



The newsletter for landowners of properties protected with conservation easements

June 2017

Monitoring Season Begins in the Land Trust's 25th Year

It's our birthday! Twenty-five years ago, the founders of the Minnesota Land Trust realized that Minnesota needed another conservation option for private land.

Private land contains some of our most important wildlife habitat and is essential for things we take for granted like clean water and fresh air.

Just as important, our natural world can inspire us and provides the antidote to the noise and clutter of our everyday lives.

As we've grown, so too has the notion of non-profit land conservation. Across the country, the more than 1,700 land trusts have now collectively protected

more land in the lower 48 than all the national parks combined!



To steward these lands in partnership with their owners, the Land Trust monitors every protected property annually. While some monitors are staff, most are volunteers who enjoy visiting with landowners and walking the land.

Landowners are encouraged to join the monitoring visit. This is a great time for landowners to ask questions or let the Land Trust know if any changes to the property are planned.

Preparing for Hazards: Is your Land Resilient?

We are seeing changes in our state. Insect pests are extending their range into areas where they never before existed. Growing seasons are longer. Rain storms are more intense, with longer droughts in between.

While we cannot predict the exact impacts to our changing natural world, our understanding of the importance of connected, diverse natural lands is deeper than ever.

How can landowners increase the ability of their land—and the natural communities on it—to resist and adapt to change? Manage for **resilience**.

“Resilience” is the capacity of

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Mary Giles, Roger Strand, and Jess Berge—landowners of protected properties across Minnesota—celebrate the Minnesota Land Trust's 25th anniversary.

Stewardship at the Land Trust

Andrew Moe joined the Land Trust in April this year as our Stewardship Associate. He will work alongside landowners, volunteers, and other partners to ensure that the Land Trust's protected properties continue to provide the benefits for which they were first conserved.

Andrew grew up outside of Rochester, Minnesota and has degrees in environmental studies and conservation biology. The rest of the stewardship team:

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You may also call us toll free at 1-877-MLT-LAND.



Andrew Moe, the Land Trust's new Stewardship Associate



2016 Landowner of the Year Gordon Bailey (right) and Land Trust Executive Director Kris Larson.

2016 Landowner of the Year

Congratulations to the Bailey family, recipients of the Land Trust's 2016 Landowner of the Year award.

Several years ago, Gordon and Josephine Bailey purchased land west of Rochester along the Zumbro River as a getaway to relax, enjoy the outdoors, and maybe do a bit of hunting.

As the owners of a plant nursery business now employing its fifth generation of Baileys, Gordie and Jo may not have that "relaxation" gene. You can see it on their land, which over years of hard work been converted from crop land to wildflowers and big bluestem.

The deep roots of the big bluestem and other prairie plants help the soil absorb rainfall better than tilled land.

The water ends up deep in the soil, as opposed to running off into the river and taking valuable topsoil with it. This is especially important as we see larger storm events.



By planting prairie, the Baileys are providing a public benefit in the form of improved wildlife habitat, cleaner water, and water that stays on the land longer.

Gordie pointed out what makes his family's business so long-lasting: "Ego. We have no egos in our family."

That may be the secret behind the Baileys' stewardship of the land as well. Planting prairie and protecting important resources for future generations requires a kind of selflessness that drives many landowners' land ethic.

We recognize and appreciate all who manage the land with the long view in mind, and a special thank you to the Baileys.

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 communities and ecosystems to respond to a disturbance—by resisting damage and recovering quickly—without losing function. All communities and ecosystems face hazards such as drought, disease, storms, and flooding.

Examples of functions that could be lost include flood management capacity, animal breeding or nesting grounds, or timber or crop productivity.

When an area has many types of soils, varied topography, and diverse species of plants and animals, it is more resilient to change. Resilient natural land is one of the ways to reduce the risks of hazardous events to humans and natural systems.

Increasing resilience is a way to hedge our bets. For example, the more variety of habitats there are, the more likely there will be a suitable niche for a species in a changing environment.

In the case of large rain storms, resiliency means the ability of the land to capture water in wetlands and floodplains so that there is

time for it to soak in, rather than flooding homes, fields, and roads.

There is much to think about when managing land. But decisions that increase resilience are often “no regrets” decisions; they make your land healthier and can be successful under many circumstances. You may already be doing many best practices, such as:

- Manage invasive species, which stress ecosystems and decrease species diversity
- Add to natural perennial vegetation along waterways
- Increase the diversity of plant species in forest or grassland
- Consider future conditions; peruse the Forest Service’s Climate Change Tree Atlas: nrs.fs.fed.us/atlas/tree
- Plan, prioritize, gather information, adapt to changing conditions; update your land management plan

Further Resources: mnland.org/landmanagement

The Gift of “Forever.”

Last summer Sharon Dockstader was able to make a dream come true.

The St. Croix valley forests where she played as a child are now permanently protected with a conservation easement held by the Minnesota Land Trust.



Sharon Dockstader’s property provides bird habitat in the St. Croix River Valley.

And now, Sharon has made plans to convey her land to the Minnesota Land Trust upon her death. Having a conservation easement means that the land will always be preserved as it is today, regardless of ownership, long into the future.

If you’re interested in making a gift of land, stock, IRA withdrawal or other similar gift, please contact Beth Westerback at 651-917-6297.



Baihy Woods Preservation Association members Karen Petersen and Richard Booth stand in a restored ravine on their protected property in Rochester, MN. Now, the ravine can handle increased stormwater flooding and it has more ecological diversity.

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MINNESOTA LAND TRUST LANDOWNER NEWS



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The Minnesota Land Trust works in partnership with over 550 landowners to steward land protected by conservation easements. To support the ongoing management of your protected property, this issue has information about preparing for hazardous weather events. It also includes the 2016 landowner of the year, the Minnesota Land Trust in our 25th year, and this coming monitoring season.

Join us at the
Treasured Places
event this fall!

An appreciation event for
landowners, volunteers, and
conservation partners.

Keep an eye on our email
newsletter for information.



At 2016 Treasured Places, kids explored at Land Trust protected property Gale Woods Farm.