

# Conservation Easement LANDOWNER NEWSLETTER

- a newsletter for owners of land protected with a conservation easement -

Spring 2005



## CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROFILE

### Birch Island

12 acres - Les Cheneaux Island  
The Goehring Family

*The island and coastline retreats of the Great Lakes have provided those fortunate enough to enjoy them on a regular basis with experiences that literally shape who they become. This powerful influence that a place can have on a person is felt every time you speak with someone from the Les Cheneaux region.*

In 1902, Addison T. Saunders was given the opportunity to purchase Birch Island from a family friend, F.A. Seiberling. Situated in the west entrance to the Les Cheneaux archipelago, the 12-acre Birch Island had become a camping destination for the men and their families who were based near Akron, Ohio the rest of the year. Saunders' daughter, Amy, became captivated by the islands early in her life. One of the stories from when she was around 17 years old tells of a boat trip off the island on the last day of the season. The young lady was riding with John Osogwin, a renowned Native American who spent his days caretaking many family properties. As they were boating to the mainland, Amy looked wistfully back, clearly sad to be leaving. "Island stay," Osogwin said reassuringly with the wisdom of one who knew.

Amy Saunders married Frank Goehring and continued to make annual trips to the island with their two daughters and son, Gordon. The family would greatly look forward to their time in the islands all year round, their escape from the congestion and weather of their city homes. Before automobiles, they would take the train to Cleveland and from there, travel by boat through Lake Erie and up Lake Huron, stopping at Mackinac Island before their final leg to Les Cheneaux. If the weather was poor or it was late in the day, the trip would include an overnight stay on Mackinac Island.

Located approximately 2 1/2 miles from Hessel, Birch Island is a shoal island with a rocky shore. Its woods consist primarily of white cedar, spruce, aspen and white birch. Ecologists who have visited the island have noted

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Birch Island inland view.

This sixth issue of the Little Traverse Conservancy's *Conservation Easement Landowner Newsletter* was written to provide you with a variety of important topics related to conservation easement stewardship and land matters. Inside, you will find stewardship and land program information of concern to every conservation easement landowner. If you'd like more information on any of these topics, or other related topics, please contact Melissa Hansen or Cindy Mom at the Conservancy office or email:

[melissa@landtrust.org](mailto:melissa@landtrust.org)

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# Stewardship page two



*continued from cover*

the abundance of ground hemlock, an indication of the absence of deer.

At first, the family camp consisted of a single tent. Later, a girls tent was added for Gordon's sisters. Around 1906, A.T. Saunders built a log cabin with logs which had drifted on to the south shore after escaping from the logging booms. Annegret

notes that it must be one of the most historic cabins in the islands. The first "house" built on the island was to store the boat over the winter. In 1927, a one-room cabin was built for one of the grandmothers.

Gordon's mother, Amy, was an artist and drew inspiration from the islands. She deeded the island to Gordon and it continued to become a destination for the Goehrings' growing family as well as the families of their siblings.

Gordon and Annegret met in Ohio and married in 1954. "I must admit, I was captivated by the stories of the islands," said Annegret. The couple moved permanently to the Les Cheneaux region with their young children, Carolena and Peter, in the late 1950s.

An accomplished potter, Gordon Goehring opened a



The Birch Island fire circle. *Top photo:* Gordon and Annegret Goehring, mid 1980s.

studio along the shores of Hessel in the early 1950s. In 1960, the studio was moved to a restored farmhouse near Hessel where the couple sold pottery until Gordon's death in 1997.

"The island really affected his whole being," Annegret said of Gordon who spent all but one summer of his life in the islands - growing up learning about the plants, trees, and stars. His trademark pottery reflects a deep love of nature in decorations of simple nature forms on his functional pieces. Annegret herself has always drawn inspiration from the islands and creates beautiful paper cuts which she recently compiled into a nature journal that she sells locally.

In 1990, Gordon and Annegret Goehring became the first people within the Les Cheneaux islands and surrounding region to permanently protect their property, Birch Island, with a conservation easement. "We always knew that it should not be divided or changed," said Annegret. "When you are on the island, you can't imagine property boundaries preventing you from enjoying all of its 12 acres with its many varied special little corners and spaces."

When asked if she had any regrets since choosing the conservation easement, Annegret smiles, "not at all." Indeed, Annegret has and continues to be a guiding force in helping others understand the true, long-term benefits of conservation.



