



# NORTHWOODS LAND TRUST

HELP LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY FOR THE NORTHWOODS

## Special Feature: Three conservation easement properties highlighted!

P.O. Box 321, Eagle River, WI 54521-0321

April 2006

## Clyde Dussault Family Nature Preserve Protected

Sally and Bud Schlack of Land O' Lakes left a lasting legacy of conservation for future generations of their family when they protected the 190-acre Clyde Dussault Family Nature Preserve on December 14<sup>th</sup>. The Schlacks signed a perpetual land protection agreement, or conservation easement, with the Northwoods Land Trust in honor of the family of Sally's parents and long-time Land O' Lakes fixtures Clyde and Elsie Dussault.

According to Sally, the forested tract will be held as a family dynasty trust. The land will remain private, but the entire acreage must be kept in tact, and cannot be split up and sold for development.

"My dad purchased this property 40 by 40 so he could have his own hunting land," explained Sally. "That was the beginning of the accumulation of the contiguous property. He was very proud of that, and his one request when they gave the land to me was that it always be kept together. So that was always on my mind."

Sally learned about conservation easements from Vicki Elkin, Executive Director of Gathering Waters Conservancy, while attending a Vilas County Lakes Association meeting. "The light bulbs started going off and I thought 'that's what I want to do.' I presented the idea to Dad and my mother, Elsie, and they thought it was a wonderful idea."

"Dad's original interest was for hunting property, but also for conservation of the land for wildlife in general," Sally noted. He liked to plant Norway pines too, and regularly measured them to record their growth. "He spent the winter in the woods trimming the trees. He had the property as a Tree Farm for a long period of time, and then put it into the DNR Forest Crop Law program," she said.

"My interest grew as we spent more time in Florida, and I realized how important contiguous land was for a variety of species of wildlife," said Sally. "I wanted to keep this property together as a whole and hopefully to

connect with other properties that may be protected in the future. The neighbors around Lake O' Pines are really excited that we are doing this."

"Dad was so pleased," she said. "I would talk to him about it periodically as I was learning more and more. He had many mini-strokes later in life, but conceptually he could understand what we were doing."

According to Northwoods Land Trust Executive Director Bryan Pierce, the property includes most of the shoreline of Perch Lake, or roughly 3200 feet of frontage. A 14-acre bog-fringed seepage lake, Perch Lake was identified by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Northern Initiatives: Wild Lakes Program as warranting additional protection.

The land also includes about 300 feet of frontage on Lake O' Pines (or Dollar Lake), also a seepage lake. Lake O' Pines is a deep, very round lake that generations of the Dussault and Schlack families have used. "Our children and grandchildren all learned how to fish from the

*(Continued on page 2)*



*Most of the shoreline of Perch Lake, a "wild lake" in the town of Land O' Lakes, is now protected in perpetuity by Sally and Bud Schlack as part of the Clyde Dussault Family Nature Preserve.*

### mission:

*The Northwoods Land Trust (NWLTT) promotes conservation by private landowners of natural shorelands, woodlands, wetlands and other natural resources, as public benefits for present and future generations. The Northwoods Land Trust covers areas of Vilas, Oneida, Forest, Florence, Iron and Price Counties.*

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## 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



Lake O' Pines shoreline protected with the Schlack's conservation easement.

## Dussault Family Nature Preserve *(continued from page 1)*

shore of Lake O' Pines," Sally said.

Historically, the property was also the location of a logging camp around the early 1900s. The last remnants of an old horse barn and camp site can still be found near the shoreline of Perch Lake. "I remember when part of that building was still there," said Bud. "It was more of a horse shed than a barn."

"We both grew up in the area and graduated from Eagle River high school," said Bud. "That is where we started dating." Bud went on to school at the University of Wisconsin and got his PhD in Engineering Mechanics. He worked at UW-Madison as an engineering professor teaching aerospace courses. Sally also went to UW-Madison, was a counselor by training and worked as an elementary teacher and counselor. "I have always been interested in the life sciences," she said. "That was my upbringing. My Dad and Mom were really into the lakes and woods."

