



**CELEBRATING OUR  
500TH CONSERVATION PROJECT**



**MINNESOTA LAND TRUST  
MID-YEAR REVIEW  
MAY 2016**



“BECAUSE IT’S A RARE OPPORTUNITY TO PERMANENTLY PROTECT PRIVATE PROPERTY SITUATED WITHIN A PRIORITY TARGET FOR LAND AND WATER PRESERVATION.”  
 KRIS LARSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

## A WATERSHED MOMENT FOR AN IMPORTANT WATERSHED

Nearly 25 years ago, a small and diverse group of people gathered at Belwin Conservancy near Afton, MN to talk about the loss of open space in Washington County.

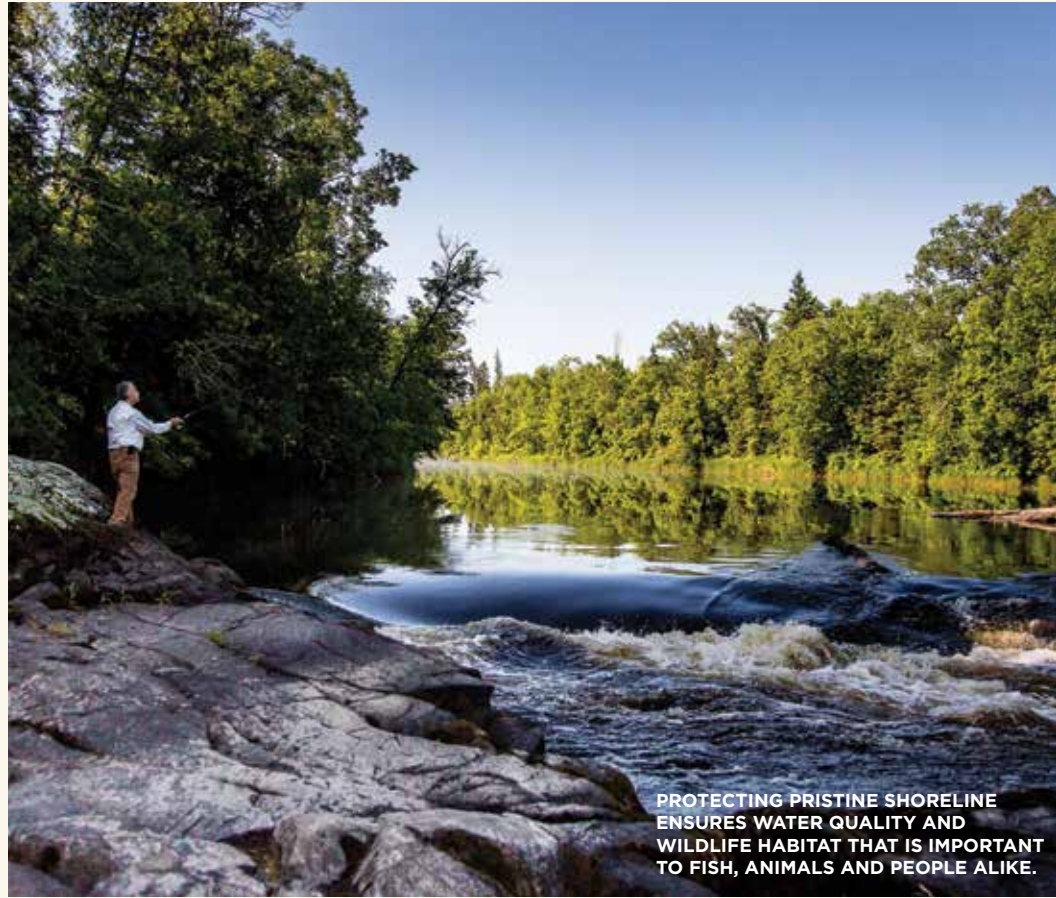
At that time, the group’s ambitions were focused on the nuts and bolts of creating an organization that could sustain the goal of permanent land conservation.

It was beyond their wildest dreams to imagine that, in less than 25 years, their vision of a Washington County Land Trust would grow into a statewide organization with a staff of 17 and a multi-million dollar operating budget.

