

Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation

Protecting Water, Woods, and Wildlife for Future Generations to Enjoy

SPRING/SUMMER 2008

“Saving the Places We Love”

By Britta Reque-Dragicevic

Family Land Protected Forever

The wind softly ripples across the quiet waters of Portage Lake, passing gently through the reeds at the edge of the shore. Across the sky, brilliant white clouds sail into the horizon, the sunlight glistening off shimmering poplar leaves. A mother Mallard pokes her head out from the shore, her webbed prints nestling lightly into the damp sand. A trail of young follow, undisturbed, fearless.

It's a perfect summer day in this natural lakescape—one that Gene and Katie Bradfield have made sure will be repeated undisturbed into perpetuity. Gene and Katie generously donated their 203 acres—including 3,700 feet of natural shoreline that embraces Portage, Rice and Elbow lakes—to the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation. The reason? To pass along a natural heritage that had been in their family for over 50 years. Like many Minnesotans, the Bradfields wanted to not only protect the wildlife and lake environment from future development, they also wanted to make sure that future generations of Minnesotans would have the opportunity to be able to spend time on land that has no trace of humanity—just the pure, natural state of creation evolving over time.

“We have so many memories of our personal observations of deer, bear, wolves, beavers, fox, coyotes, rabbits, squirrels, mink, otter, weasels, skunks, porcupines, raccoons, ferrets, many varieties of turtles and snakes and untold birds from eagles to hummingbirds living undisturbed in the area, just as they have for hundreds of years. Ducks, swans, geese, loons and other waterfowl used the lakes as rest stops, or reared their young in the summer, quietly following our boat whenever we were on the water,” Gene said.

Gene and Katie's life together on their land came about in a rather remarkable way. Katie was born in Park Falls, Wisconsin and Gene in Omaha,

Nebraska. All four of their parents were educators. Katie's parents later became dairy farmers while Gene's parents moved to Pine River, Minnesota, to open a clothing store. Legally blind at age 14, Gene spent his early years out of high school playing in a small dance band and then, with the help of a leader dog, attended Bemidji State University. He continued his education, earning a Masters and Doctorates' degree from the University of North Dakota. It was there that he met Katie who had joined the University's faculty after earning her Doctorates' degree in Colorado. They married in 1965 and both joined the Bemidji State University faculty as professors of psychology. They lived on Big Wolf Lake until they moved to Deep Portage Lake in the late 1970's where they commuted to work at Aw Gwah Ching in Walker. In 1991, they retired.

“When I was growing up, my dad bought a 36-acre parcel with 1,000 feet of undeveloped shoreline on Deep Portage Lake. He intended to build a summer place someday, but in the meantime, he and I spent many happy days fishing and enjoying the abundant wildlife which we saw along the shores,” Gene said. When it became clear that his father wasn't going to build, Gene and Katie proceeded to purchase the land from him. It was the beginning of what was to become over 200 acres of well-loved family land.



“When we married, Katie told me the one thing she wanted was a small farm. I told her I knew just the farm,” Gene said. A 160-acre farm adjoined the Portage lake property and was mostly wooded. The Bradfields were able to purchase it after the elderly woman who owned it passed away. “The purchase gave us some unspoiled lakeshore on the small lake to the south, and about 40 acres of cleared land on which deer could frequently be seen grazing,” said Katie.

