

gathering waters conservancy

Rally Comes to Wisconsin

This October 14th-17th, when prairie seed collection is in full swing and wood ducks start to head south, more than 1,600 land trust practitioners will migrate to Madison, congregating for the annual National Land Conservation Rally.

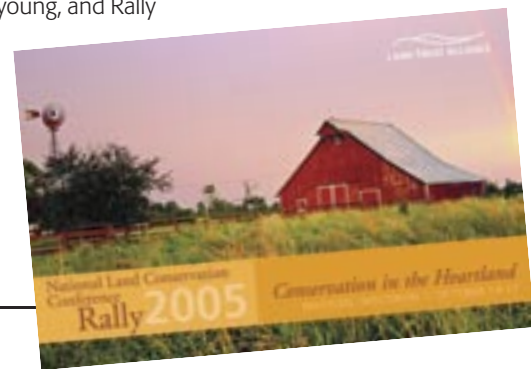
Every year, the Land Trust Alliance organizes this three-day conference—the largest gathering of land trust personnel in the country. Rally is always a valuable and busy few days! Highlights will include keynote addresses from Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., a long-time environmental advocate, and William Cronon, an influential historian at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, as well as the poetry of Ellen Kort, Wisconsin's former poet laureate.

Wisconsin's land trust community is looking forward to hosting this year's Rally, meeting land trust peers from across the county, and showcasing conservation successes here in the Heartland. The Midwest boasts thousands of miles of national trails, nationally significant river systems, innovative public-private partnerships for land protection, and some standard-setting urban land conservation. We have a lot to show off!

We also have a lot to learn. Most Wisconsin land trusts are relatively young, and Rally is an opportunity to collect the wisdom of long-standing organizations. Participants learn about the latest land protection tools, trend-setting projects, and new legal and legislative developments.

Interested in attending Rally? Register online at www.lta.org or request a brochure at registration@lta.org.

~Pam Foster Felt
Program Coordinator



Get Ready to Celebrate!

It may be hard to believe now, as the sweltering heat of summer is setting in, but October is just around the corner. Gathering Waters Conservancy's third annual Land Conservation Leadership Awards Celebration will be held on Thursday, October 13th from 5:30-8:30 PM—just before the start of the Land Trust Alliance's Rally—at Madison's Monona Terrace Convention Center.

This event is a joyful party where land conservation leaders from around the state take time out to mingle, nibble, and celebrate their successes. The awards celebration is accompanied by a silent auction, so come ready to bid on one of the over fifty items that suits your taste—a vacation package, a work of art, or a vintage Radio Flyer tricycle!

Last year nearly 300 people attended the Awards Celebration, and we expect an even bigger turnout this year. We have some exciting nominations for this year's winners—don't miss the opportunity to find out who takes home the awards!

The event will be co-hosted by Gathering Waters Conservancy's Board President, Joan Ziegler, and Mequon Mayor Christine Neurenberg, one of the award winners from 2004 for her innovative work in establishing the Mequon Preserve. The celebration promises to be an evening to remember, so mark your calendars now!

~Julia Solomon
Program Coordinator

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nature photos: Gil Gribb



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 Board President...

During the past eight months Gathering Waters Conservancy's board and staff have developed a strategic plan to guide our work over the next three years. Along the way we solicited insights from the land trusts we serve, and I thank them for their support.

Gathering Waters Conservancy will continue its mission to help communities, land trusts, and private landowners protect the places that make Wisconsin special. However, new challenges confront the land trust community, and we hope our strategic plan will guide us in meeting these challenges. Two areas in which Gathering Waters will specifically expand include creating a pre-accreditation program and ensuring the reauthorization of the Stewardship Fund.

Pre-accreditation

Across the country, land trusts' practices have come under the close scrutiny of the IRS and other regulatory bodies. In response to this challenge, the Land Trust Alliance is spearheading an effort to create a land trust accreditation program. The accreditation process will help ensure that easements are properly drafted, protected lands are accurately appraised, and land trusts are governed in such a way that they will be able to fulfill their obligations long into the future.

Our strategic plan recognizes that Gathering Waters Conservancy can play a key role in helping Wisconsin land trusts prepare for accreditation. Our "pre-accreditation" program will be implemented by a team of professionals who will provide assistance and training to land trusts.

