

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT



JUDD LAKE - JIM BRANDENBURG



MINNESOTA LAND TRUST

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS



**NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF THOUGHTFUL, COMMITTED CITIZENS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD; INDEED, IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT EVER HAS.**

This familiar quote from cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead has been in my head these last few weeks because the words could have been written to describe the early days of the Minnesota Land Trust. As we celebrate our 25th anniversary this year, I have been reflecting on the vision and “can-do” spirit of our founders and early supporters.

In response to the explosive growth in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area in the late 1980s and 1990s, ten thoughtful citizens rolled up their sleeves and decided that it was time to do something about it. They established the Washington County Land Trust and several years later they had the foresight and courage to incorporate state-wide as the Minnesota Land Trust.

Now, a quarter century later, we’ve completed 507 conservation projects that permanently protect nearly 49,000 acres of some of Minnesota’s most significant natural lands and over a million feet of shoreline. Thanks to all the passionate individuals along the way who have gone the extra mile for the Land Trust—board, staff, and volunteers—we can still see tall-grass prairies instead of plows and hear chirping songbirds instead of chainsaws.

One of the groups of people I want to personally thank are our donors who have been with us for the past 20 years (see donor lists at the back of this report). We simply couldn’t have come this far without their generosity and loyalty.



But as proud as we are of these achievements, we can’t rest now. In fact, more than ever, we need to accelerate our work. Whether we all know it or not, we are in the midst of a golden age of land conservation right here, right now.

Never before have we had the right formula to do so much, with willing landowners, expert staff, a driven board and the potential to significantly leverage state funding.

It is for these reasons that we have set out an ambitious plan to double the pace of our work over the next 10 years, protecting the remaining natural gems we have left, restoring those we’ve already lost and engaging the next generation of conservationists.

I believe that 25 years from now, we will look back to this time and recognize it as a turning point when thoughtful, committed individuals rose yet again and helped the Minnesota Land Trust take the next big leap to meet the conservation challenges of today and responsibly pass the torch onto new leaders for tomorrow.

Because in the end, we all want a Minnesota that is known for its clean water and abundant wildlife, outdoor adventures and beautiful vistas.

Even though the Land Trust has grown and evolved, the basic foundation remains: we are a group of concerned citizens who collectively care enough about our state’s future to selflessly contribute time, talents, and treasure to permanently protect and restore Minnesota most treasured places.

Thanks for all you do.

Kris Larson  
Executive Director



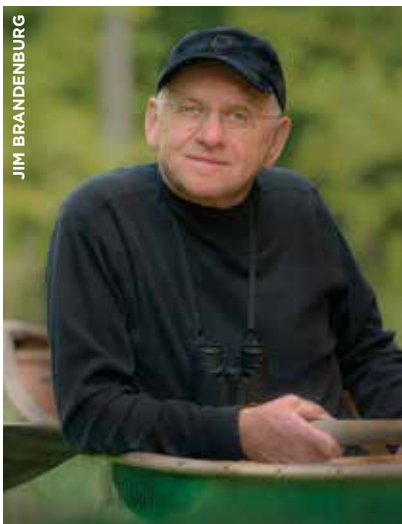


JUDD LAKE: ANTHONY BRANDENBURG

# PRESERVING THE LAND OF JIM BRANDENBURG

THE LAND SPEAKS, AND THE ARTIST TRANSLATES

“DESTINY HAPPENED.”  
With these words, Jim Brandenburg begins to speak about the long and often difficult story of the land that has been integral to his international success as a photographer.



JIM BRANDENBURG

Jim and his wife Judy tell a tale that's filled with Shakespearian twists and turns, complete with epic vision, loyalty and betrayal.  
The setting was spectacular: a waterfall gurgling over lichen covered

boulders. Tall pines standing sentinel over a pristine lake in the wilderness of northern Minnesota. Boggy, nearly impenetrable wetlands harboring the secrets of the surrounding boreal forest, the tranquility broken only by the raucous cackling of a raven.  
It was a place that eventually brought fame and good fortune to this humble photographer from Luverne, Minnesota who “grew up in a cornfield where nothing was natural.”  
This place is Judd Lake, a remote Border Country lake just off the Fernberg Trail east of Ely.  
Millions of people all over the world immersed themselves in Jim’s iconic photographs of wolves, lynx and bear that he photographed on this remote and wild Judd Lake property. Even James Taylor called, asking to visit Jim so he could see a wolf.

