

July 1, 2009–June 30, 2010

2010

annual report



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www.gatheringwaters.org
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From the Executive Director

I've written in the past about the work we do here at Gathering Waters that falls in-between the headlines. As I read in this Annual Report the necessarily brief summaries of last year's highlights, I'm reminded again how important those interstitial spaces really are.

Obviously, the headlines represent months of many cumulative efforts. For instance, we plan for the Wisconsin Land Trust Retreat for seven months. Our support for Wisconsin's first state-funded Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement Program engages at least one of our staff every week.

But when I look back on a successful year, I see that our organization's momentum is carried by daily communications and tasks that never make headlines.

Some recent examples help illustrate my point. On August 4th, President Obama's America's Great Outdoors Initiative held a listening session in Minneapolis. We sent word through our online network that the session would be an excellent opportunity to communicate the critical and growing role land trusts play in land conservation, and to suggest improvements to federal programs funding land trusts' work. We held a statewide conference call to share talking points we and our friends at the Land Trust Alliance prepared. Armed with those comments, we then sent our staff to the session to represent Wisconsin land trusts.

We recognized that many land trusts across Wisconsin can't afford to send someone to Minneapolis. Acting on their behalf, we at Gathering Waters can. We can also track the White House's initiative, looking for the opportunity to reinforce our case for the importance of land trusts. We'll report back to them. And if there's a time when our member land trusts need to be there themselves, we'll be sure to equip them.

In fact, our work equips land trusts everyday. One land trust called last winter asking about how to improve their board of directors' manual. Our staff shared her inquiry with a few targeted land trust leaders, collected several examples, and provided an annotated set of sample documents within a week. We included one of the samples in the next edition of our electronic newsletter, and in response, four other organizations wrote to thank us for valuable and timely advice.

Although land trusts don't close The Big Land Deal because of our e-newsletter, our staff's participation in the listening session did not directly protect any more acres of Wisconsin, and neither the newsletter nor the listening session will earn mention on our list of annual highlights, they are still vital and consistently well-received services that define our core programming.

We are proud that our ambassadorship makes land trusts stronger, better funded, and better known. We're engaged in that kind of ambassadorship every week as we act as on-call consultants and resource librarians, connecting Wisconsin land trusts to the wisdom of their peers nationwide.

No other organization in Wisconsin provides the same day-in, day-out service to land trusts.

So, thank you. Your contributions support our headline successes. Perhaps more importantly, your support of all the effort behind them is what makes Gathering Waters a unique and essential asset to Wisconsin land trusts. You are helping people protect Wisconsin's special places.



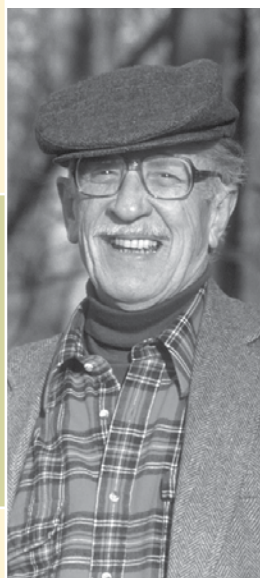
Michael Strigel, Executive Director

Bud's Legacy

In the weeks following the passing of Gathering Waters founder Harold "Bud" Jordahl we received several donations in his memory. Over the years, Bud asked that several of his own gifts to Gathering Waters, which were many and generous, support our internship program. To honor his commitment to mentoring tomorrow's conservation leaders, those memorial gifts have also been earmarked as support for Gathering Waters' internship program.