Cont. on page 2

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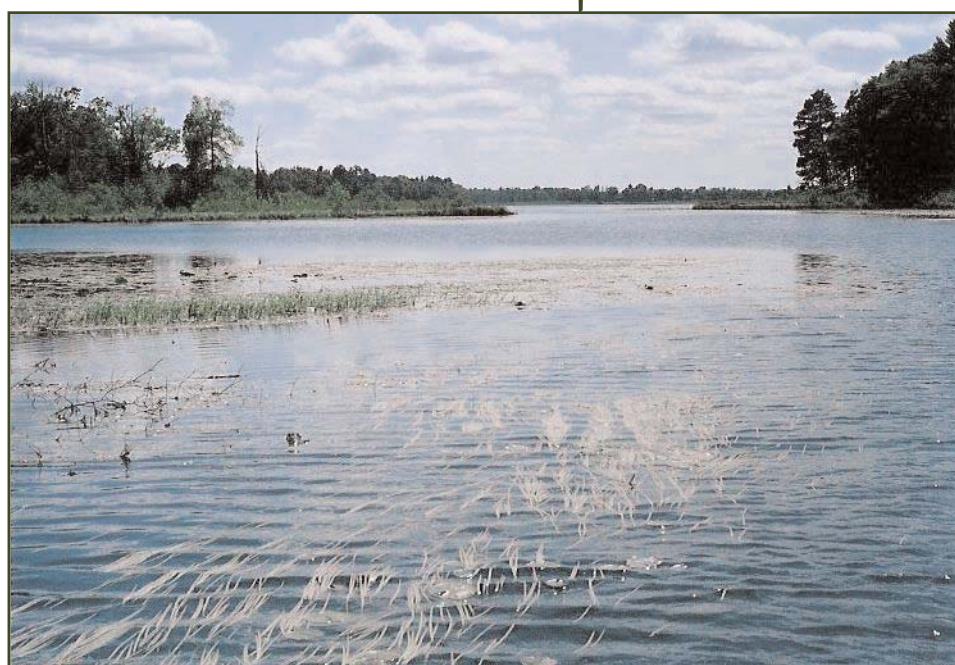
“Saving the Places We Love”, continued

Then, years later, the couple got a call from a man out East who had purchased adjoining property and planned to build a road through an easement across the Bradfield’s land. Because the road would disturb wetlands that would have to be replaced, the owner changed his mind and instead offered to sell the property to the Bradfields. This added another 20 acres on Rice Portage which served as a wonderful spot for nesting and migrating waterfowl.

“The older we became, the more we treasured the natural simplicity of the land and how valuable it was to our wild friends,” said Katie. “Although we have no children of our own, we thought how sad it would be for future generations that could not have the experience or even the opportunity for the experience that we have had.” It wasn’t until Gene had a stroke in 1994 however, that the couple began to seriously discuss what they would do with the property in the future. They examined various organizations that accept donated land.

“We soon realized that not all of those organizations were straightforward with their donors and a person could not be sure what the ultimate disposition of the property might be,” said Katie. “This is one important reason for our decision to commit to the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation (LLAWF). We met with them several times, they told us that if we donated our land to them we would have to develop a plan for them to follow in the form of a conservation easement, and that’s what we did.”

A conservation easement is a legally recorded agreement by which landowners may voluntarily restrict the use of the land. If the land is sold, the easement passes on to the next owner to insure permanent protection. In the case of the Bradfields, their easement is carried by the LLAWF to which they also donated the property. The Bradfield’s wishes were that the land remain posted for no hunting or camping, and that trails on the property be maintained for fire prevention and forest conservation logging.



“The Foundation not only helped us do this properly, but they were also willing to thoroughly discuss and understand our wishes and honor them. Thanks to their guidance and recommendations, we managed the legal aspects of the transfer quite nicely, and we all ended up with what we desired,” said Gene.

Like the Bradfields, many Minnesotans are finding that donating their land to organizations such as the LLAWF, gives them peace of mind knowing that their land will be cared for in the future and will not fall to development or misuse. While the Bradfields cite that financial reasons had little to do with their decision, they were able to take the value of the donated property and conservation easement as tax deductible contributions over a period of six years, the legally allowable limit at that time. Since the total of the donation was greater than the maximum allowed, they also had the choice to stagger the periods of time in donating sections of the land, which would have given a greater tax advantage and additional six year periods. However, the Bradfields chose to donate the land at one time.

“We didn’t want any legal problems for the land in the future if something would happen to us,” Katie explained.

As more and more land and lakeshore is developed, property owners have the opportunity today to decide how they may act to make sure that future generations of wildlife and natural environments will be preserved-and how they can help leave a lasting legacy of love for the great outdoors to generations of Minnesotans to come.

(Note: This is the first of several stories of conservation-minded people who have donated land to the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation for the purpose of protecting its conservation value and insuring enjoyment for future generations. Contact LLAWF for more information on how we can assist you in meeting your land conservation goals.)

