



SUMMER/FALL 2023

DRIFTLESS

A Newsletter from the Driftless Area Land Conservancy



"All my life through, the new sights of Nature made me rejoice like a child."

- Marie Curie



DRIFTLESS
AREA LAND CONSERVANCY



Driftless Area Land Conservancy

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Cover Photo: Zach Pacana
6-month-old Shea Pacana enjoys a summer day on the Driftless Trail.

Driftless Area Land Conservancy

HERE TO STAY



"Huh? What the heck is a land trust?"

If you're reading this newsletter, you probably know the answer, but it's a question we get asked a lot. In the land conservation community, a land trust or land conservancy is a community-based, nonprofit organization that works to permanently conserve land.

Land trusts come in all shapes and sizes and are all unique to the community they serve. DALC was formed because landowners in our community wanted to protect their land with conservation easements - voluntary legal agreements that protect conservation values - and there wasn't a local land trust here.

Today, our projects reflect our commitment to our unique community. We are a region with deep roots in farming (especially grass-based farming), hunting and fishing, and tourism. We are a biodiversity hotspot, and the last stronghold for grassland birds in the entire Upper Mississippi River Basin! We have a culture that values protecting nature and getting outdoors, even though 97% of the Driftless is privately owned. All these factors inform our projects, from the creation of the Driftless Trail, to our commitment to the Southern Driftless Grasslands partnership, to the defense of our 50+ conservation easements and management of 4 preserves.

When I think more deeply on our work, it strikes me that DALC will never fully realize our mission. The permanency part of a conservation easement is unique and important - no matter who owns the land, DALC stays legally connected to it. We will always have responsibilities to steward the lands we've protected. We are truly a forever organization.

Protecting land in perpetuity is a tall order. But we have faith in our community - YOU! You engage with DALC and the land, and support us through your gifts of time, talent, and treasure. Your support allows us to dream big and lean in to big ideas, like doubling the total amount of land we've protected by 2027. To imagine a 50-mile hiking path that traverses private lands and connects three state parks. To respond to the rallying cry of our community and fight an unnecessary transmission line. To include protecting a tradition of agriculture in our vision to restore a quiet, bucolic valley in rural Dane County.

We are constantly balancing work we do that benefits us now, and work that benefits future generations. The stories in this newsletter show how everything our community accomplishes today is helping to build a strong foundation for tomorrow. Thank you for joining us to sustain the Driftless - forever!

Jennifer Filipiak
Executive Director
jennifer@driftlessconservancy.org

Turk's cap lilies in full bloom. Photo by Barb Barzen.



"Ryan's Oak," one of the most iconic trees at the preserve. Photo by Zach Pacana.

THE POWER OF A NAME

At the end of 2020, we received a remarkable gift: 300+ acres of a diverse Driftless landscape north of New Glarus. Thanks to the vision, dedication, and generosity of the local community, this special place was forever saved from development. At the time, we called this property Spring Valley Tract. But that name was always meant to be a placeholder, a temporary title while we got to know the land better. Now, after several years of exploration, restoration, and conversation, we are excited to share a new and permanent name:

Wild Oaks Preserve.

This name was the result of careful thought and several rounds of community input. Below, site steward Fil Sanna shares some of the things this new name signifies for him.

This name is simple, and yet encapsulates several important aspects of the land and the project.

First, oak trees are a prominent symbol of the landscape. Even though the property is hugely diverse - containing oak woodland and savanna, native prairie, several types of wetlands, a spring-fed stream, pastures, and tilled cropland - almost anywhere you go, you are within sight of oaks.

Oaks are also a keystone species - one that helps define and hold together the entire ecosystem. Countless insects, birds, mammals, and smaller plants depend on oaks. Accordingly, we are working to preserve the oaks that are there and improve conditions for new oaks to sprout and survive.

As for the "Wild" part, the site was once wild and we are working to make it (relatively speaking) wild again. I've been fortunate enough to visit true wilderness in the mountains, and have pictured in my dreams how the vast tallgrass prairies of southern Wisconsin might have once looked. It's my hope that we can rekindle enough of the

latent wildness of the land to evoke something of what our ancestors saw when they came through these hills. In the words of Terry Tempest Williams: "Wildness reminds us what it means to be human, what we are connected to rather than what we are separate from." Our hope is that future visitors will find inner rejuvenation and outward community in the wild corners of this place.

