



MID-YEAR REVIEW
MAY 2018

THE **OUTDOOR** CONNECTION



MINNESOTA LAND TRUST

ENGAGE



CAMPS: GATEWAYS TO NATURE

With declining outdoor time, one of the few ways kids are getting meaningful outdoor experiences is by going to camp. Over 10 million kids in the US went to some sort of outdoors camp last year, and the good news is that those numbers are growing every year. But just as camps are becoming a final link for kids and the outdoors, some camps are closing due to financial hardships. With over half of camps nationwide already near or at capacity, a single camp closing could mean kids being deprived of what could be their only connection to nature.

The Minnesota Land Trust works closely with camps and nature centers across our state to not only protect their land and water, but also to keep their doors open. By preserving their land with a conservation easement, camps can reduce the pressure for development of their land, and potentially free up cash resources through the process that can be re-invested into the camp facilities. And if the camp does have to close in the long term, the lands and water will still be protected in their natural state by the Land Trust—forever.

FOR A **LOT OF KIDS** IN SAINT PAUL,
WE'RE THEIR **FIRST EXPERIENCE IN**



HIGHLIGHT BELWIN CONSERVANCY

Since 1971, over 500,000 students with Saint Paul Public Schools have visited Belwin Conservancy as part of a science-based outdoor program. Every year, 10,000 kids from all walks of life are able to engage in nature-based activities, and ignite a long-term passion for Minnesota's natural places.

"For a lot of kids in Saint Paul, they'll tell us we're their first experience in nature," says Josh Leonard, education director of Belwin Outdoor Science. "We only see kids for a day, but I think a lot of kids can have a real shift on what their connection to nature is, and what it means to protect nature."

Protected forever by a conservation easement with the Minnesota Land Trust, the Belwin Conservancy is a non-profit dedicated to the preservation, restoration, and appreciation of the natural world.

"Many schools aren't able to provide enough time for science learning, so for these kids, we may be a significant chunk of their science education for the year. We work to reinforce the practice of citizen science—using real observations and being in touch with the scientific process. Having land that's protected forever means we know we can pin an experiment like a rain gauge to a post and know that will be there next year and the next and the next."

Every child in Saint Paul Public Schools will come through Belwin, and thanks to the permanent conservation easement by the Minnesota Land Trust, the outside experiences that shape their understanding of nature will be there for the next generation too.



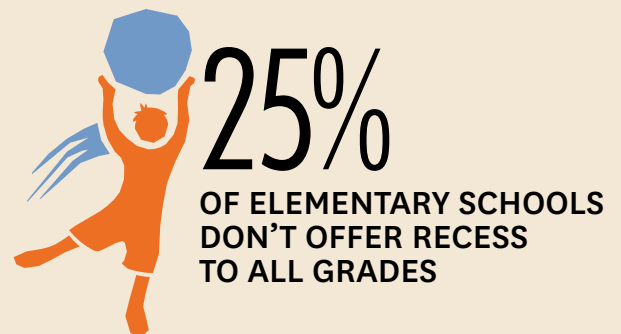
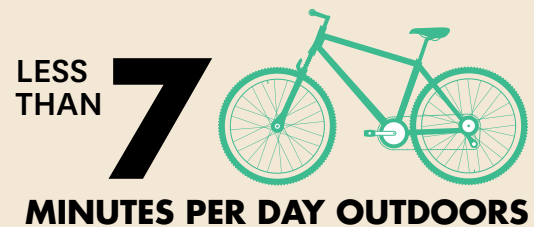
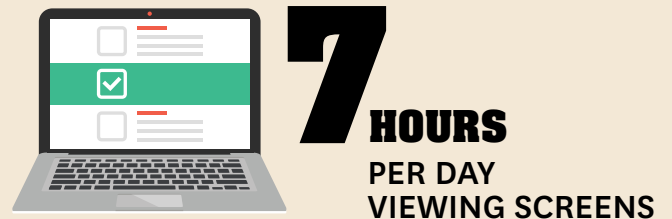
THEY'LL TELL US
NATURE.



Belwin Conservancy

GENERATION INDOORS?

In a world of video games, 24/7 streaming services, and smartphones, the act of just going outside can seem radical. American children spend:



The Minnesota Land Trust is committed to helping reverse this trend. By protecting and restoring the natural heritage of our state we're providing places to experience the great outdoors. Discovering wonders of nature and playing freely is not just good for children's physical and mental health, but also can help spark a connection and love for the outdoors that last a lifetime.

SOURCE: REI-THE PATH AHEAD 2017

PROTECT



SHARING A LOVE OF THE LAND

The story of land conservation isn't just one of flora or fauna—it is most importantly a story of people. The property owners who work with the Minnesota Land Trust to protect and restore their land are inspirational people who see land conservation as a way to share what they most love with future generations.

