

SUMMER 2017 Volume 68

landscript



Love the land. *Pass it on.*

Proposed Preserve on
Upper Manistee

Expansive
Protection Map

Farms and Farming

PHOTO BY NOAH JURIK/
STONE HUT STUDIOS

*Proposed Upper Manistee
Headwaters Preserve*

Protecting significant natural, scenic and farm lands, and advancing stewardship - now and for all future generations.

A LETTER FROM GLEN CHOWN

Dear Friends: Increased development pressure has meant that the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy has had to respond more quickly to more threats than ever in our 26-year history.

We recently stepped in to save a 160-acre piece of land that is tremendously important from a recreational standpoint (see story on this page). Only a few short weeks after we learned Grand Traverse County planned to sell the parcel, we made a formal offer to acquire the property as part of the Pere Marquette State Forest. Thanks to an outpouring of support from hundreds within the bicycle racing and recreational communities, the county accepted. Had we not been able to move quickly, a critical public corridor used by two popular mountain bike races and countless cyclists, skiers and hikers may have been lost forever.

We faced a similar situation when the Boy Scouts gave us a limited time to close on the former Camp Tapico in Kalkaska County (see story on page 6). Fortunately, Conservancy supporters Richard and Diana Milock offered us a three-year, interest-free loan, and we received a substantial lead gift from another longtime ally: The J.A. Woollam Foundation. This support literally “buys us time” to raise the money needed to permanently protect this spectacular property and make it accessible to the public.

The things we treasure about the Grand Traverse region are no longer a secret. And while it would be nice if we could dictate the pace of our land protection projects, we simply do not have that luxury.

Our visionary board of directors has placed a premium on our ability to act quickly, and our dedicated staff is prepared to tackle the challenges ahead. But we won't be able to say “yes” to every project that meets our land protection criteria without the increased support from committed donors that enable us to respond when critical parcels of land become available.

Read on to learn about our latest efforts to save important land throughout our region. Thank you for your support!



Glen Chown, GTRLC Executive Director

GTRLC Saves Sand Lakes Parcel

A 160-acre parcel of vital recreation land will be protected forever after quick action by the Conservancy.

The parcel, situated in Grand Traverse County's Whitewater Township, is surrounded on all sides by the Pere Marquette State Forest. It contains a section of the Traverse City to Kalkaska Trail and has been used for nearly 30 years by the tremendously popular Iceman Cometh Challenge mountain bike race. In addition, the parcel is also used for the Mud, Sweat and Beers mountain bike race and serves as the main access point for Bullhead Lake.

Grand Traverse County owned the land since 1977, but decided to sell it this year as part of a plan to alleviate pension debt. The parcel had been on GTRLC's land protection radar for years, and when it was listed for sale in late May, GTRLC sprang into action and had a purchase offer to the county within a matter of days.

The Conservancy's \$255,000 offer was not the highest bid the county received, but an outpouring of support convinced commissioners to accept the offer over competing offers of \$352,000 and \$266,000. GTRLC plans to transfer the land to the state of Michigan within the next few years.

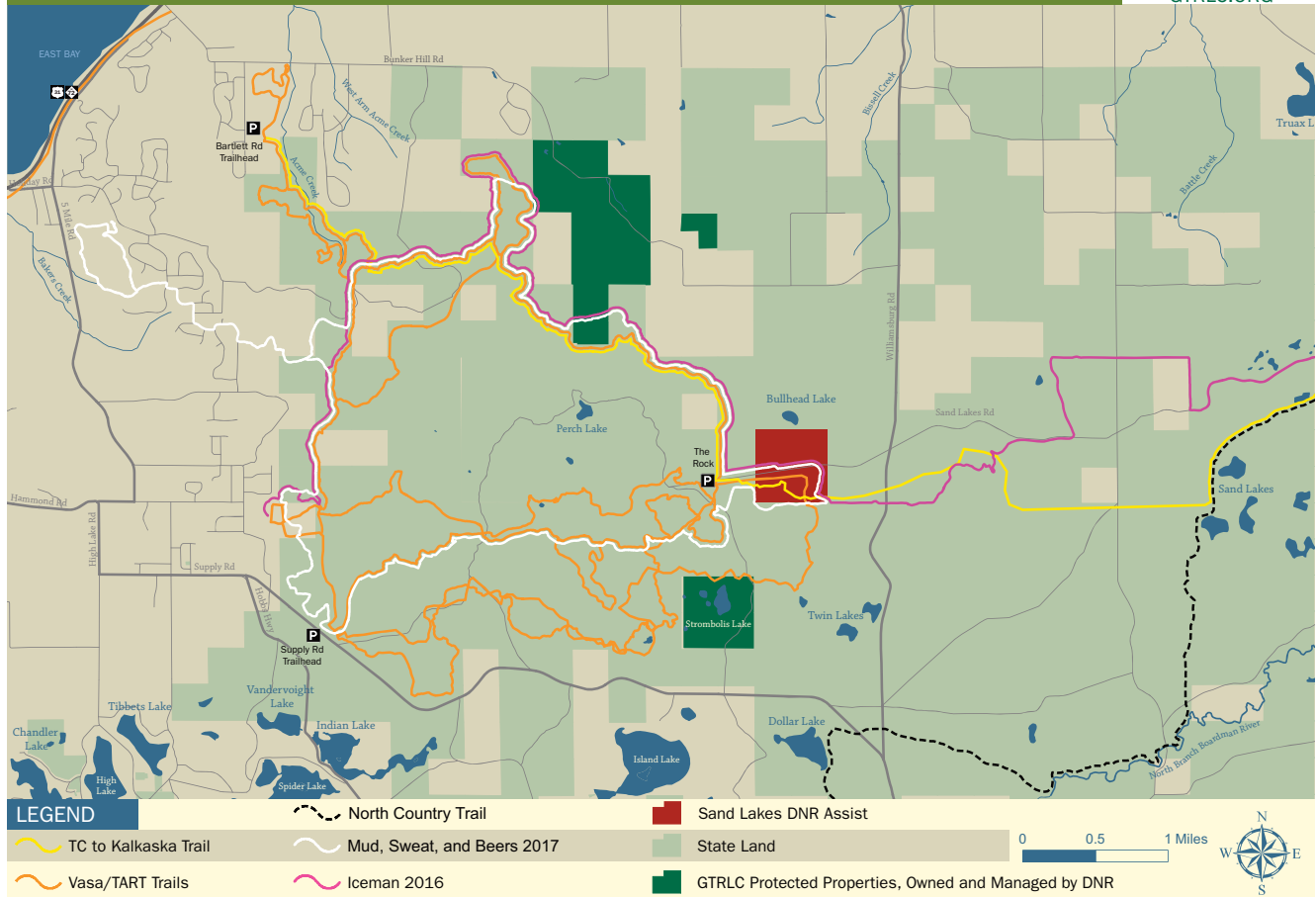
Iceman founder Steve Brown said he believes the Conservancy's track record of success was important to commissioners, as was its ability to

SAND LAKES DNR ASSIST



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

GTRLC.ORG



quickly make an offer. He also greatly appreciated GTRLC Executive Director Glen Chown’s speech to commissioners in front of a packed meeting room.

“Glen’s leadership really proved to be instrumental here,” Brown said. “I don’t think the county had really thought of it as a recreational piece or how it fit into the state forest.”

This is the second time in recent years that GTRLC stepped up and preserved trail access in that area. In 2010, GTRLC helped secure a key piece of land near Kalkaska – dubbed the “Kalkaska Connector” – that created a permanent public corridor for motorized and non-motorized trail users alike and preserved a key link for trail users traveling between Traverse City and Kalkaska.

Brown, while glad to see the route for Iceman preserved, is far more excited about the parcel being protected in perpetuity.

“To me personally, it wasn’t really about the route of the Iceman course nearly as much as it was about preserving that piece of property as an integral part of the Pere Marquette State Forest,” he said. “This is for the generations yet to come.”

Brown’s Iceman organization has made a generous challenge grant in which it will match every donation dollar for dollar, up to \$20,000.

“We’re excited to have played a role in protecting land that is so important for recreation,” Chown said. “This is a perfect example of our need to be able to act fast to protect the places that people love.”

