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P.O. Box 896 Mount Pleasant, MI 48804-0896
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Volunteer Opportunities

Do you have a helping hand that is itching to help the Conservancy? We can regularly use help with mailing newsletters, conducting membership drives and fund appeals. If you have computer skills and familiarity with MS Word or MS Excel, we are developing new mailing lists that can be compiled from home. Following are several opportunities available now:

- Capital campaign fund appeal
- New membership appeal mailing list development
- Sylvan Solace Butterfly Garden maintenance
- Education and publicity outreach
- Spring Banquet Committee
- Stewardship Committee



Call the office at (989) 644-5045 to volunteer or to get more details on these opportunities.

Board of Directors

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Keith Frame: Treasurer, Investments
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CWC Land Protection Successes

22 Easements- 2,868 acres
13 Preserves - 289 acres
Total - 3,157 acres

County	Acres
Clare	1,966
Gratiot	104
Isabella	435
Mecosta	181
Montcalm	471



HERON TRACKS

Heron Tracks

The Official Newsletter of the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy

Volume 16, No. 1

First Annual Fall Benefit



"Art from Our Parks" participants on a guided nature walk



Rick Stevens - in the style of Jackson Pollock

November 1, 2008 was a gorgeous day in Isabella County. Blue skies and mild temperatures greeted those in attendance at the first annual "Art from Our Parks" celebration at Isabella County's Deerfield Nature Park to benefit the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy and promote parks in the county. At a cost of \$5 for adults and \$2 for children, a jam-packed four hours from noon until 4 p.m. offered many attractions to see, hear and try. Artists engaged in "plein air," or on-location painting in watercolors, acrylics and oils gave interested on-lookers ample opportunity to see park-inspired paintings come together with practiced strokes and skilled eye. There was poetry reading, storytelling, caricature drawing, a juggler, and live music, all courtesy of Art Reach of Mid Michigan. Members of the Central Michigan University Wildlife Society and the CWC led a short nature walk to show off the sights to be seen along one of the parks trails. For the kids, there was the Isabella County Parks Creation Station, featuring ash bat painting as part of the Emerald Ash Borer awareness and "Don't Move Firewood" campaigns with 2% funding support from the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, and a community mural painting opportunity. A bonfire crackled. Entry to the activities also included a chance to sample several delicious gourmet soups from Dixie Dave's Wild Game Soup Company. The day ended with a captivating demonstration of the "Jackson Pollock abstract technique," by local artist Rick Stevens, who used a variety of paints provided by the Isabella County Material Recycling Facility and even some of the park grasses to craft an impression on a large canvas that now hangs in the new Isabella County Commission on Aging building.

There are so many people to thank for making this entertaining and exciting event a reality. First, a big thank-you to organizers Rick Stevens from Art Reach of Mid Michigan, CWC member Leone Weber, well-known supporter and promoter of the local art community, and Sue Ann Kopmeyer and Katrina Stock from Isabella County Parks and Recreation, for all their hard work with planning and execution. Thanks too, to Mike Marsh, Walt Farley and Lindsay Belonga from Isabella County Parks and Recreation, for their behind the scenes support, and to Keith Miller and Clay Wilton of the Wildlife Society for their interpretive walk. Finally, we say a sincere thank you to all of the artists in each of their specialties, who gave of their time and energy to share the day and their talents with all who attended. We couldn't be more pleased with the success of this initial event and we look forward to an even bigger activity next year.

