

News from the



CENTRAL
INDIANA
LAND TRUST

Preserving the Heartland

FALL
2008

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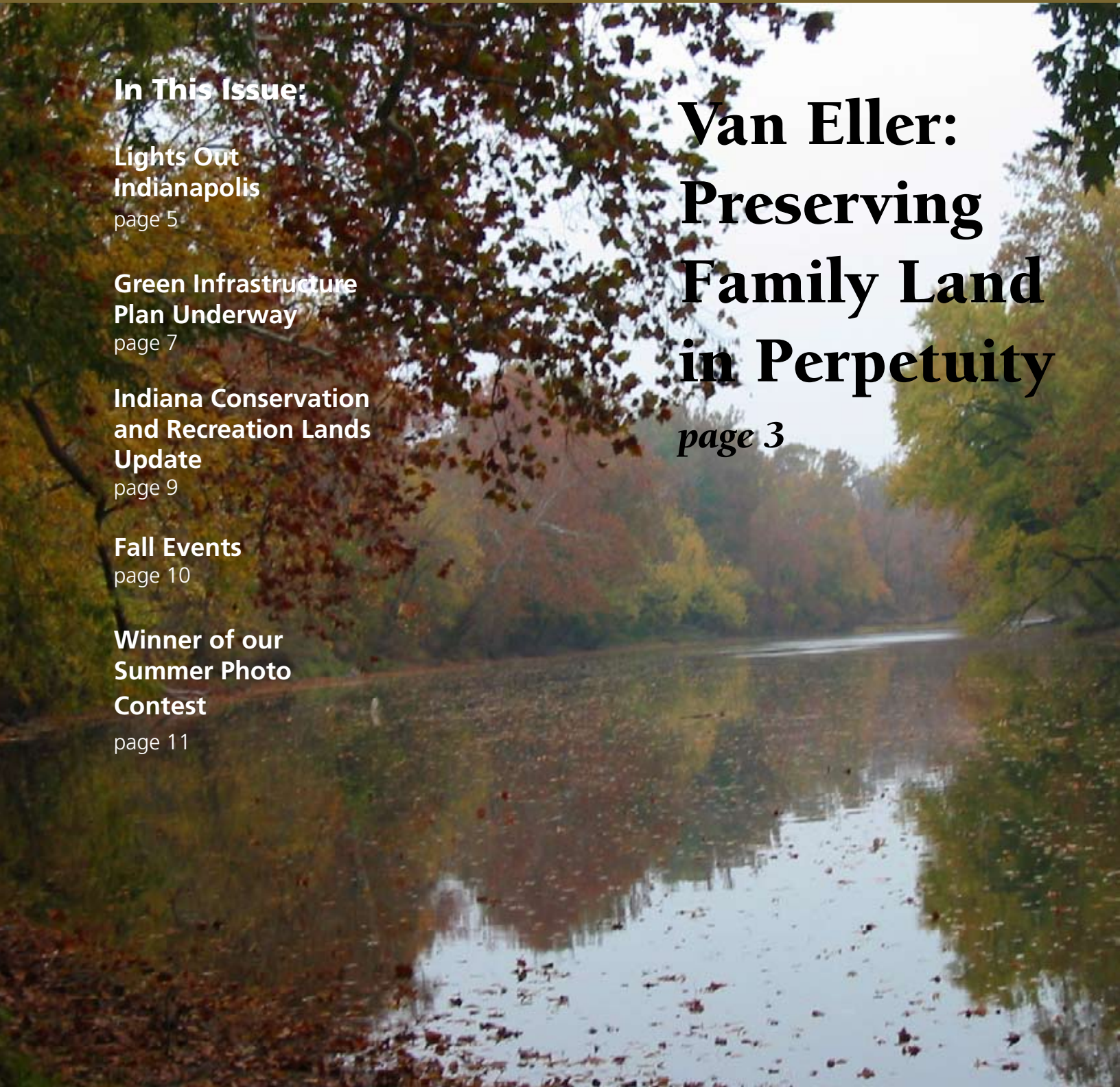
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FROM THE LEADERSHIP

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Cover Photo: The White River from
Wapahani Nature Preserve. Photo
by H. Bacher.

