



GROUNDSWELL
CONSERVANCY

2018–2019 ANNUAL REPORT



“My farm, it’s such a nurturing place, beautiful, with good soils. What’s not to love? (Maybe the mosquitoes and Japanese beetles.) I see an endless appetite for land. Watching the area turn into a suburb, that’s what brought it home for me.”
– Peg Whiteside.

Following in the conservation footsteps of her mother and sister, Peg placed a conservation easement on her farm overlooking Cherokee Marsh and sold us 10 acres so that a group of Hmong families could continue to grow food and flowers.

756 acres of land permanently protected this year means our communities are more resilient to flooding, farmers can invest in their soil with the confidence that it won't be developed, wildlife has more places to thrive, and we all can enjoy more public nature spaces.



6



It has been an honor to work with these conservation-minded landowners this year:

1. Peg Whiteside donated a 90-acre conservation easement on her farm overlooking Cherokee Marsh. PHOTO: MARIO QUINTANA
2. Peg also sold to us, at a discount, 10 acres to ensure Hmong growers continue to have land to farm. PHOTO: BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY
3. Richard Wilcox sold to us 139 acres of beautiful uplands and wetlands at French Creek Wildlife Area in Columbia County. This land is open to the public for hiking, hunting, and more.
4. Tom Hanley sold to us, at a discount, 25 acres of upland to expand Patrick Marsh. Planting prairie on this parcel will protect water flowing into Patrick Marsh. PHOTO: BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY
5. An anonymous landowner sold to us 31 acres to expand Ferry Bluff State Natural Area on the Wisconsin River and help prevent disturbance of winter roosting sites for bald eagles.
6. Brian Pasley sold to us, at a discount, 36 acres of farmland and wetlands on Swan Creek, upstream from Waubesa Wetlands. Neighborhood Food Solutions is using the farmland to show kids and adults how to grow food. PHOTO: BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY
7. Pat and Patricia Hermesen donated a 59-acre conservation easement of field and forest overlooking the Village of Oregon. One day this land will become a public conservancy park. PHOTO: BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY
8. Bill and Roz Gausman placed a conservation easement on their 212 acre farm in the Town of Dunn through our partnership with the Town's Rural Preservation Program. PHOTO: BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY
9. An anonymous farm family placed a conservation easement on their 76 acre farm in the Town of Dunn, protecting high-quality soil from development.
10. An anonymous farm family placed a conservation easement on their 80 acre farm in the Town of Dunn, helping to improve water quality draining into the Yahara River. PHOTO: ROBERTA HERSCHLEB

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Mud, Sweat, and Cheers

In spring 2018 a neighbor reached out to Groundswell to ask that we improve the trail near the southern entrance to Patrick Marsh. For months each spring this trail was flooded, muddy, and difficult to cross. Together with the Sun Prairie Rotary Club and other volunteers, over two days last fall we built a boardwalk over the seventy wettest feet of trail. Building the boardwalk was a community effort made possible by James E. Dutton Foundation, Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, Sun Prairie Rotary, and our many volunteers and caring community members. Thank you!

At Westport Prairie, volunteers from Madison College, Friends of Cherokee Marsh, UW Badger Volunteers, Waunakee High School and elsewhere, along with our Prairie Partners summer intern crew, continued to restore and expand the four prairie remnants that are the cornerstone of this preserve.

Saving Grand Oaks

This summer we received a grant from the John C. Bock Foundation to restore an oak savanna on the east side of Patrick Marsh. The savanna is home to many white and bur oaks that have stood tall on the landscape for many years. But today the oaks are being outcompeted by smaller, faster-growing shrubs and trees like box elder maples that are shading out and killing the lower branches of the oaks.

With the support of the Bock Foundation, help is on the way. We will hire contractors this winter to remove the invading shrubs and trees. Once the initial work is finished, we will follow up with our trusty volunteers and interns to go after the weeds and saplings that emerge. This important restoration work will extend the lives of these oaks and will let future generations enjoy their awe-inspiring nature.

A Partnership Soars

Intrepid volunteers of the Ferry Bluff Eagle Council are about to begin their winter work watching the skies each evening for eagles entering fifteen roosts near Sauk Prairie. The Council has been doing these counts since 1989. This information helps track the eagle population and is also important to the local economy.

Our partnership with the Eagle Council means that some of the vital roosts are better protected this winter. Together last fall we added 31 acres to the Ferry Bluff State Natural Area, protecting more land from development that might drive the eagles away.





BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY

People were on the lookout for bumblebees in the fall flowers of Patrick Marsh at September's Pollinator Walk led by Susan Carpenter.