In this Issue Winter 2009

- Fall Benefit
- Executive Director's Corner
- President's Statement
- IRA Rollover info.
- Director Profile
- Upcoming Events
- Neely Preserve- our newest!
- Dow Foundation Grant
- Peterson Natural Area Grants
- Spring Banquet sign up sheet
- Donor List

Executive Director's Corner



Stan Lilley,
CWC Executive Director



Random Notes

Happy New Year and thank you for all you did to make 2008 a successful year. Have you taken stock in what you have accomplished with the CWC in the past year? It began with Steve and Carrie Tluczek's 40-acre permanent conservation easement in Mecosta County and it ended with the purchase of the 22-acre Neely Preserve in Isabella County, one of five new preserves totaling 147 acres that we added last year. We met the endowment fund challenge of the second and final year of the \$50,000 Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation. With your support we are now protecting 289 acres of land in 13 preserves and helping 22 families protect the heritage and conservation values on another 2,868 acres for the benefit of us all while the land remains in private ownership. Have you been considering donating land or a conservation easement? What a great new year's resolution that would be. If you are ready to take the plunge, we are ready to work with you to make your dreams a reality.

We have a new logo! After several years of careful consideration of many different designs and themes, the Board of Directors of the CWC approved the logo you see on this newsletter to represent our organization. We aren't publishing the newsletter in color yet, so you can't see its full beauty in this medium. You can go to the Web site at www.ChippewaWatershedConservancy.org to see the color version. We think the land aspect, characterized by the green leaf touching the ripple, the water aspect of our mission, effectively portrays



our overall purpose, to protect the natural space and wildlife habitat of the counties we serve. The Wordmark portion of the logo combines the initials of our organization, by which many know us, with our full name for those who don't yet know us. You'll still see us using the heron and the other symbols we've always used, but we are excited to have this new logo and look forward to building our marketing and public awareness programs around it. I especially want to acknowledge the efforts of Logo Committee members **Tim Odykirk** and **Amy Shindorf**, and three graphic artists who worked on various versions: **Kyo Takahashi**, **Aimee Bentley** and **Sharisa Petrowsky**. Thank you for your hard work. Let us know what you think about the new logo. Send us your feedback to info@ChippewaWatershedConservancy.org.

We are already heavily engaged in planning for the annual **Spring Banquet**, set this year for Thursday, April 16. We are offering a wonderful opportunity this year with the raffle - \$500 cash or your chance for immortality. The winner will have a choice between \$500 cash or the naming rights to our 25-acre preserve at the north end of Isabella County's Coldwater Lake (subject to Board of Director approval of the desired name). This would be a great opportunity for someone to create a lasting legacy by choosing a family name like our current Neyer Preserve, or choosing something unique, like our Winawa Preserve or Sylvan Solace Preserve. Or, who couldn't use \$500 cash? Raffle tickets will go on sale beginning in February for \$10 each or three for \$20. Your chances of winning are much better than with the lottery and all of the proceeds go toward meeting our operating costs.

Does your company have a matching gift program? Many companies offer to match the charitable gifts of their current and retired employees. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy qualifies to receive matching gifts. If your company has a program, please consider asking them to match your gift to us. If your company doesn't have a program, why not ask them to start one?



Donor List (September 11, 2008 – January 15, 2009) – Thank You for Your Support

Anonymous
Norma Bailey
Brigitte Bechtold
Scott Bellinger & Lori Rogers
Jim & Marilyn Bidwell
Don & Claudette Bosscawen
Arlin Briley
Al & Cindy Bryan
John & Karen Caldwell
Mike & Sue Carey
Annette Clark
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Robert & Joan Clute
Harold & Mary Cook
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Fremont Area Community Foundation
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Robert & Cordelia Kohrman
Sue Ann Kopmeyer
Ronald Marmarelli
Daniel & Sharon Milan
Carol Miller
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Francis & Mary Molson
Clara Lee R. Moodie
Ellen Moss
Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation
Julie Murphy
Arlene Murray
Cathy Murray
Muskegon River Watershed Assembly
Don & Nancy Nagler
Dixie Neier
Nestle Waters, N.A., Inc.
Kathleen O'Connor
Dr. Mary C. & Dr. Peter Obuchowski
Tim & Elizabeth Odykirk

