

# gathering waters

wisconsin's alliance  
for land trusts

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SPRING 2015

# crosscurrents

a newsletter to serve the land trust community of Wisconsin

## The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program is at Risk: Together We Can Save it

The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program has been providing funding to the state, local governments, land trusts, and other non-profits to purchase and protect land for 25 years. These projects benefit all of us in Wisconsin by:

- supporting jobs
- benefitting local economies
- protecting our water resources and air quality
- promoting tourism and a high quality of life
- guaranteeing places to hunt, hike, fish, and explore close to home

This edition of *Crosscurrents* is all about the Stewardship Program. It offers stories that demonstrate the program's benefits to communities throughout the state and, most importantly, describes **actions you can take to help protect it**.

Thanks for all you do to help protect the places that make Wisconsin special.

**Thomas Mitchell**  
Chair

**Michael Strigel**  
Executive Director



# THE KNOWLES-NELSON STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM IS INTEGRAL TO A PROSPEROUS FUTURE FOR WISCONSIN

## IT'S AN INVESTMENT...

The Stewardship Program invests in clean water and natural resources, which **support jobs and provide wild places for all of us** to fish, hunt, and explore close to home.

## IT'S AN ECONOMIC ENGINE...

The Stewardship Program directly supports Wisconsin's **\$20 billion forestry industry** and **\$12 billion outdoor recreation industry**—including our **\$4 billion hunting and fishing industries**.

## IT'S AFFORDABLE...

The annual cost for the Stewardship Program is **less than 0.3% of the total state budget**. That means that the Stewardship Program costs each Wisconsin resident **less than a fishing license or state park sticker each year**.



Clearly, the benefits outweigh the costs—especially when you look at the whole picture...

Watch a short video to see how the timber industry, our public schools, and urban communities have made the Stewardship Program's investment pay off. **Watch it today at [gatheringwaters.org/video](http://gatheringwaters.org/video)**





Stewardship Project Location:  
Ellison Bay

Land Trust Project Leader:  
Door County Land Trust



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

This 16-acre property and its famous view are now permanently protected as the Grand View Scenic Overlook and Park—a place for visitors to picnic, take photos, reflect, and explore.

## Sense of Identity & Source of Revenue

**T**errie Cooper, a lifelong resident of Door County, considered the view from the top of the bluff in the town of Liberty Grove, saying, “I grew up in Ellison Bay. This is my home. The Grand View property was an iconic view that we had all known and loved. It identified our community. I don’t think anybody ever realized that could change.”

From this Door County high point, one can see the sparkling waters of Green Bay, islands in the distance, and sheer bluffs topped by hardwood forests. Residents and visitors alike have enjoyed the scenic overlook for many years, often pulling over to the side of the road to snap photos or take in the majestic view. Only when construction of a 44-unit condominium development began on the property did people realize that this signature view could disappear.

Beyond the community concern, an economic threat also loomed. **Door County draws over two million visitors every year, most of whom come to enjoy the scenery and outdoor activities. Tourism accounts for almost \$300 million in annual revenue in Door County.** Though privately owned, the Grand View property was a de facto tourist attraction that drew thousands of visitors each year.

Concerned citizens approached Door County Land Trust to help find a solution. The land trust responded, marshaling its resources for what would be a five-year-long commitment to forge a path to preservation of the popular and iconic view. Their expertise in conservation and real estate led to successful grant-writing, private fundraising, and land purchase negotiations. They also partnered with the Town of Liberty Grove, which agreed to take eventual ownership of the land and manage it as a public park.

Through persistence and dedication, **the land trust was able to secure funding for the overlook property through the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program** and the National Scenic Byway Program. The 16-acre property and its famous view are now permanently protected as the Grand View Scenic Overlook and Park—a place for visitors to picnic, take photos, reflect, and explore. Door County, known for its beautiful landscape, can rest assured that this destination spot will always remain.

### Why Stewardship Matters:

Tourism accounts for almost \$300 million in annual revenue in Door County. Most folks come to enjoy the scenery and outdoor activities.

Money from tourism in Door County supports over 3000 jobs and \$64 million in labor income.

Visitor spending generated over \$33 million in state and local taxes in 2013.

“My wife Vonnie and I drive into Ellison Bay every day and always slow down to marvel at the remarkable view. This very special place has been naively taken for granted until the past few years when the potential for development became real.”

– *Dave Callsen,*  
*community member*



Stewardship Project Location:  
Chippewa County

Land Trust Project Leader:  
Ice Age Trail Alliance



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



Camp Nawakwa will continue to shape the lives of Girl Scouts while the community gained a new source of revenue, place to explore, and destination spot!

