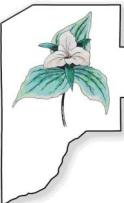


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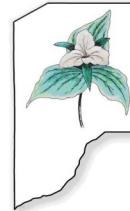
- fostering appreciation for and understanding of the natural environment
- enabling the voluntary protection of environmentally valuable land
- preserving environmentally significant lands and scenic areas

To protect the natural diversity and scenic values of LaPorte County by

MISSION STATEMENT



La Porte County Conservation Trust, Inc.
405 Maple Avenue
La Porte, IN 46350



Fall 2012

Newsletter for the La Porte County Conservation Trust, Inc.

trillium

Pine Lake Shoreline Preserved by LPCCT, PLA



This is a section of the Pine Lake Assembly shoreline on the northwest side of Pine Lake in La Porte that has been permanently preserved by a conservation easement granted to the LPCCT. The property features undeveloped shoreline and old growth oak forest, eco systems that have almost disappeared from La Porte Lakes.

The LPCCT is pleased to announce that the Pine Lake Assembly (PLA) has granted a conservation easement to the LPCCT on approximately 12 acres of property on Pine Lake in La Porte. The property includes about 1950 feet of shoreline, which is the longest private undeveloped shoreline on Pine Lake, the largest lake in La Porte.

This agreement culminates three years of discussions between the PLA and the LPCCT. The result of the agreement is that this property will be forever protected from development. A conservation easement is a tool widely used by land trusts to protect properties in perpetuity; for more information on conservation easements see the article on the next page.

The PLA is a homeowners organization established in 1893 and is an important part of La Porte's history.

The leadership of the PLA approached the LPPCT several years ago asking about how the property could be preserved. Most of the shoreline of Pine Lake has been developed. Recently condominiums have been built on the northeast side of Pine Lake, blocking the view from highway 35. A beautiful view of Pine Lake that residents took for granted quickly disappeared. Although the PLA did not have any plans to develop or sell the

property the leadership of the PLA wanted to ensure that the property was maintained in its present, undeveloped state forever.

Ken Gudino, who was president of the PLA during the planning of the easement, explains the reasons for the easement in this statement. "We have had a long standing opinion in our community to preserve our natural resources of woods, shoreline and park land setting as intended by our founding directors in the past and as it continues to be today. The Pine Lake Assembly board collectively decided to pursue this goal through a legal means to permanently protect our undeveloped land by a conservation easement with a land preservation group. The partnership with LaPorte County Conservation Trust proved to be the right fit Pine Lake Assembly was looking for to ensure a permanent protection for our land now and for future generations. Personally, I would like to thank LPCCT for their dedication, hard work and foresight in the support of land preservation and an ongoing partnership with PLA."

In order to establish a conservation easement a baseline documentation report must be produced to show the condition of the property at the time the easement is granted. To perform this work the LPCCT hired Cardno/JFNew, a leading

See Easement next page

Easement Continued

company in the field of ecological restoration. The report detailed three ecological community types on the property. These are Aquatic Bed (Lake), Emergent Marsh and Dry-Mesic Forest.

Although this is not considered a high quality natural area, there were 167 native plant species located, including a large population of Indian pipe (*Monotropa uniflora*). The mature oak forest is an example of the forest that ringed La Porte lakes before settlement. Some very large oaks were observed (black oak, white oak, and bur oak) and these individuals were estimated to be over 200 years old. The LPCCT would like to thank Steve Barker and Scott Namestnik of Cardno/JFNew for their work on this report.

The easement was carefully written to allow the PLA members use of the property while protecting the natural features of the property. The LPCCT is looking forward to partnering with the PLA in this process.

Please note that the easement property is private property and not open to the public.

The LPCCT would like to thank Paul Kohlhoff for providing legal advise for the easement. In addition the LPCCT thanks all their donors whose support allowed the LPCCT to pay for the legal and environmental report costs associated with this project.

Anyone interested in conservation easements should contact the LPCCT at info@lpcct.org.

La Porte County Conservation Trust, Inc.

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Sign for Pine Lake Assembly on Southwest corner of easement on Holton Road. The sign is located on a bluff overlooking Pine Lake.

What is a Conservation Easement?

The most traditional tool for conserving private land, a “conservation easement” (also known as a conservation restriction) is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that permanently limits uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values. It allows landowners to continue to own and use their land, and they can also sell it or pass it on to heirs.

When you donate a conservation easement to a land trust, you give up some of the rights associated with the land. For example, you might give up the right to build additional structures, while retaining the right to grow crops. Future owners also will be bound by the easement’s terms. The land trust is responsible for making sure the easement’s terms are followed. This is managed through “stewardship” by the land trust.

Conservation easements offer great flexibility. An easement on property containing rare wildlife habitat might prohibit any development, of example, while an easement on a farm might allow continued farming and the addition of agricultural structures. An easement may apply to all or a portion of a property, and need not require public access.

Source: Land Trust Alliance

For more information about conservation easements go to LPPCT.org/abouteasements

Third Annual Chain-of-Lakes Outing To Be Held September 29

The third annual Chain-of-Lakes paddling outing is planned for Saturday, September 29 at 9:00 am at the Stone Lake beach in La Porte. This is a joint outing with the Northwest Paddling Association (NWIPA) and the La Porte City Park Dept. If water levels allow, we will be paddling from Stone Lake through Hennessey Swamp into the channel that runs parallel to Pine Lake Avenue up to the bridge at Weller Avenue. Also paddlers may go through the channel from Stone Lake to Pine Lake. After the paddling we will have a potluck lunch at the beach house on Stone Lake. Participants should bring water, sun protection, and life preservers (there will be some extra preservers available). A limited number of canoes and kayaks are available from the NWIPA; these may be reserved by calling Liz McCloskey at 219-326-0700.



Paddlers in last years Chain-of-Lakes outing

Hike at Ridgeway Wetlands Planned

In partnership with the Potawatomi Audubon Society, there will be a hike at Ridgeway Wetland on Saturday, October 13 at 9:00 am. This time of year will be good for spotting migrating ducks, geese and shorebirds. The water levels at Ridgeway Wetland have receded from the very high levels of the last few years, allowing hikers to move around the ponds on the site. Hikers should wear boots. Anyone interested in joining the hike should call Dennis Richardson at 219-778-2810.

Christmas Bird Count Will Be December 17

The 27th Northeast La Porte County Christmas Bird count has been set for Monday, December 17. The LPCCT and the Potawatomi Audubon Society are co-sponsors of the bird count. The count area is a 15 mile diameter circle centered near Rolling Prairie and encompassing all or part of Springfield, Galena, Hudson, Wills, Kankakee and Center townships. Data gathered during these counts provides valuable information about bird population trends and migration patterns. If you would like to participate in the count call Dennis Richardson at 219-778-2810 or email hawkridge04@gmail.com.

THANKS TO ALL OUR DONORS

Lake Michigan Level \$1000 or more
Nicholas Timm & Deborah Longworth
Dennis Richardson & Frances Sipocz-Richardson

Grand Kankakee Marsh Level \$500-\$999
Thermco Instrument Corporation
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Sandy O'Brien
Karen Piper

New LPCCT Website

The LPCCT has a brand new website! Check out LPPCT.org to find out all about it. The site contains detailed information on each protected property, plus a calendar of events. Members can now donate on-line. More information on the website will be in subsequent issues of the Trillium.