McHenry County

An extraordinary place - rich with people who care.

Spring Hollow Conservation Area

2012 Annual Report
Many McHenry County residents know how beautiful and precious our home is, and want to see it preserved, restored, and available for future generations to enjoy.

In 2012, it became clear that conservationists from across the globe, federal biologists and the entire Chicago region also recognized the significance of McHenry County’s natural resources.

It is also true that the vast majority of those natural resources are owned by private landowners – and these are the families and individuals who will decide whether to preserve, enhance, or destroy those resources.

Three regional projects were announced last year that put McHenry County on the map from a global conservation perspective:

**Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge**, a federal project, will include a mix of public lands connected by privately-owned and restored properties. Federal, state and local government agencies are focused on acquisition of land that will be part of the refuge. **TLC holds several easements within the connecting corridors, and is the only organization working with private landowners in that area.** For reference, we have included an outline of the approved Hackmatack National Refuge on the adjacent map and points that show the location of TLC land preservation projects.

**Oak Recovery Project: Northeastern Illinois** is being funded by the US Forest Service and coordinated by Chicago Wilderness, a regional consortium of environmental organizations. TLC’s Project Quercus®, is the only community-based program in the region focused on conservation of the oak woodland ecosystem. Since the vast majority of the region’s remaining oak woods are located on private property, it is clear that **TLC needs to be prepared to inform and engage a wider audience** in the region.
Chicago Wilderness Green Infrastructure Vision (GIV) The map below shows the best remaining land that should be restored to collectively preserve the unique plants, animals and natural communities that call the region home. We’ve outlined McHenry County to help point out the significance of our natural lands in relation to the rest of the region.

McHenry County is an extraordinary place, rich with people who care: from Seed Sharing up in Alden Township, TLC’s Oak Keepers®, The Wildflower Preservation and Propagation Committee’s natural yard mentoring program, and the landowners who have worked with TLC to permanently preserve nearly 2,000 acres of land – voluntarily.

Let us be thankful for the opportunity to live in this amazing place and commit to do what we can to keep it that way.
Land Now Preserved Forever

Zoost-Weier Preserve
Matt & Carol Zoost were so happy with their 2011 land donation to TLC that they made an additional donation in 2012! What we call the Zoost-Weier Preserve is now 4 acres of oak woodland and wetland that will be restored and forever preserved at the corner of Roberts and Lamphier Roads.

Gateway Park
The south entrance to the City of Harvard will provide residents and visitors a welcome view of oak groves and a naturally meandering stream – forever. Students at the nearby Elementary School will have the opportunity to learn about the natural resources of the area through hands-on activities at the park.

Remington Grove Conservation Easement
The addition of a 26 acre easement along the west branch of Dutch Creek in Johnsburg was a long awaited addition to TLC’s portfolio. First discussed in 2005, this project appeared to be dead after the real estate market crash a few years later when the development company filed for bankruptcy. In 2012, the bank contacted TLC about completing the easement, and in September we closed, ensuring that this portion of the creek that includes oak woods and restored wetlands will remain in its natural condition.

Fleming Road Natural Heritage Corridor
With the addition of four easements, the Fleming Road Natural Heritage Corridor now includes 21 properties that together protect nearly two-thirds of the road frontage along the 2.5 mile roadway. This project helps ensure that the road will remain in its existing footprint in perpetuity, and that future generations will enjoy the winding, hilly, scenic roadway for many years to come. Road resurfacing will take place this year, but the road will not be widened and the alignment will not be changed due in part to the Corridor designation.
Possible Future Protected Sites

Marsh/Sedge Meadow
Hartland Twp., 30 acres

Oak Savanna/Farmland
Richmond, 40 acres

Oak Woodland
Dunham Twp, 40 acres

Sedge Meadow
Johnsburg, 13 acres

Yonder Bluff
TLC was able to acquire a dramatic 2-1/2 acre overlook for the growing complex of protected lands we call Yonder Prairie Nature Preserve. Yonder includes over 140 acres of wetland, prairie and oak savanna habitat that has been preserved on the western edge of the Woodstock Moraine (located between the Westwood Lakes Subdivision and Rose Farm Road).

The Yonder Bluff property protects a steep portion of the moraine – thus the name. Come and see the view from the top!

&

With continued support from TLC’s members, SO much more
Our Oak woodlands and savannas are among the most threatened ecosystems on the planet. The remnants in this region are so important to conserving plant and animal species that may otherwise vanish.

The Good News? There is something that each one of us can do to ensure that McHenry County’s oaks will be here for our great-grandkids to enjoy.

Project Quercus®

Work with us to set up an oak planting in your community! A record number of oak seedlings were planted by volunteers across the county in 2012.

Do you have a sense of adventure? TLC’s Oak Keepers® visit privately-owned woodlands to help complete surveys, and have discovered the largest oaks yet seen in McHenry County.
Have you ever seen an oak in distress? We need help to “rescue” these oaks from the grip of invasive shrubs like buckthorn and honeysuckle. Help give some of McHenry County’s oldest residents a new lease on life!

Many of the oaks planted in 2007 are ready to have their cages removed and get a fresh bed of mulch. You can help!