## Why Stewardship Matters:

Girl Scouts will continue to be involved in a program that has already shaped and enriched the lives of many.

It improves the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, which attracts an estimated 1.2 million visitors every year. Users contribute approximately \$113 million annually to Wisconsin's economy.

In 2014, Stewardship properties contributed 20% of Chippewa County Forest's \$680,000 income.

Locals now have a place close to home to get outside and be active year round.

**"Thankfully, the Stewardship Program was available. Without this state funding, the Camp Nawakwa property would not have come under County ownership or become open to the public." – Mike Dahlby, Chippewa County Forest Administrator**

## Enriching Lives, Providing Livelihoods

**C**amp Nawakwa, in Chippewa County, is a summer camp that has been run by the Girl Scouts for many years. Located on a glacial lake and surrounded by hardwood forest, the camp **offers kids a place to experience the outdoors, to connect with nature** through activities like fishing, swimming, or hiking, and learn invaluable skills; all while building lifelong friendships. It has **shaped the lives of many.**

Sherry Jasper has been a part of the Girl Scouts for decades, starting as a young camper and later serving on the Board of Directors of a large Wisconsin Girl Scout council. "I grew up in Girl Scouting and the out-of-doors program, so taking care of the land and providing opportunities for others to learn from the land is a very strong value that I carry to this day," she says. So when a portion of Camp Nawakwa needed to be sold to support other programs and properties, Sherry and the Girl Scout leadership approached the Ice Age Trail Alliance (IATA) for help.

The IATA is a land trust whose mission is to create, support, and protect the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, a thousand-mile footpath that winds through the state. The trail provides access to some of the state's most beautiful natural areas, including privately-owned land near Camp Nawakwa. It also **helps feed Wisconsin's tourism industry, strengthening local economies.**

The IATA did not disappoint. They understood the vision and led the way to make it possible. They collaborated with Chippewa County to **secure funding through the state's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, which provided half the purchase price of the land and made this deal possible**, and with the Girl Scouts, who placed an easement on the land to ensure its permanent protection.

Because of this project, the camp will remain and have access to an extensive trail improved and maintained by the IATA. And that's not all. Because of this deal, the land is now managed as a public working forest, **supplying the county with jobs and a new source of revenue that also offers 110 magnificent acres of public recreational opportunities** like fishing, hiking, skiing, and much more.



Photo by Dave Caliebe



This Stewardship project supports an economically viable forest, which creates jobs while ensuring access to outdoor recreation.

## Keeping Forests Accessible for Timber & Recreation

**W**isconsin is a leader in the forest products industry and our timberlands directly support the state's economy. **Funding from the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program protects this valuable asset by limiting the subdivision of large forest properties** and complementing the active management of adjacent public forestlands.

Since the 1990s, Wisconsin has lost more than a quarter of a million acres of industrial forestland—much of which is now in small, parcelized ownerships. The smaller the parcel, the less chance timber will be managed to support local mills. Hunters also lose out as “no trespassing” signs typically follow changing ownership.

Fortunately, through the leadership of land trusts, the Stewardship Program has been instrumental in slowing forest land parcelization. **Funding from the program allows land trusts and land owners to find business solutions, ensuring our forests remain accessible for recreation and timber harvest.**

In fact, as a nationally recognized leader among land trusts, The Conservation Fund has become a champion of Wisconsin's northern working forests. Its most recent victory for the state was the permanent protection of the 13,732-acre Twin Lakes Legacy Forest in Iron County.

This Legacy Forest has been a top priority for supporters of working forests because **its resources and outdoor recreation opportunities are major drivers of the regional economy.** An important aspect of this land deal is **providing permanent public access** for recreation, including vehicle access on over 10 miles of private-woods roads that **enable hunters to continue accessing the interior of the property.**

It will also now continue to **support jobs and provide a sustainable supply of forest products in perpetuity, ensure and enhance access to outdoor recreation, and protect habitat** for important game and non-game species.

Stewardship Project Location:  
Iron County

Land Trust Project Leader:  
The Conservation Fund



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

### Why Stewardship Matters:

It supports Wisconsin's \$20 billion forestry industry, including jobs.

It provides a sustainable supply of forest products.

It ensures that our forests remain and are accessible for recreation, timber, and sport—major drivers of the regional economy.

It protects important habitat for game and non-game species.

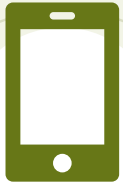
**“These investments in our future are made possible by the Knowles-Nelson State Stewardship Program, helping communities safeguard the state's habitats and inhabitants.”**

– **Tom Duffus,**  
Vice President – Midwest for  
The Conservation Fund



# 10 WAYS TO SAVE STEWARDSHIP NOW

Visit [gatheringwaters.org/action](http://gatheringwaters.org/action) for easy access to legislators' contact info, letter templates, info on costs/benefits, I ♥ Stew profile pic, eNews, and more.



