

## in this issue:

- From the President – p2
- Welcome Michael Strigel – p2
- Stewardship Campaign Update – p3
- Stories of Stewardship – p3
- News from the Field – p4
- PDR for Wisconsin – p5
- News from the Office – p6
- State Policy Update – p6
- Inspiration for Breakfast – p7
- Ways of Giving – p7
- As Seen on TV – p8

nature photos: Gil Gribb



## gathering waters conservancy

### Gathering Waters Conservancy – a National Leader

#### What does it mean when we say that Gathering Waters Conservancy is a land trust service center?

At the national land trust conference this year, I was reminded that there are as many different structures for land trust service centers as there are service centers. A survey of twenty-two organizations which provide resources to land trusts found twenty-two different ways of providing those resources. Some service centers are statewide land trusts that have taken on a coordinating role. A few are focused on advocacy work, others offer statewide conferences.

Among this diversity, Gathering Waters stands out. Our outreach materials, particularly *In Their Own Words*, are widely praised and replicated by other service centers. Many groups model our hands-on approach to our work with land trusts.

Yet while we innovate, we also learn from our fellow service centers. The Land Trust Alliance (LTA) organizes biannual meetings of service center staff for us to get together, learn what we are each doing and provide input to LTA from our more local perspectives. In October 2006, we met in Nashville. Here are a few things I learned from my colleagues nationwide:

- The New Jersey Conservation Foundation will litigate to prevent development of protected land, partnering with law school students and faculty.
- The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association offers a small grants program to assist land trusts in paying conservation easement related expenses.
- The Center for Land Conservation Assistance in New Hampshire has created a guide for local municipalities to develop and implement land protection funds.

These, and many other creative ideas are projects Gathering Waters would like to emulate. Land trust service centers may come in many colors and sizes, but we share in common our mission of aiding land trusts in accomplishing their land conservation goals.

~ Karen Bassler, Conservation Programs Director

*"Gathering Waters Conservancy has become a true pillar of the land conservation movement...marshaling and sustaining a unified, educated, and passionate voice for Wisconsin's land trust community. Their success to date demonstrates to the broader land conservation community a comprehensive approach to advancing land conservation – from grassroots to grassroots."*

~ **Erin M. Heskett**,  
Land Trust Alliance  
Midwest Program  
Director

### Accreditation Update

This year the Land Trust Accreditation Commission is gearing up for the pilot phase of their national program. Applications to participate in the pilot were taken through the end of November; the Commission is now selecting land trusts from those applications to begin the accreditation process.

A draft accreditation application form has been completed. Gathering Waters has been providing detailed feedback to the Commission on the form and process of applying for accreditation. Several land trusts have expressed concern about the time it may take to complete the application – we are working with the Commission to develop programs to assist land trusts through the process. For additional information about the accreditation program, visit [www.lta.org](http://www.lta.org) or call our office.

Gathering Waters Conservancy's mission is to help communities, land trusts and landowners protect the places that make Wisconsin special. Our goal is to increase the amount of protected land in the state through private voluntary action.

#### Gathering Waters Conservancy

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

#### Board of Directors

Arthur Harrington  
*President*

Darrell Bazzell  
*Vice-President*

Chuck Haubrich  
*Treasurer*

Joy Stieglitz Gottschalk  
*Secretary*

Peter Dohr  
Alice Godfrey  
Shawn Graff  
Thomas "Tuck" Mallery  
Howard Mead  
Bryan Pierce  
Lew Posekany  
Rudy Rasin  
Patricia Stocking  
Joan R. Ziegler

#### Staff

Michael Strigel  
*Executive Director*

Karen Bassler  
*Conservation Programs Director*

Dana Chabot  
*Office Administrator*

Sara DeKok  
*Member Relations Director*

Althea Dotzour  
*Outreach and Policy Coordinator*

Natalie Easton  
*Advocacy Coalition Coordinator*

Vicki Elkin  
*Stewardship Campaign Director*

Pam Foster Felt  
*Education and Outreach Coordinator*

Liz Walsh  
*Operations and Programs Coordinator*

Conor Moran  
Andrea Ward  
*Interns*

## From the President...

### How do you know Gathering Waters Conservancy?

Are we a technical assistance resource? Is Gathering Waters an opportunity for you to invest in Wisconsin's special places? Are we the advocates engaging you in the campaign to reauthorize the Stewardship Fund?