One final note: the site is historically and culturally rich. How do we properly honor those who came before us? We have been in conversation with officers and allies of the Ho-Chunk tribe, and our work nurturing these relationships will continue. We have researched the history of and had conversations with families who lived on the land in the past. There were at least three homesteads there. We are preserving the old barns at the historic Sonstebly farmstead and converting the farmyard into the main entrance for the property. The other two homesteads have ruins that can be featured along future hiking trails. And we expect that there will be other naming opportunities within the site - a council ring, different trails, a boardwalk, and more - to honor those who came before us as well as those deeply involved in the current project.

This is a big moment for the Wild Oaks Preserve - we've come a long way since we acquired this property less than three years ago!

Fil Sanna

Thank you to all who have given their time, energy, support, and creativity to Wild Oaks Preserve. We are still working on safe access to the site. If you want to visit Wild Oaks, contact us, or attend one of our many work days or events there! Find details at www.driftlessconservancy.org/calendar-of-events.

Interested in protecting your land? Give us a call at 608.930.3252 for a confidential discussion.

TAKE A LONG-TERM VIEW

What are some ways to leave a positive, lasting impact on our world? Helping found a land trust is a pretty good one. So is a permanent conservation easement on private land with diverse native ecosystems. Joining DALC's Legacy Society and supporting our future is another. And David Kopitzke and Paul Klawiter have done all three.

Their deep love and care for the Driftless began nearly fifty years ago. Paul grew up in Eau Claire, and David grew up in Indiana. They met at UW-Madison, and later David ended up in Milwaukee. But since they were both nature lovers, they wanted to live out in the country, and started searching for a spot. On field trips for his master's degree in plant ecology, David had been out to Southwest Wisconsin. "I said, oh, that's a pretty part of the state, let's look there."

And in 1974, they found the perfect place: fifty acres tucked into a steep valley in Richland County, part of a former farmstead. Over the years, they were able to add another thirty-plus acres. This land showcases nearly all the diversity of habitats the Driftless has to offer. It ranges from a small hilltop prairie to a wetland along a river bottom. There are warmer, drier south-facing slopes supporting oak and hickory, and cooler, shadier north-facing slopes supporting maple, basswood, and yellow birch, which is uncommon in this part of the state. A small spring flows into a trout stream that leads to a four-acre wetland, a later addition to the property. "That's where we hear spring peepers," David notes.

The wide range of native plants on the land was a great match for David's skill in botanical illustration, as well as the native plant nursery he ran on the property for ten years, with woodland flowers growing under a big maple in the front yard. The old barn offered abundant hay for mulching their garden. In return, Paul and Dave worked to steward the land, especially by planting, tending, and protecting oaks. The combination of working full-time and owning a large property meant it was important to pick their battles when it came to restoration projects. But Paul still picked a big one: clearing out the black locust blanketing the hillside behind their house.

Originally found further south of our region, black locust trees are fast-growing and have been widely planted for erosion control. Unfortunately, they spread rapidly and

form dense stands that crowd out native species. They also resprout from roots and cut stumps, making them very difficult to remove. But Paul's arduous fight against the black locusts paid off – first with lots of firewood, and today with a young forest of diverse native trees where ephemeral wildflowers bloom in the spring.



David leads a group of visitors up to sandstone outcrops on the property. Photo by Katie Abbott.

While David and Paul were growing oaks and wildflowers, something new was growing all across Wisconsin: the land trust movement. Responding to increased suburban sprawl and loss of farmland, conservationists all over the state came together in the 80s and 90s to create organizations that could protect special places forever.

At the time, David was working for the DNR's Bureau of Endangered Resources. In the late 90s, he was part of a group of conservationists brought together by Vicki Elkin, then the executive director of Gathering Waters, Wisconsin's alliance for land trusts. David and others agreed that the Driftless Area needed protection. But who would provide it?

To the east of the Driftless, Groundswell Conservancy (originally the Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation) was founded in 1983, and on the river bluffs to the west, Mississippi Valley Conservancy was founded in 1997. But both organizations were too busy to expand into the heart of Wisconsin's Driftless Area.



One of David's botanical illustrations, a beautiful burr oak that is now part of DALC's logo!



A farm road through the forest on the property. Photo by Katie Abbott.

"So," David says, "we bit the bullet and started a separate land trust."