Jeanne Pfeiffer
Powell Brothers LLC.
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Larry & Judy Schaftenaar
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Leone Weber
Robert Welsh
Tom & Marje Williams
Jo A. Wilson
Dan & Millie Wujek
Lucille Wysong
Basil & Theresa Zimmer
Marilyn Zorn

Donations in Memory of Special People

Dave & Eunice Burgess in memory of Cathy & Dan Weber
Tom & Sarah Delia in memory of Mary Crotty
Richard & Brenda Donley in memory of Leland "Bud" Hines
Michael & Rhea Dow in memory of William Brehm
Betty Stephenson in memory of Lee Jeppesen
E. Diane Tope in memory of Esther & Jack Brewster
Dianne L. Haas in memory of Elaine Hughes
Jan Hewlett in memory of Jim Novosad
Virginia Kjolhede in memory of Ted Kjolhede
Dolores J. Lawrence in memory of Joe Lawrence
Ruth Magnell in memory of Ken Magnell
Marilyn & Joe Martin in memory of Ted Kjolhede
Linda Neely in memory of Harry E. (Gene) and Olga Shiraef Neely

Thank you for your Time

Mike Brockman for Web site management and production of *Heron Tracks* **Donna & John Buckley** for trail maintenance at Sylvan Solace **Doris Dale, Richard and Diana Moreau and Donna Buckley** for work on the butterfly garden **Dianne Haas** for grant writing and event planning advice and assistance **Pat Lilley** for help with mailings **John Mitchell** for invasive species removal at the Williams-Blackburn Preserve **Diane & Michael Morey** for stewardship at Sylvan Solace **Lori Rogers** for grant writing **Larry & Judy Schaftenaar** for hosting a neighborhood open house to discuss the Hall's Lake project **Alicia Shantz**, CMU intern, for numerous projects **Yvonne and Rocky Symon** for stewardship at the Alyce J. Peterson Natural Area

We get so much more done because of our volunteers who generously give their time and energy.



We are once again delighted to report that the CWC has been awarded an operational support grant by the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation of Midland. This three-year, \$97,500 operational support grant is in the form of a challenge. The Dow Foundation will match up to \$30,000 in 2009, \$32,500 in 2010 and \$35,000 in 2011 of contributions received by the CWC from other sources to help carry out our activities.

CWC Executive Director Stan Lilley, stated, "We are thrilled to receive this grant in these difficult economic times. This is a continuation of our partnership with the Herbert and Grace Dow Foundation begun in 2006. But this new grant requires us to do more up front. From 2006-08 the Dow Foundation provided us with \$30,000 at the beginning of each year to start out our activities. The new grant provides funding up to the match level at the end of each year, so those matching dollars won't be available to us until the beginning of the following year."

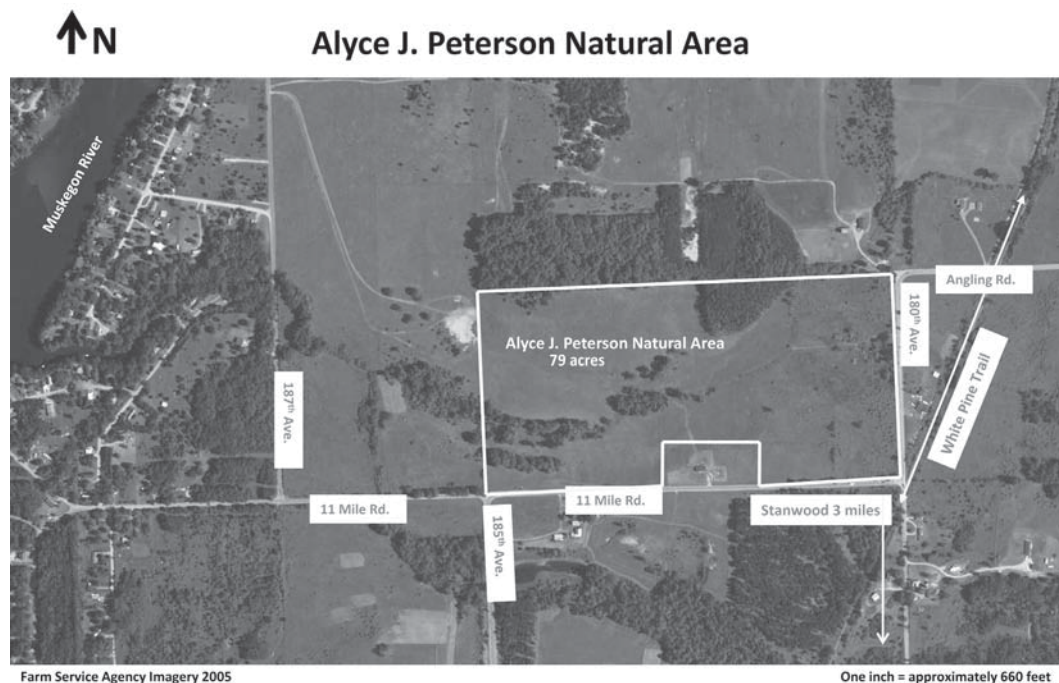
The good news is, by your generous response to our end of year fund appeal, we already have \$7,500 toward the challenge. And if we raise more than \$30,000 in contributions this year, the excess amount can be applied to the next year's challenge.