“It doesn’t get much better than this.”

MALONE FAMILY’S LOVE OF THE REGION SPANS GENERATIONS

As with so many others before him, it wasn’t hard for Terry Malone to fall in love with Torch Lake.

Terry was fortunate enough to marry into a connection with Michigan’s longest inland lake when he wed his wife, Sally, in 1955. She and her family had regularly vacationed there ever since her father built a cottage along the shores of Torch Lake in 1933, and she was eager to show him her northern paradise.

Terry, who was raised in Boston and Chicago, got his first glimpse of what would become one of his greatest passions on a trip up north not long after his wedding.

“The first time I saw Torch Lake I remember thinking it looked like the Caribbean – that wonderful turquoise color with these beautiful rolling hills around it, largely wooded and very rural,” Terry said this year. “It was a very quiet, peaceful setting, and it didn’t take me long to fall in love with it.”

So began a multi-generational connection with Torch – and the greater Grand Traverse region – for Terry and his family. Based in Wisconsin while Terry worked as an executive for S.C. Johnson, Sally and the couple’s three children – Denny, Kevin and Kathy – summered at the Torch cottage, with Terry traveling up nearly every weekend.

“We’d come here pretty much the day after school got out and we’d come home the day before school started,” Denny said. “We spent our entire summers up here, and it was just great.”

Denny moved here right after graduating college. He met Deb, a Bellaire native, while working at Schuss Mountain, and they settled on Old Mission Peninsula. Kevin and Kathy also moved to Traverse City, and Terry and Sally moved to Torch full time after Terry retired in 1995.

Denny came to love Old Mission in the same way Terry became connected to Torch Lake.

“Deb and I have been really fortunate to be able to travel a lot, and we like to bike. We’ve been biking in Italy, we’ve been biking out in California in wine county, in Costa Rica, but inevitably we come back and go for a ride on Old Mission Peninsula, and we realize it doesn’t get much better than this,” Denny said. “It’s a really special place – really unique.”

Terry and Denny are both regular donors to the Conservancy because they feel strongly about GTRLC’s mission.

“This area is going to continue to be developed, and I’m not opposed to that - I think it’s important from the standpoint of offering jobs and economic growth,” Terry said. “But we also need to have that development not be random or excessive, because we need to preserve the rural character and natural beauty of the area, which is the biggest attraction.

“I think the Conservancy is very important in helping us achieve that balance,” Terry continued. “Where there are areas that need to be protected, we really ought to do it. Because if we don’t take very good care of the assets we have – the land, the lakes, the natural beauty – we run the risk of losing them.”

Both Terry and Denny also have future generations in mind. Denny’s daughter recently got married at the family’s cottage on Torch Lake, as he and Deb did years ago. They want to help ensure that Torch and the rest of the region remains beautiful.

“From a selfish standpoint, I want them and their kids to have the same experience we did,” Denny said. “We would love for Torch Lake to remain just as clear, just as clean, for their kids.”



Denny (left) and Terry Malone

Although both Malones have given generously to GTRLC over the years, they've also gotten involved in other meaningful ways. Denny and Deb knocked on doors in support of the Pelizzari Natural Area acquisition effort. Terry and Sally hosted gatherings in support of the Glacial Hills Pathway & Natural Area project, and it was Terry who first notified GTRLC of the potential sale of Torch Ridge, a spectacular 431-acre farm and undeveloped parcel on the east side of Torch Lake.

After GTRLC negotiated an option to buy a conservation easement on the property, Terry not only donated his own money to the project, but he also has been instrumental in the overall fundraising effort by encouraging his friends and neighbors to donate.

"Terry was doing peer-to-peer fundraising," GTRLC Executive Director Glen Chown said. "That's the highest level of volunteer engagement you can

have. When you're willing to talk to friends and neighbors about supporting the Conservancy, that's just fantastic – and we can't thank him enough."

Terry was, of course, glad to help. With his assistance, the property is well on its way to protection.

"I felt that even though I'm not a natural fundraiser and it's not my favorite activity, it was important that we raise enough money to protect it. The objective of what we were trying to accomplish justified the effort," he said. "Fortunately there were enough people who felt the way I did."

Kevin and his wife Sue also recently pledged a substantial gift for the Torch Ridge project.

"Ongoing development pressure is evident at the south end of Torch for properties like this, and I think this is money well spent," Kevin said.



PHOTO BY KATHY PARTIN

Fundraising Underway for Former Camp

PROPOSED UPPER MANISTEE HEADWATERS PRESERVE HAS STUNNING NATURAL FEATURES

A truly spectacular former Boy Scout camp could become GTRLC’s second largest preserve – and one of its most ecologically significant – thanks to a generous loan from a local couple.

The former Camp Tapico spans an impressive 1,288 acres in central Kalkaska County. In addition to about a mile of the north branch of the Manistee River, the property includes its own 130-acre spring-fed lake, multiple types of wetland habitat, several kettle-hole ponds and high-quality northern mesic forests.

GTRLC recently used a private loan from Richard and Diana Milock to acquire the property from the Boy Scouts, which operated a camp there from 1946 through the 2012 season. The Conservancy must raise \$3.9 million to pay off the loan, fund immediate, on-the-ground needs and cover long-term stewardship costs.

If GTRLC successfully raises the money, Camp Tapico will be opened to the public as the Upper Manistee Headwaters Preserve. This preserve would safeguard important habitat, protect water quality and provide a wonderful recreational resource for residents of and visitors to Kalkaska County.

“We’re beyond thrilled to protect this truly remarkable property for so many reasons, and we’re grateful for the generous loan that gave us the time to make this deal possible,” GTRLC Executive

Director Glen Chown said. “But this story isn’t over until we pay the loan off, so we’re hoping our supporters rally behind this exciting project.”

GTRLC has already received a lead gift of \$535,000 from the J.A. Woollam Foundation, a longtime supporter of GTRLC and other Michigan conservancies.

The Milocks were glad to play a role in protecting the former camp. Lakes and water have always intrigued Richard, and he believes the valuable habitat on the property should be preserved.

“With the overall size of that piece of property, with the lake and the wetlands, there’s got to be all kinds of wildlife there,” he said. “It would have been such a shame to see a developer go there and put in a bunch of cottages.”

The former camp ranked among the top 10 of the roughly 12,500 parcels scored in GTRLC’s expansive and detailed priority land atlas. To complete the atlas, GTRLC’s land protection staff examined thousands of parcels and ranked them on the basis of size, natural features, length of shoreline, adjacency to previously protected land and more.

“From a biodiversity standpoint, this project is exemplary in our region,” GTRLC Senior Preserve Steward Angie Lucas said. “In addition, the property has had a relatively low degree of human impact

and is free of aquatic invasive species, and the few species of non-native terrestrial plants are restricted to former camp areas.”

Even in a very limited inventory that only covered a fraction of the property, Lucas and other staff and volunteers found 108 plant species. The Floristic Quality Index (FQI) is already at 45, which is well above the state average of 20. This index is based on the presence of plants that require undisturbed or very specific habitats. It is likely that the FQI will increase as more of the land is inventoried. In just one day of surveying, local birders – led by avid birder Nate Crane of Rare Bird Brewpub in Traverse City – identified 50 species, bringing the total observed thus far to 60.

In addition to the valuable and diverse habitat it provides, the proposed Upper Manistee Headwaters Preserve is adjacent to state land on two sides, so protecting this land would significantly expand upon already protected land. Research has shown that contiguous blocks of protected land offer more in terms of wildlife habitat and recreation potential.

And of course, protection of the preserve will have a huge role in water quality protection. Testing has shown that water quality parameters in Grass Lake – the lake contained on the property – are better than that which leaves Manistee Lake upstream.

GTRLC is in the early stages of developing a management plan for the proposed preserve. Among other things, this management plan will safeguard the property’s ecological features while maximizing recreation potential. Until the property is formally dedicated as a preserve, access to the public will be restricted to GTRLC-led public hikes and appointments by request.

Dick Sadler is a Michigan State University assistant professor who camped at Tapico every summer

since he turned nine in 1996, then worked there for the Boy Scouts every year from when he turned 18 until the camp closed.

