

# Landings

News from the Places You Protect:  
A Newsletter for Door County Land Trust Members

News  
Splash  
Winter 2021-2022

Thank you for  
protecting the  
lands, waters, and  
wildlife that make  
Door County so  
special.

Your generosity  
has helped  
preserve TWO  
new properties!

## Conservation Stories: Thanks to You...

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**Door County Land Trust**

Protecting Door County's Exceptional Lands and Waters...Forever

PO Box 65, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235  
(920) 746-1359 • [www.DoorCountyLandTrust.org](http://www.DoorCountyLandTrust.org)



# Our Conservation Family Story

It takes a lot of love to protect Door County's exceptional lands and waters!  
Send your notes and stories to [photos@doorcountylandtrust.org](mailto:photos@doorcountylandtrust.org).



Photo by Jamie Palmer

Pat and I are inspired by the Land Trust's stewardship that enables the sharing of Door County's beautiful and unique vistas with our community. Our favorite site to visit is the Three Springs location and we especially enjoy visiting there in late fall, winter and early spring. Thanks for continuing to make an increasing number of these sites available for everyone's enjoyment.

-Pat and Ted Jankowski



Photo by Nicky Blasler



Photo by Char Fatke

I love being able to experience each season as it changes by hiking through the Land Trust properties. Life reemerging in the spring, lush woodlands in the summer, sprouting mushrooms and the vibrant colors of fall, and the majestic stillness of winter.

-Jodi Ivnik Hendricksen



Photo by Jamie Palmer

I love the undeveloped-ness of these places!

-Katherine Flesch Jones

I enjoy the variety of nature in each and every preserve

-Jim Perry



Photo by Alice Huff

It is my pleasure to give back to a place that gives me so much peace.

-Connie Piotrowski



Photo by Greg Van Dyke



Photo by Carrie Ehrfurth

My favorite thing about Land Trust nature preserves is the quiet beauty it encourages.

-Marjorie Grutzmacher



Photo by Megan Sarkis

# Thank you!

for being a part of our conservation family.  
you protect Door County!





# Making History: First Land Protected at Stony Creek

Photo by Julie Scharfner

Stony Creek is a beautiful, babbling creek in southern Door County. Surrounded by banks filled with grassy marshes and wetland trees, the creek is sheltered by a lush forest filled with native white cedar, black ash, and white birch. This wooded streambank is Door County Land Trust's newest protected property. Door County Land Trust is the first conservation organization to purchase land on Stony Creek for the purpose of permanent preservation. This is a critical first step towards greater understanding of the ecology of this watershed.

Last winter, river otter slides and footprints were visible along the steep slope to the creek. Plants like sensitive ferns, cinnamon ferns, and ostrich ferns, which reach 6' tall in places, adorn the shady woods near the creek. Native invertebrates, mussels, and insects in the creek form the basis of a thriving ecosystem. Lying just a quarter-mile from the Lake Michigan shoreline, this property is along a migratory bird 'super-highway' that hosts hundreds of species passing through each spring and fall.

The newly protected property includes one mile of streambank (both sides of a half-mile stretch of

stream) on Stony Creek. The 13-mile Stony Creek stream corridor is the largest stream system in southern Door County, making its protection vitally important for Lake Michigan's water. Door County Land Trust plans to restore an area that was formerly used for agriculture. This will create a buffer of native plants that will help to lessen soil erosion and sedimentation in the creek, an improvement which can positively impact fish that may be found here. Protection of land within the Stony Creek watershed and stream corridor aims to protect fish spawning habitat with the ultimate goal, over time, of improving the water quality flowing into Lake Michigan.

The Door County Land Trust wishes to thank and acknowledge the following for funding support of this project: Wisconsin Knowles Nelson Stewardship Grant Program, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Crown Family Philanthropies, Caerus Foundation, Inc., and the John C. Bock Foundation. Additional support for the long-term care and continued protection of this property will be funded through membership support from donors like you. Thank you for making a difference in Door County.



