



Spring 2021

Scenic Views

A newsletter from the Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy

For the Love of the Land

Our Mission

To preserve and protect valuable land and water resources for the benefit of the public, as well as for the wildlife dependent on these resources, in order to maintain quality of life, biological diversity, and natural scenic beauty for future generations.

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With so many of us shopping online, there's a new way to give to MALC by using Smile Amazon! Just go to smile.amazon.com, search for Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy and set it as your organization of choice when shopping at Smile Amazon. For every purchase you make, Amazon will donate a percentage of their receipts to MALC, without any cost to you! Deposits are made monthly to the MALC bank account and are used to help maintain the places we save.

Beth Stoddard Reveals the Beauty of Fitzsimmons Woods

MALC is thrilled to be continuing its success with ARTservancy by collaborating with Beth Stoddard, who is creating art inspired by our Fitzsimmons Woods preserve. ARTservancy is a collaboration between Port Washington's Gallery 224 and regional land trusts wherein artists in residence take inspiration from a different palette of natural areas each year to promote the vision of art and conservation in our community.

Beth Stoddard is a Milwaukee artist whose work is informed by art history and motivated by a love of nature. She studied art at the University of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. She teaches, judges and exhibits art and her works are held in private and corporate collections nationwide.

"The appeal of Fitzsimmons Woods lies in its fabulously active forest floor, the grand sweep of layered trees and the solitude of its splendid isolation. Its old-growth woodlands betray but a handful of human contacts from the surrounding homes. This precious land offers a wealth of visual treasures: improbably angled fallen trees, fantastical fungi and traces of resident wildlife."

"I've been making weekly visits, observing seasonal changes whilst sketching or painting onsite, focusing on forest floor details for drawings and creating pan-



Holdout Birch Leaves at Fitzsimmons Woods
Oil on panel, 10"x 8"

oramic palette knife color sketches and layered paintings. I'm looking forward to the warmer months in the woods for more seasonal changes and inspiration."

To see Beth's work and how it will continue, follow her on Instagram @bethstoddard-art, visit her website <http://www.bethstoddard.com/artservancy.html>, or sign up to receive her monthly art newsletter <http://www.bethstoddard.com/newsletter.html>. You can learn more about the ARTservancy program at <https://www.gallery224.org/artservancy-2020-2021>.



Beth Stoddard

Dear MALC Supporters,

This year, in my letter to you, I am reflecting on the connection between soil organic carbon and our mission at MALC. Have you heard of the "4 Per 1000" Initiative? Frankly, most of us haven't.

Yet, I recently learned that soil is the largest carbon pool on land. In recognition of this, attention has turned to increasing soil carbon stocks as an important piece of the puzzle for prevention of climate warming. In 2015, at the Paris Climate Talks, the French government introduced the 4 Per 1000 Initiative and it was adopted by a number of participating nations. (The U.S. has not signed on).

Signatories to the initiative commit to increasing soil organic carbon levels in the top layer of soil by .04% per year. If this goal is achieved globally over a twenty-five-year period, while at the same time aggressively reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the goal of achieving carbon neutrality will be in sight. It turns out that this may work if there is a massive effort to transition from current industrial agriculture to a variety of regenerative agricultural practices that minimize soil disturbance, protect soil from erosion through cover cropping, etc. In addition to agricultural lands, other poor, degraded soils can benefit from the addition of various soil amendments. These efforts are important and necessary.

However, another salient truth has emerged. Studies show that the rich, healthy soils existing within undisturbed lands such as old-growth forest, wetlands, prairie grasslands and savannah, would take a century or more to restore once those ecosystems are disturbed and converted to agriculture or development. Centuries!

That's well beyond the greenhouse gas reduction targets that must be met – 45% by 2030; carbon

neutrality by 2050 – to avoid catastrophic changes to life on Planet Earth. The implication is clear. Success in drawing down carbon in the soil begins with preserving and maintaining existing healthy, carbon-rich soils, the soils found beneath our remaining environmentally significant lands. We cannot afford to lose any more undisturbed wetlands, woodlands and prairies. In this era of climate change, the mission of MALC and of the many other land trusts across Wisconsin and the rest of the country takes on new significance. We at MALC are now challenged to scale up our efforts and our reach, to acquire additional land and conservation easements that will permanently protect the remaining pristine and natural area lands in our territory. In doing so, we will preserve healthy, carbon-rich soils that took centuries to create, while saving threatened and fragile, interdependent ecosystems of plants and animals. In this way, permanent land conservation serves not only to address climate change through carbon sequestration, but also to provide for the resilience we absolutely need as life on Earth adapts to the changes that are upon us. We at MALC are honored to accept that challenge and work toward it to the best of our ability.



