



There's no place like *Leelanau*.

Conserving the Land, Water and Scenic Character of Leelanau County

2023 Fall Newsletter



Letter from our Executive Director

I don't even remember the season. I just remember walking between them and feeling for the first time that I belonged somewhere.

— Stephen Chbosky

Do you recall the first time it hit you—really hit you—that you belonged? When you experienced a deep sense of well-being, a lightness of being, and all was right with the world? For me, it came as a child, in the woods, having an adventure with my closest friends. I still feel it all the time here in Leelanau. If you're reading this, it's likely you feel it too.

Not to put too fine a point on it, but whether you care about Leelanau depends in large part on whether you believe you belong. Can you recall a time when you felt out of place? I can. And because I felt I didn't belong it was personally challenging for me to feel engaged. If we want people to care about Leelanau and our mission, we must do our utmost to provide good reasons for people to feel they belong.

Let's zoom out a bit. Over the last several years, many people have shared with me their apprehension about a world that is in crisis. It's an "in-between season" nearly everywhere. There's much uncertainty and anxiety because the connections that used to bring our society together seem to be waning. Yet I can see every day there is one thing that continues to bring people together—a shared love of our lands and waters. This love and concern for protecting our precious natural resources remains, gratefully, a tie that binds—one that invites a real sense of belonging.

At the Leelanau Conservancy, we believe the outdoors is for everyone. No exceptions. Everybody is included and empowered. We roll out our welcome mat for all people. It's the right way to be. It's the right way to do what we do. Because we recognize and celebrate that the well-being of all people and nature cannot be separated.

And if ever there was a time we needed everyone to care for the Leelanau they love, it is now. Leelanau has never faced greater threats than it does today. Consider the persistent efforts to remove local governmental control of sand and gravel mining—Leelanau rests on a vast bed of it. Think about overdevelopment, the degradation of cherished natural resources—our rivers, lakes, forests, and farms. There is a proliferation of invasive plants on our lands and in our waters. We see the diminishing opportunities to live and work in Leelanau. And we are witnesses to the ultimate game-changer—climate volatility.

The more people who can act on their love of Leelanau, the greater our chances that one hundred years from now, Leelanau will still possess its wild spaces that have been here for thousands of years—our forests, our wetlands teeming with life, our rivers and lakes. These lands and waters may look and feel a little different in 2123, but if we pull together today Leelanau will still have clean, fresh water to swim in, fish, and drink. Family farms will still grow and provide local food. Forests will continue to be wild. Our communities will still be vibrant yet retain their rural charm and character.

I'll say it again, *people care when they feel they belong*. We—all of us—must continue to foster opportunities for all to experience a sense of belonging to Leelanau. No matter what the season, literally or metaphorically, let's extend a welcome hand that says, "We all belong."

Sincerely,
Tom Nelson
Executive Director



Cover photo by Drew Palmer



Land Protection Alert!

Your Support Needed to Protect 80 Acres of Palmer Woods

When Leelanau Conservancy has the opportunity to protect the 80 acres of wilderness right in the middle of Palmer Woods Forest Reserve. In order to permanently protect and care for this land, your support is needed today.

This missing puzzle piece in the center of Palmer Woods includes a lush, native northern hardwood forest, untouched through generations. By protecting this vital land, we can create even more of a corridor for wildlife to thrive. A corridor that plays a crucial role in protecting the delicate watersheds that ultimately flow into Lake Michigan.

Wildlife corridors are a lifeline for elusive black bears, stealthy bobcats, and majestic red-shouldered hawks. These uninterrupted tracts of protected land pave the way for species with large territories to thrive. And these positive impacts extend beyond individual species. Wildlife corridors become biodiversity sanctuaries, fostering resilience within the web of life. They offer

a refuge for plants and animals seeking solace from development.

With your support, we'll expand Palmer Woods' protected territory to 1,155 acres. This means even more serenity while exploring this majestic forest.

As a valued supporter of the Leelanau Conservancy, you know how remarkable Leelanau is, and the importance of protecting it. Join us in this noble cause. Your donation isn't just a contribution; it's an investment in the future of our environment, our community, and our shared legacy.

Together, we can make a lasting impact and ensure that the natural beauty of Leelanau endures in perpetuity. Make a gift today to be part of something extraordinary.

