

Conserving a Sense of Place Conference Co-hosted by Gathering Waters Conservancy

Over 250 people from across the Midwest attended *Conserving a Sense of Place*, the Midwest Land Trust Conference in Madison from April 23-25. The weekend started on a festive note with a series of field trips to local conservation destinations, followed by Gathering Waters' 10th Birthday Party celebration. Those who joined field trips to The Aldo Leopold Reserve, the Waubesa wetlands, or the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area came back glowing. Nina Leopold Bradley, Aldo Leopold's daughter, gave an especially inspiring address to those who visited the Reserve.

The following two days were devoted to workshop sessions on a broad variety of conservation topics, which attendees described as "timely and pertinent on every level," providing information that was "specific, practical and applicable." Some of the most heavily-attended sessions included, "Polling and Open Space Referenda Campaigns," "Ecological Health, Restoration, and Land Management Primer," and "Effective Landowner Communication."



In addition to the sessions, the conference included numerous opportunities for learning and networking. Keynote speeches by authors Curt Meine and Scott Russell Sanders were complemented by a "Conserving a Sense of Place" poetry reading featuring local writers and Wisconsin's poet laureate, and a networking breakfast on the theme of "Women in Conservation." Participants described the conference as "inspiring," "nourishing," and "the first conference of any type that I have attended in my life that has truly exceeded my expectations." *Conserving a Sense of Place* was co-hosted by Gathering Waters Conservancy and the Land Trust Alliance.

One pre-conference field trip included a canoe trip through the Yahara River wetlands, where participants saw sandhill cranes and learned about the Town of Dunn land protection program.



Curt Meine gave a wonderful keynote address entitled "Home, Land, Security"



Sonya Newenhouse, Cindy Coffin, Astrid Newenhouse, Tracy Kuczynski, and Heidi Rahn founded the Path Project and have been meeting for years to grow and inspire through their writing.

Inspiring Words

Consider this assignment: take five minutes, write about your personal experience, and, without editing a word, read your prose out loud to strangers. Would you do it?

Many attending the Women in Conservation Breakfast at this year's Midwest Land Trust Conference, inspired by members of The Path Project, did just that.

The Path Project is a long-term writing group of women in environmental careers. They spoke briefly about their initiative and shared a few of their writings. The regular attention to writing has allowed participants to keep their motivation for conservation work near the surface of lives busy with careers, family, and graduate study.

In a weekend packed with professional advice, training, and networking, the Women in Conservation Breakfast let conference women pause for five minutes to consider their own connections to the resources we all protect. One attendee called the breakfast "the frosting on the cake" of the conference.

—Pam Foster Felt, Program Coordinator

Crosscurrents is published by Gathering Waters Conservancy.

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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.

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Gathering Waters is Ten Years Old!



JOHN URBAN

Over the past several weeks, my work has taken me across the state and across the country. In June alone, I traveled over 3000 miles on business! These trips are a little hectic, but I always return inspired and

recommitted to Gathering Waters Conservancy's mission.

In my travels, I've met many committed, passionate and bright people who've become energized by the land trust movement. They include landowners, members and donors and my colleagues at other conservation organizations. These committed folks always remind me that I work in very impressive company indeed.

Here are some highlights from my travels in the month of June. I hope to give you a sense of the day-to-day work here at Gathering Waters Conservancy and how our efforts have an impact far beyond our immediate activities in Wisconsin.

My first trip in June was to northern Wisconsin where co-worker Pam Foster Felt and I met with three families who own several thousand acres on one of the most pristine wild lakes in the North Woods. Each family has been on the lake for generations and thanks to their good stewardship, the lake looks much like it did 100 years ago. It's also off the charts in terms of water quality and wildlife habitat.

At least once a month, a developer calls each family asking "Would you consider selling your land?" These calls have inspired them to take action. Rather than sell, they are considering conservation easements as a way to protect their land from those who see the lake's undeveloped shoreline as a potential source of profit. They have called Gathering Waters Conservancy for guidance and we are honored to help them ensure the lake remains a favorite fishing spot and quiet vacation destination for visitors.