David credits DALC's early success with board members who brought lots of diverse talents to the table. Eventually, the young organization hired its first staff member, started closing conservation easements, and kept growing, becoming nationally accredited in 2017.

"Accreditation is very important," David notes. "It makes the whole organization more credible." (To learn more about DALC's accreditation, visit page 9!)

From the start, David and Paul hoped that their property would be eligible for a conservation easement with the organization they had supported from day one. Wanting to be sure that the easement was free from conflict, David was not involved in any board decisions. The merits of this diverse landscape were enough to warrant permanent protection, and the property received its conservation easement in 2015.

"Neither of us regret it or had any hesitation about doing that," Paul says.

Today, the land will always have the protection of the conservation easement. Knowing that DALC will always be here to defend it, Paul and David decided to include us in their will to ensure that our organization has the resources it needs to keep doing good work. (See page 11 for more information about how you can do the same by joining our Legacy Society!) But what else does the future hold for this place? And how can landowners prepare for it?

Biodiversity has always been a primary focus of land stewardship for David and Paul, but in the face of climate change, it's even more significant. A tulip tree, historically found in warmer regions to the south and east of Wisconsin, is thriving in a neighbor's yard, demonstrating how plant ranges are shifting north.

That's why Paul and David emphasize flexibility, and, in

David's words, "Taking a long-term view." Managing land for a broad diversity of species – instead of monocultures of aggressive plants, like black locust – enhances ecological functions such as food for wildlife, ground water recharge, and carbon storage. It allows species to find the resources they need or move to more suitable locations as conditions shift. Overall, thriving ecosystems are better adapted to a changing climate.

But biodiversity wasn't the only reason for the conservation easement. "Also, in the back of both our minds, we didn't want to see irresponsible development," David says. "To me, that's a big part of the reason for Driftless Area Land Conservancy – prevent the breaking up of land."

"We didn't want to see irresponsible development," David says. "To me, that's a big part of the reason for Driftless Area Land Conservancy – prevent the breaking up of land."

Fragmenting land with houses and roads reduces habitat, increases weedy species, and prevents plants and animals from moving freely. As part of our goal to protect 16,000 acres of land in the Driftless by 2027 – doubling the amount we conserved in our first 20 years – DALC is striving to create large, contiguous blocks of protected properties that will forever support people, wildlife, agriculture, and beautiful views across the Driftless.

Paul and David both hope that more private landowners will see how important their role is in protecting and sustaining wildlife habitat, green space, and biodiversity.

"I think public lands are very important," David says. "But for private landowners, it should be a responsibility, and really a joy, to do stewardship on one's own property."

Emilee Martell (emilee@driftlessconservancy.org)



David shaking hands with former Executive Director David Clutter upon finalizing the Kopitzke-Klawiter conservation easement.

TWO DRIFTLESS TRAIL SEGMENTS NEARING COMPLETION

After opening the re-routed Weaver Road Segment of the Driftless Trail last year, just north of Governor Dodge State Park, we are excited to announce great progress on two additional pieces of the Driftless Trail. The Knobs Road Segment, north of Ridgeway, is now in the “trial run” phase, open to a limited group who will provide feedback. In October, the Phoebe Point Trail on the Taliesin property, near Spring Green, will open to the general public.

The 2.7-mile Knobs Road Segment can stretch to a four-mile loop by walking Knobs Road in between the trail ends. This trail crosses a property where Dave and Ann Zimrin raise grass-fed beef, sold under the Butler Family Farm label. Hikers will pass through an old orchard, woods, prairies, a wide valley where cows are rotationally grazed, and a mile-long ridge with impressive views and perennial crops. The relatively short hike offers a lot of variety. Stay tuned for the official opening date.

Last year, Driftless Area Land Conservancy and the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation agreed to co-brand the Phoebe Point and Welsh Hills trails on the Taliesin property as part of the Driftless Trail. Natural landscapes were integral to Mr. Wright’s designs, and from both of these trails, you get sweeping views of the landscape that, in his words, “picks you up in its arms and so gently, almost lovingly, cradles you.”

The 1.1-mile Phoebe Point Trail will be opened in October. It will traverse a slope where prairie and savanna restoration is in progress, then follow a ridge with views up and down the Wisconsin River and across much of the Lowery Creek watershed, including the Welsh Hills. This fall, we will also begin to construct an extension of the Welsh Hills Trail, which has been open to the public for several years.

