



# Leelanau Conservancy

## Conservation Easement Landowner Newsletter

March 2014

This is the third issue of our Conservation Easement Landowner Newsletter. We wanted to let you know of some important upcoming events and include some information that may be helpful as you plan for the spring/summer season on your property.

If you'd like more information on any of these topics, or have questions about your conservation easement, please contact Conservation Easement Program Manager, Yarrow Wolfe, at 231-256-9665, or email: [ywolfe@leelanauconservancy.org](mailto:ywolfe@leelanauconservancy.org)



*Protected Farmland in Empire Township*



I am a conservation easement landowner. I wasn't always. Before I contributed a conservation easement on my vineyard property, I was just a normal guy. Bought the land in 1975, planted vines in 1976, built a house/winery in 1978, the usual. Farmed for years

before the Conservancy existed, still farm the place. Loved the land when I bought it, still do. Honored

to be caring for it. It's what we do, you know. Husbandry. Taking care of things, watching them grow, trying to make things better. Always knew that's what my life was about. I was 25 when I bought the place, had a 20 year plan, now I'm older, the second 20 year plan is done, starting on the third. Can see the end for me up ahead a ways. Nice to know that the land I care for will be cared for after I'm not here for it. That's what the Conservancy does. Takes care of this place we love. Makes me feel real good, knowing that this place will be stewarded. Not just my land, but yours, too. And lots more of Leelanau, forever.

Larry Mawby

### DID YOU KNOW.....

The Leelanau Conservation District now has a District Forester who is here to provide services for YOU, Leelanau County landowners. Her name is Kama Ross and she works out of the Leelanau Conservation District Office. Her services are provided under a grant from the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development at no cost to landowners.

Kama is a great resource if you want information about forestry and can help guide you through the process of finding a forester to write a forest management plan. You can reach Kama at 231-256-9783 Email: [kama.ross@macd.org](mailto:kama.ross@macd.org).

Website: <http://www.leelanaucd.org/services/professional-forestry/>

## FOREST MANAGEMENT ON YOUR CONSERVATION EASEMENT

### Why do I need a forest management plan?

Most of our conservation easements require a Forest Management Plan (FMP) before you harvest live timber on your property. A Forest Management Plan is written by a certified forester who will work with you to determine a plan for your property, which may include harvesting timber. It may also include wild-life habitat improvement projects, firewood cutting, etc. Even if this is not required by the terms of your conservation easement, a FMP could be very beneficial to the overall health of your forest and long term forest management.

It is recommended to have a FMP regardless of a planned timber harvest. Having a FMP is an important step in long term planning and management of your property. A Timber Harvest Plan (THP) is often required when you decide to implement some of the goals outlined in your FMP and often is required to cut any live trees on your property. This is outlined in the terms of the conservation easement (CE) and most CEs require a FMP along with a THP before any live trees are removed. If you are unsure whether or not this is required, please review your conservation easement or call the office to talk to Yarrow.

### What is a forest management plan?

A forest management plan guides the forestry practices on your property and outlines the different types of forests you have, what species could be harvested and when. It is a forester's summary of the inventory of the landowner's property and from a scientific view, how best to keep the forest healthy and sustainable, according to the landowner goals. The FMP usually prescribes various management practices (thinning, removing dead/dying species, etc) and defines a timeline for when they could occur. A FMP is not the same as a timber harvest plan (THP). A THP is written when it is time to actually conduct forestry practices on the ground. The FMP will include maps and information about the soils on your property.

A FMP doesn't always mean implementing a timber harvest. Sometimes a selective thinning or a crop

tree release is prescribed by the forester as the best way to maintain the health and vigor of the property, sustain the resource for future generations, and meet the landowner's goals. Resource professionals, such as the Leelanau Conservancy and Area Foresters can help landowners carry out the prescription in a way that works for the landowner, the Conservancy (if protected with a conservation easement) and the forest resources. The Conservancy is always happy to meet with you to make sure the prescribed actions in the plan are compatible with the terms of the Conservation Easement.

This is your plan and it is up to you whether or not you wish to implement the prescribed tools in the plan or conduct a timber harvest. If you decide to follow the plan--when it is time for a prescribed task to occur on your land, you will work with your forester to develop a timber harvest plan (THP). The THP should, at a minimum, outline where the activity will take place, what trees will be harvested and for what purpose (saw timber, etc), and where any logging or skid roads will be.

Most conservation easements have a provision that requires the Conservancy to approve both the FMP and the THP. Once the plans are written and approved, you will work with the forester to develop a contract between you and the forester (or others depending on the project).

The forester will then start to implement the THP, which will include marking the trees for harvest (both at the Diameter Breast Height (DBH) and at the base) and working with a logger and/or mill to sell the timber.

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For more information on Forestry Topics visit our website:

[www.leelanauconservancy.org](http://www.leelanauconservancy.org)

Go to Stewardship the Tab and scroll down to Landowners of Conserved Land

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### Why should I work with a consulting forester?

A consulting forester works for you, the landowner, not the mill or the logging company. They will work with you to find out your goals for managing your forest and help you come up with a plan that suits your needs and management goals.

Please keep in mind that foresters do like to see trees utilized. And with all the insects and diseases impacting our forests, there are many that believe doing nothing is not always the best option.