Gathering Waters Conservancy is, of course, all those things. My own understanding of this organization has expanded significantly in recent months. I was elected President last year just as our board was charged with recruiting and choosing a new Executive Director. This search was exciting, and we met many superb candidates applying for the position. We are very pleased with the outcome, and welcome Michael Strigel to the helm.

During our search, I had the opportunity to work more closely than usual with our excellent staff and observe their many activities on behalf of our mission. Mike will oversee a very busy office, indeed! We are truly one of the most creative groups working for Wisconsin conservation. I'd like to share with you a snap shot – an aerial view of this organization. On any given day:

**We strategize.** As I write this, Vicki Elkin is likely meeting with other conservation leaders to craft the campaign for the Stewardship Fund's reauthorization. Meanwhile, Althea and a savvy team of advisors are determining Gathering Waters' policy agenda for the 2007 legislative session.

**We nurture the grass roots.** While our policy team discusses statewide action, Pam attends evening meetings of local farmers, lake association members and other citizens in the early stages of fostering a land trust to work in Dodge County. Sara works one-on-one to help other all-volunteer groups build membership and fundraising programs.

**We collaborate.** From those local grass roots on one side of the state to watershed-level conservation work on the other—our Conservation Programs Director, Karen, is facilitating conservation plans for the St. Croix Conservation Collaborative, a group of agencies and non-profits working to make sure conservation on the St. Croix River occurs in concert and attracts federal funding.

**We educate.** Last year our staff presented twice to conventions of Wisconsin assessors and worked closely with Department of Revenue staff to provide assessors useful information about evaluating conservation easements. We ran a credentialed workshop for attorneys. This year our staff will organize trainings for land trust staff, appraisers, and estate planning advisors.

There's more, of course, as this newsletter illustrates. I don't think I know another organization engaged on so many fronts. If you are reading this, then you are also engaged in some way—as a supporter, practitioner, or partner—in conservation success in Wisconsin. Please join me in welcoming our new Executive Director to this busy, innovative, and determined organization.

~ **Art Harrington**, President

## Welcome Aboard

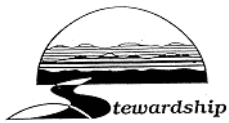


Gathering Waters Conservancy is thrilled to welcome Michael Strigel as our new Executive Director. Mike comes to us most recently from nine years at the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters, where he served as Executive Director since 2003. Happy about his accomplishments and colleagues at the Wisconsin Academy, Mike is now looking forward to returning to his conservation roots with this position at Gathering Waters. Previously, he served as Blufflands Project Director with The Prairie Enthusiasts. After completing his master's degree in land resources at the UW-Madison, he worked as publications editor for the University of Wisconsin Arboretum. With his proven background in non-profit leadership and long commitment to Wisconsin's natural places, Mike is sure to provide valuable vision for the future of conservation in our state. It is an honor to have him join the Gathering Waters community. Many thanks go to the Gathering Waters Board of Directors, especially Joy Gottschalk, hiring committee chair, for their long hours invested in the hiring process and commitment to an excellent staff.



photo courtesy of  
Mario Quintana

## Calling All Stewardship Fund Supporters



- Would you contact your legislators to let them know how important Stewardship is to you?
- Would you be willing to write a letter to the editor about the Stewardship program?

- Would you add your name to a list of individuals, organizations or businesses that support the Stewardship Fund?

The future of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund is uncertain, and we need your help.

The Stewardship Fund will cease to exist in 2010 unless the Legislature and Governor vote for it to continue. Unfortunately, some politicians have argued that Stewardship is a luxury we cannot afford. In fact, the 2006 Republican Party platform even called for an end to the Stewardship program altogether.

The Stewardship Fund was founded in the spirit of bipartisanship, and we believe that Stewardship can be restored to its rightful place as a program celebrated by Republicans and Democrats alike. Our goal is to see Stewardship renewed and strengthened by our representatives at the state Capitol.