When viewing Jim’s photographs, the world saw wolves thriving in huge expanses of pristine wilderness. But Jim and Judy saw the landscape changing around them and the very real threat of roads, docks, cabins or even logging taking place on their beloved refuge.  
In a nice turn of fate, the photographs ended up saving the land. But we’re getting ahead of ourselves.

“THE PATH HAS BEEN LONG AND ROCKY”

As a young man, Jim Brandenburg recalls skiing out to Judd Lake during one of his first visits to the north country. At that time he knew that this was a very special spot that not only deserved a voice, but that this voice would tell life changing stories through his images.

“I HAVE FOUND IT HUMBLING BUT **INCREDIBLY REWARDING** TO HAVE PLAYED A SMALL ROLE IN PRESENTING THIS LAND TO **FUTURE GENERATIONS.**”



IMAGES WERE CAPTURED AT JUDD LAKE BY JIM BRANDENBURG



Enthralled with this landscape, he created a small “bush camp” on the lake, which became the setting for most of the images in his beloved books such as *Brother Wolf*, *Chased by the Light* and the *Nature 365* video series.

The Brandenburgs later built “Ravenwood,” an award-winning home designed by David Salmela, not far from Jim’s original bush camp.

As they immersed themselves in the rugged northern lifestyle, Jim and Judy recognized that the wild nature of this land was at risk. The property surrounding Judd Lake had been broken into smaller and smaller private parcels as the generations passed and family members moved away.

Over many years, Jim and Judy set out to reassemble this fractured land. Bit by bit, by taking out small loans and taking small risks, the Brandenburgs were able to purchase and piece

together private parcels around Judd Lake in order to fill in the gap between huge tracts of federal forest which surrounded them.

But one key private parcel on Judd Lake remained just out of reach, creating a glaring gap in an otherwise seamless, unbroken landscape.

Daunting obstacles remained, yet the Brandenburgs were steadfast in their desire to permanently preserve this land.

### PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE WIN THE DAY.

During his childhood in southwest Minnesota, Jim daydreamed about having a place Up North. He could picture the tall pine trees surrounding a cabin with smoke curling from the stone chimney. Next to the cabin stood a wolf.



“THE **LAND IS MY TEMPLE** AND MY PHOTOS ARE MY PRAYER FLAGS.”

At the time, it seemed like an impossible dream for a kid of modest means.

Recently Jim reminisced about his early years, hunting and fishing like everyone in his family and like all of his friends. In fact, calling himself a ‘bounty hunter,’ Jim told of selling pelts for spending money as a teenager.

But all that changed with his first photograph. “I was obsessed with everything in my viewfinder that didn’t have the hand of man in it.”

That photograph set in motion a string of events over decades that resulted in the recent permanent protection of the Brandenburg’s Judd Lake property.

### THE MAKING OF A DEAL

Recognizing that they couldn’t meet their preservation goals without help, the Brandenburgs partnered with the Minnesota Land Trust, the Trust for Public Land, and the Leuthold family to complete a unique and complex transaction.

Thanks to the Trust for Public Land, the neighboring parcel which had eluded the Brandenburgs was finally purchased, realizing the dream of securing a seamless complex of hundreds of acres of wildlands around Judd Lake. Investment advisor Steve Leuthold and his family generously provided the funding to complete the transaction.

And finally, the Minnesota Land Trust crafted a conservation easement over the entire complex, ensuring that Jim and Judy’s dream of preserving the wilderness around Judd Lake would endure forever.

Executive Director Kris Larson expressed gratitude to all the partners, stating “great projects require great partnerships—no individual or organization can go it alone when it comes to important, complex transactions like these.”

Steve Leuthold has helped develop and fund large scale wilderness projects around the country, from Maine to Colorado. The Leuthold family’s vision and dedication to wilderness conservation were essential to this project. Steve Leuthold summed up his legacy of philanthropy by stating, “I’d rather be associated with a wilderness forest than have a building with my name on it.”

“The significance of permanently preserving this land is hard to quantify,” says Larson. “It’s more than just an important piece of real estate. It also encompasses our northern Minnesota mystique, a great artist’s palette, and the conservation legacy of two families.”



### THE CAPSTONE PROJECT

Not long ago, Jim and Judy began to feel that time at their cherished Ravenwood was

coming to an end. The land had sustained them, and helped them prosper. The wolves and all the other forest creatures had prospered as well. The Brandenburgs felt that it was their responsibility to preserve the land before they left for good.

They also wanted to honor the significance of the place where Jim created his monumental body of work. As Jim says, “The camera drew me there but in the end it’s the land” that matters.

