

landscene

A publication of the Natural Heritage Land Trust
Early Spring 2002

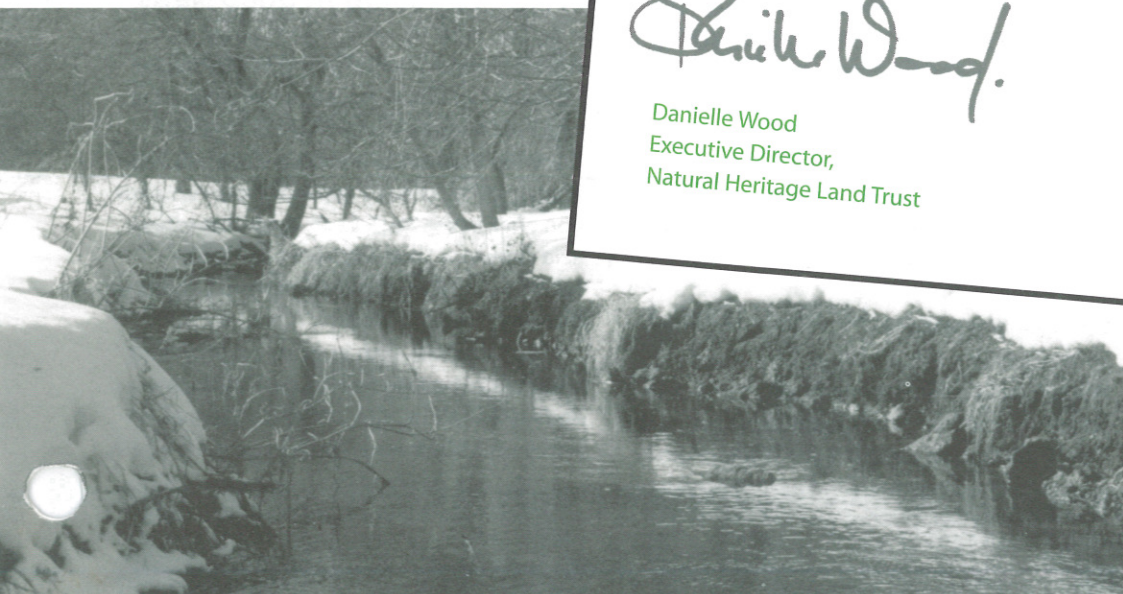
A Coalition for Conservation... Stepping Up Efforts in the Black Earth Creek Watershed

As Natural Heritage Land Trust members, many of you are familiar with our first conservation effort in the **Black Earth Creek Watershed Land Conservation Coalition**, the 63 acres of farmed wetlands we recently protected on the banks of Garfoot Creek. We're happy to announce that our Garfoot project was just the beginning of a new and much larger community-based conservation effort in the watershed.

The Natural Heritage Land Trust, together with Trout Unlimited, American Farmland Trust, Black Earth Creek Watershed Association, Black Earth Creek Conservation Organization, Wisconsin Wetlands Association, Madison Audubon Society, and the River Alliance of Wisconsin have formed the Black Earth Creek Watershed Land Conservation Coalition. Members of the coalition have signed on in dedication to "coordinated land conservation in the Black Earth Creek Watershed to protect the water quality and aquatic ecosystems of the creek and scenic value of the watershed." The Natural Heritage Land Trust is coordinating the coalition's efforts.

A Coalition continued on page 2

Garfoot Creek



Dear Members and Friends,

Welcome to the first edition of our new newsletter, *LandScene*. We have amended our name from the **Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation to the Natural Heritage Land Trust**. We are still the same organization, —dedicated to the conservation of natural areas and open space in Dane and the surrounding counties. We've kept the best portion of our name—natural heritage—while adding land trust to better explain who we are and what we do.

You'll notice other changes, too. We have a beautiful new logo, we've made improvements to our web site, we're publishing our first annual report, we're working to make our newsletter more educational, and to strengthen our relationship with you, our membership.