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A Day in the Field



JEFF STROBEL



Each year, Groundswell inspects the places we've protected, including the 7,200 acres of land under permanent conservation easements. These monitoring visits ensure that the conservation values of our protected lands are upheld in perpetuity.

Six-Mile Creek Wetlands Protected

Pam and Pat O'Malley, Dave O'Malley
(not pictured are LaVonne O'Malley, and
Maureen O'Malley and Ken Lemmer)



As we learn more and more every day, every single piece of wetland we have left is worth protecting—the health of Madison's chain of lakes and other watersheds depend on our wetlands. In September we permanently protected 84 acres of wetlands along Six-Mile Creek on the northwest corner of Waunakee. Six-Mile Creek flows south of Waunakee into Lake Mendota. We need wetlands like these to keep the water clean and reduce flooding.

The O'Malley family worked patiently with us for four years to protect their land. It has been in the family for three generations. To hear the O'Malley's story about the land, please visit our home page at groundswellwisconsin.org for a link to a video interview. Funding and other support to purchase the property came from the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, Dane County Conservation Fund, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Village of Waunakee, the Town of Westport, and supporters of Groundswell including the Estate of Marie Fraser. The Village of Waunakee will be the long-term owner of the property.

Accreditation Comments Welcome

Groundswell Conservancy is pleased to announce that it is seeking renewal of our accreditation as a conservation organization that meet national standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The public comment period is open through June 19, 2020.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission is an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance. It conducts an extensive review of each applicant's policies and programs. The Commission invites public input, in the form of signed, written comments. Comments must relate to how Groundswell Conservancy complies with national quality standards. For the full list of the standards see <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/help-and-resources/indicator-practices>. To learn more about the accreditation program, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org. You may email your comment to info@landtrustaccreditation.org or mail them to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments, 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.

Black Earth Creek



Because of its beauty and its trout, people have long cared about the Black Earth Creek valley. Since 2001, Groundswell has been fortunate to work with ten families to create access for fishing, prevent development of farmland, and set aside land for trails. We are at work right now purchasing a piece of land adjacent to DNR land near Cross Plains.

I first spoke to the landowner in February, who was referred to me by Kevin Thusius at the Ice Age Trail Alliance. The family is settling an estate and has two parcels to sell, one of which would be a good home for a segment of the Ice Age Trail. Kevin and I have teamed up in the hopes that in the next few months both parcels will become part of the mosaic of permanently protected conservation land in the valley.

Over the spring and summer we have ordered an appraisal of the property, reviewed the property title, investigated for environmental contaminants (none found!), and have been raising money to complete the acquisition. If you would like to make a contribution, please let me know.

– Jim Welsh, Executive Director

Here's the good news I always like to share: Thanks to your support and the dedication of conservation-minded landowners, this past year we secured land for immigrant and minority farmers and protected four farms in the Town of Dunn and near Cherokee Marsh. We safeguarded roosting habitat for bald eagles, conserved important wetlands, and added uplands to Patrick Marsh. And we reserved open space overlooking the Village of Oregon for a future conservancy park.

These successes don't happen by accident. And none of them would have happened without your support. We are successful because of the community of people who care about land.

This fall, Bill Lunney was recognized for 50 years of service to the Dane County community, including 30 years as the chair of the Dane County Parks Commission.

When I think of Bill and his wife Judie Pfeifer, I think of more parks, bigger parks, more kinds of parks, and people who love parks. Bill knows that parks and other protected areas can be community builders. The public treasures that Bill has helped create are the spaces we need to strengthen our social fabric. And we need that more than ever.

In a fitting recognition of Bill's service, the Dane County Board of Supervisors renamed Lake Farm County Park in his honor. Congratulations to Bill and Judie, and thank you and all our supporters, partners, and landowners for protecting special places, forever.

—Jim Welsh, Executive Director



ANGIE BANKS

BEN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY



Your Legacy, Next Generation's Future

As a Legacy Circle member, you are crucial to preserving our irreplaceable lands for the future. To 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.

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BY THE NUMBERS

July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

Your individual gift makes a big difference!

750 Supporters

756 Acres Protected Forever

\$3,970,440 Value of Land Permanently Protected

Between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019 Groundswell Conservancy received \$480,121 for programs and operations and spent \$492,357 for programs and operations. In addition, Groundswell received \$3,175,969 in private gifts and public funds from Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, Dane County Conservation Fund, Town of Dunn, and US Department of Agriculture to permanently protect 756 acres of land.

