

# Land-Water-Wildlife Matters

A Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust Publication  
Spring 2016



NORTHEAST WISCONSIN  
**LAND TRUST**  
*Preserving Our Natural Heritage*

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## Land Matters

is published by Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust, a non-profit, member supported, conservation organization dedicated to preserving lands that protect our waters, landscapes and natural habitats for this and future generations.

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NORTHEAST WISCONSIN  
**LAND TRUST**  
Preserving Our Natural Heritage

# CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF LAND CONSERVATION!

This year, at Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust, we are celebrating our 20th year anniversary! Together we have accomplished so much in our area:

- 41 properties protected by conservation easements
- 9 public preserves
- 638 acres of wetlands
- 31 miles of undisturbed shorelines

**All totaling more than 5,000  
acres of land preserved in  
perpetuity!**

To celebrate all of these successes, we would like to invite you to our 20th year celebration and fundraising event! You deserve to celebrate, we couldn't have done it without you!

The event will be **October 6, 2016** at **The Source Public House**  
**890 Lake Park Road**  
**Menasha, WI 54952**

Join us in celebrating all that we have accomplished, come learn what we are currently working on and help us plan for the future of land conservation in northeast Wisconsin.



*Did you know you could name  
Northeast Wisconsin Land  
Trust, Inc. in your estate?*

## Memorial Gifts

NEWLT recognizes gifts made in the memory of the following people:

**Jim Belling**  
**Fred Kersten**  
**John Stuessy**  
**Reinhardt Hans Wuestenberg**

Thank you to the families and friends who honored their loved ones with gifts to the land trust. The gift of preserving our treasured land will last forever.





# A FREE RANGE KID

A STORY FROM AMELIA RUGLAND - ACTIVE EMERITUS DIRECTOR

There are two reasons Milly Rugland became such a conservationist over the years. One was because her father was one and the other was because most of her childhood was spent outdoors in nature. “I was a free range kid,” she said.

While growing up, Milly lived along the Fox River. In her backyard, there was the river, a ravine, and many acres of woods. Every day after school all of the neighborhood kids would go out to play. “Even in winter when we were told to play outside in biting temperatures and we would stand outside the door asking to come back inside.”

“I really got to know nature because of this unstructured exploring and playing.” Milly saw the beauty and value in everything and at a young age she realized just how important nature was for the birds, small mammals, fish and for everyone’s well-being.

One of Milly’s favorite memories is of lying on top of the ice on the brook where the water was flowing underneath. There were mesmerizing frozen whirl pools and nature particles flowing past under the ice that could be followed and gathered downstream.

“I also remember making whole villages with grape vines or collected sticks and logs. My older brother was the best at building the forts and shelters. We all pretended to live off the land.” Milly talked about catching crayfish and how one of the neighborhood kids would borrow a big pot from their parents and they would build a fire to make crayfish stew. She would also dig up clay from the riverside and make traditional clay pots and harden them in a fire. “We ate lots of plants, always starting out with just a nibble... We explored everything out there. Using all of our senses tasting, smelling, touching and absorbing all of nature.”

Milly says she used to fear for the children of this generation and how they have fewer opportunities to visit and commune with nature. She still lives on the Fox River and has noticed the changes and the diminishing green spaces available for the wildlife and for kids to explore. However, she says that there are still so many different chances to experience the wilderness.

When she takes her grandchildren outdoors to preserves or parks they are just as excited about nature as she was when she was a kid. “The last time we were at Guckenburg-Strum preserve the children ran around balancing on fallen trees, collecting stones and leaves, and carefully watching a mother deer and her fawn.”

“Now many children get their nature in small doses but they still have the opportunity to get it. We need to remember to let our kids out to play.” Milly believes that learning to love nature at an early age is essential. At a young age, we can learn to care for it and protect it and in turn it refreshes and cares for us.

**“We have such a brief opportunity to pass on to our children our love for this Earth, and to tell our stories. These are the moments when the world is made whole. In my children’s memories, the adventures we’ve had together in nature will always exist.” -Richard Louv**



# WONDERMENT ON GREEN BAY'S MIGRATORY BIRDS



Loons, downy woodpeckers, sandpipers and marsh wrens are all Great Lake migratory birds that claim a residence in Wisconsin part of the year. They are also part of the estimated 100 million birds that migrate and travel vast distances each spring and fall. Traveling such a distance twice a year is a hardship for any living creature on our planet and these small beauties do not have it any differently. Like humans, birds can endure physiological stress while traveling and the highest mortality rate for birds is during migration.

