



GROUNDSWELL CONSERVANCY

2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT
AND FALL 2018 NEWSLETTER

Formerly Natural Heritage Land Trust

Conservation Where You Live includes the food you eat

Peg Whiteside had a vision for her farm on the west side of Cherokee Marsh -- to protect it from development and let some of it continue to be a home for local food production by Hmong farmers. This summer she achieved her vision. She donated to Groundswell a perpetual conservation easement over 90 acres of her farm, ensuring that the land will remain available for farming even after she no longer owns it. And she sold to us, at a generous discount, ten acres of land to allow a group of Hmong farmers to continue to have a place to raise vegetables and flowers. Peg said that she is "grateful there is a way to protect her farm and also the land that the Hmong farmers have been relying on for the past 20 years."

Peg's farm sits on a hill overlooking Cherokee Marsh. It is made up of some of the best soil in the nation. It is also an important link in the landscape between Cherokee Marsh and our Westport Drumlin preserve.

Knowing that minority and immigrant farmers sometimes face barriers to long-term land access, Peg turned to us to find a way for the Hmong farmers to continue to work the land after she retired from farming. Could we help? Thanks to Peg's generosity, an anonymous donor, and a grant from the Dane County Conservation Fund under its innovative Agriculture, Gardening, and Foraging initiative, we were able to purchase the ten acres from Peg. Now we will begin our work with the Hmong farmers, embracing the principles of community food-sovereignty that are important to local food production. These include: valuing the food providers, putting control locally, building knowledge and skills, and working with nature. Let us know if you would like to learn more about this project or get involved. We will need help with everything from putting in a well to developing a lease system for the grower's plots and common areas. ●

Andy Vang is one of 20 Hmong farmers raising vegetables, fruits, and flowers on ten acres of land permanently protected between Cherokee Marsh and Westport Drumlin.

**PROTECTED
FOREVER**

Conservation Where You Live
A year of conservation successes



DANIELLE LEE

As many of us witnessed first-hand in August, flooding can be made more severe when a watershed loses its wetlands. Our acquisition in June means that another 95 acres of wetlands at **Cherokee Marsh** can never be developed or otherwise used in ways that prevent them from protecting water quality at the top of the Yahara chain of lakes. We purchased the property from the Wisconsin Laborers' Apprenticeship and Training Fund. Critical financial support was provided by Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Dane County Conservation Fund, Friends of Cherokee Marsh, and supporters of Groundswell. ●



TIM ESCHER

On **Lake Wisconsin**, thanks to the foresight of several landowners as well as collaboration with Gathering Waters, we have created a block of conserved land that extends across 182 acres of upland woods, prairie remnants, wetlands, and mostly undeveloped shoreline near Okee on Lake Wisconsin. In April we took over from Gathering Waters, the perpetual responsibility to uphold a conservation easement protecting almost 3,000 feet of undeveloped shoreline on the lake. In May Tim and Terri Escher generously donated their second conservation easement to us. These lands are not open to the public but they protect beautiful scenery that will be enjoyed forever by boaters on Lake Wisconsin. The easements also help maintain water quality by restricting the disturbance of soil and sediment that might otherwise end up in the lake. ●



French Creek Wildlife Area grows by 139 acres

Protecting special places forever takes commitment. Thanks to one landowner's persistence and patience, 139 acres of scenic upland and wetland habitat were protected forever at French Creek Wildlife Area in Columbia County in September.

Since 1860, Richard Wilcox's family has owned and operated their farm adjacent to what we now call French Creek Wildlife Area. Some of the Town of Fort Winnebago's oldest plat books show the Wilcox family farm, and even the road the farm sits on bears the Wilcox name. Richard decided to sell the farmland to Groundswell to ensure the land his family has stewarded for generations can be enjoyed by others.

Groundswell will manage the property consistent with the adjacent state land to increase public recreation opportunities at French Creek. According to Sara Kehrli, DNR Wildlife Biologist, "Restoring the farmland to native cover will increase bird nesting potential, add habitat complexity to a key stopover area during migration, and decrease nutrient runoff within the watershed."

Funding to purchase the Wilcox Addition to French Creek Wildlife Area was provided by Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, National Wild Turkey Federation, and supporters of Groundswell. ●



When was the last time you had this much fun?