### **We'll need your help sooner rather than later.**

Although the Stewardship Fund technically doesn't expire for another three years, there may be an attempt to renew the program in the 2007-2008 legislative session. The outcome of the recent elections, which put the Governor's office and Senate in control of the same political party, makes this possibility more likely.

Please add your name to our growing list of Stewardship supporters. We'll be calling on you to contact your legislators, promote the Stewardship program in your communities, or write letters to the editor.

**For sample letters to the editor and legislators and other Stewardship Campaign information, visit [www.gatheringwaters.org/Stewardship](http://www.gatheringwaters.org/Stewardship).**

*"Far from a luxury, the Stewardship Fund is critical to maintaining our high quality of life here in Wisconsin. Stewardship is an investment in our future and a promise to our children and grandchildren. Thanks to the Stewardship Fund, future generations will be able to enjoy the state's natural beauty as we do today."*

**~Jim Burgess,**  
former publisher,  
Wisconsin State Journal



## Mark Your Calendar

The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters' Conservation Lobby Day is Wednesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>.

You can help make sure our legislators address top conservation priorities like reauthorization of the Stewardship Fund. Join other conservation-minded citizens for one-on-one meetings with your state legislators. Visit [www.conservationvoters.org](http://www.conservationvoters.org) for more information. We'll see you at the Capitol!

## Sneak Preview



We are excited to share a sneak preview of *Stories of Stewardship: Tales from Wisconsin's Big Backyard*. This forthcoming publication is filled with stories highlighting connections between people and land protected by the Stewardship Fund. Look for it later this spring.

### **Tracing the Ice Age** *an excerpt from **Stories of Stewardship***

By Barbara & Jerry Larson

We began hiking the Ice Age Trail in southern Wisconsin in 2002. Somewhere in the Kettle Moraine forest, we made the decision to hike the entire trail. We set a goal of finishing the trail for our 50th wedding anniversary in September 2006, and thus began our incredible foot journey of over 600 miles across our beloved state of Wisconsin, following the terminus of the last glacier.

We're very proud of our Ice Age Trail, one of only eight National Scenic Trails in the country. In Wisconsin, we have the best set of different Ice Age glacial formations anywhere in the world; geologists from around the world come here to study the effects of glaciation.

Many Wisconsinites may not know that the Ice Age Trail is only about 50 percent completed. Much of the proposed trail runs through privately owned land. The Stewardship Fund will be crucial in helping willing landowners allow the trail to pass through their property or for buying the land outright. We were only able to hike the completed segments of the trail, as the paved roads connecting the finished segments are not as kind to older joints as the "good earth." It will be truly wonderful when the Ice Age Trail is completed at over 1,000 miles and long stretches of road are not part of the trek!



## Field Notes

At Gathering Waters, we measure much of our success through the accomplishments of our member land trusts. In this issue, we chose to highlight a few Wisconsin land trusts that are protecting the viability of farming in our state. Here's just a glimpse of the work land trusts are doing to preserve essential and important features of Wisconsin's working landscape.

### Farming On the Urban Fringe

In Dane County the Town of Dunn and the Natural Heritage Land Trust recently purchased development rights on a property connecting a five-farm corridor of permanently protected land. Funding for the protection of this 162-acre farm came from the Town's Purchase of Development Rights Program (PDR) and the federal Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP—see p. 5).

Concerned about losing farms as Madison expanded, the Town of Dunn launched its PDR program in 1996. Residents contribute to the program, which has protected 21 farms—about 2,700 acres—through property taxes that leverage grant funds from other sources. The Natural Heritage Land Trust co-holds most of the Town's conservation easements and shares monitoring and enforcement responsibilities. The Land Trust's partnership ensures that even if the Town changes its program, the farms will remain protected as the landowners and the Town envisioned. Through this program, the Town is successfully maintaining a rural landscape on the edges of Madison.

For more information please visit: [www.nhlt.org](http://www.nhlt.org).