These changes are indicative of larger improvements we've made inside the organization. Specifically, we've:

- Completed a strategic plan to help our organization more efficiently and effectively conserve land,
- Completed our conservation plan, an analysis of our area which guides our conservation efforts,
- Developed strategies to be better able to respond to conservation opportunities

It is a busy time at your local land trust and we invite you to share in the excitement of participating in conservation where you live. Please take a moment to read over the **executive summary** included in this newsletter and reacquaint yourself with NHLT as we work for conservation in 2002 and beyond. We think you'll like what you see. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to call. As members, you are the Natural Heritage Land Trust, and we are here to serve you and the conservation needs of our community. We thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Danielle Wood
Executive Director,
Natural Heritage Land Trust





Natural Heritage
LAND TRUST

303 S. Paterson, Suite 6
Madison, WI 53703
608.258.9797
www.nhlt.org

President
Mark B. Williams

Vice-President
Kathy Pielsticker

Treasurer
Johanna London

Secretary
Chris Huges

Past Presidents
John B. Hutchinson
Michael A. Slavney
Norman C. Anderson
William G. Lunney
Jean D. Meanwell

Directors
Jim Bricker
Lloyd Eagan
Susan Fox
Rob Gottschalk
Chris Hughes
John Hutchinson
Leonard Massie
Nancy Mead
Walt Meanwell
Eugene Roark
Jeffery Strobel

Executive Director
Danielle Wood

Outreach/Development
Laurie Lewis Robertson

Administrative Assistant
Nancy Weiman

Volunteers

Stewardship Assistant
Sarah Gehlhoff

Website Coordinator
Jan Anderson Hunt

Laurie Lewis Robertson
LandScene editor

A Coalition continued from page 1

Says southwestern chapter president of Trout Unlimited, Bill Pielsticker:

"The degradation pressures impacting Black Earth Creek would normally lead to the destruction of the cold water fishery that makes this stream one of America's top 100 trout streams. Fortunately, the unique groundwater source feeding the stream is strong. This means that we have a good chance, if we act now, to protect this rich resource and the lovely valley it runs through. That's the goal of the coalition."

As Pielsticker notes, the watershed is a regionally, and even nationally significant resource. Spread over the rolling hills of western Dane County, it marks the beginnings of the "Driftless Area," and is known for its rich farmland, recreational opportunities, and scenic beauty. The watershed is 103 square miles in size, encompasses nine towns, three villages, and borders the city of Middleton. It includes 27 miles of Black Earth Creek, which is designated by Department of Natural Resources as a Class I and II quality stream. It is also one of the heaviest fished streams in Wisconsin.

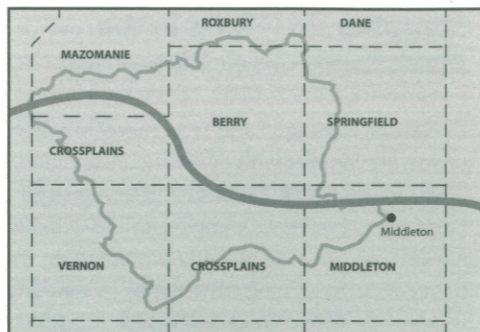
A Call to Action

With the significance of the Black Earth Creek Watershed resource in mind, it is important to understand the pressures that face the watershed. The watershed, once renowned for its water quality and trout populations, suffered a major fish kill in June 2001. The cause of the kill is still unknown, but it is likely to have been caused by a mixture of sources such as urban and agricultural run-off and/or other unknown sources. (See the 2001 Summer edition of our newsletter, also on www.nhlt.org). Compounding the problem, is the fact that the watershed is in one of the fastest growing areas in Dane County, a county that has added more to its population in the last 10 years than any other county in Wisconsin. Growth and escalating land values make conservation efforts more difficult, and higher prices for land mean that less acreage is protected for the same investment. Today, more than ever, the Black Earth Creek Watershed needs our protection before it's too late.

Strength in Numbers

By working together, the Black Earth Creek Watershed Coalition members are able to pool resources, share knowledge and expertise, and merge interests so we can make stronger conservation achievements together, rather than overlap or duplicate each other's efforts. By jointly focusing on the watershed level, the coalition should be better able to protect the

water quality of the stream and scenic value of the watershed. This is also important because streams flow across the landscape heedless of political boundaries, connecting towns and villages and other watersheds. Thus, by protecting the Black Earth Creek Watershed, we can make an impact on the overall health of Wisconsin's landscape and beyond. ■



Black Earth Creek Watershed

The Black Earth Creek Watershed

Coalition is working to foster land and water conservation and promote an environmental ethic. For this type of large-scale, grassroots, conservation to be successful, We need your help and support. You too, can be a part of the collaborative effort. We hope you will join us in protecting this valuable resource that we all share in, right here in our own community. Please help the coalition by contributing directly to the "Black Earth Creek Watershed Project" on the form in the back of this newsletter. Thank you.

