



NORTHWOODS LAND TRUST

HELP LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY FOR THE NORTHWOODS

Wisconsin's 2007 Land Trust of the Year!

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

Summer 2009

McCafferys Protect Oneida County Woodlands for Wildlife

By Willa Schmidt, NWLT Board Secretary

The many acres of forest in private hands that help make the northwoods the northwoods are increasingly threatened these days by paper company sell-offs and other consequences of a difficult economy. It is therefore welcome news when landowners move to keep their forest lands intact, a decision Rhinelander residents Keith and Josie McCaffery recently made in partnership with the Northwoods Land Trust.

In December 2008 the McCafferys signed a land protection agreement, or conservation easement, to protect approximately 84 acres in the Town of Stella in perpetuity. The McCafferys have owned the land since 1976, when Keith, a Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Biologist, purchased it as soon as it came up for sale. Keith often bowhunted in the area.

"Back when land was \$2,000 a forty my brother told me I'd never buy any because it'd always be too expensive," Keith laughs. "So I waited until it was \$6,000 a forty." He and Josie hiked up a hill on the property one evening and when they saw the view northward over bordering fields, simply couldn't pass it by.



Grassy openings and woodlands by potato farm fields provide valuable habitat for white-tailed deer, black bears and lots of other wildlife.

The land contains both wooded habitat with stands of aspen, oak and pine that are enrolled in the Managed Forest Program, and grassy openings that make it popular with deer, grouse and other wildlife. Black bears are especially fond of the black cherry trees found on the property.

In addition to sandy uplands there are natural shoreland-wetlands on its eastern edge that provide critical water quality protection for nearby Jewel and Jennie Webber Creeks, which are part of a system of water courses that eventually flow into the Wisconsin River. Jewel Creek is listed by the Department of Natural Resources as a Class II trout stream, with naturally reproducing brook trout. Canada yew, a rare species, is found under the hemlocks and black spruce in the shoreland-wetlands.

The planted fields north of the property are particularly attractive to deer. As many as fifty have been seen running from the potato patch onto his land, although McCaffery can't figure out why none seemed to be there

(Continued next page)



Keith and Josie McCaffery (holding signs) celebrate the protection of their 84-acre woodland property with NWLT Board members (from left) Mary Schwaiger, Sue Coffman, John Huppert, Pete Davison, Jim Holperin, Jerry Parker and Ed Mouw.

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. The Northwoods Land Trust covers areas of Vilas, Oneida, Forest, Florence, Iron and Price Counties.

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



Canada yew, a rare species, is found in the shoreland-wetlands on the McCaffery's land.

McCaffery Woodlands - continued

during gun season! The property is gated, but motorists on the town road that skirts its northern and eastern sides are provided with a scenic corridor and the popular grassy openings for viewing wildlife.

In addition to hunting, Keith and Josie enjoy camping on their land, from spring “until the snow flies.” Keith notes, “One of the great amenities of the area at the present time is silence. If you go to most of our lakes,

there’s constant traffic of one kind or another, winter and summer, or construction, hammering, leaf blowing; out here you can hear nature making its own sounds.” He likes putting his feet up around the fire and catching up on the magazines he’s accumulated over the winter.

Because the easement allows no subdivision and no buildings beyond small non-residential structures such as deer blinds or camping facilities, the property will remain in its undeveloped state. Keith enjoys practicing forestry on his land. When he was a young man in Stanley, Wisconsin trying to decide on a career, he listened to good advice. “My dad always said, choose a vocation you enjoy doing in your spare time. If you can find a vocation like that, you’ve got it made.” He was interested in forestry and wildlife, and Bob Wendt, former Wildlife Manager at Ladysmith, told him to major in forestry, because it was easier to branch out from there to wildlife than vice versa.

He studied at St. Olaf College, where he met Josie, and later at the University of Minnesota. In 1963 he returned to his home state to work for the DNR as a Forest-Wildlife Biologist, retiring in 2000 after a long and distinguished tenure. “They paid me for 37 years to do something I enjoyed, and I go back to the office every day now in my spare time because I still enjoy it.”

