



NORTHWOODS LAND TRUST

Leaving a Lasting Legacy for the Northwoods

Meet Ted Anchor - NWLT's Executive Director



Ted Anchor was hired as Northwoods Land Trust's new Executive Director in July.

I'd like to start by thanking you for your support of the Northwoods Land Trust (NWLT). Even after 25 years of working in the natural resources field, this organization and its mission are truly an inspiration to me and it's been a pleasure to arrive and receive such a warm welcome.

With four months as Executive Director at my new work home, I've found the staff and board of NWLT to be very proud of past accomplishments, excited about the future and committed to projects that we are currently working on.

I've visited with landowners that are just starting to explore the idea of donating a conservation easement, as well as with some of our most seasoned landowners who trekked down the conservation road almost 20 years ago. You likely won't be surprised to read that they still speak proudly about protecting their properties.

I've spoken with our partnering conservation organizations and I can see and feel the respect that this organization has earned through its laser-like focus on land and water protection.

I've met with, and been humbled by, land trust members that express their joy in providing the financial means to support NWLT and its commitment to protecting the northwoods landscape we all love. Many have included NWLT in their wills, which will leave a lasting legacy for our local conservation programs.

I attended Land Trust Days in August, a statewide effort to grow public awareness of land trusts, where I met over 40 people at our Lake Katherine paddle to highlight the Yawkey Forest Reserve. The dedication of the Yawkey Forest Reserve was also held in August with the NWLT staff and board and members of the Yawkey family. What a special gift to conservation and certainly worthy of statewide recognition (see the article on page 7).

(Continued next page)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- TED ANCHOR, NEW DIRECTOR
- NINE MILE CREEK CONSERVATION EASEMENT
- HANSEN FAMILY EASEMENT
- GROUND HEMLOCK LAKE CONSERVATION EASEMENT
- BRYAN PIERCE & YAWKEY LUMBER CO. AWARDED
- SPECIAL PRESENTATION ON SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY
- YEAR-END SUPPORT APPEAL

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, Price and northern Langlade Counties.



The accreditation seal recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent.

NORTHWOODS LAND TRUST

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Ted Anchor - NWLT's Executive Director *continued....*

All of the experiences above are punctuated by the fact that NWLT can highlight the permanent protection of three new conservation easements in this newsletter. All together these easements protect approximately 200 acres of land, including forests, riverfront, lakefront, and even farmland. We thank the Amundson, Krueger, and Hansen families for entrusting NWLT with the protection of their properties, and for giving the gift of clean water and air and scenic values to all.

An exciting project in the works is the Sack Lake Hemlocks Old-Growth Forest in Iron County. NWLT expects to acquire this property before year's end to protect one of the largest remaining stands of old-growth hemlock-hardwood forest in our service area. We will give you a full briefing in our next newsletter.

We expect even more quality conservation projects to come in 2020. This spring the NWLT Board of Directors will develop the organization's next five-year strategic plan - outlining goals, objectives and strategies for continuing the important work of protecting natural shorelines, wild lakes, wildlife habitat and a diversity of forest types.

Please join us in celebrating the continued growth of our conservation portfolio, and again, thank you for supporting the Northwoods Land Trust. Please contact me at any time at (715) 479-2490 or ted@northwoodslandtrust.org.

A Little Q&A with Ted Anchor

What was your first job? At 14 I was a laborer for a vegetable farm. It was hard work picking and weeding, but at that age I was thrilled to be driving tractors and trucks. In the fall they had a pumpkin patch and haunted house...it was a great job for a middle-school kid and as I write this it makes me smile.

What did you major in in college? My BS was centered on soils, hydrology and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). My MS from the University of Wisconsin - Madison was focused on natural areas management, restoration and planning. I've always wanted to work in the natural resources field and feel fortunate to have been able to carve out a meaningful career in my chosen profession.

