



landscript

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PROTECTING SIGNIFICANT NATURAL, SCENIC AND FARM LANDS, AND ADVANCING STEWARDSHIP, NOW AND FOR ALL FUTURE GENERATIONS

The Best is Yet to Come! *by Glen Chown, Executive Director*

Recently I was invited to speak to the Traverse City Rotary Club about the transformational impact of their \$100,000 start-up grant that launched the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy in 1991. Rotary's charge when they birthed our organization was to balance the inevitable, and desired, growth of our region with the permanent protection of our cherished natural, scenic, and farm lands.

I dare say that no one could have predicted the impact of that initial investment and what their bold, far-sighted vision for our region would leverage. Here's just a sampling: \$45 million in private individual and foundation gifts earmarked for land protection projects and over \$55 million to our region in competitive grants from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for the creation of public natural areas over the last nineteen years. That is a total of \$100 million toward the preservation of our region's precious land and water, a one thousand-fold return on their investment in less than twenty years!



A group of friends enjoy a hike at Arcadia Dunes this winter
Photo by GTRLC Volunteer Colleague Chris Rogers

The number we can be most proud of though is the fact that your Regional Conservancy has now permanently protected over 33,000 acres and nearly 100 miles of shoreline in our five-county service area. That did not happen by accident. Generous, unrestricted donations from caring supporters like you – 41,000 individual gifts since our inception - have enabled us to grow and sustain one of the best professionally staffed regional land trusts in the U.S. And I could not be more proud of the “knack and craft” of our staff whose skill and hard work made it possible to not just assemble an amazing portfolio of preserves, conservation easements, and community assist projects but also to perform exemplary stewardship on these precious lands. The fact that we are engaging an ever-increasing number of volunteer colleagues in carrying out our day-to-day work is something else you can be proud of in these fiscally challenging times when it is so important to stretch the value of every single donated dollar.

I should point out that Rotary was not alone. Five other foundations with strong ties to our region awarded three-year start-up grants in the beginning. We are forever indebted to the Biederman, Seabury, Borwell, Oleson and Grainger Foundations for taking bold action in recognizing the critical importance of land conservation to our region's prosperity. And like Rotary, their support has been ongoing.

With Michigan struggling mightily these days to reinvent itself during a prolonged and difficult economic transition, it is not surprising that leaders across the state are looking at the example of northwest Michigan. We have understood for a long time that quality access to nature defines our sense of place – witness Traverse City's forty-year effort to convert an industrial zone into waterfront parkland, which today is our beloved “open space.” The same can-do spirit and recognition that “quality of place” matters in the new economy is now fueling similar efforts in Acme, along the coasts of Benzie and Manistee Counties, and elsewhere.

And here's more good news. On the eve of our twentieth anniversary in 2011, your Regional Conservancy is putting together a bold and far-sighted blueprint for action for the next twenty years. Based on what I am hearing already from loyal supporters, I can barely contain my excitement for what's on the horizon and, indeed, it would not be a stretch to say the best is yet to come! Moreover, it is your support that truly makes it possible to “dream big” but also to be confident that we will succeed in building upon our great track record of success to create a lasting legacy for future generations.



Acme Shoreline

Life is a Sandy Beach!

The early spring brought back one of our favorite Traverse City scenes: people at the Open Space. Without question the jewel of West Bay, the Open Space buzzes with activity and community as people make their way back to this precious shoreline park. It has become central to our town's identity and provides us with an important reminder: *we protect the land for people*. Across town, our neighbors in Acme are longing to create a similar space for the community.

The Acme Shoreline Preservation Initiative, as it's called, will provide open, public waterfront access along a mile-long stretch of East Bay. The community vision will showcase the natural beauty of Acme Township by opening the view to provide a scenic entry to the Grand Traverse region, along with offering public access – to a sandy shoreline park – on East Bay. And we know that this will not only enhance the quality of life for the residents of our region, but will also boost tourism and the local economy. Communities are increasingly realizing that preserving and featuring their best natural assets - their productive farms, their shoreline, their beaches, their dunes, and their riverfronts – can be a key to future prosperity.

Three properties adjacent to the existing Bayside Park, the Willow Beach, Knollwood, and Shoreside Inn, are “Phase One” of the campaign and will provide over 540' of additional water frontage. The cost of these properties, all for sale, totals \$4,008,000. Acme Township was awarded 75% of this amount by the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund - conditional on the Township securing \$1 million in matching funds by June 1, 2010. The Conservancy is coordinating the private fundraising for the campaign.