Jim ponders the interconnectedness of his camera and the fate of his land. “I was gifted with certain advantages in life and I can’t think of a better capstone of what I was meant to do than to enable a property like this to live in perpetuity.”

Jim reflects on his work with the Minnesota Land Trust. “It’s been a 5-star experience. Besides my children, the process of preserving this land on into the extreme future is the most rewarding thing I’ve done in life.”

*This project was made possible by Minnesota Land Trust members, the Trust for Public Land and the Steven C. Leuthold Foundation.*

“**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PERMANENTLY PRESERVING THIS LAND IS HARD TO QUANTIFY,**” SAYS LARSON. “IT’S **MUCH MORE THAN JUST AN IMPORTANT PIECE OF REAL ESTATE. IT ALSO ENCOMPASSES OUR NORTHERN MINNESOTA MYSTIQUE, A GREAT ARTIST’S PALETTE, AND THE CONSERVATION LEGACY OF TWO FAMILIES.**”

## LAND PROTECTION PROJECTS

### OTTER TAIL COUNTY



The following three conservation easements were completed in concert with the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan, which recommends permanent protection of existing grasslands through the acquisition of conservation easements to protect native prairies, wetlands and other habitats.

Completed by a collaboration of DNR scientists and representatives of Minnesota's leading conservation organizations, this plan defines a "prairie corridor" as a linear stretch of habitat that connects prairie "core areas" to each other and moderates the effects of a highly fragmented and increasingly agricultural landscape. The Plan identifies the goal of at least 10% permanent protection of wetlands and grasslands in each square mile within the corridors.

Because little public land exists within these corridors, this goal cannot be achieved without private land conservation.

These easements are located in close proximity to one another, and have established a 700-acre complex within the Prairie Plan corridor that protects native prairies, wetlands and other habitats.



#### FOSSAN LAKE

This protected 175-acre land includes over 4,000 feet of shoreline on the Pomme de Terre River and is contiguous to another conservation easement. The land features rolling hardwood forested hills, open meadows of natural and restored prairie grassland, wetlands, and open water providing significant food, shelter and breeding grounds to a variety of plants and animals.



#### POMME DE TERRE RIVER (2 PROJECTS)

In addition to the Fossan Lake easement, these two projects added 533 acres and over 8,000 feet of shoreline to preserve over two miles of shoreline on the Pomme de Terre River and its small tributaries. By protecting the shoreline and surrounding land, the owners are conserving high quality habitat for migrating and nesting birds, as well as small and large game.

### BLACK LAKE BELTRAMI COUNTY



This project provides a prime example of the Land Trust's focus on protecting excellent wildlife habitat adjacent to public lands. In this

case, Three Island Lake County Park, a 3,000 acre county-owned recreational area, and Buena Vista State Forest are both effectively extended by these nearly 400 acres of newly protected land.

Located just 12 miles from Bemidji in an area of rapid lake home development, permanent protection of the more than 6,000 feet of shoreline on this project will enhance water quality and provide important fish habitat.

### ST. CROIX RIVER WASHINGTON COUNTY



This 87-acre property is located in Stillwater Township very near the St. Croix, a Wild and Scenic River, and within the Saint Croix Bluffs Important Bird Area, which the Audubon Society has designated of global significance due to its importance as a crucial migratory flyway.

The mixed hardwood forest protected by this easement is a key habitat for several species including owl, red-shouldered hawk, four-toed salamander, and rose-breasted grosbeak. By preserving this large intact tract of land in private ownership, wildlife habitat is enhanced for the entire region.



### SNAKE RIVER KANABEC COUNTY




This conservation easement protects over 2,000 feet of the Snake River's natural riverbank, preventing erosion and sediment runoff. In addition, because the Snake River State Forest runs along the northern border and is also located across the river, this 62-acre parcel extends wildlife habitat for several threatened and endangered species into the upland woods.

The Snake River is the third largest tributary to the St. Croix, which flows to the Mississippi River. Protecting upriver shoreline helps maintain water quality and reduces erosion on this river stretch that has so far remained relatively unspoiled.






**BEAR LAKE**  
**CARLTON COUNTY** 

 Nearly 5,000 feet of pristine shoreline and undeveloped wetlands on this newly conserved land help maintain Bear Lake's water quality and provide important habitat for nesting and migratory birds like wood ducks and mergansers.

Wildlife like otters and fishers also benefit from healthy shoreline habitat and wetlands. Bitterns and herons browse the reeds near the lake and a small pond in the heart of the land. One hundred and sixteen acres of forested hills and rolling uplands surrounding Bear Lake are peppered with pines planted and nurtured by three generations of the landowner's family, providing important food sources and shelter to wildlife like red foxes, native songbirds, moose and bear.