Josie was born in Oklahoma, the daughter of a chemical engineer who worked at refineries all over the country, but she too had Wisconsin roots: her father had been raised in Chippewa Falls and coincidentally also born in Stanley.

Asked how he’d like the property to look if he could be here 100 years from now, McCaffery expects a natural progression of the forest, probably to pine. He also finds the open areas enjoyable and hopes they’ll remain, though he understands a future owner may manage differently. “I grew up in dairy country,” he says, “where you could see across fields.”

What is his message for other landowners? He’s already planning to encourage a neighbor to follow in his footsteps and consider an easement too. Clearly, Keith and Josie McCaffery feel they’ve made the right decision, one that will help keep the northwoods the special place it is for the many generations to come.



“One of the great amenities of the area at the present time is silence.” - Keith McCaffery

You Can Help!

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.

Protecting a Bend in the Wisconsin River

It is more than just a bend in the river. Just ask the bald eagles that hunt from towering pines along the entirely natural shoreline. Or the pack of timber wolves that killed a deer on the ice last winter. Or the otters that slide down the steep banks. Or the ruffed grouse that drum on downed logs in the aspen thickets while the woodcock perform their sky dance overhead at dusk in the spring.

Or you can ask the occasional paddlers canoeing or kayaking past, enjoying the solitude as they go with the flow. This bend is a place of special beauty, and it always will be thanks to Tim Hagen of Rhinelander.

When Tim found out this property with 870 feet of entirely natural Wisconsin River frontage was coming up for sale, he knew he wanted to buy it to protect it. Through his River Bend LLC, he did just that last spring when he bought 75 acres of land. He then granted a perpetual land protection agreement, or conservation easement, to the Northwoods Land Trust in December on the 35 acres adjacent to the river. The agreement will ensure that this special bend in the Wisconsin River will be protected for wildlife and natural scenic beauty forever.

Located below Hat Rapids Dam south of Rhinelander, the protected property is immediately adjacent to land owned by his cousin, Beverly Engstrom. Her 50-acre site was protected with a conservation easement through NWLT in 2006. Tim's land is also located less than a half mile downstream from Harry and Candy Whidden's conservation easement-protected farmstead by the dam.

Hagen knew about the Northwoods Land Trust since its inception. A Certified Financial Planner with Financial Strategies Group (formerly Hagen Financial Planning), he



Located adjacent to and just downstream from Beverly Engstrom's conservation easement property, Tim Hagen has added protection to another 870 feet of entirely natural Wisconsin River shoreline as it flows below the Hat Rapids Dam south of Rhinelander.

went looking for land trust information earlier for a client, and found there was nothing available in this immediate area. "It grabbed my attention and I got really interested when I saw the press about this organization forming," he said. "I thought it was a great thing. I have been pushing the land trust ever since, just trying to encourage people to protect their lands."

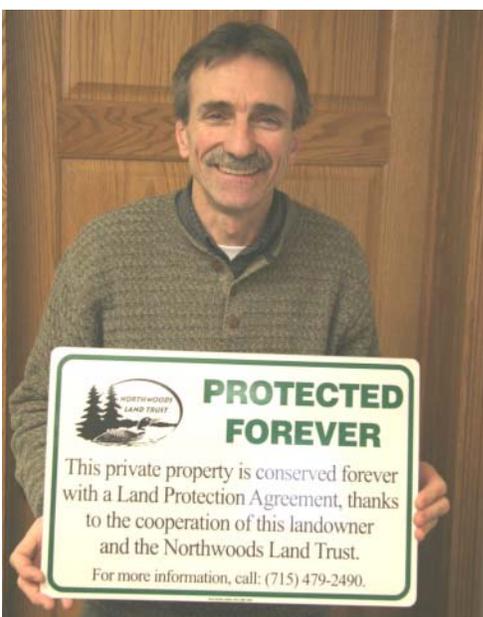
Tim became even more familiar with the Northwoods Land Trust and the organization's conservation efforts when he was recruited to the NWLT Board of Directors. He also served a stint as Treasurer. Tim continues as a volunteer and shares his investment expertise and advice with NWLT.

