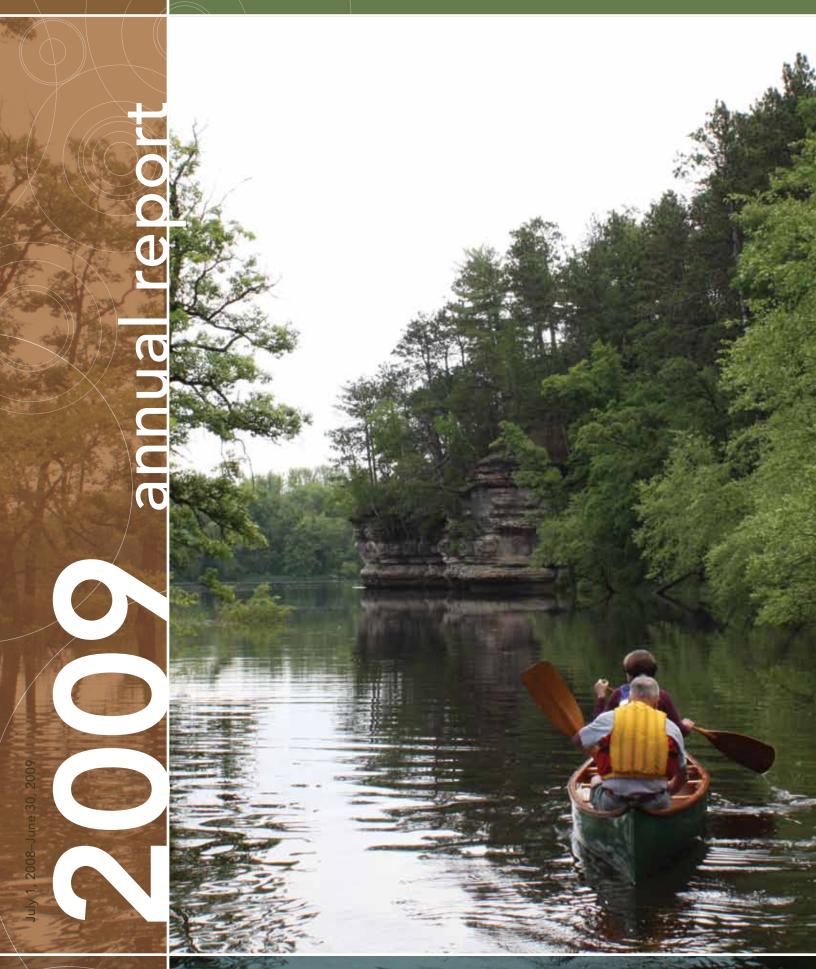
gathering waters conservancy



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Gathering Waters Conservancy 211 S. Paterson St., Suite 270 Madison, WI 53703 www.gatheringwaters.org 608.251.9131

From the Executive Director

Friends and colleagues have asked me in the last year how Gathering Waters Conservancy has weathered the economic climate. They asked cautiously, eyebrows raised suggesting sympathy. They assumed that inquiring about the financial health of a non-profit was going to bring up bad news. Not at all.

Gathering Waters Conservancy is thriving. That's a very satisfying announcement for this executive director to make, but I can't take too much credit for our success. Nor can I claim that we had some clever or unique strategy to pull through a financial downturn (although we do have a first-rate, creative staff). Gathering Waters is thriving because in this, our 15th year, our mission is relevant and our supporters



Michael Strigel, Executive Director

concur: land conservation is an essential service to Wisconsin communities and land trusts are powerful service providers.

This annual report reflects a year of investing in land trusts' potential. We helped Wisconsin pass into law a significant farmland conservation program, one which will channel resources to land trusts and will need land trust partners to be most effective. Through our Great Lake Gatherings, we created opportunities for land trusts in Wisconsin's Lake Michigan Basin to make connections with hundreds of community leaders through the Great Lake Gatherings. We welcomed Wisconsin land trusts to the best-attended Wisconsin Land Trust meeting to strategize the movements' support of the Stewardship Fund, the Working Lands Initiative, land trusts' approach to accreditation and more.

As this report shows, many of you helped us make that investment in land trusts' astounding potential. Thank you. You've done more than simply keep a non-profit's doors open. Your investment in Wisconsin land trusts last year helped us lay the groundwork for big programs ahead. In our 16th year, you'll see us pursuing many opportunities to make land trusts stronger. Some highlights in the coming year will include:

Educating land trusts and local governments about the tools best suited to working lands protection to ensure that the new Working Lands Initiative can boast standard-setting farmland protection projects in its first few years.

Positioning the land trusts of the Lake Michigan Basin to help direct federal money from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to strategic land conservation in Wisconsin.

Delivering resources to the several Wisconsin land trusts planning to apply for Accreditation by 2011.

Expanding our outreach on behalf of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund to galvanize public awareness of its value to all Wisconsin communities.

As our first 15 years come to a close, I am inspired. The returns on our collective investment in land conservation have been impressive. We are energized by successes, we feel well equipped by our committed members, and we're motivated by the growing, vibrant land trust community we serve. I hope you feel the same.

15 Years of Supporting Wisconsin Conservation

2009 marks Gathering Waters Conservancy's 15th year. To honor the achievements of the land trust movement in our first 15 years, and to ensure that we have the resources to strengthen Wisconsin's land trusts over the next 15 and beyond, we've launched our 15th Anniversary Campaign.

The keystone of the campaign is an opportunity for 15 donors to give \$15,000 or more. We're honored that the Forest County Potawatomi Community Foundation contributed a generous lead gift to the campaign. In addition to the Potawatomi's generous pledge, we have secured just over half of our 15-donor goal.