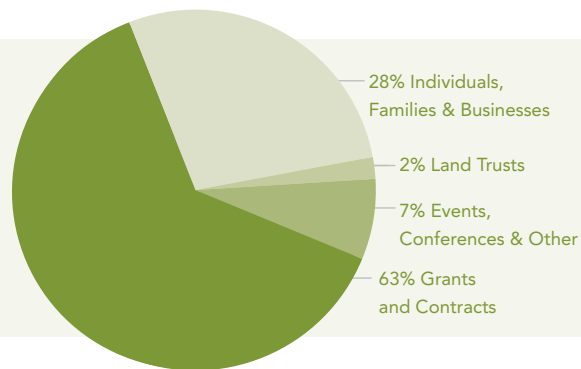
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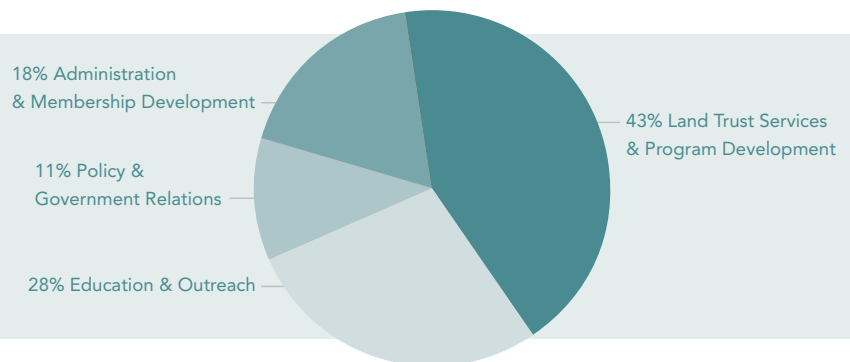


Gifts made in memory of Bud Jordahl will be used to fund GWC's internship program.

FY 2010 Income \$664,536



FY 2010 Expenses \$718,167



Balance Sheet

	June 30, 2010	June 30, 2009
Assets		
Cash and investments	\$ 508,258	\$ 505,800
Unconditional promises to give	86,631	193,300
Other	11,143	9,600
Total Assets	\$ 606,032	\$ 708,700
Less		
Liabilities	46,442	39,700
Temporarily restricted net assets	152,250	208,100
Unrestricted net assets	\$ 407,340	\$ 460,900

Land Legacy Society

We are grateful for the leadership of the following contributors:

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the Blog

for Wisconsin land trusts

We publish a newsletter just three times a year, but we update our blog several times a month. There, you can get a glimpse of what we're up to anytime, from anywhere. It's news and musings on the latest in land conservation.

Read how we're helping protect Wisconsin the rest of the year at www.wisconsinlandtrusts.org.

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The Holland Sand Prairie, forever protected by the Mississippi Valley Conservancy

Fiscal Year 2010 Highlights

Stewardship Rulemaking Stamina After almost two years of public process, NR-52, the administrative rule governing public use of lands purchased with Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Funds, became law on August 1, 2010. In the preceding year, Gathering Waters staff informed, advised, negotiated, and advocated on behalf of land trusts. We equipped participants in public listening sessions, kept land trusts and our supporters informed and engaged. The rulemaking process divided conservation supporters, at times deeply. Gathering Waters remained a solution-oriented advocate for a program flexible enough to protect places important to Wisconsin communities. We are proud to have been at the table to craft the compromise that became the final rule. We are even more pleased, with expanded funding of the Stewardship Program starting July 1 this year, to help land trusts work with the revised rule to permanently protect many more of Wisconsin's special places.

Protecting Wisconsin Farmland With the Working Lands Initiative passed into law, we spent the last year acting as liaison between the land trust community and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, as the agency built Wisconsin's first program to purchase conservation easements on working farms. With our partner, American Farmland Trust, we have maintained www.wisconsinfarmland.org, a clearinghouse of resources, status updates, and inspiring stories related to the Working Lands Initiative's land conservation programs.

The 2010 Wisconsin Land Trust Retreat Our signature event—part conference, part celebration, all fun—was the largest to date. We educated, fed, and celebrated land trusts' staff and boards. This year's retreat featured conversations about working land protection, the ever-complicated legal landscape in which land trusts work, board governance, and much more. This is the only statewide event dedicated to the concerns of the land trust community, and we, again, offered it at no charge to participants.