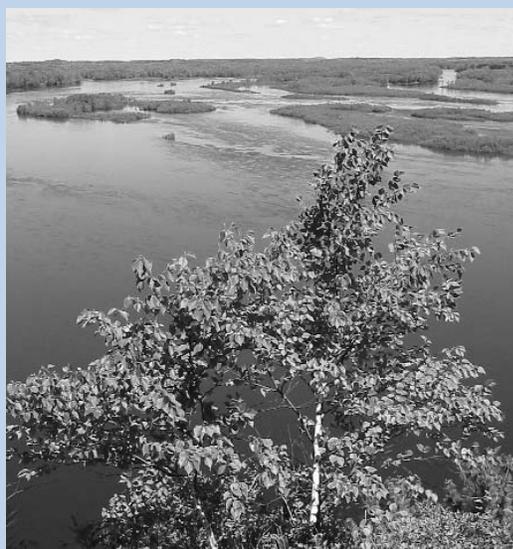
Later in June, I flew to Washington, D.C. for meetings with the Land Trust Alliance and other national conservation leaders. Gathering Waters Conservancy is one of the few statewide conservation organizations of its kind and LTA invited me to give a presentation.

The group was incredibly enthusiastic about our work and many said that they look to Gathering Waters Conservancy as a model. Here's just one example of how we are inspiring work in other states: After seeing copies of "In Their Own Words"—our award-winning collection of stories by Wisconsin landowners—a dozen of my colleagues have decided to do their own version, highlighting landowners in their own states. I've fielded calls from Massachusetts to Washington State, and California to Texas!

At the end of June, I traveled to Chicago for a series of meetings. I had a very special lunch with Luigi Mumford, the widow of Manly Mumford, a long-time friend of Gathering Waters Conservancy who sadly passed away over New Years. Some of you may have read Manly's story in "In Their Own Words."

These relationships with landowners, other organizations and our membership are the fabric of Gathering Waters Conservancy and fuel all our successes. While preserving land is the ultimate goal, it's these connections between cause-minded people that make our work so rewarding.

It is so rewarding to know that our work is resulting in the preservation of beautiful and ecologically significant areas like this view of the Wisconsin River.



Milwaukee County Conservation Coalition

We are pleased to announce that Gathering Waters Conservancy has received a generous grant from the Brico Fund to support its ongoing work with the Milwaukee County Conservation Coalition (MC3). The coalition is a network of over 40 conservation, land use, environmental and other non-profit organizations working together to protect the Milwaukee area's remaining wetlands, river corridors, wildlife habitat and other natural areas and open spaces.

Gathering Waters Conservancy has served as the organizer and facilitator for MC3—leading meetings, developing agendas, enabling communications, helping define issues and activities, recruiting members and participants, maintaining mailing lists and providing overall vision and direction.

"MC3 has been successful beyond everyone's expectations," said project coordinator Peter McKeever. "By forming MC3, Gathering Waters Conservancy has filled an unmet need for coordination and collaboration among conservation and environmental interests in the Milwaukee Area."

MC3 is focusing on both on-the-ground conservation projects and larger county-wide issues and policies. For example, MC3 has been closely following land use and open space issues at Potters Woods (a Milwaukee Public School Forest), Honey Creek Parkway, the Park East Corridor, the Lake Front, St. Francis Seminary Woods and the adjoining We Energies site, the Prairie Preserve Subdivision virgin prairie in Franklin, and the Milwaukee River.

On the policy front, MC3 has adopted public positions on the proposed Aurora Health Development in the Honey Creek Parkway, a proposal to establish a Milwaukee County Park District, and the "Job Creation Act" in the State Legislature.

The grant from the Brico Fund will help MC3 develop a strategic

plan and mission for the coalition. MC3 is always looking for more people to be involved. If you are interested in learning more, contact Peter McKeever at heart-lakec@aol.com.