"We've achieved a lot in the past couple of years, both in terms of land preservation and public support. We still need to raise the required amounts to meet the challenge, but this grant will substantially help us to continue to serve the people of our area as we work to ensure important lands are preserved for the benefit of future generations. We are grateful to the Herbert and Grace Dow Foundation for their reaffirmation of support to our mission," said Lilley.

Grants Received for Alyce J. Peterson Natural Area

The Chippewa Watershed Conservancy has been awarded multiple grants to assist in cleanup and restoration efforts at the Alyce J. Peterson Natural Area near Stanwood. The Fremont Area Community Foundation approved a grant of \$13,600 from the Ice Mountain Environmental Stewardship Fund to help clean up hazards on the property and restore grassland. In addition, several other area organizations are supporting the project. The Mecosta County Community Foundation has provided \$1,500 toward asbestos abatement and the Muskegon River Watershed Assembly contributed \$500 toward reseeding. Nestle Waters, N.A., awarded \$1,850 for signage and a stewardship endowment. We have in-kind labor donations of \$2,000 from Symon Excavating and Medler Trucking toward cost for demolition of buildings and grading.

The Conservancy received the 79-acre property in June 2008 from the estate of Alyce Peterson, a long-time Stanwood resident, who died on August 31, 2007, at the age of 91. A small, unnamed creek flows through the property and empties into the Muskegon River less than a mile to the west. Grassland along both sides of the creek provides water quality enhancement by preventing erosion and by filtering out sediments that otherwise would enter the river. The area provides habitat for ground-nesting species of songbirds and refuge for all manner of flora and fauna.



The parcel includes several buildings which contained asbestos. The grants support plans to remove the asbestos, demolish the remainder of the buildings and restore the area. Our cleanup and restoration project provides a distinct public benefit through the water quality enhancement afforded to the watershed by the preserve's status as a permanently undeveloped parcel of land as well as the opportunity for quiet enjoyment of nature on the property. CWC Executive Director Stan Lilley said, "These grants are the culmination of a great collaborative effort to clean up the property, enhance water quality in the watershed, and provide a sanctuary for wildlife as Alyce Peterson wanted. We are grateful to all of the partners who are helping with this project."

Asbestos abatement has been completed and demolition of the remainder of the buildings, begun in November, will be completed in the spring.



A Letter from a Friend

A letter arrived just before Christmas. It was a thank you note from one of our donors; one of our conservation easement donors to be exact. Because of what we have done together; he is more than that. He is a friend.

He thanked us for what we have done for him, and for his family. He thanked us for helping them keep the land they love in their family for one more generation; and hopefully for many, many more.