The Central Indiana Land Trust protects our environment by preserving the natural landscape. However, that does not speak to our entire mission. The Land Trust also protects our natural landscape to connect people to nature so that we are healthier, happier, and part of a more whole community. This connection is possible – the work of the Land Trust is possible – because of the commitment and effort of so many people.



Today the Land Trust has a staff of four, a board of 15 directors, and seven advisory council members, all of whom work on behalf of the organization. Beyond these people, there are hundreds more that have invested time, resources, and talent over the last 18 years to make central Indiana a better place to live.

Our members give **gifts of money or land** supporting the conservation mission of the Land Trust. Each of these gifts matter, regardless of the size. Some contributors have given for specific purposes. For example, our friend June gives generously to specific projects like restoration or stewardship projects. She has said that she gets satisfaction from being able to see a task that needs to be done and providing the resources to see it completed. John and Mary, on the other hand, rather than picking specific projects to support, like to leave it to the Land Trust to use their support wherever it is needed.

Many people generously give **the gift of time**. It is amazing how many people devote time to conservation because they have a passion and a sense of community. Bud has been volunteering for the Land Trust almost since the group formed. You will often find him working on our membership database or committee tasks or out in the field. Elizabeth is in the office every week doing key tasks that free valuable staff time for other efforts. Committee members meet monthly, site stewards watch over their preserves, professionals provide counsel and services for no charge, and other volunteers represent the Land Trust at events, conferences and meetings... the list goes on.

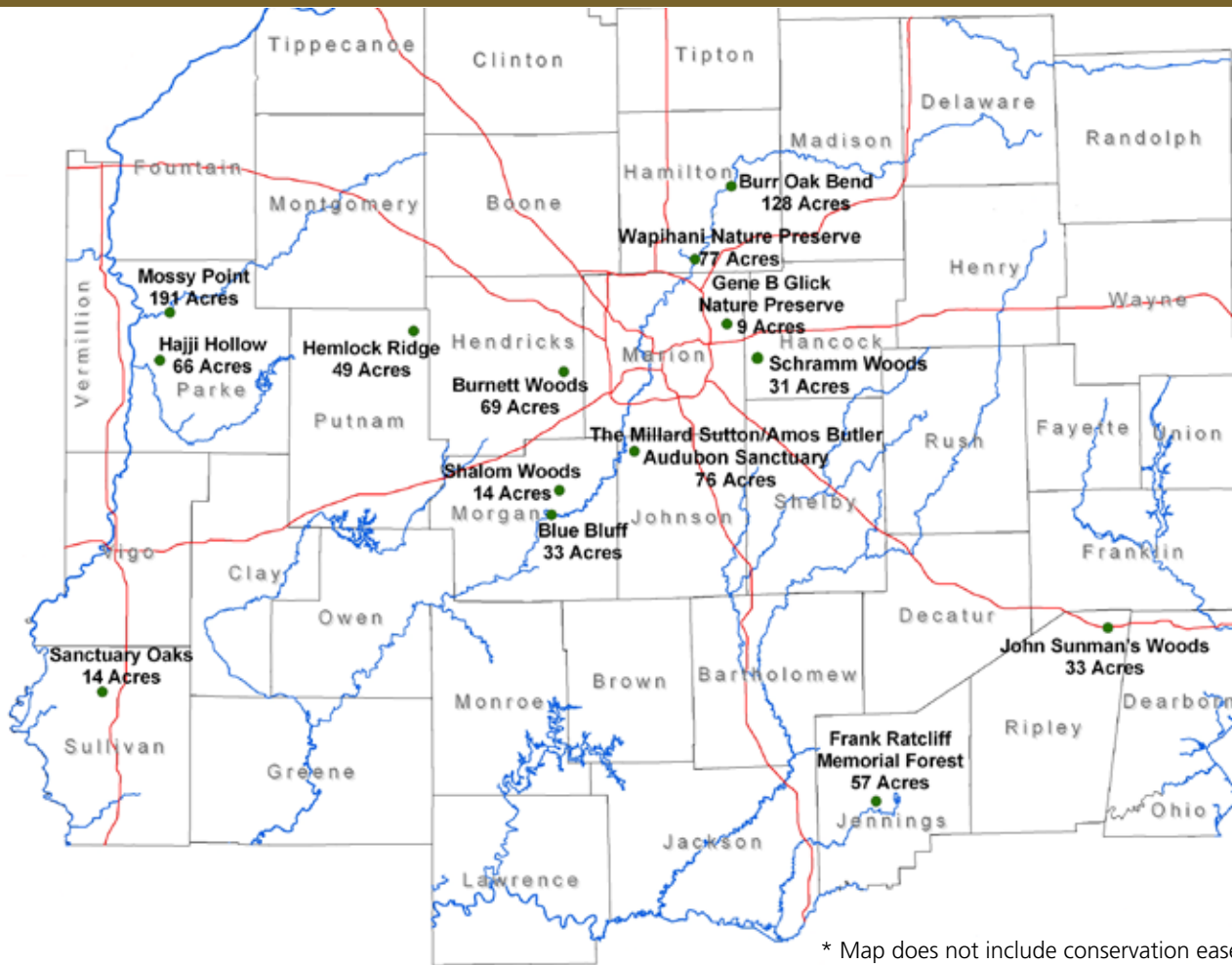
The Central Indiana Land Trust is honored to have so many people passionately committed and working as mentors, pied pipers, cheerleaders, negotiators, party planners and task masters. These people show up time and time again because of their commitment to conservation and what it means to our quality of life. They are YOU, our friends, supporters and advocates. Thank you for everything that each of you do for the Land Trust.

