



MINNESOTA LAND TRUST

MID-YEAR REVIEW
MAY, 2012



MINNESOTA'S TREASURES, PRESERVED FOREVER.

NORTHERN REGION

GIANTS OF CONSERVATION such as Ernest Oberholtzer and Sigurd Olson captured the romance and history of Northern Minnesota in their writings. They also actively and tirelessly lobbied to preserve large tracts of land for the benefit of generations that followed them. Without them and others, who can say in what condition our beloved North Woods would be today?

Many of us are just as passionate about our own corners of the North Woods. We recognize that our membership in the Minnesota Land Trust is our way to aggregate our passion and our funds into the continuing effort to preserve the legacy of our beloved state.

In the last year, the Minnesota Land Trust has completed land protection projects on several significant parcels of land that include entry points to the BWCAW and important waterways such as trout streams and water trails.

Read on to learn how your membership dollars have helped preserve precious shoreline and continue the legacy of Oberholtzer, Olson and other conservation pioneers. All in all, the Land Trust has protected a total of over 10,000 acres and well over 300,000 shoreline feet in northern Minnesota alone.

SOUTH KAWISHIWI RIVER+

Nearly a mile and a half of the South Kawishiwi River is protected from development with this easement on property almost entirely surrounded by state and federal lands. The South Kawishiwi flows into the BWCAW a short distance away, and a federal campground is located directly across the river from the protected land.



> OVER 100 ACRES OF LAND ADJACENT TO SUPERIOR NATIONAL FOREST ARE NOW PROTECTED ON SOUTH KAWISHIWI RIVER.



> THIRTEEN ACRE MILLER ISLAND AND ITS NEARLY 4,500 FEET OF SHORELINE IS NOW PROTECTED FOREVER.

MILLER ISLAND ON BURNTSIDE LAKE+

The Land Trust has been active in the Burntside Lake area for several years and has protected seven other properties on the lake including Listening Point, the historic and inspirational home of wilderness advocate Sigurd F. Olson.

MINNESOTA LAND TRUST HOLDS EASEMENTS ON ERNEST OBERHOLTZER AND SIGURD OLSON'S ICONIC NORTHERN MINNESOTA PROPERTIES WHICH PERMANENTLY PROTECT THEM FROM DEVELOPMENT.



LITTLE PINE RIVER++

This 88-acre property in Crow Wing County is located next to a campsite owned by the State of Minnesota and contributes to a complex of undeveloped space in the immediate area. Over 3,000 feet of shoreline along Little Pine River and 2,300 feet of shoreline around an open wetland pond and the surrounding forest provide habitats for a variety of threatened species, including bald eagles, northern goshawks, Blanding’s turtles, and wood thrushes.

LITTLE WEST BRANCH KNIFE RIVER+

Over 2,400 feet of the Little West Branch of the Knife River, a designated North Shore trout stream, flow through the unique forest habitat of this property near Two Harbors. This project will provide important habitat for amphibians and various plant and animal communities and will preserve the water quality of the Knife River and the local watershed.

FUTURE PROJECTS IN MINNESOTA’S ARROWHEAD REGION

The Minnesota Land Trust has identified 40+ private landowners in Cook, Lake, St. Louis and Koochiching counties who are interested in permanently protecting shoreline and other critical habitat on their property through a conservation easement. Shoreline is of particular interest because a healthy shoreline can improve water quality, reduce erosion, and enhance the success of native species.

The targeted projects contain the highest quality habitat and represent more than 25 miles of shoreline and 4,600 acres of forest land, all privately owned.



WHAT DO THE CLEAN WATER, LAND AND LEGACY AMENDMENT AND ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND MEAN TO THE MINNESOTA LAND TRUST?

Both show the tremendous support of the citizens of Minnesota for preserving our precious natural resources and protecting them from the budgetary ebbs and flow that are part of our current economy. The Land Trust uses these funds to accelerate the work that we do with the support of our membership. We could not do our work without the combination of membership support, public funding, or the dedication of scores of volunteers.