He also thanked us for the care with which we had treated his needs.

His letter spoke to me of his love for that land and how partnering with us had helped him ensure those same woods and fields could be there for his grandkids.

That one letter meant more to me than all the Christmas cards combined, for he was thanking us for being what we are – the CWC.

That letter was for you.

You are the people who make this possible. Without you the CWC would just be one of those great things that should have happened – but never did. It's that simple. Your donations over the years, large or small, have come from your hearts, because you care about this community and the families that are this community. You have protected 35 preserves and conservation easements – each of them a precious home to wildlife and vital to the environmental health of this, our home.

By now you know that what we do together means a whole lot to me, just as I know it means a whole lot to you. And when a letter arrives thanking us for what we have done, it matters even more than how many acres we have protected. I probably say it too much, but together we are building something beautiful.

2009 will see new projects, more wildlife habitat protected for all time, and more families touched by our care. I am truly excited about all we have the chance to accomplish.

So as we start a new year, a new beginning, let me say to each of you with all sincerity – thank you.

John Mitchell

The Charitable IRA Rollover: Another Giving Opportunity

The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, signed into law on October 3, 2008, renews a temporary provision that allows donors age 70 1/2 or older to make a direct, tax-free rollover of up to \$100,000 from a traditional or Roth IRA to a qualified charitable organization such as the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy - but only until December 31, 2009. A direct rollover will be much better for most donors than a taxable IRA withdrawal followed by a charitable gift. Of course, only donors who are sure they will not need these assets at a later date should consider a charitable IRA rollover. Donors of any age can still make a deferred gift of an IRA or other retirement account by naming the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy, Inc. as a beneficiary of the account at their death. Ask your tax or financial advisor for details.



Don Nagler, a well-known Mt. Pleasant MD (retired) and conservation visionary, began serving on the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy Board of Directors in March 1999. The preservation and conservation of natural habitat has always been of great importance to him, especially relative to human use. After coming to practice internal medicine in Mt. Pleasant, he became active in the Sierra Club and the Chippewa Valley Audubon Club. He served for twelve years on the Isabella County Parks and Recreation Commission, most of them as chairman, along with another well-known former CWC Director and long-time area conservationist, the late Bob Ball. His involvement in the development of Coldwater and Deerfield Parks and the beginning of Herrick and Meridian Parks were especially satisfying accomplishments.

“Water resources have been of great interest to me. I like our organizational name,” he said. “This may be genetic as my father was a professor and federal consultant of hydraulic engineering.”



One of the first local recreational activities of what was to become the Nagler family of seven was canoeing the Chippewa and other rivers and lakes in Michigan. They kayaked and sailed them in central Michigan and in the North Channel of Lake Huron. “The Chippewa in winter is especially interesting,” he says. “And we did a lot of camping in Michigan and subsequently in the Western U.S, Canada, and the British Isles.”

“I always have read a lot outside of medicine. My favorites have been H.D. Thoreau, Aldo Leopold, and Sigurd Olson among many ‘nature’ authors.”

“I think my interest in the CWC has had to do with how the natural environment has healing and inspirational qualities for human beings (even primates!). I hope the CWC can contribute to that quality of life for our constituency.”

(Note: This is the fifth in a series of profiles of the CWC Board of Directors. It is their opportunity to provide background and speak to you about why they are involved. All of our Directors are unpaid volunteers whose work is critical to the success of the CWC).

Upcoming Events

Clare County Land Conservation Expo - Mid-Michigan Community College cafeteria - February 25, 2009 (5 – 7:30 p.m.)
Speakers include Dale Allen, Farm Service Agency and Scott Everett, Agricultural Preservation Boards of MI. The Chippewa Watershed Conservancy and Little Forks Conservancy will have information booth and be available to discuss conservation options with landowners.

Land Trust Alliance Midwest Regional Conference - Madison, WI March 12 – 14, 2009

Networking and training opportunities for members, landowners and donors to learn about the latest in land protection activities and best management practices around the region.