The camp was a special place where he and other scouts learned to be self-sufficient, Sadler said. Individual groups of scouts camped in remote areas of Tapico, cooking their own food and forging special bonds with other campers and staff. It was also a chance for many scouts who came from urban areas to immerse themselves in nature.

“When you’re growing up in the Metro Detroit area, or the Flint area, it’s just busy suburb after suburb, there’s no place you could go that’s quiet and peaceful,” he said. “You went to Tapico and you were relaxed, and it was really hard not to find some spiritual connection there...it was just so beautiful and so quiet.”

While Sadler was very sad when the Boy Scouts closed Tapico, he is comforted in knowing he’ll always be able to go back there once it becomes a GTRLC preserve.

“I was really happy to hear about the Conservancy’s involvement, especially considering all the ways this could have panned out – The

Boy Scouts selling it to a private developer, or a hunt club, or some place that it wouldn’t have been accessible,” Sadler said. “That would have just broken my heart. Tapico was, and is, home.”

He’s confident other former scouts will appreciate GTRLC’s role. “I think there are some people who are very sad that it’s no longer a camp, but this is probably the next best outcome,” he said. “So I’ve tried to impress upon (former staff and scouts) that this is the best long term solution. You will still be able take your kids there, you can still go hiking, you can still enjoy the land – this doesn’t have to be the end.”

For more information, or to make a donation, please contact Anthony Rupard at arupard@gtrlc.org or (231) 929-7911.

PHOTO BY KATHY PARTIN



The proposed Upper Manistee Headwaters Preserve has rich ecology



PHOTO BY NATE RICHARDSON



PHOTO BY NATE RICHARDSON

Glacial Hills Boosts Bellaire Area

STUDY DETAILS ECONOMIC IMPACT OF GLACIAL HILLS PATHWAY & NATURAL AREA

For those who live in or visit northern Michigan, the spiritual and environmental benefits of protected natural lands are crystal clear.

These are the places where we exercise, relax with our families and immerse ourselves in nature. Most of us have a favorite natural area or preserve we return to time and time again for a break from the hustle and bustle. Repeated natural inventories and additional studies have also shown that these protected lands harbor rare and threatened wildlife, help safeguard water quality and provide a host of other ecological benefits.

What's been less clear, however, is the economic benefit these protected areas provide. Plenty of anecdotal evidence suggests that protected lands boost housing prices, help businesses attract quality talent and inject tourism dollars into local businesses.

Now, a thorough study of the Glacial Hills Pathway & Natural Area near Bellaire confirms much of what was believed to be true regarding certain economic drivers.

Glacial Hills was established in 2010 after Antrim County and Forest Home Township worked with GTRLC to acquire 345 acres of private property, a move that allowed the consolidation of several fragmented public holdings into a contiguous 763-acre publicly-owned block.

This natural area has become a hotspot for a number of recreational activities, particularly mountain biking and hiking. That's due in large part to the more than 30 miles of trails that wind through some of the most beautiful rolling hills in the region. Representatives from Forest Hills Township, Antrim County, the Village

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GLACIAL HILLS STUDY

(See graphic on following page)

- Infrared trackers placed at three key points of access around the natural area, coupled with survey data collected from both daily users and event participants, show that there were 26,000 visits to Glacial Hills in one year.
- According to surveys conducted with trail users, nearly 60 percent of users live outside the Bellaire area. These non-local visitors spent an average of \$71.22 per visit in the Bellaire area. The estimated annual economic impact from these visitors is \$1.4 million.
- Of participants in one popular mountain bike race, 96 percent are likely to recommend the area to friends and family, and 83 percent are likely to return for an overnight visit/vacation in future years.
- With modest growth in use of 10 percent per year, the 10-year impact of Glacial Hills is estimated to be \$25.4 million

of Bellaire, GTRLC, and others serve on a steering committee for the property.

Using a grant from Short's Brewing Company, the steering committee hired Traverse City-based research consulting firm Avenue ISR to complete a study of Glacial's users for 12 months beginning in February 2016.

"In a way, this study just confirms what we already knew – protected lands are good for the economy," said Jesse Wolff, GTRLC's director of land protection.



GLACIAL HILLS

COMMUNITY
ECONOMIC IMPACT

PROPERTY INFO

Glacial Hills has become a recreation hotspot for both locals and non-locals, helping it become a key contributor to the local economy.

PROPERTY SUPPORTED RECREATION ACTIVITIES

- Hiking/Walking
- Mountain Biking
- Snowshoeing
- Trail Running
- Cross-Country Skiing
- Birding
- Hunting
- Fatbiking

763 acres
31 mi. trail

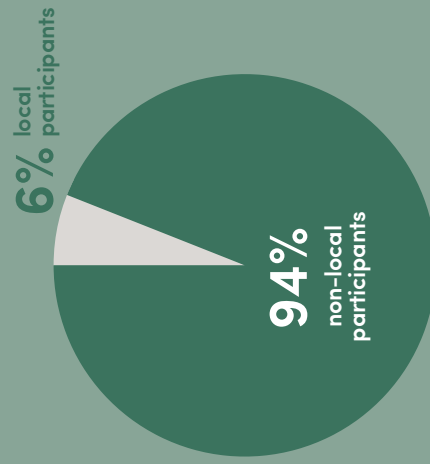
PROPERTY USER INFO

DAILY USERS



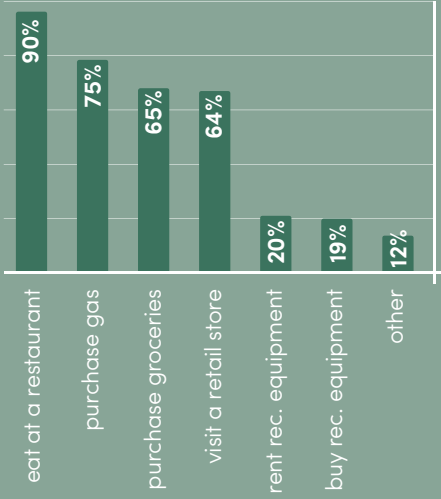
Money spent by non-local users creates additional economic impact on the local economy.

EVENT PARTICIPANTS



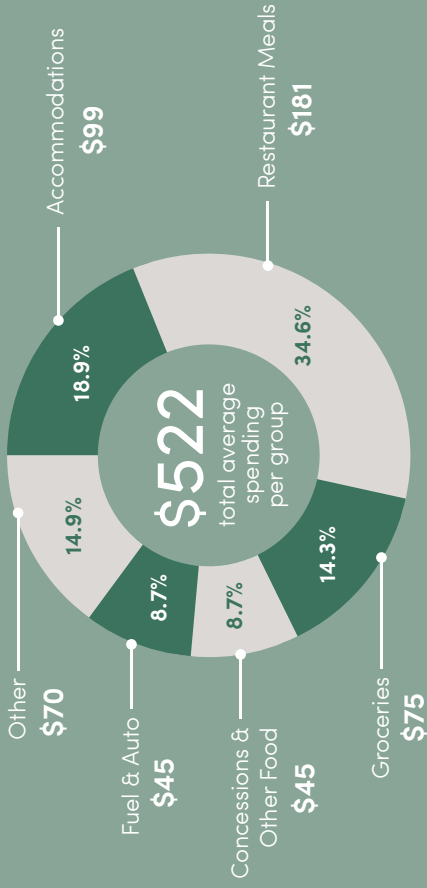
NON-LOCAL SPENDING

DAILY USER SPENDING



\$71
per visitor
per day

EVENT PARTICIPANT SPENDING



Based on user surveys from an event including 73 groups (176 non-local individuals)

ECONOMIC IMPACT

DAILY USER SPENDING IMPACT

$$\frac{\text{non-local daily users}}{15,000} \times \frac{\text{per visitor per day}^*}{\$71} \times \text{multiplier} 1.3$$

\$1.4
million annually

+

EVENT PARTICIPANT SPENDING IMPACT

$$\frac{\text{non-local groups}}{73} \times \frac{\text{per group}}{\$522} \times \text{multiplier} 1.3$$

\$.05
million annually

=

\$1.45
million annually

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

*\$71 multiplier is from MSU Economic Impact Calculator - for more information please contact GTRLC for a copy of the full report.