Delivering GIS Resources to Lake Michigan Basin Land Trusts The 10 member land trusts of the Lake Michigan Shorelands Alliance (LMSA) have created a powerful new outreach and planning tool. Last year, we collected data from almost countless sources and contracted mapping experts at the Trust for Public Land to create maps of each organizations' service area and the entire basin. These detailed maps reflect where permanent land conservation will provide recreational opportunities, protect critical working lands, safeguard surface water quality, and protect irreplaceable wildlife habitat. This project laid the groundwork for an expanded, interactive mapping tool coming to LMSA land trusts next year.

On Call, Online & On the Road A staff meeting last fall revealed that in a single week, our 6 staff had been in contract with 11 land trusts. That's typical. We logged thousands of miles on Wisconsin roads visiting the organizations we serve. We conducted comprehensive organizational assessments, delivered customized fundraising trainings, offered a land trust board orientation, a capacity-building workshop, and more. We are land trusts' reference library: last year we delivered answers about directors and officers insurance, corporate donor campaigns, and easement monitoring procedures, to name a only a few examples. On the phone, on the road, and online via a revised email newsletter, social media sites, a web-based technical forum and a soon-to-be launched new website, we strived last year, as always, to keep apace with the expanding needs of the land trust movement.

Land Trust and Conservation Organization Members

- Baird Creek Preservation Foundation
- Baraboo Range Preservation Association
- Bayfield Regional Conservancy
- Caledonia Conservancy
- Cedar Lakes Conservation Foundation
- Chippewa County Land Conservancy
- Couderay Waters Regional Land Trust
- The Conservation Fund
- *Door County Land Trust
- Driftless Area Land Conservancy
- Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy
- Geneva Lake Conservancy
- Glacial Lakes Conservancy
- Green Lake Conservancy Foundation
- Green-Rock Audubon Society
- Half Moon Lake Conservancy
- Ice Age Trail Alliance
- Kenosha/Racine Land Trust
- Kettle Moraine Land Trust
- Kinnickinnic River Land Trust
- Land Trust Network of Jefferson County
- Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve
- Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy
- *Mississippi Valley Conservancy
- Natural Heritage Land Trust
- The Nature Conservancy
- North Central Conservancy Trust
- Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust
- Northwoods Land Trust
- Ozaukee Washington Land Trust
- The Ridges Sanctuary
- River Revitalization Foundation
- Riverland Conservancy
- Standing Cedars Community Land Conservancy
- Tall Pines Conservancy
- The Prairie Enthusiasts
- Town of Dunn
- Waukesha County Land Conservancy
- West Wisconsin Land Trust

**Thank you to the organizations who fulfilled their final pledge commitments to GWC's Stewardship Campaign in the 2010 fiscal year.*



The Sturgeon Bay Ship Canal Preserve protected by the Door County Land Trust. Photo courtesy of Philip Hinkle



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we help people
protect the places
that make
Wisconsin special

Thank you. For fifteen years, Gathering Waters has pursued our mission confidently thanks to the reliable support of people who care about land in Wisconsin. In July, just after the close of the fiscal year that this report reflects, the Board of Directors of Gathering Waters sat down to craft the organization's next three year strategic plan. It is an exciting project to chart the course of this ambitious organization, and satisfying to know we can be so ambitious because of our faithful contributors. You are helping people protect Wisconsin's special places. Thank you for your continued support.

Chris Hughes, Board President

Gathering Waters Conservancy's Board of Directors Standing, from left to right: Terry Hatch, Joy Stieglitz Gottschalk, Chris Hughes, Kimberly Gleffe, Rita Hayen, Ellen Kwiatkowski, Bill Berry, Nelson French, Peter Dohr. **Kneeling:** Eric Schumann, Shawn Graff, Tim Jacobson. (Not pictured: Darrell Bazzell, Alice Godfrey, Art Harrington, Randall Lawton, Ben Niemann, Tia Nelson)