By the end of 2025, we hope to complete the Driftless Trail from Tower Hill State Park through the Taliesin property. From there, we will route the trail south through the Lowery Creek watershed and begin trail construction on the Blue Mound State Park end of the project area.

As this project evolves, its value for educating people about nature and land management, protecting and stewarding a long conservation corridor, building community, and simply connecting people to this amazing landscape is becoming abundantly clear. We are immensely grateful to landowners who are making this possible by hosting the trail on their property and to volunteers who help on multiple fronts.

Enjoy hiking the Weaver Road Segment and (soon) Phoebe Point Trail by finding trail guides at driftlessconservancy.org/driftless-trail.

Barb Barzen (barb@driftlessconservancy.org)

Top, left to right: The bridge over a stream on Knobs Road Trail, built by volunteers in 2022; a workday on the Phoebe Point Trail; and Phoebe Point itself, overlooking the Wisconsin River. Bottom: The striking vista of the Welsh Hills around Phoebe Point. All photos by Barb Barzen.



STUDENTS HELP TACKLE CLIMATE DISRUPTION



Dodgeville High School - Braudi Reyes and Owen Tiber are two of the DHS 1st place award winners in the Penny Wise & Earth Smart Story Contest.

Driftless Area high school students are attuned to the challenges associated with climate disruption. However, they are not just wringing their hands over it. Many are ready to help.

With support from DALC’s Clean, Local Energy Alliance – Now! (CLEA-N) project, area high school students have been researching ways they can make a difference. And what better place to begin than in their own school buildings? With energy costs typically being school districts’ second-highest expense, schools are ideally positioned to benefit from energy efficiency and small-scale solar opportunities.

This spring, CLEA-N sponsored the Penny-Smart & Earth-Wise Story contest. The initial goal of the contest was to have students create a compelling “story” to demonstrate the financial benefits of advancing energy efficiencies and rooftop solar. For this contest, a story could be any method that would best convey their message. Students created working models, Power Point presentations, videos, and demonstrations. Multiple entries came in from four of the five Iowa County high schools.

The secondary goal was to have these stories inspire their school administration and boards to take the next step and commit to the formation of a Clean Energy Transition Team (CETT) or similar. Students in the Mineral Point (MPHS) and Dodgeville (DHS) high schools are well on their way to doing just that.

This summer, CLEA-N hosted a picnic in each of those communities to pull together students, community members, school administrators, and board members. The response has been very encouraging. School officials expressed admiration for the enthusiasm of the students

and voiced support for moving initiatives forward in their school districts. Aaron Dunn, Mineral Point School Board president, advised, “You don’t know how much power you have. Build your team and formulate some ideas; the board will be moved to act.”

Students in both high schools have not waited for the next school year to begin to dig into the work. In Mineral Point, students have met with their principal, Matt Austin, to set up the parameters for a new group they’re calling the Earth Wise Club. The founding club members are meeting throughout the summer in preparation for a successful launch of the new club in September. They are also making initial plans for some engaging demonstrations and displays to share at MPHS’s Wisconsin Science Festival event in October.

Meanwhile at DHS, Principal Ryan Bohnsack and science teacher Karri Roh-Wasley are meeting with interested students to help launch some of the energy efficiency and solar pilot projects the students touted in their contest entries last spring. Students will have the opportunity to share their progress with the wider community at the DHS College & Career Fair later this fall.

DALC is pleased to be engaging area high school students in fostering a stable, vibrant environment in the Driftless Area and the world beyond. With the students’ enthusiasm and help from our generous supporters, a bright future lies ahead for their generation and for those to follow.

Chuck Tennesen (charles@driftlessconservancy.org)



Mineral Point High School - Margot Fritard and the Earth Wise Club’s president, Kalea Biddick, won awards in MPHS’s Penny Wise & Earth Smart Story Contest.



SDG partners complete an inventory of a remnant prairie. Photo by Mike Engel.



SDG intern Floreal Crubaugh catches a bumblebee as part of her summer surveying. Photo by Cindy Becker.

DALC RENEWS NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

After a rigorous review process by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, we are excited to share that our accreditation has been renewed!

