

# SPRING 2016 | VOL. 66 | GTRLC.ORG

Protecting Significant Natural, Scenic and Farm Lands, and Advancing Stewardship, Now and For All Future Generations





From left to right: William, Leonard, Martin, Becky and Glen Chown in California, 2015

Water is on everyone's minds these days. Access to fresh, clean water is a global problem that may be hard for some of us to fully appreciate, given northern Michigan's incredible abundance of high quality lakes and streams. But if we've learned nothing else from the sad and tragic events in Flint, it's that we should never take this resource for granted.

This important lesson was driven home to me last summer when our family traveled to California on vacation. While driving through the Central Valley during a record drought, I noticed a roadside farm market offering fresh sweet cherries. Our oldest son told the farmer we live on the Old Mission Peninsula in northern Michigan, and the man's voice became hushed and almost reverent at the mere mention of our home. He told us that we have the "best cherries on the planet," and remarked that we are truly blessed to have plenty of water. He explained that his region was running out of water, imperiling his very way of life.

After that encounter, I know for certain our sons will never look at Grand Traverse Bay with the same eyes.

This year, we celebrate our 25th anniversary. From day one, your Conservancy has made watershed protection a top priority. And while we have accomplished so much in every corner of our region, we don't plan to slow down now.

Our board knows that clean water is fundamental to our quality of life and the strength of our economy, and we've made accelerating our water quality protection efforts a top strategic goal going forward. We hope you, our loyal supporters, will help us protect the lands most crucial to the health of our watersheds and give the gift of clean water to future generations.

> Glen Chown, GTRLC Executive Director

Mr Chan



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**LONGTIME GTRLC VOLUNTEER PROVIDES CRITICAL SUPPORT** 

If something needs to be done, the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy can always count on Linda Forster to do it – and odds are she'll be smiling the whole time.

Linda has been a regular and dependable GTRLC volunteer for about three years. Her first contact with the conservancy came in 2012 when she attended an event at what is now the Timbers Recreation Area in Long Lake Township, and she decided shortly thereafter to start volunteering on a regular basis.

Although she sometimes helps outdoors, Linda spends most of her time at GTRLC helping around the office. As a retired secretary, she's very familiar with what it takes to keep an office running smoothly. Her many responsibilities include organizing documents, sending thank you letters, answering phones, assisting with accounts payable and much more.

"It's nice to feel like I'm being helpful in every way that I can," she said. "And these are things I'm well acquainted with."

She knows that her work in and around the office allows GTRLC staff to better focus on the conservancy's core mission.

"I have found that there are a lot of tasks that I can

do very easily, which frees up the staff to focus on their work," she said.

Linda works closely with Drew Broadway, GTRLC's administrative assistant, and the rest of the administration team.

"Without Linda I don't know how I would manage," Drew said. "I greatly appreciate everything she does."

GTRLC Executive Director Glen Chown is also grateful for Linda's continued service.

"The importance of Linda's work cannot be overstated," he said. "She gives us that extra layer of support to make sure we can continue to collectively do the best job we can when it comes to land protection."

Linda, a mother of three and grandmother of three, is proud to be a part of the GTRLC family. She's a lifelong outdoor enthusiast, so volunteering for an organization that works hard to preserve the region's natural beauty is a perfect fit.

"I've always loved hiking, I love the water, I love being out in nature, so this was very important to me to be able to do something like this." I just really believe in what the land conservancy is doing, and I'm so grateful to be a part of it."

# MILTON TOWNSHIP BEACH

A key land acquisition will allow people of all ages and abilities to access nature in Antrim County's Milton Township.

The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy is working closely with the township and helped it secure a \$491,000 Michigan Natural Resources

Trust Fund Grant to purchase the Water's Edge Resort. The roughly 0.65-acre property along Elk Lake in Kewadin was the final piece the township needed to create a waterfront park.

"We are absolutely thrilled," said Liz Atkinson, Milton Township Treasurer. "It's just going to be a fantastic opportunity for people to use the waterfront there, and there's just not enough access to water in the area."

Milton Township provided \$172,500 as a local match to the trust fund grant, and GTRLC is actively fundraising to gather the remaining \$102,000 needed for land acquisition costs and the demolition of several existing structures.

"We're close, but we're not there yet," GTRLC Executive Director Glen Chown said. "Donor support will be critical to get this to the finish line."

The township had already acquired parcels contiguous to the Water's Edge property, but needed this piece to tie it all together. Plans call for demolition of most of the old resort buildings and eventual development of a park with a wide variety of features and 380 total feet of shoreline.

"People are excited; they're happy," Atkinson said. "It's all very positive."

The township's goal is to create a barrier-free park that can be used by people of all ages and abilities. To that end, Rotary Charities of Traverse City provided



a \$30,000 grant for a universal access kayak launch. Other features – including restrooms, parking, a playground and more – will be designed with universal access in mind.

"We want to make it friendly for everybody," Atkinson said.

The fully-envisioned park may take a few years to materialize, township parks and recreation committee member Bob Kingon said, as officials plan to apply for additional grants. But the township plans to get the universal access kayak launch in operation yet this year, and GTRLC hopes to help manage deconstruction of most resort buildings as soon as possible, creating an open area along the water.

"That will be a nice public amenity just in itself," GTRLC Land Protection Specialist Todd Vigland said.