**GILBERT LAKE**  
**DOUGLAS COUNTY** 

 This protected property includes 125 acres of land that includes one of the largest remaining high quality forest stands in Douglas County. The acreage is ranked as High Biodiversity Significance by the Minnesota Biological Survey, providing key habitat for American badger, bald eagle, red-headed woodpecker, American bittern and rose-breasted grosbeak.

Nearly 4,800 linear feet of shoreline on Gilbert Lake and smaller ponds help ensure quality habitat for northern pintail, loon, white pelican and snapping turtle.



**BURNSIDE LAKE**  
**ST. LOUIS COUNTY**

 This project protects 2,785 feet of shoreline and 12 acres of an island on Burnside Lake, which is now home to eleven Land Trust projects that protect nearly 3,000 acres and 4 ½ miles of shoreline.

The island and its natural wooded shoreline, along with nearby Burnside Island Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs), provide scenic undeveloped vistas from Listening Point, where author and conservationist Sigurd Olson got his inspiration. Families and young people from nearby Camp Widjiwagan and Camp du Nord will have the thrill of seeing these islands just like Sig did nearly 75 years ago.



*Funding for these projects was provided by Minnesota Land Trust members and the Outdoor Heritage Fund as recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC).*



**“WITHOUT THE GENEROSITY OF LANDOWNERS WHO GENEROUSLY DONATE ALL OR PART OF THEIR CONSERVATION EASEMENT, THE LAND TRUST WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO COMPLETE THE VOLUME OF WORK THAT WE DO. WE ALL OWE THESE FOLKS A HUGE ‘THANK YOU’ FOR THEIR SELFLESSNESS AND VISION.”**

**TUCKER LAKE  
COOK COUNTY**



Our 500th easement, this property connects Tucker Lake to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness just south of the Gunflint Trail. This conservation easement eliminates the threat of timber harvest and residential development which would have fragmented the forest, eliminated habitat and harmed water quality.

Instead, the boreal forest supports a wide array

of wildlife species and is identified as critical habitat for the gray wolf and Canada lynx. Other wildlife observed on the property includes black bear, moose, bald eagle, ruffed grouse, alder flycatcher, and northern raven.

In addition, the protected land includes two miles of undeveloped shoreline on Tucker Lake and an unnamed lake, both of which extend into the BWCAW.



HANSI JOHNSON

**500th  
EASEMENT**

**AVON HILLS  
STEARNS COUNTY**

These 61 acres include wetland, meadow and mixed and mesic hardwood forest. The land also contains several rare species, native plant communities, and landscapes that have strong potential for recovery and provide key habitats for Species of Greatest Conservation Need such as the red-shouldered hawk, yellow-bellied sapsucker, and weasel. The landowners frequently see coyote, wild turkey, white-tailed deer, hairy woodpecker, owl, mink, sandhill crane, and several types of raptors, including bald eagle.

This second property in Stearns County is located within a unique complex of protected land in the Avon Hills. It is located directly adjacent to the Partch Woods SNA and less than a mile from the Saint Wendel Tamarack Bog SNA. Two additional properties protected by the Minnesota Land Trust totaling 97 acres lie less than half a mile to the east. This provides key habitat for a variety of Species in Greatest Conservation Need including the short-eared owl, American bittern, and Blanding’s turtle.

The property consists of 170 gently rolling acres, including a tamarack swamp with outstanding biodiversity.



FITZ FITZGERALD



*Funding for this project was provided by Minnesota Land Trust members and the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR).*



**DOUG'S PRAIRIE  
HENNEPIN COUNTY**

This 45-acre property lies within an important natural corridor that stretches from Wolsfeld Woods and Wood-Rill SNAs to Lake Rebecca Park Reserve. The property also is in close proximity to two other Land Trust conservation easements in an increasingly developed part of western Hennepin County.

Along with preserving scenic qualities enjoyed by neighbors, the large restored prairie, maple-basswood forest and wetlands all provide important habitat for a variety of species including deer, waterfowl, osprey, and other migratory birds.

This project, made possible by a gift from Doug and Wendy Dayton, will protect this prairie habitat forever.



**BIG FORK RIVER  
KOOCHICHING COUNTY**

These 22 acres of land are within the Koochiching State Forest and include nearly 2,000 feet of undisturbed shoreline along the Big Fork River. The forest consists of old growth black ash and white pine, with some over 240 years old. No residential development nor division of the property are allowed under the terms of this easement.