Charlie Kehr Memorials Drive Trapp Farm Improvement

Important work is ongoing at one of GTRLC's oldest and most interesting preserves, much of it funded by those donating in memory of a beloved Conservancy board member who passed away last year.

The original 74-acre portion of Trapp Farm Nature Preserve, near the eastern edge of Crystal Lake, was dedicated only a few months after GTRLC opened its doors in 1991. Several additions over the years have brought it to its current size of 140 acres.

This year, GTRLC's stewardship team is again treating phragmites, a large and prolific invasive plant common in wetland areas. Additionally, there is a newly completed parking area along Eldridge Road. This parking area will connect to the Nancy Brickman boardwalk trail through the cedar swamp, and GTRLC will build a small wooden landing along a stream on the property. This work is all designed to improve access and better engage people with this property.

None of this work would be possible without those who donated generously in memory of former GTRLC board member and dedicated Trapp Farm enthusiast Charlie Kehr, who passed away last year. Charlie's first contact with GTRLC was through his work at Trapp, which was a short distance from his Benzie County home and dental practice in Beulah.

He adopted the trails on the preserve as his own personal maintenance project, his wife Linda recalls, manning his tractor and gathering volunteers to clear brush and remove downed trees. He loved the fact that the preserve protected

water quality and provided important wildlife habitat, Linda said.

Charlie went on to be honored by GTRLC for his volunteer work, and later to serve on the Conservancy's

board. He also was a member of Benzie County's parks and recreation commission,

serving as its chair and playing an important role in the expansion of the Railroad Point Natural Area.

"Charlie's work with the Conservancy was extremely important to him and helped to define who he was," Linda said. "He saw himself as a steward and he believed that the Conservancy's work served a vital role in reconnecting us to the land and to the natural world of which we are all a part."

Meanwhile, the Trapp preserve continues to be a prime example of nature correcting itself. The area that comprises this preserve once was a wetland of Crystal Lake. The lake level dropped nearly 20 feet in 1873 after a failed attempt to connect the lake with the nearby Betsie River, leaving these wetland soils high, dry and perfect for growing celery and onions, as the Trapp family did for many decades in the 20th century. However, those great growing soils have been in a slow state of decomposition ever since the natural hydrology changed.

As the soil decomposes, it shrinks in volume, a phenomenon that has caused several large stands of trees to topple over as the soil shrinks beneath them. In 50-75 years, Trapp will once again be a large wetland area. It's our job to manage invasive plant species as the land continues along in this process.

"He saw himself as a steward and he believed that the Conservancy's work served a vital role in reconnecting us to the land and to the natural world of which we are all a part."



The following people and organizations made memorial gifts in honor of Charlie Kehr. Those with an asterisk (*) made a gift specifically for Trapp Farm in Charlie's memory.

Jon and Mary Armstrong
 The Arvidson Family
 Constance and Michael Barnes
 Royce and Marj Beers*
 Priscilla Belden
 Bill and Patrice Bobier
 Suzanne and Thomas Bohnhorst
 Paul and Amanda Brink
 Gary and Beverly Brouwer
 Ronald Chao*
 John and Lynn Collins*
 Richard Cooper and Jan Tennant
 Cooper-Gerhart Forestry
 Deerhaven Family Dentistry*
 The Dental Advisor
 Roger and Helen Dewey
 Rita Ann Doerr
 Elizabeth G. and Stanley F. Dole
 Kathy Dols and Al Stevenson
 Earl and Anne Dryden
 Maggie Duncan
 Cheryl and Bill Dundon
 Sue and Charles Ecker
 Kenneth and Janet Engle
 John and Char Ester
 Chad and Monica Evans
 Charles Fahlgren and Kay Harley

Curtis and Karen Ferber
 Robert and Lee Foerster
 Ruth Forrest
 Franke Family Dentistry
 Frankfort Garden Theater
 Elizabeth and Keith Gaiser
 Susanne Glynn
 Grand Traverse Oral Surgery*
 Ward and Margaret Griffen
 Lorrie Groenevelt
 Kathleen and Mark Guy
 John and Kelly Hall
 Deborah and Michael Haller
 Buzz, Karen and Luman Hejl
 Jean Hilbert
 Philip Hill and Elizabeth Rodgers
 Jim and Diana Huckle
 Jennifer and Brian Jaffe
 Gerald Jehle
 Fran Johnson
 Gary and Carol Johnson
 Raymond and Beverly Jusick
 Debra Kehr
 Linda Kehr
 Thomas and Susan Kehr
 Patrick and Mary Kelly*
 John and Connie Kerns
 William Lee*

James and Christina MacInnes
 Manitou Restaurant*
 Jan Manning*
 Robert and Nancy Marshall
 Robert and Jane McElroy
 Lawrence and Joan McKay
 Bill Moorey Family
 Marie Moorey
 Larry Munsey and Brenda Corner
 Debra Lewis and Kevin Nagy
 Jean and Larry Neuhardt
 Northway Orthodontics*
 Mary Pitcher
 Robert and Diane Portenga*
 John Puetz
 Jane Purkis
 Charles and Judith Retallick
 Louise and John Ryan
 Wylie and Donald Schaffer
 Barbara Schneider
 Bob and Mary Scholl
 Jane and Roger Schultz
 Wesson and Janie Schulz
 Gregory Seman
 Heather and Rick Shumaker
 Leah Serrine
 Evan Smith and Cynthia Anderson

Kris Stegmann
 Steve and Lynn Stephens
 Jane Stevenson
 Craig and Mary Stucky
 David Swan*
 Gary and Carol Tasch
 Ann and Al Taylor
 Dean and Maureen Templeton
 Dori Turner
 Judy Twigg
 Craig Urquhart
 Wendy and Donald Urquhart
 Robert VanDragt and Jackie Norton
 Susan Vigland
 John and Lynn Vinkemulder
 Hank and Bonnie Visser
 Suzanne Voltz
 Kathryn Vreeland-Rapai and Joseph Rapai
 Margaret Wade
 Water's Edge Dentistry*
 Peter and Nancy Weir
 Keith and Judith Westphal
 John Robert Williams and Terrie Taylor
 Frank and Beverly Winders
 John and Marylou Zaloudek



PHOTO BY JESSE WOLFF

Above: Barker Creek as it winds through the Copeland property. Right: Bonnie Copeland's grandfather, Edgar Copeland (far left) is shown at the farm with his wife and children, including Bonnie's father, Lawrence, around 1909.



For Habitat and Heritage

COPELAND FARM EASEMENT PRESERVES HISTORY AND CRITICAL ECOSYSTEMS ALONG LAKE SKEGEMOG

For Bonnie Copeland, memories of the old family farm on the shores of Lake Skegemog are rich and plentiful.

Copeland, 74, grew up on land that had been in her family since 1855, when her great-grandfather, William Copeland, became the first permanent non-native settler of Kalkaska County. Like her father and grandfather before her, she became intimately familiar with all of her homestead's nooks and crannies, natural or otherwise.

"It was so great growing up there. I have really great memories of climbing way up to the top of the

barn, to those little windows they have way at the top, and sitting there looking out over Round Lake, which is what they called it in those days," she said. "I really felt like I was on top of the world."

During haying season in late July, she always made it a point to seek out the gooseberry bushes heavy with fruit along the field edges. And there was a favorite gnarly old apple tree that had a saddle-like depression. She'd sit in it and pretend – "I was either Roy Rogers or Dale Evans, whomever I felt like that day" – that she was in a far-off land.

Sometimes, her thoughts drifted to the previous generations, which had worked the same land for nearly 90 years before she was even born.

"I used to just wander around a lot, down there on the top of the hill, and just stand there and try to imagine my great-grandfather and others being there and looking around like I was," she said.

GTRLC has an option to purchase a conservation easement on this beautiful 179-acre property and hopes to close in December. Although its history is

exciting, it's also incredibly rich from an ecological standpoint.

"Very rarely do we have the opportunity to protect a piece of land that is so important from both a conservation standpoint and a historical standpoint," GTRLC Executive Director Glen Chown said. "And it's fitting, because the heritage of this region is tied to the land and the water. You don't want to lose that identity or that history."

