

Natural Heritage LAND TRUST

Conservation where you live.

Ten Years Conserving the Black Earth Creek Valley



SHELLEY DUBIS

The iconic Black Earth Creek valley stretches west across Dane County from Middleton to Mazomanie. It is a world of trout water, rich farmland, and steep wooded relief. It is the place where many people are introduced to the magical beauty of Wisconsin's driftless area as they make the drive down highway 14 or bike along highway KP.

The past year has been good for conservation in the Black Earth Creek valley. Natural Heritage Land Trust and its partners permanently protected over a mile of Vermont Creek, a picturesque trout stream and important tributary to Black Earth Creek, with two conservation easements that secure public access for fishing and hiking. The Land Trust also purchased a conservation easement on 80 acres covering a very prominent ridge directly across from Festge County Park. The conservation

The Land Trust completed three projects in the Black Earth Creek valley this year.

easement helps ensure that the panoramic view of the Black Earth Creek valley from the popular lookout at the park will remain unspoiled.

These three projects advance our effort to conserve the scenic beauty and high-quality waters of the Black Earth Creek valley. The valley landscape has been a conservation priority for many years. Since our first acquisition along Garfoot Creek in 2001, the Land Trust has permanently protected over 700 acres of cherished lands in the valley, including Hickory Hill Conservancy Park in Cross Plains and the Sunnyside Unit of the Black Earth Creek Wildlife Area in the Town of Middleton.

Public and private partnerships have been critical to our success. We work with local towns and villages to implement their land-conservation goals. Public funding of conservation purchases through the Dane County Conservation Fund and the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program are key. Working in concert with groups like Trout Unlimited and Ice Age Trail Alliance is critical to leverage our strengths. And, of course, we would be nowhere without the support and trust of private landowners and Natural Heritage Land Trust members who want to preserve this cherished landscape.

We continue to make progress. In the coming year we expect to complete our third farmland preservation project and open up another mile of Black Earth Creek to the public. Conservation easement projects like these permanently protect valuable natural resources at a fraction of the cost of outright land purchase with the added benefit that the land stays in private ownership and on the tax-rolls.

You can view an interactive map of our work from Middleton to Mazomanie on our website at: bit.ly/nHUFF9 ■

**WISCONSIN'S
2010
LAND TRUST
OF THE YEAR**



Mission

The Natural Heritage Land Trust protects natural areas, wildlife habitat, working farms, healthy lakes and streams, and recreational land to provide a high quality of life in the Dane County, Wisconsin region.

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Thank you for helping Natural Heritage Land Trust permanently protect nearly 800 acres at great places like the Black Earth Creek valley, Westport Drumlin, and the Town of Dunn this last year (see next page for details). We get these results by focusing on places with community consensus that land deserves protection. Strong partnerships with private landowners and local governments and other non-profits are important elements of our success. So is maintaining an efficient and frugal organization, with a staff of 3.5 and 43 volunteers. Our efficient and focused approach returned nearly \$14 worth of permanently protected land for every \$1 invested in the Natural Heritage Land Trust this year. In the works are additions to wildlife and natural areas and several farmland conservation easements. Your continued support and encouragement will help permanently protect the cherished places where you live.

Jim Welsh
Jim Welsh, Executive Director

CONSERVATION EASEMENT LANDOWNER PROFILE: Mary Trewartha

Mary Trewartha has had a conservation easement with Natural Heritage Land Trust on her Iowa County property since 2003. Of her 170 acres, 50 are in active prairie and savanna restoration and management and 45 acres are in hay and crops maintained by a local farmer. Mary's long-term dedication and determination combined with this mix of land practices has resulted in a biologically rich landscape that provides the ideal habitat for numerous at-risk plant and animal species, including high numbers of bobolinks and nesting redheaded woodpeckers. Mary has received funds to assist with restoration from the DNR's Landowner Incentive Program and the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Private Lands Program. Mary sat down with Land Trust board member Darcy Kind to talk about her land.

Darcy: What is your favorite plant?

Mary: Yellow star-grass (*Hypoxis hirsuta*). It is a beautiful and unusual little plant.

Darcy: What is your favorite place on the property?

Mary: Generally it is the prairie, because of the plants that you see out there and the sweep of the hills.

Darcy: What are the most common noises that you hear out here?

Mary: Frogs and birds in the spring, coyotes during the summer, and owls in the fall.

Darcy: Can you describe what a year in restoration is like on your property?

Mary: Early spring begins with prescribed burning, almost at the same time garlic mustard control begins, followed by burdock, yellow and white sweet clover, wild parsnip in the heat of the summer, and woody invasives during the winter. When completed, repeat.

Darcy: What is the biggest lesson that you have learned from the land?

