

ADVOCACY UPDATE

In June 2021, Wisconsin's Legislature voted to renew the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program for four years at \$33 million per year. This outcome is short of the 10-year renewal we had hoped for, but it's still an important win for Wisconsin.

The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program is a vital source of state funding for land and water protection. The program helps land trusts and communities conserve working forests, natural areas, and wildlife habitat. It supports the creation of parks, trails, and boat landings so people can enjoy nature.



Team Knowles Nelson could not have done this without you.

We want to thank everyone who took the time to contact their elected officials—writing emails, creating postcards, and calling lawmakers to let them know land and water protection is important. Because of your commitment to protecting land and water in Wisconsin, you helped produce positive results—even in a difficult political climate.

From hunters to birders, bikers to prairie conservationists, foresters to paddlers, and from parks advocates to wilderness buffs, the collective effort of Team Knowles Nelson shows that we can always find ways to work together toward a common goal.

We hope you take some time to get outside and enjoy the places you've worked so hard to protect.

Check for updates about Wisconsin Land Trust Days at [HaveFunOutside.org](https://www.havefunoutside.org)



Request a Wisconsin Nature Guide and enter to win a YETI Cooler. Details at [HaveFunOutside.org](https://www.havefunoutside.org)



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MEET THE

2021 LAND CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNERS

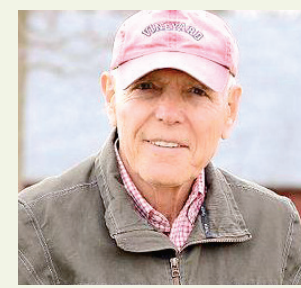
Gathering Waters is delighted to announce the 2021 Land Conservation Leadership Award Winners. Awards will be presented at local events.

CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

Don Pluemer of Monfort has spent thousands of hours improving nearly 18 miles of cold-water streams and trout habitat in southwest Wisconsin. When Don joined Trout Unlimited 17 years ago, he learned about the serious threats facing these fragile ecosystems, including erosion, run off, and warming water temperatures. Don was determined to do his part alongside fellow volunteers with the Harry and Laura Nohr Chapter of Trout Unlimited. Don's dedication to improving the health of these streams and the surrounding landscape has created a brighter future for these priceless natural resources in the Driftless Area.



ROD NILSESTUEN AWARD FOR WORKING LANDS PRESERVATION



John Gehl of Hartland has long understood that soil depletion is a key factor affecting the profitability of Wisconsin family farms. His passion to protect these lands from development and improve soil health led him to start the Faye Gehl Conservation Foundation to promote land conservation and regenerative agriculture. Since the early 1990s, the Faye Gehl Conservation Foundation, along with Tall Pines Conservancy and other conservation partners, has permanently protected farms and worked to restore healthy soils in the Lake Country area in southeast Wisconsin.

HAROLD "BUD" JORDAHL LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Susan Foote-Martin and Mark Martin of Arlington are lifelong conservationists whose passion and tireless commitment have positively impacted Wisconsin. Working for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Susan helped create the Great Wisconsin Birding and Nature Trail while Mark helped preserve thousands of acres of habitat through the State Natural Areas Program. Together, along with their efforts with the Madison Audubon Society, they have protected 2,700 acres across south-central Wisconsin.



As resident managers of Madison Audubon's Goose Pond Sanctuary, they've inspired dozens of interns and volunteers. Mark and Susan's conservation legacy will last for generations.

HAROLD "BUD" JORDAHL LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Tom Eddy of Green Lake has been instrumental in conserving the natural resources in his community. As a founding member of Green Lake Conservancy, with a background in biology and botany, Tom's expertise helped the organization prioritize the protection of land with high conservation value. In 2018, Tom played an integral role in the purchase of Tichora Conservancy, one of the last remaining natural areas on Green Lake's shoreline. Tom's love of conservation and education has inspired hundreds of students and community members.

LAND LEGACY AWARD

The Paul E. Stry Foundation of La Crosse generously supports Mississippi Valley Conservancy's mission to protect land and water resources around La Crosse and across the Driftless Area. For nearly 25 years, the quiet, consistent philanthropy of the Paul E. Stry Foundation has helped numerous community organizations, has played a key role in saving and restoring 1,500 acres of prairies, bluffs, and other important lands along the Mississippi River, and has educated local citizens about conservation in the region.

Learn more about the award winners and their impact on conservation at [gatheringwaters.org/awards2021](https://www.gatheringwaters.org/awards2021).



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Explore some of Wisconsin's special places using our online interactive map at [GatheringWaters.org/Places21](https://www.GatheringWaters.org/Places21).

Those noted with a are locations of events featured on the following pages.

Land Trust Days are a wonderful time to get outside and enjoy all the natural and protected areas Wisconsin has to offer.

DISCOVER AND EXPLORE PROTECTED PLACES

Enjoy self-guided hikes through Wisconsin's forests and prairies. Paddle along natural lakeshores. Soak in the scenic beauty from the bluffs of the Mississippi River to the shores of the Great Lakes. Find places to visit at [gatheringwaters.org/Places21](https://www.gatheringwaters.org/Places21).

GET INVOLVED WITH ACTIVITIES

With over 30 events to choose from, there's something for everyone. Bike through farm country. Take the kids on a nature-based scavenger hunt or visit a fishing park. Take a hike and learn more about natural areas in your community. Visit [HaveFunOutside.org](https://www.havefunoutside.org) for a complete list of events.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE WHILE YOU #HAVEFUNOUTSIDE

Build a segment of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. Volunteer to collect seeds or remove invasive plants. Add your discoveries to citizen science projects. Share your #HaveFunOutside photos on Facebook and Instagram.

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