Income for Programs and Operations

Contributions from individuals	\$353,538	74%
Restricted gifts	\$42,333	9%
Consulting fees, rental income, and other	\$30,099	6%
Endowment distributions from Madison Community Foundation		5%
Easement Enforcement Endowment	\$10,387	
Operations Endowment	\$4,471	
Bob and Anne Bolz Gift Endowment	\$7,650	
Investment Fund distribution	\$31,643	7%

Total Program and Operating income \$480,121 100%

Total Income for Land Acquisition \$3,175,969

Expenses for Programs and Operations

Conservation, Education, and Outreach	\$336,043	68%
Fundraising	\$95,157	19%
Management and General	\$61,157	12%

Total Program and Operating Expenses \$492,357 100%

As of June 30, 2019 Groundswell Conservancy had total assets of \$8,122,611 and liabilities of \$82,771. 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 2018-2019 report should be posted by February 2020. You can also view our federal tax returns at our website under the tab "ways to give" / "donate with confidence".



GROUNDSWELL
CONSERVANCY

We protect special places forever. We want everyone to live in a world filled with green places where communities thrive. We believe that land is essential for people's physical, emotional, and spiritual wellness. If we don't protect undeveloped land now, it may be lost forever.



Thank you for your investment in *conservation where you live*

Each and every gift, no matter the size, helps protect the land we love, forever. The following generous supporters gave gifts to Groundswell Conservancy between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

Thank you for protecting special places, forever.

\$100,000 & Above

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\$50,000 - \$99,999

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\$30,000 - \$49,999

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"We choose to give monthly because we know that conservation is an ongoing process and one that is more urgently needed than ever. And we trust Groundswell with our donations because we've seen the results of their work first hand in beautiful places like the Eggleston-Muir family farm, the Priske family farm, and several easements along Black Earth Creek. Thank you to Groundswell for all you do!"

— Amanda Dambrink & Johnathon Dexter, Sustainers

By becoming a Groundswell Sustainer, you provide predictable funding, allowing us to plan for the future. Your monthly contributions play a major role in protecting local lands from development.

¹Event Sponsor ²Prairie Partners Sponsor ³Part or all of gift is to help uphold our conservation easements

⁴Part or all of gift for land acquisitions ⁵Gifts or Partial Gifts of Land and Easements ⁶Monthly Sustainer



I remember fondly the birthdays of my youth when I could legally drive, drink, and vote! Decades later these hallmark birthdays have been replaced by the year I signed up for Medicare, when I started receiving social security checks, and when I turned 70½. What? Yes, the year I turned 70½ I had to take “Required Minimum Distributions” from my IRA and other tax-deferred plans. You can reduce the annual amount on which you must pay taxes on RMD withdrawals by making a “Qualified Charitable Distribution” or QCD to Groundswell. This is especially beneficial if you can no longer itemize deductions (like charitable gifts). I will be making an annual QCD to Groundswell to continue its great work AND to lower my taxes!

— Pat Pourchot, Supporter with son Caleb

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ALTHEA DOTZOUR PHOTOGRAPHY

I've always found ways to be connected with nature: from a pine needle nest in the woods as a child to my home now bordering Patrick Marsh, nature has brought me solace. When I retired, I felt the need to cultivate my love of nature. Volunteering with Groundswell has been an important part of that goal. Working with Groundswell's dedicated, talented employees has inspired me to also donate funds to advance their well thought out goals to secure important parcels of lands, as well as developing and promoting existing sites.

**— Pat Wende,
 Volunteer and Legacy
 Circle member**

¹Event Sponsor ²Prairie Partners Sponsor ³Part or all of gift is to help uphold our conservation easements

⁴Part or all of gift for land acquisitions ⁵Gifts or Partial Gifts of Land and Easements ⁶Monthly Sustainer



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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Ledell Zellers & Simon Anderson
Beth Zelten⁴
Thomas Ziegelhoffer
Rich & Andrea Zietko⁴

Memorials & Honorariums

In honor of Norman Anderson
Eva, Henry, Ian, Ellen and Eric Anderson

In honor of Patricia Arndorfer
Gary Coenen

In memory of Jane Bauman
Mike & June Bauman Denruiter

In honor of Vera Bauman
Mike & June Bauman Denruiter
Barbara Nilsson

*In honor of Jeanne Behrend
& Daniel Fields's Wedding*
Jason & Lucilyn Buesing
Wendy Dorman
Daniel & Cathleen Huber
Marirose & John Huebscher
Cheralyn Randall
Bart & Shirley Klotzbach
Georgine Price
Kent & Judy Hinze
Katherine Gergor
Terry Fields
Sally Fields
Kathryn & Paul Anderson
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Kathleen Falk & Peter Bock

