



Fall 2010
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Protecting the Pigeon

NEW PARCELS EXPAND RIVER CORRIDOR PROTECTION

Pigeon River/Todd Parker

THE CONSERVANCY'S PROTECTION OF THE PIGEON RIVER DATES BACK to 1983 when Agnes A. Andreae donated 27 acres and a cabin perched along the river. Since then, the generosity of many landowners and donors has helped us protect a string of natural gems on the Pigeon. Today, more than 12 miles of frontage along the Pigeon River, Little Pigeon River, and associated tributaries are protected from future development as a nature preserve or through a conservation easement on private land.

Last June, two additional parcels were purchased by Little Traverse Conservancy with funding provided largely by the J.A. Woollam Foundation. Both parcels became part of the Vivian VanCampen Preserve, adding more than 22 acres and 2,600 feet of undeveloped river shoreline. "These additions were especially important because they provided protection on both sides of the river at this preserve," said Ty Ratliff, Conservancy land protection specialist.

Ratliff pointed out that one of the additions includes an river oxbow that provides important riparian habitat for a variety of waterfowl species and a host of mammals such as mink, otter and raccoon. The Vivian VanCampen Nature Preserve now totals more than 58 acres and 3,700 feet of protected Pigeon River frontage.

"This is a long, long stretch of undeveloped stream where – as a fisherman or a hiker – you can get lost in your thought and experience the joy of solitude," said John Woollam, whose foundation also funded the initial preserve purchase.

The cumulative impact of LTC's work along the Pigeon River is clearly visible on the map to the right. Designated by the State of Michigan as both a Natural River and a Blue Ribbon Trout Stream, the river is a high priority for protection to ensure its long-term health. As part of the Lake Huron watershed, the Pigeon drains into Mullett Lake where its waters join the Inland Waterway and eventually flow to Cheboygan and Lake Huron.

Last fall, the Conservancy staff held its annual strategic planning meeting at the Andreae Preserve cabin. "It had been some time since I had visited the preserve and was struck by the special beauty of the river," said Alison Berry, Conservancy education specialist.

For a copy of the Conservancy's nature preserve map highlighting the Pigeon River preserves and beyond, please call 231.347.0991 or visit www.landtrust.org where it can be viewed online.



Oil and Gas Boom in the North?

PEOPLE ACROSS NORTHERN MICHIGAN AWOKÉ IN MAY of this year to a frenzy of activity to lease land for oil and natural gas exploration and extraction. The rush began when an auction of mineral rights on land owned by the State of Michigan shattered all previous records. While the top “bonus” payment per acre for leasing state land had been \$200, the May auction saw rates as high as \$5,500 per acre paid in Charlevoix County, and \$2,000 and \$3,000 per acre in Emmet and Cheboygan counties. The auction produced a record total of \$178 million in revenue for the state Natural Resources Trust Fund and the Game and Fish Protection Fund. This figure compares to some \$190 million in proceeds from all previous auctions since the 1920s, according to DNRE reports.

The boom was launched when a well in Missaukee County, deeper and more technologically advanced than any previous wells in Michigan, was drilled into a previously untapped shale formation and found to produce large quantities of natural gas. Similar deep shale deposits in other states have produced large quantities of gas since horizontal drilling technology was developed, enabling drillers to extract gas and oil that was previously not available.

The result was that private land owners across the North were approached by a number of different companies and agents seeking leases to explore for and extract oil and gas. News reports have indicated that some people signed for \$25 per acre and a 1/8 share of royalties, while others signed for \$2,000 and 1/6. But as this issue goes to press, several of the companies that were seeking leases have pulled back, letters have been sent rescinding offers, and the situation seems to be cooling off. Consultants have indicated to the Conservancy that many people are waiting to see what will result from another upcoming auction of state mineral leases in October.

What’s to come? The boom could go bust – a considerable amount of the activity of late has been said to be pure speculation. On the other hand, if commercially viable quantities of oil and gas are available, the development of a deep shale gas and oil formation across our area could have major impacts on northern Michigan.

From what we have learned from sources like Michigan State University Extension Service and colleagues at land trusts in areas where shale gas development is taking place, these deep wells involve a lot more activity than the wells previously drilled for oil and gas across the North. New technology allows drillers to reach depths of more than 10,000 feet below the ground surface, and then turn horizontally to tap gas and oil bearing formations for up to a mile from the well head. Up to ten wells can be drilled from one drilling pad, reaching out in all directions.

