



### Gathering Waters Conservancy Hosts Celebration of Wisconsin Land Conservation Leaders

It isn't often that land conservation leaders from the four corners of the state are able to come together to meet and mingle and celebrate common successes. Just such an opportunity took place on a lovely evening in September at Monona Terrace in Madison for Gathering Waters Conservancy's second annual Awards Celebration. Nearly 300 people signed up for the event, and the evening was full of fun and laughter. "I couldn't believe how many people I didn't get a chance to talk to," was a lament of the evening.

Gathering Waters Conservancy's Land Conservation Leadership Awards Celebration helps bring champions of land conservation together to celebrate recent accomplishments. It also provides the opportunity to re-connect to a larger movement and to share success stories we can all celebrate.

This year, we had a particularly exciting diversity of award winners (see page six for details on these terrific groups). Land conservation issues are so often seen as contentious and combative. These award winners demonstrate opportunities where groups working together, working within their communities and forming unique partnerships, have resulted in projects that make everyone feel proud. They project a common message of creativity and partnerships that others can model in the future.

Gathering Waters Conservancy Executive Director Vicki Elkin and event co-hosts Curt Meine and Jean Meanwell led the program and introduced the four award winners. The Conservationist of the Year award was given to the Native American communities who purchased the Crandon Mine site on the Wolf River, and both Gus Frank and Tina Van Zile gave particularly moving speeches about the decades-long fight to save the Wolf River.

A silent auction containing almost 60 items ensured that attendees went home with winnings from a canoe to one-of-a-kind art work to tricycles to vacation packages. The atmosphere was warm as friends old and new shared stories and forged new bonds. Next year's Awards Celebration will take place the night before the start of the National Land Trust Rally in Madison on Thursday, October 13, 2005. Mark your calendars now!

*Keep your eyes peeled for people and groups to nominate for next year's award celebration. Nominations can be mailed to Gathering Waters Conservancy at any time, and official nomination forms will be mailed out and available online in the spring.*

*I was inspired by the company of so many people committed to conserving Wisconsin's land resources. The award ceremony celebrated the power of imaginative collaboration combined with the persistence to make things happen.*  
~ Kristin Girvin Redman



From top:  
Jane Wiley and Justice Anne Bradley, Darrell Bazzell and Katie Beilfuss, Madison Mayor Dave Cieslewicz

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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.

### **Gathering Waters Conservancy**

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## **From the Executive Director's Desk...**

Gathering Waters Conservancy's phone has been ringing off the hook lately – and many of these calls are coming from our friends and colleagues in neighboring states and from as far away as California, Texas, North Carolina, and New England.

These folks are increasingly looking to Gathering Waters Conservancy for advice, guidance and inspiration, and they point to our innovative programs, leadership on the policy front, and impressive growth over the past ten years. While we've been hard at work here in Wisconsin, Gathering Waters Conservancy has become the largest state land trust support organization in the country and a leader in the national land trust movement.

Here in the Midwest, land trusts in Michigan have come together to form Heart of the Lakes Center for Land Conservation Policy, inspired by Gathering Waters' successful efforts on policy issues.

"Our name might not be quite as poetic as yours, but we wanted to continue the theme of referring to waters in this beautiful Great Lakes region," explains Tom Bailey, the Executive Director of the Little Traverse Conservancy. "Needless to say, we have a lot to learn from you. Thanks for setting a wonderful example for us to follow!"

Andy Loza, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association (PALTA), calls Gathering Waters "the strongest state program in the country." I recently met with Andy and his Board President to share ideas to help them expand their programs and grow their organization. Andy thanked us for our "great work and showing the way to land trust service centers in other states."

PALTA is also one of several organizations using *In Their Own Words*, our collection of award winning stories written by landowners, as a model. "We are reshaping the final installments of our Stories of Land and People series into an *In Their Own Words* for Pennsylvania. Thanks for blazing the way," said Andy. We've heard similar comments from our colleagues in California, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Washington State, among others.

Rupert Friday of the Rhode Island Land Trust Council summed up what we've heard from many others. Rupert called recently to ask about our process for working with land trusts to assess their organizational needs.