Reauthorizing the Stewardship Fund

Renewal of legislation for Wisconsin's premiere land acquisition fund, the Warren Knowles-Gaylord Nelson Stewardship Fund is the second major challenge facing the land trust community. The Stewardship Fund protects recreational lands, wildlife habitat, and other natural areas and is authorized at \$60 million per year through 2010. Land trusts have used Stewardship grants to protect nearly 30,000 acres, and loss or curtailment of this fund could severely impede private and public efforts to protect Wisconsin's natural heritage.

Accordingly, our strategic plan focuses on rejuvenating the broad based, bi-partisan support we know exists for the Stewardship Fund. Two of our staff members currently share responsibility for our policy activities. In the next few years, we intend to hire a full-time policy coordinator to lead our effort in defense of the Stewardship Fund and to work on other policy initiatives.

Implementing our pre-accreditation program and developing a stronger policy presence will require the addition of at least one new staff member, and one or more consultants. Gathering Waters Conservancy therefore faces the challenge of seeking new sources of financial support. Along with our board, our Executive Director Vicki Elkin has shouldered much of the responsibility for fund-raising in the past. While Vicki and the board will continue to lead the way, we plan to hire a full-time development director sometime during the next three years to facilitate these efforts.

I believe that helping land trusts prepare for accreditation and strengthening our policy work are essential to fulfilling Gathering Waters' mission. I hope that you are as excited about our future as I am!

~ Joan Ziegler
Board President



Gathering Waters Conservancy Staff Updates

2005 has been a year of change and growth for Gathering Waters Conservancy, and we have several new additions to introduce to you.

Liz Walsh started in April as our new full-time office manager, and already we cannot imagine how we got along without her. Not only does she coordinate events, keep our paperwork and finances organized, and solve our computer problems, she is also the only person who has managed to conquer our multi-line phone system and make it work properly. We are delighted to have her on staff!

Julia Solomon is a familiar face at Gathering Waters—she has been a part-time intern for us since January 2004—but we are happy to announce that you will be seeing more of her now. Julia finished her Master's degree in Conservation Biology and Sustainable Development in May and has accepted a full-time, permanent position with us. During the next few months she will take over as Interim Outreach and Policy Coordinator while Althea Dotzour is on maternity leave. After that she will continue to work on our policy programs, and will also coordinate the Lake Michigan Shorelands Alliance.

There have also been some changes to our board of directors. We are very happy to welcome **Joy Stieglitz Gottschalk**, a principal at Vandewalle & Associates and a founding member of Gathering Waters Conservancy's Land Legacy Society, and **Shawn Graff**, who currently serves as the Executive Director of the Ozaukee Washington Land Trust. These two members bring a great deal of experience and enthusiasm to our board.

At the same time, we bid a fond farewell to **Renay Leone**, who has served on the board for more than two years. Renay, who lives and works in Minnesota, is hoping to spend more time closer to home, but promises that we can still call on her with questions! She will be missed.

Finally, we are overjoyed to welcome the newest member of our Gathering Waters family. **Alexander Elkin Ivey** was born on April 16th, right on time. (He arrived during our board meeting, so it is a good thing that Mama Vicki Elkin had decided not to attend!) Alex is happy, healthy, and growing fast.

Vicki and Mike are enjoying spending time at home with their new arrival, and Alex is already a familiar figure in the office. Look for an update in the next newsletter on Baby Dotzour, the next addition to our growing family!

Thank-yous

Cheryl Clemens for housing, feeding, and touring Karen in the St. Croix Valley; **AND** for giving Karen's part of their joint presentation at the Waters of Wisconsin Conference

Scott Minter and **Kate Kaiser** at the UW Law School for event coordinating and co-hosting our Attorney Seminar in April

Monona Terrace Convention Center for providing a room at no charge for the Accreditation Focus Group meeting

John Vigen, Wendy Walker, and **Ron Olson** for their time, travel, and expert instruction at our Appraiser Training in May

Wegner LLP for use of their facility for April board meeting

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College for scrambling to find a free room for the NW Partners in Preservation meeting when our original location was cancelled