The spectacular Copeland property has nearly 1,000 feet of shoreline on Lake Skegemog and more than 500 feet of frontage on Barker Creek, a key tributary. Half of the property is high quality wetlands that provide important wildlife habitat and protect the water quality of Lake Skegemog by filtering runoff.

"This is a fantastic water quality easement," GTRLC Land Protection Director Jesse Wolff said. "There's some really nice wetlands there, and Barker Creek flows right into Lake Skegemog. It's a classic filter."

The Copeland property has been on the conservation radar since the early 1970s, when a grassroots effort led to the creation of the 3,300-acre Skegemog Lake Wildlife Area. That property is now managed by GTRLC.

"Protecting this property completes the shoreline, and that's the fulfillment of a mission that began with some very special people a long time ago," Chown said. "This is the last big undeveloped piece on the water, and protecting it is a really huge deal."

Aside from her own family history on the land, Bonnie Copeland is well aware of its importance from a conservation standpoint. Some of her fondest memories include listening to bobolinks,

WHAT IS A CONSERVATION EASEMENT?

A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between GTRLC (or another organization) and a private landowner that permanently restricts development on a piece of land for perpetuity, regardless of the owner. GTRLC, which either purchases these easements from the landowner or receives them as a donation, is responsible for regular monitoring to make sure terms of the easement are upheld. GTRLC has secured and monitors more than 200 of these easements.

whip-poor-wills and other birds along the fields and wetlands.

"I am a big fan of wildlife," she said. "I think it's pretty important to keep the swamp and all of that land available to all the types of wildlife that use it so they can thrive."

She moved away at age 20 to work and raise a family in the Detroit area, but moved back in 1991, a few years after her father died, and lived on the property for another 25 years. In 2016, she decided to move closer to family in the Flint area. It was around that time that she decided to reach out to GTRLC to discuss land protection, something she had considered for years.

"I never wanted the property to be developed," she said. "It's far too important to me. So I resolved to do something to (protect it)."

GTRLC was friendly, informative and helpful in the land protection process, Copeland said.

"I didn't really understand what a conservation easement was. I used to see things about it here or there, and I'd think to myself, well, if you don't want it developed, just don't sell it for development," she said. "But once I finally understood how it works, it was just perfect."

When the time is right, Copeland hopes to sell the land to a member of the Copeland family, or, failing that, one of the neighboring landowners. No matter what, she knows it will be protected forever.



PHOTO BY JESSE WOLFF

The Copeland property has a long stretch of undeveloped shoreline on Lake Skegemog.

FOUNDATION PARTNERSHIPS

GTRLC recently received substantial grants from various foundations that believe in our mission and wish to support our farmland protection work. In their own words, here's why they believe the cause is important – and why GTRLC is a trusted partner.

Consumers Energy Foundation (Jackson, Mich.)

“Consumers Energy has a proud history of energizing Michigan's farms, and we continue to support our state's second largest industry every day. By working with GTRLC, we can help ensure there's a strong future for agriculture in Michigan.”

- *Brandon Hofmeister, President*

The Brookby Foundation (Milwaukee, Wisc.)

“The Brookby Foundation values the ecological and cultural significance of West Michigan farmland. Healthy soil and hardworking hands are natural remedies to soothe our environmental ailments. Healing our water begins by ensuring our land and people are supported. Protecting farmland stems from our intent to honor that which nourishes it all. GTRLC has built a reputation of carefully preserving and promoting the landscape, along with a willingness to build lasting partnerships in order to balance ecological, recreational and economic values of land.”

- *Nicole Lightwine, Program Officer*

Frey Foundation (Grand Rapids, Mich.)

“As a regional funder focused on water quality and land conservation, we understand that farmland protection is a big part of the equation. Protecting the family farm and its legacy for the future is most important to the Frey Foundation. We are impressed by the long-term relationships that GTRLC has established throughout the Northwest Michigan region over a period of decades. Their leadership is demonstrated in the diversity of funding that they've been able to cultivate as well as their very strategic approach programmatically to land conservation. The 'kitchen table' conversations that they've had over the years with farmers and farm families, helping carry forward the legacy in the Grand Traverse region, is most impressive and something that is a benefit to the other regions of Michigan.”

- *Steve Wilson, President*

Farmland Protection Roundup

Protecting farmland is part of GTRLC's mission and our legacy. We are proud to continue our work to protect farmland and farming itself with a variety of initiatives and land protection efforts. For information about our farmland programs, contact Farmland Protection Specialist Laura Rigan at lrigan@gtrlc.org or (231) 929-7911.

PDR Update

GTRLC remains involved in Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs in Peninsula and Acme townships. Under these programs, a voter-approved millage is used to generate funds so that the townships can purchase development rights from farmers. The programs, both of which are in their second multi-year terms after renewal elections, have been resoundingly successful. More than half of the land in Peninsula Township's Agricultural Preservation Zone (APZ) is protected, and nearly a quarter is protected or under application in Acme Township, which launched its program 10 years after Peninsula Township.

GTRLC works with both townships to manage the individual land protection deals, and to monitor for easement compliance in Acme Township. We are also part of a partnership that secured a nearly \$8 million grant from the 2014 Farm Bill's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) to support water and land protection in our region. About \$2.8 million of the grant will be used to protect farmland in GTRLC's service area, and most of it will be used to bolster both PDR programs.

Active Farmland Conversations

We aren't slowing down in our efforts to protect farmland outside of active PDR programs. Our land protection team is in various stages of conversation with landowners throughout our service area regarding protection of more than 1,300 acres of prime farmland. Some of these parcels are several hundred acres in size, including a roughly 400-acre parcel near Central Lake, a nearly 300-acre parcel in Whitewater Township and multiple large farms on Old Mission Peninsula to augment PDR efforts.



PHOTO BY GARY L. HOWE

Farmer to Farmer Program

Thousands of acres of farmland in the Grand Traverse region and throughout the state will change hands in coming years as an aging population retires. The average age of farmers in our region ranges from about 55 in Kalkaska County to nearly 60 in Manistee. The future of agriculture in our region depends on not only farmland protection, but also the successful transition of agricultural land from current owners to the next generation of farmers.

GTRLC recently partnered with the Leelanau Conservancy, Michigan State University Extension and Taste the Local Difference to develop a new website that, among other things, connects farmers with available farmland in the region. The site features a searchable database of agricultural land for sale or lease, as well as job openings in the industry.

Visit www.f2fmi.com to explore the site, and be sure to check back frequently as more land and jobs are added.

Maple Bay & Misty Acres

Important and exciting work continues at both of these GTRLC-owned farms. We are working hard to develop a public access plan that will allow people to come to the Misty Acres farm at any time and learn about the various sustainable practices being modeled there. We are working with experts to create the most engaging experience possible, likely

with the use of volunteer docents. In other news, the farm also recently received cropping, farmstead and livestock system verification from the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP), and Misty is also serving as the home base for an exciting new program in which we will use goats to control certain invasive species.

At Maple Bay, we continue work in our volunteer-managed garden. This year, we are engaging campers from YMCA Camp Hayo-Went-Ha on Arbutus Lake to help tend to the garden, which produces plenty of food for local food pantries. Be sure to read about the Maple Bay farmhouse renovations on page 18.

Policy Efforts

Aside from directly protecting farmland, GTRLC is at the forefront of state and national efforts to protect farmland and the future of farming. Executive Director Glen Chown is a part of a working group that includes partners from the American Farmland Trust, the Land Trust Alliance and several other large farmland-focused land trusts across the nation. Together, this coalition is crafting policy recommendations for the 2018 Farm Bill.

Glen is also part of another group that includes the agribusinesses, Michigan Farm Bureau, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and the state departments of Natural Resources and Agriculture and Rural Development. This group aims to create a framework and funding strategy for the state's farmland preservation programs, which are critically underfunded.

In addition to interior renovations, the house was painted for the first time in many years.

Maple Bay Farmhouse Renovated

A beautiful piece of history will now be as functional as it is charming – and will go a long way toward helping GTRLC advance its mission.