Township officials are thankful for GTRLC, which helped write the MNRTF grant application, negotiate with the property owners, raise matching funds for the grant and more. Since the landowners didn't want to wait for the sometimes lengthy MNTRF process, GTRLC also temporarily purchased the resort in anticipation of the grant and will soon transfer it to Milton Township.

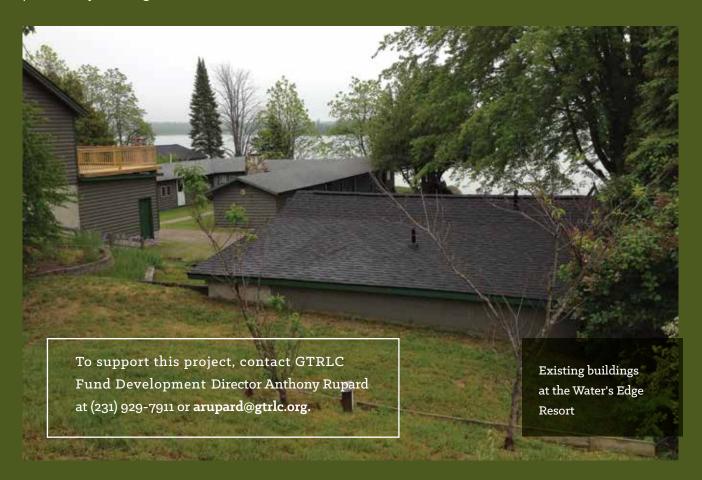
"I've just loved working with the Conservancy. It's a bunch of professional, kind-hearted people," Atkinson said. "To me they have just the perfect temperament. We are absolutely thrilled. It's just going to be a fantastic opportunity for people to use the waterfront there, and there's just not enough access to water in the area.

- Liz Atkinson, Milton Township Treasurer

It's just 'What do you want to do and how can we help?' It's been a great experience."

GTRLC has dozens of similar municipal assists under its belt, but Chown said this project is particularly exciting.

"We've always believed that helping communities with their goals of providing access to nature is an extremely important part of our work," he said. "This park will certainly be enjoyed by local citizens for generations to come."



The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) turns 40 in 2016. The Trust Fund uses money collected from the sale and lease of state-owned mineral rights to help communities acquire and develop lands for public recreation. GTRLC has worked extensively with local units of government on 46 MNRTF projects:

- 10,558 acres protected
- 30.1 miles of shoreline on rivers, lakes and streams
- \$55,521,652 in MNRTF grants
- Leveraging \$18,048,830 in local matches



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GTRLC Land Stewardship Specialist

without them.

Steve Lagerquist,

Steve Lagerquist's face still lights up when he thinks back on the "Bucket Brigade."

Steve, a Land Stewardship Specialist with GTRLC, fondly recalls the two days in 2010 when dozens of volunteers converged at Arcadia Dunes: The C.S. Mott Nature Preserve to tackle a significant erosion

problem at Old Baldy, the preserve's beloved centerpiece.

Standing side by side, roughly 70 volunteers from throughout the community passed buckets of sand up the south entrance hill to Old Baldy to remediate years of erosion from people climbing up the slope.

When the project was complete – Steve estimates a whopping

10 cubic yards of sand were moved between the two work days — a set of cable suspension stairs were installed to substantially reduce future erosion issues. The work was tremendously important from an ecological perspective, and Steve remains grateful to the people who took the time to help.

"It was just so neat to see so many people rise to the occasion and help us with that project," he said. "We absolutely couldn't have done it without them."

Every year, volunteers play a crucial role in GTRLC's stewardship efforts. The stewardship team, responsible for 34

preserves and several other protected properties spread across five counties, is glad to have the help.

Volunteers help in many, many ways.
Aside from the actual hard labor involved in trail building, maintenance and other matters, they also provide invaluable assistance in invasive species monitoring and removal, hazard

identification, habitat improvement and much more. Each preserve has a designated volunteer preserve steward that serves as a main point of contact for the stewardship team.

"Perhaps the most important thing volunteers do is to keep their eyes peeled on their regular visits to GTRLC preserves," Stewardship Director David Foote said. "The biggest benefit is their ongoing presence at a site to quickly identify issues that arise."

Volunteers regularly report downed trees, trail issues and other problems directly to GTRLC staffers, prompting quick response. Beginning in 2015, GTRLC started an online system that allows volunteers to easily notify conservancy staff of issues.

"Thanks to this reporting system, we can get the location and can go out and fix problems much more quickly," David said.

A timely response can make a huge difference when it comes to invasive species, some of which spread very, very rapidly. Invasive species monitoring and removal is an extremely important aspect of GTRLC's work, as such species can permanently alter the ecology of an area if left unchecked.

"Volunteers often notice invasive plant species that we need to identify early before the problem gets away from us," David said. "Something like baby's breath, if it gets to seed one time, it goes everywhere."

Volunteer Preserve Steward Paula Dreeszen has mapped garlic mustard at Arcadia Dunes for several seasons, allowing staff and volunteers to quickly and effectively remove the plants. And Thom Yocum, another longtime volunteer Preserve Steward, has been very active at his home preserve of Wilcox-Palmer-Shah near Elk Rapids.