Britta Reque-Dragicevic is a free-lance writer and marketing copywriter; see www.redflowerwriting.com. Britta’s family owned property on Leech Lake and she now lives near that area. She, too, has a special love of the natural resources in the Leech Lake Watershed.

What Does the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation Do?

- Identifies and protects sensitive lands and waters in the watershed through land conservation projects, often in partnership with county, state, and federal governments; other non-profits; lake associations and sporting groups.
- Accepts donations of land and/or helps conservation-minded landowners explore options for selling their land while preserving its conservation value as a legacy for ongoing public enjoyment.
- Facilitates the establishment of conservation easements on private properties to prohibit or limit future development and preserve conservation value while the landowners still retain ownership and use of the land.
- Provides education on individual and community responsibility for stewardship through workshops, publications, and partnerships with lake associations and professional organizations.
- Builds leadership and local responsibility for watershed protection by developing new lake associations and encouraging active land conservation projects within lake associations through the formation of Sustainability Committees.
- Promotes land-use decisions and regulations by local and state governments that will ensure sustainability of the region's natural resources.

Summary of Accomplishments

30
completed land conservation projects.

79,000+
feet of shoreline protected.

1,800+
acres preserved.

\$13 million+
in estimated value of land conservation projects completed, many of which are now part of the DNR, U.S. Forest Service or county land base.

1st
shoreland conservation easement in Minnesota (Little Boy Lake Project).

#1
biggest partnership (22 organizations) to team with the DNR to buy a conservation property (Mule Lake WMA @ \$2.7 million).

What is a Watershed?

When you hear the word watershed what do you think of? Most people think of water bodies, such as lakes, rivers, or streams. But a watershed is actually that area of land that drains directly into a lake, either through rivers, streams, surface runoff, or groundwater.

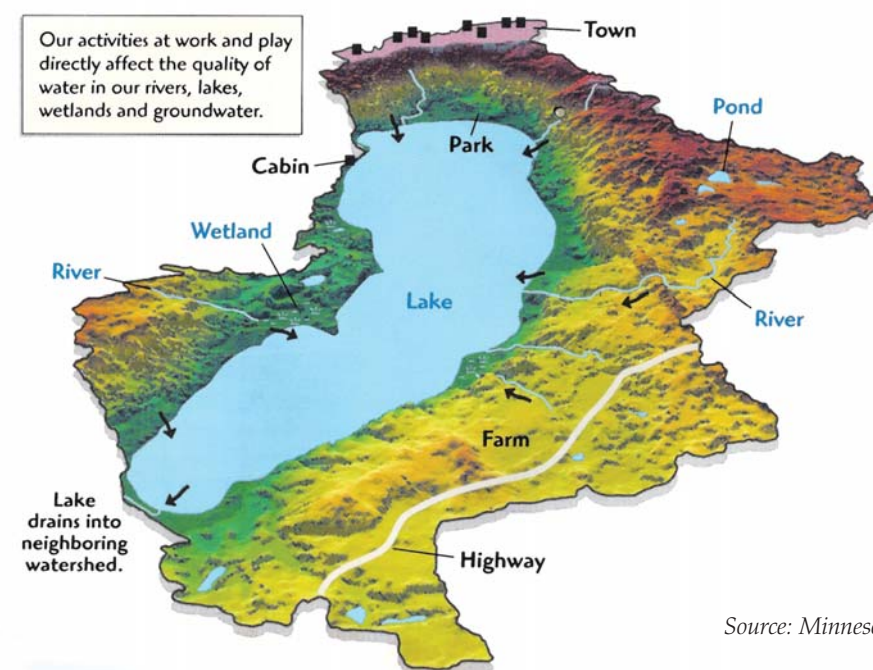
A watershed is best envisioned as a funnel with a glass at the bottom representing a lake. Anything that falls into the funnel will find its way into the glass. Much the same occurs in a watershed, therefore watershed characteristics such as size, land use, slope, and soils play an important role in determining both the quality and quantity of water that drains to a lake.

Now think about what happens when it rains or snow melts. Some of the water evaporates back into the atmosphere, some infiltrates into the ground to become groundwater, and the rest runs off the land as stormwater. The land use in a watershed affects the types of sediment, nutrients, and other pollutants that can be picked up with stormwater and eventually washed into the lake.