- Heather Bacher and James Wilson

OUR MISSION

Through land protection, stewardship and education, the Central Indiana Land Trust preserves natural areas, improving air and water quality and enhancing life in our communities for present and future generations.

OUR PROPERTIES



* Map does not include conservation easements.

HOW WE PROTECT LAND

Fee Simple

The outright ownership of land through donations or purchases is the most basic land protection tool. Once owned by a land trust, the land is protected in perpetuity.

Conservation Easements

This agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government entity allows the landowner to retain the title to the land, but permanently limits development and prevents certain uses of the property.

Protection Partnerships

We often partner with like-minded organizations to pool resources for the purchase of larger parcels of land.

Acres Counter:
3,060 acres protected

815 acres owned
200 acres under management
2,045 acres protected through partnerships

For details on all of our projects, visit our website or purchase *A Guide to the Preserves of Central Indiana Land Trust*, featured on page 8.

VAN ELLER: PRESERVING FAMILY LAND IN PERPETUITY

By Pamela Louks, Central Indiana Land Trust Member

I spent a very enjoyable evening with Mr. Van Eller who shared the story of his life and his land. His land is now part of Wapihani Nature Preserve, which will serve citizens and students and be maintained as a natural area in one of the fastest growing suburbs in the country.

Not many people in Hamilton County can say they were born on the land where they still live. However, Van Eller can. He lives in Fishers on land settled by his family in 1831, and was born in the house that still stands on the land. When he married, he built a house on the property for him and his wife of 41 years, Betty, who is now deceased. He still lives in the house that originally cost \$9,000 to build.

In earlier days, Mr. Eller worked as the Trustee for the Fishers and Carmel schools, hiring teachers and writing their paychecks. He was also on the board of the Soil Conservation Service. His dad owned a restaurant in Fishers during the depression. He had cousins who owned land in the area, leading to the subdivisions and road bearing the Eller name.