**"Farms near cities will become increasingly important as transportation costs rise and the demand for locally produced food increases. So farms in Pierce, St. Croix and Polk Counties are high on our radar screen."**

— Rick Gauger, Executive Director,  
West Wisconsin Land Trust



The Schommer family

Photo courtesy of West Wisconsin Land Trust



photo courtesy of Natural Heritage Land Trust

### Partnering with Municipalities

Glacial Lakes Conservancy in eastern Wisconsin aims to establish at least one local farmland preservation program in each of the five counties where they work.

In Sheboygan County they have already met success. The Conservancy is partnering with the Town of Mosel to fund a PDR program through an innovative arrangement of their zoning code. Called the Bonus Lot Preservation Plan, this voluntary tool will allow developers to create several more lots in proposed subdivisions than zoning would normally permit. Developers agree to donate the sale proceeds of half those bonus lots back to the Town to be used to purchase development rights on high priority farmlands.

This plan boasts a great list of advantages:

- Developers keep the profits from half of these bonus lots.
- The Town can fund a PDR program without taxpayer investment.
- The plan encourages increased development density, cutting down on the expense of extending services to new subdivisions.

The PDR fund will purchase development rights from willing landowners on high-priority farmlands. As in the Town of Dunn, the land trust will co-hold conservation easements. The program is designed to help farmland protection keep pace acre-for-acre with growth.

For more information please visit: [www.glaciallakes.org](http://www.glaciallakes.org).

### Attracting Federal Dollars for Farmland Protection

On the other side of the state, the West Wisconsin Land Trust has leveraged funds from the Federal Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to purchase conservation easements on over 1,000 acres of working farms over the last four years. They recently closed a deal on a 160-acre family farm in Pierce County.

The Schommers have owned their farm since it was homesteaded in the 1850's. Gene and Jane Schommer have raised seven children on the farm. "We want another generation of our family to be here, too," Gene explains. Their agreement with the Land Trust will allow the 5th generation of Schommers to continue the family's farming tradition, and the land will be available for agriculture forever. The land will also support wildlife habitat and clean water. The farmstead includes woodlots and two ravines which flow directly into the Big River, a Class I trout stream.

The addition of the Schommer Farm brings the total farmland protected by WWLT to nearly 5,000 acres.

For more information please visit: [www.wwlt.org](http://www.wwlt.org).

## Federal Funds for Farmland Protection

Since 2002, the Federal Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) has provided funds to purchase conservation easements on working farms.

The program is designed to protect prime agricultural land, and FRPP projects must meet a hefty set of eligibility requirements. Nationally, the program is most successful in places where established Purchase of Development Rights programs provide matching funds. Here in Wisconsin, the DNR, two counties, two towns and six land trusts have worked doggedly to combine this pool of federal money with state grants and private donations to protect important places in Wisconsin's rural landscape. To date, 10,800 acres in Wisconsin have been permanently protected using FRPP money.

At Gathering Waters Conservancy, we want FRPP to continue and to be even more accessible to land trusts than it is now. We are keeping close watch on two policy fronts that will affect the future of FRPP in Wisconsin.

- The 2007 Federal Farm Bill needs to include increased allocations for the FRPP program.
- A Statewide PDR program designed specifically to match FRPP requirements would attract many more of these federal dollars to Wisconsin than individual applicants do now. We support a Wisconsin agricultural PDR program, so long as it would not divert funds from the Stewardship Fund.

For additional information about current policy positions, visit our web page. The next time you drive past a picturesque Wisconsin farm, appreciate the land trusts working hard to keep that farm or farms like it on the map.

*"The land trusts with whom we work have great connections to the landowners and work hard to dovetail their conservation goals with FRPP requirements. When we close a deal, I know that farm will be available for agriculture AND be important conservation land for the long haul."*

– **Carl Wacker**,  
Wisconsin FRPP  
Coordinator, USDA

## Statewide PDR for Wisconsin?

Last year, the Working Lands Initiative Steering Committee, a group of advisors convened by the Secretary of Agriculture, concluded that current land use policies in Wisconsin should be, but are not, preventing the fragmentation of working farms.