The preserve is definitely a family affair. "I was an only child," said Sally. "Our oldest son David and his son, John, deer hunt on the property. Second son Steve bird hunts on the property and is a fly fisherman. Our third child, Mary Landry, is a horse woman, so she brings her horse up and rides the trails. Our youngest son Jim now lives up here and is a true conservationist with an education in environmental studies and computers. And now we have six grandchildren, and they are all very much oriented to the outdoors."

"Both Mom and Dad were into birds of all kinds, so conserving the property for birds was important," explained Sally. But that isn't the only wildlife that the property will likely benefit. "I saw a cougar three years ago on Big Portage Lake Rd., and a cougar was seen a couple of times by another woman on Little Portage Lake Rd.," said Bud. "It is exciting for us to think that we are preserving some wild area for whatever animals choose to live there," said Sally.

"The property is now enrolled in the Managed Forest Law program and it will continue to be harvested over time as the forest habitats on the property mature. The family has retained the right to maintain the logging roads, and to prepare a forest management plan and conduct forest management practices," explained Pierce.

"One of the real benefits of a land protection agreement like this is the flexibility to structure it according to the needs of the landowners while protecting the important conservation values of the property," said Pierce. "There are also income and estate tax benefits in the form of charitable deductions that can be an incentive for landowners who donate a conservation easement to the land trust."

According to Pierce, students from the Conserve School under the guidance of teacher Joe Panci assisted with the project. The students utilized GPS units to help map existing trails on the property on Earth Day 2005.

The Greater Green Bay Community Foundation also provided support for the project through the Audubon Land Fund for Wisconsin, as did the John C. Bock Foundation and a DNR Lake Protection Grant. Grants covered the cost of an ecological assessment by Naturalist John Bates and title reports for the project. 🌲



Sally & Bud Schlack signed a conservation agreement to permanently preserve 190 acres.

### You Can Help!

The Northwoods Land Trust is a non-profit, tax exempt conservation organization. Your gifts of cash, stocks, bonds or other financial support are 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.

## Meta Reigel protects 195 acres on Springstead Lake and Creek

Meta Reigel, of Waupaca, protected well over one mile of natural lake and river shorelines for future generations when she conserved her 195-acre family property on Lower Springstead Lake and Springstead Creek in Iron County. Meta signed a perpetual land protection agreement, or conservation easement, with the Northwoods Land Trust of Eagle River in December.

It was an emotional experience. “I got tears in my eyes when I read the document the first time,” Meta said. “It brought home the reality of my responsibility for the land, and that I can do something to protect part of the northwoods for the future.”

Protection of the lake and keeping the land intact, with its diversity of highland and lowland habitats and ecosystems within the property, were the major motivations for her to enter into the perpetual land protection agreement. “It’s about water quality; it’s about aesthetics and habitat. But it is mainly about loving the land and thinking of the future,” she said.

Meta explained that the site has an interesting local history in the Town of Sherman. “According to the abstract, the property was originally part of a resort several miles away. There were cabins for visitors who wanted really rustic accommodations. The guests were taken by buckboard from the train station in Powell to the cabins in the very early 1900’s. Before that, it had been the site of a logging camp. In the 20’s the property was sold to a doctor from Chicago. She set up a girl’s camp called *Sherwood Forest*. The old farm house on the property was used by the riding master, and the old field by the house was used as pasture for the horses. The camp failed during the Depression and reverted to the bank.”



*Meta Reigel protected 195 acres of her family lands with a perpetual conservation easement.*



*Over one mile of Springstead Creek and Lower Springstead Lake shorelines in Iron County were protected with a conservation easement by Meta Reigel.*

Both sets of Reigel’s grandparents were among the first resort owners in Springstead. Her father’s parents first established a hunting camp and then built a resort on French Lake around 1900 - Seifert’s Resort.