Where did you recently work? For 11 years I was the Northwest Indiana Program Director for the Indiana Chapter

of The Nature Conservancy where I managed their 8,400-acre Kankakee Sands Preserve and a 75-head bison herd. Prior to that, I was an Outreach Specialist/Ecologist for UW-Madison.

What do you enjoy most about working in conservation? Being able to witness tangible benefits to the flora and fauna in areas I've helped protect and restore.

What is your connection to the Northwoods? I grew up exploring the woods and waters around my family's cabin outside Park Falls. It's always been a special place to me and we are so excited to now call the Northwoods home!

Tell us about your family. My wife Kristen and I recently celebrated our 19th wedding anniversary. We have a one-year old labrador retriever named Emmy and we just closed on a house in Eagle River.

What are your favorite hobbies? Hunting and fishing - I've recently been told this is called "foraging for wild food". 🌲



The dedication at the Yawkey Forest Reserve on August 2, 2019 ended with the sign unveiling at the canoe launch on Lake Katherine on Highway 51.



The Lake Katherine paddle was organized as a part of the 2019 Land Trust Days, a statewide series of outdoor events on conservation lands.

Nine Mile Creek Easement is a Promise to the Future

In 1939, Caroline Amundson's grandfather Walter Brown purchased 120 acres on Lower Nine Mile Lake in Three Lakes from the town founder, Sid Fell. Her experiences at 'Timberlost' - the primitive family outpost - through the 1940's and 50's, immersed in nature and with family, led to a love of the lake and forest.

In 1968, Caroline met her husband Bruce, and used Timberlost as a test of compatibility. "Caroline brought me up here six months after we met, and she judged my reaction to the place as a 'yes' or 'no' type of decision. Thankfully I had a liking for forests and lakes because my family vacationed in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan for many years when I was growing up," commented Bruce.

Both Caroline and Bruce graduated from the University of Wisconsin - Madison before settling in Berkeley, California. Bruce worked in real estate and then returned to education as a high school math teacher, while Caroline taught persons with severe handicaps at the junior high level.

In 1980, Caroline and Bruce purchased their own plot of land adjacent to Timberlost on Nine Mile Creek. "When our 40 acres on Highway X came on the market, we did not think twice about purchasing it. Not only was it adjacent to Timberlost, but it was bordered by Nine Mile Creek, below the dam that formed Lower Nine Mile Lake. It would be ours to explore and enjoy, yet close to family. In the almost 40 years that we have owned the property, in addition to caring for the buildings, we have looked after the forest and enrolled it in Wisconsin's Managed Forest Law Program," said Caroline.

Their son Kurt was born the year they bought the property, so he developed a love of nature, camping, and exploration - just as Caroline had. "The seeds to preserve this property were set long ago, in the '40's in Caroline's case. There was no land trust then, but the foundation was being laid," said Bruce.

Seeing the area change over the decades, with more and more development, led the Amundsons to think about the future of the mixed northern hardwood and pine forest. "When this road was dirt, it wasn't connected to Three Lakes, and Honey Rock Camp was about the end of the line. People got their mail delivered by a boat crossing Long Lake. Gradually the road expanded, then was paved, and it lessened the solitude. It became an extended community of Three Lakes and Eagle River," said Caroline.

At a local lake association meeting, the Amundsons' neighbors, Don and Sue Kratsch, shared their experiences of protecting their stretch of Nine Mile Creek and Eagle River with NWLT, encouraging the Amundsons to continue conservation of the creek corridor. On December 20, 2018 the Amundsons granted a conservation easement to NWLT to protect their 38 acres of woodlands and 460 feet along Nine Mile Creek.

The creek flows into the Eagle River, feeding the 28-lake Eagle River Chain of Lakes and the Wisconsin River. The Amundson property, along with nearby NWLT conservation easements and Chequamegon - Nicolet National Forest tracts, provides an environmental corridor and link between important blocks of wildlife habitat.



Every summer the Amundsons leave their home in California for three months to come to the Northwoods to observe wildlife and the changes in the forest, fungus, and wildflowers. "People ask us why we spend three months in Wisconsin. We reply, 'to watch things'!"