A partial list of MC3 members:

Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers
Friends of St. Francis Green Space
Gathering Waters Conservancy
Glendale Natural Heritage Society
Greendale Environmental Group
Metro Audubon
Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy
Milwaukee Audubon
Milwaukee Green Party
The Park People
Preserve Our Parks
River Revitalization Foundation
Root-Pike WIN
Great Waters Group—Sierra Club
The Wild Ones



Thanks all those who helped with the Mid-west Land Trust Conference, specifically:

Jamie Ewing and the Land Trust Alliance for working hard to organize the conference. The poets who presented their work at the *Conserving a Sense of Place* conference: **Robin Chapman, Ellen Kort, Hans Ribbens, Catherine Jagoe, Paul Wozniak** for emceeding the poetry reading. **The Path Project** for the Women in Conservation Breakfast program. **Jeff Strobel** for creating fun and creative artwork for our publications. **Flagstads Florists** for donating 50% of the flowers for the conference. **Ed Minihan** for Town of Dunn presence on the canoe trip. **Jay Hoel** for organizing the picnic spot on the canoe trip. **Carl Busjahn** for guiding the canoe trip and providing equipment. **Rutabaga Paddle Shop** for their willingness to donate boats & staff time. **Kristin Westad & Steve Richter** for their help with field trips. **Nina Leopold Bradley** for giving talk at the Shack. All the terrific **conference presenters**.

Thank You to the Conference Sponsors and to the Land Trust Alliance

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Bill Kraus for hosting a luncheon to discuss strategies for the Stewardship Fund.
Angela Nelson for volunteering to help with office tasks.
Jefferson Patterson for hosting GWC staff.
Arline Paunack for donating a computer.
Jill Rosenberg for creating a searchable, interactive, online map and directory of Wisconsin land trusts.
Stacey Staniak for hosting Vicki on a recent trip to DC.
John Wagner at The Nature Conservancy for making maps for *Lake Michigan Shorelines Alliance* and *Partners in Preservation*.
West Wisconsin Land Trust for hosting the June Partners in Preservation meeting.

“Smart” Conservation

On June 5th, Gathering Waters hosted a *Comprehensive Planning for Conservation* workshop at the Barkhausen Waterfowl Preserve in Suamico. More than two dozen citizens of the Greater Green Bay area came together on the first sunny Saturday of the summer to share ideas, concerns, and questions about Smart Growth planning and conservation in the region. The workshop was co-hosted by UW-Extension Basin Educator *Kendra Axness*.

In addition to the participants, we were fortunate to have three expert advisors. *Rick Stadelman*, the Director of the Wisconsin Towns Association came to offer examples of how towns address complex legal and technical questions about Smart Growth planning. *Mark Walter*, the Executive Director of Bay Lake Regional Planning Commission came with a thorough overview of the Smart Growth Law. Finally, *Kristi Sorenson* came to share the lessons of her experience in local planning, and to encourage everyone to remain involved in this time-consuming and fruitful process.

The workshop sparked many productive conversations and laid the groundwork for future action. An inspired group of citizens from De Pere left with plans to form a neighborhood association to address concerns about urban sprawl. All participants went home having met some of their allies in conservation planning and having gained ideas about how to influence comprehensive planning in their communities.

Since the “Smart Growth Law” passed, Gathering Waters has amassed a rich collection of planning guides and related material. Planning can be a powerful conservation tool! Contact Pam Felt in the Gathering Waters Office if you would like additional information about the Comprehensive Planning Law.

Gathering Waters plans one more Smart Growth related event in September in West Bend. Look for updates on our webpage.

—Pam Foster Felt, Program Coordinator

New Faces in Conservation



Anne Selness

Marghie Rich & Lauren Robinson



Land Trust Staff Additions

In the past few months, Wisconsin’s land trusts have welcomed several new staff members:

At the Mississippi Valley Conservancy, *Anne Selness* is the new Executive Director, following Cynthia Olmstead’s departure. Anne is joined by *Lauren Robinson* as Development Director

and *Marghie Rich* as Office Administrator. *Laurel Hauser*, formerly a Director with the Door County Land Trust, is now their Member Relations Coordinator. The Ozaukee-Washington Land Trust hired *Derek Strohl* as Preserve & Stewardship Manager. *Bryan Pierce* has a new role with the Northwoods Land Trust, as Executive Director. The River Revitalization Foundation has hired *Vince Bushell* to run their land trust program. The West Wisconsin Land Trust hired *Michael Hanten* as Regional Protection Specialist, and opened an office in Trego.