From the Governor: Good News

We are pleased to announce that the Natural Heritage Land Trust recently received a grant of \$126,000 from the state of Wisconsin's **Knowles-Neslon Stewardship Program**. The money will be directly applied to our conservation work in the Black Earth Creek Watershed. Said Governor Scott McCallum and DNR Secretary Darrel Bazzell, in a letter to Executive Director, Danielle Wood:

"Organizations such as yours are providing many opportunities for Wisconsin residents and our guests to enjoy the many faces of Wisconsin's landscape. These opportunities are a major component of the quality of life that we so much enjoy in Wisconsin."

We'd like to thank you, our members, for making the work we do possible. ■

**strategic plan
executive summary**
2002-2005



Many people think
of far-away
rainforests as
needing their help,
but we also need
to protect the
wonderful natural
heritage right here in
our own backyards.

our changing landscape

The Dane County region is experiencing rapid growth. This means that development is occurring in and near some of our most significant natural features. Ironically, the very features that inspire many people to live in our community are often those most threatened by growth. Consider these Dane County statistics:

- Our region added more population in the last ten years than any other region in Wisconsin.
- The population living outside of the city of Madison is growing, increasing the rural subdivision of many natural areas.
- Since 1990, more than 1,500 acres were rezoned yearly from Exclusive Agriculture
- The median price for homes has nearly doubled in the last ten years—increasing the cost of land conservation.

conservation where you live

Did you know the Dane County region includes imperiled and rare ecosystems, such as oak savannah, wetland fens, and cold-water trout streams? Dane County alone has nearly 60 endangered or threatened species of plants and animals, like the pale green orchid and barn owl. Many people think of far-away rainforests as needing their help, but we also need to protect the wonderful natural heritage right here in our own backyards. The

Natural Heritage Land Trust does exactly that. The land trust is a community-based, non-profit organization that protects land and water resources for the public good.

This is our home. Our natural areas and agricultural lands are essential to the health and welfare of our communities, as well as providing scenic beauty. At the Natural Heritage Land Trust we believe it is our responsibility to leave a legacy of a healthy and sustainable landscape for generations to come.

your local land trust

The Natural Heritage Land Trust is your local land trust, dedicated to the conservation of natural areas and open space in Dane and the surrounding counties. Since 1983, with the help of conservation-minded friends, the Natural Heritage Land Trust has protected thousands of acres of wetland, prairie, woodland, lakeshore, springs, savannah, and farmland in our region.

The Natural Heritage Land Trust works by:

- Protecting priority conservation areas through acquisition or conservation easements.
- Educating and helping to involve residents in protecting their local natural areas.
- Working with willing landowners to protect significant elements of our landscape.
- Developing conservation partnerships and community networks.



With approximately 85% of the land in Wisconsin in private ownership, a commitment to conservation from private landowners is important. As a non-governmental organization, the Natural Heritage Land Trust is in the unique position to work with both the private and public sector to ensure protection of our vital natural heritage.

planning for our future strategic plan goals for 2005

Conservation and Stewardship

- Protect a total of 4,375 acres, primarily through proactive conservation efforts.
- Continue to identify local conservation needs using factors such as rare species, water quality, scenic value, and growth pressures.
- Increase funding for responsive conservation efforts throughout the Dane County area.
- Develop goals and strategies for achieving acreage goals in our priority areas.
- Strengthen partnerships with local government, businesses, landowners, and nonprofits.
- Develop improved monitoring practices to ensure the ongoing health of the lands we've protected.
- Foster long-term relationships with landowners, and aid them in continued land management.
- Serve as a conduit of information about land conservation and stewardship for the community.

Education and outreach

- Nurture our relationships with school groups.
- Increase the number and attendance of our work parties and field trips.
- Expand the educational component of our outreach materials.
- Cultivate a stronger community identity, making it easy for area residents to contact us with their land conservation questions and needs.
- Continue honoring local conservation heroes through our Stewardship Awards Program.
- Double our individual and business memberships, thereby strengthening the Land Trust's ability to do conservation work.
- Provide increased opportunities for membership involvement.