You can give online at leelanauconservancy.org/donate, mail a check to "Leelanau Conservancy" with

"Palmer Woods" in the memo, or contact Development Director Paris Morse at pmorse@leelanauconservancy.org or 231-994-3212 to discuss making a multi-year pledge or gift of stock.

The Leelanau Conservancy must raise \$1,090,800 by the end of 2023 to protect and steward the forested uplands in the center of Palmer Woods.

Your generosity and support will make this important project a reality.

Make a gift today:
leelanauconservancy.org/donate

For more information contact:
Paris Morse, Development Director
231-994-3212
pmorse@leelanauconservancy.org

Parker Family Protects 153 Acres of Farmland

By Brigid Driscoll



More than 150 acres of Solon Township farmland was recently protected with a perpetual conservation easement. This project is possible thanks to Wes Parker, his siblings, the collaborative grant leadership through the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians, Farm Bill funding from the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Regional Conservation Partnership Program, and generous donors like you.

One of the best parts of working for the Leelanau Conservancy is sitting around a kitchen table with landowners talking all things Leelanau. Carolyn Faught told me it was something she truly enjoyed, and hoped I would too. It took me no time to share her sentiments, and sitting with Wes and his brother Dave, I'm reminded of why. Sprawled across the vintage yellow table is a copy of the book *Remembering Solon* and a custom calendar filled with family photos. "My sister makes one for all of us every year for Christmas," Dave says.

Family is of the utmost importance to the Parkers. The house we sit in is the one Wes and his siblings grew up in—where he found his love of farming.

The Parker family's Leelanau roots run deep. *Remembering Solon*, a locally published historical book, lists Wes's great-great grandparents Franz and Carolina Amtsbuechler as early settlers of Solon in the 1800s. Franz was a farmer, kicking off a long line of family farming, including Wes's dad, Keith. Keith grew up in the house next door and attended Solon School. He was paid weekly to get to the one-room schoolhouse early, build a fire, and stay after to clean up. "Even as a kid, my dad made money," Dave laughed.

Wes inherited Keith's ambitious spirit. He began farming pumpkins as a teenager, employing Dave's help to transport and sell them around the county. Merchants liked that he cut the winding vine neatly off without any knife marks. Wes liked that he could make a profit doing something he enjoyed and was good at.

He was only 21 when he purchased his first parcel of farmland in the 1980s; 39 acres that currently grow sweet cherries and corn. Then, in 2011, he bought another 113 acres of farmland that he and his family had been leasing since the late '80s. "We grow mostly corn. But we also grow soybeans, alfalfa, rye, and some grass hay," said Wes.

The Parkers have been implementing no-till farming for decades. No-till farming has numerous benefits and continues to grow in popularity. The practice helps preserve soil health by keeping precious topsoil intact, preventing nutrient loss and erosion. It also reduces runoff and stores carbon in the soil, helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



The advantages go on. "You've gotta do what works," Wes explains. "Everybody's learning all the time. With farming, you think you've got it, but then you realize there's more, and you can do things better."

There was no specific moment when Wes decided to protect the farmland permanently—just an innate feeling. "My dad and I were on board with this for as long as I can remember. You can't have a viable agricultural community without land available for farming. What the Conservancy has done here in Leelanau is remarkable. It's a good combination of an exceptional organization with people that support them to get the job done."

Wes knows that farming isn't for everyone. And while he hopes one of the next generation of Parkers is interested in a farming future, he acknowledges that the future is unknown, "it's nice to have set plans, but life isn't always well-ordered." Plans or not, he's comforted in knowing that there will be permanent farmland available.

River Ecology 101

Rivers are like nature's veins, flowing through landscapes with steady grace. Their meandering currents tell stories of times past and forge connections between cultures and ecosystems. Yet, they face constant threats from pollution, climate change, and other external forces.



Like all of the Conservancy's protected watersheds, the Cedar River Preserve provides enhanced water quality and a home for wildlife. The preserve is one of the state's most exceptional river and wetland complexes. We talked to two expert river ecologists, Fluvial Geomorphologist Will Harmon and Biologist Nate Winkler, to better understand rivers and how they work.

LC: Tell me a little about how a river forms.

