

Nature News

Quarterly Newsletter of the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy



Winter 2022



Unexpected Benefit?

Research shows us that people who spend time in nature are more likely to report good health and higher psychological well-being. The Outdoor Industry Association's 2021 Trends Report points out that 53% of Americans participated in outdoor recreation in 2021. That's the highest participation rate on record! 7.1 million more Americans participated in outdoor recreation in 2020 than in the prior year. (<http://outdoorindustry.org>)

Researchers at the University of Illinois recently reviewed hundreds of studies and found that there's evidence nature makes kids smarter. More specifically, time spent in nature enhances kids' development and academic achievement.



Anecdotally, we have seen many families outdoors walking, biking, exploring and enjoying their time together. Do you suppose they will be spending more time outdoors in the year(s) ahead?

This is the reason to continue our efforts to preserve and protect those precious outdoor spaces and maintain and improve our preserves. It is their future.

Sparks and Flames: Fire in Michigan

Most of us fear fire and yet are mesmerized when we watch a campfire in the night. Wildfires have been devastating our western states lately. Our own state has a history of fires beginning with the great Michigan fires of 1871 that damaged the entire Lake Michigan shoreline, destroyed the cities of Holland and Manistee, and spread across to Port Huron. The Thumb Fire 10 years later damaged over 2,000 structures and killed 282 people. The Seney Fire in 1976 burned for months underground in the peat in the wildlife refuge. As late as 2012, the Duck Lake Fire in Luce County burned 21,000 acres. Fortunately most of the thousands of yearly fires in the state are small and only 100-200 homes are lost.



Now, when the temperatures are dropping below freezing and the snow is piling up in the drive, is a perfect time to learn about the past, present and future of fire in Michigan.

Marie Orttenburger, communications director of the Land Conservancy of West Michigan, is sharing her series **Sparks and Flames** online. In the past, long before European settlers arrived, fires regularly occurred; plants and animals adapted. In the early 20th century the U.S. Forest Service adopted a culture of fire suppression —“Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires.” We over-corrected. Orttenburger dives deep into the effects of fire on ecosystems in Michigan. She describes the positive outcomes of prescribed burns for land management. Her story-telling is enhanced with beautiful illustrations created by local artist, Spencer High. You'll find this series at <https://sparksandflamesmi.com/>



We Want YOU!



CALC is looking for volunteers to help with monitoring, editing the newsletter, and preserve mowing and maintenance. Call (231) 775-3631 if you can help.

A Fish or a Canary?



Ecologically, fish are the canary in the coal mine. “Bridge Magazine” reports that warm winter temperatures, a historic drought and one of the hottest summers on record are warming the AuSable River. Trout are an indicator species in that river and recreational fishers are alarmed.

The Au Sable river is so revered as a trout fishery that in 1959 a group of anglers formed Trout Unlimited, now the country’s premier organization advocating for the protection of cold-water streams nationwide.

Of course the root cause is global climate warming which requires curbing carbon emissions, but we can put in place some local mitigations.

What should we be doing? First, limit overfishing. There is now an informal agreement among anglers to not fish when the water temperature is over 68° (which can kill even catch-and-release fish). Hopefully the DNR will enforce this “rule.”

Conservation tactics can help—restoring trees along riverbanks, removing barriers to stream flows, adding timber to streams to make the river flow “coarser” and disperse floodwaters.

To see the magazine’s complete report and more articles of interest to anglers, visit <https://www.bridgemi.com> and search for trout fishing.

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A Tribute to Tom, A Valued Volunteer

CALC lost yet another of its ardent supporters when Tom Anderson lost his battle with cancer last September. Our thoughts go out to his wife Karen and his family as they reflect on Tom’s legacy of hard work, dedication, and his life-long appreciation of the great outdoors.



Tom getting the job done despite the weather

Tom served on the CALC board, but he was happiest working outdoors on projects — installing bat houses, maintaining trails, dealing with autumn olive. As Larry Copley points out, “Tom’s can-do attitude will be sorely missed. Tom’s philosophy was that rather than sitting around talking about it, just get it done. He jumped at any outdoor project and worked hard to make it happen. His life

outside CALC also reflected his love of the outdoors. He supported CALC because protected lands meant the youth of tomorrow could enjoy hunting and fishing as much as he had.”

We hope the American Chestnuts he grew from seeds will flourish and multiply.