Each of these birds typically migrate during the evening and seek out shelter and a nature filled home as day hits. These green filled places, especially northeast Wisconsin's special coastal areas, provide shelter from rough weather and harsh prey. It is a place for them to rest, refuel, and gain nutrients for their long journey ahead.

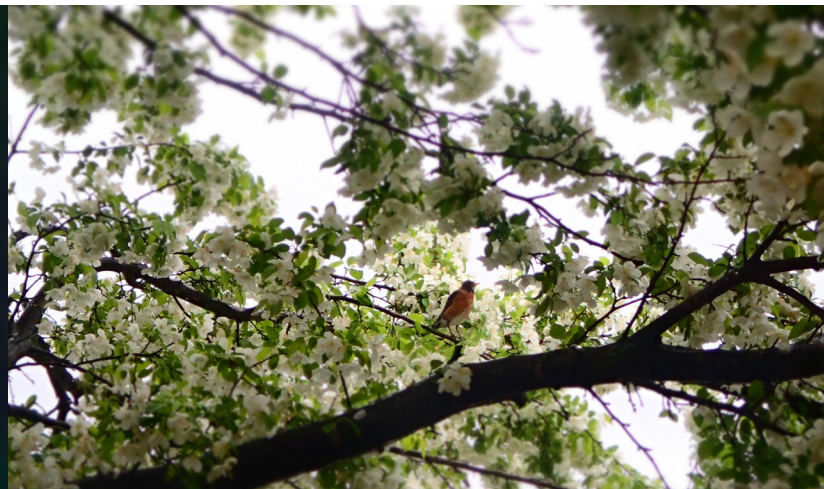
We are lucky to live in such a wonderful area that provides homes for many different critters all over Wisconsin. Despite how fortunate we are, many stopover habitats that these birds use are becoming scarcer and scarcer as natural lands are developed and habitat is slowly becoming more fragmented.

## Here are some ways to help our migratory birds have a safe journey:

- Create welcoming backyard habitats by: keeping your pets indoors, planting native grasses, flowers, and shrubs that attract birds, eliminate pesticides, add a brush pile to the yard, and keep feeders and bird baths clean to prevent diseases.
- Contact local bird friendly groups like the Audobon Society, Bird City Wisconsin, Wisconsin Waterfowl Association, or a nearby bird club.
- Learn more about wetlands and how to keep them healthy for water quality and for wildlife that depend on them. You can obtain a copy of the "My Healthy Wetlands" book by contacting Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust or you could join the Wisconsin Wetlands Association to learn more.
- Join a conservation group in your area. Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust does much to preserve land now and for the future on Green Bay's west shore and throughout northeast Wisconsin. Visit our website at [www.newlt.org](http://www.newlt.org) to learn more about the land we preserve or contact us if you would like to know more about preserving your own land.

**"It is out task in our time and in our generation, to hand down undiminished to those who come after us... the natural wealth and beauty which is ours."**

**- President John F. Kennedy**







# WEST SHORE

## NORTHERN PIKE RESTORATION

Northern Pike are the second largest predator fish in the Bay of Green Bay. According to Chuck Larscheid, manager of the West Shore Northern Pike Habitat Restoration Project and former Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust board member, “The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource’s fishing creek surveys, netting results and other observations have noted the once robust Northern Pike population in Green Bay has fallen precipitously.”

Northern Pike have a very particular spawning criteria. They leave the bay each spring and attempt to spawn in inland wetlands. The fish sometimes travel tens of miles up flooded road ditches and small streams to reach a suitable wetland to lay their eggs. Chuck explains that, “Along the way they often encounter impediments to passage, such as dams or poorly positioned culverts. They are also vulnerable to natural and human predators.”

If the fish are lucky enough to make it past all of these obstacles, they may find that there are no suitable wetlands in which to congregate and spawn at the end of their journey. They may also get stuck on the way back to the bay.

Chuck and Brown County have dedicated much time trying to restore the Northern Pike population and the habitat they occupy. In 2007, after receiving a couple grants they set two goals:

1. To find and remove impediments to fish migration in streams and road ditches leading from the bay to potential spawning wetlands on Green Bay’s West Shore.
2. To restore wetland destinations that have become degraded and lost the ability to provide suitable spawning habitat.

Since then, Chuck says, “We have completed 50 wetland restorations or impediment removals on streams and road ditches on Green Bay’s west shore.” These completed wetland restoration projects don’t just benefit the pike, they help many species of reptiles, waterfowl, amphibians and other fish species.

