

Year in Protection 2013-2014

Permanently Protecting John Muir's legacy in Wisconsin



Natural Heritage
LAND TRUST

Conservation where you live

I hope you share my enthusiasm for Natural Heritage Land Trust's great success this year in permanently protecting some of the John Muir family farm between Portage and Montello. When the Wisconsin Friends of John Muir learned that the property might be available, **they came to us because of our reputation for getting the job done.**

Working with a conservation-minded family and a community of partners, we completed the 198-acre acquisition in early September, less than a year since we were introduced to the landowner family.

In this past year, we also permanently protected four other great places in and around Dane County. **When we say "permanently protected", we mean it.** We annually visit each of our 65 conservation easements to maintain strong relationships with the landowners and work with them to ensure that the forests, streams, wetlands, and farmlands on their property remain protected. Likewise, every piece of land that we buy to add to nature preserves, wildlife areas, and trail corridors is permanently restricted to conservation uses, ensuring that the public's investment in these conservation lands is never forgotten or ignored.

Your financial contributions make it possible for our small but dedicated staff to protect great places in south central Wisconsin. Your support buys the staff expertise and talent that we need to get the job done. We look forward to what we will achieve with your support in the coming year at places like the Yahara River, Westport Drumlin, and the Wisconsin River. Thank you very much for your generous support. ■

Willi Van Haren, President



A young Bessie Eggleston on her beloved farm.

Bessie McGwin Eggleston: Preserving John Muir's legacy in Wisconsin

Bessie McGwin Eggleston died at the age of 101 in March of 2014. One of her wishes was to ensure that the farm she loved so deeply along Highway F south of Montello, would remain an untrammled part of the natural world. Though she didn't live to see it, her family made that wish come true when they sold Bessie's farm to Natural Heritage Land Trust in September.

In life, Bessie was a strong, independent woman and a lover of the natural world. In a poignant essay, Bessie evoked John Muir's own feelings when she recounted her horror at the destruction along Highway F as it was being "improved" as part of the Hiawatha Trail highway project in the 1970's:

"...Tears blurred my eyes so I couldn't count the rings of the old elm stump as I sat upon it and surveyed the 'Progress' made along our winding, blacktop country road. The mammoth red and white oaks, the towering cottonwoods and the giant among giants, my dear old elm, all in a heap of rubble. Their mossy bark and the cambium hearts through which their life blood flowed, stopped forever. No disease or act of God could have been more devastating than the power of 'Progress' placed in the hands of a commissioner."

That her farm was part of the history of John Muir's life in Wisconsin was well known to Bessie. 38 acres of her 198 acre farm was once part of the 320 acre farm where Muir grew up. Bessie told the story of her father, Sam McGwin, as a sixteen-year-old working in the field when Muir stopped by, having walked about 12 miles from Portage. Muir was trying for the third time to purchase part of the property around Fountain Lake (now Ennis Lake, named for Bessie's grandfather John Ennis) where he had spent his boyhood.

Some 118 years later, an important part of John Muir's original boyhood home is now permanently protected as a complement to the John Muir Memorial County Park and State Natural Area. Thanks to people like Bessie McGwin Eggleston, our natural heritage is being preserved so future generations can cherish the places that make Wisconsin special.

Save the Date! Celebrate preservation at the Eggleston farm on Saturday, June 13, 2015 from 1:00 - 4:00 pm.

Natural Heritage Land Trust will donate 120 acres of Bessie's 198-acre farm to the US Fish and Wildlife Service to be managed as part of the adjacent Fox River National Wildlife Refuge. A memorial plaque will be installed on the foundation of the family's barn commemorating the McGwin-Eggleston history on the property. The remaining 78 acres will be donated

to the Ice Age Trail Alliance and the Ice Age Trail will likely be extended north from the existing trail around Ennis Lake.

Natural Heritage Land Trust worked with Bessie's niece and nephews, John, Kathleen, Ken, and Tim McGwin, to complete the sale of her beloved farm. They have our special thanks for making this historic project a success.

Many partner organizations and donors came together to make this project happen. Our thanks go to the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, Fox River Green Bay Natural Resource Trustee Council, The Conservation Fund, Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust, The Wisconsin Land Fund of the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation, Ice Age Trail Alliance, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service Ice Age National Scenic Trail, and the many generous members of Natural Heritage Land Trust, Wisconsin Friends of John Muir, and John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club. ■

ON THE COVER: John Muir, Bessie Eggleston, and the Eggleston farm.