This is our future and everyone can help!

Celebrate a life, a birth or any milestone. **Plant an Oak** at Hennen Conservation Area.

**Acorn Roundup**
They start dropping in late summer. All of TLC’s oaks come from locally-collected acorns.

Thinking about buying a tree for your yard? TLC has an **Oak Sale** each spring and fall.

Contact us today! (815) 337-9502
Land Stewardship

Restoration of the lands that TLC owns and protects exploded in 2012 through the efforts of new staff and hundreds of hours of volunteer help.

From the remnant prairie atop the winding esker at the Hidden Marsh easement near Hebron, to the banks of Woods Creek at TLC’s Acorn Lane Preserve in Lake in the Hills, land stewardship is growing and making a difference for people and nature!
“Whether it’s getting down and dirty or simply monitoring wildlife, we all can play a role in taking a step toward a more sustainable existence on Mother Earth. After all, without her, we wouldn’t exist.” ~ Nicky Obenauf, TLC Volunteer

Each One of Us Can Help

TLC Volunteers know they are making a difference. They come to work and they know that the more we all work together, the more our mission will be realized. TLC’s extraordinary volunteers care deeply about our environment.
Working to Preserve McHenry County’s Natural Resources

TLC Board of Directors

Alan Stromberg, Marengo
PRESIDENT
Ders Anderson, Nunda Twp.
VICE PRESIDENT
Ed Robbins, Hebron
TREASURER
Virginia Peschke, Bull Valley
SECRETARY
Doug Hawthorne, Harvard
Jan Kennedy, McHenry
Randy Rapp, Harvard
Kathy Reiland, McHenry
Sandra Scheinfeld, Marengo/Chicago
Randy Schietzelt, Crystal Lake
Steve Wenzel, Woodstock

TLC Staff

Linda Balek
Jackie Eberle
David Ducci
Lisa Haderlein
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- 10 -
Come and see for yourself:
Get Involved!

TLC holds a variety of events throughout the year, ranging from nature walks, training for landowners and volunteers, one of THE most well-attended art events in the county—we’re even in a parade! There is something for everyone and we welcome you to come out and experience these places with the other people in our community who care.

“Chicks with Chainsaws”
Coming
November 16, 2013

“I Pancakes on the Prairie”
Member Event

Halloween Hike at the Land of Oz

Night Owl Bike Ride with the McHenry County Bicycle Advocates
Coming August 3-4, 2013

Stewardship Training
Coming
July 13, 2013

Art of the Land
Coming, September 20-21, 2013

Burn Training
Coming
March 2014

“Chicks with Chainsaws”
Coming
November 16, 2013

Hebron Field Day
## 2012 Financial Summary

### INCOME 2012
- **Member Support**: $87,685
- **Grants**: $114,835
- **Program Service Fees**: $28,100
- **Special Events**: $20,157
- **Dividends/Interest/Investment Income**: $40,078
- **Endowment Contributions**: $2,100
- **In-Kind Gifts/Other**: $19,612
- **Released Funds for Land Stewardship**: $47,835

### EXPENSES
- **Programs**: $269,710
- **Management**: $40,078
- **Fundraising (A)**: $38,598

### Year-End Fund Balances
- **Stewardship Endowment (1)**: $467,763
- **Land Protection Fund (3)**: $51,617
- **Land Management Reserve (2)**: $106,050
- **Operating Reserve (4)**: $7,200
- **Land Conservancy Fund @ MC Community Foundation**: $50,520

### 2012 Land Acquisition Overview
- **Value of Donated Land**: $55,000
- **Value of Purchased Land**: $148,000
- **Funds Raised for Land Acquisition**: $111,118
- **Funds Released from Land Protection Fund**: $18,000
- **Mortgage Secured (Gateway Park)**: $40,000

### Dedicated Fund Balances as of 12-31-12
- **Stewardship Endowment (1)**: $467,763
- **Land Management Reserve (2)**: $106,050
- **Land Protection Fund (3)**: $51,617
- **Operating Reserve (4)**: $7,200
- **Land Conservancy Fund @ MC Community Foundation**: $50,520

(A) Includes a one-time consultant cost to review TLC’s fundraising program, help develop an updated fundraising plan, and provide training for board and staff.

1. The Stewardship Endowment is held to provide income that covers the cost of annual monitoring of TLC’s easements, and also provides resources in the event that TLC must legally defend an easement. TLC holds 76 permanent conservation easements.

2. The Land Management Reserve was created to ensure that TLC has funds set aside to support longterm management of the lands that it owns. TLC owns 235 acres of land. Our goal is to build this fund to be equivalent to $2,000 per acre of land owned, so the goal for the fund is $470,000.

3. The Land Protection Fund is available for TLC to use when acquiring land. The fund currently includes approximately $35,000 ear-marked for Gateway Park, so the actual available balance is about $16,000.

4. The Board started an Operating Reserve in 2012 to help ensure that TLC has adequate funds on hand to manage its cash flow. The goal is to build the Reserve to an amount equal to three months of operating expenses by the end of 2015 ($75,000).