The Conservancy retained the historic Maple Bay farmhouse and the 11 acres it sits on in 2002 during protection of the contiguous 452-acre Maple Bay Natural Area for Grand Traverse County. Though it's had limited use for various events, the 110-year-old house hasn't served much of a role in recent years.

Now, the house is being completely renovated and updated. In addition to up-to-date office space for staff and volunteers, the house will now have ADA-compliant restrooms, an updated kitchen, a conference room, upgraded utilities and a new access ramp outside. Among many other things, this spruced-up house will provide satellite office space for GTRLC staffers, a more functional space for meetings and events and a way for the Conservancy to better interact with the public.

"We've owned that property for a long time, and people already love it," said Vic Lane, who manages Maple Bay for GTRLC. "But now the house won't just be something to look at, it will be something to use, and that's pretty fantastic. This is going to create a lot of energy for the farm and for the Conservancy."

While the goal was to create an up-to-date, highly functional facility, GTRLC worked hard to retain the home's turn-of-the-century charm.

New cabinets being installed in the farmhouse



PHOTO BY GARY STAUFFER



PHOTO BY GARY STAUFFER

"One of the major guiding principles behind the restoration of the farmhouse was to preserve the character and the feel as much as we possibly could, because that's what people love about it," Lane said. "We wanted to maintain the charm while making it functional and useable."

"...now the house won't just be something to look at, it will be something to use, and that's pretty fantastic."

Many donors, led by the Novi-based Americana Foundation and Elk Lake summer residents Tom and Debby

McMullen, provided support for the current renovation project. Nearly \$100,000 still must be raised. Previous donors were instrumental in funding repairs to the farmhouse roof, sugar shack and more.

In addition to interior renovations, the house also received a fresh paint job this summer. The house was probably last painted shortly before GTRLC acquired it 15 years ago, Lane said.

A public access plan for the house is still in the works, Lane said. It is possible that GTRLC will ask volunteer docents to staff regular hours at the house during the high-traffic summer months. That way, visitors to the immensely popular natural area can come to learn about the farmhouse and GTRLC's mission.

"If you think about it, the Maple Bay project as a whole reflects every aspect of our work," GTRLC Executive Director Glen Chown said. "It's along a popular scenic corridor, it includes protected farmland and has active farming, there's a wonderful and vibrant natural area, and it offers ample recreation opportunities. You can't get a better place to engage people."

Compelled to Serve

GTRLC VOLUNTEER HELPS GTRLC MONITOR AND INVENTORY PRESERVES

Rarely does a day go by that Eddie Sullivan doesn't appreciate the Grand Traverse region's natural beauty.

Sullivan started volunteering for the Conservancy not long after he moved to the area on a full-time basis in 2015. He figured that since he loved the region so much, it made sense to join in the effort to protect the places that make it so special.

“People don't need to necessarily have any special education or skills – there's always something that needs to be done, and there's always help that can be provided.”

“I'm so fortunate to be able to live and work in this area, and I want to do everything I can to help the Conservancy with its mission,” he said. “The protection of all of these natural areas benefits everyone.”

Sullivan grew up in the Detroit suburbs, but frequently took trips to the northeastern part of the state. It was there that he first learned to appreciate the natural world.

“As a young kid, being able to go where there was tons of nature and a lot of wooded or undeveloped areas fueled my fascination and my love of nature and Northern Michigan,” he said.

It was also during his younger years that he learned that nature can disappear quickly.

“Growing up when I did, in Sterling Heights in the 70s and 80s, I saw firsthand how uncontrolled development can just gobble up natural areas. It's not that I'm against development, but when I'd see all these pockets of woods and fields and farms disappear, it really hit me that we need to be smarter about it.”

After moving to Thompsonville with his partner, Tracy Hobbs, Sullivan first became aware of

GTRLC by attending public hikes led by Conservancy volunteer preserve steward Paula Dreeszen. Before long he was volunteering on a number of important initiatives, including leading a plant inventory at the John J. Helstrom Quiet Area of the Misty Acres preserve and coordinating vegetation monitoring at the grasslands section of Arcadia Dunes: The C.S. Mott Nature Preserve. He has also helped monitor and remove invasive species.

“Eddie has been a wonderful asset to the GTRLC volunteer stewardship program,” GTRLC Senior Preserve Steward Angie Lucas said. “His knowledge and passion for nature is evident in all that he does, and we are all so grateful for his time, and that he cares so much about these wonderful protected lands.”

Sullivan is grateful for the opportunity to work with GTRLC.

“My experience has been that the Conservancy is really great at identifying how people would be good at helping out. People don't need to necessarily have any special education or skills – there's always something that needs to be done, and there's always help that can be provided.”

For more information on GTRLC's volunteer program, contact Nate Richardson at nate@grtlc.org or (231) 929-7911.