Huge quantities of water are required for the drilling and hydraulic fracturing (called “fracking”) of these wells. Estimates place water demand at some 3.5 million to 5 million gallons per well. In the “fracking” process, millions of gallons of water, mixed with chemicals and sand, are pumped into the wells at extreme pressure in order to fracture the rock and allow the gas and oil to

A recently drilled natural gas well in Benzie County.



seep out through the cracks formed by the fracturing. That water has to be obtained from somewhere, and there are concerns about depletion of surface or ground water in some areas. Then, considerable quantities of this water, with the chemicals injected plus brine and other chemicals that emerge from the deep oil and gas formation, are blown back up out of the well and require disposal.

Horror stories have been reported about shale gas extraction and fracking in articles and television documentaries. Many northern Michigan residents are concerned. On the other hand, our colleagues at the Extension Service and Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment tell us that Michigan’s water laws and oil and gas industry regulations are much more stringent than those in other states where the worst problems have occurred. They note that hydraulic fracturing has been used for years in Michigan without major problems.

Another area of potential impact is traffic. Industry sources note that drilling equipment and the huge quantities of water and chemicals required must be moved by trucks, resulting in heavy traffic in terms of both volume and weight. Once wells are completed, they must be checked daily and serviced. More traffic. The impacts on roads can be serious.

Yet another impact, if there is large scale development, is the construction of new pipelines and processing facilities. All of these will have an impact on the land.

And the economy. There has been considerable excitement not only about the money that could change hands for leases and eventual royalties, but also about the payrolls for drillers, truckers, pipeline construction, the building and operation of processing facilities and so on. In the short term, the payment of large bonuses for an exploration and development lease can be a life-changing event for some land owners. It can mean the difference between working into old age and a comfortable retirement for some farmers. It can save family land that was threatened to be lost to foreclosure or economic hardship.

The Conservancy’s Board of Trustees has established a special committee to look into the oil and gas situation and potential impacts on our preserves and conservation easements. As with any major natural resource development, the potential impacts of deep gas and oil extraction are wide-ranging. Yet it is too early to tell how or even whether an oil and gas boom may play out. But the Conservancy’s mission remains the same: to protect the scenic quality and natural integrity of the North as best we can.



Leopold Preserve Grows Again

Grant funding from the North American Wetland Conservation Act program made possible the purchase of a 40-acre inholding within the Aldo Leopold Nature Preserve on Marquette Island in the Les Cheneaux archipelago. (An inholding is a privately owned parcel within an existing preserve.) This addition brings the preserve to 1,313 acres, the largest preserve currently owned by the Conservancy. “We continue to seek parcels that will add to this preserve and help us provide better access, protect crucial resources, and avoid potential trespass problems,” said Doug Fuller, the Conservancy’s stewardship director.



Conservancy Assists Forest Service with Purchase

Little Traverse Conservancy assisted the U.S. Forest Service recently by purchasing a 40-acre privately-owned land situated within the Hiawatha National Forest. The Conservancy will hold the parcel for the Forest Service until approved funds are available for a federal purchase. “This tract is just south of the Lake Superior shoreline and its acquisition meets Hiawatha National Forest Plan goals for protection/enhancement of watershed function, property line reduction, and consolidation of large blocks of National Forest lands,” said Sharon Hagstrom, lands program manager with Hiawatha National Forest.



Offield Trails Improved by Land Purchase

Since the 380-acre Offield Family Nature Preserve was established last summer, it has become one of the most highly enjoyed nature preserves in the Conservancy’s preserve system. Located within minutes from Harbor Springs and the ski resorts, the preserve is readily accessible from many neighborhoods and now includes two parking areas for visitors.

Recently, a small piece of land was purchased from a neighboring landowner to acquire an existing trail that crossed onto private property. “We are pleased we were able to easily work with the landowner to make this purchase and to avoid any potential trespassing issues in the future,” said Jay Neff, Conservancy land protection specialist. In addition to preventing future trespass, the new addition complements the preserve’s trail system. See map at right for an updated trail map of the preserve (new addition shown in yellow). Please keep in mind that this extensive trail system is still a work in progress. We appreciate your patience as we work towards finalizing the trails and maps!