"Tom single-handedly eradicated the spotted knapweed from the beach," David said.

In addition to situations in which the Conservancy puts out the call to volunteers to tackle a specific project, businesses and organizations throughout the region also frequently contact us for group volunteer opportunities. Stewardship staff looks at its goals for the year and determines a viable, previously-identified project that will simultaneously advance the Conservancy's mission and provide meaningful work for the volunteers.

"We will never create 'make-work' projects," Volunteer Program Specialist Nate Richardson said. "Nobody wins in those situations."

#### **VOLUNTEER Q&A**

Q: Where can I find out about volunteer opportunities?

A: All volunteer work days are listed on GTRLC's events calendar (www.gtrlc.org/events). You can also fill out a volunteer request form (found under the Volunteer tab on our website) to receive an e-newsletter that includes upcoming opportunities.

#### Q: What kind of volunteer opportunities are there?

A: Typical volunteer work is outdoors, caring for GTRLCprotected lands. Tasks include trail building, invasive species removal, seed collection, seedling planting and much more. Some of the work can be physically demanding, but all fitness levels are welcome and appreciated. Non-field work opportunities are also occasionally available. Volunteers are always encouraged to call with questions about the nature of the work.

Q: Do I get to pick where I work or what I do?

**A:** Most people choose to volunteer at a property close to them. though all opportunities throughout the region are open to everyone. Some folks choose to participate in group work days, while others choose to do independent preserve monitoring and report observations back to the conservancy. Scheduled volunteer workdays are determined by our stewardship staff based on current needs and the best management of our land, but people with ideas outside of those opportunities should feel free to contact us.

Q: How often do I volunteer?

A: It's up to you! Some of our volunteers help out one day a year, others contribute hundreds of hours.

No matter what, please feel good about whatever you are able to do - it all helps!

To learn more about volunteer opportunities, contact Nate Richardson at (231) 929-7911. Volunteer events are also listed on our website at www.gtlrc.org/events.



These large groups of volunteers whether from a business or drawn from the community at large - help the stewardship staff tackle major projects that require more manpower. Several of these projects are identified each year and accomplished through volunteer work days.

"There's a lot that we do ourselves, but having volunteers really allows us to bite off these bigger chunks," Steve said. "We just won't pull the trigger on some of those bigger projects without them."

Stewardship staff makes every effort to educate volunteers as they work, which improves the volunteer experience and allows for word of the Conservancy's positive impact to spread. "When they're

engaging in our work, if they understand what we're doing – and why – it becomes more meaningful and also allows them to be ambassadors for us in the community" David said.

Steve, who oversees plenty of trail building and maintenance projects, said he enjoys teaching his volunteers about the significance of the protected property on which they're working. That way, he knows, a trail build project is even more enjoyable. "They get to feel great because they made something that actually allows people to get out and see these special places," he said.

Susan Sheldon, a Senior Vice President at Chemical Bank in Traverse City, has brought a group of Chemical Bank

volunteers out to help build trails on multiple occasions.

"I knew volunteers would flock to GTRLC because they are a well-respected organization and are well known and supported in our community," she said. "Further, since our positions at Chemical Bank keep us inside, we all welcome the chance to get out and enjoy fresh air and inspiring sights."

The Chemical team was surprised to find out how much work went into building a trail, Susan said, but had plenty of fun while working.

"The staff from GTRLC was patient in providing instruction and insight into what we would accomplish and how others would enjoy what we would create." Susan said. "We learned our efforts were appreciated and would be long-lasting. We were all encouraged to go back to the site and enjoy it for years to come!"

David and Steve are both impressed by and thankful for the scores of volunteers who share GTRLC's work each year.

"They recognize that these are their resources, these are their landscapes." David said. "Their commitment to help certainly shows that they care about them and about keeping the Grand Traverse region one of the most beautiful in the world."



## Land Champions Program Allows Interlochen Couple to Make Monthly Gifts

When she was younger, Rita Melotti knew she needed more room to roam.

Growing up in the Detroit suburb of Dearborn, Rita felt caged in. Constricted. Stifled. She made use of parks scattered here and there, but she knew she wasn't made to live the city life forever.

"I remember building after building, looking out our backyard and seeing home after home," she said. "I thought: 'Someday, I want to look at nature out my back window.""

Rita and her husband, Andrew "Rudy" Bishop, now live the dream at their home near Interlochen. Their back door looks over an open field with a forest in the distance, and they make use of wonderful hiking opportunities that start the second they step off their property.

"The peacefulness, the smells, the sounds, all of that combined, I can't even begin to explain what nature does to the inner soul and the body," Rita said. "It's a reinvigorating experience."

Since not a day goes by that Rita and Rudy don't feel thankful to live in such a beautiful area, they're a perfect fit for the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy's Land Champion program. Land Champions support critical, dayto-day operations by making regular monthly gifts.

Rita and Rudy had given to GTRLC for several years before signing on as Land Champions in July 2013. It was the first organization they decided to give to on a monthly basis, and they feel great about their decision.

# **GIVING FOR** THE FUTURE

"When I look at the fact that we work very hard for our money, and that we have to budget, I thought: What would I feel very good in my life about giving to?" Rita said. "When we committed to this, it felt so good knowing our money was going to preserve and protect those lands I fell in love with."