However, preserving old growth and leaving forests untouched is always an option ***And you, the landowner, are in control of how you want to manage your property.***

## Conservation Easement Landowner Gathering at CLAY CLIFFS NATURAL AREA! June 21st, 2014 from 12-3 pm.

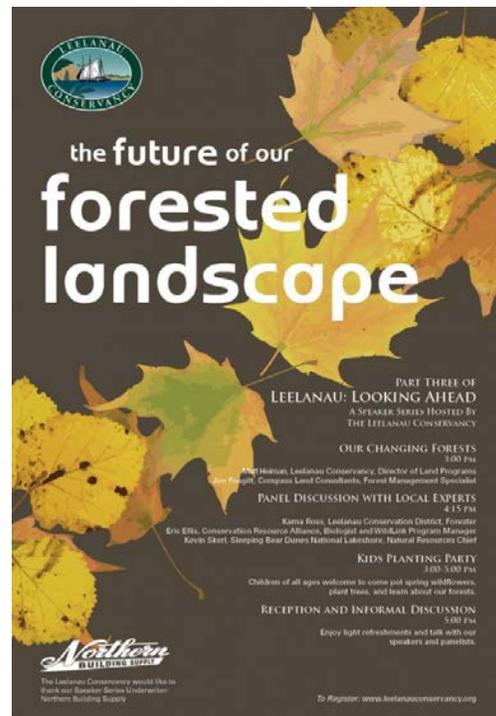


We wanted to give you a preview of what we are planning for this year's Conservation Easement Landowner Gathering. We hope you can join us in June for a Leelanau Conservancy Staff led hike on the new Clay Cliffs Natural Area owned by Leland Township and managed by the Conservancy.

We want to share this special place with you, and we will have staff available to answer any questions you may have. Watch for a formal invitation in the mail. In the meantime, please mark your calendars and let us know of any topics you would like us to present at this event.

All are welcome to attend this free event! Please sign up for this event by calling the Conservancy Office (256-9665).

To learn more: you can register at [leelanauconservancy.org](http://leelanauconservancy.org). Click on Events!



SAT. MAY 3 | 3 PM | A FREE EVENT  
SUTTONS BAY SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

### Please call us if....

.....you would like to set up a specific time for us to monitor your property OR if you want us to look for invasive species or specific features while monitoring. Our monitoring staff has various skills and we are eager to help you learn more about your conservation easement property.

.....you are selling your property. We can help explain the terms of the conservation easement to potential buyers and help the Realtors with maps or language that describes the features of your protected property. Also, we have a Conservation Buyer Program where we list protected land that is for sale. <http://leelanauconservancy.org/land-protection-and-stewardship/conservation-buyers/>

.....you plan to exercise one of your reserved rights in your conservation easement.

.....you have a question about your conservation easement or would like a copy of your conservation easement mailed to you.

Web Soil Survey: Do you want to learn more about the soils on your property? The link below is an interactive website that can help you pull detailed soil information.

NRCS Web Soil Survey: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm>

Call Yarrow if you want help navigating the website.

Forest Health: Listed below are some of the greatest forest health concerns facing Leelanau County forests:

- \*Emerald Ash Borer
- \*Beech Bark Disease
- \*Oak Wilt
- \*Asian Long-Horned Beetle
- \*Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

We encourage you to talk to your forester or Kama Ross at the Leelanau Conservation District to learn more.

## RATE MY LAND

There is a new online resource being created by Derek Shiels, one of our past invasive species specialists who worked for the Conservancy last year. This website is called Rate My Land (RML) and aims to be a resource for private landowners interested in conservation. Rate My Land's primary purpose is to invite landowners to have the biological diversity of their land surveyed. Biodiversity surveys provide the core biological data needed to understand species distributions, population trends, or the threats native species face. RML seeks to raise interest in biodiversity and to connect private landowners with biological consultants and the information they need to engage in surveys and other land management activities such as developing management plans, controlling invasive species, improving habitat, etc.

If you are interested in exploring the biodiversity of your land, we encourage you to visit the RML website: [ratemyland.com](http://ratemyland.com) or contact Derek directly while the site is being developed at [ratemyland@gmail.com](mailto:ratemyland@gmail.com).

Rate My Land respects private property rights and desires to be an advocate for private property owners—information is confidential. When participating in the RML rating system, the landowner can choose how much (or how little) information is shared. Sharing gives you the opportunity to display the investment you've put into your land, while also encouraging others to engage in conservation.

## Healthy Forests

### Caring for our Trees

**Saturday, April 12, 2014**  
**1:30–5:00 p.m.**  
**Grand Traverse Conservation District**  
**1450 Cass Road, Traverse City**  
**\$10/person, \$15/at the door**



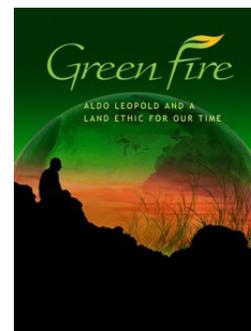
Learn about how we can best keep our trees healthy and vigorous and prevent loss from insects and diseases. Russ Kidd, retired Michigan State University Extension Forester will give you practical ways to minimize your loss in the forest or in your own backyard.

For more information or to register, contact Kama Ross, District Forester, Leelanau, Grand Traverse and Benzie Conservation Districts at 231-256-9783, ext. 15 or [kama.ross@macd.org](mailto:kama.ross@macd.org).

## Earth Day Green Fire Showing at the Old Art Building

Tuesday, April 22 at 7:00 pm - All are welcome to come watch this Emmy winning film at the Old Art Building in Leland. This is a FREE event!

The first full-length documentary film ever made about legendary environmentalist Aldo Leopold, *Green Fire* highlights Leopold's extraordinary career, tracing how he shaped and influenced the way we think about land and our relationship to it. Leopold remains relevant today, inspiring projects all over the country that connect people and land.



We hope to see you there! See more at [leelanauconservancy.org](http://leelanauconservancy.org). Click on the Events tab.



*Private protected land near Omena*

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