Mary: That I never learn... restoration is an inexact science. Also—always add a year to whatever your expectations might be.

Darcy: What motivates you to keep going with restoration and management season after season?

Mary: The grassland birds, and the bobolinks in particular. I worry about the bobolinks from the time they leave till the time they arrive again! It is a lot of worry.

Darcy: If you had a chance to start your restoration and management over again, what would you do differently?

Mary: I would have gone after invasives the minute I saw them, but I didn't take them seriously or didn't know what they were. This would be advice that I would give others restoring their land too; just a few plants of garlic mustard or wild parsnip should be taken very seriously and controlled quickly.

Mary became a member of the Land Trust in 1987. Last year she joined our Legacy Circle. Thank you Mary for all you do for local land conservation. ■

Mary Trewartha at her Iowa County farm protected by a conservation easement held by the Natural Heritage Land Trust.



Conservation Project Roundup

July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011



UW Professor Emeritus of Geology Dave Mickelson led a field trip at Westport Drumlin Day, October 1, 2011.

**PERMANENTLY
PROTECTED**



Vern Treinen's farm was the first in the Town of Windsor to be protected by an agricultural conservation easement.



In May, Land Trust members explored land along Vermont Creek permanently protected by a streambank easement.

This year the Natural Heritage Land Trust completed nine land protection projects, permanently protecting 787 acres at cherished places in the Dane County region. Most of these projects are at places where we have spent years working with landowners and partners to conserve important natural resources. For example, please see our cover story about our work in the **Black Earth Creek valley**, where we completed two streambank easements and one scenic easement; these are our 6th, 7th, and 8th projects in the valley.

In partnership with the **Town of Dunn**, we permanently protected a 38-acre farm on Lalor Road; this is our third project on Lalor Road and adds to the many hundreds of acres of protected land in the Waubesa Wetlands areas. It is also our 21st project with the Town; our work there adds up to almost 2,700 permanently protected acres.

Thanks to the Koltes family, we added 100 acres and several prairie remnants to the **Westport Drumlin Prairie**/Empire Prairies State Natural Area east of Waunakee – in two years we have increased the amount of protected land there from 14 acres to 217. We also began to improve visitor access to Westport Drumlin.

We completed our second project at **Kingsley Bend** Mound Group south of the Wisconsin Dells on the Wisconsin River. At Kingsley Bend our goal is to help the Ho-Chunk Nation permanently protect this important cultural and natural landscape featuring several large dome-shaped mounds and a variety of animal-shaped effigy mounds.

We helped the **Town of Windsor** complete its first agricultural conservation easement, permanently protecting Vern and Vicki Treinen's 184-acre farm that is 100% high-quality soils. Modeled on the Town of Dunn's successful program, Windsor has identified a large area of the town for long-term agricultural use.

At the **Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area**, we assisted Driftless Area Land Conservancy in the completion of two agricultural conservation easements on Iowa County farmland owned by John and Nancy Meyers. ■

Thank You

to our members, donors and partners!

July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011

Leverage:

Each \$1 of your investment in the Natural Heritage Land Trust returned almost \$14 of land permanently protected this year.

Land Trust members visit Westport Drumlin Prairie at the lands dedication on October 1, 2011.

\$5,000+

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Conservation Specialist Caleb Pourchot and Land Trust Member William Sonzogni look for birds during a spring field trip.

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If you are a contributor and your name was left off this list or misspelled, we apologize. Please call us at 258-9797 and we will correct our records.



Land Trust members went birdwatching at Rattlesnake Ridge (the Glass Conservation Easement) by Dodgeville in May. From left to right, standing: Brooke Williams, Brendan Gorman, Larry Hitch, Lloyd Eagan, Vivian Pratsch, Patrick Eagan, Brad Bachner, Pam Heilman, William Sonzogni, Nancy Habeger, Mary Trewartha, Dan Erdman, Craig Heilman, Terry Habeger, Caleb Pourchot, Dave Clutter. Kneeling: Anne Bachner, Barbara Glass, Brad Glass, and Natalie Erdman.

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Legacy Circle

Legacy Circle members choose to remember Natural Heritage Land Trust in a will or through other planned gifts.