A key component of that committee's recommendations was a statewide Purchase of Development Rights or "PDR" program that would provide matching grants to land trusts and local governments to buy the development rights on working farms. The goal of such a program would be to keep farmland and farming financially viable in Wisconsin communities.

A state PDR program would accomplish much:

- Offer farmers an alternative to selling land to developers by compensating farmers for protecting their land.
- Keep farmland in private ownership—by selling only development rights, landowners retain the ability to farm, lease, sell and bequeath the property.
- Keep farmland affordable as it is transferred from one generation to the next—the federal estate tax system includes generous benefits for land protected by conservation easements.

The program would also attract more federal money than Wisconsin land trusts can attract themselves. PDR grants would be eligible to match funds from USDA's Federal Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program. Wisconsin land trusts use this program now, but it has demanding eligibility requirements that are difficult to meet without a PDR program providing local matching funding.

Across the country 27 other states and over 50 local governments run PDR programs. They are well-tested tools. It's a natural fit that Wisconsin, a leader in the agricultural economy, might implement one. Supporters of the idea have worked to include a PDR program in the state budget this year. Cross your fingers! Better yet, call your representative.

**The Working Lands Initiative will host a series of public workshops on February 26, 27 and 28 to discuss how Purchase of Development Rights programs protect working lands.** For more information about those workshops, or the status of a PDR proposal in the state budget, visit the policy section of our web page: [www.gatheringwaters.org](http://www.gatheringwaters.org).



*photo courtesy of Driftless Area Land Conservancy*



## Office Notes



photo courtesy of the Department of Administration

### A Promising Political Landscape

Gathering Waters Conservancy has never been short on great public policy ideas. Unfortunately, the political climate at the Capitol in recent years has limited us to small, slow steps as conservation has not been a priority for many political leaders.

Since last November 7, however, our political landscape is a little brighter. The '06 election unseated vocal conservation opponents. With changes in legislative make-up and leadership, we can forward our agenda to protect, improve and expand state conservation programs with increased confidence.

We welcome your help – the state budget will be negotiated between February and July. As this newsletter goes to print, we can't anticipate the exact contents of those discussions. As you read this, however, the details of this budget cycle will be taking shape. Most importantly,

the Stewardship Fund may be up for reauthorization (see p. 3). We will likely see a proposal for a statewide Purchase of Development Rights Program (see p. 5). One way or another, conservation supporters will have opportunities for advocacy.

The land trust movement has tremendous political strength because of our grassroots, politically diverse membership. We may call on you to seize this opportunity – the best we have had in some time – to engage our lawmakers.

To learn about Gathering Waters policy agenda and track legislative activity, visit [www.gatheringwaters.org](http://www.gatheringwaters.org) and click on "Land Policy and Legislation."

~Althea Dotzour, Outreach and Policy Coordinator

### The View from Milwaukee

Last fall, Gathering Waters hired Natalie Easton to serve the Milwaukee County Conservation Coalition (MC3), an independently-funded project of Gathering Waters Conservancy. Natalie has updated the MC3 communications systems, convened regular coalition meetings, and researched funding options for the group.

She reports: "Though 'conservation' and 'environmental concern' may not be the first things Wisconsinites think of when they think 'Milwaukee County', we are a strong body of determined, active folks. MC3 is working to hone the efforts of this urban environmental community."

"MC3 is a coalition of individuals, environmental organizations, and neighborhood groups who have come together to speak with one voice about common environmental concerns. People intent on achieving a healthy environment in a thriving city face substantial challenges. Often, those who are most negatively affected by poor environmental quality are also those most alienated from the processes that determine that quality. MC3 will continue to work from the grassroots to include all community members with a stake in protecting valuable natural resources."

*Note: our MC3 Advocacy Coalition Coordinator is currently on maternity leave – congratulations, Natalie!*

### A Generous Endorsement

Gathering Waters Conservancy would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the Eugenie Mayer Bolz Family Foundation for their generous gift of a \$50,000 endowment to the organization. With this gift, Bob & Jack Bolz, both long-time supporters of GWC, will leave a lasting legacy for conservation in Wisconsin.

