

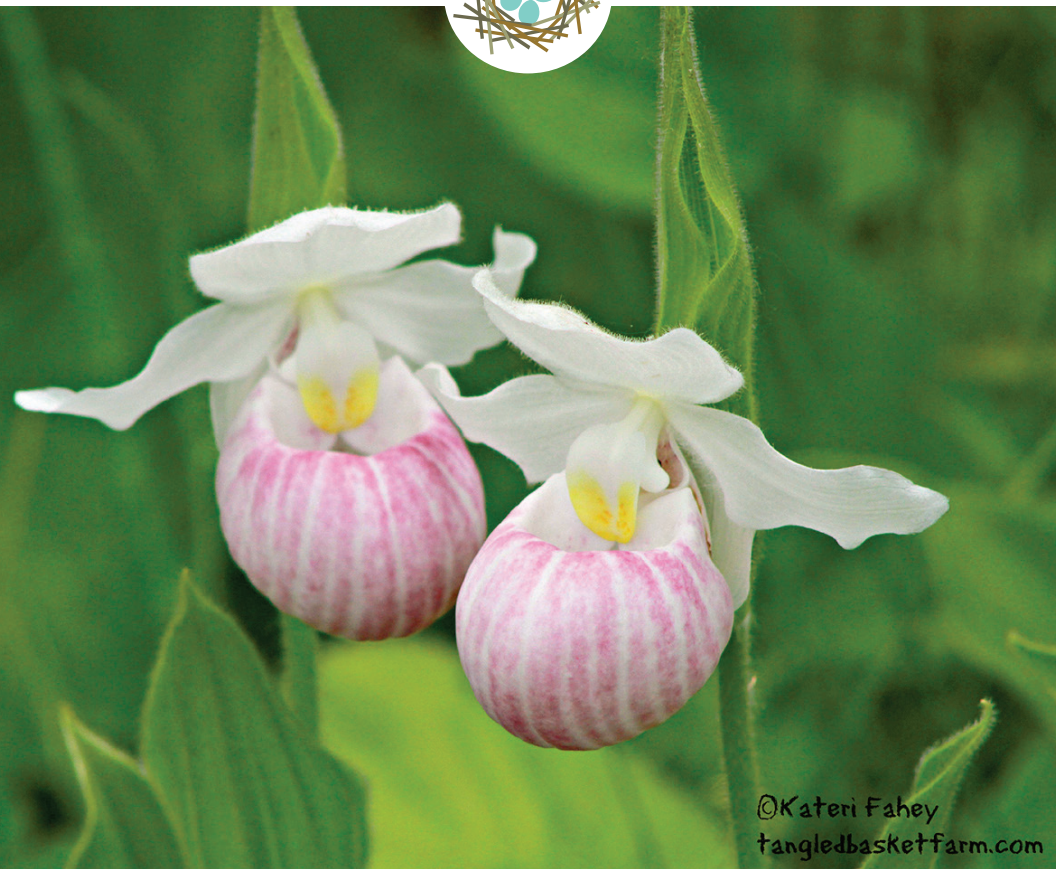
THE UNDERSTORY

The newsletter of Legacy Land Conservancy

Spring



2019



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LEGACY
Land Conservancy

WELCOME

Long-term Michigan nonprofit leader has joined Legacy as the Executive Director

In February this year, Legacy welcomed Diana Kern as our new Executive Director. After an extensive search and vetting process Diana was offered the job by the search committee in late December and began transitioning into the role immediately, leading up to her official start on February 4th.

“Diana was our first choice for the position and brings an extensive background in nonprofit organizational operations, planning, staff development and fundraising,” says Simon Whitelocke, President of Legacy’s Board of Trustees. “The Board and search committee discovered that in Diana’s skill set and personal passions we have a perfect match to lead Legacy in fulfilling our mission, and we are thrilled that she has joined the team.”

Diana has served the greater Southeast Michigan community in various roles for years. She is well known regionally after working for more than 17 years with residential and commercial real estate leader McKinley, 10 years with Nonprofit Enterprise at Work, and recently as a Vice President with Eversight. Diana has also served on numerous nonprofit boards and committees.

“I am truly excited to be stepping into the role of Executive Director at this point in Legacy’s history,” Diana says. “As we enter into strategic planning and our 50th anniversary, I look forward to stewarding the lands already under our care, and continuing to serve the community, our donors, our land owners, our volunteers, and our partners in conservation efforts.”

“I invite everyone to reach out to me with ideas, comments, or needs,” Diana adds.

When not leading Legacy’s team, Diana can be found outside—birdwatching, hiking, or simply enjoying nature.