“My mother’s parents (Reids) lived in the area since 1917 as caretakers for another big chunk of land around Springstead Lake,” Meta said. “They ultimately bought the camp property from the bank and converted it into a resort. The cabins and resort changed hands many times, but the old farm house, horse field, and adjacent acreage along the creek and southern end of the Springstead Lake has stayed in our family. My son, Allen, will be married here this spring.”

“While I was growing up, there was an area bounded by the lake, the road, the creek and the house that I had the run of,” Meta explained. She still enjoys most the relaxation of watching the creek and the sunsets, and of canoeing on the lake. “It is a beautiful piece of land,” she said. “Springstead Creek is also one of the most photographed creeks in the area.”

Meta has two children, Allen and Paul, and four grandchildren. Her husband Richard is deceased. “I have every intention of keeping it in the family, and my kids do too,” she said. “But even if it doesn’t stay in the family at some point, we will still know the land is protected.”

“As far back as I remember, my parents were always concerned about the land, of keeping it intact, and protecting it,” Meta explained. “I have actually completed what was their goal, and my late husband’s goal. It is a good feeling to protect it, and still have people enjoy it. I’ve seen a lot of changes in the area since I grew up here, but this property isn’t going to change. It’s our family’s way of ‘keeping the North, the North’.”

Professionally, Meta is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point College of Natural Resources. In keeping with her passion for conservation,

*(Continued on Page 4)*



*Meta and naturalist John Bates look over extensive sedge meadows bordering Springstead Creek.*

### **Reigel Conservation Easement** (continued)

she teaches a class on human dimensions of natural resources. Her course focuses on working with the people part of natural resource management, including environmental education, communication and policy making. “We cannot manage natural resources without involving people,” she explained.

An ecological assessment of the property was conducted by naturalist John Bates of Mercer. According to Bates, the property includes about 146 acres of northern dry-mesic to mesic forest types. The land also includes roughly 50 acres of sedge meadow bordering Springstead Creek. “Sedge meadows support an uncommon community of birds including American bittern, common snipe, sedge wren, swamp sparrow, northern harrier, common yellowthroat, sandhill crane, sora rail, and various sparrows such as LeConte’s, Lincoln’s and savannah,” he noted.

“A major northern bog community exists along part of the shoreline of the lake and includes tamarack and black spruce trees along the shore,” said Bates. “The far southern portion of the property is also bog, and forms the tip of the Springstead Muskeg

State Natural Area, designated by the state of Wisconsin in 2002. Undisturbed large bog complexes are relatively rare and support unique plant and animal communities.”

“It’s nice to be bordered by that Natural Area,” said Meta. “And beyond that is the Chequamegon National Forest.”

Bryan Pierce, Executive Director of the Northwoods Land Trust, explained that under the agreement, the land will remain private, and the entire acreage cannot be split into more than two parcels. The terms of the agreement specify that the existing home and guest cottage can be remodeled, replaced or expanded up to certain limits.

According to Pierce, the property includes the southeast bay of Lower Springstead Lake, with roughly 3800 feet of frontage. A 91-acre lake, Lower Springstead Lake is drained by Springstead Creek. The property also includes over 3,600 feet of creek corridor. Beaver dams on the creek over the years have created shifting ponds utilized by waterfowl and many other wildlife species. Springstead Creek eventually feeds into the Flambeau River system.

“The property is now enrolled in the Managed Forest Law program and will continue to be sustainably harvested over time as the forest habitats on the property mature,” said Pierce. “Meta has retained the right to maintain the logging roads, and to prepare a forest management plan and conduct forest management practices.” Pierce noted that “Buckshot Ridge”, an esker, is an interesting relict of the most recent Wisconsin glacial period. The ridge runs through the southern part of the property.