NW: There are two things required for a river to form. You need a source of water and a change in gradient. The gradient falling away from the water source provides that energy for the water to flow. Water sources can come in many forms. Here in Michigan, we have a lot of groundwater and water stored in lakes. The riverbed reflects the material in the landscape it runs through. In a case like Cedar River, the gradient is pretty flat. You can expect to find more "fines," or soft organic matter, in flat areas. Further up the river, the gradient is higher, so the current is really moving; you're more likely to find less of that fine, fluffy stuff, and more sand and gravel.

LC: Is having more sediment something that negatively impacts the river?

WH: There are three ways we can look at sediment. We can look at sediment supply, sediment transport, and sediment storage. To say, is sediment supply good or bad? Well, you can't, it depends. It's a natural process. The Cedar River has a lot of vegetation. And so its sediment supply from hillslopes and streambanks would generally be pretty low. What's important to remember is that there are natural rates of sediment supply and unnaturally high rates of sediment supply. The river can

either transport that sediment or store the sediment, and usually these processes work together. And so some of that sediment starts moving downstream, but only some of it, and that's driven by things like slope, substrate type, and flow regime. You naturally have areas in a stream system that either transport or store sediment. Sediment can be stored on the floodplain or bars, but where the Cedar River meets the lake, where that slope is really flat, that is naturally a sediment storage area. That's just what the river is supposed to do.

LC: How does a river change over time?

NW: In some ways, it's been explained that rivers get older the further downstream you go. Upstream, they're closer to their source, and so their contact with the surrounding landscape is less than it is further down the river where it's had time to pick up material. You would think that the lower Cedar River would be deeper than it is, but it's relatively shallow.

LC: Could manmade changes make that lower part of the river deeper?

NW: Temporarily.

WH: Dredging will not stop sediment from accumulating. It will set up a dredging schedule in perpetuity. You're not going to change that environment. But you will disrupt all of the organisms, both flora and fauna, that thrive in those delta-like sediment storage areas. Species composition, especially for animals, will shift because of a direct change like that. Within all those sediments are our aquatic insects and all sorts of small animals that live in that environment that dredging would get rid of. The dredging won't last. It would have

to be dredged in perpetuity to maintain it, which would cost millions. Then, they would have to mitigate for the impact, which would be millions more.

LC: What do you mean mitigate the impact?

WH: There's a program under the Clean Water Act Section 404, that says, when you propose an activity like this you first have to try to avoid impacting streams and wetlands, then you have to minimize your impacts to streams and wetlands. And if you do have an impact, you'd have to mitigate for that impact. So dredging would be considered an impact and that impact would have to be quantified. Then they would have to go somewhere else and do restoration work or pay other people to do restoration work to compensate for that impact. And, like I said, it would be millions of dollars.

LC: As humans, how can we best interact with river systems like the Cedar River?

NW: The benefit of having an area like the Cedar River and the swamp down there is that it provides a pretty rare opportunity in this area, especially to have an opportunity for quiet boating, either through kayaking or canoeing, paddleboarding, and even lower horsepower outboards for duck hunting or fishing, stuff like that.

WH: I think kayaking is fun. That's probably one of the best ways to recreate. And to walk trails on the shoreline that get you down into this area to watch birds, turtles, amphibians, and all the other critters that would use systems like this. There are many areas to recreate in. How many pristine systems like this are there?

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Stewardship staff, aka our “stew crew,” arguably have the best job at the Conservancy. Their days are spent in Leelanau’s wild places, witnessing, documenting, and interacting with the rhythm of nature.

It’s a cool Tuesday in September, and the stew crew have another day of doing what they do best; looking after Leelanau.



9:00 a.m.: Emily, Chad, Caleb, and AmeriCorps members Emma and Griffin meet at “Chuck’s Shed,” the new equipment shed at Palmer Woods. With thermoses and water bottles, they pile into an old work truck to head to a conservation easement (CE). They’re headed out to collect fern spores. Chad rolls down the windows to allow the cool crisp late summer air to circulate and alleviate the “work-truck funk.”

9:30 a.m.: Pulling into the CE, the crew notices a pair of sandhill cranes near the edge of a cornfield. Griffin notes that their migration season has started as he snaps a picture.

