



CADILLAC AREA LAND CONSERVANCY  
124 North Mitchell St., Suite 115  
Cadillac, MI 49601



# NATURE NEWS

A Quarterly Newsletter from the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy

Fall 2008

## CALC Office Moves to New Downtown Cadillac Location; Adds Staff & New Website Features



Margo Copely  
CALC Secretary

The Cadillac Area Land Conservancy recently celebrated the grand opening of its new office. After many good years in the Network Reporting building, CALC has now moved to the Masonic Building, Suite 115, in downtown Cadillac. This allows the organization more space and a central location, since it serves Lake, Missaukee, Osceola and Wexford counties.

Della Bednarick is the new Treasurer. She is a life-long resident and owns property near Mitchell Swamp, a renowned black bear nursery that is part of the Cherry Grove Bear corridor that CALC is attempting to preserve. Della is the branch manager for Chemical Bank for the north end of Cadillac and volunteers throughout the community.

Nathan Piwowarski is also a Cadillac native. He earned his Eagle Scout designation on Waldeck Island, which is now a CALC nature preserve. During college, as an aide to Senator McManus, he was responsible for policy areas including natural resource and environmental quality regulation. His current law practice with McCurdy, Wotila and Porteous has included preparing conservation easements.

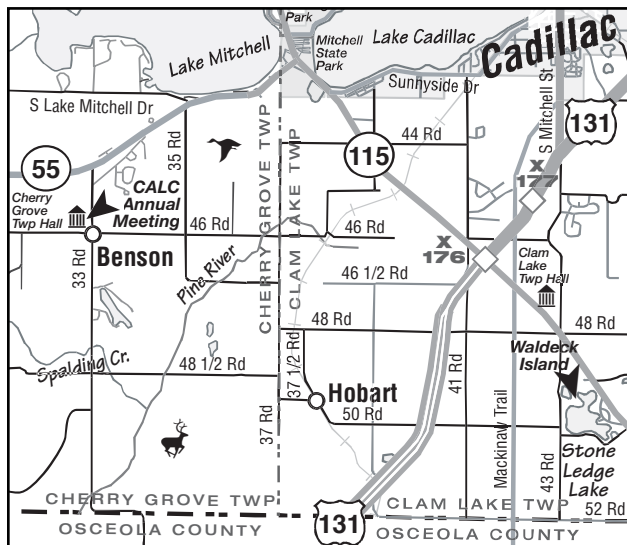
### New Staff



Sara Marr is the new CALC office staff person, replacing Sherri Baller who previously held the position. Thank you to Sherri and to Sara for their dedication to our cause. Sara is an outdoor enthusiast who loves camping, fishing and hunting and is the owner of Focus on Massage.

### New Web Site

CALC is in the process of revamping its web site. Be sure to check out [www.calc-landtrust.org](http://www.calc-landtrust.org) this fall for current information in a user-friendly format.



## CALC Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the CALC will be held on  
Saturday, October 11, at 1:30 p.m.

Cherry Grove Township Hall (Benson Corners) S 33 Rd & E 46 Rd

Following a brief meeting at Cherry Grove Township Hall (old Benson School building), CALC members and guests will travel a few miles to Waldeck Island for a formal dedication ceremony at 3:30 p.m. to accept George and Victoria Rock's gift of this island preserve. A permanent sign will be unveiled during the ceremony to mark the contributions of the Rock family.

George worked with family members to preserve the land he loved. To further his goal, he and Victoria, along with Tom Rensberry, became founding members of the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy in 1995.

What began as George's quest to keep family farmland together has made private land preservation in four surrounding counties a reality. The Rocks' gift of Waldeck Island is another example of their dedication to land preservation and stewardship.

Everyone is encouraged to attend the annual meeting and Waldeck Island dedication ceremony. Both are free. They are an opportunity to witness first hand what the Land Conservancy is doing for the community by protecting special properties with developmental easements. Waldeck Island, which will never be developed and where the trails will be open for all to experience nature forever, is well worth a visit.

Invite your friends and neighbors and mark the calendar to join in this celebration! Light refreshments will be served after the annual meeting, transportation to the island will be provided, and guided or self-guided tours of the island's many marked trails will be offered.