Rudy works in sales at Hagerty Insurance Agency. Rita has a long history in TV and radio in Northern Michigan.

Rudy & Rita Melotti,

including hosting the Good Morning Michigan show on TV 29&8 in the 1990s. They met at

**GTRLC Land Champions** Northwestern Michigan College in 1981 after both had moved up from downstate.

Rita's first taste of nature during her urban upbringing was on regular trips to Girl Scout camps, where horseback riding, camping and other outdoor activities got her in tune with the outdoors.

"I knew, at that point, I just had to have more nature. I knew the city wasn't right for me," she said. "Once I got my first taste of camping, I was all over it."

She also worked in a youth conservation group that built a nature trail in a park near her home – a project that instilled in her a sense of how important it is to pass on a love of the land.

"At the end of the day, I remember feeling so good knowing that future generations would be able to use that to connect with nature," she said.

Rita and Rudy first were inspired by the Conservancy during the sweeping Coastal Campaign, which resulted in the protection of more than 6,000 acres in what is now Arcadia Dunes: The C.S. Mott Preserve, Green Point Dunes and an extension of the Betsie Dunes Nature Preserve.

Arcadia alone was set to become an exclusive community with a golf course surrounded by more than 200 homes - something that deeply troubled the couple.

"I thought, oh dear, they've got to preserve it," Rita said. "They've got to fight this battle and they've got to win this one, it's critical."

They went on to learn about all of the other land protection

the Conservancy has accomplished, inspiring them to become donors.

"As I looked at different articles seeing the lands you've protected and the relationships you've garnered, it just blew my mind over the years."

Rita and Rudy are big fans of GTRLC's regular publications, which highlight preservation efforts, donors, volunteers and much more.

"This is when I know my money is going to a good cause," Rita said, holding a recent Landscript. "It's all about accountability, and you've proved so often over the years that this is an organization I can feel so good about supporting."

Rudy also loves that his money is staying local – and helping keep the areas he loves stay as beautiful as possible.

"You guys are here. This is where we live," he said. "This is our piece of God's country."

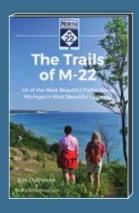
The couple recently upped their monthly donation in response to a challenge from The Carls Foundation, which offered to double annual donations of those donors who increased their gift.

"When I can see that my money is going to double, well Hello! Why in the heck wouldn't you donate?" Rita said. "If my 30 turns into 60, or my 60 turns into 120, it's just a great, great thing."

Rita and Rudy are well aware that GTRLC's work will be increasingly important as development pressure ramps up in the region.

"We knew moons ago what a special area this was," Rita said. "But now the population is really starting to grow, the building is happening more, the traffic is worse ... it scares you."

"Support from Land Champions like Rita and Rudy is absolutely critical to Conservancy operations," Executive Director Glen Chown said. "We are very grateful for and humbled by people who help us accomplish our mission by providing monthly gifts."



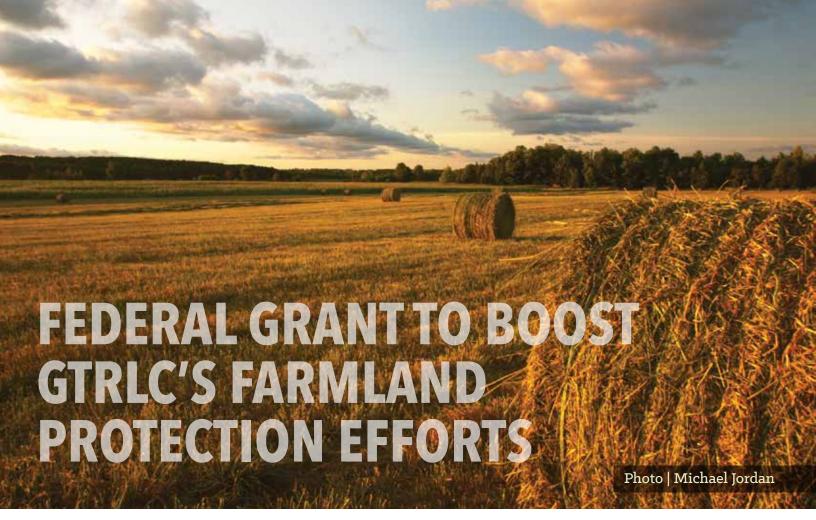
# New Guidebook Focuses on the Trails Along M-22

The Grand Traverse Regional Land
Conservancy has teamed up with the Leelanau
Conservancy and MichiganTrailMaps.com to
produce a new guidebook; The Trails of M-22.

The full-color, 192-page book focuses on 40 of the most beautiful trails that are accessed from the scenic M-22 corridor, which serves as the gateway to more than two-dozen preserves protected by the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy in Manistee and Benzie Counties and the Leelanau Conservancy in Leelanau County.

The Trails of M-22 was written by Jim
DuFresne, one of the best known outdoor
writers in the Midwest and author of more
than 20 books including Isle Royale National
Park: Foot Trails & Water Routes and 50
Hikes in Michigan. Along with outstanding
photography, the guidebook features more
than 40 trail maps with larger, more detailed
versions available from MichiganTrailMaps.
com (www.michigantrailmaps.com) which can
be downloaded to smart phones and tablets or
as PDF files to be printed later.

