

Land Protection in Wisconsin

WHAT DO LAND TRUSTS PROTECT AND HOW DO THEY DO IT?

Wisconsin is a unique state with a variety of terrain. Learn about the wide range of land protected by Wisconsin land trusts in the charts below.

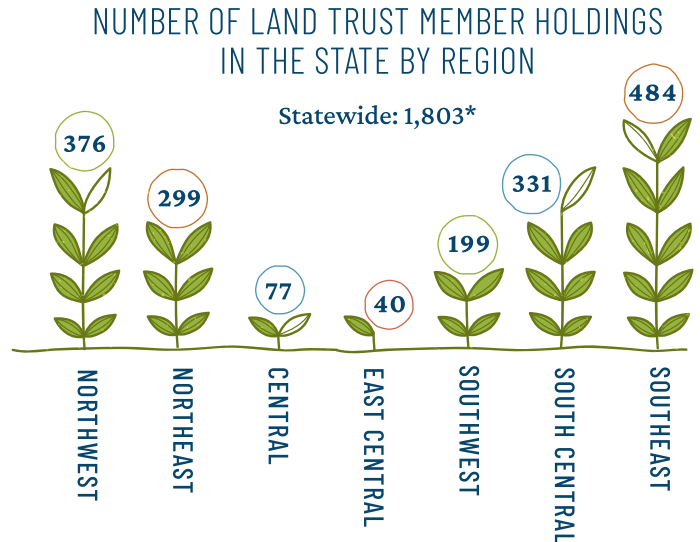
HOW DO LAND TRUSTS WORK?

Land trusts are private, non-profit organizations that work to protect and enhance land. They typically protect land using two main strategies.

Fee-simple acquisition, where land trusts purchase properties outright and manage the land for conservation purposes.

Conservation easements, where a landowner enters into a voluntary legal contract with a land trust to permanently protect their land.

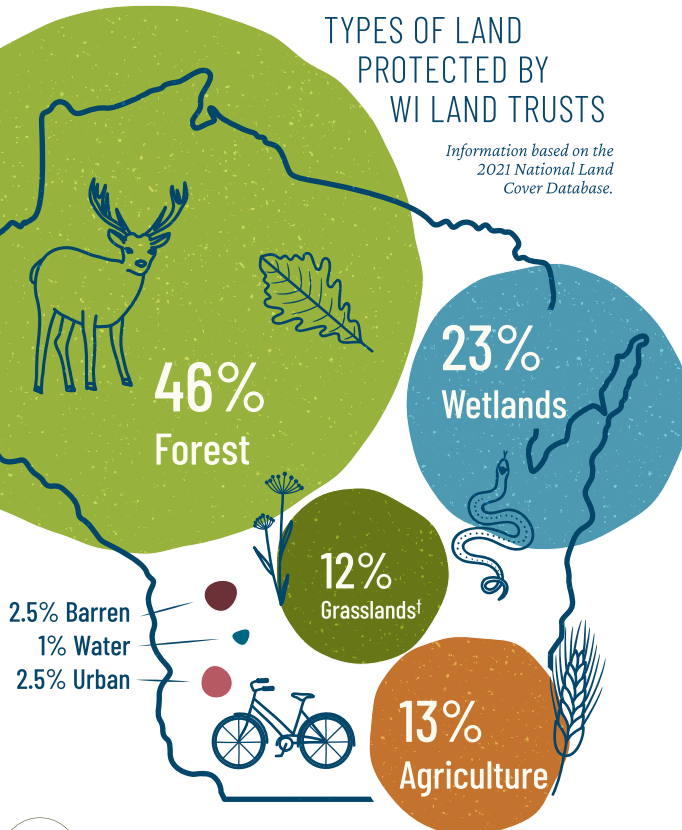
Every conservation easement is unique to the location, the landowner's preferences, and the land trust's conservation goals.



*Some easements border multiple zones.

TYPES OF LAND PROTECTED BY WI LAND TRUSTS

Information based on the 2021 National Land Cover Database.



†This land cover category includes both grasslands and hay/pasture, so this surrogate grassland category includes native prairie, working grasslands, idle grasslands, and permanent pasture.

LAND COVER AND LAND USE IN WISCONSIN

Wisconsin has unique landscapes around the state. Protected properties vary by type and size.

- Northern Wisconsin has more forested properties than other parts of the state. Population density is lower and properties protected by land trusts can be quite large.
- Southern Wisconsin is more densely populated and has more agricultural land, so protected properties tend to be smaller. Land trusts in this part of the state protect more farmland.
- Along the shore of Lake Michigan, land trusts protect many wetlands from the Milwaukee area north to the west shore of Green Bay. Wetlands are found throughout the state, but especially in this area.
- In the Driftless region of southwest Wisconsin, land trusts protect a mix of grasslands, forests, and agricultural lands.

This data was prepared by Morgan Goff and Riley Hubanks, Conservation & Community Planning Students at UW-Stevens Point. Austin Holland of the Center for Land Use Education advised the students during this project.