Jeanne Kingston is just that kind of person. Last year she permanently protected her 44-acre property, a beautiful landscape with wetlands, grasslands, and forested areas. The property connects to William O'Brien State Park and offers habitat for a number of species including gray fox, great-horned owl, and brook trout. Fifteen years ago she set out to renew the natural prairie on her land, with the



**IT IS IN MY
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intent of preserving quality habitat for wildlife species. But she also wanted to actively use her land as a learning platform to inspire the next generation of conservation-minded youth. To that end, she partnered with a local school to give kids a unique outdoor experience snowshoeing and visiting her horses. For years, groups of first graders have been exploring her property and connecting to the outdoors.

And she's not done yet. Working with her granddaughter, Jeanne has been creating a pollinator garden, using all native plant species. They plan to release monarch butterflies into the "Butterfly Garden" as a way of helping replenish that species.

"It is in my blood. I grew up roaming around my grandparent's farm, and experiencing the smell of plowed fields and listening to the birds," says Jeanne. "Then I had children and grandchildren, and I wanted to share my experiences with them."

Thank you to Jeanne and all the wonderful landowners who do so much to inspire and engage young people with Minnesota's natural places! Jeanne has generously donated a tour of her prairie as an auction item for our annual Minnesota Made event.

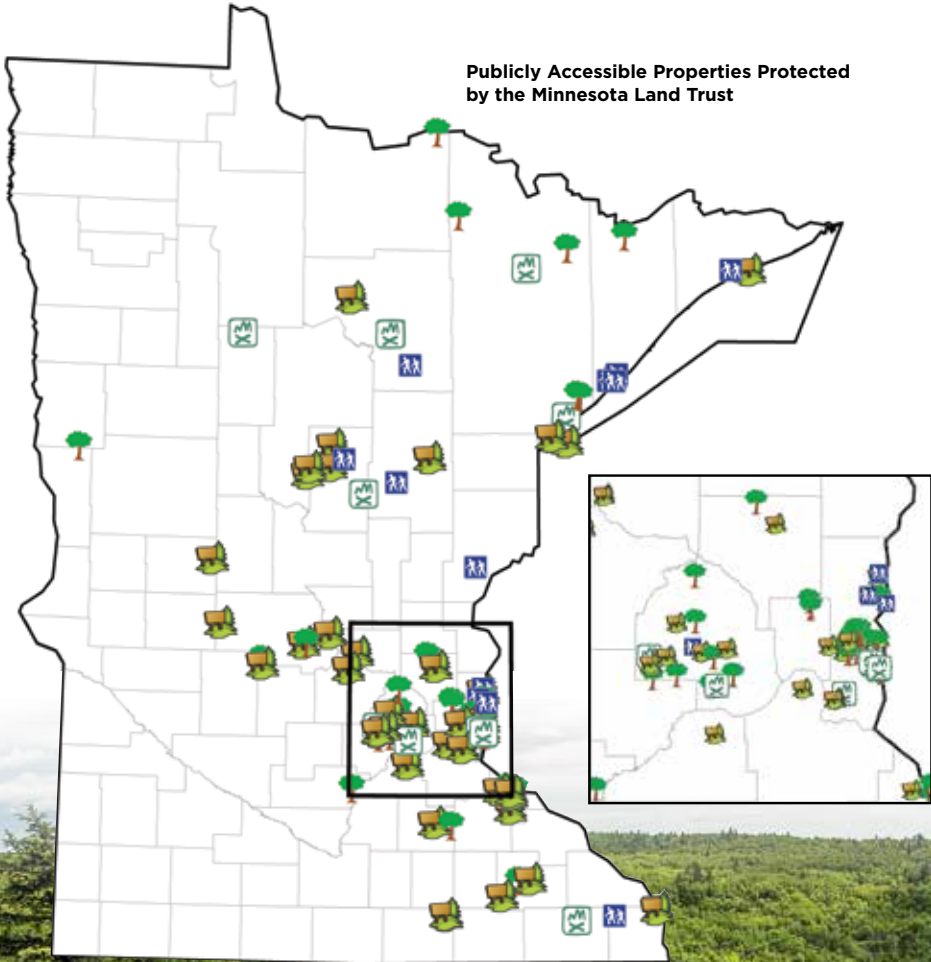
The conservation easement on Jeanne's property was made possible thanks to the members of the Minnesota Land Trust and with funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund, as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature and recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC).







Raising butterflies can be a gratifying experience for all ages! Collecting eggs "cats"; feeding caterpillars; releasing monarchs. Butterfly garden sign designed by Jeanne's granddaughter, Maddy, and named after the resident donkey, Suki.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO GET OUTDOORS

Publicly Accessible Properties Protected by the Minnesota Land Trust



If you've ever hiked the Superior Hiking Trail, chances are you've crossed through a section of land protected through an easement with the Minnesota Land Trust. Almost 25% of the properties we protect are accessible by the public, including trail access, camps, nature centers, and parks. And many landowners offer additional public access (like the story on the preceding page!)