Tim knew about the property for a long time. "My Dad talked about it all the time," Hagen said. "It was called Eternicka's Bend, named after Eternicka's farm in the vicinity."

"Bev's parcel and the parcel just upriver were my Grandfather's homestead. That is why my Dad was so familiar with it and why he referred to it many times. As a kid growing up, he used to knock off big ice chunks, jump on and float down the river until he got down around Eternicka's Bend. Then the ice chunk would eventually hit shore and he would walk back," Tim related.

"I grew up on Hat Rapids flowage a mile or two upriver from the property," said Tim. "I used to ride horses up and down Washatko Road past this place as a kid, but I never set foot on the property until I bought it."

"Twenty years ago I became aware of the property as a place to possibly build a house," he said. "I contacted the man who owned it, but he was keeping it as a place to build their dream retirement home. I kept in touch with him on and off over the years. A year ago I heard a rumor he was going to sell it, so I contacted him again."



Tim Hagen of Rhinelander protected 35 scenic acres along the Wisconsin River with a perpetual land protection agreement granted to the Northwoods Land Trust in December.



As a kid, Tim's father used to break off big ice chunks, hop on and float down the river to Eternicka's Bend (pictured).

"This part of the Wisconsin River is special," Hagen explained. "When I was a kid growing up, we used to canoe the Pelican River all the time, and there were very few houses. Now you are canoeing through houses."

"I actually didn't canoe this stretch of the Wisconsin River much as a kid," he said. "On the Wisconsin, we usually did our canoeing right out the back door on the flowage. But this stretch has always been important to me."

So why did Hagen select a conservation easement as a financial planning and land management option for his property? "To know it is protected, but still own it is probably the key," he explained. "Unlike some other options, with a conservation easement you also have the ability to pass it on to someone else who appreciates it. But you still know that no matter what happens going forward, it will be protected."

"I've seen way too many cases of people who wait too long," he noted. "They find out that the family member they left their land to, doesn't treat it the way they treated it. It can be a death, divorce, or other things can happen, and suddenly these lands are worth more to someone developed than they are protected. The conservation easement assures me the land is protected, but it also gives me options going forward."

"There are also some financial reasons for me to do the easement this year," he said. Hagen was aware of the enhanced federal income tax benefits which currently apply to any conservation easement donated in 2008 and 2009.

Subject to an IRS-standard appraisal, donors can deduct the value of the conservation easement at up to 50% of their adjusted gross income in any one year (versus 30% normally), and any remaining charitable contribution balance can be carried forward for up to 15 additional years (as opposed to 5 years with the previous federal tax provisions). These enhanced federal tax benefits are currently scheduled to end on December 31, 2009.

According to Hagen, most of the property is under the state's Managed Forest Law (MFL) program, however there were two reserved building zones excluded from MFL- one on the 35-acre riverfront parcel and one on the adjacent 40-acre forest parcel along the black-topped road. Through the conservation easement, he is eliminating the building zone on the river, and is currently amending his MFL forest stewardship plan to reflect that change.

"The front 40-acre parcel, right on Washatko Road, will take some additional thought to determine just exactly how that should be protected and dealt with," Hagen said. "When I initially bought the property, my inclination was to protect the whole 75 acres. But when my financial circumstances changed, I did the river parcel easement first with the idea of adding the second piece later. That piece along the paved road will take more time and consideration, because I'm still undecided as to whether I will allow a building site on it."

"I can say that if neighbors adjacent to this piece of property were to ever put their land into some kind of strong protection, I wouldn't hesitate to eliminate a building site on this second piece too," he stated. "But without knowing what is going to happen, and to protect myself a little bit financially, I'll leave that door open for a while."

"It would be nice if this stretch of the Wisconsin River was fully protected from the Hat Rapids dam all the way down to where the state owns property and Lake Alice. That would be the hope, before it becomes too cluttered with homes – but, who knows?"

What Tim Hagen does know, though, is that he and his cousin Bev are certainly doing their part to conserve the Wisconsin River for all of us and future generations to come. Thanks Tim!

