



First Price County Conservation Project!

NWLT land protection agreement conserves 4,000 feet on Sailor Creek

“Our vision is hopefully that the future will look more like the past,” said Sue Kartman and Cindy Walters of Fifield, Wisconsin. Sue and Cindy recently granted a land protection agreement, or conservation easement, to the Northwoods Land Trust (NWLT) on about 319 acres of land. This agreement is the first conservation project completed by the land trust in Price County.

“Way back it was paper company land, so it has been logged extensively over the last hundred years,” Sue said. “It would be neat to have big, old cathedral-like white pines back. We would like to see the property turn back into what it was years and years ago.”

Sue was born and raised in Madison, WI. She worked on the Madison Fire Department for 15 years as a fire fighter/paramedic and retired on a disability. She taught American Heart Association courses for the Madison Area Technical College, and currently teaches paramedic students part time for the WITC and NTC technical colleges. “I am also starting a First Responder group at our local fire department,” she said.

Cindy also lived in Madison since she was about 7 years old, although she moved around a bit. She worked for the Madison Fire Department for 29 years as a fire fighter/paramedic. Cindy just retired in 2011. In 2000, she started taking classes at UW-Madison to become a physician’s assistant. Now that she is retired, she works part time as a physician’s assistant on the Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation.

“We had a little retirement place across from where we are now (on the Sailor Creek Flowage),” said Cindy of the cabin they purchased in 1992. “We bought this little place without running water. It was all we could afford. We didn’t have very much money and we did a lot of work on it. We shopped all over the state, and that cabin was the

“Our vision is hopefully that the future will look more like the past.”

- Sue Kartman and Cindy Walters



Celebrating the signing of NWLT’s first Price County conservation easement donation were (from left): NWLT Executive Director Bryan Pierce, landowners Sue Kartman and Cindy Walters, and NWLT Board President Mary Schwaiger.

most economical.”

“It was also the quietest,” added Sue. “We wanted some place to go up north. We weren’t looking for what we had in Madison. We wanted the ‘up north’ thing where it was quieter.”

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MISSION:

The Northwoods Land Trust (NWLT) promotes conservation by private landowners of natural shorelands, woodlands, wetlands and other natural resources, as public benefits for present and future generations in Vilas, Oneida, Forest, Florence, Iron and Price Counties and the surrounding region.

Phone: (715) 479-2490 Email: nwlt@northwoodslandtrust.org Web site: www.northwoodslandtrust.org

Northwoods Land Trust

Purpose:

- To provide education and utilize voluntary conservation options with private landowners.
- To preserve natural shorelands on lakes, rivers and other waterways for protection of water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, erosion control, and natural scenic beauty.
- To conserve private woodlands and encourage landowners to manage their forest lands in an ecologically sustainable manner.
- To accept perpetual stewardship for secure conservation agreements with private landowners, such as easements, land donations and property acquisitions.
- To annually monitor NWLT land protection agreements.
- To seek support through donations, grants, endowments memberships and volunteers.
- To leverage our conservation efforts through partnering with other organizations and agencies.

Newsletter Editor: Bryan Pierce
Staff Writer: Trisha Moore



First Price County Project - *continued*

“I used to vacation only an hour north of Madison when my parents had a cabin by Wautoma,” Sue recalled. “I really liked that when we were kids. I told Cindy that we can stick a lot of money in to our house in Madison, or we could buy a cabin up north and get away from the big city and all the pressure we had during work. It was one of the best things we ever did.”

“We found the place where we live now three or four years later while snowshoeing in the middle of winter,” said Cindy. “The man was losing it on a bank sale, and it was all covered in plastic. It was never even sided, and looked like a spaceship.” “We had an interest in owning more land and being more private, so we put a bid on it and got it,” said Sue.

Their year-round home is located about a mile from the conservation easement property. “When we first heard about the land being for sale we thought we would never be able to afford it, but the owner dropped the price quite a bit,” reflected Cindy. After Cindy’s Mother died, they approached Cindy’s brother Doug Walters and his wife, Bonny, about buying the property. “With the fact that my Mother had left us something, we went into the purchase thinking that ‘conservation’ was what it was going to be about.”

“The individual who owned it before us said we could go in there and walk the trails, so we did,” Cindy commented. “It was very beautiful, and we were worried about what would happen to this place when he left.”