To date, Chuck and his team have recorded exciting results in a few urban creeks and some have shown impressive numbers of adult Northern Pike using the waterway for their spring spawning migration!

[There are many places to view Northern Pike spawning along the Bay of Green Bay. Two great places to travel to in northeast Wisconsin are Barkhausen Waterfowl Preserve and Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust’s West Shore preserve!](#)





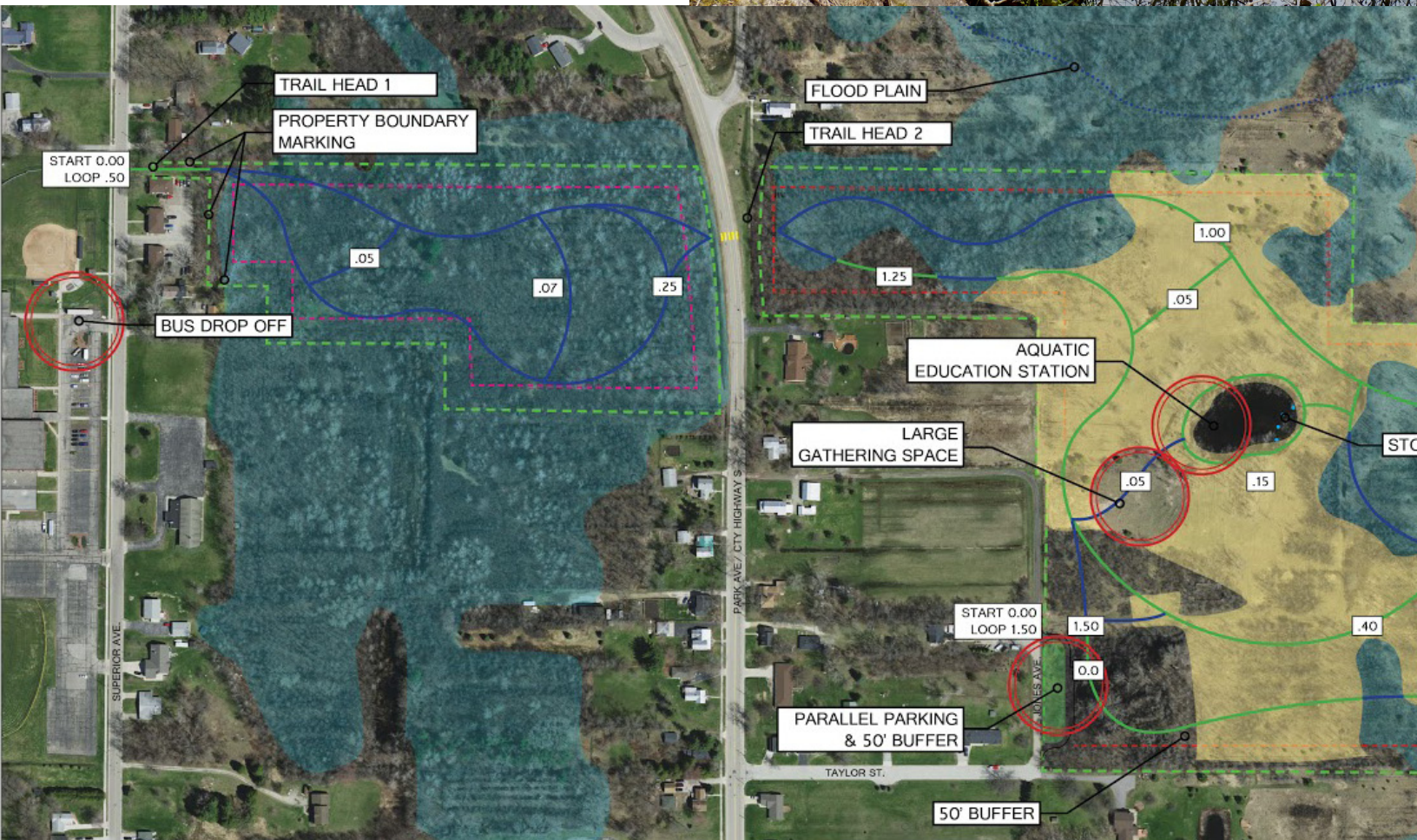
# OCONTO PRESERVE

This 70 acre preserve was purchased in the spring of 2015. Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust and the community are very excited about this new nature preserve because of its wonderful ecological benefits and the potential for a great outdoor learning spot.