Save the Trees Raises \$32,000

For the 21st year, the Save the Trees benefit committee held another successful event to raise money for Little Traverse Conservancy's land protection fund. A total of 240 people including 50 children attended the family event that raised \$32,000. Special thanks go to co-chairs Shelagh Luplow and Beth Kost along with the entire Save the Trees committee. Please see below for a complete list of donors.



Thank you to the 2010 Save the Trees Donors

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May 21 - August 20, 2010

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Happy Birthday Arnold Kluge

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David Searles

Mrs. Louise Taylor

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Happy Anniversary Ralph and Jeanne Graham

Ms. Carol J. McCarus

Daniel and Ellinor McElroy (35th)

Mr. and Mrs. Byron L. West

Anthony & Madeleine Naylor (50th)

Mr. and Mrs. Byron L. West

Coming...and Going



Mary Anne Griffin with her daughters Charlotte and Kelsey and new grandson, Charles Rocker Frohlich.

Little Traverse Conservancy will be losing one of its longest-term staff members with the departure of **Mary Anne Griffin**. “When Mary Anne came to the Conservancy more than 19 years ago, it was clear that she was looking for more than just a job,” said Conservancy Executive Director, Tom Bailey. “Her heartfelt commitment to conservation was obvious from the beginning. In her previous work at the local Soil Conservation District, she had become familiar with many area farmers, land owners, and issues. With lifelong roots in the area, she also has a deep affection for the beauty of the north. She is truly a kindred spirit in conservation and so has been a natural fit with our organization,” Bailey said.

Mary Anne also has a wonderful appreciation for volunteers and ability to work with people. She did a superb job of organizing volunteers who help with our large mailings, being recognized as “Station of the Year” by the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program, and was always a favorite of volunteers who appreciate the ways in which Mary Anne

For the third summer in a row, **John Bailey** has lent the Conservancy his strong back and enthusiasm for the outdoors while he has worked as a seasonal Stewardship Assistant. John has been one of our main go-to guys to “get ‘er done” for a host of projects, including everything from putting up fence and signs to maintaining and building trails to restoration projects.

John is the third generation in his family to choose conservation work, and is now a senior at Central Michigan University, pursuing a double major in Environmental Policy and Natural Resources Biology. “My experience at LTC has been crucial to my develop-

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ment as a Conservationist/Naturalist,” John said. “Although there were several hot, sweaty and physically strenuous days, when I came back to the office I saw the difference I was making in a big way!”

An avid hunter and angler, John also enjoys time with friends on his motorcycle and is a devoted Green Bay Packers fan. He recently enlisted in the U.S. Army National Guard and will be attending boot camp next summer.

Thanks, Big John, for all of your help!

makes it easy and fun to help the Conservancy.

She has been a great contributor on our staff, reaching beyond her administrative functions and caring about all aspects of the Conservancy’s work. We will miss Mary Anne, but we extend our deepest, most heartfelt thanks for her work, her professionalism, and her dedication. Mary-Anne is looking forward to spending more time with her new grandson, Charlie.

It is the Conservancy’s good fortune to have **Cacia McClain** step into Mary Anne’s position and the two have been working together to prepare for the transition.

Born in Vermont, Cacia has conservation in her blood, with both parents working in related fields. In her young life, she has already lived in and traveled to numerous places, including a year of high school in South Africa on a Rotary Exchange program. After graduating from Prescott College in Arizona with a degree in Environmental Conservation, Cacia lived in Wyoming, Maine, and for two years in Alaska. Her fiancé, David Lesh, has connections to northern Michigan on Burt Lake and after several years of moving, the young couple decided that northern Michigan had everything they wanted.

“I feel blessed to be at Little Traverse Conservancy and will only thrive in my role here as I am surrounded by this landscape and these people,” Cacia said. “It is my hope that the people and environment around me can get as much benefit out of my presence here as I do out of theirs.”

When not at the Conservancy, you might find Cacia gardening, teaching yoga at the Yoga Roots studio in Petokey or running the North Country Trail. Her direct line is 231.344.1000.



Cacia McClain



John Bailey



AmeriCorps member Ryan Kozar beside an animal den on his first visit to the Upper Peninsula.