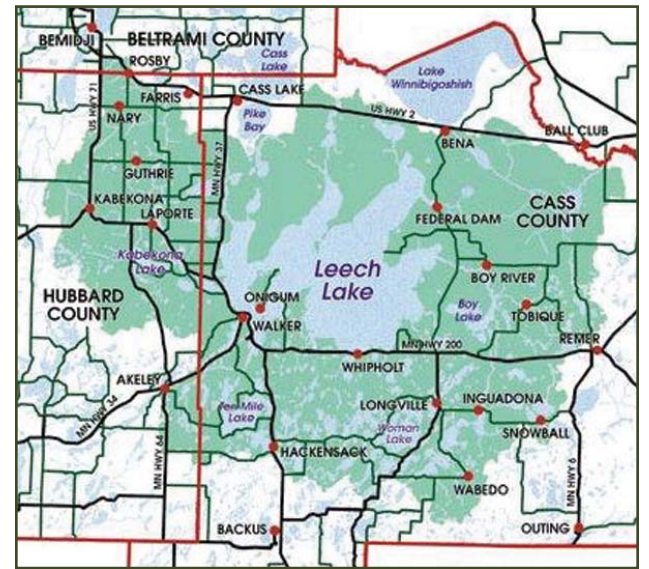
Some water bodies have very large watersheds—the Mississippi River watershed comprises approximately half the area of the Continental United States. The Leech Lake watershed is one of 15 subwatersheds located in the Upper Mississippi River watershed, which is one of eight major watersheds in Minnesota. The Leech Lake watershed is home to half of Minnesota's natural reproducing Muskie lakes; abundant eagle, loon, and osprey nesting areas; and rare bird, plant, and animal habitats. Its natural resources provide millions of hours of outdoor recreation and sustain an economy primarily based on tourism and timber harvesting.

The bottom line—everyone lives in a watershed. If you live in the Leech Lake watershed, the land and water eventually drain to Leech Lake, the

Within a Watershed...



Leech Lake Watershed



third largest lake in Minnesota. Leech Lake drains to the Mississippi River, which eventually flows to the Gulf of Mexico.

We're all interconnected by water. It's what we do on the land that impacts the quality of our waters, forests, and fish and wildlife habitat in the Leech Lake watershed.

Since the watershed's boundaries were determined by the topography that Mother Nature laid down, not by man's artificially established boundaries, everyone in the watershed must manage land responsibility to reduce impacts to our waters to insure the enjoyment of these resources of generations to come. Multiple political entities must set good land use regulations and enforce them. Private property owners must be responsible land stewards, managing their land in a way that reduces stormwater runoff. And state and federal agencies must partner with local governments and citizens to meet mutual natural resource management goals. **The future is up to us!**

About the Leech Lake Watershed

- 855,000 acres
- 674 lakes (168,807 acres)
- Leech Lake is 111,500 acres
- 120 miles of streams
- 140,000 acres of wetlands
- One-third is in public ownership

Source: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources



Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation

Mission: The Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation whose mission is to fund, promote, and enable activities that will protect the natural environment of the Leech Lake watershed, with all its beauty, wealth of natural resources and diversity, for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations.

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paulawest@leechlakewatershed.org
218-838-5010

Office Address:
410 Main Street
Hacksensack, MN 56452

Mailing Address:
PO Box 455
Hacksensack, MN 56452
218-675-5773
info@leechlakewatershed.org
www.leechlakewatershed.org



Chair's Remarks

Pat Larson, Chairperson,
Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation

Many of the Foundation's completed land conservation projects were possible because of the generosity of conservation-minded landowners who donated land or easements to their property to the Foundation to limit develop and permanently preserve its natural resource value. Courtney and Loretta Sorrell are two of those landowners. Thanks to their conservation ethic, their 46 acres in Woodrow Township now remains in a natural state, safe for the wildlife to grow and thrive under the watchful care of the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation.

