

Nature News

Quarterly Newsletter from the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy



FALL 2009

Fish Camp Protected . . . Forever Thanks to Fairman Donation

by Jim Skipper



Robert & Rudean Fairman

Fifty years ago some fishing buddies built a cabin on a small piece of land along the Little Manistee River. Today, seventy-seven acres of land with approximately 1,500 feet of river frontage has been added to CALC's growing list of conservation easements. This environmentally valuable piece of property contains an upland



red pine plantation, mixed oak and pine woodlands, an undeveloped 1,000 feet on the north bank of the Little Manistee, along with diversely vegetated floodplain lowlands and wetlands.

The Little Manistee is a corridor for anadromous fish runs of salmon and steelhead trout, and bird and mammal migrants. Although the river is being considered for Natural Rivers protection, currently there are no zoning or other protections for land along the waterway. This property also adjoins eighty acres of National Forest property and protects the ecological integrity of that area.

Mr. Robert Fairman, the trustee of the property, and Rudean, his wife, donated this land as a tribute to its beauty. Their children support their wish to protect the land and prevent development if the property were ever to pass from family ownership. Mr. Fairman plans to return to the property in the spring with his extended family to celebrate the opening of trout season.

Although Mr. Fairman no longer hunts on the property, the rights of future owners to hunt remains unfettered. The small portion of the property where the family has two cabins was excluded from the easement so the family can continue to visit and enjoy this beautiful place.

As an added bonus, the Robert Fairman Trust made a commitment to provide funds for easement stewardship in the future. Our thanks to the Fairmans and the Fairman Trust for their generous donation.





A Better Us

by Dave Smith

CALC has been awarded an organizational improvement grant called Advancing Conservancy Excellence (ACE) Program. The grant will

- Provide mentoring, coaching, training and consultation.
- Assist us in partnering with successful Michigan conservancies.
- Prepare us for national accreditation as a professional land trust.

The program is sponsored by Michigan’s Heart of the Lakes Center for Land Conservation Policy and the Land Trust Alliance of Washington, DC. Funding for the program came from these Michigan foundations: Carls Foundation, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Frey Foundation, Kresge Foundation, and the Wege Foundation.

CALC has an obligation to all its members, donors, and conservation easements to hold protected lands in trust in perpetuity—a big responsibility. This program will help us ensure our future. We hope that someday we can provide staff to perform the functions of a professional land trust.

We have completed an organizational assessment with assistance from Julie Stoneman from Heart of the Lakes and Mary Kay O’Donnel from Land Trust Alliance. We will now move toward creating long-term fundraising and strategic plans, and will participate in Peer-to-Peer mentoring with other Michigan conservancies.

Other conservancies successfully funded through the 2009 ACE program are the Headwaters Land Conservancy (Gaylord) and the Land Conservancy of West Michigan (Grand Rapids).

For 200 years we've been conquering Nature. Now we're beating it to death.

~Tom McMillan

Thanks To . . .

We appreciate these departing board members who have served us well and will be missed!

Mary Bellows who helped with promotion and memorials.

Tom Rensberry, co-founder of CALC, who served as our legal advisor.

Jim Skipper whose ambitious efforts and expertise have added several easements.



Worth a Read

The Spring 2009 issue of the Nature Conservancy magazine had a good article demonstrating the value of protecting wildlife habitat. “In the Dark” looks at the mysterious syndrome affecting the bats in New England caves. Mount Aeolius cave, “the most famous bat research site in the Northeast,” is used by researchers studying the white nose syndrome which is killing bats around the country. This valuable ecosystem is owned by the Nature Conservancy. Why do we need to study and protect the bats? The 47 bat species in the United States pollinate flowers, disperse seeds, gobble insects, and fertilize plants. A single little brown bat can eat up to 1,200 insects an hour!

We have our own bat “cave” at Tippy Dam. The concrete spillway has a large hollow cavity where about 20,000 bats hibernate each winter. When it became necessary to make repairs to the dam, the concrete surface was engineered so it would remain bat-friendly. The dam is the northernmost spot where the endangered Indiana bat can be found.