Over that quarter-century, the Minnesota Land Trust has quietly and efficiently protected some of our state’s most treasured places. These include:

- **PUBLIC DESTINATIONS** such as Grand Marais Harbor, Minnesota Point and Gale Woods Farm;
- Pieces of **MINNESOTA’S HISTORY** like Sigurd Olson’s Listening Point and Ernest Oberholtzer’s Mallard Island;
- **MILES OF SHORELINE** along important waterways such as Lake Superior, the Mississippi River, Duluth Harbor, Burntside and Ten Mile Lake, and Lake Vermilion;
- **CRITICAL WILDLIFE BUFFERS** found in places such as our properties next to Split Rock and St. Croix State Parks;
- **NATURE NEARBY** the Twin Cities including one of the metro’s best trout streams, Valley Creek.

And today we are thrilled to announce that we’ve completed our 500th land conservation project – truly a watershed moment for the Minnesota Land Trust and for our devoted members who have supported this work for nearly a quarter century.



PROTECTING PRISTINE SHORELINE ENSURES WATER QUALITY AND WILDLIFE HABITAT THAT IS IMPORTANT TO FISH, ANIMALS AND PEOPLE ALIKE.

It’s an important achievement to be sure, but made even more so by the conservation impact of this 500th project.

Located on Tucker Lake in the Rainy River watershed in far northern Minnesota, the protected land and surrounding area contains some of the largest blocks of unfragmented forest habitat in our state.

“We’re excited about this project because it’s a rare opportunity to permanently protect private property situated within a priority target for land and water preservation,” observed Executive Director Kris Larson.

Even more, this project touches the northern border of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. This means that we’ve added more undisturbed natural habitat to the wild lands surrounding the BWCAW.

The protected land includes more than 10,000 feet of shoreline along two bedrock lakes which that speak to the character of this Canadian Shield landscape. The pristine shoreline and wetlands will help maintain the surrounding lakes’ water quality and provide important habitat for nesting and migratory birds long into the future.