With warmest regards,

Linda Frank
MALC President

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MALC Thanks Our 2019 Supporters and Contributors

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Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy 2020 Consolidated Financial Report

Assets

MALC has continued to maintain appropriate long-term reserves for ensuring against impermissible activities on protected lands. Dedicated funds are held primarily for special maintenance project funding on designated parcels and these funds have been applied in 2020 for completion of a land management project at Fitzsimmons Woods and continuation of a maintenance project at Carity Prairie. Liquid cash on hand remains strong. While conservation land holdings have remained constant for the last four years, additional protected lands will be added in 2021.

Income

Income in 2020 was provided through annual assessments established to provide conservation funds from homeowner's associations in subdivisions adjacent to our conservation lands, as well as generous donations from individuals. Additionally, MALC supplements its income with the volunteer labor of MALC board members and friends.

Expenses

Land management costs have consistently represented the vast majority of expenditures, while operating costs remain low. This is a result of operating as an all-volunteer nonprofit organization. The 88% spent on land management supported field work primarily to control invasive plant species and thereby allow native plant ecosystems to thrive. Operational expenses included communications, dues and memberships, insurance and supplies.

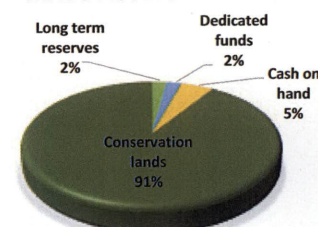
Summary

MALC is financially well positioned to continue its work of preserving and protecting natural lands now and in the future. We wish to thank our volunteers, contractors, consultants and donors for your continued support in 2020 and beyond.

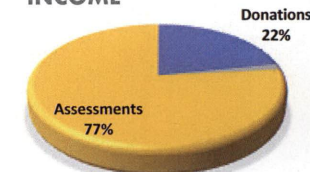
EXPENSES



MALC ASSETS



INCOME



What's That Bird?

Of the dozens of bird-identification tools and technologies, eBird and Merlin are offered as open-access websites as well as completely free apps for both Android and iOS mobile devices. Functional companions developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, they play an increasingly important role in science, education and conservation.

Essentially a global citizen-science project, eBird is a constantly updated online database of bird sightings

from around the world. You can manage and submit your bird lists, photos and sound recordings for review and inclusion and you can also access shared data from other contributors. Visualizations and tools for exploring and describing where bird populations occur and how they change through time are just some of the features produced using eBird's observational data. Anecdotally, many of the local birders I've asked are contributing, reporting their observations and sightings on eBird.

To aid in the collection of accurate data, Merlin is designed

Continued on back page

YES! I would like to help the Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy preserve and restore beautiful places for the public's enjoyment. Enclosed is my tax deductible gift.

___ \$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ \$200 ___ Other

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Mail this form with your check to: **For additional information:**

Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy
P.O. Box 320304
Franklin, Wisconsin 53132

email: MALC@mkeconservancy.org
www.mkeconservancy.org
Phone: 414-377-3851

MALC accepts donations online. See the donation page of our website at: mkeconservancy.org



Print your name as you would like it to appear in our newsletter acknowledging our supporters. If you choose to be listed as anonymous, place the letter "A" after your name.

Contributions will be applied to land acquisition, stewardship, and operating expenses to help carry out our mission. MALC is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law.



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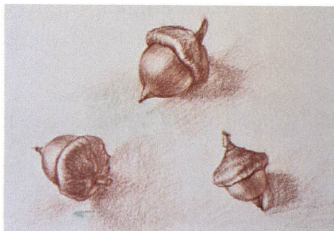
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Art Event

MALC will host an ARTservancy field event at our Fitzsimmons Woods preserve on West Fitzsimmons Road in Franklin on Saturday, May 15 from 2 to 4 PM.

Artist Beth Stoddard and MALC Secretary Perry Rossa will guide a small, socially-distanced group of no more than 12 individuals through this regionally-important natural area and provide meaning both contemporary and historical. Registration is available online at <https://volunteersignup.org/3TJPT>



Fitzsimmons Woods Forest Floor
Acorns sanguine pencil on paper.

BIRD continued from page 3 to assist beginning and intermediate bird watchers with bird IDs. The five questions Merlin asks are basic and somewhat subjective, but through customized location and date tools that generate answers for wherever you happen to be, the list of likely suspects tends to include the bird in question. While I have noticed some more seasoned birders relying on a combination of shared expertise and their favorite field guides for particular identifications, there is an unencumbered advantage to having an interactive bird guide on your phone.

The data and interpretive features provided by these apps are powerful resources for a wide range of research and conservation applications, from monitoring, management and habitat protection to developing sustainable policies and laws. For land trusts like MALC, we can use both eBird and Merlin to assist our staff and volunteers in identifying birds to better inform our discussions and stewardship decisions.

Now...what's that bird?