Note: For more information about the enhanced federal income tax benefits for 2009 donations of conservation easements, please contact the NWLT office at (715) 479-2490.



The Wisconsin River below Hat Rapids Dam is a special stretch enjoyed for its natural scenic beauty by canoeists, kayakers and other boaters. Check out page 7 for an invitation to see it for yourself.

Welcome to Trisha Moore - NWLT's Conservation Specialist

At the beginning of the year, the Northwoods Land Trust welcomed Trisha Moore as Conservation Specialist - a new position for NWLT.

The Conservation Specialist has diverse responsibilities that include oversight of the annual conservation easement monitoring program; organizing volunteer monitors and landowners for the required annual visit to each property. Trisha will also prepare membership renewals and maintain the NWLT computer database of donors, volunteers and other supporters. The position also includes helping with management of NWLT's conservation properties, assisting with new land protection projects, and conducting education programs. Currently, Trisha is employed on a part-time basis with NWLT.

Trisha spent most of her childhood in Phillips, Wisconsin and graduated from Phillips High School. She furthered her education at UW-River Falls where she received a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a secondary education license in Biology and Chemistry. While at River Falls, she ran for the cross country and track teams, was involved in Habitat for Humanity, and was an EMT. Trisha became more involved in the natural resource fields while working two summers on a prairie restoration project, working and living on an organic farm, and in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in Minnesota.

After graduating from UW-River Falls, Trisha taught at-risk students in the Winter School District and Biology and Chemistry at Mayville High School. While teaching in Mayville, she had the opportunity to chaperone students on a four-day trip to Trees For Tomorrow Natural Resource Education Center in Eagle River. Trisha left Mayville to work as a research technician on a Sage Grouse study for Oregon State University and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. After the project was finished, she searched for a way to teach natural resources and be outdoors more. Trees For Tomorrow seemed like the perfect fit and Trisha was hired as a naturalist there in August of 2003.

Trisha and her husband, Mark Shepherdson, have been living in the Eagle River area for almost six years. Mark (originally from Burlington, WI) works as a carpenter for Daniel Benson Builders. In October of 2008 Trisha and Mark welcomed their son, Iland, into the world and Trisha decided to switch careers to full-time mom and part-time naturalist. Mark and Trisha spend their free time cross-country skiing, biking, hiking, canoeing, hunting and travelling to visit family and friends (oh yes, and taking care of a baby)! Trisha enjoys cooking, reading, and hopes to use her love of writing and photography in this new position.

Trisha is very excited about the opportunity to work for and serve the Northwoods Land Trust. She is looking

forward to being able to connect with landowners and volunteers for a cause she is passionate about. "I spent a lot of time hiking in the woods with my parents, hunting with my dad, and really developed a love for the Northwoods," said Trisha. "When I moved to Eagle River, reality hit that so much of this land I grew up with was being developed. That has motivated me to do something to help people keep the land they love intact and in turn



The Northwoods Land Trust is delighted to welcome Trisha Moore of Eagle River as our first Conservation Specialist. Welcome Trisha!

Forest County Lake Project

With grant funding assistance from the Wisconsin DNR Lake Protection Grant program, the Northwoods Land Trust is extending our highly-successful landowner education and technical assistance program to focus on lake property owners in Forest County.

The project involves utilizing geographic information system (GIS) computer technology to identify all lakefront parcels with a minimum of about 500 feet or more of natural shoreline frontage.

The selected lakefront parcels are mapped on the GIS system. The parcels are then linked with the Forest County tax roll database to generate a mailing list of the landowners. Copies of "For the Love of the Land... A Landowner's Conservation Guide to Protecting Your Northwoods Property" are currently being assembled to mail to the identified landowners.

Special thanks to the Forest County Association of Lakes, Forest County Land & Water Conservation Department, Forest County Emergency Management/911 and the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission for their cooperation and assistance!

Conservation Easement Monitoring - Vital to NWLT's Mission

By Trisha Moore

When I was offered the Conservation Specialist position with the Northwoods Land Trust I was thrilled to be able to support an organization that works toward “keeping the Northwoods the Northwoods.” I am most looking forward to the upcoming monitoring season; to be out meeting landowners, working in cooperation with volunteers, and learning the unique features of each of the 42 properties NWLT has helped to conserve to date.