Some groups have contract staff for specific projects, including *Lori Artiomow* with the Kenosha/Racine Land Trust, and *Amy Staffen* with the Prairie Enthusiasts.

New Land Trusts

An opportunity to protect a significant piece of Lake Michigan shoreline in Kewaunee County has inspired a local group to pursue development of a land trust to serve the county. The Rural Land Legacy Committee has met with the Lake Michigan Shorelands Alliance to discuss possible collaborative structures and partnerships.

In Dodge County, several organizations and individuals have been meeting to discuss the formation of a land trust in the Lake Sinissippi area. They are developing a mission statement and organizational structure, and determining the geographic scope for the new organization.

The Half Moon Lake Conservancy is active in Washburn County, protecting shoreline properties through conservation easements.

—Karen Bassler, Program Director



Thinking long-term about the layout of communities brings together a wide-variety of stakeholders to plan and collaborate.

Livable communities are often an important part of a smart growth plan.



Sudsing Up Support for Land Conservation

Gathering Waters Conservancy has partnered with a line of hand-crafted soaps to benefit land conservation. "Our Land" is a bar soap made with deep earthy tones of sandalwood, cedar, patchouli and peru balsalm. Rock River Soap Company owners Scott and Teri Holloway are



providing Gathering Waters with a generous ten percent of profits from soap sales.

Teri Holloway said that she and her husband wanted to make this contribution because, "With a business and two young children we have a stake in Wisconsin's land and water resources. We would like to support Gathering Water Conservancy's mission to preserve Wisconsin's natural heritage and rural landscape for future generations."

Environmental stewardship is part of the mission of Rock River Soap Company. "We all have to play a role in protecting our environment if we are to live sustainably. A lot of people can do little things and they really add up." Members and friends of Gathering Waters are encouraged to support this locally owned business and GWC by buying their household and gift soap at farmer's markets or online at www.rockriversoap.com/conserve/.



Rejuvenating Support for the Stewardship Fund

Plans are underway at Gathering Waters Conservancy to bring together a diverse array of groups to rejuvenate support for the Warren Knowles-Gaylord Nelson Stewardship Fund. Despite widespread support, in the past several years legislation was proposed, and in some cases passed, to severely cut or to reduce the scope of the Stewardship Fund. Only through the extraordinary work of the land conservation community and a veto by Governor Doyle was the fund spared. Without vocal supporters, a renewed attack on the Fund is expected in 2005. Gathering Waters Conservancy is working to rejuvenate broad-based, bi-partisan support for the Stewardship Fund. We are working with partners such as the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation and Nature Conservancy to develop a grassroots network of Stewardship advocates to help rally for the Fund if the time comes.

We are also meeting with opinion leaders and a diverse coalition of interests to re-engage vibrant support for protecting Wisconsin's best natural and beautiful places. A recent roundtable discussion at Bill Kraus' home in Madison drew together political, business, and cultural leaders for engaging conversations on Stewardship.

As we look forward to celebrating the 15th anniversary of the Fund in 2005, we plan to build a diverse set of stakeholders to begin a balanced discussion that veers away from past polarized positions and works at reconciling problems and looking forward for innovative approaches. We hope to bring to light the vast array of supporters for the Fund and to highlight the work that has been done as we prepare for the next 15 years of land conservation. If you would like to be part of these efforts, please contact Althea Dotzour at althea@gatheringwaters.org.
—Althea Dotzour, Outreach and Policy Coordinator

Stewardship funds have helped protect more than 225,000 acres in 71 of Wisconsin's 72 counties.