Fundraising

- Build our funds supporting operations, easement enforcement, and conservation efforts to \$1,042,000.
- Grow our Madison Community Foundation Endowment Fund to \$1,320,000 to ensure our continued conservation presence in our community.

Natural Heritage

Land Trust is in

the unique position

to work with both

the private and

public sector to

ensure protection

of our vital natural

heritage.



**Supporting the
Natural Heritage Land
Trust means you are
saving great places
right here in your
own community.**

how you can support conservation

Supporting the Natural Heritage Land Trust means you are saving great places right here in your own community. We depend on membership dues, donations, grants, and fundraising events to provide much of our operating budget and conservation project funding. To ensure that land conservation is a lasting part of our community, we are also building an endowment fund at the Madison Community Foundation. Individuals and businesses can also support the Natural Heritage Land Trust by volunteering, donating in-kind gifts and making gifts of easements or lands.

We'd like to protect thousands of more acres by 2005—and that's where you come in!

Remember, the Natural Heritage Land Trust is a local organization, supported through local funding, and giving back to our local community by ensuring that our own natural heritage will thrive. We need you to make this happen. If you believe in conservation where you live, please visit our web site at <www.nhlt.org>, or call (608) 258-9797 to become a Natural Heritage Land Trust member or find out about other ways you can contribute. ■



Conservation where you live

303 S. Paterson St., Suite 6
Madison WI 53703
www.nhlt.org

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

In Your Community...and nearby

Saturday, February 23

Late Winter Birds or Very Early Spring Birds

Goose Pond, MacKenzie Center and maybe Mud Lake. Led by Aaron Stutz, Madison, Audubon. Call Aaron at 232-1756.

Thurs.-Sat., March 7-9

How's The Water? -Water Recreation in Wisconsin

24th Annual Wisconsin Lakes Convention.
Contact UW-Extension (715) 346-2116
or see uwexplakes@uwsp.edu

Saturday, March 9

Attention Landowners:

The Resource Conservation and Development Council is holding a seminar for landowners: "Managing Your Land for Wildlife" Please call (715) 343-6215.

Saturday, March 16

12th Annual Native Landscaping Conference

NHLT will be a sponsor/exhibitor at the conference at the Alliant Energy Center, Madison, 8:30-5:00. Call (608) 265-5872, or see njsclim@facstaff.wisc.edu

April (TBA)

Wetlands Restoration Workshop

The Wisconsin Wetlands Association is holding a workshop on how to identify and obtain cost-sharing funds from government and private conservation programs. Call Derek at 250-9971.



Common Barn-Owl, Tyto alba

History in Wisconsin

Wisconsin's Barn Owl population has been decreasing since the 1950's

- Development of land, draining of wetlands, removal of hedgerows and other destruction of Barn Owl habitat, as well loss of habitat for its prey, are a likely cause of the Barn Owl's decline in Wisconsin.
- The Barn Owl is endangered in Wisconsin. A nesting pair was last sighted in 1985 in Deerfield (eastern Dane County).

The Natural Heritage Land Trust's commitment to land conservation means that we protect the places our diverse wildlife needs in order to thrive.

—From: <<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/factsheets/birds/>> ■

Want to find out more about your natural heritage?

The Department of Natural Resources's Endangered Resources web site, <www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er> now includes an online version of their natural heritage inventory. You can find out about the natural heritage in our state, county, or even right in your own township.

Extra Special Thanks

- John D. and Phoebe R. Lewis Foundation for its donation to our Madison Community Foundation Fund
- Theodora Kubly and Beth Kubly for a stock donation to our Operations Fund
- William O'Connor for his generous stock donation to our Operations Fund

Thanks for your help

We regret if we missed anyone

- River Road Consulting Psychologists, Ltd. Flynn Division, for donating a Hewlett Packard Office Jet fax/copier
- Sarah Van Tiem and Scott Laich for donating a computer monitor
- Sarah Gehlhoff for her outstanding volunteerism and friendship
- Douglas Berry for his accounting assistance and volunteer work.
- The NHLT Board and Committee Members for their hard work and great strides in our name change and strategic plan