The Trails of M-22 is \$19.95 and is available on our website: **www.gtrlc.org.** 



The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy is part of a group that received nearly \$8 million in federal funding for critical water and land conservation efforts throughout northwest Michigan.

The unique partnership, called the Tribal Stream and Michigan Fruitbelt Collaborative, includes GTRLC, the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, the Leelanau Conservancy and the Conservation Resource Alliance. It was formed to protect water quality, safeguard farming and improve wildlife habitat in the Grand Traverse Bay watershed.

In February, U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow announced the \$7.9 million grant through the 2014 Farm Bill's Regional Conservation Partnership Program. The grant will be paid out over five years, and the collaborative will raise an additional \$8 million in matching private funding during the same time period.

Roughly \$2.8 million of the federal allotment will be used to protect farmland within GTRLC's service area, particularly the high-value crops along the fruit belt that starts in Acme Township and stretches north along the bay into Antrim County. Not only are these crops tremendously important for the local economy, but the farms on which they're grown actively help protect the quality of water that flows into the bay.

"If you look at the hydrology of a natural forest system and the hydrology of an orchard, it's similar," said Matt McDonough, GTRLC Director of Land Protection. "This type of agriculture helps preserve water quality, so preserving that kind of agriculture is very important."

The topography and composition of these farms also lends itself to water protection.

"Most of the farms are not just agriculture, but there are woodlands, creeks, lowlands, all sorts of buffers," GTRLC Executive Director Glen Chown said. "A well-managed fruit farm has almost the same water quality benefits as a forest."

In addition to GTLRC's efforts, the Conservation Resource Alliance will work to improve dozens of places where roads cross streams and assist with the removal of small, privately owned dams and the Leelanau Conservancy will protect critical farmland in that county. The Grand Traverse Band will, among other things, focus on restoration of critical areas where roads cross streams.

# Celebrating Land Lovers From Throughout Our Community

This year, as part of the Grand
Traverse Regional Land
Conservancy's 25 anniversary, we
are excited to feature a special
series celebrating Land Lovers from
throughout our community.

This year-long series of postcards showcases a group of people whose passion and purpose sets an example in their communities and inspires others to support efforts to protect the places we all love.

Though these people come from different places and backgrounds, they all share a deep love for our land and how important it is to protect it — now and for future generations.

Watch for Land Lovers in your mailbox, on Facebook and on our website: www.gtrlc.org.





Land Lovers photography by Andy Wakeman

"This gives each of us money to do what we're already really good at," McDonough said.

McDonough said a large portion of GTRLC's grant allotment will be used to bolster existing purchase of development rights (PDR) programs in Acme and possibly Peninsula Township. In each program, voters approved millages that generate income for the township to purchase farmers' development rights, protecting farms from development. Existing funds in each of these programs can be used as a local match for the RCPP dollars.

"We'll be able to stretch those local dollars so much farther," he said. "This will help those programs have a much more significant impact in terms of protecting land in those agricultural preservation zones."

Money not sent to those programs will be used to secure conservation easements on critical pieces of farmland within the watershed.

Chown is thrilled that the federal government as well as the Grand Traverse Band are recognizing and appreciating the link between farmland protection and water quality.

"This recognizes that our work on the nexus of farmland preservation and water quality protection and improvement could be a national model," he said.



Photo | Kathy Partin

Our Spring events feature a wonderful set of opportunities to get outdoors, learn about some fantastic GTRLC preserves and celebrate our 25th anniversary!

In addition to our own exciting events, some of our outings this season are in partnership with The Benzie Audubon Club and Green Elk Rapids. The Audubon Club promotes an appreciation for and a better understanding of the plants and animals in Northern Michigan, and Green Elk Rapids is a volunteer community group that works to raise awareness of an appreciation for environmental issues in our region. We're delighted to work with both groups.

To see a full list of events, or to RSVP for an event, visit www.gtrlc.org/events.

#### Trail Clean-up | 10 a.m. April 15, Arcadia Dunes

Join GTRLC to help tidy up the coastal preserves trails. After a brief training the group will split up to cover as many miles of trail as possible. Bring a hand saw and lopper style pruners if you have them. GTRLC will also provide tools. Please dress for the weather, wear comfortable shoes and bring water. Light refreshments will be provided. Meet at the St. Pierre parking area.

# Spring Bird Hike | 8 a.m. April 16, Arcadia

Join the Benzie Audubon Club for its always popular spring birding outing in the Arcadia area. The club is expected to visit a few GTRLC preserves to see waterfowl and spring migrants. Meet at Arcadia Beach at the west end of Lake Street in Arcadia. Those with questions can contact Doug Cook at (231) 871-0503.

# Trails of M-22 Book Release Party | 1 p.m. April 16, Stormcloud Brewing Company, Frankfort

Join GTRLC and www.michigantrailmaps.com founder and established author Jim Dufresne for the release of *The Trails of M-22*. Along with outstanding photography, the guidebook features more than 40 trail maps. (see story on page 9)

#### Nature Hike | 1 p.m. April 28, George & Ada Reffitt Nature Preserve

The George and Ada Reffiitt
Nature Preserve is bursting with
things to see in the Spring! Join
GTRLC Land Steward Chris
Garrock for a hike at his
ecologically diverse preserve that's
right in the heart of town. Wear
comfortable shoes and dress for
the weather!