GIVE ME A POEM

made from
a long-necked heron
flying against
the wind
a boy who finds
his grandfather
in the face
of a stone
in the eye of a fish
in the wrinkled skin
of a birch tree
A poem whose ear
is listening
to the river
the umbilicus
spin of its cord
breathing inside me
that one moment
the wonder of it
when the current
runs wild
and everything
is ready to break open

—Ellen Kort

First published in the
spring-summer issue of
Wisconsin Trails magazine

Timeline of Success

1994

- Founded by Jean Meanwell, Geoff Maclay, Bill O'Connor, Rob Chambers & Bud Jordahl

1995

- Hired first full time staff: Brian Hotz, Executive Director

1996

- Sponsored a statewide land trust conference in Wausau

1997

- Hosted a regional land trust conference and seminar

1998

- Hired Vicki Elkin as Executive Director
- National Land Trust Rally held in Madison

1999

- Held Wisconsin land trust conference in Baraboo

2000

- Organized the first "Wisconsin Land Trust Staff Retreat"

2001

- Hosted a statewide conference celebrating community-based conservation
- Launched "Partners in Preservation" in the Lake Michigan Basin

2002

- Organized six "County Conservation Coalitions" to advocate for conservation policies and practices in Southeast Wisconsin

2003

- Published "In their Own Words," a collection of land conservation stories
- Led successful efforts to save the Stewardship Fund from devastating budget cuts

2004

- Hired fifth full-time employee
- Co-hosted the Midwest Land Trust Conference

Thanks to the Party Sponsors

Karen Bassler
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Betsy Otto
Bryan Pierce
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Clyde Samsel
Trish Stocking & Jonathan Ela
Wheeler, Van Sickle & Anderson
Joan & Peter Ziegler

Also, thank you to:

John Urban for emceeding Gathering Waters Conservancy's birthday party
Sonya Newenhouse for acting as photographer during Gathering Waters' birthday party
Katie MacKendrick for volunteering to create much of the outreach material for the party

Birthday Party a Rollicking Success

Gathering Waters Conservancy's 10th anniversary celebration filled Club Majestic with hours of good times. Over 200 party-goers kicked up their heels on Friday, April 23 to celebrate 10 years of great strides in Wisconsin's land conservation movement.

Throughout the party, strolling balloon-twisters amused guests with their fabulous creations. A Madison radio host emceed a Letterman-esque top 10 slide show on the old theater's large screen to much laughter and applause. Gathering Waters Conservancy's founders concluded a short program by blowing out candles on a cake depicting all the new land trusts created in the last 10 years as party-goers sang "Happy Birthday." A slide show highlighting the achievements of Wisconsin's land trusts and the growth of Gathering Waters showcased some of the beautiful, protected places in Wisconsin. Photos of the party are available on Gathering Waters Conservancy's website www.gatheringwaters.org.

Executive Director Vicki Elkin stands with the founders at the Birthday Party. Thanks to Gathering Waters Conservancy's founders Jean Meanwell, Bill O'Connor, Geoff Maclay, and Bud Jordahl! Founder Rob Chambers is not pictured here.



Gathering Waters Conservancy Unveils New Logo

Gathering Waters Conservancy's new logo ripples with movement and energy. This image evokes ideas of connection and flow and symbolizes the outward impact Gathering Waters Conservancy has on Wisconsin's land conservation movement. The circular raindrops also convey a sense of community and shared work that Gathering Waters Conservancy provides for those who may otherwise feel isolated. **Cricket Redman**, donated her time to work with us through myriad iterations of the logo until we hit upon the one that clicked. Many thanks to her for her extraordinary sense of design and style. Watch your mailbox for material sporting our new look!

Ways of Giving to Gathering Waters Conservancy



A Note from our Membership Coordinator, Sara DeKok

Aside from furthering the mission of our organization, my favorite aspect of my job is getting to know the many supporters of Gathering

Waters Conservancy. What I've discovered is that our donors do not fall into a single classification or demographic—they are a diverse group of passionate individuals with assorted motivations and financial situations. As a result, I've been asked several times about alternative ways of making a contribution to Gathering Waters. Being a recent college graduate, I can appreciate the difficult challenge of trying to express one's dedication through the use of their checkbook. In an effort to accommodate all of our supporters, we have included in this edition of *Crosscurrents* several means of making a charitable donation. If you have any questions about these ways of giving, please contact me at 608-251-9131 ext. 10 or saramurphy@gatheringwaters.org

Credit card Gathering Waters Conservancy is capable of accepting single-time credit card donations or donations made in installments over time. For example, if you are more comfortable giving \$10 every month for a year instead of an outright gift of \$120, we can accommodate you.