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Jeffrey & Paula Renk
Charles Johnston
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Jeffrey & Jeanne Brandt
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Richard & Laurel Steffes
Joan Smiley
Julie Chase
Thomas Ramsey
Caleb Pourchot & Heidi Habeger
Deborah Isenberg
Eric Vollrath
Marilyn McGarry
Laura Zimmerman

In honor of Janet Braun
Richard McCoy

In honor of Nancy & Lou Bruch
Doris & Dick Dubielzig

In memory of Harold Cottington
Tom Cottington

In memory of Jim Cottington
Tom Cottington

In memory of Art Engel
Kathleen Engel-Hunt

In honor of Natalie Erdman
Anonymous

In honor of Pleasant & Jerry Frautschi
Sylvia Marek

In memory of Bradley Glass
Barbara Glass

In memory of Richard "Steve" Grant
Stephanie Reynolds

In memory of Kirk Jiannacopoulos
Julia Jiannacopoulos

In memory of Bart Klotzbach
Paula Barbour
Janice & Jim Eastman
Timothy & Judy Wicke

In memory of Jean Knickmeyer
Rosalind & Bill Gausman

In honor of Tom & Margie Krauskopf
Sara Krauskopf, Josh Krauskopf, &
Rachel Walts

In memory of Scott LaBelle
Jane Sybers

In honor of Margaret Lalor
Timothy & Kathleen Curran

*In honor of Suzie
& Graham Lovell*
Bill & Judith Eisinger

In memory of Martha Martin
Anna Goebel

In memory of Rick Morrison
Mike & June Bauman Denruiter

*In memory of Don
& Dolores Neurauder*
Janet Neurauder

In honor of Caleb Pourchot
Sara Dillivan-Graves & Robert Graves

In memory of John Rausch
Joe Rausch

In memory of Bill Roark
Brenda Haskins

In memory of Ann Rogan
John Rogan

In memory of Helen Jordan Scanlon
Pat & Phil Leavenworth

In honor of Kevin Shelley
Deanne & Steve Rohde

In honor of Stewart Stroup
Stinson Stroup

In memory of Robert Thomas
Faith Thomas

In memory of Eugene Treinen
Jim & Anita Treinen

In memory of Orvel Utech
Lynda & Dick Wright

*In memory of Hugh
& Jeanne Wallace*
Dan Wallace
Michael Wallace

In memory of Winifred Welsh
Herbert Ley

In honor of Jed & Sharon White
Nathaniel White

In honor of Peg Whiteside
Dennis Tande & Mary Manering

In memory of Roger Widiker
Tracy & Jason Widiker

In honor of Karen Wollenburg
Fred Wollenburg

In honor of Mary Woodburn Stennes
Bob & Nan Woodbum

In Kind Contributions

Culver's – Sauk City
Fontana Sports Specialties
Renee Lauber & Graham Cody
Movin' Shoes
The Shoe Box
Mark Smith & Dan Rigney
Joy & Paul Zedler
Willy Street Co-Op

Government Grants for Land

Dane County Conservation Fund
Knowles-Nelson Stewardship
Program
Town of Dunn
USDA Natural Resources
Conservation Service
City of Sun Prairie

Gifts or Partial Gifts of Land and Easements

Tom Hanley
Pat & Patricia Hermesen
Brian Pasley
Peg Whiteside

In preparing this report, we tried to ensure that it is accurate and complete. If there is an omission or error, please accept our apologies and contact Danni Lang at (608) 258-9797 or danni@groundswellwisconsin.org so we can correct our records.

¹Event Sponsor ²Prairie Partners Sponsor ³Part or all of gift is to help uphold our conservation easements

⁴Part or all of gift for land acquisitions ⁵Gifts or Partial Gifts of Land and Easements ⁶Monthly Sustainer



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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/events soon.



Appreciation Party

Tuesday, December 10th
4:00 – 6:00 pm
Lussier Family Heritage Center
3101 Lake Farm Road, Madison

Come celebrate all the special places you protected this year! We want to show our appreciation for your dedicated support for conservation where you live. 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. ●



SVA Financial Group



Patrick Marsh Bonfire & Candlelit Hike

Saturday, January 25, 2020
4:30-6:30pm

The tradition continues! Join your friends and neighbors for an easy 1.5 mile candlelit hike at Patrick Marsh Wildlife Area. A warm bonfire and tasty s'mores wait for you at the end of the trek. ●



Westport Prairie Story Hike and Bonfire

Saturday, February 22, 2020
4:30-6:30pm

Explore a story a new way as you hike the pages of a children's book or ponder winter poems. This easy hike is family friendly. Finish the winter evening off with a bonfire and campfire popcorn. ●