#### Wildflower Hikes | 10 a.m. May 3 & May 10, Pete's Woods/ Arcadia Dunes

Preserve Steward Paula Dreeszen will lead her annual wildflower hikes in the beautiful Pete's Woods area of Arcadia Dunes: The C.S. Mott Nature Preserve. Pete's Woods is known for its incredible display of spring ephemeral wildflowers. Meet at the Swamp Road parking lot south of Joyfield Road. The hike will be about 1.5 miles long. Dress for the weather and wear comfortable shoes!



#### Richard Louv | 6:30 p.m. May 4 in Elk Rapids, 6:30 p.m. May 5 in Traverse City

Green ER will host journalist and author Richard Louv for presentations in Elk Rapids (Peterman Auditorium) on May 4 and Traverse City (Hagerty Center) on May 5. Louv is the author of eight books about the connections between family, nature and community. Details and ticket information are available at www.greenelkrapids.org.



#### Nature Hike | 5:30 p.m. May 20, Maple Bay

Join Green ER for a hike with local botanist Angie Lucas of GTRLC at the Maple Bay Natural Area. This spectacular protected habitat is home to many unique plant species, including Lake Huron Tansy and Pitcher's Thistle. Learn about ongoing stewardship efforts to protect these threatened endemic Great Lakes plant species, and along the way hike leaders will show how to identify some of the native spring plants that may be in bloom along the beach or in the forested dune and swale habitat.

#### Spring Bird Hike | 8 a.m. May 20, Arcadia

GTRLC Preserve Steward Paula Dreeszen will wear her Benzie Audubon Club hat as she tells guests about the wonderful warblers that visit Arcadia this time of year. Meet at Arcadia Beach at the west end of Lake Street in Arcadia.

#### Botanical Hike | 3:30 p.m. May 21, Pete's Woods

GTRLC Preserve Steward Angie Lucas, a member of the Great Lakes Chapter of the Michigan Botanical Club, will lead a hike at Pete's Woods in Arcadia Dunes. For those interested, Leelanau Conservancy staff will hold a hike at Palmer Woods at 1 p.m. the same day, also in partnership with the botanical club.



#### Hidden Gems | 7 p.m. May 26, Rare Bird Brewpub in Traverse City

Many people have lived in the Grand Traverse area for years without seeing some of the region's most spectacular natural gems. Meet GTRLC communications specialists Art Bukowski and Nate Richardson at Rare Bird Brewpub for a brief overview of some GTRLC natural areas you just can't miss! Guests will leave with directions and information about the preserves, which they can visit on their own.

#### Garlic Mustard Pull | 10 a.m. May 26, Meet in Elberta

Garlic mustard is one of the most problematic invasive species in our region. Join GTRLC Land Stewardship Specialist Jon Troop to learn about this pesky plant and - more importantly - help remove it from the Elisabeth Parr Nature Preserve. Wear comfortable shoes, dress for the weather and bring gardening gloves if desired. Insect repellent and a sack lunch are recommended. Meet at Elberta waterfront park.

Together, we've accomplished so much in our first 25 years. Some of our region's most special places are now protected *forever* – a promise that requires ongoing work.

Our land stewards strive to restore and improve the ecologic health of every property we care for, all while creating the most thoughtful and sustainable opportunities for access to and enjoyment of our natural environment.

Just as we couldn't have protected more than 39,000 acres of natural, scenic and farm lands without the generous support of donors who believe in our mission, our promise to provide the best possible care for the lands we all love also relies on those who help fund the need.

Thanks to the forward thinking of supporters, GTRLC has more than \$11 million invested in a variety of long-term funds. Functioning like endowment funds, the principal of these long-term funds remains intact, and only a portion of the investment earnings is expended annually, subject to Board-mandated spending policies that are geared toward growth and sustainability. We are thankful to have this investment and we are also aware that the need for additional funding will grow as we continue to protect more critical lands.

Planned gifts as part of estate planning and gifts directly to our stewardship endowment ensure that the places we care for are beautiful and healthy now – and perhaps even more so for the many generations that come after us.

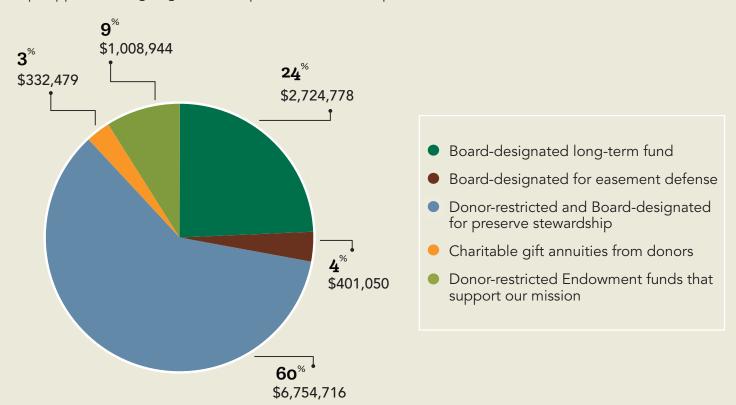
Please consider a gift to strengthen our stewardship endowment. After all, forever is a long time.

