



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

# LAND MATTERS

Spring 2013

Volume 16 — No. 1

## PROTECTED FOREVER – CALDRON FALLS CONSERVANCY

Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust is pleased to announce the protection of 55 acres of rare and fragile habitat near Caldron Falls in Marinette County. This is the seventh conservation easement agreement we now hold in Marinette County. A large array of wildlife, including deer, black bear, coyotes, red fox, weasels and porcupines benefit from the land's diverse habitat. The new conservancy also includes habitat for numerous migratory and nesting song and game birds such as warblers, horned owls, wild turkeys, eagles, pileated woodpeckers and whippoorwills.

The owners have been managing their land to promote and maintain the native composition and structure of the forest that provides diverse habitat with its natural springs, numerous ephemeral streams, wetlands, granite ridges and glacial erratics. The owner of the land said, “It is my belief that conservation should include provisions for retaining resources for the enjoyment of future generations as well as maintaining and improving our present environment.”

“The property is recovering nicely from the intensive logging that occurred in the late 1800s and now has over 20 native varieties of tree species. The land is clearly showing a typical forest succession pattern,” said Jim Klinkert, NEWLT director of land acquisition. The remaining private forest lands around Caldron Falls are being threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. Now these 55 acres of land are protected forever, preserving elements of the unique natural features that make this area so special. ☺

*We would like to thank all of our supporters; without them this land would not be protected.*



**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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## From the Director

# OUR NATURAL HERITAGE

This year's featured book for the 2013 Fox Cities Book Festival is Richard Louv's *Last Child in the Woods*. Louv is one in a long line of great minds to question our need for a connection with nature, or more specifically for our children to be in the outdoors—which, sadly, is something they do less of these days. Reading this book brought to mind my own childhood when we were outside from sunup to sundown and we were as familiar with each woodlot and field as we were with our own yards. As an adult, I couldn't agree more with Mr. Louv, "In our bones we need the natural curves of hills, the scent of chaparral, the whisper of pines, the possibility of wildness." My love of nature may have been different if I had spent my childhood parked in front of a succession of screens whether television, computer, phone or games. Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust sends our thanks to Fox Cities Reads for selecting such a relevant topic and author. To not discuss the importance of nature and a child's exposure to it could lead to an even greater crisis for our children's health, and ultimately, the health of our natural world. You would be hard pressed to find a group that shares Mr. Louv's sentiments more wholeheartedly.

Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust was recently granted the opportunity to preserve a gem of a property; a priceless convergence of habitats: streams, shorelines, wetland and woods. As our newest land acquisition project, it is one of our most ecologically exciting. The land has been owned by the same family for three generations, who now wish to sell it. Adding this project, a second significant land purchase at a time when funding is more and more difficult to come by, will stretch NEWLT's resources, but the alternative is unthinkable.

As we begin the process to preserve this land, I imagine it through the eyes of a child. The roll and swell of the land and the incredible diversity of plants and animals presents the ultimate adventure for an intrepid young explorer. Before I knew a thing about biodiversity, watershed management or ecosystem service, I still would have connected with this special place. What child would not love to trek the upland woods where mushrooms bloom? Who would not tackle the challenge of leaping and weaving through the tussocks in the wetlands? What about jumping the stream in one great bound before finally reaching the shore of the Bay where the waves lap the sand and Lake Michigan stretches vast? There are far too few of these wild shoreland properties left along our lakes. Each year more are lost as they are parceled and sold into smaller postage-stamp lots. We have the ability, still, to save some of these places and I know that as I write this piece, you are nodding along with me and saying "Yes, preserve this place so that one more child might experience nature."

"Preserving access to outdoor recreation protects the economy, the businesses, the communities and the people who depend on the ability to play outside," according to the Outdoor Industry Association. They say that at least 60 percent of Wisconsin residents participate in outdoor recreations each year, not including hunting and fishing. **Visit [outdoorindustry.org/recreationeconomy](http://outdoorindustry.org/recreationeconomy) to learn more.**



## GET OUTSIDE WITH NEWLT THIS YEAR!



We at Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust savor any season to explore. What could be more satisfying than spring erupting from the frost of winter? The spring peepers emit their familiar sleigh-bell-like chorus to announce the arrival of spring. The hepaticas, spring beauties, marsh marigolds and trilliums delicately color a fading winter landscape. Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust invites you to experience a myriad of activities beginning this month and extending into summer. Fieldtrips, workdays and social events offer you the opportunity to connect with nature and familiarize yourself with NEWLT. When you join us for field trips as a member, you witness private properties that have been preserved with your contributions.