+ These projects were funded in part by the Outdoor Heritage Fund as recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC).



++ These projects were funded in part with the generous support of the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). Currently 40% of net Minnesota State Lottery proceeds are dedicated to building the Trust Fund and ensuring future benefits for Minnesota’s environment and natural resources.

CENTRAL REGION

EDGE OF THE PRAIRIE

Vast wetland and shallow lake complexes play an important role in the vitality of the Mississippi River. This is particularly true for the watersheds within the Edge of the Prairie landscape such as the Chippewa, Sauk, Crow, and Long Prairie Rivers. These watersheds are dominated by agriculture, which can have a dramatic impact on water quality and wildlife habitat. Funding is being sought to support numerous properties that have been identified as excellent candidates for conservation easements. Two recently completed projects exemplify the work that the Land Trust has already done in this important region.

CROW RIVER++

This 30-acre property in Kandiyohi County includes wetlands, grasslands and woodlands with approximately 2,651 feet of shoreline along the Middle Fork of the Crow River. Over the years, the landowners have planted approximately 6,000 trees as they have restored the farmland to a more natural state. The wetlands on the property are a key habitat for species in greatest conservation need such as Blanding's turtles.

GLACIAL RIDGE

One family's commitment to conservation has resulted in four separate easements totaling over 400 acres that are part of a larger complex of wildlife habitat near New London, a few miles east of the Crow River property. The newest 47 acres that were protected this year feature deeply rolling, forested hills, grasslands, wildlife food plots, small wetlands and a pond that provides habitat for frogs, salamanders, turtles, and wood ducks.

MINNESOTA'S MIGRATORY BIRD FLYWAY

The Minnesota Land Trust has worked for years to protect high priority wildlife habitat within the three big river corridors in the Twin Cities metropolitan urbanizing area – the Minnesota River, Mississippi River and St. Croix River. Increasing agricultural pressure and fragmentation by small rural residential developments has taken its toll on habitat used by waterfowl as they migrate along the Mississippi Flyway between Alaska and Patagonia. About 40% of all North American migrating waterfowl and shorebirds use this route. The rivers themselves provide nesting, spawning, and other habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial animals.

STICKNEY LAKE+

Nearly five hundred acres of Mississippi Flyway habitat will be protected for future generations with this conservation easement on Stickney Lake just southeast of St. Cloud. The landowner wants to preserve the nearly 8,000 shoreline feet and 130 acres of wetland habitat that builds on a network of public lands including the Cater Homestead Prairie and Clear Lake Scientific & Natural Area. A number of additional projects are identified and are expected to be completed over the coming months.

SCANDIA++

This 294-acre easement in Washington County contributes to a complex of protected land in the St. Croix River Corridor. The woodlands, wetlands and grasslands on the property are key habitats for a variety of species in greatest conservation need, including bald eagles and American badgers which have been observed on the property, and provide an important respite for Mississippi Flyway birds such as sandhill crane, bald eagles and various waterfowl.



> UNDEVELOPED SHORELINE ALONG STICKNEY LAKE HELP PRESERVE WATER QUALITY AND PROVIDE NEAR-SHORE HABITAT.



SOUTHEAST REGION

> THIS SPECTACULAR BLUFF IN FILLMORE COUNTY IS PROTECTED FROM DEVELOPMENT FOREVER.

MINNESOTA RIVER BLUFFLANDS

The Mississippi River Blufflands ecological subsection is identified in Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy as having the highest concentration of species in greatest conservation need in the entire State. This includes neo-tropical migrant birds and waterfowl, as well as reptiles, mammals, mollusks and insects. Many of these game and non-game species exist in part because of the rich tapestry of habitat types in the region—hardwood forests, floodplain wetlands, cold water streams—and the unique presence of bluff prairie, oak savanna and re-established grasslands.