Wyman Road Wetlands Tire Cleanup - April 11, 2009 - 9 a.m. to noon

We are teaming up with volunteers from the Isabella County Material Recycling Facility to remove discarded tires from the roadside and adjacent wetlands.

CWC Spring Banquet - Buck's Run - 1559 S. Chippewa Rd., Mt. Pleasant, MI - April 16, 2009

Social hour begins at 5:30 p.m. ; Network with other CWC supporters, bid on great silent auction items, find out who wins the raffle, and enjoy a delicious meal.

Florence Maxwell Audubon Woods Preserve Spring Bird Walk - May 1, 2009 - 9 a.m. to noon

Walk with an expert to identify and enjoy the many species of migrant and resident birds found on the preserve located west of Mt. Pleasant

Florence Maxwell Audubon Woods Preserve Trail Maintenance June 13, 2009 9 a.m. to noon

Help us to restore the trails at this delightful wooded preserve located west of Mt. Pleasant

Sylvan Solace Butterfly Walk - June 20, 2009 - 9:30 a.m. to noon

Join a local butterfly expert as we explore the old fields of this oldest of the CWC preserves, west of Mt. Pleasant.

Please call the CWC office at (989) 644-5045 or email us at info@ChippewaWatershedConservancy.org for details and any changes regarding any of these planned activities

Silent Auction Items Sought

Are you looking for a way to give something other than cash to the CWC? We are looking for new and gently used items for our silent auction to be held at the annual spring banquet on April 16, 2009. Suggested items include: artwork, photographs, bird feeders and houses, nature books, gardening items, educational materials, optics, gift items, jewelry, ceramics, regional items such as maple syrup, soaps, candles, honey etc. If you have something that you think might generate spirited bidding, mail it to the CWC office at 6801 W. Airline Rd., Weidman, MI 48893, or call 989-644-5045 for pickup by April 1.