Protecting land in perpetuity means every land trust must be strong, responsible, and ready to face the future. Accreditation shows that Driftless Area Land Conservancy is verified to be operating at the highest possible conservation standards. The national Land Trust Alliance sets best practices for land trusts across the country, focusing on four key areas:

- Sound finances
- Ethical conduct
- Responsible governance
- Lasting stewardship

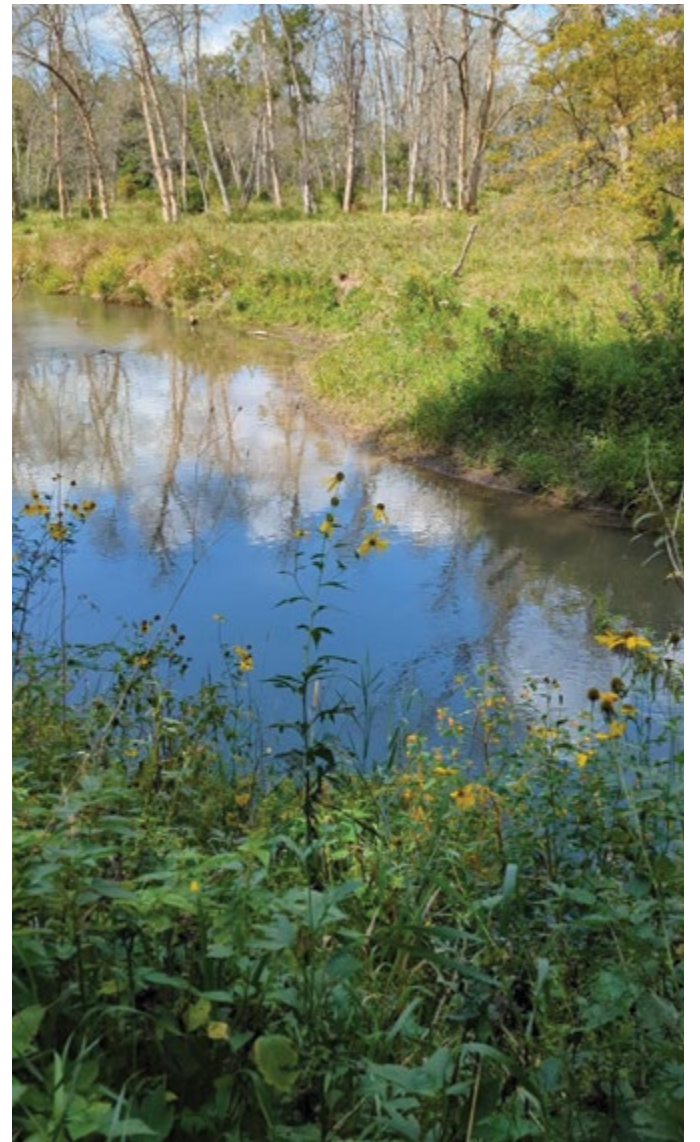
To demonstrate that we are excelling in each of these areas, DALC provided extensive documentation and was subject to a comprehensive third-party evaluation. Only after this in-depth review were we awarded renewed accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, signifying its confidence that DALC's lands will be protected forever.

"We are proud to recognize DALC's continued commitment to conservation excellence," said Melissa Kalvestrand, executive director of the Commission. "The accreditation seal is a mark of distinction that stands for excellence, trust, and permanence. Accredited land trusts

"Protecting land in perpetuity means every land trust must be strong, responsible, and ready to face the future."

inspire confidence and respect among their peers and in their communities." DALC goes through the renewal process every five years to ensure that we continue to follow best practices for land trusts. A huge thanks to you, our Driftless community, for supporting all the work it took to get here! We are so happy to keep partnering with you to protect the places we love.

Emilee Martell (emilee@driftlessconservancy.org)



Fall-blooming split leaf coneflowers line the bank of Mill Creek in Arena, WI, on a property forever protected by a conservation easement. Photo by Chris Anding.

SOUTHERN DRIFTLESS GRASSLANDS IS FLEDGING THE NEXT GENERATION

Recently, I've been interacting with a colleague who signs off with "Keep growing bobolinks" and another who signs "Invest in conservation." I find both of these inspiring. Every time, I smile and pump the air, thinking, "That is exactly what this partnership is doing!"

"Neighbors working with neighbors across fences. It is a beautiful thing."