In May we will be traveling to Shawano County to see spring wildflowers growing in a restored wetland prairie located along the Embarrass River. We will also be exploring the west shore of the Bay with Randy Hoffman, ecologist for the WDNR, for our spring migration field trip.

**Adam and Addie at a NEWLT workday.** NEWLT will be sponsoring the Northeast Wisconsin Paddlers Park-to-Park Paddle again this July; everyone who attended last year had so much fun! Once again, we will be hosting a lively and entertaining post-paddle celebration including food, music and an informal presentation.

In August, you can join us in Green Bay as we learn a few pointers on how to take great nature photos from one of our volunteers. Examples of his talent can be seen on our Facebook page. You can also roll up your sleeves and get dirty as you join staff and volunteers on workdays at a number of our public preserves throughout the year.

A full schedule of events can be seen on the new event calendar on our website. Periodically visit the events page on our website for details about each event and join us on Facebook for frequent updates and post-event photos. Feel free to contact us [newlt@newlt.org](mailto:newlt@newlt.org) or (920) 738-7265. We hope to see you soon!



2012 Park-to-Park Paddle.

### 2013 Events

- May 11: Wildflower Walk for members, at Embarrass River Conservancy, 10a.m.-12p.m.
  - 18: Spring Bird Migration Field Trip led by Randy Hoffman of the WDNR, in Green Bay, 9a.m.-12p.m.
  - 19: Frog Survey near Reeve Reserve in Waupaca County, 8-11p.m.
  - June 15: Summer Workday at Gilson Creek Preserve in Brown County, 9a.m.-1p.m.
  - July 8: Frog Survey near Reeve Reserve in Waupaca County, 8-11p.m.
  - 20: Park-to-Park Paddle and Celebration in Appleton, visit our website for event details.
  - August 8: Phragmites Treating at West Shore Preserve in Brown County, 9-11a.m.
  - 14: Nature Photography Field Trip for members, in Green Bay, 4:30-6p.m.
  - September 14: Fall Workday at Reeve Reserve in Waupaca County, 9a.m.-12p.m.
- Events are subject to changes—please RSVP a week prior.*

**Visit our website [www.newlt.org](http://www.newlt.org) for details and to see our new event calendar.**



## WINCHESTER MEADOWS STATE NATURAL AREA

Winchester Meadows, a public preserve of Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust, was accepted as a State Natural Area in the fall of 2012 by the WDNR: Bureau of Endangered Resources. Formerly known as Winneconne Wetlands, NEWLT purchased the property in December 2008, then donated the entire 442-acre wetland to the WDNR. As a State Natural Area, it will be managed to maintain water quality and to preserve the natural ecosystem.

According to WDNR sources, the wet meadows and associated wetlands along Lakes Winneconne and Poygan are particularly important for stormwater and floodwater retention and water quality protection functions. Winchester Meadows spans 442 acres and features a rare northern sedge meadow ecosystem, which is host to pheasant, fox, beaver, otter, Virginia rail, Common snipe, Uncommon yellow rail, Sandhill crane and Blanding's turtle. This property is the location of the first documented Blanding's turtle (a threatened species in Wisconsin) in Winnebago County. Winchester Meadows is recognized as a Wisconsin Land Legacy area, a Conservation Opportunity Area for wildlife and an Important Bird Area.

NEWLT encourages adventurous hikers to explore this property year round. An array of emerging wildlife will delight you in spring and early fall provides the best visibility of the northern sedge meadow and sandhill cranes. Winchester Meadows is publicly accessible for hiking, bird watching, sightseeing and hunting. You can enter the east side of the property near the signs located on Highway MM. We are grateful for the opportunity to ensure that beautiful places like Winchester Meadows are protected forever!



442 Acre Wetland in Winnebago County

## THANKS TO OUR

WE WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME

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## NEWEST MEMBERS

THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

LAINE ARAGONA

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S SO MUCH TO US!