“He was concerned about it too,” said Sue. “He didn’t want just anyone to buy it, he was pretty selective. He liked our values with it. He was really into woodducks, and he dug a lot of ponds to make habitat on the property. We were into that too. He really wanted us to be able to buy it, and he enabled it to happen. And the money Cindy inherited from her parents allowed us to be able to do it.”



About 1.5 acres of spring-fed trout ponds are located on the property protected forever by Cindy Walters and Sue Kartman.

(Continued next page)

Left: Extensive natural bog, sedge meadow, tamarack-black spruce swamp and other wetland habitats exist on the property. The land also borders the Chequamegon National Forest.

Gifts that last beyond our lifetimes!

The Northwoods Land Trust is a non-profit, tax exempt conservation organization. Your gift of cash, stocks, bonds or other financial support is fully tax deductible as charitable contributions under federal law. Donations of property or conservation easements may also provide tax benefits while promoting the conservation of our northwoods.

Price County project - *continued*

Land protection was the focus “from the get-go, when we first bought it,” said Cindy. “My brother and his wife never really thought they would be able to spend a lot of time there, but they liked the idea of protecting it.” Cindy and Sue currently have a land contract with Doug and Bonny to eventually purchase their share of the property.

According to NWLT Executive Director Bryan Pierce, the protected property has diverse conservation values. The land has almost a mile of shared boundary with the Chequamegon National Forest. It is also located close to Price County Forest land, providing contiguous habitat and a natural corridor for the movement of wildlife.



Above: The conservation agreement allows for limited development, including one single-family residence within a designated building zone.

Below left: A series of large ponds were created in wetland areas to enhance breeding habitat for woodducks, mallards and other waterfowl. Several of the ponds also offer outstanding breeding areas for spring peepers, wood frogs, toads, salamanders and many other species of amphibians.

*“It is just beautiful.
Every time I walk or ski in there,
I just take a minute to be quiet and listen”
- Cindy Walters*



Pierce noted that the property includes about 2,000 feet of natural stream corridor in the floodplain of Sailor Creek. The site also includes a series of small spring ponds that at one time were stocked with trout. About 3.5 acres of waterfowl ponds were dug or expanded on the property. The upland forest habitats are primarily northern mesic and dry-mesic forest with northern red oak, aspen, paper birch, black cherry, white spruce, balsam fir, white pine, red pine and red maple.

“It is just beautiful. Every time I walk or ski in there, I just take a minute to be quiet and listen,” Cindy reflected.

“The ridges are beautiful,” said Sue. “We opened up a new trail that we can snowshoe on to connect with the ‘bowl’ that drops down from a big horseshoe ridge. Now we can get back into there and it is just gorgeous.”

“Our neighbors walk it, our friend rides her horse in there, and we do let a few people hunt deer,” added Cindy. “It’s neat to look at the trail camera and look at the paw prints and see who was there. Last year when I was skiing, I saw an otter just having a great time. I watched him for a good long time, then went up ten more steps and he took off. But seeing the slides is neat even when we don’t see him.”

“Pretty much it is a wildlife sanctuary, at least that is our philosophy about it,” noted Sue. “That is really what this property is all about. We’ve caught huge bears in the spring on our trail camera. A big grey wolf was in there

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Price County project - *continued*

last year with huge paws, and we are hearing that he has a mate, so it will be interesting to see them. There are a lot of turkeys in there now and a lot of grouse. I got a picture of a bobcat too, so we get a lot of pictures of wildlife on the property. We are hoping through our conservation efforts that it will always be like that.”

“We are planting more diversity on the property too,” Sue said. “We don’t want it to just be a popple plantation. We have a good start on planting oaks in a couple of areas. In the new area where we just logged, we are hoping to put 2-300 more oaks in there next year, and maybe some more white pine.” Sue and Cindy have planted the bed of an old cranberry marsh with tree seedlings to serve as a nursery for their plantings.

The conservation agreement does allow for continued use of several storage buildings that are currently on site. A homestead formerly occupied the site near the trout pond, and the landowners have reserved the right to build one single-family residence within a designated building zone.