"I wanted to develop an organizational assessment tool for land trusts, and you've done it! I wanted to pull together landowner stories, and you've done it! You're a model for the rest of us, and I appreciate all your help," he said.

Of course, Gathering Waters Conservancy's success would not be possible without the wonderful work of Wisconsin's 55 land trusts, an enlightened, conservation-minded citizenry, and the generous support of our members and sponsors. We are especially fortunate to receive grants from several foundations and government agencies that support our more innovative initiatives.

Thanks to all for helping make Gathering Waters Conservancy a national leader and a model for other states.

Vicki Elkin

## **Gathering Waters' office has moved...but not far**

*If you come to Madison to visit Gathering Waters Conservancy's headquarters, you'll have to walk a few more feet down the hall to find us. In the past six years, Gathering Waters has grown from a staff of one to a staff of five full-time, two part-time and two interns. In October, we moved into a larger office to fit our growing needs.*

Big thanks are due to Sandy Gordon from Gordon Interiors for volunteering time to help us identify a lovely palate of colors for the new office. We are also working to incorporate our new logo into the space. Our contact information remains the same.

### **Wish List**

*Now that we have the conference room we've been hoping for, we need a conference table and chairs to fill it! If you have some to donate or would like to contribute toward the purchase of these items of furniture, please let us know. We're anxious to put this space to good use!*

*Other items on our wish list include a microwave oven, rugs, color laser printer and plants to add green life to the office.*

## Gathering Waters Conservancy Helps Local Land Trusts Protect *Landscapes of Opportunity*

At Gathering Waters Conservancy, our first objective is to help Wisconsin's 55 land trusts maximize their grass roots energy to protect the best of what remains of Wisconsin's natural landscapes. This is the impetus behind our Partners in Preservation initiative.

A couple of years ago, Gathering Waters Conservancy brought together the eight Wisconsin land trusts operating in the Lake Michigan Basin—from the tip of the Door County peninsula to our border with Illinois—to develop a coordinated strategy for protecting the most critical lands near the shoreline or along rivers and streams that flow into the Lake.

The results have been exciting and promising. Last year, Gathering Waters Conservancy convened a conservation planning summit involving the local land trusts and their major conservation partners—The Nature Conservancy, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Fish and Wildlife Service, Wisconsin Coastal Management, the Oneida Nation, the University, regional planning agencies and others. The task of the group was to compile all the conservation plans that had been prepared for the region and then identify the most critical resources in need of protection. We specifically asked participants to identify places where local land trusts should focus their efforts.

What resulted was **Landscapes of Opportunity**—a plan identifying 18 priority conservation sites up and down the watershed—places like Red Banks and Gilson Creek near Green Bay, Brussels Hill and Gardner Swamp in Door County, the Peshtigo Harbor Marsh and the North Branch of the Milwaukee River. These include some of the most beautiful, pristine places left along and near Lake Michigan as well as places under heavy use and threatened by suburban sprawl. Land trusts are now hard at work on protection of these sites.

Thanks to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, and the Ziegler Foundation for funding this effort. If you are interested in reviewing the **Landscapes of Opportunity** report or in learning more about our efforts to help land trusts leverage their resources by engaging in regional collaboration, contact Gathering Waters at 608.251.9131.



We have started a new tradition at Gathering Waters Conservancy. Every week each staff person writes down a couple of inspiring, successful, motivating, or just plain good things that happened during the week. Then we share these bits of inspiration at our staff meetings. The purpose is to keep everyone updated on the great things that are happening, thus giving us something to tell other folks that are interested in knowing what's going on at GWC. Here are some recent highlights:

### A Respected Voice at the State Capitol

Governor Doyle recently named 2005 the Year of Land Conservation! This will add a level of focus and importance to our work next year, specifically our efforts to rejuvenate support for the state Stewardship Fund.

### In Their Own Words making waves

Participants at the Land Trust Alliance's National Land Trust Council meeting loved In Their Own Words. There were many requests for additional copies and now, thanks to our example, In Their Own Words projects are underway in California, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania and Washington State.