Thanks to the unbelievable generosity of individuals and foundations, the remaining need for Phase One is just \$285,000!

Most recently, The Carls Foundation awarded a challenge grant. Every dollar that comes in from local individuals, businesses and foundations will be matched 1:1, up to \$100,000. The Carls Foundation is a state-wide foundation based in Detroit, but with a long history of supporting conservation across Michigan and in the Grand Traverse region. Their support adds to the generous gifts from individuals and local foundations like Rotary Charities of Traverse City, the Oleson Foundation, and the Les and Anne Biederman Foundation.

Gifts of any size are appreciated and will literally have a lasting impact on the landscape and character of the gateway to the Grand Traverse region. Please consider making a gift today!

Success at Elberta Dunes South!

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.
Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”* – Margaret Mead

We reached a milestone early this year when we completed raising the funds needed for the permanent protection of the Elberta Dunes South property.

One of the highest quality privately owned dune properties along Lake Michigan, Elberta Dunes South boasts 58-acres, 1/4 mile of Lake Michigan Beach, and from the top, sweeping views of Lake Michigan and the Betsie Valley. It was the landowner, Jim Thorpe’s deep desire that the property be protected forever. Before he passed away, he worked with the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy to sign an option to sell the Elberta Dunes property at a bargain-sale to secure his legacy.

It took two years, 270 gifts from foundations and individuals, in-home gatherings where old friends encouraged new friends to “join the cause,” and countless hikes – most led by dedicated volunteers with a true love for those dunes to successfully protect Elberta Dunes South.

Three gifts were in the form of challenge grants, matching other donations dollar-for-dollar. The first was from the J.A. Woollam Foundation. The next from the Herbert H. and Barbara C. Dow Foundation. The final challenge was from Ted and Marcia Curran, made in honor of their friend, Diana Sloane Field and her father - a world famous glaciologist - William Osgood Field.

Those who supported the dune’s preservation included families who had never before made a gift to a conservation organization, along with a small and precious “family” of supporters who had led the Arcadia Dunes campaign and rallied again on behalf of the Elberta Dunes.

We are genuinely blessed by the generosity and commitment of everyone who made it possible for the Elberta Dunes South property to be protected for all, forever.



Elberta Dunes

Photo by Michael Collins

Updates from Your Land Protection Specialists

Brad Gerlach: Center Road Natural Area



Work continues on what has become my favorite project: the Center Road Natural Area. Only a few minutes north of Traverse City, the 60+ acres provide a peaceful opportunity to interact with nature on some of the most enjoyable hiking trails in the area. In my dual capacity as a Land Protection Specialist and Volunteer Colleague Program Stewardship Liason, I not only get to enjoy the property on a regular basis but I also interact with an innovative and inspiring volunteer group. Last year, with 1400 hours of volunteer work, almost three miles of trails were built and marked, fencing and boundary markers were installed, eroded areas restored and vegetation planted. This year, we will continue to improve access for the public while enhancing users experience with additional planting and signage. If you have not already

visited, I would encourage a trip to the Center Road Natural Area for an excellent hike. Consider a donation to help us complete the project!

Todd Vigland: Glacial Hills Pathway and Natural Area



Unique to this project is that Forest Home Township and Antrim County are each purchasing roughly half of the property to be managed as a whole as the Glacial Hills Pathway and Natural Area. The name originates from the former Glacier Hills Ski Area, located adjacent to the property. The ski area operated in the '40s and '50s and is remembered by many locals.

The Township wants to have an upland recreational area since they have little public land for recreation. The County wishes to consolidate four fragmented County-owned parcels. Common to all four parcels is the eastern half of this property. Like a real-life jigsaw puzzle, it ties the whole together. 345 acres of property will consolidate fragmented holdings into a contiguous 763-acre

publicly-owned block in close proximity to the Village of Bellaire and the north arm of Lake Bellaire. The successful completion of this project will allow for the numerous, widely-recognized economic benefits of trails (an estimated 9-13 miles worth!) and greenway corridors to impact the entire Bellaire community.