### New Board Members

CALC recently welcomed three new board members: Margo Copely, Della Bednarick, and Nate Piwowarski (l to r).

Margo Copely is the new CALC Secretary. She has worked with CALC before and is familiar with land preservation organizations. She and her husband recently put their 40-acre farm in a conservation easement that CALC will oversee into perpetuity.

# Landowner’s Guide to Working with CALC



RuthAnn French  
Promotion Committee Chair

CALC recently finished a publication that clearly explains what options a landowner has regarding preserving land. For anyone serious about considering an easement or land donation, it spells out exactly what to expect and what is expected. To see an electronic copy of this go to our newly revamped website at [www.calc-landtrust.org](http://www.calc-landtrust.org). Here is an excerpt from the Landowner's Guide regarding easements:

## Conservation Easements

A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and the Cadillac Area Land conservancy that permanently limits a property’s uses in order to protect its conservation values.

## How Conservation Easements Work

When you own land, you also “own” many rights associated with it. These property rights include the rights to harvest timber, build structures, raise crops, and others, subject to zoning and other restrictions. When you grant a conservation easement to the Conservancy, you may permanently give up some of your development rights, while retaining other use rights to grow crops or harvest timber as designed by you, the landowner. If your property is sold, future owners are also bound by the easement’s terms.

Conservation easements can be used to protect a wide variety of land, including farms, forests, wildlife habitat, and properties with scenic views. Conservation easements are drafted in a detailed legal agreement that outlines the owner’s uses of the property and the responsibilities of the landowner and the Conservancy.

## Easements are Flexible

The landowner and the Conservancy tailor the easement terms to protect the land’s conservation values and to meet the needs of the landowner. Thus, each easement is a unique document.

Generally limitations are made on the number and location of structures and types of land use activities that can take place.

The Conservancy cannot accept an easement that does not meet our conservation standards, but these standards are met in different ways on different properties. For example, a farm might be protected by an easement that allows continued farming and the building of some additional structures for agricultural purposes. For a property containing habitat for a rare wildlife species, an easement might prohibit development of any kind. A working forestland easement can allow for sustainable timber harvesting and possibly a limited number of home sites.

A conservation easement can serve as a flexible tool in a family’s financial planning. The easement may apply to just a portion of the entire property; it could also allow some building within the area under easement, if that is compatible with the easement’s conservational objectives. A conservation easement can also be combined with other protection methods. 🦋

### CALC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dick Bensel, Chairperson  
Margo Copley, Secretary  
Della Bednarick, Treasurer

Mary Bellows  
Steve Cunningham  
Ruthann French  
Thomas Harris  
Richard Harvey  
Steve Kalisz  
Nathan Piwowski  
Kurt Schindler  
James Skipper  
David Smith  
Tom Rensberry  
Gary VanHouten



#### MAJOR COMMITTEES

Sue Conradson, Clam River Greenway  
James Skipper, Conservation Easements  
Ruthann French, Promotion

#### PROJECT COMMITTEES

John Grix, Endowment Fund  
Steve Cunningham, Wildlife Corridors  
George L. Rock, Newsletter  
David Smith, CALC Grants

# The History of Waldeck Island



George L. Rock  
CALC Board Member  
& Longtime Owner of  
Waldeck Island Property

Stone Ledge Lake, with its island, was formed about 10,000 years ago when the Wisconsin glacier retreated from its farthest point south, near the present-day Ohio River, dropping off moraines of soil and rocks that were originally scraped off Canadian soil. It is a “perched” or pot hole lake dependent on rainfall, which accounts for the varying levels over the years. While there are ponds draining into the lake from the southeast, southwest and northwest, there are no springs. The recorded history of Waldeck Island begins in a Meander Survey dated September 22, 1848, with a note that at a point along the northeast shoreline of a lake (Stone Ledge) in the southeast section of Wexford County, an island existed 3 chain lengths (198 feet) to the southwest.