Diana Kern

LEGACY Land Conservancy

Protecting and Preserving
Southern Michigan

STAFF

Ann Agler, Office Manager
Pam Bierzynski, Office Systems Specialist
Diana Kern, Executive Director
Allene Smith, Land Stewardship Coordinator
Erika Taylor, Finance & Operations Director
Dana Wright, Land Stewardship Director

TRUSTEES

Simon Whitelocke, President; **Larry Doll**, Vice President; **Charlie Crone**, Treasurer;
John Moran, Secretary; Neal Billetdeaux, George Borel, Suzanne DeVine, Dale Sass,
Adam Smith, Bill Strohaver, Kathleen Timberlake, Ginny Trocchio, Karen Ufer

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OUTREACH

Love Water. Protect Land

Fun fact: The headwaters of four major rivers rise in Legacy Land Conservancy’s service area and flow to Lake Michigan or Lake Erie.

This makes Legacy’s work critical to an entire region: what happens on the land in these watersheds carries impact for drinking water, wildlife, agriculture, and recreation/tourism throughout the Great Lakes Basin.

Since 1971 Legacy has been protecting land to achieve a variety of conservation goals. To protect the health of our lakes, rivers, and streams, Legacy works with land owners to limit threats to healthy watersheds by preserving shorelines and groundwater-recharge zones.

Public concern over the health of Michigan’s waters coincides with Legacy’s desire to shine a spotlight on our work in safeguarding water quality. Over the past several months we have been working with Heart of the Lakes—the collective voice for Michigan’s land conservancies—to develop a video highlighting this aspect of our work.

Shoreline conversations with land owners and neighbors are captured on the resulting video, “Love Water. Protect Land,” released in 2019. These lively narratives reveal how protecting land with Legacy positively affects water quality—and quality of place—in our region and beyond.

Legacy’s Beckwith Preserve, in Stockbridge, is featured in the video as an example of how forestland filters and replenishes the aquifer. Beckwith holds a mature pine and spruce plantation and an oak-hickory forest surrounding over 800 feet of frontage on Portage Creek. Portage Creek is one of the cleanest tributaries to the Huron River, which feeds Lake Erie.

Near Legacy’s Reichert Preserve, also featured in the video, the headwaters of the Grand River

begin their cross-state journey to Lake Michigan.

Also featured in our video are the owners of a property containing farmland, woodland, and a restored tall-grass prairie, with 1600 feet of shoreline on the Saline River.



Brittany Campbell

Painted turtle baby

You can watch “Love Water. Protect Land” by visiting the Legacy website homepage, legacylandconservancy.org, and clicking on the YouTube icon in the upper right to access our YouTube channel. It’s easy to select the video from there, and enjoy 7 minutes of pride in Legacy’s partnership with land owners as guardians of the Great Lakes.

Enjoy the video, share it with family and friends, re-post in your social media and tell us what you learned!



Legacy’s Reichert Preserve

What's it worth to us?

by Zane Almquist

I am a first-year master's student at the University of Michigan's School for Environment and Sustainability. I joined Legacy's team in September, 2018, through the University's work-study program. Since then, I have been working to develop methods to measure and value ecosystem benefits on Legacy preserves. For the initial project, we chose to study carbon storage at Legacy's newest public preserve, the Anthony and Rose Shatter Family Preserve. We hope to use this work as a model for valuing other ecosystem functions and services on Legacy preserves and easement properties.

In conservation, we are often faced with the question, why this place? Since the beginning of the conservation and preservation movements, we have sought to determine which places we want to save. Some places are visually unique (think Arches National Park). Some places harbor unique ecology that does not exist in other places (think Everglades National Park).

Underlying in all of these decisions is cost, but the question, "What is a piece of conserved land worth?" doesn't have a clear-cut answer. The concept of ecosystem services helps us come up with an answer.

The term "ecosystem services" refers to the benefits that people get from ecological processes and functions—things happening on the land that link organisms and their environment. Ecosystem services are varied and diverse, ranging from water and air filtration, to recreation, to supplying food and building materials.

The concept was developed by Robert Costanza in the 1997 paper, "The Value of the World's Ecosystem Services and Natural Capital." Since then, many people have used the concept of ecosystem services to communicate the value of maintaining intact natural areas. The concept is used by the United Nations in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, and it has gained widespread acceptance as a theory.

Legacy's mission is to preserve and protect valuable and unique ecosystems in southern Michigan for the benefit of future generations. Making specific value judgements on particular properties is often a difficult task, but adopting the lens of ecosystem services can help identify specific benefits from natural processes and can be considered when making decisions about land conservation and stewardship.



Shatter Preserve trees

Carbon sequestration refers to the rate at which carbon is removed from the atmosphere, while carbon storage refers to carbon which has been removed from circulation and is currently stored in plants, soil, and other aspects of our landscape.

For my project with Legacy, I concentrated on the ecosystem services related to carbon sequestration and storage.