You did it, you saved the woods! Thanks to the support of many people and foundations, last December we purchased one-half acre of land at **Lake View Elementary School** on the north side of Madison to enlarge the school's outdoor classroom. Nearly 80% of Lake View's students come from low-income families living in small apartments with no yard to play in and explore. Your support gets them outside and excited about seeds sprouting, leaves falling, and the warbling songs of birds. This summer, with the help of Operation Fresh Start we built a nature course on the property – featuring a construction play area, a spider web scrambling net, a “whale watch” teeter totter – where the students can have fun and learn outside. ●



“The land belongs to the future, Carl; that’s the way it seems to me. How many of the names on the county clerk’s plat will be there in fifty years? I might as well try to will the sunset over there to my brother’s children. We come and go, but the land is always here. And the people who love it and understand it are the people who own it—for a little while.”
—O Pioneers! by Willa Cather

Norm and Carol Aulabaugh were inspired by the writings of Willa Cather to transform 75 acres outside of Orfordville in Rock County into a public natural resource. Norm and Carol donated the land, **Sunny Peace Prairie**, to Green-Rock Audubon Society, who will be responsible for creating an outdoor education resource on the property. As part of this initiative, in February Green-Rock Audubon Society granted to Groundswell a permanent conservation easement on the land to ensure that the Aulabaugh’s wishes for it to remain open for the public’s enjoyment be upheld, forever. Our thanks go to Norm and Carol for their wonderful gift to the future and to Groundswell Conservancy supporters that make our work on these projects possible. ●



Thanks to the generous donation of land by Full Circle Farm, LLC, at the end of 2017 we permanently protected 31 acres of wetlands north of Stoughton. This property is adjacent to an 82-acre wetland area owned by the DNR along the **Yahara River**. Wetlands are increasingly endangered in Wisconsin. According to Katie Beilfuss, Outreach Programs Director at Wisconsin Wetlands Association, “wetlands provide critical natural benefits for our communities, including protection from flooding, improving water quality, and providing critical habitat for wildlife. With 50% of Wisconsin’s wetlands already gone, and efforts underway to roll back state and federal wetland protections, it’s more important than ever to protect wetlands through local and private actions like this one.” ●



In collaboration with Riverland Conservancy and Wisconsin Power & Light, in October, 2017 we assumed responsibility for the stewardship of a 359-acre conservation easement in the heart of Merrimac Preserve on the southeast side of Devil's Lake State Park. Merrimac Preserve is a 1,700-acre natural area owned and managed by Riverland Conservancy. **Merrimac Preserve** surrounds Gallus Slough, a shallow marsh connecting to Lake Wisconsin and home to many kinds of waterfowl and other wildlife. The conservation easement, which covers a large area around Gallus Slough, was originally established between the landowner – Wisconsin Power & Light Company – and Riverland Conservancy in 1998. From now on, Groundswell will be responsible for making sure that the land under the easement remains undeveloped as wildlife habitat. ●



In the Works

Three years ago a fourth generation landowner asked if we could help protect the last remaining part of his family's farm upstream from Waubesa Wetlands. Brian Pasley was concerned about the impending development of land in the City of Fitchburg, some of which is in the headwaters of Waubesa Wetlands. Over the next few years, more than one square mile of farmland and rural open space will be transformed into a new neighborhood, bringing changes to the quality and quantity of water heading into **Waubesa Wetlands via Swan Creek**. The Society of Wetland Scientists has identified Waubesa Wetlands as one of the world's most valuable wetlands, so we all need to do whatever we can to protect it. We hope to purchase the Pasley property by the end of the year.



Marie Fraser with her two daughters

Marie Fraser: Leaving a legacy of land

Conservation was always important to her mom, said Lynn Rassmussen. Marie Fraser, who lived her whole life in Madison, believed Wisconsin is a lovely state and wanted to help keep it that way. She also loved to birdwatch. Marie passed away this February, but her support of conservation continues. As she had been planning for a long time, she bequeathed \$100,000 of her estate to Groundswell. A portion of her gift will help fund our easement enforcement endowment at Madison Community Foundation, which allows us to uphold our easements, forever. Her gift is also helping to fund several land purchases, including critical habitat for bald eagles at Ferry Bluff State Natural Area. Marie had several philanthropic interests and was also a financial supporter of the Lake View Public Library, Rape Crisis Center, DAIS, and other local nonprofits. Her mom's whole family was kind-hearted, said Lynn. We never had the opportunity to thank Marie personally for her gift but we are deeply grateful for her thoughtful planning and generosity. ●



Legacy Circle

Make a lasting difference as a Legacy Circle member! There is no greater legacy that one can leave than permanently protect land. Learn about your options for adding Groundswell to your estate plans, including bequests, IRA or life insurance designations, and more: visit groundswellwisconsin.org/legacy or contact Heidi Habeger at (608) 258-9797 or heidi@groundswellwisconsin.org.