Liz Walsh



Julia Solomon



Joy Stieglitz Gottschalk



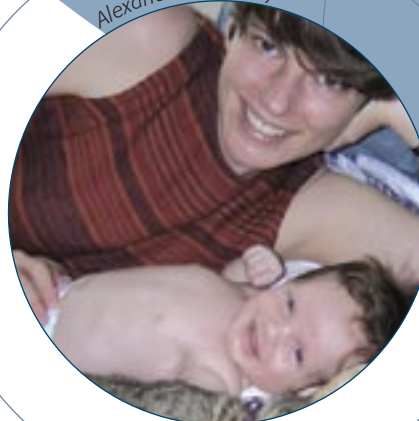
Shawn Graff



Renay Leone



Alexander Elkin Ivey



Conservation Easement Deductions Under Attack

This year, Federal Congressional committees have alarmed land trusts by proposing changes—including significant decreases in income tax deductions—in the rules governing conservation easements. Some of these proposals could severely set back our conservation work.

A conservation easement is a voluntary agreement between a landowner and a land trust that restricts the right to develop land in order to protect conservation values on it. Under current rules, conservation easements can be donated—the value of those development rights can be gifted to a land trust. Since 2003, a few highly publicized “insider” and fraudulent deals have raised eyebrows. In response, the Joint Committee on Taxation proposed major cuts in tax deductions for donated easements. The Senate Finance Committee is also considering reforms, and the IRS is now auditing several hundred easement deductions.

Conservation easements are valuable tools for land protection, and tax incentives motivate landowners to use them. Land trusts in Wisconsin hold over 350 conservation easements protecting lakefront, working farms, forest lands and other natural areas. These easements leverage private money for conservation, and provide an alternative means of protecting land when purchase is not a viable option.

Gathering Waters Conservancy and the land trust community are in favor of improving the rules governing conservation easements to discourage those who abuse tax incentives. The proposals now on the floor, however, are too sweeping, and would shut down all conservation easement transactions in an effort to thwart a few bad ones. The Land Trust Alliance, the national umbrella group for land trusts, is spearheading a nation-wide effort to help ensure the future viability of easement deductions.

In April, I traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with Wisconsin’s representatives about the success of land conservation in our state and the importance of conservation easements in that success. I was pleased to find that our delegation supports conservation easements and does not want to see laws enacted that would discourage their use. Special thanks go to Congressman Paul Ryan (Rep., District 1) who serves on the Ways and Means Committee, for his backing of conservation easements.

The political landscape changes quickly. To find out more about the current tax proposals, visit www.lta.org. If you would like to join GWC’s policy network and receive policy updates, visit www.gatheringwaters.org.

~Althea Dotzour
Outreach and Policy Coordinator

Gathering Waters Convenes Bi-partisan Stewardship Summit

In late February, Gathering Waters Conservancy and The Nature Conservancy hosted a ground-breaking summit to discuss the future of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund. This event was held at the Johnson Foundation’s Wingspread Conference Center, which provided an elegant and comfortable setting for the meeting. The summit was attended by influential decision-makers from across the political spectrum who spent the day discussing strategies for building a broad base of support for the Stewardship Fund. Everyone in the room shared a commitment to seeing this program continue, and this group represents the beginning of a powerful coalition of advocates for the Stewardship Fund.

Gathering Waters, The Nature Conservancy, and our partners are looking ahead to 2010, when the Stewardship Fund must be reauthorized. We plan to work proactively to rejuvenate bi-partisan support for the Fund. The Wingspread Stewardship Summit was a great way to jump-start this campaign.

One of the first outcomes of the Stewardship Summit is the Parade of Preserves—a series of field trips that will highlight key Stewardship properties around the state this summer. For more information, see the article on page five of this newsletter.

~Julia Solomon
Program Coordinator

Mary Jean Huston from The Nature Conservancy; Curt Meine, Stewardship Summit facilitator; Vicki Elkin from Gathering Waters Conservancy; and Steve Branca from the Johnson Foundation





The appraiser training took place on May 20 in Wisconsin Dells.