Photo by P. Louks

Mr. Van Eller sold 38 acres to the Central Indiana Land Trust to ensure its protection forever.

His attachment to the land is strong. He likes to watch his garden, the trees, and the deer from the back of his home. From this view, Mr. Eller can see the rolling terrain and natural occurring woodlands mingled with trees he has planted. Mr. Eller has seen development shrink open space and wildlife habitat and watched a two-lane road become a four-lane highway that cuts in front of his home—his land. He has seen the land he used to farm turn into residential and retail developments. He has watched the rural countryside of Fishers become urban.

Mr. and Mrs. Eller used to farm 1,200 acres of land that stretched from 116th Street to the south end of Noblesville. As development grew in the area, so did the traffic.

“The traffic got so bad. One day, I needed to get my combine from 116th Street to Eller Road, and I knew the traffic would not allow that. I called the local police and told them that I needed an escort down the highway for my combine. I knew I was in trouble when the officer asked what a combine was!”

The sad truth is that development has taken over and squeezed out the working of the land.

Mr. Eller is a land lover, tree planter, farmer, and retired pilot who continues to thrive on his passions at age 87. He is disheartened by the area’s rapid, and at times, unplanned growth.

“Sprawl is nuts in this area, and I did not want that land developed. I wanted just trees on the property and no free standing buildings.”



Photo by M. Steiner

Arbor Terra Consulting planted 19,000 tree seedlings on 39 acres of Wapihani Nature Preserve in May of 2008.



A tiny bur oak seedling thrives in its new home at Wapihani Nature Preserve.

There are many new tree plantings along with mature trees on his property. He continues to plant trees.

“There is still land to fill in - with trees. I don't have a favorite tree. I like oaks, pines, and I have a patch of bald cypress. I buy my stock from the state nursery.”

He can recall when he planted them, how they are doing, and if moved from another site, where that site was. In fact, five years ago, he planted 4,300 trees on his property, which now consists of 45 acres.

To maintain and keep this cherished acreage is no easy task. The real estate is prime, and developers approach him regularly and encourage him to sell. However, Mr. Eller has other plans for his land, and they don't include development. His two friends, Cathie Jefferson and Daryl Brown, help him maintain and safeguard the property.

In an effort to slow development in his corner of the world, he sold 38 of his acres along the White River to the Central Indiana Land Trust. The parcel is now part of the 77-acre Wapihani Nature Preserve in the rapidly developing area between Fishers and Carmel. The preserve sits adjacent to Riverside Middle School, allowing classes to utilize the area as an outdoor laboratory.

Although he lived in California for a while pursuing his love of planes, buying seven and then building one of his own, he returned to his roots, his family, his community, and this land.

Mr. Eller is happiest in the seasons when there are leaves on the trees, and when he can be outdoors putting around his land, planting trees, working in his garden, or driving his golf cart over to Wapihani and gauging any changes and progress the Land Trust is making on the property.

Now area residents will always be able to enjoy the scenic vista that is now in the process of being reclaimed by trees and prairie

grasses. In addition, anyone who wants to hike a little on the wild side in this highly urbanized area will have access to the preserve. Hike along the river and enjoy the sights and sounds of wildlife. Traffic becomes a distant memory as you enter deeper into the river corridor.

Mr. Eller has done a service to Hamilton County residents and to central Indiana by entrusting his 38-acre parcel to the Central Indiana Land Trust. He is doing a service to the community by keeping a little part of the nature on his own 45-acre property in this fastest growing area of Hamilton County. His desire to have “nothing but trees” on the preserve parcel and on his own land benefits us all.

Meet Mr. Eller and join us for the dedication of Wapihani Nature Preserve on Sunday, October 19th. See page 10 for details.



Photo by P. Louks

Cathie Jefferson and Daryl Brown are friends of Mr. Eller and help preserve and maintain his remaining property.

COULD SOMEONE GET THE LIGHTS, PLEASE???