"When we got the property, it had been recently logged. There were vast raspberry and blackberry patches. Then over the years we've watched trees grow up and disappear as a part of the natural progression. It's fun watching things grow and change."

"Wild animals and birds have been a constant source of pleasure: porcupines chewing away at the seat in the old outhouse; a very occasional bobcat; a pileated woodpecker announcing its presence by a maniacal laugh and loud drumming sound; plus kingfishers, great blue herons, sandhill cranes, loons, mink, weasels, river otter, mergansers, and of course, numerous chipmunks and deer."

"One summer, a three-legged mama black bear wandered into the back yard followed by her four cubs. The cubs played in the white pine and on an attached tree swing

Photo by Bruce Amundson



The Amundson's easement joins other conserved lands on Nine Mile Creek and the Eagle River.

Continued next page

Nine Mile Creek Conservation Easement *continued....*

while mama raided our (impenetrable!) garbage can. One cub climbed so high up that when it was time to leave, he awkwardly climbed down, all the while complaining he was being left behind,” said Bruce and Caroline.

When asked if they could convey a message about why they chose land conservation with NWLT, Caroline shared: “It’s the way to go! How else are you going to preserve the natural areas and beauty of the Northwoods? It’s hard to convince someone that isn’t of a certain mindset that it’s a worthwhile thing to do. It’s the appreciation of this kind of environment. Land is our anchor to the past; the conservation easement is our promise to the future.”

Bruce ended by saying, “this easement would not have happened without Brian Pierce’s (former NWLT executive director) patience, knowledge, command of the facts, and an ability to clearly communicate.”

Today, Caroline’s family from Ohio and Bruce’s family from the Milwaukee area join them in the summer months to enjoy moments of solitude and the brilliance of the Milky Way. The Amundsons stay into early fall to experience the change of season on their forever protected forty. 🌲



*Nine Mile Creek in wintertime.
Photo by Bruce Amundson.*

Hansen Family Easement Balances Forestry with Agriculture



The Hansens (center) proudly show the signs in front of the Oneida County Courthouse that will be posted at their now conserved property. Pictured: Bob Martini, NWLT Board Vice-President (left) and Bryan Pierce, NWLT former Executive Director (right).

Guy and Carole Hansen donated a conservation easement to NWLT on December 17, 2018 on their 120-acre farmstead and woodlot in Harshaw, a small community located between the cities of Rhinelander and Tomahawk.

The Hansens bought the property nearly forty years ago, when they lived near Rhinelander on Boom Lake and their family was in a time of transition. Guy had gone back to school at the University of Minnesota for a master’s degree in Public Health and Carole began her master’s degree in Reading. Coming back to Rhinelander at the end of that school year, they realized they wanted to move to the country.

Carole recalls, “We started looking around and found this farm. I can remember as we were driving away and looking at it, I said it felt like home. We soon bought it and started to fix it up. There was lots to do.”

At that time there was a barn falling down, an old garage and a house needing lots of care. The house was built in the early 1930’s, when the government had it built for the Sanz family so their girls would be close

enough to go to an elementary school. Workers harvested white cedar logs from the property to build the home that still serves as the main framing of the house today. The Hansens went to work tearing down and replacing the dilapidated garage and barn and modernizing the house, expanding it with additional bedrooms and a sunroom.

The Hansens bought cattle and employed their two sons as farm laborers. “Both boys had their own cattle; one had a bull and the other had a cow. The offspring were sold and the boys got the profit. Brian and Matt learned a lot about repairing equipment, making hay and feeding cows,” said Carole. “This was our way of making sure the boys knew how to work. It’s paid off, too!”

“We practiced rotational grazing back before it was popular. The deer would run through the electric fences, tearing everything down, so we spent a lot of time looking for cows in the woods and repairing fences,” Guy explained.

The Hansens enrolled in cost share programs with the USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service (then called the Soil Conservation Service) to create a management plan and to improve the property for agriculture,



Different land types at the Hansen property provide abundant wildlife habitat.