### CELEBRATING OUR 500TH CONSERVATION PROJECT

# PROJECT

## SO, WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM THIS GREAT CONSERVATION EFFORT?



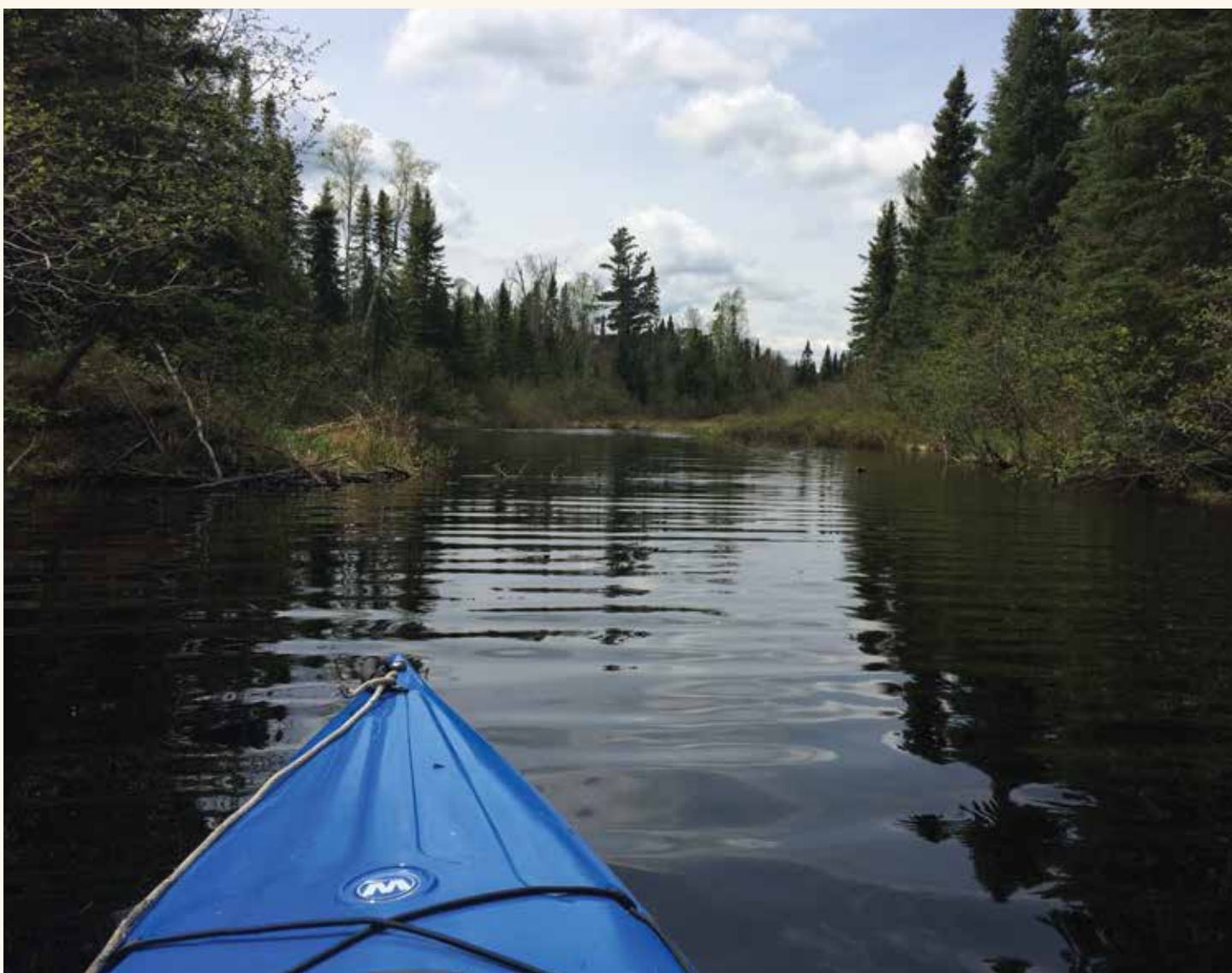
JOHN PENNOYER

This permanently conserved land provides critical habitat for the gray wolf, Canada lynx, black bear, moose, bald eagle, ruffed grouse, northern raven and a host of other wildlife.

Two-legged creatures benefit as well: Paddlers can access the BWCAW via Tucker Lake, and will appreciate the nearly two miles of pristine shoreline with its tall, majestic white pines and rock outcroppings that are now protected forever.

On a larger scale, Minnesotans will also benefit because this undeveloped land and shoreline will help keep our waters pure and abundant.

This land was permanently protected because of the generosity of the landowners, Karl and Elizabeth Johansson who donated the conservation easement. In addition, members of the Minnesota Land Trust and Minnesota's Outdoor Heritage Fund provided funding to support the project.



“SOME OF THE STATE’S BEST STEWARDS OF THE LAND  
ARE MINNESOTA LAND TRUST LANDOWNERS.”  
RESTORATION PROJECT MANAGER KRISTINA GEIGER.

## WE’RE IN IT FOR THE LONG HAUL, BY MAKING INVESTMENTS TODAY

Those of you who have been married for decades know that simply marking time is not the best measurement for a happy marriage.

When you’re in it for the long haul, a far greater investment is necessary to make good on the promises you made on your wedding day.

The Minnesota Land Trust is in it for the long haul as well. Our 500th easement is a great achievement, but we all know that we’re in the forever business and that leads us to a very important question:

How do ensure that the land that’s permanently protected maintains its conservation relevance?

As we approach our 25th year, the Minnesota Land Trust is launching restoration initiatives that will directly help landowners to better manage and improve their lands.

Many Minnesota Land Trust landowners are already engaged in very active and impactful management of their property.

Some landowners have professional expertise (and a strong back) to engage in a vigorous level of restoration that results in improved wildlife habitat. They use all sorts of tools such as managed burns and even employ goats to keep invasives at bay.

They plant and nurture trees by the hundreds and restore drained wetlands.