It all started with a trip to the Mule Lake Store for peanut butter. Along the way, the Sorrells saw a parcel of land for sale with a run-down cabin, a pond, woods and abundant wildlife. Inspired by what it might become, they placed a bid and eventually became the owners of this small country estate of 46 acres with 1000 feet of shoreline.



After years of hard work the run-down cabin is now a cozy new cabin surrounded by beautiful native plants. They look out at a pond teeming with many different wildlife species such as eagles, ducks, otters, fishers, snapping turtles and much more. Having always loved the nature of the North woods, they decided to place the land in a conservation easement voluntarily restricting its land use into perpetuity.

"We have received so much from Minnesota that this is our own way of giving something back to the land we love!" is what the Sorrells told the Foundation when they made contact in the late 1990s for help in creating a conservation easement that would protect the water, woods, and wildlife on the land they loved.

The easement on their property, now held and monitored by the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation, restricts hunting, fishing, boating and building on the property. The Sorrells still own the property, but it will be protected forever. Any new landowners will be bound by the conditions of the conservation easement.

We applaud the Sorrells for their conservation hearts. We welcome your inquiry about placing a conservation easement on your property—each one is unique and tailored to the specific property and the landowner's situation. We can provide assistance, resources, and referral to meet your conservation goals.

Today the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation has accomplished 30 land conservation projects and is still counting. Each project has a story and every time we are contacted a new story unfolds and we begin a journey with a new friend.

If you are interested in learning more about conservation options for your property, please contact us at 218-675-5773. One of our volunteer board members will be in touch with you. We look forward to hearing from you.

Plates With A Purpose

Ever wonder what those special deer, loon, or fish license plates are all about? They are Critical Habitat License Plates for your vehicle first created in 1995 to provide an opportunity for citizens to contribute to the conservation of Minnesota's natural resources. With an annual minimum contribution of \$30, the money generated from the plates goes into the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Program. The DNR uses this money to buy and manage important critical habitats throughout Minnesota that are protected as public lands (e.g. Wildlife Management Areas, Aquatic Management Areas, and Scientific and Natural Areas) and are open to compatible public use for generations to enjoy. Since its inception, these plates have been purchased by more than 110,000 Minnesotans and have generated more than \$20 million for the purchase of critical habitats. A small portion of the money is used to help fund non-game projects such as nesting surveys, lakeshore restoration projects, or other habitat projects that bene-

fit non-game species like the loon, bald eagle, or trumpeter swan.



Many of LLAWF's land conservation projects were aided by RIM monies generate from the sale of Critical Habitat License Plates. Most notably is the Mule Lake Project that protected a 360-acre parcel of prime fish and wildlife habitat that included 13,400 feet of undeveloped shoreline on Mule Lake and 2,000 feet on Donkey Lake. Thanks to RIM funds, LLAWF's project facilitation, the donations of over \$88,000 by Mule Lake Property Owners, and partnerships with the DNR and many other organizations, the area is now protected as the Mule Lake Wildlife Management Area.

Please purchase a Critical Habitat License Plate as a way to support LLAWF's conservation work.

Foundation Receives Grants from The McKnight Foundation and Muskies Chapter

The Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation (LLAWF) recently received \$30,000 from The McKnight Foundation and \$3,000 from the Twin Cities Chapter of Muskies, Inc. to enhance awareness of the Foundation and increase its capacity to address growing opportunities for land conservation in the Leech Lake watershed.

Recognizing the increasing population within the Leech Lake watershed and the need to protect its high quality natural resources, The McKnight Foundation granted LLAWF a \$30,000 planning grant to help LLAWF enhance its land conservation work. The grant will provide training for board and staff, planning assistance to increase the organizational capacity to fund and implement more land conservation projects, support for building the public/private partnerships needed to accomplish effective land conservation, and resources to identify priority conservation targets.

The McKnight Foundation grant application pointed out that "accelerated land conservation efforts are needed in the next ten years to stay ahead of the rapidly approaching development. Without the ability to enhance land conservation

efforts, the Foundation will miss critical opportunities to conserve land and ultimately protect the quality of the waters and natural resources in the Leech Lake watershed from the impacts of future development."