The forests and wetlands provide important habitat for many different species in the area. Birds depend on the coastal zone of the Bay as they journey along the Great Lakes migratory corridor twice a year. Also, the wetlands are critical for maintaining water quality and healthy fisheries in Lake Michigan.

The Oconto Preserve, located in the city, is less than a ten minute walk from the high school. This preserve could be a convenient outdoor classroom where students can collect water samples to study macroinvertebrates. It is also great for younger children to dip their nets into the pond and identify animal tracks in the mud.

“If you truly love nature, you will find beauty everywhere.”  
–Vincent VanGogh



OCONTO  
PRELIMINARY



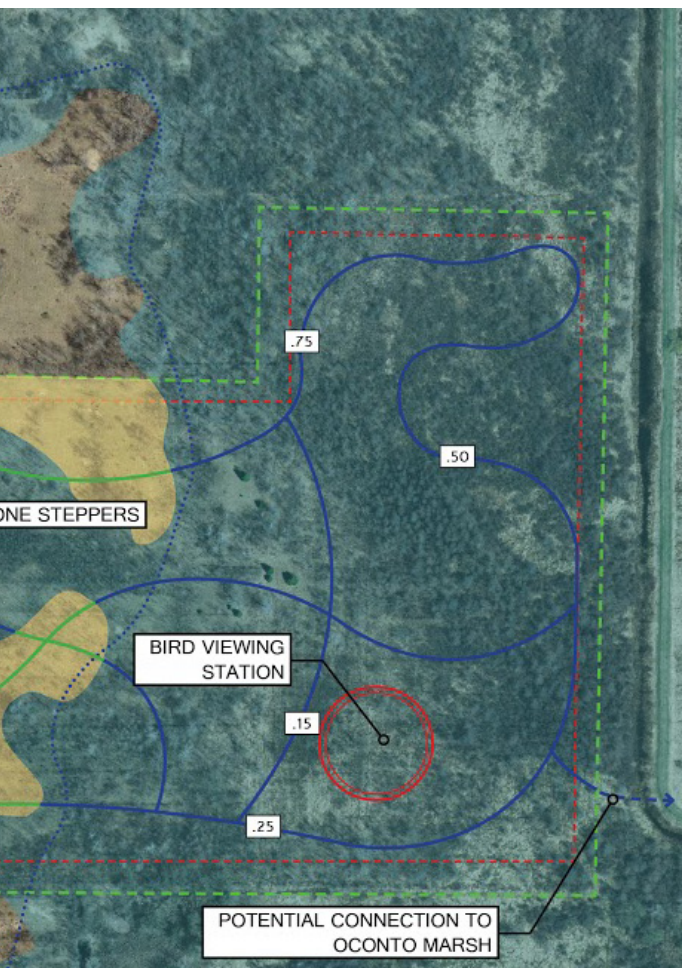


## An update on the Oconto Preserve...

This May we had a workday out on the Preserve! The day was filled with smiling faces, hardworking hands, children exploring, and wildlife all around.

So much was accomplished, the trash was gathered and tours were given. The neighbors shared their knowledge of the deep history of the land and the volunteers were able to see many different bird species and gained excitement about the educational opportunities that the land will provide to students in the area.

Through such great community support, we have already completed so much. We have lead a public meeting in January to gather input for the site plan, installed signs, and filled an abandoned cistern on the preserve. After the work day, we are now free to move forward. We are working with SITE Landscape Architecture to create a master plan to guide future improvements on the preserve such as deciding locations of hiking trails and potential amenities. If you would like to view the plan or would like to share your input please visit our website at [www.newlt.org](http://www.newlt.org) or give us a call at (920) 738-7265.



O CONTO PRESERVE MASTER PLAN  
JANUARY 1 JANUARY 21, 2016

0' 265' 530'







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Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust is in the process of applying for accreditation. If approved we will join over 300 accredited land trusts in the U.S. The Commission invites public input and accepts signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust complies with national quality standards. These standards address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. For the full list of standards see: <http://www.landtrustalliance.org/topics/standards-and-practices>

To learn more about the accreditation program visit: [www.landtrustaccreditation.org](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org).

To submit a comment go to: <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/accreditation-feedback/291> or email your comment to [info@landtrustaccreditation.org](mailto:info@landtrustaccreditation.org). Comments may also be faxed or mailed to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments: (fax) 5185873183; (mail) 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. Comments on Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust's application will be most useful by November 12, 2016.

