Interns from UW-Madison continue to offer additional support. New to Gathering Waters Conservancy is **Jen Zawacki**, a senior at UW-Madison majoring in zoology and biological aspects of conservation. Jen is working on new materials for land owners. ■

—Jane de Broux

Jane is the Director of Development and Communications of Gathering Waters.



Jane de Broux
outside Gathering
Waters Conservancy's
new office.

Profiles in Land Conservation

In 1964, Manly Mumford, a Chicago-area lawyer, and his wife, Luigi, purchased land in Wisconsin as an investment and for recreation. Their lovely 160-acre property is bisected by a one-half mile stretch of the Eau Claire River, populated mostly by northern hardwoods and conifers. The woodlands and banks of the Eau Claire are home to deer, beaver, mink, otter, foxes, raccoons, skunks, porcupines, groundhogs, ruffed grouse, great blue herons, and bald eagles. Mumford has also recently spotted sand hill cranes, and has seen some black bear tracks.

Over the past 35 years, Mumford has done some hunting, fishing, and bird watching. He also enjoys identifying edible plants and collecting wild mushrooms. Originally, the Mumfords spent time on their land in a tent, then progressed to a trailer, a concrete block garage, and eventually a pre-fab house; including a well and septic tank. They are not connected to the power grid, but rely on a solar panel for electricity and use bottled gas for cooking, refrigeration, and hot water.

Mumford's desire has always been to preserve the land and protect it from development. Last spring, his daughter learned about a landowner's option to donate development rights by putting a conservation easement on the land, assuring it would remain undeveloped. Immediately interested, he called the DNR who referred him to Gathering Waters. Vicki Elkin, Gathering Waters' Executive Director, advised Mr. Mumford of his various conservation options and suggested he call Dr. D.J. Freeman, president of the North Central Conservancy Trust. Ultimately, the Mumfords donated the easement to NCCT.

"I can use the land as I always have," says Mumford. "Hunting, fishing, and recreation that doesn't damage the trees are acceptable under the terms of the easement." The Mumfords may also continue using their existing house or replace it with a single building of dimensions outlined in the easement.

When asked if he had something to say to other landowners considering a conservation easement, Mumford advised, "Find out how much the land is worth, both

with and without such an easement. I was very pleasantly surprised when the easement came in. Also, one of the main reasons for doing this is to make it unnecessary for heirs to sell to developers for tax reasons." ■

—Jane de Broux



Manly Mumford (left) with Dr. D.J. Freeman of the North Central Conservancy Trust.

Gathering Waters Takes Membership Training On the Road

Gathering Waters Conservancy recently hosted a series of regional workshops on how to build a successful membership program. The Building Your Membership workshops, held in River Falls, Wausau and Waukesha, were a huge success! Over 80 participants representing over 40 organizations attended the events led by Ellis Robinson, a nationally-known membership development expert from Seattle, Washington (see related article, page 6). The event was supported by the Land Trust Alliance, the Wausau Area Community Foundation and the WeatherFriend Land Fund.

Workshop attendees found the course to be informative and influential, offering a new perspective on their land trusts' membership and fundraising strategies. Participants especially enjoyed the one-on-one feedback that allowed Ellis Robinson to critique each organization's membership and outreach materials. In addition to

80 Appraisers Trained on How to Appraise Conservation Easements

In April, Gathering Waters and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources co-hosted a training course for appraisers on appraising conservation easements and rural lands. The event was so popular that it was over subscribed. Eighty appraisers representing all corners of the state attended the course and received continuing education credits for the full-day event. Gathering Waters Conservancy plans to repeat the course annually to keep up with the demand.

Land trusts and landowners throughout the state have difficulty finding appraisers who are familiar with conservation easements. Gathering Waters Conservancy now has a list of all course graduates and is willing to refer landowners and land trusts to these appraisers. Please contact Gathering Waters by phone at 608-251-9131 to request a complete list of trained appraisers. ■

looking over land trusts' materials, Ms. Robinson discussed the myths and realities of membership development. For example, Myth #5 states, "A successful membership recruitment campaign requires expensive materials and lots of premiums." In reality, Ms. Robinson explains that members of land trust organizations want to know that you will use their money wisely for programs they care about. The course took the students step-by-step through several membership recruitment techniques, such as special events, direct mail and a Board-And-Staff Get-A-Member Campaign.

The event garnered much praise from the course attendees. As Donna Sefton, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Association of Lakes said, "As a result of your workshop, our organization approved two major actions at the August board meeting which will greatly change our financial support base and increase our effectiveness. Thanks much for your help." Genna Anderson of the Standing Cedars Community Land Conservancy especially appreciated that the training concentrated on land trusts which, "made it so pertinent that everyone related and saw the issues as our issues in one way or the other." Gathering Waters looks forward to hearing the success stories from land trusts as they "build their membership" in the years to come! ■

The more direct your ask, the more successful you will be. Asking people to join your land trust will get the strongest response, the closer you are. For example, count on only about one in 10-20 people responding to a letter asking for support. Email response is about the same. However, a personal phone call will increase the odds to one in five or ten, and a face-to-face request is your best bet. A quarter to a half of the people you ask in person to join will say "Yes." And if they say no? You have still had one more chance to spread the word about your land trust's great work.

