



Conservation Easement Landowner Newsletter



A newsletter for Conservation Easement Landowners

Spring 2003

This fourth 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 Vic Lane at the Conservancy office:

(231) 347-0991
3264 Powell Rd.,
Harbor Springs, MI 49740
or email:
melissa@landtrust.org
vic@landtrust.org

Cudlip Conservation Easement

480 acres
Cheboygan County



Remember

Are you planning to sell your conservation easement-protected property? Please be sure to notify the Conservancy if your property changes ownership. The best line of defense against easement violations is early contact with new landowners. This allows us to promote understanding of the easement terms and gives us an opportunity to inform them of the monitoring process and stewardship procedures, ultimately helping us maintain the land's long-term protection.

In 2000, Lynn, Jim and Peter Cudlip donated a conservation easement on their Cheboygan County family property, which includes nearly a mile of frontage on the Pigeon River. The large property contains a main cabin residence and adjacent small cabin. A three-acre building envelope was retained for the future, with the remainder of the land permanently protected. Lynn, a biologist living in Colorado, explains their decision to protect their land and what it has meant to her.

Can you tell us about the history of your land and how your family came to acquire it? My parents bought the property in 1964. It was a hunting camp called the Fin, Fur, and Feather at that time, and had previously been logged as had been most of northern Michigan. In the 1920s or 30s, several parcels were pulled together to create the piece we own today. We have enjoyed the property for its support of wildlife, hunting and fishing, and its solitude. Also we have had selective cuts occur on the property. For wildlife purposes and forest health, portions of the property could be logged again.

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Since the easement has been donated, how have you and your family felt about it? Very well. Our thoughts have not changed, and we have no "conservation easement regrets."

Can you tell us a bit about your personal land ethic?

I love connected and wild landscapes. I have been mulling over the idea of conservation easements viewed as relieving pressure from stressors, such as development, as opposed to the more defensive posture of protection. In this fashion, conservation easements may acquire a more pro-active position in the land management ethic. In essence the conservation easement frees the land, its associated functions and services, and organisms that use it - few things hinder the land's ability to support diverse communities. However, since I live in the new west where tourist meets rancher, I still find real value in continued use of the land when sound management and good business practices are employed.

You and your family are considering selling the property. How has the conservation easement affected this decision? Do you anticipate any difficulties with the sale as a result of the easement? We anticipate that market conditions - the economy and world events - may influence the sale of the property more than any easement placed on it. We believe intact land, including large acreages connected to other land with the same land use or management, may be more of an attraction to prospective buyers.

Anything else you'd like to add?

The "popularity" of conservation easements questions the typical response to what is the highest and best use of the land (i.e. subdivisions not associated with a town or city core area). Appraisers take heed.

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From the family photo album: The Cudlips at their cabin.

Meet Your Stewardship Staff



Don't forget that these signs are available to you for your conservation easement protected property.

Private Conservation Property

The Little Traverse Conservancy holds a conservation easement on this property. The Conservancy and the landowner are cooperating to ensure that the scenic, natural, and open space value of this land will forever be protected.

This protected area is private property.

Little Traverse Conservancy
3264 Powell Road
Harbor Springs, MI 49740
(231) 347-0991



Stewardship Coordinator
Melissa Hansen



Stewardship Specialist
Vic Lane

Little Traverse Conservancy Conservation Easement Profile

Since our Conservation Easement Program was initiated in 1986, the Conservancy has worked with landowners to protect 7,564 acres of northern Michigan land in private ownership.

County	# Projects	Acres
Charlevoix	24	1,708.6
Cheboygan	21	2,528
Chippewa	5	601.4
Emmet	63	2,568.5
Mackinac	7	158.2
TOTAL	120	7,564.7

Recently Donated Conservation Easement Properties

*Zeerip Conservation Easement
53 acres, Chippewa County*



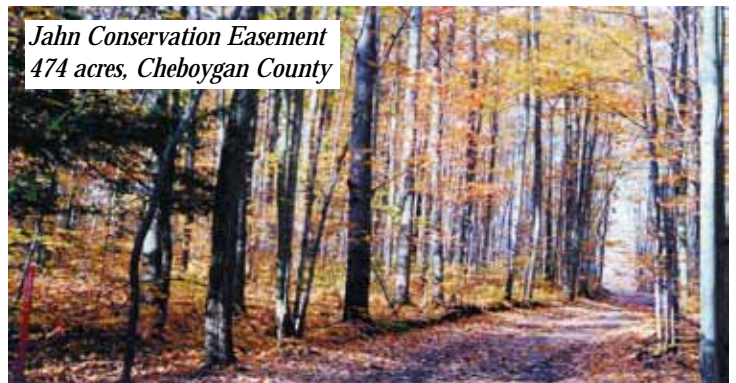
*Clayton Conservation Easement
40 acres, Emmet County*