Hansen Conservation Easement *continued....*

timber, and wildlife habitat. Historically, the property was used as a dairy farm, then for raising and pasturing beef cattle and growing hay to feed the herd.

As a young child, Guy planted seedlings with his father and mother every year, and he carried on that tradition while reestablishing forest stands on the property, mostly by hand planting. “Every fall I spray any trees I want to keep with deer repellent—mostly white pine, oak and cedar, even if they are in an enclosure,” said Guy.

They improved hay fields and created three small wildlife ponds that have brought a variety of wildlife to the land, including woodcock, ducks, geese, song birds, wolves, coyotes, black bear, salamanders, snakes, bobcats and even an eastern cougar.

Guy’s professional career in waste water treatment spanned decades since around the time the Clean Water Act was passed by the Environmental Protection agency in 1972. He worked for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the Rhinelander Paper Mill, and this life philosophy has carried over into granting a conservation easement to NWLT. Guy was also one of the founding members of the Rhinelander Area Silent Trails Association (RASTA) and serves as the Executive Director of the Rhinelander Area Food Pantry, which he helped found in 2005.



The Hansens learned a bit about conservation easements at a Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association (WWOA) conference several years ago. Guy’s sister and her husband also had conserved properties in Shawano and Burnett Counties. After reading more about it, they felt it was the right avenue for their land in Harshaw, especially after spending a lot of labor and time improving the forests, fields and wetland communities. Their conservation easement now protects productive forest land, productive agricultural land and wildlife habitat.

The Hansens are currently guided by their second 25-year plan under the WDNR’s Managed Forest Law that calls for future timber sales to remove aspen and other hardwoods, and to thin white and red pine on the 73 acres of forest that make up the property. They enjoy walking, hunting and cross-country skiing on the trails they created and maintain through their woods. They both are involved with maintaining and improving the silent sports trails of Oneida County, and Guy is a volunteer groomer on those trails.

“It has been a blessing all along,” stated Carole. “I like the idea that the land can’t be changed much. That means if it’s ever sold it has to be to someone of like-mind and to someone who appreciates it!” “And yet there can be some changes, and it can be farmed. It’s a multiple-use property,” Guy pointed out. “I would hope whoever has it in the future would continue to plant and follow the management recommendations.” 🌲

Ground Hemlock Lake Shoreline Conserved Through Easement

On January 25, 2019 Ron and Winnie Krueger donated a conservation easement to NWLT conserving over 40 acres of woods and 415 feet of wooded shoreline to protect the scenic value and water quality of Ground Hemlock Lake in Forest County (pictured, right).

Ron and Winnie graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in 1964 and spent the next few years searching for the perfect Northwoods lake property to call their own. Ron worked for the paper industry as a waste water technician for five years, then as a Wisconsin DNR district biologist in the then new Division of Environmental Protection for another four years. Winnie was a teacher and a mom during those years, and two sons and a daughter were added to the mix. They always kept an eye out for a piece of wild land. In 1968, at the end of a long, rainy weekend of camping, they saw a for sale sign that led to lake lots on Ground Hemlock Lake in the town of Lincoln.

They bought one long triangular lot in 1969 and in 1970 purchased the adjacent forty acres. Funds were depleted after these purchases, and weekend tent living soon got old. So, with a nice stand of hemlock available on the forty, the next quest was building a log cabin, which consumed the next three years of every weekend minute of spare time.



Ground Hemlock Lake Conservation Easement *continued...*

The weekly commute to and from Green Bay soon too got old, so in 1974 they decided to try making it on their own and expanded the cabin in order to live there full-time. “There was lots of character building back then. We started with no electricity or running water, and the first winter up in the loft the sheets froze to the wall. We were potty trained in the outhouse!” said son, R.T.