Legacy Circle Members: Dorothy & John Priske on their Fountain Prairie Farm

Supporters who have included Groundswell in their estate plans

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Anonymous (5) | Bill Lunney & Judie Pfeifer |
| Johanna Allex | Nancy McGill |
| Norman & Peggy Anderson | Stefanie Moritz & Vince Jenkins |
| Patricia Arndorfer | Jim & Rumi O'Brien |
| Norm & Carol Aulabaugh | Evan & Jane Pizer |
| Jodi Bruss-Sherman & Jack Sherman | Dorothy & John Priske |
| Dana & Pat Chabot | Cary & Scott Reich |
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| Julie Hayward | Nicole & Paul Staskowski |
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| Sue Jones | Jim Welsh |
| Douglas & Marjorie King | Pat Wende |
| Joanna Kramer Fanney | Carla Wright |
| Beth Kubly | |



Executive Director’s message

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” — Margaret Mead

This fall marks the 35th anniversary of Groundswell Conservancy – originally known as the Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation. Over these 35 years, the founders of our land trust, and all the supporters, conservation-minded landowners, volunteers, and partners have made our part of the world a distinctly better place. Together we have permanently protected almost 12,000 acres of great places like Black Earth Creek, Patrick Marsh, Cherokee Marsh, and some of the best farmland in the nation.

I am grateful for all you have helped us accomplish and I look forward to what we can achieve together in 2019.
—Jim Welsh, Executive Director



Protecting special places, forever.

Community conservation helps protect special places, forever. In January, we began hosting monthly outdoor volunteering opportunities at Patrick Marsh and Westport Drumlin – and it sure has paid off! This year 125 volunteers dedicated 388 hours to accomplish some amazing tasks, including planting five acres of prairie at Westport Drumlin and restoring the savanna around the kettle pond at Patrick Marsh. Visitors are already enjoying the benefits, and we hope they’ll learn to love their local natural places even more.

And thanks to the next generation of conservationists, we were able to accomplish even more this year at Patrick Marsh and Westport Drumlin. In 2018, the Prairie Partners intern crew put in 650 hours of work at these special places.

If you volunteered with us this year, thank you! Future generations depend on us to protect these special places, forever.
If you’d like to get involved, I’d like to hear from you.
—Tony Abate, tony@groundswellwisconsin.org 608/258-9797



SARA SHACKLETON

Flood Update

The August rains which did so much damage in our community also destroyed a section of the Wolf Run Trail that connects Mazomanie with Wisconsin Heights School along Black Earth Creek. The Wolf Run Association has done a great job repairing the surface of most the trail and getting the bridge over Black Earth Creek put back in place. The most heavily damaged section of the trail, where it passes under Highway 14, was repaired by Wisconsin DOT and the entire trail has already been reopened. Thanks go to the Wolf Run Association, Gateway to the Driftless, and Wisconsin DOT for getting this great community resource repaired so quickly.

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CONSERVATION SPECIALIST
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BY THE NUMBERS

July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018
Your individual gift makes a big difference!

843 Members
698 Acres Protected Forever
\$1,231,862 Value of Land Permanently Protected

Between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018 Groundswell Conservancy received \$387,199 for programs and operations and spent \$443,492 for programs and operations. The difference of \$56,293 came from reserve funds that support the work of Groundswell. In addition, Groundswell received \$411,573 in private gifts as well as public funds from Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, Dane County Conservation Fund, and North American Wetlands Conservation Act to permanently protect land.