LLAWF was one of 13 national recipients of grants from the Hugh C. Becker Foundation of the Twin Cities Chapter of Muskies Inc. Their \$3,000 grant will support direct costs associated with land conservation projects (appraisals, site evaluations, title work, etc.) and distribution of educational materials on land conservation options to property owners on naturally reproducing Muskie lakes in the watershed (e.g. Leech, Woman, Wabedo, Inguadano, Baby, Kid, Kerr, Mann, Mule, and Cass Lakes).

"I was surprised to learn that a high percentage of Muskie fry used for stocking across the United States comes from Leech Lake," said Paula West, executive director of the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation. "This makes protection of those spawning areas on Leech and other lakes in the watershed of critical importance."

Land Conservation Tools Workshop Held

On May 28th, LLAWF invited lake leaders from Cass and Hubbard Counties to attend a Land Conservation Tools workshop held at the new Walker Community Center. Representatives of 18 lake associations, the Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL) and the Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Association attended the workshop, funded by a grant to LLAWF from the Central Regional

Sustainable Development Partnership, University of Minnesota, in Staples.

Tom Duffus and Clint Miller of The Conservation Fund, a leading national nonprofit dedicated to protecting America's land and water legacy, talked about the various types of land conservation options, such as land acquisitions, conservation easements, and more, and the benefits associated with the various options.

Tom Buss, chairman of LLAWF's Sustainability Committee, informed the lake association leaders about various resources LLAWF offers lake associations to help them establish Sustainability or Conservation Committees to identify local opportunities for land conservation. These resources include presentations to boards, a new brochure "Your Land Has a Future", fact sheets on conservation options, and opportunities for lake associations to learn from each other's experiences identifying conservation options and working with local landowners.

The lake associations attending were surveyed about additional assistance they would like to receive from LLAWF to enhance their land conservation efforts. Interests included more training,

LLAWF Partners with Cass County Environmental Services

LLAWF and Cass County Environmental Services received a jointly awarded grant from the Minnesota DNR Shoreland Habitat Program for \$57,000 to expand native landscaping in Cass County starting in July 2008 through June 2010. The grant will fund three (3) two-day workshops on shoreland landscaping, printing and distribution of a *Shoreland Homeowners Guide to Lake Protection* in 2008, and up to 20 cost-share demonstration shoreland landscaping projects on private properties in Cass County, including a public tour of the demonstration projects. See page 12 for details on upcoming opportunities.

A grant from the Center For Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) at the University of Minnesota and the Initiative Foundation, Little Falls, was recently received by LLAWF to fund a summer intern from Bemidji State University to map large parcels of undeveloped shoreland on priority lakes in Cass County, including those in the County Intra-Lake Study and member lakes of the Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL). Cass County Environmental Services is contributing in-kind support of the project by providing work space and staff supervision for the intern, John Snyder. LLAWF will pay for production of the maps and when completed later this summer, will distribute the maps to the respective lake associations to aid in their identification of potential properties that are well suited for land conservation.



Tom Duffus and Clint Miller from The Conservation Fund speak to lake association leaders.

maps, funding resources, and additional printed materials. Lake associations interested in Sustainability Committees can contact Tom at 218-682-2081 or ktbuss@tds.net.

In addition to funding for the workshop, the grant from the Central Regional Partnership also supports hiring a writer to document stories about conservation-minded individuals who have donated land to LLAWF; community presentations on land conservation; development of the conservation options brochure; writing of the *Shoreland Homeowners Guide*; and a workshop for realtors on shoreland stewardship that was recently canceled and will be rescheduled for early 2009.



Thank You to Our Supporters

The Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation (LLAWF) is supported by a wide variety of conservation-minded individuals and entities that care about preserving and protecting the unique natural resources within the Leech Lake Watershed. Often we are asked: where does your support come from? Our funding support comes primarily from individuals, lake associations, businesses, foundations, sporting groups, and local governments, who donate towards the support of LLAWF's general operations and/or

special land acquisition projects. About 20 percent of LLAWF's 2008 budget will be supported by grant funding from private foundations and state agencies; the rest will be dependent on our private supporters.