Eddie Sullivan



PHOTO BY TRACY HOBBS

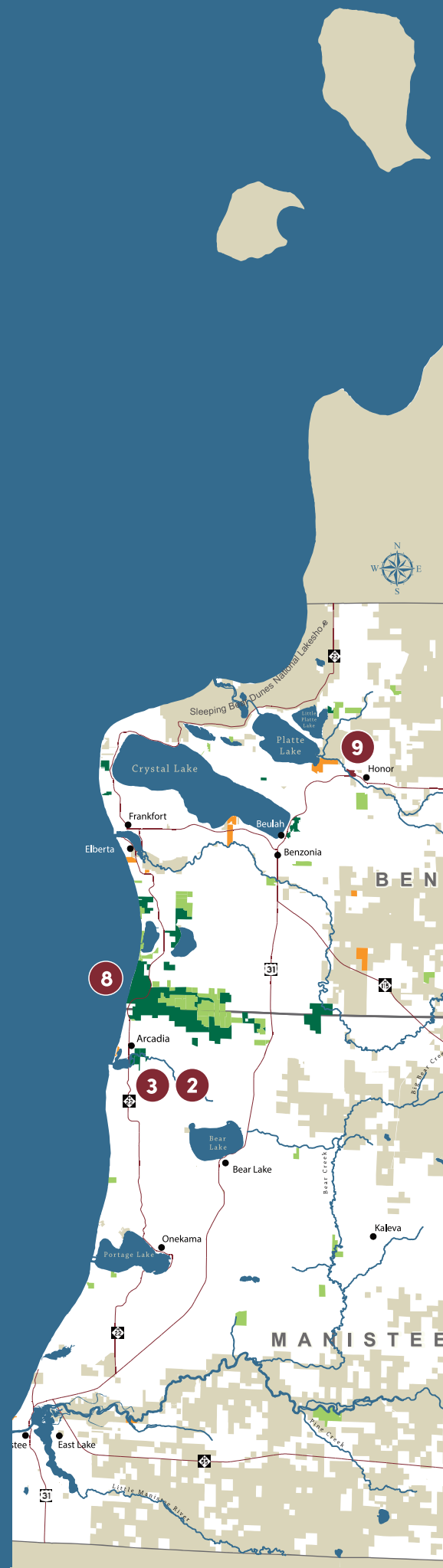
CURRENT PROTECTION PROJECTS

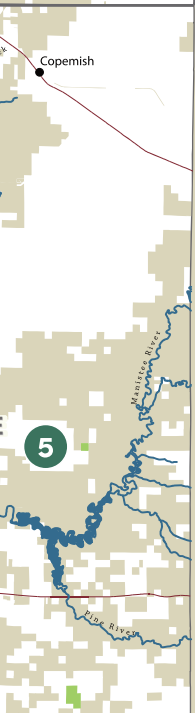
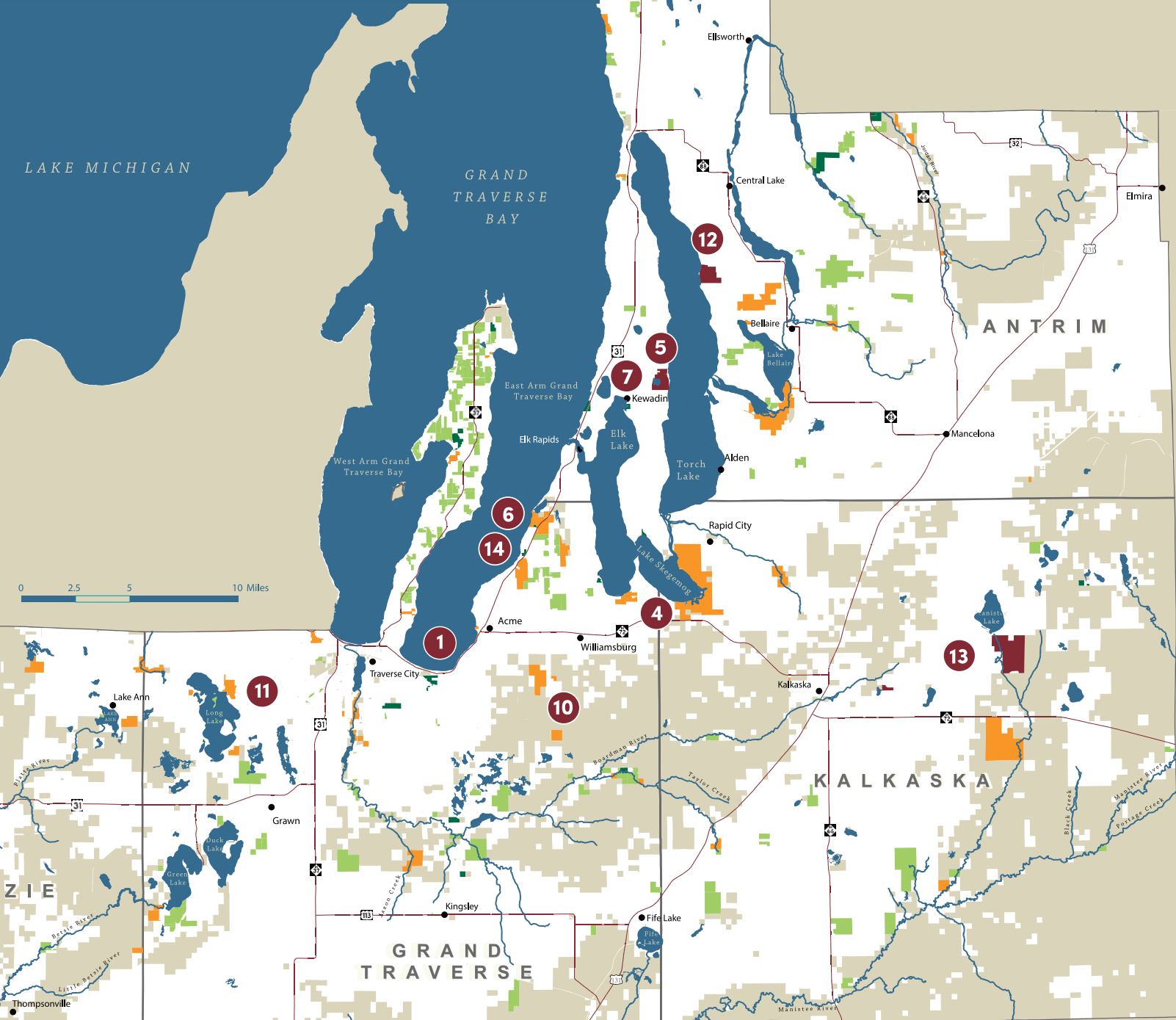
Those of us fortunate enough to live or vacation in northern Michigan have experienced firsthand this region's calming beauty, rich and productive farmland, pristine natural habitats, coastal dunes and clean water that create lasting memories. These natural resources are receiving national acclaim and attention, written about and highlighted in one Top 10 list after another.

We are experiencing a “perfect storm:” an economy that has rebounded, a vibrant region where more and more people are drawn to live, work and play, and a dramatic increase in development pressure to accommodate our region's growth. Without constant vigilance and action, our region's signature natural areas – dunes, shorelines, meadows, open spaces and critical farmland – will be sacrificed to residential and business development.

The very reasons why people love this area could be gone unless we act now to conserve the lands that are most important for water safety, food production, scenic beauty, wildlife, and community connections.

This map and the following pages provide details of those projects approved by our Board that we are working to protect. An additional dozen or more projects are in the “pipeline.” The need to come together to protect our most important land and water resources has never been more urgent. Please join us in this important effort. Every gift makes a difference in making conservation work possible.










Love the land. *Pass it on.*

GTRLC has protected over 40,000 acres of land and 124 miles of shoreline through 2016. Increased development pressure on our natural resources and signature landscapes has accelerated the pace and scope with which we need to respond.

LEGEND

-  Board Approved Land Protection Projects
-  GTRLC Nature Preserves
-  Other Public Land Protected and/or Managed by GTRLC
-  Privately Owned GTRLC Protected Lands (Including Farmland)
-  Other Protected Land



Active Project Roundup

The Northern Lights at Camp Tapico

1. Acme Bayside Park Improvements

New gardens, universal access, updated restrooms, a playground, beach enhancements and much more are in store for Acme's shoreline. This is the next step in a community-driven plan to provide recreational opportunities and enjoyable access to East Grand Traverse Bay.

2. Arcadia Marsh Addition – St. Pierre Corner

This 12-acre addition, near the intersection of Glover's Lake and St. Pierre, is grassland habitat used by a variety of birds. Its protection is perhaps most valuable, however, because it will extend the preserve boundary to the road and prevent as many as five home sites directly alongside the preserve. We will also now have the ability to directly control invasives on this parcel, further improving the overall health of the marsh.

3. Arcadia Marsh Infrastructure

As with our successful Universally Accessible (UA) trail at Arcadia Dunes, plans for the marsh call for a UA boardwalk and other improvements that will improve accessibility for those with mobility issues.

4. Copeland Farm Easement

This 179-acre property is important from both an ecological and historical standpoint. It has more than 1,000 feet of shoreline on Lake Skegemog and more than 500 feet along Barker Creek, a key tributary. For more on this project, see the story on page 14.

5. Maplehurst

This fantastic 389-acre property is one of the largest remaining intact and undeveloped parcels on Torch Lake. It has northern hardwood forests and open meadows that surround Lake Maplehurst, a 60-acre spring fed gem. We helped Milton Township secure a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant and now must fundraise for a local match and stewardship costs.



Camp Maplehurst

6. Maple Bay Farmhouse Renovations

This turn-of-the-century favorite is now set to play a much larger role in GTRLC operations and engagement than ever before after a series of renovations that will allow it to be used for office space, meetings and much more. To learn more about this project, please see the story on page 18.

7. Milton Township Beach

Protection of this 0.65-acre parcel allows Milton Township to connect two previously acquired parcels and create a nearly 10-acre public park with more than 300 feet of public access along Elk Lake. GTRLC helped Milton Township secure a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant, and now we're fundraising for a local match and stewardship costs.

8. Overlook Trail at Arcadia Dunes

This trail, which opened in June, allows visitors with mobility issues to traverse a Universally Accessible (UA) trail and enjoy a beautiful view of Lake Michigan. Preliminary data shows heavy use, and the trail has received excellent reviews from disabled visitors. We are still completing fundraising for this project.

9. Platte River Park

At the urging of the Honor Area Restoration Project (HARP), we recently secured a purchase option on a beautiful 52-acre parcel with 1,500 feet of frontage on the Platte River in Benzie County's Homestead Township. Now, we're supporting the township's application for a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant to acquire the property and use it for a public park, while assisting with fundraising. The Trust Fund decision will be made in December.

10. Sand Lakes DNR Assist

We recently acquired this 160-acre parcel from Grand Traverse County after the county listed it for sale. It is a crucial piece for recreation, as multiple trails used by several events use it. For more information, please see the story on page 3.



The Overlook Trail at Arcadia Dunes

11. Timbers UA Improvements

As with other UA projects, the goal is to provide quality of life opportunities for people of all fitness and mobility levels. In addition to a new trail, several UA-friendly amenities are planned. The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund will make a decision regarding the application to support this project in December.

12. Torch Ridge Farm Easement

This 431-acre farm has a mile long ridge that looms over the east side of Torch Lake in Antrim County. Although this land will remain in private hands and won't be open to the public, we'll all benefit from its protection, as the property serves very important roles related to viewshed preservation and water quality protection.