### Staff and Board News

*The end of an era.* **Bud Jordahl**, a founding member, past president and tireless supporter of Gathering Waters Conservancy finished his last term on our board in December. Bud's leadership has been fundamental to our successes. We're pleased to report that while Bud certainly earned his "retirement" from Gathering Waters, he is still engaged on board committees and with our Stewardship Reauthorization Campaign. We continue to be honored by his commitment to our organization and to Wisconsin conservation. Thank you, Bud!

**Natalie Easton** is on board to coordinate the Milwaukee County Conservation Coalition. Her background includes teaching philosophy, working for poverty- and homeless-relief programs and the Milwaukee State Public Defender's office.



Bud Jordahl



Natalie Easton



Julia Solomon



Aaron Ruesch

The fight against exotic species has gained a savvy strategist and skilled grant writer. **Julia Solomon** left Gathering Waters to become the Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator for UW Extension.

We also bid farewell to intern **Aaron Ruesch** who has joined the Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment (SAGE) to work on a new on-line forum, the "Earth Collaboratory."

*"My experience at Gathering Waters was that crucial 'first step' in joining the environmental community. It provided the exposure I needed to participate in an informed, conservation-minded dialogue. Go GWC!"*

~ Aaron Ruesch

## Inspiration for Breakfast: Highlighting a Milwaukee Area Success

*"It's important that innovative and effective land protection and partnership projects can be recognized and made available as models for replication in communities across the state."*  
~ Art Harrington, Gathering Waters Conservancy President

Taking our president's advice, Gathering Waters Conservancy hosted a breakfast at the Milwaukee Athletic Club last October to highlight innovative conservation programs in the Milwaukee area. The attending group of friends and supporters got an inside look into how unique public-private partnerships and the Stewardship Fund created the Mequon Nature Preserve.

Christine Nuernberg, mayor of Mequon, offered an inspiring account of how the Preserve, the brainchild of long-time Mequon resident Dick Paddock, was built through combined efforts of the City of Mequon, the Ozaukee Washington Land Trust and the Greater Milwaukee Foundation. Attorney John Lhost shared the details of Mequon's new Transfer of Development Rights program, which will complement the Preserve by concentrating development in areas where growth makes the most sense.

Gathering Waters Conservancy is proud to highlight conservation success in Wisconsin. We hope Mequon's example will seed other similar partnerships around the state.

~ Sara DeKok, Member Relations Director



Mequon  
Mayor Nuernberg

**Did you know** you can name Gathering Waters Conservancy, Inc. in your estate? For more information call 608.251.9131 x 10.

## Land Legacy Society

We deeply appreciate these distinguished benefactors and their dedication to Wisconsin's favorite places. As of January 2, 2007, our Land Legacy Society members are:

### \$10,000 and above

Alice Godfrey  
Terry & DiAnne Hatch  
Jean & Walter Meanwell

Peter Bemis  
Charles Boardman  
Robert & Anne Bolz  
Bob Brogan  
John Brogan  
Charlotte Palmer  
Phillips Foundation  
Peter & Joy Dohr  
Dale Druckrey  
Vicki Elkin & Mike Ivey  
Dan Erdman  
Kevin & Joan Evanich  
Jerry Frautschi &  
Pleasant Rowland  
Scott Froehle  
Beatrice Gallagher  
John Gehl  
Joy & Rob Gottschalk  
Chuck & Jill Haubrich  
John & Colleen Holmbeck  
Charlie & Carol James  
Harold "Bud" Jordahl  
Geoffrey Maclay  
Tuck & Peggie Mallery  
Howard & Nancy Mead

Luigi Mumford  
Marilynn Myers  
Bill O'Connor & Krista Roys  
Lorain Olsen  
Bill & Betty Parsons  
Jeff Patterson  
Arline Paunack  
John Edward Porter  
Lew & Vicki Posekany  
Richard Ring  
Mary & Tom Rolfs  
Gerald Scholz  
Eric & Jane Schumann  
David & Kate Simon  
Margaret Van Alstyne  
Gail & Willi Van Haren  
Joyce Vande Bunt  
Anthony & Linda Warren  
Frank & Mariana Weinhold  
Nancy Winter  
John & Cindi Woollam  
Meagan Yost  
Margaret Ziegler  
Ziegler Family  
Foundation Fund