Every donation counts no matter how small or large! LLAWF is 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Most donations are eligible for an IRS tax deduction. There are numerous ways you can support LLAWF: donations of cash, land, and stock;

memorial gifts; and planned gifts in your estate. Check with your financial planner regarding the personal benefits of these options. Land donations often trigger the release of state funds from the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Program that can be applied towards other conservation projects.

Thank you for the following conservation-minded supporters in 2007.

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A special thank you to Ted Mellby for his countless hours of in-kind professional services.

Working Together On Kabekona Lake

On October 19, 2007, the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation (LLAWF) sold 27 acres of land on Kabekona Lake to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to insure that the property, including 1,200+ feet of shoreline on Kabekona Lake and 1,500+ feet of Kabekona Creek, was protected into perpetuity. The following is a chronicle of how the Kabekona Lake Association (KLA) and Kabekona Lake Foundation (KLF) partnered with the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation (LLAWF) in the permanent protection of sensitive shoreland on Kabekona Lake for the enjoyment of future generations.

At a board meeting of the Kabekona Lake Association (KLA) in July, 2006, Jerry Amundson, a LLAWF board director and resident on Kabekona Lake, approached the KLA board with the possibility of purchasing 27 acres of land on the western shore of Kabekona Lake that had just been listed for sale in a local real estate advertisement.

The parcel for sale included 1,580 feet along the Kabekona River/Creek, a designated trout stream that flows into Kabekona Lake and has an extremely high quality brook trout fishery. Plus, a large portion of the parcel was wetland and not suitable for development.

Previous to approaching KLA, Amundson had contacted Doug Kingsley, DNR Area Fisheries Supervisor, to see if the DNR might have an interest in acquiring the property to preserve its high conservation value. The DNR was interested in the property for public trout fishing along the Kabekona River since a large portion of the Kabekona River is either publicly owned land or the state has angler access easements along the banks, but the general public did not have access to the stream through the parcel for sale. The DNR was also interested in protecting brook trout habitat and critical fish spawning, nursery, feeding, and cover for the lake's fish population along the 1,260 feet of shoreline on Kabekona Lake. In addition, Kingsley noted that acquisition of the property would help protect water quality on the lower reaches of the Kabekona River and Gulch

Creek, both tributaries to Kabekona Lake.

When approached by Amundson in July, the KLA board was enthused about partnering with LLAWF to purchase the land and wanted to eventually see it sold to the DNR to ensure DNR management and public recreational use and benefit. Amundson explained that while the DNR was interested in the property, with limited budgets and more potential acquisitions than the DNR had funds to purchase, they could not pay for the full value of the property. LLAWF was ready to purchase the property as an interim buyer and eventually sell it to the DNR on the condition that KLA agreed to raise funds to help reduce the purchase price for the DNR. KLA accepted the proposal and agreed to raise \$40,000.

Next, after securing an appraisal, LLAWF contacted the listing realtor to request that the landowner donate a portion of the value of the land since the appraisal was considerably less than the listing price; the landowner generously agreed. LLAWF tendered an offer for the property in December, 2006, which was accepted, and a closing date of August, 2007, was set. Meanwhile in November, 2006, the Kabekona Lake Foundation was brought into the project to help raise the \$40,000 committed to by KLA. In the spring of 2007, KLF embarked on a fundraising campaign and by August had raised the \$40,000 donation from individual lake residents and KLA. Trout Unlimited also donated to the project in the interest of securing public access to trout fishing on Kabekona Creek.

The money raised by KLF and KLA along with the donation from Trout Unlimited were forwarded to the DNR



Pat Larson, chairperson, Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation (LLAWF), (left); Luther Nervig, KLF chairperson; Dewey Ringham, KLA past-president; Tom Rogge, KLA president and LLAWF board; and Jerry Amundson, LLAWF treasurer, at the closing on the Kabekona Property in September, 2007.



Photo courtesy of Tom Rogge

Kabekona Creek flowing into Kabekona Lake



Parcel purchased by LLAWF in partnership with KLF and KLA and now owned and managed by the DNR.

by LLAWF to trigger the release of an equal amount of money from the state Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) funds, which was used to reduce the eventual purchase price of the property to the DNR. The landowner's donation of land value also triggered additional RIM funds, which are generated from the sale of Critical Habitat License Plates (see the article on page four).