**EAGLE LAKE  
ITASCA COUNTY**

This 33-acre Eagle Lake tract is located approximately 25 miles north of Grand Rapids, adjacent to another easement on Eagle Lake and is close to the George Washington State Forest. This easement protects over a thousand linear feet of undeveloped shoreline, and extensive lowland conifer forest and other wetland types. The undeveloped and natural character of the property provides significant habitat for a variety of fish, wildlife, and plants that rely on mature lowland forest habitat.

This property, as well as the following, was a gift to the Minnesota Land Trust by the landowner, Jerry Martin, who intended that both properties remain wildlife habitat into perpetuity.







DARYL PETERSON AND KRIS LARSON AT CHAMBERS GROVE CITY PARK IN DULUTH WHERE STURGEON SPAWNING GROUNDS WERE RESTORED AND A NEW CANOE LAUNCH CREATED.

OVER 115,000 TONS OF WOODY DEBRIS WERE REMOVED FROM RADIO TOWER BAY, BRINGING THIS SHALLOW BAY BACK TO HEALTH.



IMAGES: HANSI JOHNSON

**“THE GOOD NEWS IS, PUBLIC USES SUCH AS SKIING, HIKING OR BIKING CAN CO-EXIST VERY SUCCESSFULLY WITH WATER QUALITY AND WILDLIFE HABITAT. THE CITY OF DULUTH IS A GREAT MODEL FOR USING NATURAL LANDS FOR MULTIPLE BENEFITS.” —HANSI JOHNSON**

BY RESTORING THE RIVER AND CREATING TRAILS, VISITORS FROM ALL OVER THE REGION WILL BE ABLE TO ENJOY THE RICH NATURAL LANDS WITHIN THE CORRIDOR.



Growing up exploring the ocean sounds of Juneau, Alaska, Daryl Peterson dreamed of studying the whales and dolphins that he saw cavorting offshore. But as he studied marine biology at Whittier College in California, Daryl’s intended path took a little detour.

A class in field ecology taught by the esteemed botanist Dr. Sterling Keeley inspired Daryl to focus his time on field research projects that led to a six-month internship with The Nature Conservancy.

After several years managing restoration projects on the Trinity River for the US Bureau of Reclamation in California and earning a master’s degree in plant ecology along the way, Daryl concluded that he wanted to focus his career working for a non-profit thanks to their entrepreneurial, “can-do” approach to getting projects done.

Responding to the tug of family ties in Minnesota, Daryl accepted a position with The Nature Conservancy to tackle river restoration on the St. Louis River in Duluth.

But unfortunately, in the wake of the Great Recession, the St. Louis River program was dropped not long after he arrived. Undeterred, Daryl continued conversations with his project partner, DNR Fisheries, and began a new one with the Minnesota Land Trust.

In the entrepreneurial spirit described above, Minnesota Land Trust’s executive director Kris Larson understood that the St. Louis River Restoration Initiative was a true “legacy” project not just for Minnesota, but for the Great Lakes as a whole, and one that needed the unique skills and flexibility of a non-profit partner to bring it to fruition.

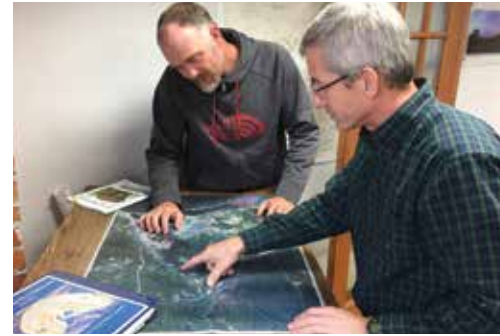
In a visionary move, the Land Trust board adopted a new strategic plan which for the first time recognized that the public it serves would benefit greatly from these new efforts to restore and heal damaged lands and that, once restored, many lands could be prime candidates for permanent protection. With the Minnesota Land Trust’s commitment to restoration firmly in place, Daryl came on board to make the decades of planning around the St. Louis River Restoration Initiative become a reality.

St. Louis River





THE MINNESOTA LAND TRUST IS PARTNERING WITH THE FOND DU LAC BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA TO RESTORE MORE THAN 250 ACRES OF HISTORIC WILD RICE BEDS IN THE ST. LOUIS RIVER, ONE OF THE LARGEST WILD RICE RESTORATIONS IN THE COUNTRY



HANSI JOHNSON AND DARYL PETERSON COLLABORATE FREQUENTLY AS THEY ADVISE THE CITY OF DULUTH IN DETERMINING LAND USES IN THE ST. LOUIS RIVER CORRIDOR.