Last June, **Ryan Kozar** joined the Conservancy for six months of service as a Stewardship Technician through the Huron Pines AmeriCorps Program. This program was designed specifically to provide hands-on help with conservation projects that meet a variety of needs in northern Michigan.

Inspired by a childhood spent on 11 acres in the Thumb region and an exceptional second grade teacher, Ryan majored in Natural Resources Biology, graduating from Central

Michigan University this past spring. “In my mind, nothing is more important than land conservation which encompasses the big picture,” Ryan said. He was further encouraged to pursue conservation work after spending last summer at CMU’s Biological Station on Beaver Island. “I am excited to see a wider range of job opportunities through working with LTC,” Ryan said.

Ryan’s outside interests lie in biology, psychology and astronomy, and he has a special interest in 19th century history. Ryan also enjoys reading, nature walks, and camping.

- George Gess and the Outfitter for providing boats and guide service for our Oden Island kayak trip; Wayne Blomberg and Ryde Marine for providing pontoon boats for the June 24 field trip; Jessie Hadley, Woods and Water Ecotours, and guides Tim and Jake for providing kayaks and guiding two Les Cheneaux kayak trips in July; and Don Ward and Jenny Eis for sharing their private property for the August 8 event.
- Jerry Mom for providing boat taxi service for our Les Cheneaux conservation easement monitoring in June.
- Bonnie Mikklesen, Tim DeWick, and John Griffin for their outstanding hospitality and assistance in the Les Cheneaux area.
- Kyle Anderson, Kathy Bricker, Sue Causley, Pete and Judi Chimner, Maureen Conklin, Lynne Henzler, Bill Horntvedt, Gwen Kuehn, Diane Morand, Dick and Betty Salzer, Darrell Schwalm, Cindy Speeter, Lauren Strobel, Clay Warner, and Kevin Weller for the Gauthier Nature Preserve cleanup on July 8.
- Volunteers who worked at the Kalman Preserve Invasives Removal Day on July 20: Kyle Anderson, Jim Fuller, Rafael Garcia, Ric and Lisa Loyd, Sarane Ross, Larry Rychlick, and Becca Turner. Four AmeriCorps members, Christina Carson, Abby Ertel, Ryan Kozar, and Justin Selden participated as part of their skills development training.
- Emmet County Probate and Family County work program for removing unwanted Scotch pine saplings from the MacDonald Nature Preserve on July 28.
- Friends of the Boyne River for removal of a problem beaver dam from the North Branch of the Boyne Preserve.
- LSSU’s Aquatic Research Lab for providing a tour of their facilities as part of LTC’s volunteer appreciation event.
- Kyle Anderson for cleanup on the Three Bears Mountain preserve.
- Kyle Anderson, Walt Lapeer, and Mike Cromley for help with stewardship at the Helmer’s Dam Nature Preserve.
- Mike Miller for helping us dismantle duck blinds at Cook Island Preserve.
- Mary Goode, Woody Kellum, Jan and Jerry Mom, Jeannine Palms, Dale Petty, Yousef Rabhi, and Christine Muscat for pulling spotted knapweed and marsh thistles at the Palms and Vermilion Preserves.
- Trail and boardwalk construction crew at the Birge Nature Preserve on August 18: Matt Adgar, Ray Barron, Tim DeWick, John Griffin, and Will Hobson. Moira (Pat) Wilson donated boardwalk materials and Bonnie Mikkelsen and the Hessel Grocery provided us with an excellent lunch and cookies.

Darrell Amlin



Thank you...

The Legends, Labyrinths & Lore field trip brought more than 35 people to Jenny Eis and Don Ward’s unique property.