In 1870, families from Ft. Jennings, Ohio, including Rocks, Dischers, and Eggles entered the area looking for homestead properties. Friedrich Rock (with his father, Hienrich) chose properties along the west shore of the lake and bought the shoreline property after the timber was removed in the early 1890s. After the land around the area was cleared for farming (there were 4 sawmills along the south and east shoreline), Friedrich observed a shack on the island and

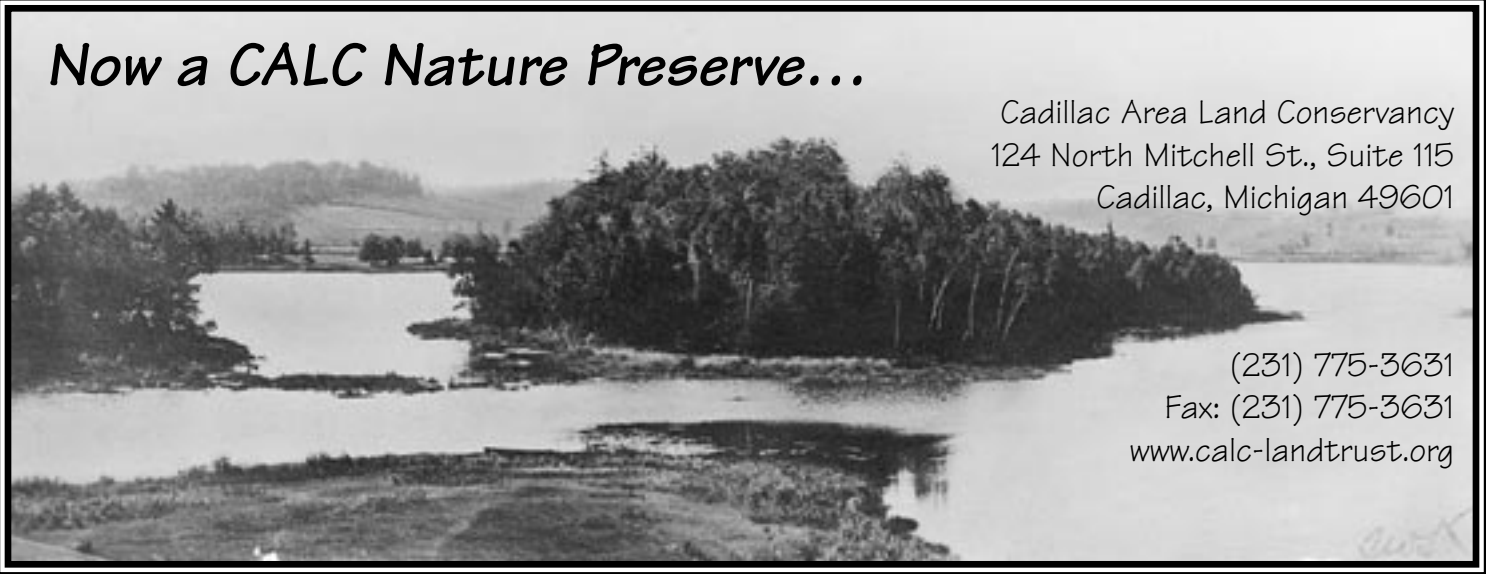
feared that someone would be claiming the property with a “Squatters Rights.” After writing to the federal, state, and railroad authorities, he learned that the island was in a section granted to the GR & I Railroad to sell to finance building a line from Grand Rapids north. The island was surveyed and a deed granted to Friedrich in 1898. He immediately built a bridge over the channel on the west shore so local families could have Sunday School picnics and enjoy the property. No one ever farmed the island, but in the access area of about 3 acres, the Rock family raised corn and potatoes, then seeded the land back to pasture.

The tip of the shoreline on the east side was known earlier as “Goose Island” and used to mark the coming of spring. Looking out the east window of their farmhouse, George Rock's mother would announce that, “the island is in view and it does not take long for the geese to appear too!” The northwest end of the lake was called “Swede Lake” because of the number of Swedes who had settled there. Boys would hike out from Cadillac and catch the bullheads that were so plentiful fisherman would string up a line of angle worms (without a hook) and pull in fish.

The jewel-like island was nameless until George and Vickie Rock named it after Waldeck Province of Germany, the birthplace of the Rock family. 🦋

*A Dedication Ceremony recognizing the Rocks’ gift of the island to CALC will be held after the 2008 CALC Annual Meeting. Map and details on back cover.*

## Now a CALC Nature Preserve...



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Early 1900’s image of Goose Island, now known as Waldeck Island