As Director of Restoration Programs, Daryl's approach has been to break the larger, complex initiative into manageable pieces and show success along the way. This 'big picture' approach led not only to successful projects to restore shallow bays, wild rice beds and fish habitat, but also led to lasting partnerships with the Minnesota DNR, the Fond du Lac Band of the Lake Superior Chippewa and others involved in this historic effort.

As the St. Louis River Restoration Initiative has unfolded, we see that the restoration work does not happen in isolation from the Land Trust's other programs. The more we restore, the more we recognize the need to protect this natural gem and get people outside to enjoy it.

Towards that end, Daryl and Director of Recreational Lands Hansi Johnson have been deeply involved in the City of Duluth's conversations about how to protect more than ten miles of wild shoreline throughout the estuary, how to connect the neighborhoods in the St. Louis River Corridor through the Western Waterfront Trail, and how to elevate the use of the river through a National Water Trail designation, only the second in the state.

Hansi Johnson said it this way: "These connected efforts demonstrate how we are living out our mantra of "Protect, Restore and Engage" in the greatest freshwater estuary in the world's greatest lake.

A conversation with Daryl can seem like stepping into a PhD level course in river structures and stream morphology. Words like "gabbro intrusions," "Quaternary deposits" and "Isostatic Rebound" roll off his tongue as if he's talking about the street names in his neighborhood.

But he also knows how to keep it simple when he says: "for years, we've turned our back on the river and made it our literal garbage dump. Now is the time to make Duluth a great river city once again so that people can enjoy the rich legacy of the St. Louis River."

The success of the St. Louis River project—and the Land Trust's work in general—depends on the passions of people who care about the outdoors and the expertise of people like Daryl who are trained to solve the problems created by the destructive ways of our past.

For the sake of the river, we're fortunate to have both.



Lake Superior

Duluth Harbor





## THE NECESSITY OF PRIVATE LANDS

Occasionally we hear the question: Why protect private land? What's in it for me? We'll answer that question by telling you about the Nords.

Not long ago, Dick and Gloria Nord signed a conservation easement that permanently protects nearly 450 acres of land and three and a half miles of shoreline in northeast Minnesota.

Nestled within the constellation of lakes between Alexandria and Detroit Lakes, the area has surprisingly few public lands that provide habitat for deer, pheasant and migratory birds.

Filling this gap, the Nords, relying on Dick's professional experience with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, have managed their land in order to provide a sanctuary to wildlife.

For example, the Nords manage locally native staghorn sumac to maximize deer forage. Their land's hayfields, which also provide nesting habitat for grassland birds, are only mowed after fawning season. And

their wetland restoration efforts have resulted in a robust heron rookery and loon nesting site.

Their conservation easement includes provisions that will ensure the integrity of the land's wildlife habitat and water quality into perpetuity. It includes forest and wetland management plans, and prohibits residential or agricultural development. The Land Trust is responsible for ensuring present and future owners' adherence to these stipulations.

Dick and Gloria Nord illustrate this critical point: responsibility for our state's conservation goals does not—and cannot—lie solely in the arena of government land management.

With more than 76% of the state in



DICK'S BROTHER DR. JOHN NORD, MATTIE THE DOG, GLORIA NORD, DICK NORD, AND NEPHEW TOM NORD.

**“ALL OF OUR WILDLIFE SPECIES IN GREATEST CONSERVATION NEED RELY ON PRIVATE LANDS FOR AT LEAST SOME PART OF THEIR LIFE CYCLE,” SAID KRIS LARSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. “WE NEED TO CELEBRATE AMAZING STEWARDS LIKE THE NORDS WHO ENSURE THEIR PROPERTIES GIVE SOMETHING BACK TO ALL OF US.”**

private ownership, individual landowners play an essential role in providing the wildlife habitat, clean water and scenic beauty we all benefit from.

In short, without a private land conservation strategy carried out by the Minnesota Land Trust, our state's conservation goals cannot possibly be met. Amazingly, the Nords are not unusual; over the last 25 years, thousands of landowners all over the state have committed their land to conservation easements.

These conservation heroes include people you've heard of, like Jim and Judy Brandenburg. Others include published authors such as Doug Wood and Larry Weber, conservation leaders such as Paul Schurke and Craig Blacklock, and even former Twins player Terry Steinbach.

They also include community heroes whose names are less well known but who have selflessly put their own interests aside to protect vital places across our entire state.