(Editor’s Note: The Nature Conservancy magazine always features amazing pictures and lots of nature travel ideas. You can find this article at www.nature.org)



Lindsey Hall
New Board Member

Meet Lindsey

My desire for conservation began with catching frogs and exploring the lakes and rivers in northeast lower Michigan where I grew up.

I learned that to enjoy the outdoors meant being a good steward of the land. I decided to pursue a degree in Park & Recreation Manage-

ment from Lake Superior State University and gained knowledge of land use and protection. I bring knowledge of wildlife management, recreation development, and conservation to my work on the CALC board. I also gained practical experience working with the Parks Division of the Michigan DNR. I moved to the Cadillac area after graduating from college and discovered many opportunities for hiking and exploring in the state and national forest lands.

My husband, Tom, and I have a home near Boon on a small piece of land. We work to create a place for wildlife who stay or are just passing through. We have enjoyed visits by birds, rabbits, squirrels, and occasionally bears and deer. We plant native trees to put our conservation ideas into practice. We enjoy rabbit hunting and being out in the woods with our two beagles. We continue to discover the great wildlife habitat the Cadillac Area has to offer.

Mission Statement: The Cadillac Area Land Conservancy protects ecologically significant, scenic, and farm lands for current and future generations and fosters an appreciation of the natural environment in Lake, Missaukee, Osceola, Wexford and northern Mason Counties.

Annual Meeting

The CALC annual meeting was a great event. Thanks to Ruthann French's forecasting we held the meeting indoors and avoided the cold and rainy weather. The big news was, of course, the ACE grant award we recently received (see page 2) and the Fairman easement donation (see page 1). The latter includes 77 acres on the Little Manistee River with over 2,000 feet of river frontage.

This year's speakers covered a variety of topics of great interest. First Eric Ellis from the Conservation Resource Alliance spoke about their Wild Links program that assists landowners with wildlife habitat enhancement planning and projects. This is an ideal resource for members who are in our wildlife corridor areas.

The second speaker was Susan Loney from the US Department of Agriculture. Susan is the Community & Rural Development Coordinator for our area. She presented an interesting overview of the programs designed to help local food producers identify local markets. Her examples demonstrated how local landowners interested in producing agricultural products can be successful in northern Michigan.

Rita Meech, our own local grocer and curbside recycler, offered a variety of locally produced vegetables. She explained how Ms. Green, her curbside recycling business, makes recycling easy for everyone.

Be sure to attend next year's meeting. It's a time to see your board in action, get caught up on the latest



Carl T. Johnson Hunting & Fishing Center

land protection news, and is guaranteed to be an enjoyable fall Saturday.



A Gift Appreciated

George and Vickie Rock, who donated beautiful Waldek Island to the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy, received the following note from a visitor to the protected island.



George & Vickie Rock:

Hi, I hope this finds both of you well. I have been thinking of you and wanted to take a few minutes to write you a note. I wanted to thank you so much for the gift of the island to the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy. I have enjoyed walking the beautiful island, especially this fall. This is my favorite time of the year and the island is so peaceful. The island has also been a comfort to me when I am missing my neighbor friend, Carol, who died from cancer recently. We are so lucky to live here on the lake.

*Thanks again,
Deb Bihlmeyer*

CALC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Ruthann French, Chair
- Steve Cunningham, Vice Chair
- Margo Copley, Secretary
- George L. Rock, Director Emeritus
- Lindsey Hall, Treasurer
- Richard Harvey
- Steve Kalisz
- Jim Peterson
- Nathan Piwowski
- Kurt Schindler
- David Smith
- Gary VanHouten

OTHER COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS

- Brandon Bensel, Website
- Sue Conradson, Clam River Greenway
- John Grix, Endowment Fund
- Pat Paveglio, Newsletter
- Fred Sprague, Conservation Easements

Kids Outdoors

An article in our last newsletter talked about involving children in the natural world. For more ideas, check out the Getting Kids Outdoors website at www.gettingkidsoutdoors.org. Getting Kids Outdoors is a coalition of organizations, businesses and individuals in Emmet County working to promote local programs and resources to help our kids spend more time outdoors.



Look for a list of membership contributors in our next newsletter.