2002 Business Donors

Architectural Building Arts
Bock Water Heaters, Inc.
Bremser, Schomer & McHugh, CPA's, LLC
DEC International—Albrecht Foundation, Inc.
Eugenie Mayer Bolz Family Foundation
First Business Bank of Madison
First Business Financial Services, Inc.
Fontana Sports Specialties, Inc.
H. Krueger & Associates
Hooper Foundation
Jim Cummings, CPA
John J. Frautschi Family Foundation, Inc.
Johnson Bank
Kennedy Hahn Inc.
Madison Newspapers, Inc.
Marling Lumber Co.
Marshall Erdman & Associates
McFarland State Bank
Midland Builders
National Mutual Benefit
Neckerman Agency
Placon Corporation
River Road Consulting Psychologists
Rocky's Flooring, Inc.
The Vogel Foundation
Town and Country Engineering
Urban Land Interests
Wheeler, Van Sickle & Anderson
W. Jerome Frautschi Chairitable Lead Unitrust
Williams Environmental Associates, Inc.

In Memoriam

From Walter and Stacey Meanwell
Laverne Johnson
Gilbert Coluccy
Janet Winn
Helen Durkopp

Newest Black Earth Creek Supporters

Jack Ladinsky

Natural Heritage Land Trust

Help us protect natural areas close to home!

Membership categories:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | \$15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiast | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | \$_____ |

Additional project contributions

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black Earth Creek Watershed | _____ |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------|

Please send information on:

- | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How to make a gift through my will |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How to make a gift of real estate |

Contributions are tax-deductible as provided for by law. Please make checks payable to the Natural Heritage Land Trust. Thank you

☐ Check if you'd prefer to remain anonymous

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____

Send to Natural Heritage Land Trust, 303 S. Paterson, Suite 6, Madison, WI 53705



"Probably the two greatest passions in my life are wildlife and their habitat, and web design. A strange combination, but true. Volunteering to do the NHLT web site allows me to satisfy both of these passions at the same time."

—Jan Anderson Hunt

Point to Ponder

"Come out of your warm, angular house,
Resounding with few voices,
into the chill,
Grand instantaneous night,
with such a
Presence as a full moon in
the clouds, and
You are struck with poetic wonder."

—Ralph Waldo Emerson
(1803-1882) *American
essayist and poet*

Jan Anderson Hunt... NHLT "super web site volunteer"

If you haven't seen it yet, check out our new web site at www.nhlt.org. NHLT volunteer Jan Anderson Hunt has donated hours of her free time and skills revamping our site with our new name and logo, updated design, new information, and increased user-friendliness. As impressive as our site is, it's people like Jan, working behind the scenes, who are most important to us.

We met Jan through our previous website coordinator and friend, Theresa Plenty. Originally from Michigan, Jan is a networking senior and webmaster for the Department of Workforce Development. She also runs her own web design and development company, Mainzpress.com. Besides her technical savvy, Jan describes herself as a "county girl" and loves taking long walks with her dogs, Jazz, and Rummel, and their buddy Lincoln in the Lodi countryside near her home. Jan and her dogs are experienced in the German art of schutzhund meaning "protection hound." If you meet Jan on the street and say hello, don't be surprised if she gives you an odd look—you may have just said hello to her identical twin sister! ■

Land Trusts—A Powerful and Growing Movement

The Land Trust Alliance (LTA) the national umbrella organization for land trusts, recently reported the following findings from their 2000 National Land Trust Census:

- The nation's local and regional land trust conserved more than 6.4 million acres of open space (an area twice the size of Connecticut) as of December 31, 2000. A 241% increase from 1990.
- 1263 local and regional land trust were in operation in 2000, a 42% increase from 1990.
- Wisconsin has the seventh highest number of Land trusts operating in the state (45) with more than 85,000 acres in their protection.

As a supporter of the Natural Heritage Land Trust, you are helping to make grassroots community-based conservation a reality. You do make a difference in helping to protect vital natural areas and preserve local community character. ■

► **Moving?** Please let us know your new address! We'd love to keep in touch with you. Returned newsletters waste valuable paper and postage. ► **Not a member?** If you are not a member of the Natural Heritage Land Trust and are receiving a complimentary copy of this newsletter, please consider joining NHLT today. We need your support. ► **Is there a student in your family?** We have a new student membership category at the \$15 level. See the membership form at the end of the newsletter. ► **Spilt coffee on your newsletter?** Want to look up all the places you've helped to protect? Know someone who might be interested in conservation options for property they own? Check us out on our new web site and tell your friends—www.nhlt.org



Natural Heritage
LAND TRUST

Conservation where you live

303 S. Paterson St., Suite 6
Madison WI 53703
www.nhlt.org

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