MARIO QUINTANA

Conservation Roundup

It was another successful year for land conservation in south-central Wisconsin. With the support of members like you, Natural Heritage Land Trust permanently protected nearly 400 acres of cherished local land at four special places where we live and play.



Black Earth Creek In December 2013, Steve Schmitt, owner of The Shoe Box and the Madison Mallards, gave us the last one and a half acres needed to complete a multi-use trail connecting the Village of Mazomanie to the Wisconsin Heights Middle and High School. The scenic trail, which will be completed by the end of 2014, winds along a recently restored stretch of Black Earth Creek providing easy public access to world-class fishing and a safe and healthy way for the youth of Mazomanie to get to school.

Historic Indian Agency House We preserved a significant piece of Wisconsin history in Portage by placing a permanent conservation easement on the 160 acre landscape surrounding the Historic Indian Agency House owned by The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in the State of Wisconsin. The Agency House and surrounding land is adjacent to the historic portage between the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers and helps tell the story of Wisconsin's frontier past. At the same time Natural Heritage Land Trust purchased the conservation easement, the Ice Age Trail Alliance purchased 46 acres from the Colonial Dames to secure a portion of the Ice Age Trail along the Portage Canal.



DESTINEE UDELHOVEN

The Historic Indian Agency House was the meeting point for Native American and European cultures when Wisconsin was on the frontier of the United States 182 years ago.



Margaret Burlingham, Chair of the Jefferson County Farmland Conservation Easement Commission, and Landowner Dale Neupert show off Dale's new sign for his farm.

Jefferson County Farmland Preservation

We continued our partnership with Jefferson County to implement their Farmland Conservation Easement program by placing a permanent easement on the farm of Dale Neupert in the Town of Waterloo. His 190-acre farm has been in the family for over 100 years and Dale wanted to see that it remained a farm forever.

TIMESCHER



Wisconsin River The wooded bluffs along the Wisconsin River are enjoyed by thousands of boaters every year. Thanks to the generosity of Tim & Terri Escher and Tim's father, Bill Escher, a prominent bluff on Okee Bay is permanently protected with a conservation easement. The easement ensures that the 47-acre scenic bluff remains undeveloped and continues to contribute to the dramatic beauty of the river. This project is the ninth that we have completed on the Wisconsin River.

Westport Drumlin Prairie and Savanna Restoration

Our ecological restoration crew continued to work their magic at Westport Drumlin, a State Natural Area east of Waunakee. The focus again this year was clearing the brush that has been invading the edges of the drumlin and keeping the weeds like sweet clover and leafy spurge at bay. It was the third year of our participation in the "Prairie Partners". The Prairie Partners is a joint program of Friends of Lakeshore Nature Preserve, Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy, Madison Audubon Society, and Natural Heritage Land Trust. It is a cost-effective way to get a lot of land management done each summer and provides valuable on-the-job training to students considering careers in conservation.

MARIO QUINTANA



The 2014 Prairie Partners crew (from left to right): Michelle Atkinson, Charles Sickles, Lauren Bradshaw, Madeline Van Cleve, Victoria Fuller, and Kathryn Prince.

By the Numbers

July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

Your individual gift makes a big difference!

633 Members (up from 564 last year)
\$196,651 in Contributions
 Renewing members = **79%**
4 Places Permanently Protected
399 Acres Permanently Protected
\$702,600 Value of Land Permanently Protected

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014, Natural Heritage Land Trust received \$279,612 for operations and spent \$323,949 for operations. The difference of \$44,274 came from reserve funds that support the operations of Natural Heritage Land Trust.

Income for operations		
Membership Contributions	\$196,651	70%
Consulting fees	\$4,222	2%
Grants	\$60,153	22%
Endowment Distributions	\$17,614	6%
Other income	\$972	0%
Total	\$279,612	100%
Expenses for operations		
Professional Staff	\$203,621	63%
Land Management	\$48,182	15%
Professional services (accounting, etc.)	\$25,037	8%
General and Administrative	\$47,109	15%
Total	\$323,949	100%

To view details on income and expenses for the fiscal year July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014, please see our financial report posted at www.guidestar.org. The 2013-2014 report should be posted by December 2014.

Mission

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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gratitude...

thank you to our members, donors and partners! Your support makes all the difference.