They receive advice from professionals and communicate their plans, successes and challenges with Minnesota Land Trust’s stewardship staff.



LANDOWNER MIKE NIZIOLEK IS PARTICIPATING IN A WETLAND HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT THIS YEAR.

# RESTORE

## **BUT SOME LANDOWNERS NEED MORE ASSISTANCE.**

They may own hundreds of acres that are becoming more and more daunting as they age. They may not have sufficient resources – experience, manpower and funds – to best maximize the resources on their land. Or they may be new to land ownership altogether.

We're happy to announce that the Minnesota Land Trust was awarded a \$120,000 grant from the Conservation Partners Legacy Program that will help private landowners improve wildlife habitat on their property.

This pilot program, in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, will restore wetland hydrology, re-seed native plants and provide the landowner with a long-term management plan.

“Conservation easement lands are the perfect place to focus restoration grant funding because of the significant habitat benefits,” observed Minnesota Land Trust’s restoration project manager Kristina Geiger. “Our landowners are extremely motivated and engaged.”

This initial program, targeted for Pope County, is just the beginning. We're already hard at work on accessing additional grant funding that will allow us to expand our program to even more Minnesota Land Trust landowners.




**DICK HUSTON MANAGES HIS LAND WITH A REGULAR SCHEDULE OF CONTROLLED BURNS. A VARIETY OF WILDLIFE BENEFITS FROM THE POTHOLE LAKES THAT FREQUENTLY ACCOMPANY NATURAL PRAIRIES.**



**“IN COMBINATION WITH ANNUAL MONITORING BY THE MINNESOTA LAND TRUST, WE CAN PROVIDE A COMPELLING CASE FOR THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE DOLLARS INVESTED IN RESTORATION WILL CONTINUE TO BEAR FRUIT LONG INTO THE FUTURE.”**

**DARYL PETERSON, DIRECTOR OF RESTORATION PROGRAMS.**

A vertical photograph of a person rock climbing a steep, layered rock face. The climber is wearing a blue jacket and a yellow helmet, and is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the frame. The rock face is composed of dark, horizontally layered rock with several large, irregular patches of snow or ice. The lighting is bright, creating strong shadows and highlights on the rock's surface. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**"IF YOU WANT TO BE SURE TO GET ALL MINNESOTANS GET OUTSIDE, SIMPLY MAKING TRAILS AND GEAR AVAILABLE IS NOT ENOUGH," OBSERVED MINNESOTA LAND TRUST DIRECTOR OF RECREATION LANDS HANSI JOHNSON. "PROVIDING COACHING AND MENTORSHIP COMMUNICATES A COMMITMENT TO SUCCESS, LEADING TO A LIFELONG PASSION IN OUTDOOR ADVENTURES."**

## INVESTING IN MINNESOTA'S FUTURE CONSERVATION LEADERS

Today's youth spend only 7-10 minutes per day outside in unstructured play, while indoor screen time is estimated at seven hours per day (and climbing!). This "nature deficit" has been shown to impact attention span, obesity and school performance.

While the immediate negative effects are concerning, we're also thinking about the long term effects. In short: who will care about Minnesota's natural world in the future?

We feel a keen responsibility to ensure that Minnesotans will always have open spaces with plenty of wildlife, clean and abundant water, and places we can go to quiet our minds, engage our bodies and renew our spirit.

But our state's demographics are changing. We're becoming more diverse and more urban. Thus we need to rethink what access to our great outdoors looks like, who will enjoy it, and where it should be. Not all access is created equal, nor do all Minnesotans have equal access.

In an effort to encourage greater engagement in our natural world, the Minnesota Land Trust has been working with

the City of Duluth for over two years, addressing the challenge of outdoor access in ways that can reverberate into all corners of our state.

We've worked closely with outdoor recreation groups and the City to design and build one of the country's most extensive outdoor recreation systems to ensure that Duluth residents have the opportunity to get outside on bikes, skis, canoes, and on their own two feet.

We completed an ambitious project to provide easy access to the St. Louis River in Chambers Grove Park for anglers, paddlers and other users. This will also be a gateway to the 100-mile Duluth Traverse Trail, a mountain bike trail spanning the entire city.