- Glen Matthews for his expertise in writing management plans for a number of our new preserves.
- Jim Boelter for removing a hunting blind at the Cain’s Creek Swamp Nature Preserve.
- Jim Liska for donating waders for our stewardship crew.
- Emmanuel Episcopal Church group for work at Bubbling Springs, Susan Creek, and Ransom Nature Preserves.
- Page Sartell and Northwoods Area Narcotics Anonymous for Andreae Cabin work in June.
- Glen Schmiede, Lynne Petersen, Mary Jane Ulrich, and Darrell Amlin for sharing photos.
- Marty Amlin for editing assistance.
- The following for help with summer mailings: Jerry Kuhns, John Maxi-miuk and Trudy Day; and from the RSVP Program: Norm Cutshall, Betty Deschirmeier, Gloria Krusell, Maxine McDowell, Tillie Cone, Sharon Brown, Paula Perttu, Nancy Fay Packer, Betty Trippe, Mona Fay, Marian Jurries, Doris Lark, Pearl Dally, Bev Warner, Lurlie Vaughn, Marge Upton, Carol Wells, Marlene Batson, and Jean Richardson.
- Ron Fowler for providing two knee-high nature and music programs.
- Troop 55 (John, Sam and Fred Bailey, Ian and Neal Betterly, John and Jon Peters, Curt Bartz, Daniel Gage) and Troop 204 (Phil, Ian, and Duncan Dickinson, Larry and Andrew Ford, Nathan and Ken Kowalski) for hours of help with the erosion restoration project at the Andreae Nature Preserve on August 28.



(Counterclockwise from above left) The invasive spotted knapweed was pulled at the Kalman Nature Preserve near Harbor Springs.

Nineteen volunteers assisted the Conservancy with removing old junk from the Gauthier Nature Preserve located within the Cheboygan city limits.



The entire Harbor Springs Middle School spent one morning as part of a "day of service" last June doing a variety of stewardship jobs at several Emmet County nature preserves. Here students clean up an old farm dump at the Offield Family Nature Preserve.

the work of generation
The old saying, "It takes a village," certainly applies to the work of maintaining and improving protected lands. Fortunately, conservation work appeals to people of all ages. Over the past few months, 12-year-olds removed exotic species, picked up trash, and cleared trails during a late school year morning. College student Kyle Anderson

An illegal hunting blind is disassembled for removal from a Charlevoix County nature preserve.

Twenty-eight Conservancy volunteers joined staff for a thank you luncheon held at the Lake Superior State University Cislser Center on August 21.





This year, two pairs of piping plovers nested on the Vermilion Point Preserve beach, successfully fledging four chicks. This one day old chick from the Grand Marais region was photographed by Alice VanZoeren.



Students from the University of Michigan Biological Station conducted a species inventory of the new Inland Waterway Nature Preserve on Crooked Lake.

NS...
volunteered his time at four different work days throughout the summer. And we have a list of many, many retirees we can call on when we need a little help in the field (or in the office, for that matter!).
After all, these preserves and protected properties are here forever — for each and every one of us.

Scout Troop 204 from Indian River and Scout Troop 55 from Harbor Springs haul rock along the Pigeon River to restore an eroded section of shoreline by the Andrae Nature Preserve.



Volunteers Tim DeWick, Ray Baron, and Will Hobson with staff member Charles Dawley build boardwalks at the Birge Nature Preserve.



Volunteers Dale Petty, Jerry Mom, Jeannine Palms, and Jan Mom pull spotted knapweed at Vermilion Point Nature Preserve.



Hunting & Trail Reminders

You are highly encouraged to explore as many Conservancy-owned preserves as you can this fall. Please keep in mind that some of the preserves are open for hunting. The majority of hunting occurs at dawn and dusk. For more information about hunting on preserves (including a list of preserves where hunting is permitted), visit www.landtrust.org and click on "Nature Preserves".

The following preserves are not open to hunting and provide excellent hiking opportunities within the Conservancy's service area:

Charlevoix County

- Barney's Lake (on Beaver Island)
- Driggers
- Jordan River
- Little Sand Bay (on Beaver Island)
- North Point (owned by City of Charlevoix)
- Ransom
- Raven Ridge
- Rogers Family Homestead
- Undine

Cheboygan County

- Andreae
- Chaboiganing
- Gauthier
- Seven Springs
- Vivian VanCampen

Chippewa County

- Palms
- Vermilion Point

Emmet County

- Bubbling Springs
- Hailand
- The Headlands (owned by Emmet County)
- Johnston, Ray
- McCune
- Oden Island
- Raunecker
- Round Lake
- Thorne Swift

Mackinac County

- Derby
- Mackinac Bay

The Nature Preserve Map will be updated and reprinted in early fall. Providing a nutshell view of Conservancy preserves throughout the service area, you can get a copy of the map by calling 231.347.0991 or visiting the website.

Please remember, dogs are allowed on Conservancy preserves but they must be kept on a leash. Please respect others by obeying this statewide law.