“One thing that I think is wonderful about the land trust is that you can do what you want with your land,” commented Cindy about the reserved rights under the conservation easement. “I think some of our neighbors were worried that we may be kind of dictated to, but it is really what you want to do with it. Your limits are what you place on it and what you want to have done there, so we have hunting and we do have four sheds that will stay

*“This is our legacy. This is important.
We don’t have any kids, so this
is what we have to leave behind
for future generations.”*

- Sue Kartman



Cindy Walters enjoys walking the trails and listening to the quiet on their 319-acre protected property in Price County.



Over 4,000 feet of wild shoreline along Sailor Creek provides natural scenic beauty on the northern edge of the property.

there and we can use them. We also reserved a portion of it in case a relative in the future would like to build on it. We specified how big the structure could be, but that is up to you. No one is telling you what to do with your own land. It is your choice.”

“We didn’t want to have a big portion of the land developed,” Sue said. “We even waffled about the building zone – should we include that or leave it all undeveloped? But we thought about other family members or if we decided down the road we wanted to move over there, so we kept that option. But we wanted it to be a very small footprint.”

“I think the conservation easement is a cool thing,” Sue stated. “We talked to Gathering Waters Conservancy (the statewide land trust service center) a couple of times at the Birkie and other places we have been. There really wasn’t anyone working in Price County at that time.” The Northwoods Land Trust originally covered areas of Vilas, Oneida and Forest counties, and only more recently agreed to work in Price, Iron and Florence counties.

“If anybody has any doubts, they should just ask (the Northwoods Land Trust),” said Cindy. “Maybe it is not for that person, but it is worth exploring.”

As Sue reflected on their completed land protection agreement, the emotion showed through: “This is our legacy. This is important. We don’t have any kids, so this is what we have to leave behind for future generations. This is something we can do that will truly last and that we can be proud of.”



2012 Gift of Stocks

A generous donor who wishes to remain anonymous has recently provided a gift of 250 shares of corporate stock as a donation to the Northwoods Land Trust. This exceptional donor from the Rhinelander area has provided stock gifts to support our efforts to “keep the northwoods the northwoods” each year since 2006!

Donations of stocks, especially those which have appreciated significantly in value over the years, can be a great way to make charitable gifts. Stock donations can have important donor tax benefits from a capital gains perspective. As always, we do recommend that donors consult with their financial advisors.

The Northwoods Land Trust has a brokerage account set up specifically to accept gifts of stocks, making a donation transaction quick and easy to complete.

Please contact the NWLT office at (715) 479-2490 for details if you are interested in making a gift of stocks or other assets. Our sincerest thanks to this wonderful donor for all of the support!



2012 MONITORING SEASON WRAP-UP

The conservation easement monitoring season wrapped up with the last visits reported of 64 total conducted this year.

A tally of the monitoring reports revealed that 30 volunteers contributed over 145 hours inspecting NWLT's conservation easement properties in 2012. This huge effort is greatly appreciated by the NWLT staff and board! Thanks so much to you all!!

*- Trisha Moore, Conservation Specialist
(pictured above right with volunteer/landowner Carolyn Aldridge marking a property corner).*



Conservation Buyer Wanted for 430 acres on the Popple River

The newest sign-up in the Northwoods Land Trust's conservation buyer/seller program features 430 acres and close to 2 miles of shoreline on the Popple River. The landowner responded to NWLT's direct mailing of our conservation guide to Florence County shoreline owners, and is seeking a buyer for this beautiful property.

The Popple River is designated as one of the state's Wild & Scenic Rivers. The Popple is an outstanding, cold water trout stream and a fun river to canoe or kayak.

There is also a trout pond on the property. A cedar cabin is finished in tongue and groove pine with views of the pond. The property is listed with a realtor at \$799,000, but the owner would be willing to come down in price for a conservation buyer.

NWLT's conservation buyer/seller program seeks to link conservation-minded buyers and sellers. Even with current economic conditions, record low interest rates and land prices at their lowest in a decade make this a great time for conservation buyers to preserve some of our last remaining wild tracts in the northwoods. Please contact the NWLT office for more information or to arrange a site visit at (715) 479-2490.



For Sale

Proceeds from the sale of this donated 100-foot lot on Pickerel Lake west of Eagle River will also support NWLT's conservation efforts. See the NWLT website for details: www.northwoodslandtrust.org.