*Henne Conservation Easement
52 acres, Charlevoix County*



*Jahn Conservation Easement
474 acres, Cheboygan County*



Conservation Easement Monitoring Schedule

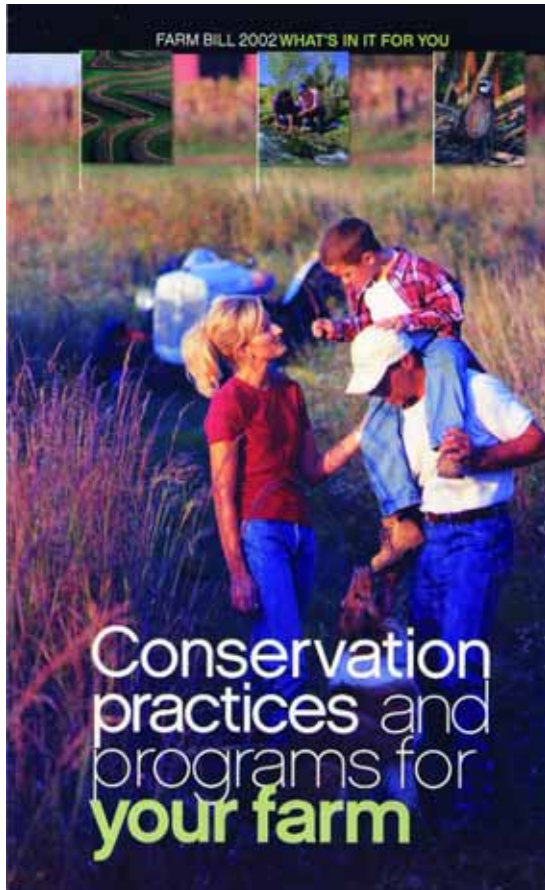
The planned monitoring schedule for 2003 is as follows:

- [Charlevoix County](#) - Monday, April 21 through Friday, May 9.
- [Cheboygan County](#) - Monday, April 28 through Friday, May 16.
- [Chippewa County](#) - Fall, after leaves are off trees, date to be determined. Landowners will be notified.
- [Emmet County](#) - Fall, after leaves are off trees, date to be determined. Landowners will be notified.
- [Mackinac County](#) - Between August 11 and August 29, by boat

An aerial monitoring flight for [Charlevoix](#) and [Cheboygan Counties](#) will occur in April, before leaves are out on the trees. It is difficult to pinpoint an exact date due to weather dependency and availability of plane and pilot.

An aerial monitoring flight for [Emmet](#), [Mackinac](#) and [Chippewa Counties](#) will occur in the fall, after leaves are off the trees.

All conservation easement landowners will receive letters regarding monitoring approximately two to four weeks prior to a monitoring visit on their property. Landowners are encouraged and welcome to attend a monitoring visit with staff. If the times specified in the monitoring schedule are not convenient for a landowner, other arrangements can be made.



Your land - whether it is a farm or not - may qualify for one of the many programs that have been funded through the federal Farm Bill. The above booklet is offered through contacts below.

NRCS/USDA Service Centers

Emmet & Charlevoix Counties

Bill Borgeld: (231) 347-5255 ext. 3

USDA - NRCS

Petoskey Service Center

2255 E. Mitchell Rd.

Petoskey, MI 49770

www.mi.nrcs.usda.gov

Chippewa & Mackinac Counties

(906) 632-9611 ext. 3

Sault Ste. Marie Service Center

2769 Ashmun St. #M-129

Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783-3730

Cheboygan County

Perry Smeltzer: (989) 733-8323 ext. 3

Onaway Service Center

4050 Michigan Ave.

Onaway, MI 49765-8852

Conservation Programs

Offered through the 2002 Farm Bill

Are you interested in taking action to improve the conservation quality of your land? Hoping to improve soil quality, attract more wildlife, or encourage native plants to flourish? The 2002 federal Farm Bill includes several programs that may be applicable to your northern Michigan property, whether it is a farm or not. Here are some brief summaries of the programs suggested for our region, and more information can be found through your local Natural Resources Conservation Service office (*contact information is below*).

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) Designed for the restoration of wetlands that had previously been altered or degraded by activities such as tile drainage, ditching, or recent pasturing of livestock. Both 10- and 30-year easement agreements are possible, and permanent easements pay a one-time up front payment along with 100% cost sharing funding to do the needed restoration work. The 10 year agreement is for restoration only, and there is no additional payment beyond a 75% cost-share rate. The 30-year agreement pays 75% of a to-be-determined agricultural value and 75% cost-share for the restoration work. The permanent easement provides a 100% agricultural appraised value, plus the cost-share mentioned above.



Emmet County Farmland/Todd Parker

Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) Designed for developing and protecting specific high priority wildlife habitats. These include grasslands, corridors, and forestland expansion. The program focuses on establishing native plant species to meet these needs. WHIP contracts can be developed for periods from 5-15 years. Cost-share incentive payments can range from 50-90% depending on the priority habitat selected.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Intended to take cropland and some marginal pastureland out of production to allow the land to recover. Annual payments for a period of 10-15 years are made on a per acre basis with 50% cost-share made for installing needed practices.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Intended for private land in agricultural production (includes non-industrial forestland). Contracts can be developed for a period of 1-10 years. This program makes cost-share payments up to 75% to install needed conservation practices that address known resource concerns.

To be accepted into one of the above programs, you must apply through your local NRCS office (*see left*). Each program has specific ranking sheets that are completed and scored for acceptance and your local District Conservationist can help you with this process.