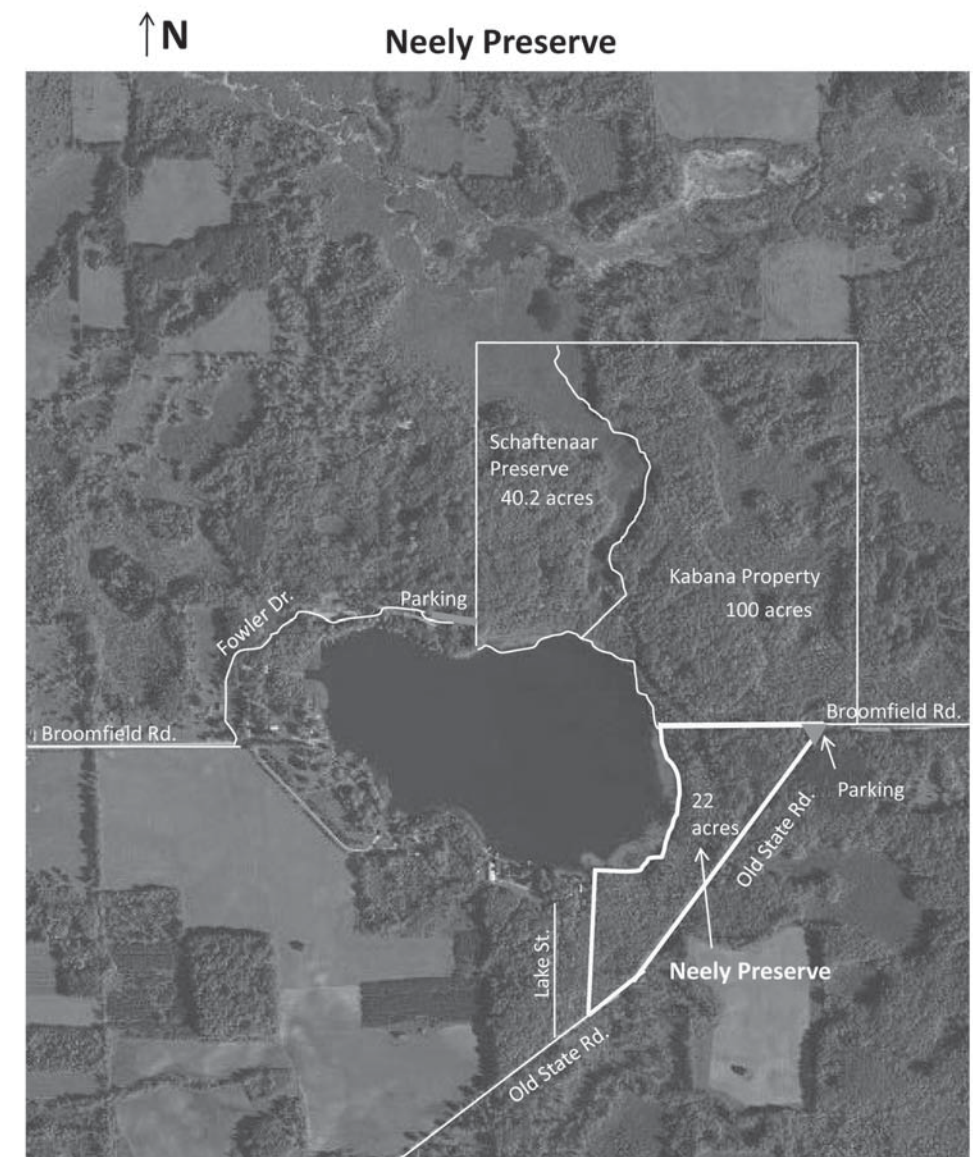
In November 2008 we completed the purchase of a 22-acre tract of land on the south end of Hall's Lake in Isabella County's Broomfield Township for a wildlife sanctuary. This parcel is bordered on the south by historic Old State Road, and portions of the original wooden corduroy road are still visible. It will be open for non-motorized public access.

The property will be named the Neely Preserve, in honor of the late Olga and Harry E. (Gene) Neely. The project was made possible in large part due to a major donation by Linda Neely of St. Louis, MI and Peggy and Al Minert of Holland, MI, who were seeking a way to memorialize their parents through a parcel of land permanently set aside for the benefit of nature.

Approximately 1,300 feet of Hall's Lake shoreline are forever protected from future development by the new preserve. About a half of the land includes hardwood forest and a patch of Red Pine on high ground. The remainder is made up of floodplain, swamp and flooded shrubs and hardwoods. Initial surveys indicated probable breeding status, based on consistent territorial behavior and singing, of Canada Warbler, a beautiful yellow-breasted warbler with a black “necklace.”

This is the first step in what we hope will be a successful effort to preserve as much of the undeveloped eastern half of Hall's Lake as possible. We have been seeking funds to buy about 140 acres more. In the meantime, John Kabana (100 acres) and CWC members Judy and Larry Schaftenaar (40 acres) are protecting the remainder of this western Isabella County treasure as we continue to look for funds. The owners of both of these parcels have generously granted permission for public foot-access between December 1 and September 30. The Schaftenaars have already created nearly ¾ mile of well-marked footpaths on their parcel, which they are calling the Schaftenaar Preserve. This land is accessible at the north end of the lake, at the end of Fowler Drive. Please park on the side of the road away from the lake.

The Neely Preserve can be accessed on the southeast side of Hall's Lake, via Old State Road. A small parking area is located at the bend of the road where Old State intersects with Broomfield Road.



Farm Service Agency Imagery 2005

We are grateful to all of these visionaries, Linda Neely, Peggy and Al Minert, John Kabana and Judy and Larry Schaftenaar, for the roles they are playing in helping to preserve the scenic natural beauty and undeveloped character of the entire eastern side of Hall's Lake. We will announce plans for dedication of this new preserve at a later date.