We thought we were done fundraising for this project when, very late in the process, we were notified that the property would have to be withdrawn from its long-time listing in the Commercial Forest Act. Withdrawal will cost approximately \$80,000. On March 11th, the Antrim County Commissioners approved allocating additional funds to the project to cover a portion of the CFA withdrawal cost, leaving our final remaining balance at just \$21,547! We know we can meet this goal and we all look forward to a fabulous new Natural Area! Let us know if you can help with a donation!

Chris Sullivan: Upper Herring Lake and Fruithaven Preserves Connected



Things have been busy this winter! We recently finished a deal started in 2006 to add 80 acres of priority land in the upper Betsie River Watershed by selling the property to the State of Michigan to integrate with adjacent state land. The property consists of a mix of upland and wetland, and contains the headwaters of two coldwater streams that feed Pickerel Creek, a tributary of the Betsie River.

Speaking of the State, we are in the final phases of finishing an exchange that will add 17.5 acres to the Betsie River State Game Area, and provide a 22.5 acre addition of land to the Upper Herring Lake Nature Preserve. Thanks

to a generous gift of land from Preserve neighbor Donna Ross which added property to the south end of the Fruithaven Forest Reserve, once we finalize the exchange with the State, the Upper Herring Lake and Fruithaven preserves will be connected. This connection ensures protection of this area as a wildlife corridor, as well as creating the possibility of a link between the trail systems at the two preserves.

Creating Community on the Land

by Rolf von Walther, Volunteer Program Coordinator

Many of you have heard the philosophical riddle (and maybe even debated the answer) “If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?” I have convincingly answered it both ways at different times in my life – most recently coming to the conclusion that what really matters is that we have trees and forests to enjoy and that sustain us!

The past year’s economic collapse has affected everyone. If you haven’t been directly affected then you’ve likely struggled seeing friends, family members, neighbors and co-workers take a hit. The path forward certainly seems challenging.

While finding our way through what some have dubbed the “Great Unraveling” there is renewed interest in assessing what’s important, reprioritizing life’s goals and digging just a little bit deeper into the real purpose of things. The process is at the very least instructive, and at its core can be transformative.

I am heartened to say what I see happening looks more like a “Great Turning”: turning towards family, towards community and towards building a life that is more sustainable – all of which speaks to a return to the land that has always been our sacred source, our place of rejuvenation, our home. The land not only provides the soil to grow food, to filter the water and the raw materials to clothe and shelter but speaks to us in ways deeper than ears can hear.

At the heart of our Volunteer Program is the idea of creating a volunteer community that offers a sense of belonging and a sense of ownership. This community allows us to develop more deeply a personal land ethic and provides meaningful opportunities to translate one’s passion for the land into action. This deepens our knowledge of the natural world, of our connections to each other, and to the mission of the Conservancy.

As the program continues to evolve and grow, the purpose continues to be centered on developing a land ethic which in turn feeds the greater regional community in building new appreciation and support for holding the land in trust for future generations.

I thank you for donating your time and talent and for being part of this effort to build community around the land that sustains us and, with your help, will continue to sustain us for generations to come.



To learn more about our work and how to become involved with our Volunteer Colleague Program join us on Wednesday, April 21st for our Open House, Events and Trainings (see page 16 for details).

Special Gifts

We are grateful for the following gifts, received October 15, 2009 - February 1, 2010

In Memory Of:

Rose J. Anderson

James Low &
Louise Anderson Low

Mickey Belden

Will Heelan & Patricia Snowdon

Mrs. Toby Bistrow

Nancy Reye & Rob Dolinka

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William Osgood Field

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(Continued)

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James & Patricia Glossi

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Frank & Judy Wilhelme
James Jackson



Consider a gift of stock

Your gift of stock could make a lasting difference to a Conservancy land project or program. Your gift of securities may entitle you to a federal income tax charitable deduction when you itemize your tax returns. And in the case of appreciated securities, you may deduct the full fair market value of your gift once you have held onto the securities for at least one year. In addition, you may avoid paying capital gains tax on stock that you donate to Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy.

Gifts of stock are easy to make directly or through your stock broker. Call or email Birgit Yetter with any questions: 1-888-929-3866 or birgit@gtrlc.org

Vanguard Society

The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy honors those whose future plans include gifts of estates, trusts, annuities, insurance policies, or the like, with recognition in our Vanguard Society.