Ron’s background in science and his previous careers led them to begin a lake management consulting business. They soon outgrew a small laboratory in a garage room and were forced to move the business to downtown Crandon. During the next several years, Northern Lake Service conducted 22 one-year lake studies under the Inland Lake Protection and Rehabilitation Program. The company also analyzed lake samples collected and delivered by DNR float plane for various DNR/EPA acid rain studies in the late 1970’s. Municipal and industrial clients began showing up in greater numbers, so the lab work increased exponentially over the intervening years. And, groundwater monitoring became a big part of the business as the lake district studies came to an end.



Ground Hemlock Lake’s natural shoreline enhances water quality and quiet living.

“As far as our lake goes, we had some issues early on. It’s a small lake and it was all developed at about the same time during the late 1950’s and early 1960’s. Early on there was an issue with water skiing on the small lake, so we got a bunch of folks together and talked the town into passing a boating ordinance. An attorney and I drafted the language and categorized the Town’s lakes by size. As a result, there were two large lakes that you could water ski on. Lakes 50 to 100 acres in size were designated slow/no wake lakes, and no outboards were allowed on lakes less than 50 acres. We’ve had that boating ordinance for a long time now and everyone on our lake respects it. We’ve been fortunate more than anything else,” said Ron. “Small townships don’t have the resources for much enforcement.”

“It was especially important to us that the shoreland vegetation around the lake stay intact. The lake is unique, with its hard water and it is blue green in color because of its hardness,” said Ron. “The lake has

been built up like most in the region, but most folks have left their shorelands heavily vegetated leaving only filtered views of buildings when on the lake.”

“We were lucky to have like-minded neighbors that banded together on issues. We went through some real consternation when mining threatened our quiet neighborhood in the 80’s. We were very concerned for a long time because of the close proximity of the proposed tailing site. The issue eventually went away, but, as long as the deposit is there it’s always a potential issue,” said Ron.

“This was an interesting place to raise our kids. We were intent on trying to keep it quiet, where you can walk and pick berries,” said Winnie. She and Ron laughed recalling when their son Jeff said, “I love that sound - a screen door slamming.”

“My favorite thing we used to do was walk around the lake. People kept up their own path that connected all the way around. There were a lot of kids and it was our way to have our own neighborhood,” said R.T.

“To me, there has to be people out there that believe that conservation increases the future value of a property because people are going to want to have a piece of property like this around. There are so many opportunities to live in the Northwoods, but many areas feel more like the suburbs,” said R.T.

The Kruegers can look back to when they planted pine and spruce trees on the forty, now grown and harvested. They can gather at the house, with all three children and their families living in Crandon, to appreciate what they’ve created together and hear the slam of screen doors echo across the lake. 🌲



Winnie and Ron Krueger with son R.T. (centered) celebrate their easement’s signing with NWLT’s Kari Kirschbaum (Land Protection Coord.), Pete Davison (Secretary), and Bryan Pierce (former Executive Director).

Bryan Pierce and Yawkey Family Receive Awards for Conservation



Bryan Pierce (photo by Althea Dotzour Photography)

Gathering Waters: Wisconsin's Alliance for Land Trusts, honored Bryan Pierce with the 2019 Harold "Bud" Jordahl Lifetime Achievement Award at the Land Conservation Leadership Awards Celebration at the Monona Terrace in Madison on September 26, 2019.

Bryan has built an incredible conservation legacy throughout Vilas, Oneida, Forest, Florence, Iron, Price and northern Langlade Counties. He helped establish NWLT in 2001 and then led the organization as Executive Director for 18 years.

His focus on sustainability, community cooperation, long-term thinking, and integrity has resulted in the protection of over 13,000 acres of land and 70 miles of natural shorelines in northern Wisconsin. His emphasis on community cooperation remains a model for other land trusts.

Bryan made land conservation popular, desirable, and fun in an area of Wisconsin that is rich in natural resources. He taught environmental courses and worked with local governments—sometimes dealing with difficult and sensitive issues—to help people understand the environmental and economic value of saving Wisconsin's natural areas.