July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

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In memory of Jane C. Bauman

Joy Bauman
 Lynda M Sharpe
 Brian D. Wacker
 Cheryl A. Horne

In memory of Jane Bauman

& Walter Bauman
 Mike & June Bauman Denruiter

In honor of Vera & Wally Bauman

Bruce Bauman & Emily Bair

In honor of the Chase Family

Joe & Kathy Chase

In memory of Jack Densmore

M.E. Densmore

In honor of Lloyd L. Eagan's 38-year

career in environmental protection
 Friends & Colleagues of Lloyd Eagan

In memory of Daniel Eater

Sandra Eater

In honor of Rich Henderson, the

hardest worker I have know
 Kathy Henderson

In honor of Judith Hutchinson, a

dear friend, who has done tireless

work for conservation
 Janice Von Haden

In memory of Ruth Johnson

Martin Johnson

In memory of Jim Knickmeyer

Jean Knickmeyer

In memory of Hazel Knudson

Nancy & Gordie Miller

In memory of Hattie & Paul LaLonde

Bill & Lorette Wambach

In honor of my Mom, Noreen Lucey

JoAnn Foote

In memory of Martha Martin

Anna Goebel

In memory of our neighbor

Hal Mathison
 William & Roberta Sonzogni

In memory of Kevin McCabe

Marie S. McCabe

In memory of Hartman Olson

& Tollef Fosheim Olson
 Tura Graber

In honor of my son Caleb Pourchot

Cathy Acker

In honor of John & Dorothy Priske

Jonny Dexter

In memory of Harriet Riley

Anna Garner-Strickon

In memory of Gerry Slavney

Mike & Linda Slavney

In memory of Judy Standish-Ely

Jim Ely

In memory of Richard W. Summers

Louise Summers

In memory of Andrew Wallen

Robert & Susan Wallen

In honor of Jim Welsh

Herbert Ley

In memory of Win Welsh

Frank & Mariana Weinhold

In memory of Hazel Wilke

Nancy Gundlach

In memory of Kenneth Wood

Tony & Darlene Nowak

In memory of Ken Wood

& Noel Cutright
 John & Cate Harrington

Gift Membership Recipients

Mary Ann Brimeyer
 Whitt Case
 Glenn Glesinger
 Tim Hacker & Carol Chen
 Elizabeth Hutchinson
 Rick Lonigro
 Madison Eats
 Cliff & Suzanne Perkins
 Scott Sankey
 Marylyn & Stewart Stroup

Gifts to Natural Heritage Land

Trust Endowments at Madison

Community Foundation
 Tim & Terri Escher
 Festge Double Forte, LLC
 Phoebe R. & John D. Lewis Foundation
 George Lucey
 John & Nancy Meyers
 The National Society of The Colonial
 Dames of America in the State of
 Wisconsin
 Fred Wolf

Gifts & Partial Gifts of Land

& Easements
 Tim and Terri Escher
 The National Society of The Colonial
 Dames of America in the State of
 Wisconsin
 Steve Schmitt

Grants for Land Protection

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program

In preparing this report, we tried to be accurate and complete. If there is an omission or error, please accept our apologies and call Martha Frey at 608-258-9797 or Martha@nhlt.org and we will correct our records.



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Places worth knowing Join Natural Heritage Land Trust on one of our field trips and get to know the places you've helped protect. Our outings are led by landowners or expert naturalists; offering you unique opportunities to enjoy and learn about our glorious landscape while meeting others who share your commitment to *conservation where you live*.



Cherokee Marsh Snowshoe
Saturday, February 7, 2015
9:00 – 11:00 am

This wetland gem will be a winter wonderland and the perfect place for a family outing. Braving the snow and cold is worth it with **Mary Binkley**, Natural Heritage Land Trust member and naturalist, there to guide and inspire us with a story around every corner.

Trewartha Bobolink Hill Farm Bird Walk
Saturday, May 23, 2015
10:00 – noon

Don't miss this opportunity to see the bobolinks and redheaded woodpeckers that thrive in **Mary Trewartha's** grassland and savanna. Located north of Dodgeville in Iowa County, Mary's impressive prairie and savanna restoration is permanently protected with a conservation easement.

Sugar River Paddle
Saturday, May 30, 2015

Once again we take to the river with **Willi Van Haren**, experienced paddler and Natural Heritage Land Trust President. This is a 2-hour paddle through permanently protected sections of the Sugar River. The river can be challenging, but we've seen it done on paddle boards! Everyone is responsible for bringing their own equipment.

All field trips are free of charge but pre-registration is required.
Reserve your spot today! Email Heidi at Heidi@nhlt.org or call 258-9797.