This rich tapestry is threatened today by the destructive impacts of land fragmentation, bluff-top development and changes in agricultural practices. The Minnesota Land Trust has been engaged in the protection of the Blufflands for more than a decade, having preserved more than 6,000 acres of land through 42 projects, making it one of the organization's highest priorities.

RECENTLY COMPLETED ROOT RIVER BLUFFLANDS PROJECTS

Highway 16 is a Historic Bluff Country Scenic Byway that runs through Lanesboro east to the Mississippi River. Two recently protected properties lie along this road where many of the prairie bluffs have reverted to forest and very little of the native habitat remains intact. Large single family holdings are increasingly being developed into small residential parcels.

Protecting these properties from development will preserve critical habitat and also enables more efficient land management. This will benefit species of special concern and, because the Root River is a major tributary of the Mississippi River, water quality will be enhanced as well. Many fish species such as brook, rainbow and brown trout, smallmouth bass, rock bass, channel catfish, and crappies inhabit the river.

ROOT RIVER+

Scott Leddy purchased his property in 2003 with the idea of restoring the bluffs habitat to benefit uncommon species that include timber rattlesnakes, six-lined racerunners, Indian paint brush, cream indigo, edible valerian, purple cliff break, and other prairie and oak savanna plant and animal species. His newly protected property is visible from the Root River State Trail and lies within the statutory boundaries of the Richard Dorer State Forest in Houston County. It joins over 500 acres of nearby Root River conservation easements.

RUSHFORD SAND BARRENS+

This recently completed project adds 148 acres to nearly 600 acres already protected by the Peterson family. Their land, near Rushford, now includes well over 11,000 feet of permanently protected shoreline, and a total of over 700 acres of spectacular bluffland that includes unique habitat for a variety of species of concern including the timber rattlesnake.

FIND IT ONLINE
TO LEARN MORE
ABOUT PROJECTS
COMPLETED BY THE
LAND TRUST,
GO TO WWW.MNLAND.ORG/PROTECT.

RESTORATION WORK ON ST. LOUIS RIVER ESTUARY'S RADIO TOWER BAY GETS UNDERWAY



SAVE THE DATE!

TREASURED PLACES COMES TO DULUTH!

You're invited to join us for a fun-filled day in Duluth on Saturday, September 8, 2012. Our annual Treasured Places Celebration will be held at Spirit Mountain Adventure Park. More details to come, but plan on an excursion to our restoration project at nearby Radio Tower Bay. You can 'like' us on Facebook so you're always up to date on all of the Land Trust's activities.



SCAN THE QR CODE TO WATCH A VIDEO ABOUT THE PILING REMOVAL.

FOR OVER 20 YEARS EFFORTS HAVE

focused on improving water quality in the Duluth harbor. Now the recovery of the St. Louis Estuary is entering a new phase to restore fish and migratory waterfowl habitat. Minnesota Land Trust plays an important role working with more than 15 partner agencies and organizations to complete these projects on this 12,000 acre wetland complex that flows into Duluth Harbor.

In 1987, the estuary was listed as one of 43 Areas of Concern in the Great Lakes. Once an entry point into the wilds of Minnesota for voyageurs and other early travelers, the river had become polluted and unsuitable for fishing and other recreation, and for the annual migration of millions of waterfowl, raptors and songbirds.

The starting point for the clean-up is at Radio Tower Bay, a shallow 40 acre basin littered with lumber remains, concrete and wood pilings, metal cables and other debris. Taking advantage of thick winter ice, plans called for the removal of wood pilings that were part of a railroad trestle used for the sawmill operations around the turn of the last century.

While warm winter weather threatened operations, a blast of cold air in mid February created a perfect window of opportunity. Two hundred and forty pilings were removed from the bay using heavy equipment that essential-

ly jiggled the 35 – 40 foot long logs out of the muck, and transported to an off-site location for drying.

Work is expected to continue this summer with a dredging operation that will begin removing the four to eight feet of sawmill waste (bark, sawdust, slab wood) from the bottom of Radio Tower Bay. The benthic (bottom) layer will be re-vegetated, and soon the blue waters will become hospitable once again for fish and other creatures that used to make it their home.