Photo by Cinnamon Rossman



Photo by Julie Scharfner



# FROM FARM TO FOREST

## Hilltop Conservation Easement near Mink River Estuary

Photo by Drew Reinke

Door County Land Trust is excited to announce a newly protected property near Door County's iconic coastal wetlands. Landowner Lisa Barker chose to donate a conservation easement on her property to protect it from future development and contribute to nearby protected lands within an important Northern Door wildlife corridor. Historically the land has been farmed, but in recent years the natural succession of reforestation has begun with sumac and young saplings.

Barker chose to donate the easement saying, "I like the idea of this property staying natural. I love going for walks on the land and appreciate the history and open space. With so much development, it is reassuring to know there will always be some natural land." Over time, the forest will return to its historic composition.

The 31-acre property straddles the border of the Three Springs Creek and Mink River sub-watersheds. The Mink River Estuary is one of the most pristine freshwater estuaries in the country. Dogwood and alder shrubs fill the scenic meadow where trout lily and sumac bloom every spring. The woodlands support a diversity of native plants including white pine and sugar maple. As they flow out to Lake Michigan, these watersheds provide significant habitat for native plants and wildlife.

The Barker conservation easement is an important step for land protection efforts in Door County. This new conservation easement, plus three other nearby conservation easement properties, are the beginning of efforts to protect more of the land surrounding the Mink River Estuary. Ms. Barker hopes that her conservation easement will inspire additional conservation easements in Northern Door and become part of a larger buffer of private land, open space, and wildlife habitat.

*The newly protected open prairie filled with young saplings.*

Photo by Drew Reinke



*Blaze red staghorn sumac fills the scenic meadow.*

Photo by Drew Reinke





CELEBRATING  
25 YEARS

# KANGAROO LAKE NATURE PRESERVE

Kangaroo Lake Nature Preserve holds a special place in Land Trust history—it is our first preserve! Located primarily on the north side of the Kangaroo Lake causeway just outside Baileys Harbor, the preserve contains a sampling of much of what Door County has to offer ecologically and scenically—lake shore, boreal forest, cedar swampland, upland hardwood forest, Niagara escarpment, a creek and farmland.

One of our most popular preserves, hikers love this spot for its meandering trails and shoreline views. The trail starts along an abandoned farm field dotted by junipers and summer flowers before descending down the Niagara escarpment into the boreal forest. Walk quietly and you may find a porcupine or opossum shuffling through the leaf litter. In the springtime, the woods are filled

with migrating bird songs and spring wildflowers. If you're lucky you may be able to spot a white egret or great blue heron wading along the shoreline. In the fall, changing leaves blanket the preserve in warm colors and fascinating fungi can be found decomposing downed trees.

Protection of Kangaroo Lake is a story of partnerships and community conservation. Thanks to joint efforts with The Nature Conservancy, a generous bequest, and several land donations, more than 700 acres of land and a significant portion of the Peil Creek watershed are now protected. Most importantly, the high quality wetlands and several types of forest communities are now protected in perpetuity for Door County's wildlife and people to enjoy.





# Our Boreal Forest

Adapted from 'Shoreline at the Edge: Door County's Lakeside Forests and Wetlands,' Published by Door County Land Trust. Aerialscapes by Paul M. Lurie, with text by Steven Leonard, Cinnamon Rossman, and Norbert Blei

Boreal forests, which wrap around the top of the globe, are powerful players against climate change. Tree and plant species adapted to arctic conditions are found across northern Canada, Scandinavia, Russia, Siberia, and at select sites around the Great Lakes, including here on the Door Peninsula—the southernmost extent of North America's boreal forest. Swampy and moist, they produce oxygen and absorb carbon, significantly reducing greenhouse gases. They are the home of endangered animals and the breeding ground for birds.

On the Door Peninsula and elsewhere, trees and plants that were adapted to the cold, damp conditions along the edge of the slowly shrinking glacier prospered. Black spruce, white spruce, balsam fir, paper birch, northern white cedar, and jack pine were able to seed and grow on the open lands and among mossy bogs left by the meltwater of the vast ice sheets.

Since the end of the ice age more than 10,000 years ago, the world's climate has naturally warmed. Now, the effects of more rapid, man-made global warming, climate change, and erratic weather patterns are beginning to show. Still, the boreal forests of the Door Peninsula

persist and much about these forests remains to be discovered. The trees of this forest type are ideally suited for Door County's foggy days, cool summers, and frigid winter seasons.