Birch Island is shown in the background of this aerial photo. Long Island is in the foreground. *(credit: Photair)*

## Spring & Fall 2005

### Conservation Easement Monitoring Schedule

	ground	air
<b>Charlevoix County:</b>	April 18-29, May 2-31	April 18-29; May 2-6
<b>Cheboygan County:</b>	May 2-31, June 1-14	April 18-29; May 2-6
<b>Chippewa County:</b>	June 13-30	April 18-29; May 2-6
<b>Emmet County:</b>	Sept. 12-30; Oct. 4-22	April 18-29; May 2-6
<b>Mackinac County:</b>	June 13-30; July 5-22	April 18-29; May 2-6

*(Dates exclude weekends, except by appointment.)*

Landowners are encouraged and welcome to accompany staff during the monitoring visit. If you would like to arrange a meeting date to monitor your property, contact Melissa or Cindy at the Conservancy office. Alternative dates are available if the above dates do not work for **your schedule**.

**NOTICE:**  
**Please notify the Conservancy if you sell your conservation easement property.**  
 It is the quickest way for us to update our records and helps ensure the continued protection of your property.



Sloan Conservation Easement  
 109 acres  
 Cheboygan County

## ...Snapshots of Recently Protected Properties



Umlor Conservation Easement  
 86 acres  
 Charlevoix County



Hoffman Conservation Easement  
 135 acres  
 Emmet County

Conservation Easement Profile		
Charlevoix County	31	2436 acres
Cheboygan County	27	3478 acres
Chippewa County	8	981 acres
Emmet County	71	3385 acres
Mackinac County	8	163 acres
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>10,443 acres</b>

# TREE DISEASES page four

**Staff Note:** Our stewardship staff has become increasingly aware of new diseases that currently pose very serious threats to our forests. The Little Traverse Conservancy's service area is a "gateway" for spreading or stopping these diseases to the Upper Peninsula and through to the western states. We want to share the information needed for landowners to make educated decisions. Above all, the most important thing that you can do to help stop the spread of all tree disease is **do not move firewood of any kind**. A proposal currently exists to revise Michigan Act 189: Insect Pests and Plant Disease, which would create heavy penalties for moving firewood across the Mackinac Bridge.

## EMERALD ASH BORER

In July 2002, a new exotic insect species was discovered in southeast Michigan. The emerald ash borer (EAB) is a wood-boring beetle from Asia that kills ash trees. Larvae tunnel beneath the bark and feed in the cambium between the bark and wood. The tunnels eventually girdle and kill the tree. More than 700 million ash trees are at risk in Michigan alone. As of March 2005, EAB had been discovered as far north as Emmet, Cheboygan, and Presque Isle counties. EAB attacks all ash species including white, green, and black ash. Mountain ash is not affected. For more information, visit: [www.emeraldashborer.info](http://www.emeraldashborer.info).



The Emerald Ash Borer (above). Damage from the larvae of the Emerald Ash Borer (left).



Oak Wilt on Red Oak, the most susceptible species in Michigan.

## OAK WILT

Oak wilt is a major disease of oaks that has been found in both the lower and upper peninsulas of Michigan. A fungus causes the disease by entering the water conducting system of the tree through wounds in the tree's bark. The pathogenic (disease) fungus causes the leaves on the tree to wilt. Wilting is followed by rapid death of trees in the red oak family. In the white oak family, death is usually limited to one or more branches of a tree. Oak wilt in Michigan may infect red, black, scarlet, and pin oaks in the red oak family as well as white, swamp, and bur oaks in the white oak family. **PREVENTION:** Avoid pruning, climbing with climbing irons, posting gates, clearing trees, or other activities that would cause wounding of oaks (making them more susceptible to the disease) from **mid-April through June**. For more information about oak wilt and other diseases, visit: [www.for.msu.edu/extension/extension.htm](http://www.for.msu.edu/extension/extension.htm)

## BEECH BARK DISEASE

Beech bark disease refers to a complex that consists of a sap-feeding scale insect and at least two species of *Nectria* fungi. The disease begins when the tiny scale insects, found on the tree trunk and branches, feed on sap in the inner bark. White wax covers the bodies of the scales and when trees are heavily infested, they appear to be covered in white wool. Minute wounds and injuries caused by the scale insects eventually enable the *Nectria* fungus to enter the tree, killing areas of woody tissue and sometimes creating cankers on the tree stem and large branches. If enough tissue is killed, the tree will be girdled and die. In Michigan, the disease has been detected in the Ludington area, Emmet County, and the eastern Upper Peninsula. It has already had a devastating effect on the beech forest at Tahquamenon Falls State Park and could seriously impact the beech tree populations in our area if it continues to spread. If beech is a major component of your forest, please seek out more information about what you can actively do to help stop the spread of the disease. Visit [www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/fidls/beechnbark/fidl-beech.htm](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/fidls/beechnbark/fidl-beech.htm) for more info.



Beech Bark Disease