### A Helping Hand for Land Trusts

Gathering Waters' Northwest Wisconsin Partners in Preservation meeting in Trego saw A HUGE turnout! One participant said "We're very grateful to GWC for coming up to do this project in this region of the state. It's a great service and opportunity for us 'Northerners.'"



Lake Michigan Shorelands Alliance partners met last fall to develop a plan for ensuring that local comprehensive plans reflect the priorities of Landscapes of Opportunity.

## February Festivities Ahead...the 2005 Land Trust Staff Retreat is on the Horizon.

Our sixth annual Land Trust Staff Retreat is already on our calendar. Mark yours! February 17th and 18th 2005 at the Cedar Valley Retreat Center in West Bend.

Throughout the year, our conversations with land trust practitioners across the state feed the hopper of program ideas for this annual event. In the next month, we will actively collect input from Wisconsin Land Trust staff: What material and information do land trusts need from Gathering Waters? What successes can you share with other land trusts in the state? What lessons? So far, topics on our draft agenda include:

- Peer-to-peer sharing about conservation subdivision programs
- The Executive Director Tool Kit—a discussion specifically for directors about their roles as employees of the board and employers of other paid staff
- A State policy update from our lobbyists and an introduction to our new "Safeguard the Stewardship Fund Kit"
- Tips about how to make "The Big Ask" with fund raising consultant David Allen
- A Deal Doctor round table—bring questions about a particularly complicated transactions to your peers for their brainstormed solutions
- The First Annual Statewide Land Trust Dessert Potluck

We welcome input about program content for the 2005 event. You are encouraged to contact Pam Foster Felt with your ideas and requests. After a day of informative discussions, Thursday night, we'll prepare our own meal and share stories and company in the turn-of-the-century log house on the retreat grounds. So, wax your skis, pray for snow in Kettle Moraine Country, and save the date.

*Pam Foster Felt, Gathering Waters' Training Programs Coordinator can be reached at 608-251-9131 x11 or [pfelt@gatheringwaters.org](mailto:pfelt@gatheringwaters.org)*

*Dan Burke, Rick Gauger, Gathering Waters' Program Director Karen Bassler and Christine Thisted from last year's retreat. Don't miss out on this year's fun!*



## Thank yous

Vicki Blank for continuing to volunteer with GIS projects after her internship was complete!

Sandy Gordon for office decorating advice for our new office.

Mayes Wilson Associates for their commitment to sponsor the 2005 Staff Retreat.

For help in the Land Conservation Leadership Awards Celebration: Nancy Zucker for designing the invitation, Nancy Kendrick for help setting up the auction, and Richard Barloga and Dirk Wilhelm for helping us load the canoe on the lucky winner's car after the Celebration.

For help with the November 18 Board Leadership Seminar, Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett, Marilyn Goris and Susan Slocum for helping with logistics for this event and planning retreats for the Milwaukee County Conservation Coalition, Jeff Strobel, again, for his fast, fabulous, and free work on the brochure for this event.

## Best Wishes Cynthia!

Gathering Waters Conservancy's board member Cynthia Olmstead has left her position on the board and as executive director for the Mississippi Valley Conservancy. Cynthia served as the chair of Gathering Waters' policy committee and helped coordinate the successful effort to protect the Stewardship Fund from legislative cuts. We wish Cynthia all the best as she charts a new course doing development work for Waldorf schools in southwest Wisconsin.

## Upcoming Events in 2005

• We are excited to announce that Governor Doyle has named 2005 "The Year of Land Conservation".

• It is also the 15th anniversary of the Stewardship Fund.

• Early in 2005, Gathering Waters Conservancy and The Nature Conservancy are organizing a small invitation-only gathering at the Johnson Foundation's Wingspread Center in Racine to begin discussions about extending the Stewardship Fund beyond 2010.

• Gathering Waters Conservancy is organizing a series of accredited training programs for professionals on land conservation issues including attorneys and appraisers.

• Gathering Waters Conservancy's third annual Land Conservation Awards Celebration will take place the evening of Thursday October 13, at Monona Terrace in Madison. Mark your calendars now.