Local Shopping Benefits Conservancy

From November 1-November 30, **Hanni Gallery in Harbor Springs** will donate 10% of all gross sales to the Little Traverse Conservancy with a minimum donation of \$500. Much of the unique work within this gallery is created by local artists and has been inspired by nature. This holiday season, support local artisans and the conservation of our beautiful region at the same time.

The Hanni Gallery is located at 140 S. Spring Street in Harbor Springs. Call 231.526.2456 for more information.





The Conservancy would like to thank the following new Friends or Benefactors or members who have increased their level of giving within the Friends or Benefactors level from May 21, 2010 to August 20, 2010:

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attention educators!



Window of Opportunity

Friday, October 1, 8 am - 4 pm

2010 Early Childhood Education Conference

The Value of Play, Music Play, and Literacy

North Central Michigan College, Petoskey

Conservancy education specialist Alison Berry will be presenting a breakout session entitled "Teaching in Nature" at this upcoming conference geared towards early childhood. In her interactive workshop, participants will discover engaging and practical ideas that can be used throughout the curriculum. Gain techniques for using the outdoor classroom as an integral part of preschool and elementary children's daily learning. Tips on creating nature-inspired outdoor spaces as well as more calming indoor spaces and rekindling a sense of wonder will also be shared. For more information about the workshop or the conference, please call Alison at 231.344.1010.

This year in northern Michigan.



Annual Conference of the
Michigan Alliance for Environmental & Outdoor Education

Engaging Students in Science & Stewardship

Friday-Sunday, October 8-10, 2010

University of Michigan Biological Station (near Pellston)

Conference Strands

- Environmental and global change monitoring
 - School-community partnerships to address a local stewardship need
 - Integrating environmental education into all disciplines
 - Outdoor teaching skills and techniques
- ...and kayaking, night sky, fall colors, new friends, exciting ideas, FUN!

A limited number of scholarships are available through the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation.

Please call Melissa at 231.344.1004 for more information.

www.michiganenvironmentaled.org

Fall Education Programs

An integral part of land conservation is to engage younger generations with the natural world. Conservancy education programs are offered at no charge - all year round.

Registration for the Fall 2010 programs began on September 1. Programs begin Tuesday, September 21 and run through Friday, October 29. To find out more about the programs listed to the right, please visit www.landtrust.org and click on "Education." A link to the most recent teacher newsletter can also be found on this site.

The Shape of Things (preK)
Falling for Leaves (grades K-1)
Meet the Arthropods (grades 1-3)
Everybody Eats (grades 1-3)
Purely Plants (grades 3-4)
Dirt Makers (grades 3-5)
Orienteering (grades 5 & up)
EcoJournaling (grades 6 & up)



"It was a pleasant surprise to discover a nature program geared to pre-school aged children. Alison, Melissa, and Sarah are able to retain a sense of wonder for the children at the same time as presenting relevant scientific concepts even adults find fascinating."

- Mary Hohlbein, Bliss
mother of Nancy and Nelle

Sam Bailey of Harbor Springs says,
"The LTC is a fun and unique way to get outdoors and learn about our environment. It appeals to all ages!"



Maggie Bailey of Harbor Springs says,
"The programs are held at different conservancy spots and we always do something new. We do things that people don't normally go out and do themselves. It's not just fun, it also gets us outside and moving! I try to take friends who have never gone before."

Seamus Nolan: "My favorite hike was the Skyline Trail. Free raspberries all around!" (pictured below middle with Liam)

Liam Nolan: "I liked the habitat one where we built the shelters!"

Maartje Nolan (Mom): "I just really liked the whole program. I like that it is age appropriate, yet challenging."