Income for Operations		
Contributions from individuals	\$317,776	82%
Restricted gifts	\$11,438	3%
Consulting fees, rental income, and other	\$90,683	19%
Endowment distributions from Madison Community Foundation		5%
Easement Enforcement Endowment	\$8,816	
Operations Endowment	\$4,657	
Bob and Anne Bolz Gift Endowment	\$7,843	
Total operating income	\$387,199	100%
Total capital income for land acquisition	\$411,573	
Expenses for Programs and Operations		
Program services	\$290,219	65%
Management and general	\$75,737	13%
Fundraising	\$59,711	13%
Total Program and Operating Expenses	\$443,492	100%

As of June 30, 2018 Groundswell Conservancy had total assets of \$7,200,085 and liabilities of \$58,728. Most of our assets are our nature preserves.

To view the details of our financial health, please see our financial reports posted at www.guidestar.org. The 2017-2018 report should be posted by December 2018. You can also view our federal tax returns at our website under the tab “ways to give” / “donate with confidence.”



We protect special places, forever.
Our vision is a world filled with green places where communities thrive.



ROBERTA HERSCHLEB



BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY



BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY



BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY



BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY



BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY

THANK YOU for your investment in conservation where you live

No matter how you chose to give, every Groundswell supporter helps protect special places. With your generous donations of money, time, expertise, and passion, together we are ensuring that our cherished local lands are here for generations to come. The people, foundations, and businesses listed on the following pages have all given generously to Groundswell in the last fiscal year, July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018. There are more names on this list than ever before, a testament to how much our community values conservation. We are deeply grateful.

\$20,000 & Above

Nimick Forbesway Foundation

\$10,000 - \$19,999

Tim & Terri Escher³
Black Hawk Ridge Trail Run
Gathering Waters³
Green-Rock Audubon Society³
Madison Community Foundation
Jean & Walter Meanwell
Riverland Conservancy³
Glenn Reinl & Sara Krebsbach
Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation
William Van Haren

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Alliant Energy Foundation
Marvin Beatty
Bitzer Family Legacy Fund
Doug & Sherry Caves²
Dave Jenkins & Mary Pertzborn
Stan Kanter
Bart Klotzbach
Jim & Rumi O'Brien²
Charlie Sanders & Tina Pacente
Pure Sweet Honey Farm
Jim Trumpy

\$2,000 - \$4,999

Mary Binkley & Dennis Petzke^{1,2}
Nancy & Lou Bruch²
Nancy & Wes Carter²
Dana & Pat Chabot
Sherren Clark
Dan & Natalie Erdman
Full Circle Farm, LLC
Nancy Heiden²
Pat & Patricia Hermesen
High Wind Association Foundation
David Koltes
Tom & Margie Krauskopf
Roma Lenehan
Stefanie Moritz & Vince Jenkins
Bill O'Connor & Krista Roys

Patagonia
Cary & Scott Reich²
Robert & Nancy Rudd³
Dorothy Troller
Bill & Lorette Wambach
Frank & Mariana Weinhold
Jim Welsh
Pat Wende
Maura Whitmore

\$1,000 - \$1,999

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Cal & Ruth DeWitt
Michael & Shelley Dubis
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Festge Double Forte, LLC³
Cameron & Kate Field
First Business Bank¹
Matt & Kay Frank
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Pamela D. Heaney
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Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc.
Greg & Jane Hyer
Susan & Conrad Jostad²
Kurt & Ann Krumholz
Beth Kubly
Mike & Pepé Foundation
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Fred Wolf³

\$500 - \$999

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Steep & Brew¹
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Dennis Tande & Mary Manering
Mary Trewartha
The Vogel Foundation
Rolf & Susan Wulfsberg
Geoff & Josie Young
Telle Zoller

\$250 - \$499

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Jan Behn & David Henige
Blue Moon Community Farm¹
Linda Bochert
John Booske
Carrie Breunig
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Rebecca Cole
Samuel & Phyllis Constan
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Victoria Enright
Jon Fadness
Herman Felstehausen
& Geke de Vries
Fontana Sports Specialties¹
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Clayton Ganser
Sharon & Warren Gaskill
Kennedy Gilchrist & Heidi Wilde
Robert & Linda Graebner
Grassland Media Inc.¹
Lee Grubb

\$250 - \$499 (continued)

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Terry Haller
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Haskins Short & Brindley, LLC
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Kathy Hornemann
Allen Jacobson & Lila Daut
Monica Jaehnig
Darcy Kind & Marc Vitale¹
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\$100 - \$249
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Whitt Case
David Casey & Kevin Hubbard
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CDW Corporation