## CALL YOUR LEGISLATORS

It's the most persuasive way to tell them why the Stewardship Program is important to you.



## WRITE YOUR LEGISLATORS

Personal, heartfelt letters are best.



## MEET WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS

Shake their hands and tell them how much Stewardship matters to you and your community.



## COPY THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

This powerful committee will craft the version of the state budget that the full legislature will consider. Copy them when you write letters to legislators.



## SEND A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Send an op-ed to your newspaper in favor of Stewardship.



## SPREAD THE WORD

Tweet, post, and talk among your friends, neighbors, and colleagues about what Stewardship does for them and get them on board.

## IT'S TIME TO ACT

There is a proposal to freeze the Stewardship Program until 2028. But the land cannot wait. Nor can the communities that depend on the benefits the land provides. **The time to protect our lands and waters is now while the opportunity exists to do so.**

The Stewardship Program is about local communities working together with landowners and the state to identify the places that make Wisconsin special and make it a place where people want to live, work, and play. **Just as we must responsibly develop land in ways that feed our economy, we must also set land aside so it can continue to provide benefits to future generations.**

Gathering Waters has been working to protect the Stewardship Program since we were founded in 1994 and we are more dedicated and committed than ever.

But we are stronger together. In fact, **the only way to save these lands, jobs, and our Wisconsin way of life is to let decision makers know how important the Stewardship Program is to each of us.**

I ♥ STEW

**SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM TODAY BY CHANGING YOUR FACEBOOK PROFILE PIC.**



## KNOW THE TRUE COSTS

Legislators are voicing concern that Stewardship costs the state and taxpayers too much money. Familiarize yourself with the facts to help enlighten them.



## SEND US COPIES

Keep us up-to-date with your letters and clippings from local papers on behalf of Stewardship.



## JOIN OUR E-NEWS LIST

Receive updates and alerts on Stewardship.

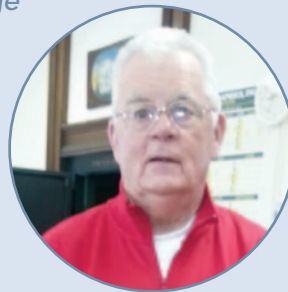
We asked people across Wisconsin...

## Why is Stewardship important?



*"Forestland owners and managers face tremendous economic challenges today because of land parcelization and fragmentation. The Stewardship Program helps keep land in large blocks and helps to ensure that it will be managed in perpetuity for recreation, timber production, and wildlife enhancement. This supports economically viable forests, which create jobs and opportunities for a sustainable economy in Wisconsin."*  
—**Ed Steigerwaldt**, President, Steigerwaldt Land Services, Inc.

*"Were it not for the Stewardship Program, the Village of Argyle would not be home to the 220-acre Erickson Conservation Area—an important asset to our community. Without it, we'd be missing out on important tourism dollars, would have fewer recreational options available to our citizens, and our kids wouldn't have access to important outdoor and environmental educational opportunities that will serve them for a lifetime."*  
—**Wayne Wilson**, President, Argyle Village Board



*"Wisconsin people—Republicans, Democrats, and independents—love the Wisconsin outdoors, whether for hunting, fishing, trapping, boating, biking, hiking, skiing, bird watching, and many other uses. It's a common denominator for us Badgers and the Stewardship Program provides all that and more."*  
—**John Torinus**, journalist, entrepreneur and business manager

*"Nature is amazing; unfortunately not everyone gets to experience it. But with the Stewardship Program, many people in Milwaukee get a hands-on experience and gain essential knowledge on what they can do to improve the environment while creating an atmosphere that everyone can enjoy."* —**Matthew Moore**, UW-Milwaukee graduate



Gathering Waters' mission is to help land trusts, land-owners, and communities protect the places that make Wisconsin special.

### Gathering Waters

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

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# **cross**currents

a newsletter to serve the land conservation  
community of Wisconsin

**gathering waters**  
wisconsin's alliance  
for land trusts

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Gaylord Nelson © Frank Wallick



## **The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program**

was named in honor of two former Wisconsin governors.

Warren Knowles, a Republican, and  
Gaylord Nelson, a Democrat,  
epitomized what can be  
accomplished when we all  
work together to protect  
Wisconsin's special places  
and most valuable  
community assets.

Warren Knowles © Wisconsin Historical Society image 74818 (cropped)