In addition to the contributors to our 15^{th} Anniversary Campaign, we also recognize the generous and loyal support of members who have given significant cumulative support to Gathering Waters Conservancy throughout our 15 years—our Hall of Fame. Their commitment to Wisconsin land conservation has had an indelible effect on the future of our state's natural resources. Thank you.

The 15th Anniversary Campaign will run through the end of this calendar year. If you are interested in being one of our campaign supporters, please contact Mike Strigel, Executive Director, at mike@gatheringwaters.org or call 608.251.9131 x 14.

15th Anniversary Campaign **Contributors**

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Gathering Waters Conservancy's Hall of Fame: 15 Years of Giving

\$75,000+

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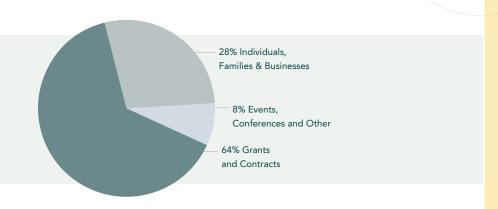
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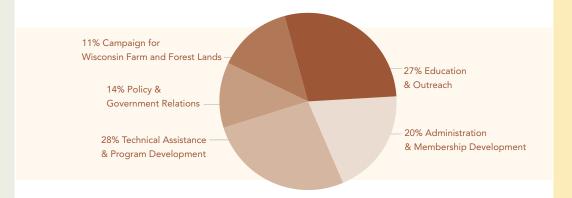
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Wisconsin Energy Foundation

FY 2009 Income \$786,000



FY 2009 Expenses \$744,000



operating surplus: \$42,000*

Balance Sheet		
	June 30, 2009	June 30, 2008
Assets		
Cash and investments	\$ 505,800	\$ 429,300
Unconditional promises to give	\$ 193,300	\$ 412,100
Other	\$ 9,600	\$ 12,600
Total Assets	\$ 708,700	\$ 854,000
Less		
Liabilities	\$ 39,700	\$ 25,400
Temporarily restricted net assets	\$ 208,100	\$ 409,700
Unrestricted net assets	\$ 460,900	\$ 418,900

^{*}We're proud of this surplus and grateful to our donors for your commitment to the land trust movement. With your continuing support and our ongoing efforts to serve land trusts as efficiently as we can, we're looking forward to the year ahead. Thank you.

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Thank you to the individuals and organizations who fulfilled pledge installments to our 3-year Stewardship Campaign in the 2009 fiscal year. All contributors are recognized in dark brown.

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Fiscal Year 2009 Highlights:

Great Lake Gatherings With the Lake Michigan Shorelands Alliance (LMSA), the ten land trusts in Wisconsin's Lake Michigan Basin, Gathering Waters organized four large community forums on conservation priorities. In Green Bay, Sheboygan, Mequon and Milwaukee, the Gatherings introduced hundreds of attendees, including elected officials, philanthropists, corporate and community leaders, conservationists and more to the land trusts and the ways in which their work benefits basin communities. The momentum of those Great Lake Gatherings earned LMSA an invitation to the Johnson Foundation's Wingspread Conference Center in Racine to strategize how LMSA can attract leadership and resources to critical land conservation.

A State Commitment to Working Lands American Farmland Trust wanted to invest in the growing momentum for a state-wide farmland protection program, so they turned to Gathering Waters Conservancy and our earned reputation as an effective, solution-oriented advocate for conservation policy. Gathering Waters and AFT ran a successful grassroots campaign to see the Working Lands Initiative become law. The new program includes opportunities for land trusts and local government to match state dollars to purchase easements on working farms.

The 2009 Midwest Land Trust Conference The Midwest Office of the Land Trust Alliance also turned to Gathering Waters last year to cohost their regional Land Conservation Conference. Gathering Waters helped build the program and bring expert presenters and keynote speakers to the best-ever attended meeting of its kind.

The 2009 Wisconsin Land Trust Meeting Last March, board and staff from more than half of Wisconsin's land trusts lined the walls in a standing-room-only meeting. They came to boast about projects and forecast needs that Gathering Waters can help address. They came to discuss strategy for seeing the Working Lands Initiative passed. They shared with our government relations staff success stories and suggestions to improve Knowles-Nelson Stewardship grants. This annual meeting—the best peer-to-peer learning opportunity of the year—continues to be a keystone of our service to Wisconsin land trusts.

Our Continuing Commitment to the Stewardship Fund

Since the Stewardship Fund's reauthorization in the 2007 state budget, Gathering Waters has represented land trusts in a year-long administrative rule making process. Our staff served on an advisory committee as the DNR crafted new rules about public access on land purchased with Knowles-Nelson Stewardship grants. We continue to invest in communication with land trusts and DNR leadership to ensure that the Stewardship Program continues to help Wisconsin communities protect their most important natural lands.

Land Trust and Conservation Organization Members

Baraboo Range Preservation Association

Caledonia Conservancy

Door County Land Trust

Driftless Area Land Conservancy

Drumlin Area Land Trust

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IX: . I . . D. I IT

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Thank you to the individuals and organizations who fulfilled pledge installments to our 3-year Stewardship Campaign in the 2009 fiscal year. All contributors are recognized in dark brown.





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we help people
protect the places
that make
Wisconsin special

"We began Gathering Waters hoping to provide a boost to an eager group of new land trusts. I look at the land trust movement in Wisconsin today and am amazed: it's bigger and more influential than I think any of us imagined."

Robert Chambers, Gathering Waters Conservancy's Founding President

Gathering Waters Conservancy's founding board • From left to right, Harold "Bud" Jordahl, Robert Chambers, Jean Meanwell, Bill O'Connor & Geoff Maclay