13. Upper Manistee Headwaters Preserve

Thanks to a private loan, we were able to acquire the former Camp Tapico from the Boy Scouts with the hope of turning it into our second-largest nature preserve if we succeed in raising the needed funds. This property is stunning from an ecological standpoint. For more information, see the story on page 6.

14. Wintergreen Woods Nature Preserve

This preserve protects 22 beautiful acres adjacent to Acme Township's Saylor Park. The property includes a striking natural pine forest and more than a half-mile of shoreline on Yuba Creek.

Charting a Course

GTRLC'S STRATEGIC DIRECTION SETS OUTCOMES, APPROACHES

It's now been more than 25 years since the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy opened its doors, and there's a lot to be proud of. More than 40,000 acres forever protected, hundreds of volunteers engaged, tens of millions of dollars raised for land protection – the list goes on and on.

But the last thing GTRLC plans to do is slow down. Our work is needed more than ever. And to do great work, you need a great plan. Earlier this year, GTRLC's board approved a comprehensive Strategic Direction to guide the Conservancy through 2021. The process took more than a year, with buy-in from staff, board and community leaders.

GTRLC has created strategic plans before, but perhaps never one this robust in terms of comprehensive involvement of those connected to GTRLC's work. "We took this process very seriously," GTRLC Board Chair Jennifer Jaffe said. "It's important that staff and board are completely aligned in their vision for our future work."

For assistance with the process, GTRLC tapped Oregon-based consultant Marc Smiley, who has decades of experience with nonprofit planning and a heavy focus on land trusts. "With Marc's help, we were able to complete a very thorough plan that gives us an excellent road map for the years ahead," GTRLC Executive Director Glen Chown said. "There's no question this strategic plan will maximize both our efficiency and our effectiveness."

In addition to reaffirming – and in some cases updating – our values, vision and mission, the strategic plan is an outcomes-driven document. Outcomes describe the results of the Conservancy's work over time and fall within two broad categories: identity and impact. Identity outcomes are goals for the organization to ensure GTRLC will be strong and effective, whereas impact outcomes describe the future character and condition of our region as a result of our work.

The plan also outlines the approaches we will take to achieve these outcomes, with many approaches supporting multiple outcomes. For example, our ongoing conservation easement stewardship supports the following outcomes: Economic prosperity, farming & farmland protection, healthy habitats & biodiversity and establishing GTRLC as a trusted brand in the community. GTRLC's staff and board will use the document to guide work plans and evaluate progress in the future.

Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy Board of Directors

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Conservancy Directors give hundreds of hours of their time, lend considerable life experiences to our efforts, and dedicate their contributions to the Conservancy. Learn more about the Board of Directors at www.gtrlc.org/about/board



Cabins being removed from the former Camp Maplehurst

Maplehurst Work Continues

Fundraising and stewardship work continues for the proposed Maplehurst Natural Area in Antrim County.

This 389-acre former camp is now temporarily owned by GTRLC after the Conservancy received a private short-term loan designed to provide time for fundraising. GTRLC is now working to raise \$1.9 million to match a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant for the project and cover both immediate and long-term stewardship needs. Once the money is raised, the property will be transferred to Milton Township for use as a public natural area.

The cabins on the property are currently being relocated, and the Conservancy is seeking bids on asbestos abatement for several buildings. The Milton Township Fire Department has expressed

interest in doing a controlled burn of the main lodge and other buildings for training purposes, and that's expected to happen in the fall.

Meanwhile, several generous donors have stepped up and provided challenge grants for the project. Paul and Paula Moyer, who live on Birch Lake near Elk Rapids, have promised to match gifts from others living on Birch Lake dollar-for-dollar up to \$10,000.

A couple from Old Mission has issued a similar challenge, matching all donations to the project up to \$50,000. And Morrissey Equipment Company, which owns property in Traverse City, will provide \$50,000 if one family on Torch Lake gives \$25,000 and the same amount is provided by a family on Elk Lake.

GTRLC still has about \$1.6 million to raise for this project. [For more information, or to make a gift, please contact Kate Pearson at \[kpearson@gtrlc.org\]\(mailto:kpearson@gtrlc.org\) or \(231\) 929-7911. Keep an eye on the events page of our website for guided hikes on the property.](#)

Donations

Your donations to the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy help protect significant scenic, natural, and farm lands from development, ensuring that the most critical lands will continue to provide local food, open space, clean water, and healthy habitat, now and for all future generations. You can donate with confidence, knowing that you are contributing to an accredited, effective and fiscally responsible organization.

A Mark of Distinction

The accreditation seal **AFFIRMS** national quality standards are met.



Conservancy Fund Donors: Your gifts provide the organization with the ultimate fund flexibility to protect land, steward lands that have been protected and meet our day-to-day financial needs enabling us to thrive as an organization and retain a talented and committed staff.

Land Champions: Your monthly gifts support the very foundation of our mission and allow us to plan and sustain our work more effectively. The Land Champion program makes it easy for you and your family to support the work of the Conservancy on a consistent basis.

Project Donors: Your gifts directed to specific projects are helping to protect special places such as the Maple Bay Farmhouse Renovation, Maplehurst Natural Area, Milton Township Beach, Overlook Trail at Arcadia Dunes, Platte River Park, Wintergreen Woods Nature Preserve and many more. Many projects can take years to come to fruition. Your gifts support the development of relationships with land owners, as well as our ability to perform environmental due diligence, conduct appraisals, work through negotiations and closings, and strengthen our community partnerships.

Conservation Easement and Land Donors: Over 23,000 acres of land have been permanently protected by landowners who have placed permanent, deed-restricted, conservation easements on their property in order to ensure that conservation values—the health and wealth of these precious lands—are

maintained forever. Thank you to those donors whose private easements benefit the public through local farms and food, healthy habitats for wildlife and fisheries, protection of water quality and conservation of scenic viewsheds.

Vanguard Members: You are a special group of just over 100 who have placed the Conservancy in their estate plan. Your thoughtful planning and generosity will have a tremendous impact on the future sustainability of the organization. Estate gifts help ensure that the places we save today will be protected and cared for, forever.

Volunteers: Every year, you play a crucial role in the Conservancy's stewardship efforts helping the stewardship team care for 34 preserves and several other protected properties spread across five counties. You built trails, planted trees, made maple syrup, fought invasive species, raised organic produce, and led hikes and work days—you helped care for this land and shared your love for it.

Business Donors: The ongoing support of our business community shows your commitment to northern Michigan's farmland heritage, the protection of natural lands and the preservation of clean air and water. As you make charitable gifts to the Conservancy you communicate to your customers how deeply you value and care for northern Michigan's natural resources.

The Conservancy received \$1,872,708 in private support from 960 donors between January 1 and June 30, 2017. Together, we are leaving perhaps the greatest gift we can give to future generations— rich and productive farmland, pristine natural habitats, coastal dunes and clean water. Every gift makes a difference in making our conservation work possible.

THE CONSERVANCY FUND

◊ Matching gift † Deceased

JANUARY 1 – JUNE 30, 2017

The following donors made gifts to The Conservancy Fund, an unrestricted fund allowing us to build a steady, reliable income to meet our day-to-day financial needs and keep our organization strong and our programs thriving. We could not be more grateful for your generous support.

Gifts of \$25,000 or more

Community Foundation
Grand Traverse Regional
Land Conservancy
Endowment

Barry Hibben
Jim and Diana Huckle
Family Foundation

Diane McDonald†

Gifts of \$10,000-\$24,999

Mariel Foundation

James and Debbie Norling

Gifts of \$5,000-\$9,999

Cherry Republic
Paolo and Patty DeMaria
Rich and Susan Erwin

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Norman Booth and Gail Zink
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Rosaleen and Richard Borton
Susan and Ted Bosler
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Bowers Harbor
Vineyard & Winery
Gloria and Jerry Boyd
John and Linda Bozzelli
Marilyn and Arthur Branco
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JANUARY 1 – JUNE 30, 2017

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JANUARY 1 – JUNE 30, 2017

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While the parks and nature preserves we protect are open to and enjoyed by the public, more than half of the land 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 ensure that conservation values are maintained forever.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the following land owners:

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