And many conservation minded land-





owners are pioneers in land management approaches that can teach others—including public owners—unique strategies for invasives removal, wetland restoration, conservation grazing and other innovations that provide a public benefit.

So indeed, private lands are an essential part of our state's conservation landscape. The last piece of this great puzzle? It's you.

People like you who generously support this kind of grass roots conservation that comes together over kitchen tables all across Minnesota...people who believe in the power of individuals to work together for the common good...people whose family history and legacy align in close harmony with the values that all of us hold dear.



TOM NORD



ROSLYN LONG



## HERE AT THE START, PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Twenty-five years ago, Jane Harper joined with other like-minded people in Washington County to form what would become the Minnesota Land Trust.

As a founding board member, Jane believes that Land Trusts provide a key tool for effective land conservation.

"We can't fully appreciate our state's conservation potential without an organization like the Minnesota Land Trust," observes Jane. "Even though my active role goes back a ways, I'm still devoted to supporting the Land Trust's work."

In fact, Jane and her husband John Velin not only make monthly contributions to the Land Trust, they have also made plans to include the Land Trust in their estate planning.

"I feel strongly that this is one way that I can leave behind a legacy for future generations," muses Jane. "I'm proud of my contributions of time and effort in the beginning, but I know that my financial commitment is key to the longevity of this important community-run conservation organization."



**MINNESOTA LAND TRUST**

The Minnesota Land Trust is committed to strong fiscal health and socially responsible investments. The financial summary that follows is based on the complete financial audit which was conducted by Redpath and Company, Ltd. Their full report is available online at [www.mnland.org](http://www.mnland.org) or by contacting the Land Trust at 651-647-9590.

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

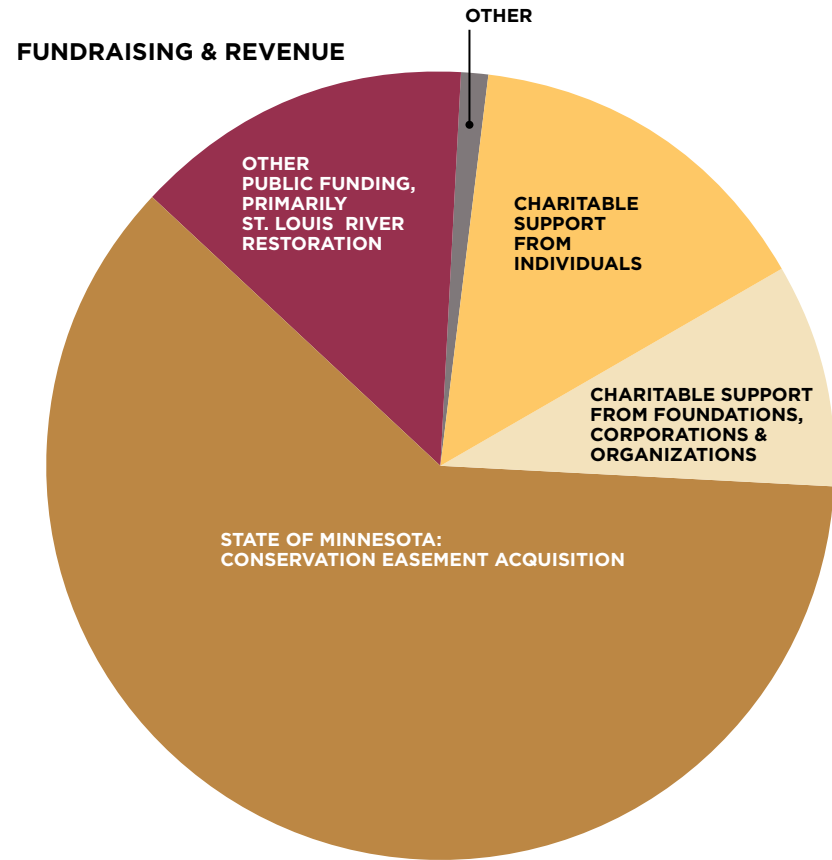
**BALANCE SHEET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2016**

<b>Assets</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>
Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$4,725,177	\$4,876,136
Net Furniture & Equipment	\$5,149	\$1,921
Land Held for Resale/Conservation	\$310,659	\$170,029
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$5,040,985</b>	<b>\$5,048,086</b>
<b>Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>		
Accrued Payables	\$119,890	\$92,065
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$4,921,095</b>	<b>\$4,956,021</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$5,040,985</b>	<b>\$5,048,086</b>