Glen Chown, GTRLC Executive Director

4. Chon

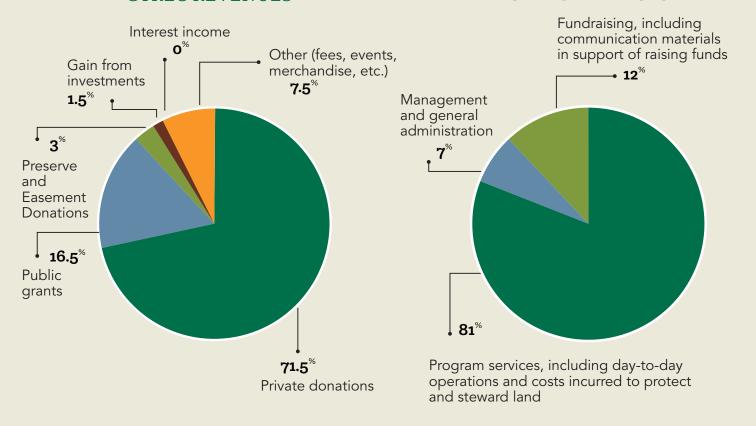
#### GTRLC LONG-TERM & ENDOWMENT FUNDS

GTRLC holds over \$11 million in long-term and endowment funds. Some of the funds are donor-restricted and help support the ongoing stewardship of easements and preserves.



#### GTRLC REVENUES

#### GTRLC EXPENSES



#### GTRLC Consolidated Statement of Activities for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2015

|                                                                                                  | LINIDECTRICTED | TEMPORARILY  | PERMANENTLY | TOTAL        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| REVENUE & SUPPORT                                                                                | UNRESTRICTED   | RESTRICTED   | RESTRICTED  | TOTAL        |
| Private Donations                                                                                | \$ 1,424,258   | \$ 2,005,882 | \$ 50,268   | \$ 3,480,408 |
| Public Grants                                                                                    | 14,893         | 788,286      | •           | 803,179      |
| Preserve and Easement Donations                                                                  |                | 144,400      |             | 144,400      |
| Gain From Investments                                                                            | 18,893         | 54,473       |             | 73,366       |
| Interest Income                                                                                  | 1,477          | 83           |             | 1,560        |
| Other (fees, events, merchandise, etc.)                                                          | 41,209         | 326,028      |             | 367,237      |
| Net Assets Released from Restriction:                                                            | 2,921,153      | (2,921,153)  |             |              |
| Liens Released on Nature Preserves                                                               |                | (264,604)    | 264,604     |              |
| Total Revenue & Support                                                                          | 4,421,883      | 133,395      | 314,872     | 4,870,150    |
| EXPENSES                                                                                         |                |              |             |              |
| Program Services, including day-to-day operations and costs incurred to protect and steward land | 4,054,532      |              |             | 4,054,532    |
| Management and General Administration                                                            | 344,654        | <del></del>  | <del></del> | 344,654      |
| Fundraising, including communication materials in support of raising funds                       | 589,695        | <del></del>  |             | 589,695      |
| Total Expenses                                                                                   | 4,988,881      |              |             | 4,988,881    |
| CHANGES IN NET ASSETS                                                                            | (566,998)      | 133,395      | 314,872     | (118,731)    |
| NET ASSETS, Beginning of Year                                                                    | 5,109,689      | 13,504,510   | 17,893,782  | 36,507,981   |
| NET ASSETS, End of Year                                                                          | \$ 4,542,691   | 13,637,905   | 18,208,654  | 36,389,250   |

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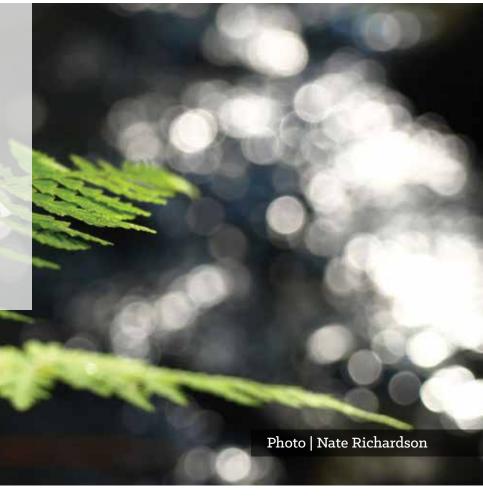
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The Conservancy is either a direct recipient or sub-awardee of grant funding from the following state and federal programs and partner organizations.



By making plans to benefit the Conservancy with future gifts—accomplished through estates, trusts, annuities, insurance policies, beneficiary designations, and other planned giving options—Vanguard Society members will continue to make a difference for land conservation far into the future, helping to ensure that the places we save today will be protected and cared for, forever.

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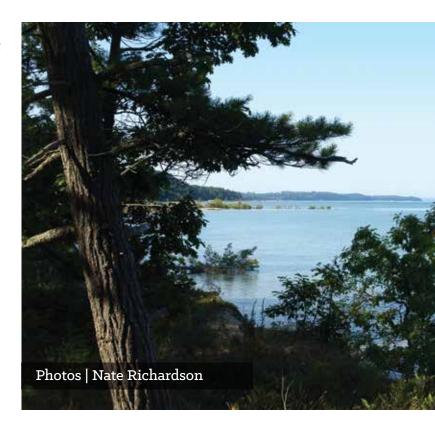
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If you would like to learn more about how you can make an impact as a Land Champion, contact Marissa Garrock at 231-929-7911.