Winter Colors

*Slate gray juncos,
Black and white chickadees,
Blue gray nuthatches.
No garish colors mar this winter scene,
Until, unbidden, the cardinals arrives
Bringing messages of hope from the skies.*



Once again Covid precautions have prevented special events and work bees, but all of these donors, who care about preserving the beauty of Northern Michigan, not to mention the wildlife, waterways and farmland, have once again been very generous.

Guardian \$1,000 +

Anonymous
Dr. & Mrs. Lewis Bender
Richard Hansen
Thomas Harris
Sam Hogg & Dr. Lauren Rule
Tom & Diane Rensberry

Steward \$500 - \$999

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Beverly Brighton

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Max Gould
Chris Harris
James & Sarah Lawless
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Doug Nelson
Keith Oberfield & Cheri Alberts
Reggie Sprick

Other Contributors

John Benson
Arnie & Linda Borish
John & Kimbra Klarquist
Beverly Lind
Patricia McRoberts
Barbara Murphy
Chris Schumacher
Alison & John Walters

Cadillac Area Community Foundation

Fred & Sharon Sprague

Memorials

In Memory of Floyd Justus

Linda and Arthur Squires

In Memory of Bud Oliver

T. Bookholtz
Sperry & Gertrude Claypool
Tim & Judy Coffey
Larry & Margo Copley
Pat Goggin
Steve & Beverly Ludwig
Pat & Leo Paveglio
Karen Waterman

In Memory of William Pattison

Lesley Pattison

In Memory of Tom Anderson

Richard Harvey & Marcia Calkin
Thomas Harris



Director's Corner

"Action on behalf of life transforms. Because the relationship between self and the world is reciprocal, it is not a question of first getting enlightened or saved and then acting. As we work to heal the earth, the earth heals us." ~ Robin Wall Kimmerer



Cited in David Allen's December 21st blog post, this really resonated with me as I begin my second year with CALC.

Nike said it another way, "Just do it." Over the past year we've been doing it. We've had conversations and meetings with ten land owners motivated to preserve their property. Over the coming months and years these discussions will potentially lead to 1,000 new acres of protected land in our area.

We've also facilitated conversation, process, and negotiation between property owners and the state to add important wetlands and historical areas to Mitchell State Park. Twenty-three acres are already included (formal announcement to come) while over 100 acres are still being considered.

There are two new conservation easement partnerships to be finalized (80 additional acres) in the coming months.

Groundwork has taken place for upcoming projects at Waldeck Island and Johnson Preserves. Stay tuned!

After twelve years as CALC's volunteer newsletter editor, Pat Paveglio, is passing the torch. This is her last issue. I am so grateful for the work and dedication she has put forth. Thanks, Pat!

Also, last Fall CALC's longtime volunteer book-keeper, Sandy Austin, retired from her CALC work. Her efforts and expertise were very important to us. Thanks, Sandy!

As we begin a new year CALC still remains a volunteer-centered organization. New and nearly new board and volunteer members have joined over the past couple of years. Please reach out to me with your interest in joining them . . . *"As we work to heal the earth, the earth heals us."*

Last Words - Pat Paveglio

I am hanging up my quill and retiring from editing the CALC newsletter.

I have certainly enjoyed being part of this organization and spending time with such interesting, committed and dedicated people.

I knew little about easements and nature preserves when I started in 2009. I've learned a lot and become more and more aware of the need to preserve and protect our natural world.

My husband and I have traveled to many amazing places* and have become aware of the dire effects of a changing climate and human negligence.

- 1) The Galapagos Islands fight overpopulation, over-use and invasive species.
- 2) Antarctica is experiencing a tremendous loss of ice and a warming ocean that threatens krill and endangers coastal populations.
- 3) Monarch wintering grounds reveal a steep decline in population due, in part, to food deserts along migration routes.

As we walk the woods here at home, we see our beautiful trees falling as one invasive species after another arrives.

I am retiring, but I will

- Make regular donations to CALC
- Help at CALC work bees and events
- Campaign to increase awareness of the damage we are doing to our fragile world

I hope you will join me.

**and yes, we do feel guilty about our carbon footprint*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chris Gentry

OFFICE MANAGER

Norma Roelfsema

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Steve Cunningham, *Chair*
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Sam Hogg, *Secretary*
Marty Williams, *Treasurer*

Sue Conradson

Cyndy Foley

Dave Foley

Shari Spoelman

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

Pete Eliot, *investment*
Richard Harvey, *monitoring*
Pat Paveglio, *newsletter*
Marty Williams, *social media*
Eric Zeitz, *website designer*

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 Missaukee, Osceola, Wexford and northern Lake and Mason Counties.