Meanwhile, we have found a sawyer who has agreed to mill the 150 year old hand-hewn pilings. Suitable pieces of the tamarack, spruce and white pine lumber will be used to construct a fishing pier and boardwalk, providing access to Radio Tower Bay. Remaining wood will be donated to youth oriented environmental

organizations who plan to use it for projects such as bat and wood duck houses.

This is only the beginning of a multi-year project that will restore about 1400 acres of wetlands and working harbor that have been severely impacted by more than a century of heavy industry and shoreline modifications. Within a comparatively short time, decades of fish advisories and closed waterfronts will give way to swimmable beaches, drinkable water and edible fish.



Estuary photos by Steven Douglas Smith



YOUR GIFTS PRESERVE MINNESOTA'S TREASURED PLACES

ESTATE GIFT RESULTS IN MORE PROTECTED LAND

Many of the projects completed over the past several months received financial support from the estate of Henry Crosby. As one of the first landowners to work with the Land Trust back in 1995, Henry left his home and protected property in Sand Creek Township to the Land Trust upon his death in 2009. We were honored by Henry's confidence in our work and know he would be pleased to see all the wonderful lands that are now protected because of his generosity.

Many people think that planned giving is just for the very wealthy. In reality, anyone can name organizations such as the Land Trust in their will. You can also name the Land Trust as a beneficiary of a retirement plan, certificate of deposit or insurance policy. Or you can make gifts of stock or land to the Land Trust.

You can find more information online at www.mnland.org/ways-to-give-landing or by calling Walter Abramson at 651-917-6285.

MONTHLY GIVING

You're hearing more and more about the value of sustained giving to a non-profit:

- We save postage, printing and staff time when we don't need to mail out reminders, leaving more funds available for land conservation.
 - We have a more constant source of funding all year long.
- However, recently we heard from a long-time donor who was setting up monthly giving programs for all of their charitable gifts. We were pleasantly surprised to hear of the benefits that this member articulated from their point of view:
- They were able to achieve their charitable giving goals, because their gifts were spread out over 12 months.
 - They never had to worry about whether or not their annual membership was due – they just made their decision once, and then forgot about it.
 - They had access at any time to their record of giving for tax and planning purposes

When you set up a monthly giving program through the Minnesota Land Trust, you will receive a reminder email before each gift, and the ability to easily modify your monthly gift at any time. It's quick, easy, and you are in complete control. Go to www.mnland.com and click on "Donate" or give us a call at 651-647-9590 and we'd be happy to set it up for you.

MINNESOTA LAND TRUST WWW.MNLAND.ORG

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- Gena Setzer,** Staff
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In addition to the staff members listed above, the following individuals and organizations provide high-quality services that enhance our mission:

- Jimelle Duncan,**
Bookkeeping
- Lee Markell,**
Land Protection
- Community GIS,**
Mapping

BOARD MEMBERS

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| Kurt Apfelbacher | Jim Mayer |
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Celebrate the very best of Minnesota...
and help the Minnesota Land Trust
with a successful fundraiser at the same time!

Thursday, May 17, 2012 | 6:00 pm
514 Studios
514 North 3rd Street in Minneapolis' North Loop



You are invited to share an evening celebrating the best of Minnesota, hosted by the Minnesota Land Trust. For only \$75, you'll enjoy an amazing array of edibles prepared by Red Stag's Kim Bartmann inspired by the very best of Minnesota's nearby food producers, including some Minnesota Land Trust conservation easement landowners.

Enjoy locally crafted beer, wine and other refreshments at this zero waste event. Find out how and why the Minnesota Land Trust is protecting land all across the state for the benefit of clean water, healthy habitat and scenic views.

Bid on a variety of exciting auction items including a dogsled or kayak adventure, an exclusive guided fly fishing trip, collector-quality wines and other surprises!

Tickets are limited and going fast!
So call 651-647-9590 or go to www.mnland.org
for more information and to reserve your tickets.