9:40 a.m.: “We’re on foot from here,” Chad declares as they pull into the woodlands. Caleb stops the truck, and everyone grabs a bucket from the back. They weave through trees and low branches until arriving at a significant dip in the ground called a kettle hole. Caleb explains that they’re depressions left behind by a glacier.

10 a.m.: The steep walls of the kettle hole prove to be a challenge. Even taking careful steps, Griffin’s feet find their way out from underneath him, and he starts sliding down. Caleb laughs as his own feet slide out, and Emma carefully ventures all the way down to retrieve fallen plant pots. Chad joins her at the bottom.

10:15 a.m.: Physical challenges or not, the stew crew are on a mission, and as they adjust to the incline, they start finding worthy specimens for spore collection. Today, they’re collecting narrow-leaved spleenwort, silvery spleenwort, and maidenhair fern species. You can tell if a fern has spores by looking for dark spots or dashes on the leaves’ underside. “Back at the office, I’ll lay the leaves on a paper and wait for the spores to drop. Then I’ll send the collectings to Brian Zimmerman at Four Season Nursery, and he will grow them. The last time I checked in with him, he had four trays of ferns coming up, and that was from old spores I gave him,” Emily said. The



new native ferns will eventually be for sale at the nursery and will also populate the fern garden at Palmer Woods and other portions of our natural areas. “This kettle hole specifically has lots of narrow-leaved spleenwort, which is why we’re here. Digging into this population won’t put a dent in it.”

11 a.m.: Chad emerges from the depths of the kettle hole with a haul of spore samples. He shows Emily. “This is great,” she said. “We have enough.” The crew works their way back to the truck. Before getting back in, they stand outside, and each enjoy a granola bar.

11:30 a.m.: A quick stop by Chuck’s Shed for shovels, and they’re off to the fern garden to transplant a few of the ferns from the kettle hole. While digging, Caleb finds a ramp bulb. He inhales the garlicky aroma before planting it back in the ground.

12:30 p.m.: Lunch.

1:00 p.m.: The crew prepares for a volunteer workbee that will start in an hour. Ten people have signed up to help seed-collect bee balm (*Monarda fistulosa*) and black-eyed susans (*Rudbeckia hirta*). They walk the trail to note spots of both plants. The plants are being collected for habitat restoration. “Whenever we create a disturbance on the land we like to take advantage of the opportunity to seed in native plants and help promote biodiversity and ecosystem services,” says Caleb. Adding native wildflowers visually adds pops of color, helps support pollinator species, and stabilize loose soil. Once the flowers begin to fade, seed heads are produced, dried seed heads contain seed ripe for collection.

2:00 p.m.: As the volunteers arrive, the stew crew shows them how to collect seeds, talks about the importance of never harvesting more than 20% of the viable seed from a stand of wildflowers, and places them into labeled bags. They work diligently alongside the volunteers.

4:15 p.m.: When the workbee ends, some volunteers stick around to ask the stew crew some questions about various native plants, trees, and invasive species. They answer questions and joke around with volunteers until the last of them leaves. With the day coming to an end, the crew collects all their equipment and belongings before heading back to Chuck’s Shed one more time for the day. They talk about plans for tomorrow, and Chad takes home a chicken of the woods mushroom to eat with dinner. All in a day’s work.