One of our top priorities is to accelerate land protection in key conservation landscapes, Bird Conservation Areas (BCA), within the SDG geography. BCAs are blocks of land that provide the essential habitat to support healthy populations of grassland birds. Two SDG partners, DALC and The Prairie Enthusiasts, are both involved in a number of land projects within the BCAs this year that will protect grassland habitat and biodiverse prairie and savanna remnants permanently from development.

How do we identify these key landscapes? One way is our Prairie Savanna Project, where we are working to fill in the gaps of knowledge on the status and restorability of prairie and savanna remnants in the region. This year, our pilot year of the project, we are on target to assess the condition of 80 - 90 prairie and/or savanna remnants in Dane County. All landowners will receive information about what was found and also an offer of outreach and assistance.

We are also excited to be building relationships with

owners of working grasslands like pastures, planted prairies, and hayfields. Well-managed working grasslands provide a lot of unseen benefits - they store carbon, build soil, keep soil in place and out of our streams, and support declining grassland birds like bobolinks.

Our capacity to learn more about grasslands in our region was expanded this year when SDG hired its first Conservation Intern, Floreal Crubaugh. Floreal has been involved in a mapping project to identify grassland cover within one of our priority landscapes, and conducting bumble bee surveys on prairie remnants and plantings on private lands.

Tying it all together, we continue to host our Potlucks on Private Lands. Our neighborhood potlucks are bringing people together to talk about restoration, cost-share opportunities, and creating blocks of grassland habitat. Neighbors working with neighbors across fences. It is a beautiful thing.

So, it has been a very exciting and fun year thus far. It sure seems to me that our collective investments in conservation ARE growing more bobolinks, and fledging more conservation awareness and enthusiasm. GO TEAM!

To learn more about the partnership and DALC's role in it, please visit the DALC website. If you would like to learn more about the programs I mention here, please contact me at cindy@driftlessconservancy.org or 608-425-0464.

Cindy Becker (cindy@driftlessconservancy.org)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



This summer, we celebrated our 30th anniversary of owning "Dry Dog Ranch" - a group of connected properties in Muscoda, owned by five friends and totaling over 700 acres. In later July, we had a cook-out at the farm with almost 100 attending. We celebrated many of our accomplishments and thanked many of those who have helped and advised us along the way. The

farm was offered at a Federal Marshall auction at the courthouse steps in Dodgeville in June of 1993, and our group of five was the successful bidder.

Our initial interest was hunting but soon turned to land improvements. Native prairies have been established, thousands of trees planted (and replanted), lots of invasive species are being battled, and many prescribed burns in the prairie and woods have been conducted.

After all this work, we asked ourselves, how can we protect this into the future? Twelve years ago, we teamed up with DALC and put six conservation easements on adjacent properties, totaling more than 700 acres. Conservation easements help preserve our many years of conservation improvements, keep this large tract of land intact, prevent fragmentation, and make passing land to future generation easier.

We are happy to report that all the original five owners are still around and enjoying nature. We have had some changes in ownership but our interests remain common.

Our friends and children (and grandchildren!) are also engaged with the land and carry on the tradition of stewardship that has been started here.



Dry Dog owners and former DALC executive director, David Clutter, at the celebration of the conservation easements.

It is fall and we need to get the deer stands ready, make selective timber harvest plans for the woods for winter, prep the bluebird boxes for next year's chicks, and order native grass seeds, shrubs, and trees for spring planting. And of course, we can always work on invasives!

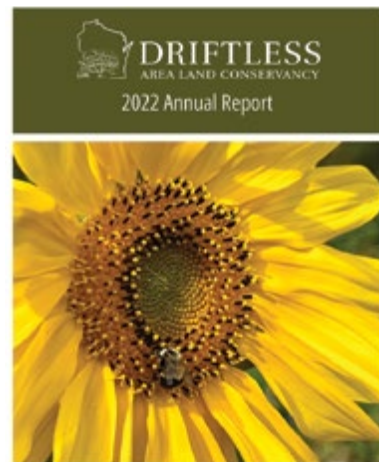
I hope that those that are still here for the next 30-year anniversary are still enjoying the property as much as I have the last 30 years!

Sincerely,
Dale

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

As partners, volunteers, and financial supporters, you make land protection and stewardship in Southwest Wisconsin's Driftless Area possible. Thank you for helping build a more hopeful and sustainable future!

This year, we've reformatted our Annual Report as a separate document from our summer-fall newsletter, and moved our list of 2022 donors, volunteers, and other supporters entirely online. Please visit www.driftlessconservancy.org/2022-annual-report to view this information.