• Madison will host Land Trust Alliance's National Rally. Rally is the largest land conservation event in the country, packed with workshops, seminars, field trips and an impressive line up of speakers. What an opportunity to promote the work of Wisconsin's land trusts.

Stay tuned for more details, and let us know if you have names to add to the invitation lists for these events.

# New Land Legacy Society Picks up the Pace of Land Conservation

You, too, can pick up the pace of conservation in Wisconsin by joining Gathering Waters Conservancy's Land Legacy Society. The Land Legacy Society, powered by a generous matching gift, is accelerating the pace of conservation throughout the state. Help shake the matching money tree by joining today! You can become a charter member of the Land Legacy Society with your annual gift of \$1,000 or more. Benefits of joining the Land Legacy Society include:

- Quarterly newsletters and invitations to all Gathering Waters Conservancy events
- Society member-only festivities, including field trips, special receptions and gatherings at the homes of Gathering Waters Conservancy board members
- Special updates on programs and policy efforts
- Recognition in publications and Land Legacy Society literature
- Opportunities for one-on-one meetings with staff and board members

*Join the Society before January, and you will be invited to a special kick-off event at the stunning new Overture Center for the Arts in Madison on January 20. To discuss giving options or to learn more about the Land Legacy Society, contact Gathering Waters Conservancy's Executive Director Vicki Elkin at 608.251.9131 x14.*

*"Through our membership in the Land Legacy Society, Ted and I are investing in the future our three boys will inherit." ~ Julie Gallagher Rolfs*



## Gathering Waters Conservancy proposes new Working Lands Protection Program for Wisconsin

Working lands are a vital part of Wisconsin's economy, culture and natural heritage. Family farms and forests are, however, under threat due to increasing development pressures.

Gathering Waters Conservancy has been invited by Wisconsin's Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection to submit a proposal for a Working Lands Protection Program that would protect Wisconsin's best and most productive farmlands and forests. This proposal is currently under review (no promises!), but we thought we would share it with you to show how we work with policy makers to create programs that benefit Wisconsin's private land conservation movement.

The proposed Working Lands Protection Program would complement the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund by providing matching grants to land trusts and local governments to purchase the development rights on working farms and forest lands. Ideally, this program would permanently protect roughly 10,000 acres of our best and most vulnerable farmlands and forests each year while keeping them in private ownership.

Local governments often need outside help as they consider setting up a purchase of development rights program. One component of our proposal establishes a technical assistance program to provide local governments with the technical and legal information they need.

Farmers and land owners who may be interested in donating their development rights can be stymied as the transaction costs can add up to as much as \$10,000. These costs may include property surveys, title reports, appraisals and legal fees. The Working Lands Protection Program would provide grants to individual land owners to cover the transaction costs of donating conservation easements.

Gathering Waters Conservancy works as the state policy voice for private land conservation, and our partnerships with state and local governments are universally beneficial. We are fortunate to have allies in state government who are interested in seeing a program like this take shape. Check our website, [www.gatheringwaters.org](http://www.gatheringwaters.org), for updates on our policy work, and please call Althea Dotzour, Outreach and Policy Coordinator at 608.251.9131 x13 if you would like to discuss this or other policy issues.



LAND LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS  
as of Nov. 14, 2004