Funding assistance to complete the project was provided in part through the John C. Bock Foundation and the DNR Lake Protection Grant Program. Grant funds covered the cost of title reports, easement preparation, monitoring fund and other expenses for the project.

For more information on protecting family lands and perpetual conservation agreements, contact Pierce at Northwoods Land Trust, P.O. Box 321, Eagle River, WI 54521, telephone (715) 479-2490 or email [pierce@northwoodslandtrust.org](mailto:pierce@northwoodslandtrust.org).

The Northwoods Land Trust is a membership and volunteer-supported conservation organization. “We welcome new members and other contributors who want to play a vital role in helping landowners like Meta conserve the northwoods,” said Pierce. 🌲



*Right: Tamarack and black spruce line much of the shoreline of the southeast bay of Lower Springstead Lake, now protected forever by Meta Reigel.*

# Don & Sue Kratsch protect site of original Burnt Rollways Dam

Don and Sue Kratsch of West St. Paul, Minnesota, have ensured that the historic site of the original Burnt Rollways Dam will be protected forever. Located just upstream from the current Burnt Rollways Dam in the town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, their 21-acre property bordering Eagle River and Nine Mile Creek was protected in December with a perpetual land protection agreement, or conservation easement.

According to NWLT Executive Director Bryan Pierce, the property features roughly 2,000 feet of natural shoreline frontage at the confluence of Eagle River and Nine Mile Creek. "This highly scenic shoreline is enjoyed by boaters, canoeists and kayakers, including all those who travel between the highly popular Eagle River and Three Lakes chains of lakes," Pierce said.

"The undeveloped forest land will be kept entirely in its natural state with no homes or other buildings allowed to be constructed," said Pierce. "The land will remain private, but the entire acreage must be kept intact, and cannot be split up and sold for development."

Historically, the property was the location of a logging camp and dam site in the early 1900s. "When you look at the area, the neatest thing is that the property has the site of the original logging dam," said Don. "When I was a kid, you could see cribbing out in the middle of the river. There is also a clearing on the property above the old dam site where the original logging camp was located. Faint traces of that old logging camp can still be found."

"They logged the area, hauled the timber in and piled it up on the shoreline," Don explained. "In the springtime, they would build a good head of water up above the dam



*21 acres of the Kratsch family property was protected in the town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, including this original Burnt Rollways logging dam site on the Eagle River.*

extending into Long Lake. Then they would pull the gates in the dam and start rolling the logs down the steep hillside into the river. That is where the 'rollways' term comes from. The logs were then floated downstream to the saw mill."

"The folk lore is that the timber company didn't pay their loggers, so they got mad and set fire to the logs on the rollway, but there is some question about that," said Don. "The rollway did get burned about 1917, but it may have been by natural causes."

Native American Indians also used the site prior to the old logging dam. "Evidently, that was the shallowest place on the river to cross, because an archaeological survey conducted on the opposite shore hit arrowheads right away," Don noted. "That was probably a traditional crossing and camping area. It is kind of fun to think about what this site must have looked like way back then."

For many years, the Kratsch family has allowed the property to be used for a cross-country skiing and hiking trail by youth attending Wheaton College's HoneyRock camp. The clearing is also used in the summer as a primitive outpost camp site by HoneyRock.

"My Aunt Edna, who taught biology in Oshkosh, purchased the property in 1938," Don said. "Shortly after I inherited the property from her, I started looking at what my forest management options were. I went to a Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association workshop at Trees For Tomorrow in Eagle River to learn more about forestry."

A local DNR forester recommended clearcutting the second growth forest, which was done in 1982. Then, because the soils



*Celebrating the signing of the land protection agreement are Don and Sue Kratsch (seated left), Scott Eppler of HoneyRock (seated right) and Northwoods Land Trust Board members (from left) Jerry Parker, Pete Davison, Beth Tornes, Sue Coffman, Dan Wisniewski, Mary Schwaiger, Mitchell Olson, John Huppert, Willa Schmidt, Jim Holperin and Bob Martini.*



*About 2,000 feet of natural shoreline frontage on Eagle River and Nine Mile Creek were permanently protected by Don and Sue Kratsch and the Northwoods Land Trust.*

on the site are so poor, it was replanted with red pine. “With my kids and my Dad, we all came up for two weeks and hand planted about 10,000 tree seedlings,” said Don. “Now my kids take their kids to the area to see the twenty-foot tall trees ‘they’ planted!”