EIGHTY ACRES OF VILLA MARQUETTE PERMANENTLY PROTECTED

Photos by Mark Smith



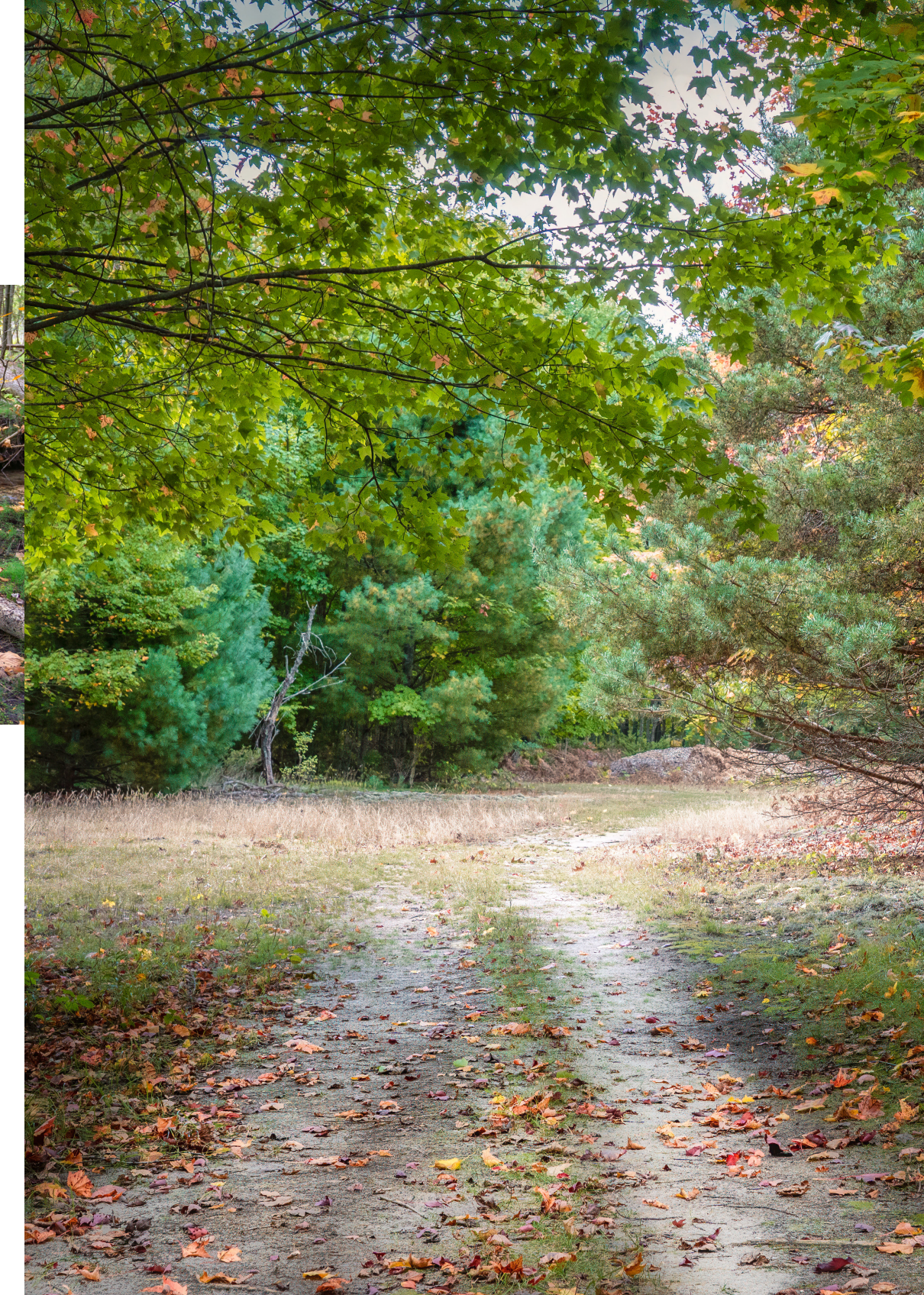
On a summer day in Omena, you might hear hymns from a boat in the bay.

Villa Marquette is a Jesuit property sitting on the shores of Omena Bay where Jesuits often spend summer vacations and make their annual retreats. We're pleased to announce that 80 acres of this biodiverse beauty have been protected with a conservation easement (CE). This CE will extend the protected Frazier-Freeland Preserve. Weaver Creek is a stream that flows into Grand Traverse Bay. A portion of the creek was protected with Frazier-Freeland in 2001. An even more significant part of the creek is now preserved—a win for wildlife and water quality.

The Jesuits, formally known as the Society of Jesus, are a prominent Roman Catholic religious order founded in 1540 by Saint Ignatius of Loyola. Known for their intellectual rigor, missionary zeal, and commitment to education, they have played a pivotal role in the church's history. Jesuits operate schools and universities worldwide, emphasizing critical thinking and social justice.

"The Jesuits acquired the property in 1936. The provincial at the time, Charles Cloud, his parents owned the property. So it was eventually bequeathed to him," said operations director for the Jesuits Midwest Province, Dave McNulty. He and Father Glen Chun are responsible for starting the protection process. Both have fond memories of spending time at the Villa when they were studying to be Jesuits.

