

# McHenry County



An extraordinary place -  
rich with people  
who care.

Spring Hollow  
Conservation Area

2012  
Annual Report

# We live here!



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.

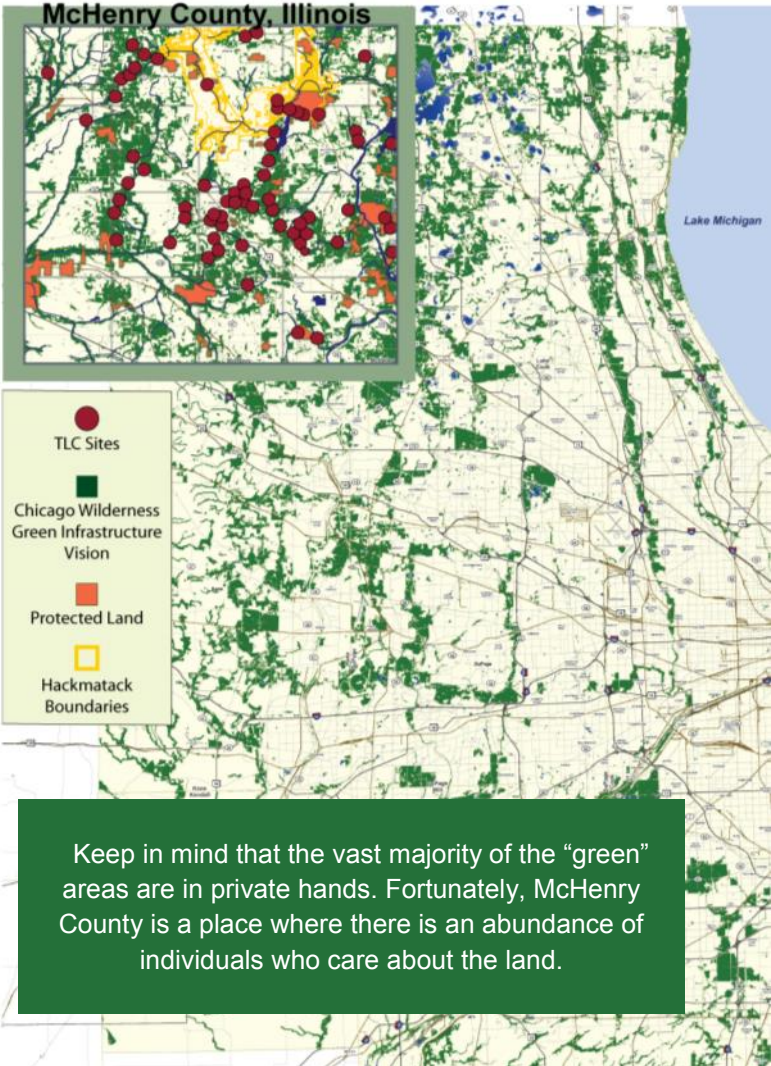
It is also true that the vast majority of those natural resources are owned by private landowners – and these are the families and individuals who will decide whether to preserve, enhance, or destroy those resources.

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.





## Yonder Bluff

TLC was able to acquire a dramatic 2-½ 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**

## Possible Future Protected Sites

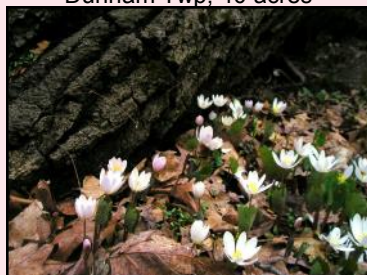
Marsh/Sedge Meadow  
Hartland Twp., 30 acres



Oak Savanna/Farmland  
Richmond, 40 acres



Oak Woodland  
Dunham Twp, 40 acres



Sedge Meadow  
Johnsburg, 13 acres



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 they 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.**

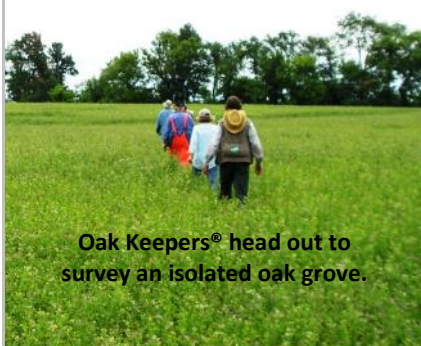


## Project Quercus®

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.



**Oak Keepers® head out to survey an isolated oak grove.**



**Largest Red Oak at 58.9" dbh discovered in Richmond**



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!



Before

Giant oak in Harvard AFTER  
volunteer rescue.



Before

Ancient oak in Greenwood  
AFTER being rescued!

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



2012

2007

Twenty oaks  
planted in  
Lakewood.