Training the Professionals

Land protection is a simple idea, but it can mean complicated deals! All conservation transactions involve more than just a well-intended landowner; they engage a team of expert advisors. This spring, Gathering Waters set out to educate key professionals about conservation easements. We enrolled 54 attorneys and over 70 appraisers and assessors for full-day credentialed seminars on conservation easement law, tax law, estate planning and appraisal methodology. Sound heavy? It can be dense material, indeed! We are grateful to those professionals who attended. Without their expertise, conservation easements, which have already protected thousands of acres of our beautiful state, would be impossible.

We were honored to have top-notch instructors volunteer their wisdom and time. We are also grateful to the UW's Law School, who co-hosted the attorney training and did the lion's share of the planning.

There will be more continuing education opportunities in October at the Land Trust Alliance's Rally—for details, see www.lta.org or contact Pam in our office. Until then, our training programs are enjoying summer vacation. We hope that you are doing the same!

~Pam Foster Felt
Program Coordinator

Gathering Waters Conservancy Supports Local Farmers

This summer, Gathering Waters Conservancy is supporting local land conservation while making fresh organically grown produce available for the staff by becoming a member of a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. We have joined Vermont Valley Community Farm, a family-owned organic farm located in Blue Mounds. As a CSA farm, Vermont Valley sells shares of its season's harvest to community members prior to the beginning of the growing season, helping to cover the costs of running the farm. In return, the farm provides its members a supply of seasonal organic produce, delivered weekly throughout the growing season. This CSA partnership creates an economically stable farm while allowing consumers to participate in stewardship of local lands. For more information on Community Supported Agriculture programs in your area, visit www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/csa/.

~Liz Walsh
Office Manager



Celebrating Land Conservation Through the *Parade of Preserves*

Summer calls us to venture outside and wander through the land that we have worked so hard to protect. In celebration of the 15th Anniversary of the Stewardship Fund, Gathering Waters Conservancy is sponsoring a statewide *Parade of Preserves* to highlight properties that have been protected with Knowles-Nelson Stewardship funding.

These properties represent the range of natural features in Wisconsin—blufflands, wetlands, prairies, wild lakes, and hardwood forests, to name a few. Throughout the summer, land trusts around the state will host tours on these properties as part of the *Parade of Preserves* so community members and policymakers can share in the success of the Stewardship Fund. The land trusts participating in the 2005 *Parade* are listed below. For more information on these events, visit www.gatheringwaters.org or call 608-251-9131 ext. 14.

This year's *Parade of Preserves* includes:

Door County Land Trust	Bay Shore Blufflands Preserve	Saturday, June 25
Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation	Swamplovers Property	Saturday, June 25
West Wisconsin Land Trust	Maiden Rock Bluff and Pine Creek	Saturday, July 16
Mississippi Valley Conservancy	Sugar Creek Bluff State Natural Area	Saturday, August 6
Ozaukee Washington Land Trust	Huiras Lake State Natural Area	Saturday, August 20
West Wisconsin Land Trust	Wayward Beaver Lodge	Saturday, August 20

~Julia Solomon
Program Coordinator

Land Trust Members

Baraboo Range Preservation Association
Bayfield Regional Conservancy
Caledonia Conservancy
Cedar Lakes Conservation Foundation
Chippewa County Land Conservancy
Couderay Waters Regional Land Trust
Deer Lake Conservancy
Door County Land Trust
Driftless Area Land Conservancy
Faye Gehl Conservation Foundation
Friends of Rowan Creek
Geneva Lake Conservancy
Glacial Lakes Conservancy
Green Lake Conservancy Foundation
Ice Age Park & Trail Foundation
Jefferson County Land Trust
Kenosha/Racine Land Trust
Kinnickinnic River Land Trust
Kishwaukee Nature Conservancy
Lakeland Conservancy
Last Wilderness Conservation Association
Lauderdale Lakes Conservancy
Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve
Madison Audubon Society
Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy
Mississippi Valley Conservancy
Muskego Lakes Conservancy
Natural Heritage Land Trust
North Central Conservancy Trust
Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust
Northwoods Land Trust, Inc.
Ozaukee Washington Land Trust
Ridges Sanctuary, Inc.
River Revitalization Foundation
Riverland Conservancy
Standing Cedars Community Land Conservancy
Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust
Tall Pines Conservancy
The Nature Conservancy
The Prairie Enthusiasts
Twin Lakes Conservancy
Walworth County Land Conservancy
Waukesha Land Conservancy
West Wisconsin Land Trust