All these adaptations make boreal trees perfectly suited for the cold chill that persists along the lakeshore—especially the relatively cool summers.

But what is happening as our climate warms and our weather becomes more extreme? Trees that are more suited to warmer summer temperatures have an advantage. Invasive shrubs growing in the understory compete with the seedlings of boreal conifers. In Door County, this southernmost fringe of the boreal forest is jeopardized most by global warming. As the makeup of the forest changes, so does the entire web of life. Eventually, these essential forests will no longer be boreal.

Some of Door County's rarest and most spectacular plant gems are associated with its boreal forests. They require specific conditions and are adapted to live alongside boreal tree species. They are slow growing and don't compete with fast-growing plants. These plants, including many rare orchids, ferns, and sedges, are tied to the viability of Door County's boreal forests.

**Reserve your copy of 'Shoreline at the Edge: Door County's Lakeside Forests and Wetlands' at [www.DoorCountyLandTrust.org/book](http://www.DoorCountyLandTrust.org/book).**

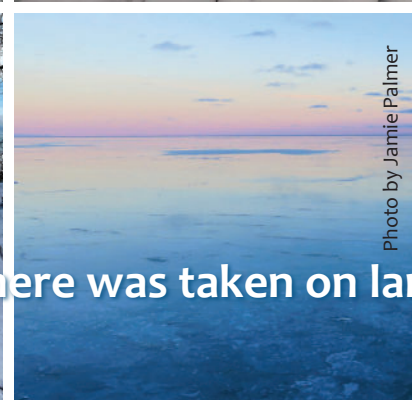
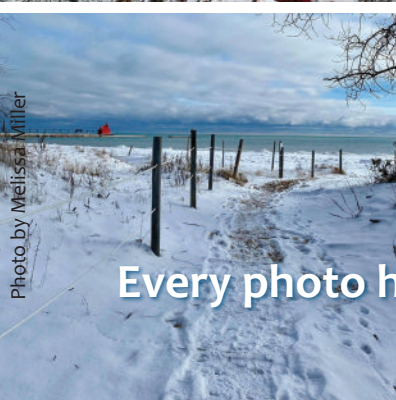
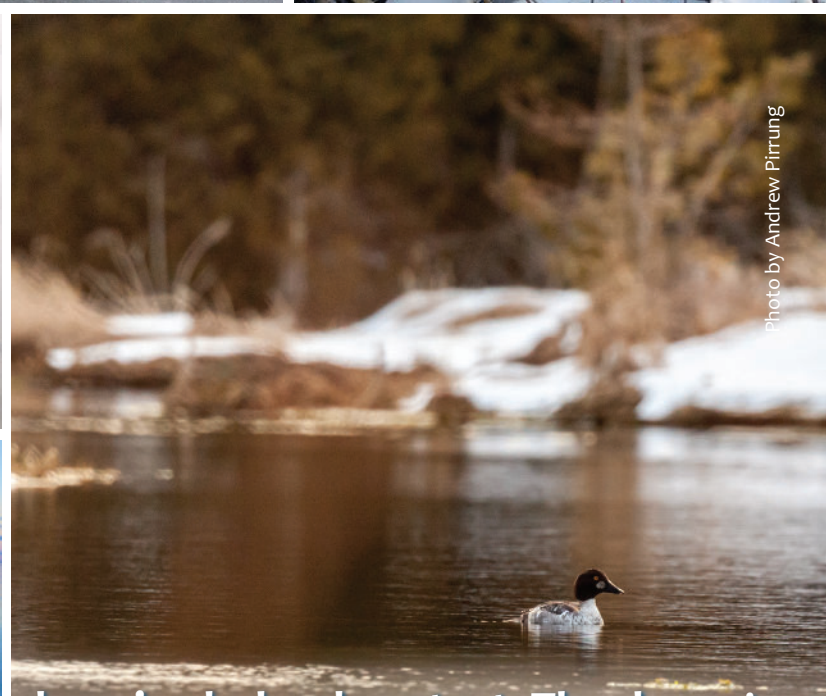
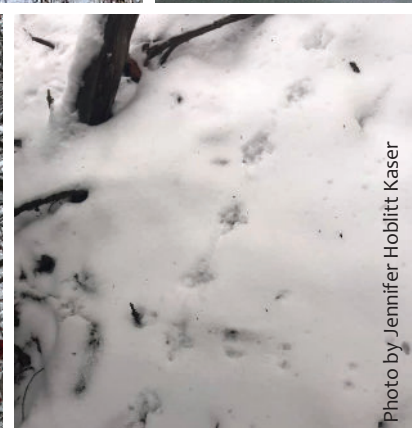
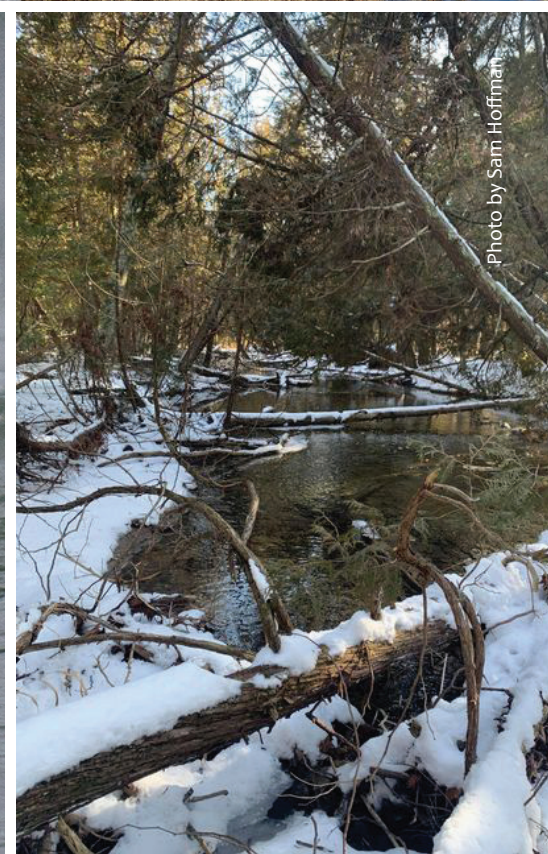
Photos from volunteers, like you, help share Door County's beauty with members no matter where they live. Our talented volunteer photographers are an amazing group who venture across the peninsula and islands to help our preserves shine! Check out page 7 for some of the best winter volunteer photos. Send us your favorite shot or nature preserve story for a chance to be featured in future publications!