And we helped establish the first new city park in Duluth in more than 40 years, Quarry Park, which provides reliable and permanent access

for ice climbers in the winter and disc golfers in warmer months.

All of these projects are located within the city limits, and are part of an even larger plan to ensure that all residents can use and enjoy these amenities.



### CLOSING THE ADVENTURE GAP

We're working with Duluth social services, education institutions, affordable housing organizations and the outdoor user groups to ensure that all residents—regardless of income, experience and backgrounds—have access to outdoor experiences

"If you want to be sure to get all Minnesotans get outside, simply making trails and gear available is not enough," observed Minnesota Land Trust Director of Recreation Lands Hansi Johnson. "Providing coaching and mentorship communicates a commitment to success, leading to a lifelong passion in outdoor adventures. In addition, you've got to make sure you have protected land close to where the people live."

**FOR MANY BABY BOOMERS, ACTIVITIES SUCH AS HUNTING AND FISHING KICK STARTED THEIR PASSION FOR NATURE. YOUNGER GENERATIONS ARE NOW ALSO INSPIRED BY ADVENTURE SPORTS SUCH AS SKIING, MOUNTAIN BIKING AND PADDLING.**

### Introducing our New Director of Development



You'll probably recognize Barbara LaMotte as she's been with the Land Trust for over five years now, most recently as Director of Communications.

Barbara will now head up both areas, along with newly promoted Development Manager Beth Westerback.

Barbara spent several years in marketing and sales with organizations such as Best Buy, the St. Paul Pioneer Press, and Twin Cities Public Television, and is pictured here with Jerry Martin who recently donated land for permanent protection in Northern Minnesota.

### Administrative Associate Sue Martinez



When you call the Land Trust or stop by our office, you're likely to speak to Sue Martinez. We're very fortunate to have Sue's wealth of experience in office management and web design.

In addition to overseeing office operations and technical support, Sue contributes to the development, communications and legal areas of the Land Trust. Sue has a BA in International Business and an MS in Reading.





## MINNESOTA LAND TRUST

**Kris Larson** | Executive Director  
**Pat Anderson** | Program Manager: Wetlands & Grasslands  
**Nick Bancks** | Program Manager: Blufflands & Metro  
**Pat Collins** | Program Manager: Critical Shoreline  
**Barbara Farrell** | Staff Paralegal  
**Kristina Geiger** | Program Manager: Monitoring & Land Management  
**Hansi Johnson** | Director of Recreational Lands  
**Barbara LaMotte** | Development & Communications Director  
**Sue Martinez** | Administrative Associate  
**Susan McCallum** | Finance Manager  
**Wayne Ostlie** | Director of Land Protection  
**Daryl Peterson** | Director of Restoration Programs  
**Ann Thies** | Director of Conservation Stewardship  
**Gena Setzer** | Staff Attorney  
**Mark van der Linden** | Baseline Project Associate  
**Beth Westerback** | Development Manager

In addition to the staff members listed above, the following individuals and organizations provide high-quality services that enhance our mission:

**Jimelle Duncan** | Bookkeeping  
**Community GIS** | Mapping

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Bob Bush**  
**Tim Edman**  
**Nichlas Emmons**  
**Ted Erickson**  
**Brent E. Frazier**  
**Brad Fuller** | Secretary  
**Wolfgang Greiner**  
**Loren Hansen**  
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**Brad Wallin** | Vice Chair



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OTHER PHOTOGRAPHY THANKS TO FITZ FITZGERALD,  
HANSI JOHNSON, AND LAND TRUST STAFF.

## MINNESOTA LAND TRUST

[www.mnland.org](http://www.mnland.org)

651-647-9590 | Toll Free: 1-877-MLT-LAND

394 South Lake Avenue  
Suite 404  
Duluth, MN 55802

2356 University Avenue West  
Suite 240  
St. Paul, MN 55114

EMAIL US AT: [MNLAND@MNLAND.ORG](mailto:MNLAND@MNLAND.ORG)