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The following donors made gifts and/or pledge payments to one or more of the projects and activities on the following pages between January 1 and December 31, 2015. We extend our heartfelt gratitude for their support.

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#### PRIVATE LAND PROTECTION

While the parks and nature preserves we protect are open to and enjoyed by the public, 18,729 acres of the land which we have permanently protected are private properties whose owners have generously granted conservation easements. We monitor these properties annually, often hand-in-hand with the land owners, to answer questions, and to ensure that conservation values—the health and wealth of these precious lands—are maintained forever. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the following land owners for their support.

| answer questions, and to<br>maintained forever. <b>We e</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|
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| Marilyn & Roland Andreasson                                 |
| Baillio Company                                             |
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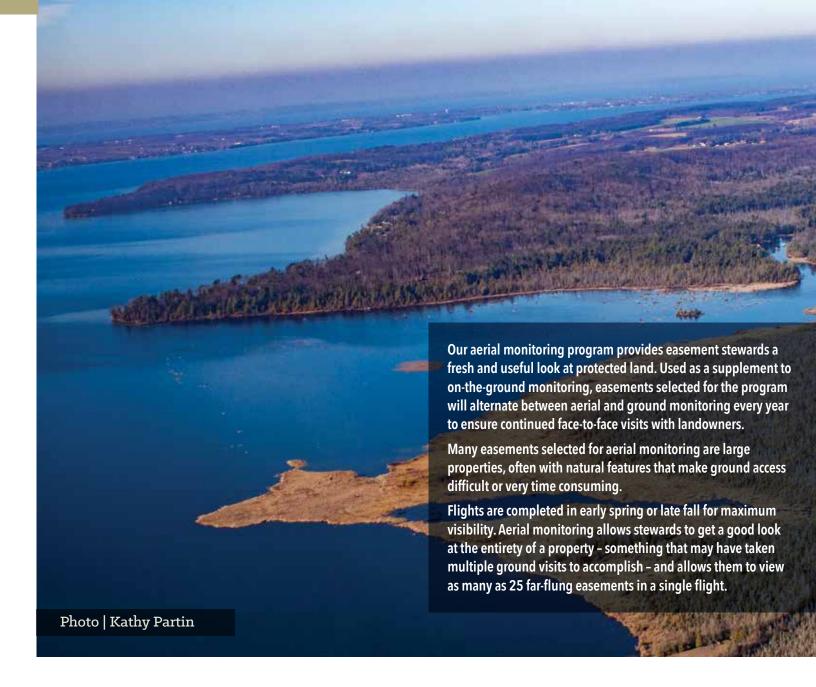
T. Grace Macdonald Susie Mackay Bob & Kris Mampe Robert & Lois Manigold Francia Mann Dirk & Mary Martin William & Ioan McCool McGuire Real Estate Company LLC Melinda Wagner 2014 Revocable Living Trust Robert & Joni Metiva Amy & Dan Meyer Jean Meyer Philip & Connie Micklin Kellv & Debra Miller Philip Miner Susan Montei Betty Jean Murray Neahtawanta Resort Association Steve & Kathleen Newman Scott Nugent Wendy O'Brien Leobardo & Carmelita Ocanas OCS Watervale Ltd. John O'Hair OHK-SEK Peter Ohrnberger Brad Oleson The Oleson Foundation DI & Lisa Oleson Dustin & Kim Ordway Ella Cooper-Froehlich Paradise Township Paul Pelica James Petrie The Philip E. Miner Revocable Trust James & Anne Porritt Steve Pray

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Shelby Ziegler

WATERSHED ENCOMPASSES

500

SQUARE MILES OF LAND LAKE MICHIEAN

GRAND TRAVERSE BAY

9,169

ACRES OF LAND IN THE WATERSHED PROTECTED BY GTRLC SO FAR

EAST ARM GRAND TRAVERSE BAY

WEST ARM GRAND TRAVERSE BAY

CELK RIFLS

THAVERSE CITY



TRAVERSE CITY'S DRINKING WATER COMES FROM EAST GRAND TRAVERSE BAY

REGIONAL

land

# CHAIN OF LAKES WATERSHED

INTERCONNECTED LAKES & RIVERS

Beals Lake Scotts Lake Six Mile Lake St. Clair Lake Ellsworth Lake Wilson Lake Ben-Way Lake Hanley Lake Intermediate Lake Lake Bellaire Clam Lake Lake Skegemog Elk Lake Torch Lake

55 MILES OF INTERCONNECTED LAKES & RIVERS

200

STREAMS FEED THIS CHAIN

180 BILLION

GALLONS OF WATER PER YEAR FLOW INTO GT BAY AT ELK RAPIDS PERMANENTLY PROTECTING LANDS
FOR WATER QUALITY PURPOSES
MITIGATES SEDIMENT AND NUTRIENT
FLOWS INTO WATER USED FOR
DRINKING AND RECREATION. THE
GRAND TRAVERSE REGIONAL LAND
CONSERVANCY CONTINUES TO
PRIORITIZE THE PROTECTION OF THE
CHAIN OF LAKES AND OTHER VITAL
WATERSHEDS IN OUR REGION.

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