PACKERS FOUNDATION FOR YOUR  
UR WEST SHORE PROJECT.

on or renew your membership  
[www.newlt.org](http://www.newlt.org)

## INCREASED TAX INCENTIVE EXTENDED

Northeast Wisconsin is a better place to live because each year thoughtful landowners conserve their land; protecting our waters, landscapes and natural habitats for this and future generations. Conservation agreements are tools utilized by land trusts to protect our watersheds and forests. A voluntary conservation agreement, or conservation easement, is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust. These agreements permanently protect the important conservation values of the owner's land by limiting future development. It allows people to continue to own and use their land and to sell it or pass it on to heirs. This is how NEWLT establishes our conservancies.

Congress recently approved the renewal of an increased tax incentive for the donation of a conservation agreement for the year 2013 and retroactively for 2012. The incentive raises the maximum deduction you can take for donating a conservation agreement and increases the number of years over which you may take the deductions. If you, or anyone you know, would like to learn more about land protection through a voluntary conservation agreement, call Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust at (920)738-7265.

*"Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land." —Aldo Leopold*

## WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

**Patrick Casey** is a northeast Wisconsin native and a strong believer in the importance of environmental conservation. He graduated from UW-Stevens Point in 2010 and is now a public relations specialist at The Boldt Company. "I'm excited to combine my professional skill set and passion for preserving our natural spaces in my role on NEWLT's board of directors," said Patrick. "The land trust's mission is vitally important to our community and I'm eager to take part in fulfilling it."

**Todd Needham** is a retired Periodontist and long-time supporter of community and environmental organizations. He feels privileged to have had the opportunities to live, travel through, hike, fish and be present in natural spaces all across the continent. Todd is inspired by the writings of Aldo Leopold and Sigurd Olson to feel passion and responsibility for preservation of these spaces. "To be offered the opportunity to join a group focused on preserving these treasures is both humbling and energizing," said Todd.



# VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

Thanks to the strong leadership and adventurous spirits of our board members, NEWLT assumed several new projects and events that may have been impossible previously. This year, we recognize two individuals that were instrumental in our growth.

## STEPHANIE VRABEC

Stephanie Vrabec teaches Environmental Science and Tropical Ecology for University of Wisconsin Colleges (Fox Valley) and Xavier High School in Appleton. As an outdoor enthusiast, Stephanie lives and actively promotes the ideals of the Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust. She seeks to protect land for future generations while providing opportunities to educate and connect scientists, students and the public so as to broaden their awareness of the importance of land preservation..

Stephanie recognized key opportunities to elevate NEWLT's visibility. She established partnerships with local associations and launched new initiatives including collaboration with Northeast Wisconsin Paddlers annual Park-to-Park Paddle event on the Fox River. Stephanie also made it possible for NEWLT staff member, Jim Klinkert to share his daughter's amazing musical talent with the Fox Valley community so as to raise funds for land conservation.

Stephanie's work with Xavier High allows the students hands-on opportunities to nurture what they grow through the establishment of raised gardens. This is one more example of how Stephanie plays an active role connecting our public to a subject that is her passion.

Visit our website's new event calendar to see what exciting outdoor activities we have planned for this year. We hope you will come out and meet Stephanie and the rest of our terrific volunteers.



Stephanie Vrabec, board member

## DICK GOSSE

Dick Gosse is a retired dentist and a current Outagamie County board supervisor. He has a passion for the environment and a desire to make a difference. As a grandfather, Dick's dream is to leave a legacy of preserved land and resources for future generations.

As board of directors' president, he has worked with genuine dedication to further the growth of NEWLT in all that he does. Dick's leadership was instrumental to the success of a project with The Boldt Company to install a floating boardwalk and wildlife viewing platforms in our Guckenber-Sturm Preserve. It was Dick's vision and drive to share NEWLT's message with a wider audience that lead to the new amenities at Guckenber-Sturm. Thanks to that vision, visitors can now get an up-close look at the eagles, cranes, waterfowl and other wildlife that live in the rare marsh habitat.

Entering his third year as board president, Dick is just as enthusiastic as when he first joined the board in 2007. We are truly lucky to have his ongoing support.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. It's the only thing that ever has."