During carbon sequestration, a plant removes carbon from the atmosphere as part of photosynthesis and stores that carbon in its tissues. Every ton of carbon stored in plant matter keeps an equivalent amount of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere, helping to mitigate the greenhouse effect and the impacts of global climate change. Thus, carbon storage and sequestration are particularly important when discussing global climate change.

The prospect of climate changes leads to many questions about solutions that can be undertaken at a local level, as many of the mitigation efforts are discussed at the national and international level. From a broader perspective, small forest preserves, like the woodland at the Shatter Preserve, can serve as a model for forest preservation even in areas with denser development and limited forest coverage.

Our work estimated that **Shatter Preserve has approximately 2,950 metric tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent** stored in its above-ground biomass (translation: its trees). If a fire were to claim all trees on the Shatter Preserve, this is the amount of CO₂ that would be released into the atmosphere.

For context, 2,950 metric tons of CO₂ is equivalent to the annual CO₂ emissions from gasoline of about 752 Americans, or the annual electrical emissions of about 1000 Americans.

In 2018, the Nature Conservancy published work that highlighted the potential of nature-based solutions in the fight against climate change, which will require a reduction in the amount

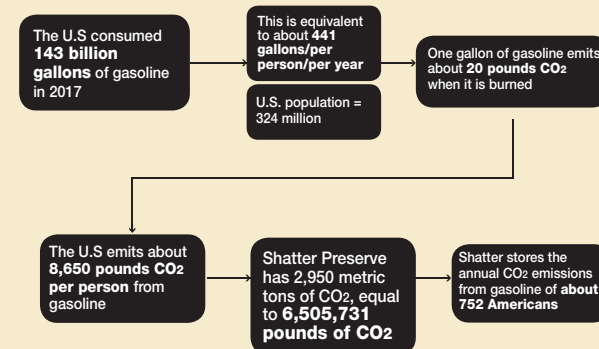
of atmospheric carbon dioxide. The Shatter Preserve is representative of many other small plots of forest whose collective impact could substantially contribute to our region's carbon storage potential.

Framing a question of "why this place?" is easier to accomplish and grasp when we have been able to quantify the benefits provided by that ecosystem. This concept ties us closer to our surroundings and our place in the natural world, and translates into certain terms the ways in which our natural world contributes to our well-being as humans on Earth.

"Legacy has just begun to explore the concept of defining the values of ecosystem services," says Allene Smith, Legacy's Land Stewardship Coordinator, "and we look forward to continuing the discussion with other conservation partners, landowners, and others. We are excited to see where this topic might lead!"

Further reading: Fargione, J.E., S. Bassett, T. Boucher, S.D. Bridgman, R.T. Conant, et al. (2018). "Natural climate solutions for the United States," *Science Advances* 4 (11). Visit <http://advances.sciencemag.org/content/4/11/eaat1869>

Gasoline



Source: <https://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=23&t=10>

Volunteers are our conservation partners

by Dana Wright, Land Stewardship Director and Volunteer Coordinator

At Legacy Land Conservancy we rely on volunteers every day in everything we do. When you look over the list of volunteers who pitched in last year, you'll see that 2018 was no exception.

Every volunteer is critical to Legacy's effectiveness. Some special mention is in order as well:

Jesse Whitney, thanks for all the work at Reichert Preserve, cleaning up downed trees as part of the oak wilt project. Marguerite Smith, our stalwart office volunteer, put in another 146 hours in 2018; thank you! Special thanks to EMU professors Emily Grman, Uli Reinhardt, and Brian Connolly for bringing out groups of college students to fight back invasive shrubs at Johnson Preserve. Thank you so much to the Stockbridge team of Kelly, Linda, Jan, Tina, JoAnn, Jo, Roberta, Tom, David, Cathy, Neal, Bill, Bruce, Stockbridge Lion's Club, and Fran and Campbell for your work creating the lovely new entrance area for the Beckwith Preserve!

And thank you to all of the other volunteers who improve our public preserves, monitor our easement properties, give us legal advice, provide us with secure governance, and keep our office procedures running smoothly!