"In 1998, I was up there for fall break, and I loved it from the beginning," said Glen. "I'm not a camping type, so being at Villa Marquette is the closest I get. The dormitory on the campus is my favorite building. We call it the barracks, and it was designed with the same plans as old World War II military barracks. It's a comfortable space. The grounds and Omena Bay are beautiful. Every summer we used to host dinner and a baseball game with migrant workers and farmers. Back then, we had jet skis, and at first, I said, 'I'm not going on that.' Within the hour, I was on a jet ski," he laughed. As a young man Dave spent four years as a Jesuit before deciding it was not his life's calling.



His time at the property is remembered fondly. “My first visit to Villa Maquette was in 1968 or ‘69. Our summer vacation was one or two weeks at Villa Marquette. In those days, we really didn’t venture off the property much. We would hike, play basketball, do some boating, swim. It was a good summer vacation.”

Memories aside, the interest in protecting the land arose when they started getting purchase inquiries. People would ask about buying some or all of the property. When a developer showed interest, the Jesuits began considering how their beliefs influenced their stance on the natural world.

Two directives helped shape their decision. The first is *Laudato Si*, a formal letter by Pope Francis urging environmental stewardship and social justice to address climate change and ecological issues. The second was the Universal Apostolic Preferences, one of those preferences being to care for all of God’s creation. “Those two mandates were very influential in our thinking about ultimately making certain that the west 80 acres of Villa Marquette remain in its natural state in perpetuity. Glen was a real champion for this project. He reached out and initiated all of this. The entire process was as smooth and pleasant as possible. The Conservancy did a wonderful job,” Dave said.

Director of Natural Land Protection Matt Heiman worked with the Jesuits on this project. “Permanent protection of the Weaver Creek property will help maintain the stream’s natural gravel riffles that occur throughout the 80 acre property,” said Matt. “These rocky patches of stream bottom help provide important habitat for aquatic macroinvertebrates, which in turn provide food for native brook trout. Protecting intact small stream systems such as Weaver Creek is one of the best ways the Conservancy can help maintain high water quality in Leelanau’s inland lakes, Grand Traverse Bay, and Lake Michigan shoreline.”

The Jesuits will continue to visit the acreage left out of the natural area, including their dormitory and other buildings. The villa will continue to be a place of retreat and serenity for the Jesuits, as the newly protected acreage will be for quiet enjoyment and wildlife.

GOING THE DISTANCE



“Slow is smooth, and smooth is fast,” Martin and Stacy Kimpston kept in their heads while training for the 35 Miles for 35 Years Trail Challenge.

The Trail Challenge is a year-long celebration of the Leelanau Conservancy turning 35 years old. And while we’re giving folks the entire year to log 35 miles in our natural areas, Palmer Woods Trail Crew members Martin and Stacy did it all in one day.

“Being a personal trainer and a nutrition coach, I had a plan for us from the beginning,” Martin said. They began training in May. By the time they were ready to complete the challenge in a day, they had already logged 300 miles of training time. “Most of those miles being on the Leelanau Conservancy trail system,” said Martin.

Preparation started the night before for their day-long challenge. They went to bed around 6 p.m. with alarms set to wake up at midnight. Stacy packed hiking essentials the night before. Chippewa Run was their first stop, followed by Krumwiede and Palmer Woods. Then, the pair tackled smaller trail systems throughout the natural areas and preserves before ending at the new Ingraham Preserve at the Cedar River. Along various parts of the journey, Land Steward Caleb Garone and his spouse Gina joined the Kimpstons, and trail crew member Bob Ashmun, plus Trail Specialist Chad Jordan and his spouse Heather met them at the end of their journey.



Though PB&Js and four jugs of coffee helped get them through, the couple attribute being able to finish the challenge to their focused mindset. “Seeing Heather and Chad at the end of the challenge was so nice. When I felt like I was starting to get fatigued, it helped refresh my energy. And then seeing how beautiful the new Ingraham Preserve is, when we got there, seeing the reindeer lichen and the light come through the trees was really beautiful,” said Stacy.