What exactly is conservation easement monitoring? Why is it necessary? How is monitoring conducted each year? Conservation easement stewardship with the annual monitoring process is a critical function of the land trust.

Each year properties with conservation easements need to be monitored to meet new national accreditation standards set by the Land Trust Alliance (LTA). Becoming accredited will help NWLT remain credible to landowners, the IRS, grant funders, and the northwoods community.

More importantly, monitoring is vital for ensuring the perpetuity of the conservation easements held by NWLT. Monitoring documents changes that may have occurred on the land by means of natural causes (fire, storms, etc.) or changes which are permitted in the easement such as improving or adding on to an existing structure or building within a specified maximum footprint. Monitoring also helps to protect the conservation values of the property by preventing or finding potential violations.

Another reason monitoring is important is for landowner contact and communication. The annual monitoring visit may be the only time during the year NWLT staff and volunteers have the opportunity to talk with landowners. These positive relationships help to build clear communication, avoid violations of easement provisions, and further both the NWLT's mission as well as the landowners' conservation-minded management of their land.

Maintenance of relationships and education will be especially vital as these private lands are transferred to future generations of landowners. These new owners may not fully understand or appreciate the original landowners' intent in granting the conservation easement.

The monitoring process starts with a questionnaire sent to all owners of properties with conservation easements. The questionnaire asks for information about recent or proposed changes on the property and the best time to schedule the monitoring visit. We hope to have two or more volunteer/staff monitors at each property. As I am trying to learn each of the properties, I hope to visit as many of the properties as possible this year.

Trained volunteers, staff and board members can conduct easement monitoring. This year we invited over 40 local volunteers and past monitors to attend a training session on monitoring procedures. Volunteers are also accompanied by staff when they first monitor a property.



Conservation easement monitoring volunteer Bill Reardon (left) meets with landowner Don Kratsch on an annual monitoring site visit.

When the scheduled day of monitoring arrives, the landowner(s) and monitors will usually begin the visit by looking over the responses to the questionnaire and talking about any changes to or plans for the property. The baseline documentation notebook prepared when the easement was put into place, with its descriptions, maps, and pictures, can be used for a comparison during the site visit to determine that the property is being used within the guidelines of the easement.

The monitor and landowner will walk the land, visiting photo sites and property boundaries. Any new, rare or exotic plants or animals are recorded, and new photos or GPS points may be taken to document any changes on the property. When the monitoring visit is finished, a monitoring report will be completed and sent to the landowner and filed with NWLT's easement documents.

While it is preferred that the landowner be present for the monitoring day, it is not required. Landowners who are able are encouraged to walk the property with the monitoring staff/volunteers. The time needed to conduct the monitoring process could be anywhere from one to several hours depending on the size of the property and how many changes have occurred.

While attending a day-long seminar at a recent Midwest LTA conference, our instructor emphasized the importance of annual monitoring: “The monitoring work done by a land trust is *the most important work* after the easement is established. Monitoring ensures that the conservation easement is upheld, no matter who has ownership of the land.” For questions on monitoring, to become a volunteer, or to set up a monitoring visit please contact the Northwoods Land Trust at (715) 479-2490 or e-mail us at nwlt@northwoodslandtrust.org.



Join us for a Wisconsin River Paddle & Preserve Field Tour and Barbecue

NWLT members, supporters and other interested individuals and families are cordially invited to join us on a Wisconsin River Paddle & Preserve Field Tour followed by a barbecue picnic on **Saturday, July 18th**. We'll meet at the Hat Rapids Dam parking lot on the west side of the river at **noon**.

After a view of the natural shorelines conserved by Harry & Candy Whidden at Hat Rapids Dam, we will put in on the Wisconsin River and float downstream past the Beverly Engstrom conservation easement property. We'll make a stop by "Eternicka's Bend" so we can celebrate Tim Hagen's recent land protection project with NWLT.