## 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.



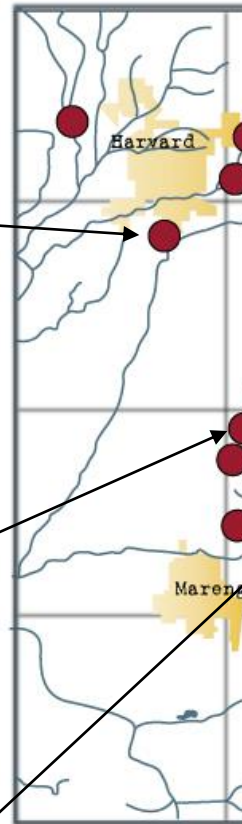
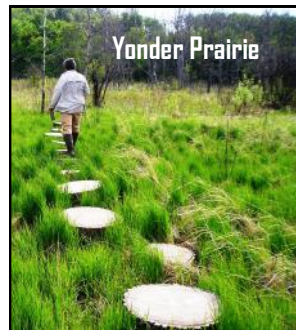
**Contact us today! (815) 337-9502**

# Land Stewardship

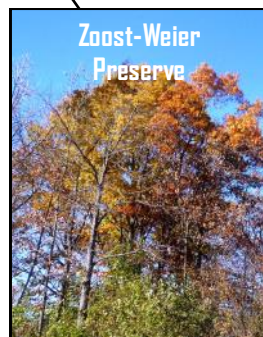
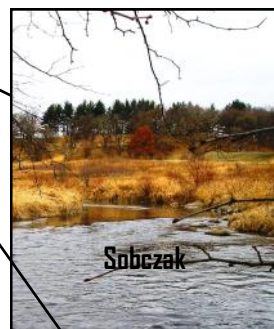
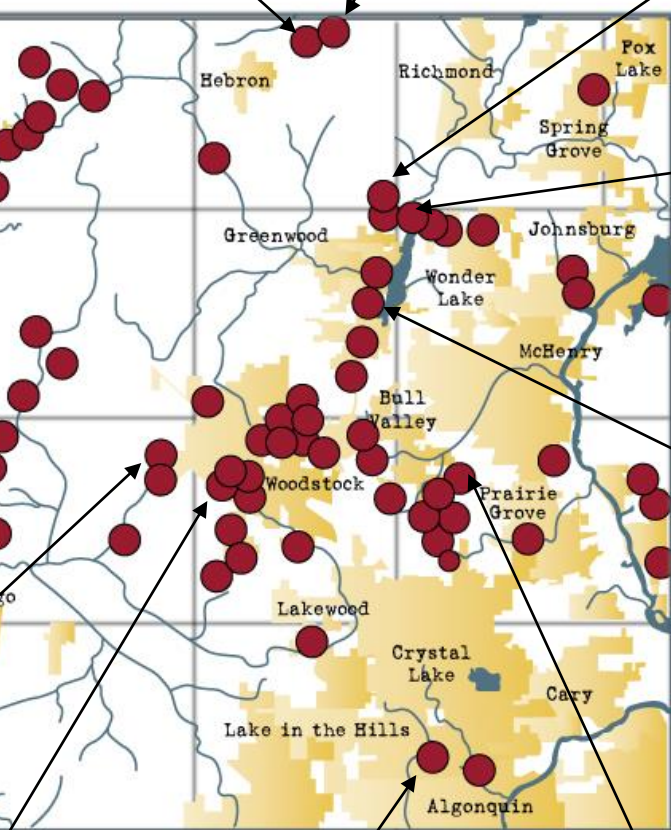
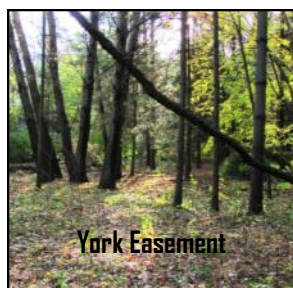
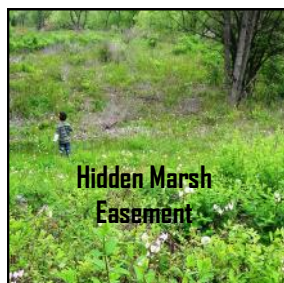
Restoration of the lands that TLC owns and protects exploded in 2012 through the efforts of new staff and hundreds of hours of volunteer help.



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 its 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

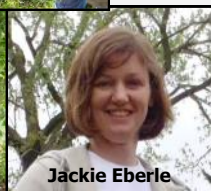
## TLC Staff



Lisa Haderlein



Linda Balek



Jackie Eberle



Melissa Hormann



David Ducci



## 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





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.



**"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

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2012</b>
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
	<b>\$360,402</b>

<b>EXPENSES</b>	
*Programs	\$269,710
Management	\$40,078
Fundraising (A)	\$38,598
	<b>\$348,386</b>

<b>Year-End Fund Balances</b>	
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

<b>Value of Donated Land</b>	<b>\$ 55,000</b>
<b>Value of Purchased Land</b>	<b>\$148,000</b>
<b>Funds Raised for Land Acquisition</b>	<b>\$111,118</b>
<b>Funds Released from Land Protection Fund</b>	<b>\$ 18,000</b>
<b>Mortgage Secured (Gateway Park)</b>	<b>\$ 40,000</b>

## Dedicated Fund Balances as of 12-31-12

<b>Stewardship Endowment (1)</b>	<b>\$467,763</b>
<b>Land Management Reserve (2)</b>	<b>\$106,050</b>
<b>Land Protection Fund (3)</b>	<b>\$51,617</b>
<b>Operating Reserve (4)</b>	<b>\$7,200</b>
<b>Land Conservancy Fund @ MC Community Foundation</b>	<b>\$50,520</b>

(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).