“The disadvantage with the red pine plantings is that the site is now mostly a one-species stand, which is not the greatest thing for wildlife,” noted Don. “But that can change over time. The nice thing about the conservation easement is that you can continue to do forestry. The shoreline buffer that was left along the river and creek was not logged. The buffer is great for wildlife.”

Kratsch noted that the property is currently enrolled in the Managed Forest Law program and will continue to be sustainably harvested over time as the forest habitats on the property mature. The family has retained the right to maintain the logging roads, and to prepare forest management plans and conduct forest management practices.

“The land has been a wonderful thing to have. I learned so much there from my Aunt,” said Don. “Our next generation includes sons Charlie and Rob and daughter Cindy, and we currently have six grandchildren. We are really glad that this could be protected with the conservation easement, and it doesn’t really change the usage pattern at all. Sue says my motive for protecting the land is so I can reach out from the grave and make sure it doesn’t change. We want to protect it from development and keep it as ‘natural’ as possible.”

Naturalist John Bates of Mercer, conducted an ecological assessment of the property. According to Bates, the upland

forest is categorized generally as northern dry mesic. “The greatest floral value of the property is in its completely undisturbed shorelines,” noted Bates. “The shoreline vegetation has been left entirely natural, thus many trees are leaning into or have fallen into the water, providing excellent habitat for many mammal, fish and amphibian species that utilize coarse woody habitat.”

“Protection of the shoreline, and the adjoining uplands, helps to ensure ecological stability on a highly developed surrounding lake and forest system very likely to see continued development and degradation,” Bates reported. “Scenic uses are enhanced, and hopefully offer the inspiration to others to follow suit in protecting their shorelines.”

“One of the real benefits of a land protection agreement like this is the flexibility to structure it according to the needs of the landowners while protecting the important conservation values of the property,” said Pierce. “There are also some income and estate tax benefits in the form of charitable deductions that can be an incentive for landowners who donate a conservation easement to the land trust. But people don’t enter into a land protection agreement for the financial benefits; they do it because they love their land.”

Funding support for completing the project was provided in part by a grant from the John C. Bock Foundation and from the DNR Lake Protection Grant program. Grant funds covered the costs of easement preparation, title reports and other expenses for the project.

A “Landowner’s Conservation Guide to Protecting Your Northwoods Property” is available free of charge from the Northwoods Land Trust. Call (715) 479-2490. 



*The Kratsch property protects natural scenic beauty along the boating corridor linking the highly popular Eagle River and Three Lakes Chains of Lakes.*



## In Memory of Paul & Shirley Ramsey

In March, Cloverland town supervisor Marty Ketterer notified us that Paul Ramsey, long-time Snipe Lake Association President recently passed away. As Marty noted, "Paul was instrumental and passionate about preserving the aesthetics and quality of Snipe Lake and its environs for all to use and enjoy." And now we have just learned that Shirley Ramsey has also passed away.

Paul and his wife Shirley of Milwaukee were also among the very first members of the Northwoods Land Trust when it formed in 2001. Under Paul's leadership, the Snipe Lake Association board agreed to fund part of the costs of helping Willa Schmidt to place a permanent conservation easement on her property with NWLT.

Paul and Shirley helped the Snipe Lake Association raise funds over a three year period, and those contributions were in turn matched by grants from the John C. Bock Foundation and the Audubon Land Fund for Wisconsin. This funding helped to cover the costs of an ecological assessment of the Schmidt property and long term easement monitoring expenses. Finalized in 2003, the conservation easement protects 12 acres of woodlands and

over 1500 feet of natural shoreline frontage in perpetuity – a scenic piece of shoreline visible from the public boat landing and county picnic area.