New Gathering Waters Conservancy Members

July 1, 2004 to May 31, 2005

Charlotte Adelman
Alec Albee
Tenny Albert
David & Kate Allen
Brenda Allen-Johnson
Rebecca Anderson
Dan Anderson
Chris & Vicki Anderson
Janet Anderson
Judith Ashford
Janet & J.P. Balding
Karen Banaszak
Jake & Kristin Barnes
Gretchen Benjamin
Catherine Beverly
Evelyn Bjorklund
Stuart Boerst
Steve Books
Scott Brandt
Michael Briselli
John Brogan
Charlotte & Douglas Brown
Robert Brumder
Dennis Buettner
Elaine Burke
Steve Bushman
Gene Bymers
John & Carolyn Cain
R. David & Vonnie Callsen
Bradley Carl
Sherren Clark
Harold Clark, Jr.
Gerard Clausen
Deb Congdon
James Cotter
Patrick Daly
Michael & Debora Dearing
Sara & Sean DeKok
Derek & Michelle Deubel
John Dixon
Dave Eckerle
Cheryl Eikland
Robert & Barbara Elsner
Laura England
David & Marguerite Engleson
Fred Evert
Gary & Annette Fisk
Lowell Freedlund
Lynn & Evan Fry
Amanda Fuller
Don Gabower
Bruce Gallagher
Beachy Gallagher
Lisa Geer
Sherm Geib

Sheldon Gendelman
Mark Giese
Donald & Karen Grade
Shirley & Michael Griffin
Kathleen Griswold
Matthew Groshek
Rebecca Grossberg
Bob Gurda & Betty Craig
Anne Habel
Dan Hamilton
Constance & Philip Hardacre
Carol Harding
Paul & Philia Hayes
Dale & Karen Haymann
Jill Hewitt
Kathleen & Ulfert Hornemann
George & Cheryl Howe
Terrie Howe
Don Janssen
John Jenkins
Marlen & John Kaiser
Mary & Charles Kamps
Elizabeth & Peter Kaseman-Wold
Jeff Kelling
Allan Klein
Mary Kniep
Stephen Koermer
Paul & Judy Kolosso
Mary Koos
Bill Kraus
Lauder Lakes Improvement Assn
Estella & Charles Lauler
Geraldyn Leannah
Sharon Lezberg & Brian Yandell
Mark Lohry
RW & JP Lottridge
John & Martha Lunz
Marjory Lyford
L. Ward Lyles
Norma & John Magnuson
Gordon Malaise
Darren Marsh
Joe Mathers
Patty & Jeff Mayers
Bill McClenahan
Robert McDermot
John McKnight
Kay & Patrick Meyer
James & Julia Millard
Jon Moffatt
Marsha & Joseph Mose
Diane & Gerald Mundt
Debra & William Nietert
Tina Ottman
Jerry Patzwald

Wayne Pauly
Harry & Sylvia Peterson
Alice & Jalam Punwar
John Race
Kristin & Phil Redman
Mary Reinke
Rock River Soap Company
Joan Rohan
Rutabaga
Brian Schimming
Gloria Schley
Dan & Karen Schmahl
Martin & Elaine Schreiber
Chuck & Bonnie Schuknecht
George Seater
D. David Sebold
Ms. Jennifer Sereno
Tom Shepherd
James & Rose Sime
Teresa & Darryl Sippel-Schmidt
Thomas Slocum
William & Jacqueline Smith
Robert Stanley
Edward Steigerwaldt
Joseph Steuer
Sustainable Racine, Inc.
Bill Swan
Margaret & George Tanner
William & Nancy Tans
Anita Temple & Jerry Sullivan
Brian Terranova
Michael Theo
Donald Thompson
Allen & Rosemary Toussaint
John C. & Judy Turner
Michael Vahldieck
Chris Valcheff
James Van Deurzen
Gerald Viebrock
Robert Vosen
Martin & Karen Voss
Damian Vraniak
Paul Wagner & Cindy Schlosser
Ken Walsh
Mr. & Mrs. Tony J. Warren
Bob Weber
Rosemary Wehnes
James Wellman
Donald Wichert
Tom & Susan Winter
Sharyn Wisniewski
Gisela Zelenka-Drysdale & Douglas Drysdale
Judy Ziewacz

gathering waters
conservancy

Stories of Giving

Sharing your talents

Kristin Girvin Redman & Annie

Our members support our work in many ways. Kristin Redman, founder of Cricket Design Works, started working with Gathering Waters Conservancy on a pro bono basis as we developed our new logo and identity materials. We were so thrilled with her work that we hired her to work on *Crosscurrents* and to undertake our website redesign (see page eight for a preview).