In September, 2007, LLAWF closed on the purchase of the land from the seller. Subsequently, the DNR then purchased the land from LLAWF in October, 2007.

While the above is a short summary of the complicated story of how and what led to the purchase of the land on Kabekona Lake, what is not detailed is the long hours of work by the KLF and KLA boards, the LLAWF, and the DNR or the generosity of the landowner, Trout Unlimited, and the residents of Kabekona Lake who committed to protecting a very sensitive part of the lake environment. This story is an impressive example of how government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and individuals can work together to accomplish a specific conservation goal for the public's benefit.

If you **VALUE** your lake, take **CARE** of your shore

Maintain or restore a natural shoreline

One year after planting

Cook site

Before



Little Bass Lake Resort

Before



Five years after planting



Courtesy of MN DNR.

Reduce Runoff: Maintain a Natural Shoreline

Preserving or restoring a native shoreline is the best way to reduce shoreland erosion, protect water quality, and improve the health and diversity of shoreland and upland birds, wildlife, and aquatic plants. Native vegetation acts as a buffer zone between the shoreland and the water intercepting nutrients and reducing runoff, erosion, and sedimentation.

If your shoreland is already natural, congratulations-please keep it that way. If you have lawn to the water's edge, or very little native vegetation near the shore, consider a natural landscaping-"Lakescaping"-project to restore your shore by creating a shoreland buffer.

A simple no-cost way to get started in restoring your shoreland is to stop mowing for the width of the desired buffer strip. Seeds in the soil will germinate and valuable native plants will begin to appear. There are several opportunities coming up this summer in Cass County to help you get started with designing and planting your shoreland landscaping project and potentially receive grant money to offset the cost. These include:

August 9, Buffer Zone Expo, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Deep Portage Conservation Reserve, near Hackensack.

The expo will feature a number of hour-long workshops on shoreland landscaping along with a variety of educational exhibits, all with an emphasis on practical, hands-on, how-to-do-it information. Experts from the Minnesota DNR, Pollution Control Agency, Cass County Environmental Services and suppliers of native plants, among others, will participate, and local residents who have completed shoreland landscaping projects will share their experiences. A fee for attending the workshops is \$15/person or \$25/couple; viewing the exhibits is free. Workshop preregistration is required; call Kathy at 218-682-2325. The event is co-sponsored by the Cass County Chapter of the Izaak Walton League and Deep Portage Conservation Reserve. For more information, contact Jack Fitzgerald, at 218-682-2941 or jjfitz@tds.net.

August 22, Shoreland Landscaping Workshop; 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Land Department Meeting Room, Backus, Minnesota

Sponsored by the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation and the University of Minnesota Extension, come and learn how to protect and enhance your shoreline. This workshop emphasizes a holistic approach to addressing property owner expectations, the beneficial functions of natural shorelines and shoreland regulations. Participants will design a simple lake or river friendly buffer. A hands-on Shoreland Planting workshop will follow in early September. Cost is \$15; contact Paula West, 218-838-5010 or info@leechlakewatershed.org for registration.

Cost Share Grant Opportunities for Shoreland Revegetation Projects

The Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation and Cass County Environmental Services received a DNR Shoreland Habitat Grant to cost-share (50:50) on up to 20 shoreland landscaping projects on private shorelands in Cass County over the next two years. Assistance in project design will be provided. If you are interested in a grant for your project, contact: Kelly Condiff at the Environmental Services office, 218-547-7241 or kellycondiff@yahoo.com.

Please help preserve the sensitive lands and natural resources of the Leech Lake Watershed. All donations to the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation (LLAWF) are fully tax deductible.

Name _____ Email: _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Address #2 (Seasonal) _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

From _____ to _____

If you own lakeshore, which lake? _____ County? _____

Telephone: _____ Cell phone: _____

I would like to support the work of the LLAWF with the enclosed special donation: \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ Other: _____

Please contact me regarding: _____ memorial gifts _____ planned gifts _____ gifts of stock _____ land conservation

Please include me on your future newsletter mailing list _____ email newsletter _____



Mail to: LLAWF,
PO Box 455, Hackensack, MN 56452