Annual report cover photo by Betsy Haynes

You are also welcome to request a physical copy of the Annual Report, featuring highlight stories of 2022 and our 2022 financial report, to be mailed to you by emailing emilee@driftlessconservancy.org or calling our office at 608-930-3252.

Thank you for helping build a more hopeful and sustainable future!



A sweeping view of the Blue River Valley at Snow Bottom State Natural Area in Green County. Photo by Joshua Mayer.

THE DRIFTLESS LEGACY SOCIETY

There are few places in the world as unique as the Driftless Area of Southwest Wisconsin. That is why protecting its critical habitat and beautiful spaces is vitally important. We gratefully thank our Driftless Legacy Society members for their commitment to this distinctive landscape. By including DALC in your estate plan, you too can protect and care for the land you love for generations to come.

If you have an interest in joining our Legacy Society please let us know by contacting us at (608) 930-3252 or email emilee@driftlessconservancy.org. We value such a profound commitment to our mission and would appreciate the opportunity to thank you in your lifetime.

And right now, your future gift will help us unlock up to \$10,000! Board member Mark Mittelstadt, one of DALC's founders, has generously pledged to donate \$1,000 to Driftless Area Land Conservancy in honor of every new member of the Legacy Society. But, this will only apply to the first ten new members, and those who join before the end of 2023. If you're interested in joining the Legacy Society, let us know and unlock a gift in your honor! Find more details at www.driftlessconservancy.org/join-the-legacy-society.

Thanks to you, and to those who treasure these lands, the future looks brighter.

DRIFTLESS LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
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DRIFTLESS

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UPCOMING EVENTS

www.driftlessconservancy.org



Phoebe Point work day. Photo by Barb Barzen

We are excited to offer the following workdays, workshops, and field trips this fall. **Please register for these free events at www.driftlessconservancy.org/events.**

DRIFTLESS TRAIL WORKDAY

October 6 | 9am-4pm | Taliesin property, Spring Green

Join us for part or all of the day to construct new trail on the Taliesin property, to Phoebe Point and the top of the Welsh Hills. Trail building is a fun social activity and very rewarding. We provide the tools, and no previous experience is required.

TRAIL BUILDING WORKSHOP

October 7 | 8:30am-4pm | Taliesin property, Spring Green

If you are interested in volunteering to help build or maintain trails OR you have trails on your land that need attention, join us for this trail building workshop! This full-day experience will

be led by Willie Bittner, who designs and builds trails internationally through his La Crosse-based business, Great Lakes Trailbuilders. He will share the basics of trail design, teach us "how water thinks", and give us plenty of hands-on practice with a variety of tools as we construct a segment of the Driftless Trail. Registration is required and will be limited to 12 participants.

INSTALLING SOLAR PANELS AT RURAL PROPERTIES

October 20 | 1-3pm | Cates Family Farm, Spring Green

This is a Lowery Creek Watershed Initiative workshop. We go through the process of installing a solar photovoltaic array on a rural property, including choosing an installer, grants to apply for, tax rebates, site selection, and more. We will also cover post-installation items such as kW generation and billing. This workshop will be led by Eric Cates, Dick Cates, and Peter Fiala from the Legacy Solar Wisconsin Cooperative.

SANDHILL CRANE VIEWING

November 4th | 4:30-6pm | near Spring Green

Every year, thousands of sandhill cranes gather on the Lower Wisconsin River as they prepare to migrate south for the winter. Join us to get a prime view of this incredible natural spectacle from a bluff above the river, and learn about the history and conservation of sandhill cranes from Jeb Barzen, who directed the Field Ecology Department at the International Crane Foundation for many years.

DON'T MISS OUT ON ANY OF OUR DRIFTLESS EVENTS THIS YEAR!

Sign up for our monthly eNews and get the latest on local conservation news, programs and volunteer opportunities. This free email will come just once a month along with any other special messages. Visit www.driftlessconservancy.org to sign up today. And, find us on Facebook and Instagram for more news and links to important work happening across the region.

Our mission is to maintain and enhance the health, diversity and beauty of Southwest Wisconsin's natural and agricultural landscape through permanent land protection and restoration, and improve people's lives by connecting them to the land and to each other.

EVENTS: DRIFTLESSCONSERVANCY.ORG/EVENTS
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