Building Your Membership

Are you looking for a way to build your land trust's membership that is inexpensive, effective, and requires no special training? A Board-and-Staff Get-a-Member Campaign builds on the resources that your land trust already has available: people, place, and places.

People:

One of your land trust's greatest assets is the dedicated individuals who are already involved. Primary among these are your board members and staff.

These supporters of your work are also your best spokespeople. They are current with your priority projects, they know about your accomplishments, and they are so enthusiastic about what your land trust does that they give their most precious asset: hours of time.

Place:

Land trusts are almost always local. Because the lands your group is trying to protect are most-likely nearby, just about everyone you see everyday benefits from the work of your land trust. Who is the next logical member of your land trust? Neighbors, friends—the list goes on and on. Basically, anyone who lives or works or vacations in the area your land trust serves is a logical prospect for membership.

Places:

The most common reason people give for joining an organization is making a difference—making a better place for their children. What better way to accomplish this goal than to give your friends a chance to protect the places that make your community special!

Steps to Success:

Plan now to launch a Campaign before the year ends. Here's what you need:

- **Two Team Captains:** This is a great job for a Board member or potential

Board officer. Qualifications: ability to keep deadlines and willingness to encourage others.

- **Printed Materials:** These can be as simple as a land trust brochure, response envelopes, and letterhead. The objective is to have something to give a prospective member that they can send back with their contribution.

- **Campaign Goals:** Agree as a group to the goals of your campaign. A reasonable expectation is five new members recruited by each participant. If you have ten Board members, you will end up with 50 or more new members from this campaign!

- **Timeline:** Give your campaign a beginning and ending date, ideally no more than two months total. The team captains' role is to keep everyone focused on the goals by updating folks on recent accomplishments and exhorting their team members to success. (A weekly e-mail update works great for this.)

All You Have to do is Ask!

The key to the success of this membership raising campaign is you asking. Remember, you are providing the people you know with a GREAT opportunity to fulfill one of their own personal goals with a minimum investment. Be generous with your largesse: give everyone you know the chance to enjoy the benefits of your land trust. There is still time to find fifty new members – or more – before the snow flies!

— *Ellis M.M. Robinson*

Ellis is a consultant specializing in membership development for conservation groups. Contact Ellis at Access Marketing, 600 First Avenue, Suite 523, Seattle, WA 98104, tel: (206) 405-3934, email: EllisRobs@aol.com.

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Robert Zeinemann
Joan & Peter Ziegler
Jan Zimmermann

Gathering Waters Conservancy received generous grants from the Land Trust Alliance, Wausau Area Community Foundation and WeatherFriend Land Fund.

Gathering Waters would like to thank the following individuals and businesses for their generous contributions to our organization:

- Ed Blume for helping move office furniture.
- Terrie Cooper for leading the Gathering Waters Conservancy Board on a field trip in Door County.
- Karen Elkin for reviewing our new lease.
- The Elkin Family for donating office furniture.
- The Kinnickinnic River Land Trust for helping with the membership workshop in River Falls.
- Angela Nelson of Wheeler, Van Sickle and Anderson for her ongoing extraordinary assistance to Gathering Waters.
- Jerry Phillips for hosting Vicki Elkin at the Old Rittenhouse Inn in Bayfield, Wisconsin during a Spring work trip to the region.
- Jeff Strobel for designing our membership training conference brochure.
- The Nature Conservancy for donating plat maps.
- Wheeler, Van Sickle and Anderson for office furniture.

Gathering Waters' Board of Directors enjoy a hike on property recently acquired by the Door County Land Trust.



Ways of Giving to Gathering Waters

■ Individuals may avoid paying capital gains taxes by donating appreciated stocks and bonds to Gathering Waters. Donors are entitled to a charitable income tax deduction equal to the full market value of the stock.

■ Individuals may also leave a bequest to Gathering Waters. A bequest is a gift made through a donor's will and is completely free from federal estate tax.

■ Frequent Flyer Miles may be transferred to Gathering Waters and used to send staff to training events.



Yes, I want to help land trusts & landowners protect Wisconsin's land and water resources by joining Gathering Waters!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Please sign me up as a:

- \$35 - 49 Forest Protector
- \$50 - 99 Creek Watcher
- \$100 - 249 Land Defender
- \$250 - 499 Prairie Keeper
- \$500 or more Harbor Sentinel
- _____ Other

Please keep my donation anonymous.

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- Please send information on protecting my land.
- Please send me information about how to include Gathering Waters in my will.

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