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Bill Swindaman



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# Volunteer Steward Newsletter



Burt Lake from the Seven Springs Preserve

Charles Dawley

a newsletter for Preserve Monitors, Trail Stewards, and Project Volunteers of the Little Traverse Conservancy - April, 2011

## Volunteer Stewardship Work Days 2011

Please help us spread the word to others who may want to work on a local preserve! For all volunteer work days, please wear sturdy shoes and bring gloves and drinking water. For some of the work days, we welcome the use of extra tools. Check the Conservancy website at [www.landtrust.org](http://www.landtrust.org) for more information later this spring and summer, or give us a call. To sign up, or for more information, please call our office at 231.344.1011.

### Saturday, May 14 (10 am to 3 pm)

#### Little Sand Bay Home Site Cleanup

The old Gallagher House on the Little Sand Bay Preserve in Beaver Island is one of the oldest structures on Beaver Island, thought to date from the Mormon era in the 1850s. The Beaver Island Historical Society hopes to preserve or restore the house. In the meantime, we'll be cleaning up the area around the home site by removing barbed wire, demolishing small outbuildings, and searching along the old fence lines and stone walls to find and remove hidden stashes of farm debris. Come out Saturday, May 14 from 10 am to 3 pm to help with this effort and learn more about BIHS's historic preservation plans. It's guaranteed to be an interesting day, and you can take home any treasures you find.

### Thursday, May 26 (9 am to 2 pm)

#### Meadowgate Meadow Restoration

In May, 2010 about 50 students and adults from Harbor Springs Middle School spent a morning pulling invasive garlic mustard from throughout the 11-acre Meadowgate Nature Preserve near Harbor Springs. Don't let their efforts go to waste! Come on out and help us keep this weed under control. We'll also be doing work on other phases of the meadow restoration project planned for this preserve, including removing undesirable shrubs and saplings and planting tree seedlings. This is a great opportunity for you to learn more about our plans for meadow restoration.

### Saturday, June 4 (10 am to 3 pm)

#### Pigeon River Preserves Trail Linking

National Trails Day, created in 1993 by the American Hiking Society, is celebrated around the country on the first Saturday in June each year. Spend National Trails Day helping us to link up two great trail systems: the beloved and familiar Andreae Preserve, and our brand new Banwell Preserve. When complete, the combined total trail system will be four miles.

### Friday, July 22 & Saturday, July 23

### Vermilion Point Knapweed Pull - call for details

For the fifth year in a row, we will be pulling spotted knapweed at Vermilion Point. This high priority project is a cooperative effort of Little Traverse Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, Lake Superior State University, and the Eastern UP Cooperative Weed Management Area, and will help keep Vermilion's habitat in shape for Piping Plovers and Lake Huron Tansy. This is your opportunity to stay overnight at Vermilion in the old Life Saving Station barracks. Don't miss out!

### Thursday, July 28 (9 am to noon)

#### Chaboiganing Preserve Invasive Removal

Since 2005, we've been working to remove autumn olive and other woody invasives from the hay fields and forest edges at the Chaboiganing Preserve. Great progress has been made, but there are always a few stragglers left behind.



## Phil and Trish Woollcott Seven Springs Preserve Monitors

We introduce you to Phil and Trish Woollcott, neighbors and preserve monitors to the Seven Springs Nature Preserve in Cheboygan County on Burt Lake.

Since she was two years old, Trish Woollcott and her family journeyed north to the east end of Burt Lake from near Chicago. The very same stretch of shoreline where she learned to swim is today part of the Seven Springs Preserve shoreline. Her grandchildren are the 6th generation to spend time at the family cabin, land, and beautiful waters of Burt Lake.

Shortly before she and Phil were married, Trish brought Phil north to experience the dream and he was hooked. Originally from the mountains of West Virginia and Asheville North Carolina, Phil grew up in an era without television. "We had to figure out things to do on our own, which naturally led us outside. The woods of northern Michigan have a remarkable similarity to where I grew up, with a prevalence of white pine and other shared species. This has the comforting feeling of being like home."

The couple and their children continued to make annual journeys to the property until they retired to a home north of Harbor Springs in 2004. Phil's working career was spent as a psychiatrist at the University of Illinois Medical School in Chicago and prior to that at Menninger's Hospital in Topeka Kansas. Trish was a practicing nurse-midwife at Evanston Hospital for the majority of her professional years.

The Woollcott property is located directly across the road from the Seven Springs Preserve. Trish says that when the nature preserve was formed through local fundraising efforts, she and Phil were inspired to donate a conservation easement on their 60 acres in 1996. "All three of our kids were 100% for it," Trish said. "It is like a tapestry," Trish said. "We wanted to add our piece to the growing quilt of protected lands and wildlife habitat surrounding the original preserve."

When the Woollcotts were approached by Conservancy staff in 2006 to consider the role of preserve monitors for Seven Springs, they gladly accepted. Their property is their summer home and various members of the family are often around. "As monitors, we have become more intimately connected with the nature preserve," Trish said. "Because we now have responsibilities there, we pay better attention to it and have gotten to know it at a deeper level." The Woollcotts also appreciate that through their volunteer role, they've gotten to know Chuck and Margy Murray, the Trail Stewards for Seven Springs.