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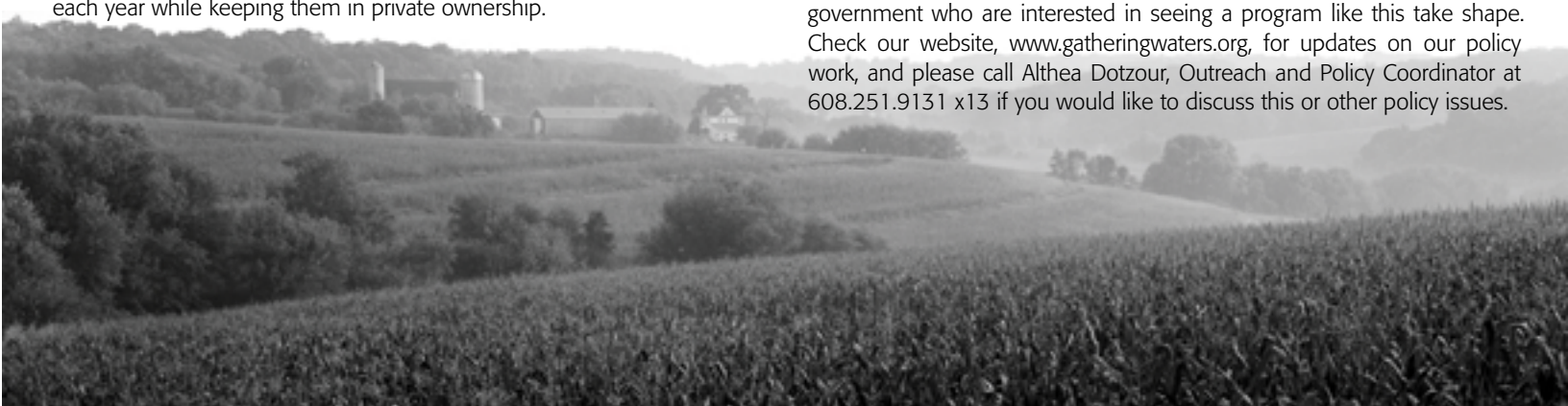
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## Looking to the Future

### Fostering a love of the outdoors in Wisconsin's children

How did you first develop a connection with the land? Maybe it was hiking in a beautiful place with your parents, exploring the natural wonders of your grandparent's land, or fishing with an uncle. However, with increased urbanization and the multitude of electronic, commercial, and scheduled activities that fill our days, today's youth are engaged in fewer and fewer nature-based activities each year. The kids of today are the land stewards of tomorrow, yet without experiences that connect them to the land, the next generation may not appreciate or support land conservation as adults.

To address this issue, Gathering Waters Conservancy is teaming with the Wisconsin Outdoor Alliance, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, and the Department of Natural Resources to develop a curriculum-based Wisconsin Outdoor Youth Summit. At this two-day event, school-children will have the opportunity to cast a fishing line, canoe, fire a hunting rifle, pitch a tent, and watch for birds.

The basic goals of this program are to foster long-term conservation support in the state while also drawing connections to the benefits of land conservation. Once children identify outdoor activities they enjoy, they will start to look for places to do them. The Outdoor Youth Summit will also provide opportunities to promote the success and importance of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund.

The Wisconsin Outdoor Youth Summit will share with children a diverse array of outdoor traditions and promote the values that motivate preservation and conservation. In the future, it will be those who have interests and values based in the outdoors who will champion the land conservation movement.

In the meantime, how can YOU make a difference? When was the last time you took a child outdoors to share an activity or location that is dear to you? The #1 reason kids say they don't try new outdoor activities is because no one asks them.

Here is your homework assignment for the month: the next time you hike or fish or hunt or bird watch or canoe, invite a child to go with you. It could be your child, a grandchild, a neighbor, or a friend. Studies have found that the environmental leaders of today were most influenced by spending meaningful time outdoors with an adult. Remember that there's no expertise needed to talk with kids about what catches your interest. If you take time outdoors with a child, you could kindle a life-long engagement with our natural resources. What could spread more joy?

*If you are interested in learning more about Wisconsin Outdoor Youth Summit or would like to talk about other way of getting youth involved in outdoor activities, contact Althea Dotzour, Outreach & Policy Coordinator at [althea@gatheringwaters.org](mailto:althea@gatheringwaters.org) or 608.251.9131 x13.*



## 2004 Land Conservation Leadership Award Winner

If you weren't able to attend the Celebration on September 15th, you can still see the great award winners. Press releases, newspaper articles, and photos are available at [www.gatheringwaters.org](http://www.gatheringwaters.org). Also, if you would like to get in touch with Althea Dotzour at 608.251.9131 x13.