Email pictures to [photos@doorcountylandtrust.org](mailto:photos@doorcountylandtrust.org).



Photo by Thomas Jordan





Every photo here was taken on land you've helped protect. Thank you!



# A Heartfelt *thank You*

*All that is gold does not glitter,  
Not all those that wander are lost;  
The old that is strong does not wither,  
Deep roots are not reached by the frost.  
— J.R.R Tolkien*

Your gift makes such a difference in Door County. We are so incredibly grateful to all those who have given this year and in past years. Thanks to landowners, volunteers, members, and the community, nearly 9,000 acres of fields, forests, farmlands, orchards, wetlands, and shoreline have been protected so far.

Door County Land Trust depends on member support to protect Door County's exceptional lands and waters forever. If Door County's wild things could speak, they would say *thank You* for protecting Door County!

Photo by Collin Richter  
Sturgeon Bay Ship Canal Nature Preserve

## Join us in thanking our Annual Business Members!



Alibi Marina and Harbor Guest House  
Ashbrooke Hotel  
Bay Ridge Golf Course  
Blue Dolphin House  
Camp Store At Nicolet Beach  
Door County Courier  
Door County Eye Associates  
Door County Nature Works

Door Landscape & Nursery  
Eagle Harbor Inn  
Ecology  
First Light Arts, Jim Perry  
The Garden Lady, Beth Coleman  
Gills Rock Pottery  
Glidden Lodge Beach Resort  
Hatch Distilling Company

Impressions Printing and Graphics  
Jack and Jill's Landscaping  
Jerry's Flowers  
Out of the Woods Woodworking, Curt Wessel  
Pinkert Law Firm, LLP  
RentShadowLawn.com  
Ross Estate Planning  
Smile Designs of Door County

Sunnypoint Landscape  
Terra Cottages  
Dr Timothy Tishler, DDS  
True North Real Estate  
Wagon Trail Campground  
Washington Island Ferry Line  
Wickman House Restaurant  
Zero Sum Muffin Shop