Conservation Land Stewardship

The Northwoods Land Trust has not yet purchased any land for conservation. We have, however, received three outright donations of land for permanent conservation protection totalling 182 acres. All three of these are located in Oneida County and are open to public use. Several other property owners have also indicated their interest in leaving their special properties to NWLT as bequests in their wills.

Accepting land to be protected in perpetuity is a major commitment that NWLT does not take lightly. We carefully consider both the quality of the conservation values protected, and our ability to ensure that we can maintain and manage those properties on into the future. Our full board of directors must vote to approve acceptance of each conservation land donation.

Similar to conservation easements, one of the requirements for national land trust accreditation is a financial commitment to dedicate sufficient funds for annual inspections, management and possible legal defense of all conservation lands owned by the land trust. A spreadsheet calculates the amount of land stewardship funds needed to be reserved for each property accepted.

The Northwoods Land Trust recently received a \$5,000 grant from the James D. & Jane P. Watermolen Foundation to help cover some of the land stewardship fund requirements for both the Holmboe Conifer Forest State Natural Area (pictured above) and the Dugan Squash Lake Nature Preserve. Additional funding for these properties has been provided by the John C. Bock Foundation and the Squash Lake Association. We greatly appreciate their support of the lasting protection of these unique sites. We are still looking to raise about \$9,000 to manage these sites - donations are always welcome!

National Land Trust Accreditation Update

No - we haven't heard anything yet. Since NWLT submitted over 25 lbs. of application materials before the September 13th deadline, our full application is currently under review by the staff and volunteers of the Land Trust Accreditation Commission.

The next step in the process is for the Land Trust Commission's review team to conduct a site visit or telephone conference with NWLT - probably scheduled for the end of February or early March 2013. The full Commission then will need to meet to make a final decision on the applicant and will vote to accredit, table or deny the land trust's application.

The Northwoods Land Trust continues to benefit in many ways from the intensive internal reviews of our current policies and procedures. We believe that, regardless of accreditation, NWLT is already a stronger, more sound and sustainable organization for having taken on this challenge. We hope that NWLT will soon be able to join the ranks of the five (of 50) land trusts in Wisconsin that can proudly display the national seal of accreditation.



Above: NWLT Board members pour over the documents prepared for the national land trust accreditation application. Pictured from left are President Mary Schwaiger, Past-President John Huppert, Past-Secretary Willa Schmidt, and Education Committee Chair Meta Reigel. Below: NWLT Conservation Specialist Trisha Moore runs the computer printer while surrounded by accreditation notebooks, files and boxes.

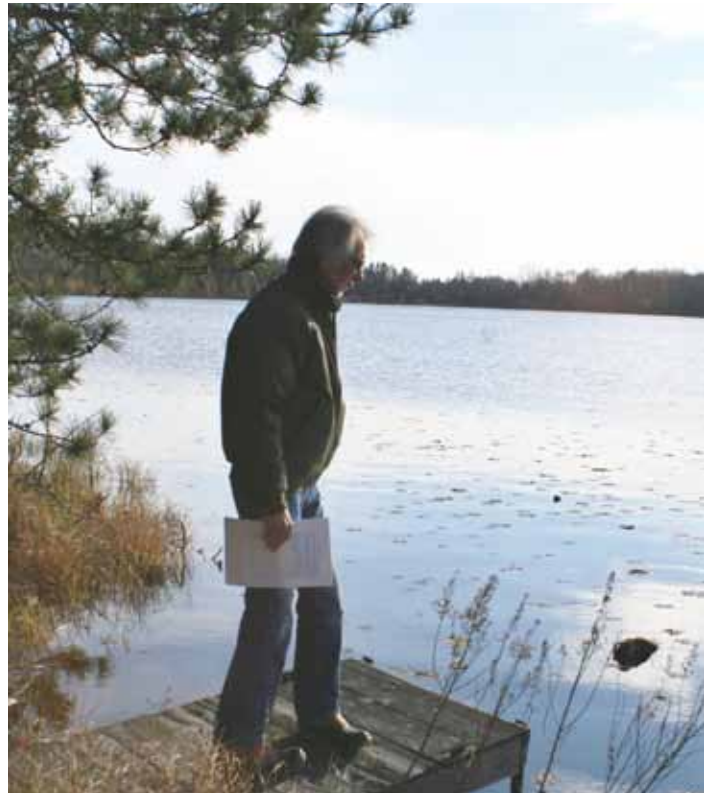


Florence County Conservation Plan Drafted

As part of the DNR Lake Protection Grant awarded to the Northwoods Land Trust, a draft conservation plan has now been prepared for guiding NWLT's land protection work in Florence County. Similar to previous projects in Vilas, Oneida and Forest counties, the plan uses an Excel spreadsheet model created by The Nature Conservancy for conservation site planning. Within the TNC model, the land trust identifies specific conservation targets, threats to those targets and strategies NWLT can use to better protect those targets.