"Bryan has actively served on just about any effort that might improve the community...His willingness to work effectively with so many groups has highlighted his talents; forged connections with just about every environmental and social group in northern Wisconsin...He is a living example of how one person can lead hundreds of people to form an organization, raise money, protect land, ... without polarization, in a way that makes everyone involved feel like a winner," said Bob Martini, Vice President of the NWLT Board of Directors.

Bryan's legacy extends beyond northern Wisconsin. As he approached retirement, he developed a comprehensive succession plan to help NWLT's operations continue without disruption. He shared his plan and lessons learned with other land trusts, and his efforts helped set up the greater Wisconsin land-trust community for success.

"Wisconsin's land trust community will miss Bryan's passion and his dedication to conservation," said Mike Carlson, Executive Director at Gathering Waters. "Generations of residents and visitors will get to experience and enjoy the impact of his efforts to protect land and water in northern Wisconsin."

Also honored at the ceremony, the Yawkey Lumber Company of Hazelhurst received the Land Legacy Award for their incredible gift to the NWLT in 2018. Company shareholders, who are all great-grandchildren of the late Cyrus C. Yawkey, donated 431 acres, including woodlands, wetlands, islands, wildlife habitat, and 4.4 miles of natural shoreline on Lake Katherine, one of the most valuable and sizable outright gifts of land to a land trust in Wisconsin. The Yawkey Forest Reserve's natural shorelines and towering white pines will now be protected and available for people to explore and enjoy for years to come.

As a tribute to their great grandparents who founded the Yawkey Lumber Company 125 years ago, the shareholders wanted to preserve the 23 remaining undeveloped parcels on the 590-acre lake to keep its natural scenic beauty intact for future generations. The shareholders and NWLT spent nearly four years working out the conservation details.

"The Yawkey Family gave the people of Wisconsin an amazing gift when they protected Lake Katherine's iconic shoreline," said Mike Carlson, Gathering Waters' Executive Director. "People who live, work and vacation in the Northwoods now have the chance to explore the natural beauty of the area and enjoy the wildlife it supports for decades to come."

Discover Wisconsin will highlight the story of the Yawkey Forest Reserve during its Wisconsin Land Trust Days episode scheduled to air in June 2020.



Members of the Yawkey Family, Nancy-Leigh Fisher, Joe Smith, and Alice Smith, receive their Land Legacy Award from Mike Carlson of Gathering Waters (photo by Althea Dotzour Photography).

Gathering Waters has honored Wisconsin's conservation leaders with Land Conservation Leadership Awards since 2004. The awards recognize the outstanding accomplishments of individuals, policymakers and land trusts whose work helped protect the places that make Wisconsin special. The awards honor the power of committed citizens and offer inspiring examples of conservation success.

Visit Gathering Waters' website at www.gatheringwaters.org.



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Leaving a Lasting Legacy for the Northwoods

SPECIAL EVENT

Issues in the Sustainable Management of Temperate and Tropical Forests

Join the Northwoods Land Trust and Trees for Tomorrow in welcoming Robert Simeone as he describes one forester's experience in confronting global natural forest losses and the emergence of new concepts in Sustainable Forest Management.

Beginning with Peace Corps/Paraguay in the late 70's, and later as an international forestry consultant, Robert has spent the last 35 years traipsing through the forests of South America and the Northwoods of Wisconsin. His decades of work with indigenous communities in the Amazonian regions of Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador led him to become one of the six founders of the Forest Stewardship Council (www.fsc.org).

His talk includes a brief history of forest science, global forest trends today, conservation strategies to save the forest, wilderness and the indigenous mind, and new forestry within an ecological context.

When: Friday, November 15, 2019 from 6:30 - 7:30 pm
Where: Trees For Tomorrow, 519 E. Sheridan St., Eagle River, WI
FMI: Contact Troy Walters at (715) 479-2490,
troy@northwoodslandtrust.org



**Happy Holidays
from the Board and Staff of
the Northwoods Land Trust!**

Please consider making a year-end gift to support our land stewardship programs! See the special appeal letter and envelope inside this edition.

Not shown: Bill Dickens, Beth Tornes, Mitch Olson