### Conservationists of the Year

**Gus Frank, Community Chairman of the Forest County Potawatomi**  
**Sandra Rachal, Sokaogon Chippewa Community Chairwoman**  
(accepted by Tina Van Zile)

The Forest County Potawatomi and the Sokaogon Chippewa Community came together last October to end a three-decade-long struggle for development of the Crandon mine. The two tribes joined forces to purchase nearly 6,000 acres of land in northeastern Wisconsin near the headwaters of the Wolf River for \$16.5 million. They now have peace of mind about the protection of the Wolf River and the quality of the water for their children and generations to come. The Sokaogon Chippewa Community is working hard to raise money \$8 million for their part of the purchase. If you are interested in donating to this cause, please visit [www.wolfriverprotectionfund.org](http://www.wolfriverprotectionfund.org) or call 715-478-7605.



### Policy Maker of the Year

**Susan Greenfield**  
Caledonia Town Chair

Working hand in hand with developers, town officials, citizens, and environmental consultants, Susan Greenfield spearheaded the creation of a conservation subdivision ordinance for the Town of Caledonia. Three years in the making, this law requires every subdivision to contain up to 60% open space. These open spaces are easements to preserve, and often order to build communities instead. Caledonia is now developing new and natural areas between developments and techniques are working to help define their character.

### Photos clockwise from upper left:

Gus Frank and Tina Van Zile.  
Terrie Cooper, Laurel Hauser, and Dan Burke.

Event co-host Curt Meine presenting the award to Mequon Nature Preserve partners Jill Hewitt, Shawn Graff, Jane Moore, and Marybeth Budisch.

Susan Greenfield and event co-host Jean Meanwell.

**winners**

September 30, you should enjoy reading about the articles, and photos from the event are available at much with any of the award winners, contact Althea

**2004 Land Trust of the Year**

**Door County Land Trust**

The Door County Land Trust is a wonderful example of the role a land trust can play in a community. They have an outstanding history of service and dedication. Executive Director Dan Burke has led the effort toward making the Land Trust an important local institution and has raised public awareness of Door County's unique natural systems and in the importance of protecting them. The Door County Land Trust has developed strong relationships with land owners, and they are known for building exciting partnerships among unusual parties.



**Harold "Bud" Jordahl Stewardship Award**

Mequon Nature Preserve  
The partners: Marybeth Budisch, Richard Paddock, Christine Nuernberg, and Shawn Graff

The Mequon Nature Preserve represents the essence of public and private partners working together, with the support of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund, to preserve a special place for public use and future generations. Created through the joint dedication of Mequon Mayor Christine Nuernberg, the Ozaukee Washington Land Trust, and the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, the physical preserve is currently 408 acres on the edge of a growing urban area. Due to the inspiration of these dedicated groups, the community will have nearly one square mile of restored hardwood forests and wetlands crisscrossed with foot trails...a respite for the body and soul.

**Special Thanks to our Auction Donors!**

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- Blacksmith Inn, Door County
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# crosscurrents

a newsletter to serve the land conservation  
community of Wisconsin



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## Give the Gift of Conservation this Holiday Season

Not sure what to get for some of the people on your list? Do people you know have more than enough "stuff"? Consider donating to Gathering Waters Conservancy in the name of a friend or family member. We will send you a nice certificate that you can wrap and share. It's a great way to make a meaningful gift that will last for generations to come.

## Community Shares of Wisconsin Donation Campaign Reminder



If your company or agency participates in Community Shares of Wisconsin's payroll donations, you are probably completing the paperwork this month. Gathering Waters Conservancy is excited to be a new member of Community Shares of Wisconsin. 100% of the money you designate goes to us! Donating through payroll deduction is easy, and think how good you would feel about knowing a bit of your work is going to improve Wisconsin's land conservation.

If you are interested in learning more about how to bring Community Shares of Wisconsin to your workplace, contact Althea Dotzour at 608.251.9131 x13.

*"Conservation is not something to be practiced by certain individuals or by a few groups on rare or more frequent occasions, but it must enter into the very fiber of our daily life and its essence must permeate every civic activity... Only so, can we hope to project nature's wonderful heritage into the distant future of the human race."*

*Wilhelmine Diefenthaeler La Budde (1880-1955)*