For the Northwoods Land Trust, our highest priority conservation targets are derived from our 5-year strategic planning process. These targets include "wild lake" shorelines, large remaining natural shorelines on otherwise developed lakes, priority northern river and stream segments, old growth forest stands, endangered and threatened species habitat, and large blocks of unfragmented, productive forest lands. Under the TNC methodology, additional "nested" conservation targets include the following: other river and stream properties, bogs and other wetlands, in-fill or contiguous properties for public or other conserved lands, and habitat managed for wildlife (ex. hunting lands). Additional conservation values such as public recreational use, scientific research areas, natural scenic beauty and productive lands (working forest and farm lands) are also taken into consideration.

With funding assistance from the DNR Lake Protection Grant, NWLT has already mapped parcels on "wild lakes" and also the large remaining natural shorelines on otherwise developed lakes throughout Florence County. A total of 415 parcels were identified on our geographic information system and mapped for each of the eight towns in the county. Those parcels were owned by 258 landowners. Each of those landowners has



Preserving pristine "wild lakes" and large remaining stretches of natural shorelines on otherwise developed lakes are high priority conservation targets in NWLT's Florence County Conservation Plan.

been mailed "For the Love of the Land... A Landowner's Conservation Guide to Protecting Your Northwoods Property." While the draft conservation plan is still being reviewed by the NWLT Conservation Committee and Board, we look forward to working closely with interested property owners in Florence County and throughout our six-county service territory as we continue our efforts to protect the important conservation targets.



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- Individual \$25
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- Founder \$100
- Conservator \$250
- Steward \$500
- Land Legacy \$1000
- My additional contribution of \$_____ is also enclosed.

Interests

- I have property I may wish to conserve, please send me the free landowner's guide.
- I am interested in becoming a volunteer to assist the NWLT.

Please make checks payable to:

Northwoods Land Trust, Inc.
PO Box 321
Eagle River, WI 54521-0321

- I am interested in the NWLT Council of Trustees.



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Please remember NWLT in your annual and planned giving. Give a gift that will last forever!



ANNOUNCING: “Wolf Tracks Challenge Grant”!



A year ago, friends of Minocqua Winter Park received a huge gift when Ken and Carolyn Aldridge established the Winter Park Pines Nature Preserve by granting a perpetual conservation easement to the Northwoods Land Trust. This 3,195-acre project is the biggest conservation easement donation to a land trust in Wisconsin to date, and permanently protects over 42 kilometers of public cross-country ski and snowshoe trails at the core of Minocqua Winter Park. In order to cover the costs of protecting Winter Park Pines now and into the future, the NWLT board is committed to raise over \$116,000.

A friend of Minocqua Winter Park has offered to help by putting into place the “Wolf Tracks Challenge Grant,” named after a favorite ski trail loop. From now until February 28, 2013, any tax-deductible gift made to the Winter Park Pines Land Stewardship Fund of NWLT will be matched dollar for dollar (up to \$2,000). This is your chance to help preserve the unique Winter Park Pines Nature Preserve while doubling your donation.

Whether you cross-country ski, snowshoe or ride a tube down Squirrel Hill, the exceptionally well-groomed trails at Minocqua Winter Park are a premier winter recreation resource now protected for all future generations.



As a special gift, the first twenty-five people who donate \$150 or more will receive an 11”x15” copy of the above signed and numbered print by artist John Stoeckley. The prints are provided courtesy of the challenge grant donor.

Donations can be made at the Minocqua Winter Park chalet or you can mail a check directly to: Wolf Tracks Challenge Grant, c/o Northwoods Land Trust, P.O. Box 321, Eagle River, WI 54521.