Our collaborative partnership has grown, and Kristin has shown a continued commitment to do pro bono work for Gathering Waters Conservancy. Thanks to her work, Gathering Waters Conservancy's consistently branded communication materials better communicate the importance of our mission and foster greater recognition of the land trust community.

Kristin says, "Working with Gathering Waters staff has been very rewarding and I've been really impressed with their dedication and their ability to think creatively and collaborate to pursue their mission. Not only that, but they seem to have a bunch of fun in the process!"

Kristin was trained as a biologist and previously worked for an environmental consulting firm. She says, "It was a really hard decision to switch careers to pursue a natural gift and practice graphic design – so it feels great to do work for an environmental organization that I believe in."

To learn more about Cricket Design Works, visit their website at www.cricketdesign-works.com. If you have talents you would like to share with Gathering Waters Conservancy, contact us at 608-251-9131!

~Althea Dotzour
Outreach and Policy Coordinator



GWC Founder Honored in Conservation Hall of Fame

Harold "Bud" Jordahl is a familiar face in the pages of *Crosscurrents*. As one of Gathering Waters Conservancy's founders, and after serving on the board of directors for the past 15 years, Bud has become one of the cornerstones of this organization. That's just one reason we were so pleased to see him inducted into the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame this spring.

A handful of Bud's accomplishments include:

- Worked with Governor Gaylord Nelson to create the predecessor for the Stewardship Fund (Wisconsin's Outdoor Recreation Act Program)
- Emeritus professor at the UW-Madison
- Helped designate the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore
- Placed a conservation easement on his 220 acre farm in Richland County

Gathering Waters Conservancy applauds Bud's history of accomplishments. In a Citation of Commendation offered by Senator Julie Lassa and Representative Louis Molepske, Bud was honored as "a man whose life immeasurably enriches all those it touches and to whom all the citizens of the great State of Wisconsin will forever be indebted for his unwavering and unfaltering dedication to conservation and the protection of our environment."

~Althea Dotzour
Outreach and Policy Coordinator



Serving on Committees to Improve Land Conservation

If you call our offices and get a voice mail message, it could be because we are busy serving the land conservation community by attending committee meetings. The list below summarizes some of the many groups in which Gathering Waters Conservancy Staff are actively engaged.

- Alliance for the Great Lakes
- DNR Environmental Advisory Group
- DNR Landowner Incentive Program
- E-team Policy Network
- Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee
- Lake Superior Land Trust Partnership
- Land Trust Alliance National Rally Local Host Committee
- Statewide Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan Advisory Committee
- St. Croix Valley Protection Partners
- WI Prescribed Fire Council

crosscurrents

a newsletter to serve the land conservation
community of Wisconsin



Gathering Waters Conservancy
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Hope for the future

"My wish is that we not be foolish enough to damage our economy by destroying the land that so many people enjoy and choose as a vacation destination... Between 1970 and 1990, the population of Milwaukee alone increased by 3 percent while the amount of land being developed went up 38 percent. If no natural beauty is left, what is the point of coming for a vacation? I think the people of Wisconsin are smart enough to see what might happen to the land along with the tourism industry if we are not careful, and I hope everyone will start taking action now."

~ Molly Schull, an eighth grader in Hayward

Quote taken from *Wisconsin Trails* January/February 2005

Gathering Waters Conservancy Unveils Website Makeover

When you surf the web looking for information on land conservation in Wisconsin, you'll find a brand new look to our website. Over the last six months, we have been reviewing our extensive online material and have rearranged and expanded our content in order to provide you with a truly useful resource. Our website has a new navigation system, and we hope you find it easy to use. Check us out at www.gatheringwaters.org and let us know what you think!