Reflections

...Tom Bailey

The oil and gas leasing boom that swept across northern Michigan this summer — and as I write in early fall seems to be subsiding almost as quickly — prompted me to reflect on the way our legal, financial, and resource management systems deal with fossil fuels versus other resources. I shared a few of these thoughts at the August 3 annual meeting of the Conservancy and, prompted by a number of requests, have done my best to summarize those ideas for this column:

Though Michigan is no stranger to boom times, it strikes me that the oil and gas rush differs in some fundamental ways from the copper boom that put Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula on the world map, or the tremendous run of Michigan's iron range. It's different, too, from the lumber boom that Michigan experienced, and here's why:

First of all, when fuel resources are used, they're gone. Period. As the old saying goes, "they're not making any more of it" — at least, not at a pace that is practical from our standpoint. Contrast the burning of fossil fuels with, say, the use of materials like copper or iron: these metals are reusable, recyclable, and therefore much of the iron and copper that was hauled out of Michigan in the 19th and 20th centuries is still in circulation. Timber, while only minimally recyclable, is different in that it is a renewable resource and the land that produces it can produce more in a relatively short time. (Critical to that is proper land and timber management, as we've learned the hard way in Michigan.) Compare this with oil, gas and coal, which represent energy that was accumulated through deposits of organic matter over hundreds of millions of years, and is burned away in a flash.

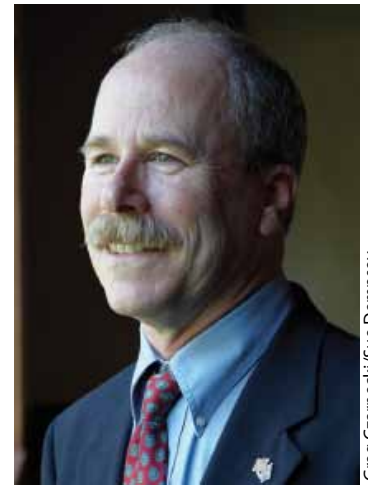
Considering the economic implications, I note that people make money on metals when they are mined, and again when they're transported, refined, manufactured into things, scrapped, reused, scrapped again and so on. A seemingly endless chain develops when these resources go into circulation. With timber, farm crops and other

living resources, there may be limited reuse and recycling, but reasonably well managed land produces these resources continually. With fossil fuels, however, once the consumer pays and burns the material up, that's it. The oil, gas or coal turns mainly into pollution.

Thus, with fossil fuels it's "winner take all" if you're in the right place at the right time. After hundreds of millions of years in the making, the wealth of the resource goes to the person who happens to have his/her name on the title to the property at the particular moment when the technology is available to extract that resource and someone is willing to buy it. If you've got the title when the boom takes place, you win. Everyone who comes after you — tough luck, they can deal with the pollution. Those who extract the resource, process it and sell to consumers simply move on and look for more.

It gives me pause to watch how such a boom plays out. Oil and gas companies have such huge sums of money at their disposal that an event like the recent unprecedented sale of oil and gas leasing rights by the State of Michigan for \$178 million can be just a passing event; speculation that may or may not pay off. Large sums are thrown about like play money. And, almost as soon as it begins, it can end, as it has for many in northern Michigan who had large offers on their tables for oil and gas leases — and awoke the next day to letters saying that the offers had all been rescinded.

There's one encouraging bright spot in all of this: oil and gas leases sold by the State of Michigan and most of the royalties on those minerals are allocated to the Natural Resources Trust Fund, which makes this non-renewable resource money available to state and local governments for the purchase of recreational and environmentally significant land. Creation of this fund was a wise act of forethought by the legislature in 1976. Even wiser acts by the voters of the state subsequently created constitutional protections for this fund to prevent raids to fund other,



Greg Czarniecki/Sue Dempsey

more ephemeral, programs and purchases. To me the Trust Fund, and its constitutionally-designated successor the State Park Endowment Fund, which will receive the revenues when the Trust Fund reaches its half-billion dollar cap, represent the sort of long-term, visionary thinking that should go into how we use the proceeds from the sale and combustion of fossil fuels.

I don't claim to have a solution to the puzzle of dealing with oil and gas resources, but I believe that it is important to raise a number of questions, as I've begun to do here. With the exception of the Trust Fund and regulations which have helped to prevent pollution and mishaps in the extraction and distribution of oil and gas, our approach to fossil fuel development remains largely as it was in the 19th century. Some significant updating seems appropriate. And perhaps we should consider more about the long-term effects of oil and gas extraction — and of course coal extraction which can bring about wholesale changes in the landscape such as mountain top removal.

The oil and gas boom in the North may be subsiding, or it may explode again. There may be extensive development of wells in the deep shale formations that have so recently been the subject of speculation, or there may be only a few dry holes. We don't know for sure at this point. But we do know for sure that billions of people with whom we share the Earth are clamoring for energy and fuel. It seems to me that it might be worth taking a fresh look at the financial, legal, and resource management institutions that have grown up around fossil fuels and consider whether some further evolution might be appropriate.