Land weaves people and time together. When a land is left natural and open for anyone to continue to enjoy, the opportunities for infinite connections, stories and memories exist for all time. The Woollcotts are giving back to this property that has offered so much to their family for generations and - in doing so - are expanding the ripple effects.



Phil and Trish Woollcott; Trish with Margy and Chuck Murray, trail stewards for the Seven Springs Preserve.





## Planned Nature Preserve Projects - 2011

The Stewardship staff have planned the following activities for Conservancy nature preserves during the upcoming work season.

### CHARLEVOIX COUNTY

#### Barney's Lake

Improve the parking and boat storage areas on the lakeshore, mark trails, install trail maps.

#### Little Sand Bay

Clean up around Gallagher house (see Volunteer Events on back page), coordinate road maintenance road.

#### Ransom

Maintain view by brush hogging top of field.

#### Raven Ridge

Improve trails by replacing signs and remarking trail blazes.

#### Rogers Family Homestead

Inspect and replace (if necessary) bridges and other structures, mark boundaries, remove barbed wire.

#### Taylor/Olstrom Preserve

Develop management plan, install LTC name sign, mark boundaries.

### CHEBOYGAN COUNTY

#### Andreae

Final phase of Pigeon River erosion control project.

#### Banwell

Create trail connector to Andreae Preserve (see Volunteer Events), revise and install trail maps to include both Banwell and Andreae, install name sign and formalize parking.

#### Chaboiganing

Autumn olive control (see Volunteer Events).

#### Hanel

Improve easement access for the public, mark boundaries, clean up litter and debris, plant trees.

#### Michigan Wildlife Foundation

Remove barbed wire, plant trees, install gate, remove billboard, install LTC name sign.

#### Reed's Alverno

Work with Cheboygan Road Commission and neighbors to resolve beaver flooding issue, culvert placement, and road maintenance of Krefit Road.

### CHIPPEWA COUNTY

#### Pickering Hay Point

Install driveway directional signs.

#### Round Island Point

Communicate with Conservation Officers regarding ice shanty storage, arrange for brush hogging along edges of access road.

#### Vermilion

Spotted Knapweed pull (see Volunteer Events), continue to maintain buildings and determine their ultimate fate, coordinate use of facilities by LSSU and other researchers.

### EMMET COUNTY

#### Covert

Continue management of conifer areas.

#### Curtis

Remove house and restore site, develop management plan, install LTC name sign.

#### Goodhart Farms

Incorporate new 70 acre addition into management plan and trail system, post boundaries, remove old wire fencing.

#### Johnston, Elmer

Clear woody plants, brush hog field, and control autumn olive to maintain view.

#### McCune

Improve preserve parking lot.

#### Meadowgate

Implement meadow restoration project (see Volunteer Events).

#### Offield Family

Continue boundary marking, trash clean up and barbed wire removal.

### MACKINAC COUNTY

#### Aldo Leopold

Inspect and mark boundaries of new additions where possible, investigate possible trail connections.

#### Birge

Construct parking area at new Wheel Road trailhead, install trailside benches, continue trail improvement work.

#### Mackinac Bay

Plan for more extensive view trimming at observation deck.

#### Search Bay

Remove old cabins and clean up area.

#### St Helena

Work with Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers and Scouts on service projects.

*Please join us!*

## Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

Tuesday, July 19, 2011  
evening picnic at Jay and Shawn Neff's Barn  
7943 West Robinson Road  
adjacent to Goodhart Farms Nature Preserve

We appreciate all your efforts to help us take care of our nature preserves, and hope you'll let us treat you to a meal! This year we'll be having a Tuesday night picnic dinner at Goodhart Farms. We'll have a short staff intro and presentation starting at 5:30, dinner from 6 to 7, followed by optional hike(s) on the preserve. This is a great opportunity for us to meet with you, answer questions you may have, and for you to meet and visit with your fellow stewardship volunteers. Your invitation with more details will be mailed in June. We hope you'll be able to join us.

## Stewardship Staff Update

In early 2011, Conservancy staff member Jay Neff transitioned from the Land Protection department to the Stewardship department. This move was made to help accommodate growing stewardship needs. "For many years, we have known that the organizational needs would eventually become heavier on the stewardship side, and this shift is already making itself evident," said Executive Director Tom Bailey. Jay will be involved in a multitude of stewardship responsibilities with a special emphasis on conservation easements. The staff is also pleased to be able to take advantage of his knack with equipment purchasing, care, and maintenance.

In addition to the staff of four, the Conservancy is hiring an AmeriCorps Stewardship Technician to work from May through October. This person will be working on the full range of nature preserve and conservation easement activities to best prepare for a future in the conservation field.

As always, please feel free to contact staff with any questions or concerns.



Ellen Meiseman

## Nature Preserve Statistics as of April, 2011

County	#	Acres
Charlevoix	37	1,946
Cheboygan	22	1,518
Chippewa	17	4,110
Emmet	61	3,354
Mackinac	13	2,579
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>13,507</b>

## Stew Crew 2011



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