Online You can give online by visiting our website at www.gatheringwaters.org and clicking on "Join GWC" or "Donate On-line" e.Power is a vehicle for on-line charitable giving.

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

Payroll deduction Gathering Waters Conservancy is a new member of Community Shares of Wisconsin, an umbrella organization that raises funds to support 60 local nonprofit groups. Community Shares of Wisconsin helps

Gathering Waters raise funds through private and public sector employee payroll deduction campaigns in the fall.

For more information on how to give to Gathering Waters through your work, contact Althea Dotzour at althea@gatheringwaters.org or 608-251-9131 ext. 13. Or, to find out how your business can join the campaign, visit www.communityshares.com.

Employer match If your employer has a matching contribution program, be sure to take advantage to double the impact of your donation. If you're not sure if your employer has such a program or if you are unsure of how to take advantage of it, contact your human resources department.

Bequest You can name Gathering Waters Conservancy as a beneficiary of specific assets in your will.

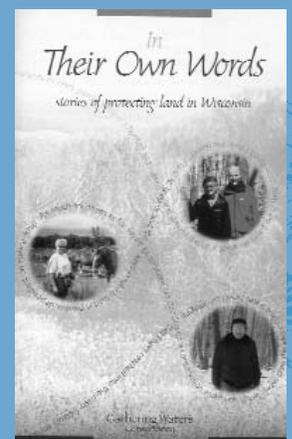
In memory/honor of someone Did you have a friend or family member who was truly dedicated to conservation in Wisconsin; is there someone in your life that is getting married/graduating/retiring? Why not honor them by donating a gift to Gathering Waters Conservancy in their name.

In-kind donation Gathering Waters Conservancy is happy to accept used office furniture and functioning computer equipment. We also continually seek donations for a silent auction we hold every fall. If you have something you would like to donate please contact us.

Volunteer Gathering Waters Conservancy is always looking for conservation-minded, generous folks who are willing to donate some of their time to support our efforts. Whether you have a special skill (web design, computer knowledge, etc.) or would just like to stuff envelopes, we'd love to hear from you.

Gathering Waters Publication Wins Award

In Their Own Words, a collection of stories from Wisconsin land owners who have protected their land, has interested and excited people around the state and around the country. We have received orders from California to Massachusetts to Texas. Inspiring and insightful, the reflections and poems demonstrate how people much like yourself have benefited by conserving their land. The Printing Industries of Wisconsin recently noted the excellent design, layout, and printing of the booklet and awarded *In Their Own Words* a certificate of merit for graphic excellence. Congratulations to Jeff Strobel, our graphic designer and to Webcrafters, our printer for helping bring this publication to beautiful, four-color life. If you are interested in ordering a copy of *In Their Own Words*, contact us at 608.251.9131 ext. 15.



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“The awards celebration recognizes and honors all of the wonderful and creative work that Wisconsin’s land trusts, landowners and other conservation leaders do to protect Wisconsin’s natural heritage. Acre-by-acre the are protecting the best of what remains of outdoor Wisconsin.”
—Vicki Elkin, Executive Director of Gathering Waters Conservancy

SAVE THE DATE for Gathering Waters’ Conservation Awards Celebration!

Pull out your calendar and write this down! On September 30, Gathering Waters Conservancy is hosting the second annual conservation awards celebration in Madison. Sure to be an event you won’t want to miss, this celebration is our opportunity to recognize and thank those individuals, organizations, and policy makers who have made exceptional contributions to the land trust movement. Last year’s celebration was a huge success and we are confident that this year’s event will be just as inspiring.

- WHAT: Land Conservation Awards Celebration**
- WHEN: Thursday, September 30, 2004**
- TIME: 6 - 8:30 pm**
- WHERE: Monona Terrace in Madison**