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Michael H. Dennos	Wendy MacGaw	Robert W. & Ann H. Pike	Ron & Marty Yocum

There is a tree in the Baldy woods that our family considers "our tree." It is a tradition for us to visit it each time we arrive in the area. This custom and all our other memories of Arcadia Dunes are very dear to us.

Our family has been going to Watervale every year for vacation since 1951. For us the area is "heaven on earth." We are perpetually astonished to see the area as pristine and beautiful as it was 60 years ago. We appreciate the fact that this is due to the hard work, caring, and love of many people. Thank you for the wonderful work you are doing.

*- Myrna and Tom Hitchman,
Vanguard Society Members*



You Can Leave a Lasting Legacy

Have you ever considered making a planned gift to the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy? It's easier than you might think and one of the best ways to help ensure that sufficient funds will always be available to care for the land we protect.

Planning your estate may not be at the top of your list of things to do, but taking on this task now can provide you with an opportunity to reduce your tax burden and support the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy's mission for generations to come.



The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy does not provide legal or accounting advice, however we encourage supporters to consider planned giving options such as Bequests, Life Estates, Charitable Remainder Trusts, and Charitable Gift Annuities. Please talk with your legal counsel or financial advisors to evaluate these options, and if you choose to include us in your legacy, contact Glen Chown, Executive Director at 231-929-7911, or email glenchown@gtrlc.org

The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy is deeply appreciative of your support in 2009! Thank you for your generosity to further land conservation.

2Mission Design and Development
Joannie Abbott*
Jennifer A. Abel
Robert & Mary Ackerman
Jay & Shirley Adams
Thomas & Susan Adamson
Keith & Carol Adler
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We strive for accuracy but if you detect an error or omission, please let us know!

Stewardship Season

Our land stewardship staff would love your help building trails and removing invasive species to provide healthy and user-friendly natural areas

Every Thursday April - October, usually in the morning

Date	Location
April 15	HBC Preserve (Grand Traverse Co.)
April 29	Seven Bridges Preserve (Kalkaska Co.)
May 6	TBD
May 13, 20 & 27	Benzie County Garlic Removal
May 21 (Friday)	Skegemog Lake Wildlife Area (Kalkaska Co.)
June 3-24	Benzie County Garlic Removal
June 10	Bauer Preserve Trail Building (Antrim Co.)
June 24	TBD
July 1-22	Invasives at Arcadia Dunes (Benzie Co.)
July 8	South & Fox Island (Grand Traverse Co.)
July 29	Wild Parsnip Removal at Cosner (Antrim Co.)

Conservancy Hikes

Incredible hikes led by experienced GTRLC Volunteer Colleagues. Family friendly and fun for all. See you on the trail!

Weekly, June-August from 10:00am - Noon in Benzie Co.

Date	Location
June 16	Arcadia Dunes: Baldy Trails
June 24	Upper Herring Preserve Trail
June 30	Arcadia Dunes: Pete's Woods
July 7	Elberta Dunes Preserve Trail
July 14	Fruithaven Preserve Trail
July 21	Elberta Dunes Preserve Trail
July 28	Arcadia Dunes: Chestnut Trail

3860 N. Long Lake Rd., Ste. D

Traverse City, MI 49684

Tel: 231.929.7911

Web: www.gtrlc.org



Earth Week

Get to know your Conservancy!

Open House, Events & Trainings

Wednesday, April 21st (Come for any or all!)

8:30am - Hike & Breakfast at Pyatt Lake Nature Preserve with Glen Chown & Nate Crane

9:30am - Old Mission Peninsula Bike ride & Breakfast with Mike Okma

11am- 2pm Open House at University Center. Learn more about the work we do from our Land Protection, Stewardship and Fundraising Specialists, Volunteer Colleague Program and sign up for upcoming events and opportunities. All GTRLC staff will be on site!

1- 4pm Field Stewardship Trainings at Reffitt Preserve- including GIS training.

And at dusk, join Steve Lagerquist for his special Spring Peepers Hike.

Stewardship Activities at Arcadia Dunes

Saturday, April 24th 9am - 1pm

We need 150 friends to help with some great projects at Arcadia Dunes! Join us for tree planting, trail maintenance and historic dump clean-up or for the first ever Dune Restoration Bucket Brigade!

To help us plan this important day, please contact Lee Maynard at 231-929-7911 or lee@gtrlc.org to RSVP or for more information.

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