Emily Earley
Lawrence Hitch
Beth Kubly
Bill Lunney & Judie Pfeifer
Jim & Rumi O'Brien
Evan & Jane Pizer
Cary & Scott Reich
Pat Sammataro
Mary Trewartha
Jim Welsh
Carla Wright

Bequests

Florence Branch

Memorials & Honorariums

In Memory of Edward Charles Welsh
Maura Whitmore

In Memory of Vernon Walter Lee

Kevin, Martin, Peter, Susan,
Christopher & David M. Lee

In Honor of Caleb Pourchot

Shawn & Becky Pourchot

In honor of 2010 Wisconsin Land Trust of the Year

Sharon & Warren Gaskill

In Honor of Norman C. Anderson

Ruth & Thomas Kent
Eric, Ellen, Ian, Henry & Eva Anderson

In Honor of Vera & Wally Bauman

Bruce Bauman & Emily Bair
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Mike & June Denruiter
Jill & Mike McDermott

In Honor of Martha Frey & John Mason

Mary & Jerry Schwoch

In Honor of Les & Susan Hoffman

Alan Hoffman

In Honor of Winifred & William Welsh

Herbert Ley

Gifts of Land or Conservation Easements

Mike Festge, Sue Hiline
& Cindy Regan
John & Nancy Meyers

Financial Report

The Natural Heritage Land Trust's fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30.

Between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011, the Land Trust received \$208,802 for operations and spent \$247,170 for operations. An additional \$38,368 came from income on investments that support Land Trust operations.

Income for operations

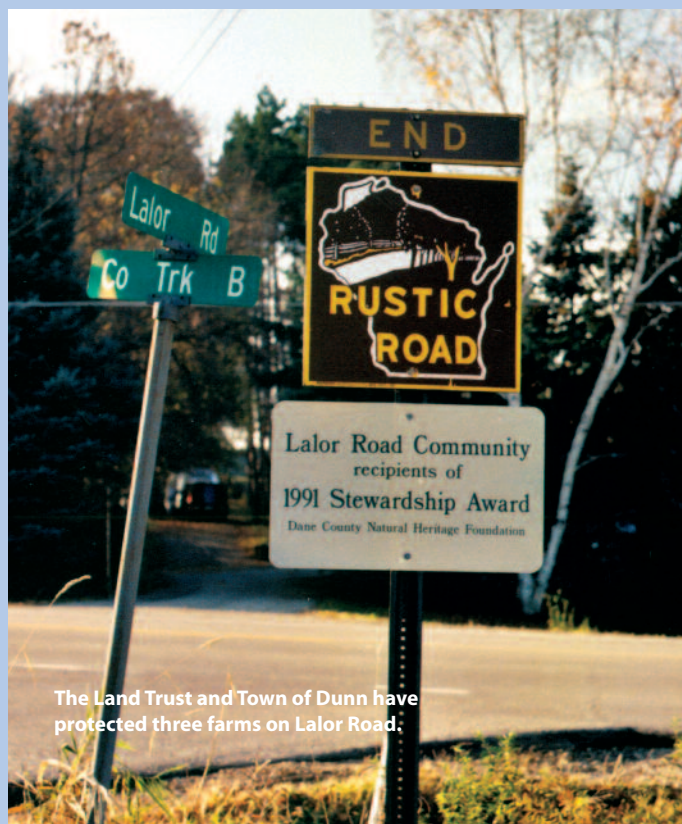
| | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Membership Contributions | \$138,842 | 66% |
| Consulting Fees | \$26,278 | 13% |
| Foundation Grants | \$14,856 | 7% |
| Endowment Distributions | \$14,460 | 7% |
| Rents | \$11,964 | 6% |
| Other | \$2,402 | 1% |
| Total | \$208,802 | 100% |

Expenses for operations

| | | |
|--|------------------|-------------|
| Personnel | \$183,325 | 74% |
| Rent and Office Expenses | \$17,700 | 7% |
| Professional services (accounting, etc.) | \$13,695 | 6% |
| Printing and Postage | \$9,210 | 4% |
| Land Management | \$6,500 | 3% |
| Real Estate Taxes | \$3,413 | 1% |
| Travel/meetings | \$1,155 | <1% |
| Other | \$12,172 | 5% |
| Total | \$247,170 | 100% |

\$3.2 million was provided by local, state, federal, private gifts, and landowner donations to protect 787 acres of important land and water in 2010-2011.

Please contact us if you would like a copy of our audited financial statements for July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011. The Land Trust's federal tax returns (990s) are available on Guidestar (www.guidestar.org).



The Land Trust and Town of Dunn have protected three farms on Lalor Road.





Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage Paid
Permit No. 245
Madison, WI

Look inside:

- **787 acres: roundup of land protected**
- **Mary Trewartha profile**
- **2010-2011 member list**

303 S. Paterson Street, #6
Madison, WI 53703

608 258-9797
www.nhlt.org

**YOU HAVE HELPED
PERMANENTLY PROTECT
7,294 ACRES OF CHERISHED
LOCAL LAND SINCE 1983**



Conservation where you live

This year the Natural Heritage Land Trust completed our 7th, 8th, and 9th land protection projects in the Black Earth Creek valley; read more inside.