2018 Legacy Volunteers

Jim Adams	Diane Dupuis	Marian Laughlin	Anita Sandretto
Robert Aldrich	Russell Dwarshuis	Evan Leroy	Peter Sandretto
Zeke Bass	Margaret Engle	David G. Lindemer	Dale Sass
Jan Benson	Tania Evans	Stockbridge Lion's Club	Kelly Schmidt
Pam Bierzynski	Joe Fazio	John Lloyd	Gary Siegrist
Neal Billetdeaux	Steven Gilzow	Sara Lupkas	Adam Smith
Kelsey Blongewicz	Ann Gladwin	Danielle MacFarlan	Marguerite Smith
Rosanne Bloomer	Kathleen Graddy	Gordon Makin	Sandy Sorini Elser
Meghan Bonfiglio	Suzin Greenway	Marta Manildi	Bill Steere
George Borel	Jacqui Grisdale	Jill Martin	Charity Steere
Terry Brinkman	Emily Grman and her EMU students	Michelle Massey Barnes	William Stickney
Bruce Brown	Brett Harris	Andrea Matthies	Scott Strodtman
Robin Burke	David Harris	Jo Mayer	Bill Strohaber
John Chamberlin	Emily Harris	John McCauley	William Strohaber
Thomas Chettleburgh	Will Hathaway	John Moran	Catherine A. Susan
Tom Clark	Judith Hady	Cathy Muha	Robert Swistock
Bob Cole	Joan Hellmann	Jo Ann Munce	Shari Thompson
Crystal Cole	Norman Herbert	Karelyn Munro	Kathleen Timberlake
Brian Connolly and his EMU students	Dave Heritier	Sue Nelson	Ginny Trocchio
Walter Cramer	Susan Horvath	Jerry Nordblom	Linda Tubbs
Charlie Crone	Jennifer Kangas	James Odell	Karen Ufer
Steve Daut	Rich Kato	John Owen	Roger Valade
Peter DeLoof	Jan Kessler	Penny Owen	Deborah Welker
Matt Demmon	Bill Kidd	Jim Paul	Jan Werfelmann
Suzanne DeVine	Robert Klinger	Nancy Paul	Nancy Whitelaw
Shelby Dinser	Sandra Kortesoja	Arianne Pieschala	Simon Whitelocke
Larry Doll	Susan Lackey	David Read	Jesse Whitney
Stephanie Doll	Campbell Laird	Ulrich Reinhardt and his EMU students	
Thomas Dow	Frances Laird	Debra Rowe	

Thank you!

**We try to keep our records up to date but apologize if we have missed anyone. Please let us know if your name is missing!*

9,000-acre milestone surpassed

With the completion in December 2018 of three land conservation projects, Legacy has been directly involved over our 48-year history in protecting a total of 9,339 acres of land in southern Michigan, primarily in Jackson and Washtenaw counties.

This milestone was reached through finalizing three separate agreements with private land owners. Legacy's conservation efforts safeguard fresh water, protect wildlife habitat and recreational lands, and preserve the agricultural heritage and economic impact of local working farms.

Two of the recent projects illustrate Legacy's focus on protecting land affecting water quality in the region's watersheds. Grant support from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality underscores the importance of fresh water protection in the Great Lakes, and helped to fund two of the recent conservation agreements, one in the River Raisin watershed and one in the Upper Grand River watershed.

The first project protected 63 acres in Jackson County's Norvell Township containing headwaters of the River Raisin and frontage on Vineyard Lake. Funding from The Carls Foundation helped Legacy to complete the transaction, which also involved a partial donation from the land owner. The property is located very near to Camp O' the Hills, a 105-acre Girl Scout camp on Wamplers Lake that Legacy protected in August 2018.

Another project in the same watershed is comprised of 80 acres of restored farmland in Washtenaw County's Manchester Township that contain dry-mesic and wet-mesic prairie,



Land protected by Legacy in 2018

forested wetlands, and open water. The conservation easement on this property was donated by the land owner.

The third project is a part of a growing network of lands conserved by Legacy and other partners highlighting the importance of protecting small streams that feed into the Upper Grand River. Land owners recently donated a conservation easement on eight acres in Jackson County's Waterloo Township along Trist Mill Pond, which empties into Trist Mill Creek. This project is adjacent to Waterloo State Recreation Area, where Legacy has long been active in conservation projects.

Throughout the region, landowners have worked with Legacy Land Conservancy to protect land that is important to the community because of its scenic or recreational value or in order to conserve working farms and natural areas and safeguard watersheds. Private, voluntary agreements with local land trusts permanently limit uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values. Lands placed into conservation easements remain privately owned and can continue to be farmed, hunted or used for other specified purposes. The lands also remain on county tax rolls, strengthening local economies.

Working hand-in-hand with land owners, public and private funders, individual donors, and dedicated volunteers, we are creating and nurturing a lasting conservation legacy.

On the cover
Showy Lady's Slippers
on Legacy conservation easement
Photo by Kateri Fahey



Get Involved!

Land conservation benefits everyone, and everyone can play a part. Get involved with Legacy and take your place in the land protection mosaic!

Volunteer

Attend our hikes, workshops, and partner events

Make a gift

*Subscribe to our e-newsletter
(legacylandconservancy.org/subscribe)*

Visit a preserve

Consider including Legacy in your estate plans

If you or your family owns land, talk about your vision for it and contact us to learn about your options

Spread the word—share our newsletter, video, and e-newsletter and follow us on social media



Legacy Land Conservancy

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