Along the way will be a discussion of the history of the use and reclamation of the Wisconsin River with retired DNR rivers coordinator (and NWLT Board member)

Bob Martini. This scenic stretch is also an excellent opportunity to watch bald eagles and other wildlife.

Please note that water levels and river flow on the day of the event will dictate the length of our paddle. We do anticipate that the paddle trip will last about 4 hours. Vehicles will carpool to the takeout point downstream.

Following the paddle tour, we will convene back at 6145 Hat Rapids Road (just 1/4 mile east of the dam) for a barbecue picnic hosted by conservation easement donor Beverly Engstrom at her beautiful home overlooking the river. Bev's 50-acre protected property also includes 1/4 mile of trout stream. Burgers and brats on the grill with assorted beverages will be a great way to celebrate these outstanding conservation projects.

We recommend a hat, paddling clothes and footwear, binoculars, sun screen and bug protection. Snacks and beverages on the water will also be provided. There is no charge for this event, however there is a suggested dona-



Bev Engstrom will host our Paddle & Preserve field tour and barbecue.

tion of \$20 for non-members.

Please RSVP at nwlt@northwoodslandtrust.org or call NWLT at (715) 479-2490 so we can plan for the barbecue.

Need paddling equipment?

Canoes and kayaks may be rented from the following places: Mel's Trading Post, Brown St., Rhinelander, (715) 362-5800; Hawks Nest Canoe Outfitters, Hwy. 70 W, Eagle River, (715) 479-7944; or Chequamegon Adventure Co., Hwy. 51, Minocqua, (715) 356-1618.

Directions: From Rhinelander, take Hwy. 17 south of Hwy. 8 about four miles, turn west on Hat Rapids Road and continue for 1.5 miles. The parking area is just west ~~across the bridge over the Wisconsin River.~~ 

Lasting Gifts in Memory of Emily Krug and Florence Wienhold

Marion Schoofs of Eagle River recently gave the Northwoods Land Trust contributions in memory of Emily Krug and in memory of Florence Wienhold. Memorial gifts are great ways to remember friends and loved ones, leaving a legacy of northwoods land conservation that truly lasts. Thank you Marion! 



JOIN THE NORTHWOODS LAND TRUST

HELP KEEP THE NORTHWOODS THE NORTHWOODS!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone (w): _____

Telephone (h): _____

E mail Address: _____

Membership Contributions

- | | |
|--|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$35 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Founder | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservator | \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Steward | \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Legacy | \$1000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My additional contribution of _____ is also enclosed. | \$ _____ |

Please make checks payable to:

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

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.

I am interested in the NWLT Council of Trustees.



YOU ARE INVITED!

2009 Annual Meeting to feature a walking tour of NWLT's Holmboe Conifer Forest State Natural Area

You are cordially invited to participate in the 2009 Northwoods Land Trust Annual Meeting on **Friday, July 17th** at the DNR Service Center building in Rhinelander.

Please come and meet the NWLT Board and join us for a free light lunch and social time at noon. The Annual Meeting will begin at 12:30 p.m. with a summary report and "virtual tour" of the year's outstanding conservation projects.

Following the lunch and Annual Meeting, those who are interested can join us for a walking tour under the beautiful climax forest of the Holmboe Conifer Forest State Natural Area. This 32-acre property on the Pelican River was transferred to NWLT from The Nature Conservancy. Come and see the new deer exclosure constructed as an Eagle Scout project by Tad Schmidt in 2008.

We recommend wearing long pants, long sleeves and bug protection. The walk will be about one-half mile in length over hilly terrain, and includes a boardwalk over a spruce swamp.

To RSVP (preferred to help us plan for the lunch, but not required), please contact the NWLT office at (715) 479-2490 or email us at nwlt@northwoodslandtrust.org.



A guided walking tour of NWLT's 32-acre Holmboe Conifer Forest will be featured at the 2009 NWLT Annual Meeting.

Directions:

The DNR Service Center is located at 107 Sutliff Ave., just one block north of the Rhinelander Chamber of Commerce building off of Business Hwy. 8.



NORTHWOODS LAND TRUST

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