Keeping Oriented

A NATURE PRESERVE & THE GEOGRAPHY OF PLACE

It seems that 15-year-old Montana Rivard was born with an internal compass, giving him the enviable ability to always know where he is. Once, when he was very young, a friend tried to confuse him while they were outside hiking. “He couldn’t be fooled and knew just the right direction to go,” said his mother, Kim, a soft spoken woman. “He has a strong sense of place.”

Perhaps Montana’s skills have evolved from his good fortune of spending so much time outdoors. All of his young life, he has been allowed to roam his grandparents’ land along with adjacent land that was recently donated by the O’Neil family to become the Bubbling Springs Nature Preserve just outside of Petoskey in Resort Township. He can tell you that this year, the trillium were not nearly as abundant as they were a few years ago, but the leeks were thriving. He noticed how the springs weren’t flowing strongly early in the year because of a dry winter. And he appreciates the work that a local Eagle Scout did last year

to create trails and ensure the preserve wouldn’t become too muddy to enjoy during the wetter months.

Shortly after the preserve was created, Conservancy staff

learned that Montana had conducted an ecological inventory of the land. “Montana’s species map is as detailed as any I have ever seen on an inventory,” said Doug Fuller, the Conservancy’s director of stewardship. Fuller noted how impressed the Conservancy was by the accuracy of the tree lines and the location of certain species.

Petoskey Middle School Teacher Mike Wolf has worked with Montana for the past three years and helped him with the Bubbling Springs map. “Montana’s spatial analysis and meticulous attention to detail is (and was as a 6th grader when he did the map) beyond most first and second year Cartography college students,” Wolf said. “His innate giftedness is equally matched by his curiosity and love of learning new things. I have been honored to know him and have been inspired daily by his work ethic.”

This past spring, Montana won the Petoskey Middle School geography bee and went on to place in the top 25 at



Montana Rivard holds his hand-drawn map of the Bubbling Springs Nature Preserve. Along with marking the elevations and the creeks, he documented 31 different vegetation communities found on the 15-acre preserve. His map will be useful to staff as they manage the preserve in the future.

the 2010 Michigan Geography Bee. But it turns out that his talents extend beyond maps. Today, he manages a 30- by 70-foot garden. He and a group of students are currently growing seedlings for the Petoskey Community Victory Garden using a greenhouse attached to Wolf’s classroom. Montana also paints watercolors of birds and plants.

When commended for his accomplishments, he modestly shrugs and reaches for the GPS handheld unit that Conservancy staff have shown him, something he is seeing for the first time. While the beauty of his hand-drawn map holds a special appeal over new technology, watching this talented mind in action creates a sense of hope and excitement for all the different directions this young man can — and will — confidently go.



Want to go paperless and receive the Conservancy newsletter electronically? Please call the office at 231.347.0991.



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Paradise, MI/Nathan Sharke

Fall Field Trips

The hiking season is upon us and these community field trips are offered at no charge. As a courtesy to our trip leaders, many of whom are volunteers, please pre-register for a Conservancy field trip by calling 231.347.0991.

Mushrooming with Marilynn **Sunday, September 26 1-3 pm** **Colonial Point Natural Area**

A classic fall favorite, we are thrilled to offer this outing with Marilynn Smith, local mycologist, as she treats us to the names, stories, and trivia of “all things fungal” during this hike below the mighty oaks of Colonial Point. You will never see mushrooms in the same way again after this adventure!

Gauthier Preserve Hike

Saturday, October 2 10 am to noon

Explore the newly cleaned up Gauthier Preserve which lies adjacent to the Cheboygan City Trails along the shores of Lake Huron. We'll meet at the city trails to walk through the wetlands (including a sidetrip to the big lookout tower) and meander toward the Gauthier Preserve.

Hike the Five Mile Creek Preserve

Saturday, October 2 10 am to noon

The Five Mile Creek Preserve is a natural gem filled with hidden beauty. Get off the beaten path (since there is no established trail) as we venture through this beautiful M-119 property with neighbor Dave Cummings. Having grown up wandering these woods, Dave is full of stories and historical information about this part of the Little Traverse Bay watershed. You won't be disappointed!