**EXPENSE ALLOCATION**

<b>Program</b>	<b>\$3,796,101</b>
<b>Fundraising</b>	<b>\$234,157</b>
<b>Management</b>	<b>\$235,195</b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$4,265,453</b>

**89%** Program  
**5.5%** Fundraising  
**5.5%** Management



**FUNDRAISING & REVENUE**

Charitable support from individuals:	\$627,092
Charitable support from foundations, corporations & organizations:	\$389,501
State of Minnesota: Conservation Easement Acquisition	\$2,587,908
Other public funding, primarily St. Louis River Restoration:	\$596,482
Other:	\$29,544
<b>Total support &amp; revenue</b>	<b>\$4,230,527</b>



## VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTE TIME AND TALENTS

PRESTON WALLIN SPENT HIS ENTIRE SUMMER HELPING OUT WITH BASELINES AND WRITING PROJECTS.



OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MAKE A SIGNIFICANT GIFT OF TIME AND TALENT. PICTURED ARE DAVID HARTWELL AND STEVE DELAPP WHO HELPED START THE LAND TRUST 25 YEARS AGO.



PAUL RAYMAKER HAS MADE NUMEROUS TRIPS TO LAND TRUST PROPERTIES TO CAPTURE GORGEOUS IMAGES FOR US.



MARTHA GREINER HAS HELPED RAISE THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS FOR THE LAND TRUST OVER THE YEARS.



STAN LISZKA DEVOTED HOURS AND HOURS TO UPDATING RECORDS FOR OUR STEWARDSHIP TEAM.



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JIM ODDEN CARRIED A FULL LOAD OF 12 MONITORING VISITS THIS PAST SUMMER.

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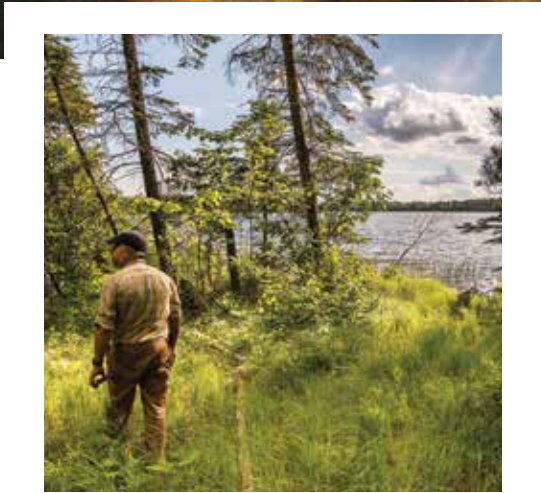
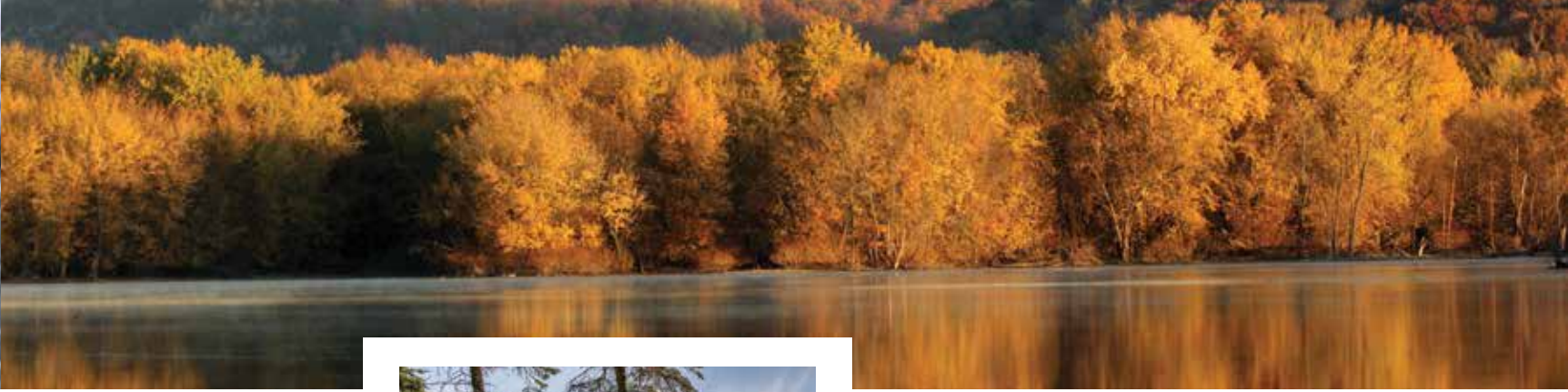
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