### \$2,500 - \$4,999

Francis Beidler III  
Linda Bochert  
Tom & Carol Ehram  
Arthur Harrington  
Walter & Stacey Meanwell  
Joan & Peter Ziegler

### \$1,000 - \$2,499

Anonymous  
Bruce Adreani  
Andy Baltins  
Darrell Bazzell

**For information about endowment gifts, the Land Legacy Society, or giving in any form to Gathering Waters Conservancy, please contact Sara DeKok, Member Relations Director at 608.251.9131 x 10.**

## A Unique Giving Opportunity

Congress recently enacted new legislation creating an attractive tax incentive for making charitable gifts from IRA accounts. Donors can now support Gathering Waters Conservancy using distributions from their retirement accounts tax free.

This unique opportunity is a great way to support Gathering Waters Conservancy, but it is only available through 2007. Here are more details:

- Donors must be 70 ½ or older.
- Tax free contributions can be up to \$100,000.
- Any amounts, up to the \$100,000 maximum, donated in this manner count toward the IRA minimum distribution requirement for the year.
- Gifts must be transferred directly to the qualified charities from IRA or rollover IRA accounts.

To take advantage of this opportunity and make a contribution to Gathering Waters Conservancy with IRA funds normally subject to taxation, call your IRA custodian to arrange for a direct transfer.

## Thank You

**Joy Stieglitz Gottschalk** for many dedicated hours of work as chair of the Executive Director Hiring Committee

**Geoff Maclay** for hosting Vicki and Liz in Milwaukee

**Mel Raatz & Dave Steiro** for help with Assessors presentation

**Ed Ritger & the Sheboygan Area Estate Planning Council**

**Daniel Mortensen** for making awards stands

**1000 Friends of Wisconsin** for recognizing Wisconsin Land Trusts

**John Lhost & Christine Nuernberg** for speaking at the Milwaukee breakfast

**John Torinus** for co-hosting our Awards Celebration

**Bill Sieger** for donating pictures of Parade of Preserves field trips

**Mississippi Valley Conservancy** for photos and **Robin Chapman** for her poem in our Thanksgiving card

**Sonya Newenhouse** for photography at our Awards Celebration

**Brenda Haskins** for answering Ask an Attorney question in Currents

**Kim Wright** for participating in Executive Director interviews

**Bill Pielsticker, Cate Harrington, & Jeff Hastings** for photos for the new Stewardship brochure

# crosscurrents

a newsletter to serve the land conservation  
community of Wisconsin



211 S. Paterson St., Suite 270  
Madison, WI 53703

[www.gatheringwaters.org](http://www.gatheringwaters.org)

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. postage  
PAID  
Merrill, WI  
Permit No. 24

## As Seen on TV!

Gathering Waters Conservancy has been working with Wisconsin Public Television to develop a series of television segments on land trusts. In this series WPT highlighted land trust activity on the Bois Brule River, in Chippewa, Bayfield and Door Counties and, most recently, a show on land trusts in Milwaukee. Featured on the show *In Wisconsin*, which airs on WPT Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. and Sundays at 5:30 p.m., the segments are also available for viewing online. Visit our webpage for a link.



## Honoring Conservation Leaders: A Call for Nominations



It's true that our Awards Celebration is months away, but it's already time to collect nominations for our Land Conservation Leadership Awards. The awards recognize outstanding accomplishments of individuals, policy makers, and land trusts who work together to conserve the places that make Wisconsin special.

The awards honor the power of committed citizens and offer inspiring examples of conservation success. Visit our webpage for descriptions of past winners. We are seeking nominations for:

- Land Trust of the Year**
- Policy Maker of the Year**
- Conservationist of the Year and/or Lifetime Achievement Award**

We invite you to nominate an individual or a land trust that has demonstrated leadership protecting Wisconsin's natural resources. For nomination forms and more information about our awards, visit our website: [www.gatheringwaters.org/awards](http://www.gatheringwaters.org/awards).

The deadline for all nominations is May 26.