When asked why they wanted to pursue such a rigorous challenge, Martin explains that it’s about challenging themselves and doing something new. “We also wanted to draw awareness to the Conservancy’s great work and extensive trail system,” he said. Generous

donations from friends and community members were sent to the Conservancy in honor of the Kimpstons’ ambitious trek. “These trails get here by donation, and we wanted to remind people of that and of the great work the Conservancy does.”

We applaud them for doing the challenge their way and congratulate them for completing it!

Celebrate 35 years of conserving Leelanau with us! Hike 35 miles in our natural areas before the end of the year and receive a commemorative patch and sticker. Find more information at leelanauconservancy.org/trailchallenge.

– New Trails; New Adventures –

Photos by Mark Smith



We're excited to offer four new trails for you to explore this fall. Whether they're within a natural area you already love, or a brand new preserve, we welcome you to discover each of these uniquely Leelanau landscapes. All offer adventure and tranquility.

Pat's Preserve at Lime Lake

Pat's Preserve spans 60 pristine acres on Lime Lake's southwest shores. Protecting more than 1,000 feet of unspoiled shoreline, it offers views of Sugar Loaf and the Conservancy's Teichner Preserve. As a natural sponge, the wetlands absorb rainwater, preventing erosion and pollutants from the nearby Maple City Highway. Established in 2019, the preserve unveiled its quarter-mile, all-abilities boardwalk trail at the end of the summer. Pat's Preserve is a biodiverse haven featuring northern forests, conifer swamps, and vibrant meadows. It teems with wildlife, from bears to brook trout, providing a lush showcase of nature's beauty for all to explore.



Palmer Woods Forest Reserve

The majestic forest of Palmer Woods invites you to explore even more hiking options. A singletrack hiking trail has been added north and west of the trail that parallels Wheeler Road, connecting the main Palmer parking lot and Krumweide. Also a singletrack hiking loop has been added just south of Darwin Road, a staff favorite for winter snowshoe adventures. Located near Big Glen Lake, Palmer Woods offers recreation year round. New cross country ski grooming equipment was aquired this year to help maintain the growing network of crosscountry ski trails. This northern hardwood forest shares five miles of border with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. In addition to recreation trails, the natural area features two large deer exclosures for scientific exploration, and the Dan and Helen Palmer Fern Garden with a boardwalk complete with interpretive signage. Please follow marked trails, as cell service is limited. Choose your own adventure at this Leelanau Conservancy gem.



The Ingraham Preserve at the Cedar River

Step into the wild heart of Leelanau at the Bart and Gail Ingraham Preserve, an 80-acre expansion of the Cedar River Preserve. This preserve gives you dry-land access and a new perspective of the wetland and river system. The 1.3-mile Ridgeline Trail offers a panoramic view of Solon Swamp, the Cedar River, and South Lake Leelanau. It also offers an enchanting view of a vernal pool within a large kettle hole. Learn more about the gift from the Ingrahams that brought this treasure to life by visiting our website. As always, the Cedar River Preserve offers opportunities for kayaking, canoeing, and immersion in diverse, unspoiled nature.



Stites Natural Area

Shaped by ancient glaciers and carved by winding streams, Stites Natural Area is a pleasure to wander. Follow bending ridgeline trails that offer views that stretch to Old Mission Peninsula when the leaves fall. In autumn, the northern hardwood forest erupts in vibrant colors, while spring paints the forest floor with trillium and lady's slippers. Beech, maple, ironwood, and red oaks lace the land, nurturing wildlife like grouse, woodcock, deer, and bobcats. Take a walk on the new .91-mile trail. Enjoy the sublime of nature while being within a mile of the downtown Suttons Bay village center. You may witness century-old giants with three-foot diameters, and you could even spot bear tracks on the old two-track.

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At the Leelanau Conservancy, we believe the outdoors is for everyone. We strive to honor and celebrate our community's diversity through our work. Our mission to conserve the lands and waters of Leelanau County can only be realized through a steadfast commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in conservation and stewardship and in our relationships and business practices. We recognize and celebrate that the well-being of nature and people cannot be separated. The Conservancy commits to including, supporting, valuing, and welcoming all people with whom we work and serve, now and in the future. By including all people in conservation regardless of culture, race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, abilities, or age, we can help shape a more inclusive, more equitable, and more vibrant future for Leelanau.