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Arlen & Judy Christenson
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Joshua Deno
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William & Lynne Eich
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Kris Euclide & Doug Steege
Joanna Fanney
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Daniel Fields
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Haen Real Estate¹



We have always loved being outdoors, exploring the parks and waterways so abundant in Wisconsin. It was at the Parks & Trails Unite Festival that we learned about the mission of Groundswell to protect and preserve our land and water. This deeply resonates with us. We want to help continue the work of Groundswell, and becoming sustaining contributors allows us to be ongoing supporters. —Jeanne and Michael Mraz, Groundswell Sustainers

Give monthly to help protect the places you love. Ask Danni how at danni@groundswellwisconsin.org.

¹ Event Sponsor ² Prairie Partner Sponsor ³ Part or all of gift is to help uphold our conservation easements
⁴ Gift to Groundswell endowment at Madison Community Foundation



AUTHEA DOTZOUR PHOTOGRAPHY

Magical places. Just to feel the breeze atop Westport Drumlin on a warm June day. Is that one of those noisy Titmice hollering at Patrick Marsh? The late-summer waves of grasses like an ocean along Black Earth Creek. Groundswell keeps the magic sprouting all over Southern Wisconsin and I'm quite glad to be a small part of it as an office volunteer and out in the field getting my feet wet and my hands dirty.
—Jim Bredeson, Volunteer and sustaining supporter

\$100 - \$249 (continued)

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Cathy Acker
Jim & Ann Addis
Carmen Alcalde & Sue Hunter
Dan Anderson
Norman & Lucie Arendt
Alisha Arnold
Barbara & Stephen Arnold
Jan Axelson & Jim Hughes
Mary & Jim Bachhuber
Mary Bakken
Shannon Ballhorn-Wagner
Sue Bangert & Mike Hammers
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Pamela Bock
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& Jack Holzhueter
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Erin Courtenay
Tom & Carla Crabb
Christy Craemer
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James Davis
Warren & Deborah Day
Jane Dennis
Samuel & Lynne Dennis, Jr.
Gordon & Gail Derzon
Marilyn DeWitt
Lynne & Bob Diebel
Judi Dilks & Rex Merrill
Shawn Doherty
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Althea & Bryan Dotzour
David & Linda Dueholm
Linn A. Duesterbeck
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Jeff Durbin
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Jim Ely
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Hildy Feen
Frank Feit & Christine Fleming
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Lee Gasper-Galvin
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When we chose to support the work and values of Groundswell, we were happy to use a portion of our IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution money.
— Barb and Mark Jung, Supporters

If you are over 70-1/2 years of age, the IRA charitable rollover is now a permanent way to reduce your taxable income, even if you do not itemize deductions. It's another way to support conservation where you live.



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THANK YOU Volunteers

We are deeply grateful to the dedicated volunteers, who devote many hours to serve on our board and committees, help with field trips, assist in the office, manage the lands, and more.

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Appreciation Party



ROBERTA HERSCHLEB

Tuesday, December 11th
4:00 – 6:00 pm
Lussier Family Heritage Center
3101 Lake Farm Road, Madison

Join us in celebrating all you have made possible this year in land protection! You are protecting special places, forever, and we want to show our appreciation. Enjoy hors d'oeuvres and refreshments between 4 and 6 pm, with a short program at 5 pm. RSVP online at groundswellwisconsin.org/appreciationparty or call (608) 258-9797.

Places worth knowing

No need to suffer cabin fever when you can join Groundswell Conservancy outside this winter on our free field trips. Space is limited so be sure to register at groundswellwisconsin.org soon.



BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY

Patrick Marsh Bonfire & Candlelight Snowshoe

Saturday, January 19, 2019
4:00-6:00PM

Explore the winter magic of Patrick Marsh Wildlife Area on a 1.5 mile snowshoe. This easy trail will be lit with candles guiding you to a toasty bonfire. Warm drinks and roasted marshmallows await you at the end of the trail. ●



BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY

Westport Drumlin Bonfire

Friday, February 15, 2019
5:00-7:00PM

Start the weekend off right with friends around a cozy bonfire at the Westport Drumlin Preserve. You'll learn about this special place while relaxing with other conservation minded folk and soaking up the stars. ●