Following this success, Paul again demonstrated his leadership by raising funds with the Snipe Lake Association to help cover the costs of a second donated conservation easement – again over a three year period. The Northwoods Land Trust was able to record that grant of a conservation easement in December with Theodosia and Melanie Kern. The Kern easement permanently protects another 56 acres of woodlands and about 1,000 feet of frontage in the east bay of Snipe Lake.

The Kern property also adjoins a third, sixteen-acre tract in the Snipe Lake watershed. This old farmstead property was protected with a conservation easement by Joann Kindt and Ellen McKenzie.

There are not many ways that people can leave a truly lasting legacy, but Paul and Shirley Ramsey, through their work with the Snipe Lake Association and the Northwoods Land Trust, have done just that. Hopefully the generations to come who are able to enjoy the natural scenic beauty and protected fish and wildlife habitat along these shorelines on Snipe Lake will remember their conservation leadership and vision for all who follow.

The Northwoods Land Trust was also named by the Ramsey Family as a beneficiary of memorial gifts. Gifts in memory of Paul and Shirley Ramsey were received from Doug & Jayne Niebruegge of Brookfield, Jeffrey & Eloise Potter of West Bend, Eileen & Patrick Taylor of Bloomsburg, PA, Sue Tessoroff of West Bend, Julie Armour & Paul Matzner of Milwaukee, Virginia Tacke of Brookfield, Don & Betty Ritchie of Milwaukee, Marisa Roberts of Bayside, and the Richards School Sunshine Committee, Milwaukee (where daughter Susan teaches).

Our sincerest sympathies to the Ramsey family!



*Willa Schmidt's conservation easement permanently protected over 1,500 feet of Snipe Lake shoreline.*



## JOIN THE NORTHWOODS LAND TRUST

HELP KEEP THE NORTHWOODS THE NORTHWOODS!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Membership Contributions

- Individual \$25
- Family \$35
- Supporter \$50
- 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.

## Welcome to Sue Coffman - newest member of the NWLT Board!



The Northwoods Land Trust is pleased to announce that Sue Coffman has joined the Board of Directors. Sue serves as Retail Banking Officer with the Eagle River Branch of River Valley State Bank.

According to NWLT President John Huppert, Sue was recruited for her financial expertise, experience with mortgage lending, and her enthusiasm for conservation. "We are really excited that Sue has accepted a position on our Board of Directors, and look forward to working with her closely," said Huppert.

Sue and her husband, Jim, moved to the Eagle River area in the fall of 1992. "Like many people, we had experienced camping, fishing, hiking, boating and hunting

while vacationing in the northwoods," she explained.

"We selected this area to call home because of access to so much public land and the abundance of lakes," she related. "We love land. Jim and I both grew up having access to farm land and woods that we were free to roam." Jim works for Walkabout Paddle & Apparel in Eagle River. Sue and Jim live west of Eagle River near extensive Vilas County forest lands.

"This love of land gives me a great appreciation for the mission of the Northwoods Land Trust," she said. The land trust was organized to promote voluntary conservation by private landowners of natural shorelands, woodlands, wetlands and other natural resources in a six-county area of northern Wisconsin. Those counties include Vilas, Oneida, Forest, Florence, Iron and Price.

"Sue has already helped us with the closing on one gift of the Meta Reigel conservation easement which protected about 195 acres of woodlands and over one mile of lake and river shorelands," noted Huppert. "Her expertise is a great fit for our Board."

Welcome Sue to the Northwoods Land Trust Board of Directors!

For more information on the Northwoods Land Trust, contact the office at (715) 479-2490.



**NORTHWOODS LAND TRUST**

P.O. BOX 321, EAGLE RIVER, WI 54521-0321

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