-  Camp or Nature Center
-  Trail Access
-  General Public Access
-  Limited Public Access

Superior Hiking Trail



RESTORE



RECOVERING A RIVER

In Duluth in the 1970s and '80s, the St. Louis River was largely a place to avoid—raw sewage and industrial contamination made the river inhospitable for most living things, including Duluth residents. Fortunately, the river has seen a remarkable turnaround thanks in part to the St. Louis River Restoration Initiative, which the Land Trust has been a part of since 2011. Recently, we've made great strides in our collective restoration work, most recently completing extensive improvements to Chambers Grove where we created fish spawning habitat and a carry-down boat launch.

Our focus now is shifting to other important restoration projects within the estuary. This restoration is significant for the overall health of the St. Louis River ecosystem and also provides increased river access for residents, connecting them to the outdoors while driving economic investment in outdoor recreation.



Revegetation work at Grassy Point

HIGHLIGHT GRASSY POINT



Jutting out into the St. Louis River in Duluth's west end is Grassy Point. Historically two sawmills operated here, disposing an equivalent of more than 30,000 dump truck loads of sawdust and scrap lumber into the shallow waters. Now, more than 120 years later the habitat is still considered impaired, and without intervention will continue to be an underwater desert.

The DNR and the MPCA will soon begin removing much of the wood waste and recreating desirable coastal marsh features like sheltered bays and low islands. As a project partner, the Minnesota Land Trust will be working with biologists to design and revegetate the area using native aquatic, wetland, and floodplain plants to provide quality marsh bird and songbird habitat. When completed, the project will create a bright new opportunity for people to fish and bird watch right in the heart of Duluth.

These projects are made possible thanks to the members of the Minnesota Land Trust and with funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund, as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature and recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC).





MINNESOTA LAND TRUST UPDATES

STAFF UPDATES

Over the last 3-1/2 years as program manager of wetlands and grasslands, **PAT ANDERSON** has passionately worked to protect Minnesota natural spaces—impacting several thousands of acres and nearly 20 miles of shoreline. Pat will retire June 30. Our appreciation runs deep for Pat and we wish him the best on his next adventures... travelling, volunteering, creating art, and playing in the outdoors.



Upon Pat's retirement, current program manager for monitoring and land management, **KRISTINA GEIGER**, will move into Pat's vacated role and **ANDREW MOE**, current stewardship associate will transition to Kristina's role.

MEET OUR NEW STAFF



ALEX TSATSOULIS joins us as our new development and communications director, having worked in fundraising for over 11 years in the Twin Cities. If he's not in the office, he's out on his bike or exploring the woods with his kids.

GINI BRIEDENBACH, our new Lake Superior projects coordinator,

loves to ski, race sailboats, grow vegetables, and spend time exploring the wilderness. She has worked at protecting water resources for over 20 years.

WELCOME BACK

Conservation associate **MARK VAN DER LINDEN** recently returned to the Minnesota Land Trust after a 6-month hiatus to hike the entire Appalachian Trail.

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

We're pleased to announce three new appointments to the Minnesota Land Trust board.

RICK ROSVOLD manages the North Region air quality department with Xcel Energy. He enjoys hunting, camping, and recharging while being outside in the natural environment.

JOHN SHARDLOW previously served as Chair of the Board and has rejoined for another term. He is a land planning consultant for the government and private sectors and is passionate about nature and working towards a sustainable future.

TINA MAY works to create farming solutions as the Senior Director of Sustainability at Land O'Lakes, Inc. A recent transplant to Minnesota, she and her husband are looking forward to raising their two young boys in the Great Outdoors!

EVERYBODY'S REASON FOR MAKING A PLANNED GIFT TO THE LAND TRUST IN THEIR WILL IS DIFFERENT, BUT THE COMMON THREAD IS A LOVE FOR MINNESOTA'S NATURAL PLACES



ENDURING LEGACY

Jim Payne, whose hobby is writing lyrics and librettos for operas, grew up in an undeveloped suburb outside Cleveland, Ohio, where he spent hours in the surrounding woods and ravines exploring the natural world. In that environment, he grew to love nature and also to mourn its loss as he watched development encroach and eventually replace the woods with pavement. The impact of that experience stayed with him, and inspired him to work to preserve natural places in whatever ways he could.

Jim became an environmental lawyer and has spent the past 40 years representing a wide variety of clients on issues involving habitat conservation, wildlife protection, and, in more recent years, pollution control. He also became involved with the Minnesota Land Trust as a volunteer land monitor, a member of the Board of Directors, and by making a planned gift.

"I wanted the woods of my youth to remain, but they didn't. I want my gift to have a long-term impact, and the Land Trust is protecting land so that woods like those will be there forever."

Planned giving is also how Jim is giving back to a state he values so highly.

"Minnesota's been great to me; it's provided me with a wonderful career and place to live, and this is one way for me to give back."

For more information about planned giving, contact Alex Tsatsoulis at 651-917-6289 or atsatsoulis@mnland.org.



**MINNESOTA
LAND TRUST**

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DESIGN: BARBARA PEDERSON
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MINNESOTA LAND TRUST

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Minnesota Made

A benefit to preserve the very best of Minnesota's Natural Places.

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THURSDAY, MAY 31 | 6-9 PM
CHILDREN'S THEATRE | MINNEAPOLIS

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