Dick finds inspiration from this Margaret Mead quote, but he adds his own ending to drive it home: "And that's what the Land Trust is."

I encourage you to visit our Guckenber-Sturm Preserve for spring bird migration. It is a great opportunity to see the boardwalk and platforms Dick was inspired to create—and in the process be inspired ourselves by the marsh's natural beauty and importance.



Dick Gosse, board president

## LIKE WHAT WE DO? WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

We have many great volunteers working in a variety of ways toward our common goal of preserving natural lands. We are fortunate to have many great ideas and opportunities. Though we wish we could do more...

**You can help us do more!** We are looking for additional volunteers to help with our education and outreach efforts.

1. Want to get outside? You can help us coordinate field trips and workdays. We often look for people with areas of expertise to lead our field trips. We also need a few enthusiastic people to staff our booth at community events. Attending a workday on one of our preserves is a great way to find out more about us and what we do.
2. Want to give us a hand in the office? We always enjoy having people around to help us with writing, creating outreach and communication materials, land stewardship recordkeeping and many other tasks.
3. Want to join a committee? Our Development, Outreach and Education Committee is looking for people to assist with event planning, marketing, communication, design and fundraising efforts.
4. Looking to build your resume? We could definitely use a highly-motivated and organized person to be our volunteer coordinator.
5. Got an idea of your own? Let us know. Sometimes people come to us with projects they would like to do on one of our public preserves. We also encourage students to work with us for class projects and college credits.

We have some really fun ideas for volunteers to help us with now such as making videos. If you have some free time, have an area of expertise the Land Trust could benefit from or just believe in our cause, please contact us so we can utilize your energy! Call us at (920) 738-7265, email Kari, administrative and communications coordinator, at [karih@newlt.org](mailto:karih@newlt.org) or fill out and mail in the form below.



**Yes**, I/we want to help preserve northeast Wisconsin's most precious natural resources:

### Annual Member Donor Levels

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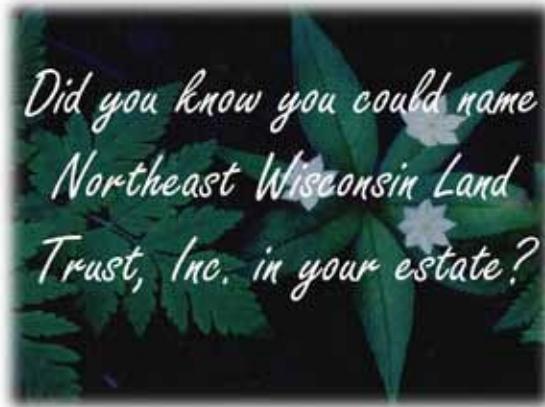
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*In an effort to save trees, NEWLT would like to transition to email invitations for our events and field trips. Please assist us in this effort by sending us your email address. You can also stay informed about events and other updates by periodically visiting our website and joining us on Facebook. If you do not use email or the internet, but would like to stay informed, please call us and we will make sure you are not left out.*



## ESTATE PLANNING GUIDE NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE OR BY MAIL

### MEMORIAL GIFTS

Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust recognizes gifts made in memory of the following people:

**Carl Stiller  
Alice Zeiss**

Thank you to the families and friends who honored their loved ones with gifts to the Land Trust. The gift of preserving land is a gift that lasts forever.

### Join us for a spring bird migration field trip in May!

Have you ever stood on the Bay of Lake Michigan, watching and listening to the different birds as they flew by? Each spring, thousands of migratory waterfowl, gulls, terns, shorebirds and passerines move through the area on the way back from their winter homes. Northeastern Wisconsin Audubon Society and NEWLT would like to invite you to join us for field trip at Sensiba State Wildlife Area in Suamico on May 18, from 9a.m.-12p.m., to experience the beauty of the west shore.

We are honored to have the field trip led by Randy Hoffman, natural areas ecologist for the WDNR. Mr. Hoffman is the author and contributor of books about Wisconsin's natural communities and birds. This field trip is a great opportunity to learn more about the west shore of the Bay and its inhabitants. **Please RSVP to [newlt@newlt.org](mailto:newlt@newlt.org) or (920) 738-7265.**

**We hope you will join us!**

*Thank you for your support!*