By James Cole, Indiana Important Bird Areas Coordinator

With so many mysterious and pervasive problems facing migratory birds – like the far-reaching troubles of habitat degradation, hysteria-inducing infectious diseases like bird flu and West Nile virus, and now the growing evidence of impending calamity thanks to climate change – I’m left wondering about the eventual fate of the rich avian diversity presently found in Indiana. Will King Rails still be nesting in the state when I reach retirement age? In another 20 years, could one still reasonably expect to see a Golden-winged Warbler in Indiana during spring? Will there still be vast amounts of grasslands in southwest Indiana with their assemblages of idyllic prairie birds in the next two or three decades? These are all relevant and practical questions. Having to consider these issues leaves a birder less optimistic about the future of migratory birds.

But local conservationists and birders are forging ahead with a new program, one to which volunteers can contribute and know they are making measurable prog-

ress to preserve migratory bird populations. I hope you consider donating your time and expertise to the effort. It’s called **Lights Out Indianapolis**.

The mission is simple and straightforward – civic and business leaders need to turn off the lights on tall buildings in downtown Indianapolis during spring and fall migrations. And the results of a successful effort could be far-reaching for birds that migrate through our state. According to estimates from US Fish and Wildlife Service, **window collisions may account for over 900 million bird deaths a year in the United States**, which is one of the highest measurable causes for human-induced bird mortality. That means more birds die from collisions each year than those that succumbed to the 2007 San Francisco Bay oil spill.

Compared to other challenges facing migratory birds, like sprawl, disease, or pollution, the phenomena of building collisions is not as easily understood. Researchers believe that external and internal lighting on buildings confuse the navigation systems of birds, forcing migrants to circle the building repeatedly and die of exhaustion or by eventual collision. But we do know that **when the lights are turned off, fewer birds die**. For example, in Chicago, which began a voluntary Lights Out program in 1999, scientists from the city’s Field Museum conducted a five-year study for a single build-



Photo courtesy USFWS

The Wood Thrush migrates from Central and South America to nest in central Indiana woodlands.

ing, McCormick Place, and found an 80 percent reduction in bird deaths when lights were turned off. Imagine the amount of good we could do for birds migrating through central Indiana if the lights on all of the tallest buildings in Indianapolis were extinguished during spring and fall nights.

But we need the help of committed volunteers to get this grass-roots effort rolling. A successful Lights Out program requires reaching out to many organizations – like the mayor’s office, downtown business leaders, the media, and like-minded conservation groups – to help save migratory birds, and this cannot be accomplished by one person. We need a platoon of enthusiastic conservationists.

Audubon will be holding a **Lights Out Indianapolis meeting on October 28 at 7:30 pm** (location to be determined). Please RSVP if you would like to attend this event at jcole@audubon.org or (317) 569-0546.



Photo courtesy USFWS

The Ovenbird migrates at night and is threatened by window collisions with tall buildings.

THANK YOU FOR STEPPING UP TO THE CHALLENGE!

Over the past year, our newsletters have had special requests to help fund particular project needs. In our Winter 2007 issue, Darrin Witt, Chair of the Stewardship Committee, wrote an article describing the beauty and natural features of Hajji Hollow, a property that was donated by the Zangerl family in 2004. He wrote about the fact that this property is not yet open to the public because of a house, barn, and several outbuildings that were on the property and provided an unsafe environment for a public nature preserve. Estimates for the demolition of these buildings came in at \$25,000 to \$30,000... quite an expense for our organization.

Another request was made by Cliff Chapman in the Spring 2008 newsletter. In this issue, Cliff wrote about the additional ten acres that were being added to Hemlock Ridge Nature Preserve, one of our state-dedicated preserves. We needed an additional \$25,000 to complete the land transaction costs and to install an erosion control project.

Thanks to Darrin and Cliff's articles, the Land Trust received the entire amount needed to complete both projects. A special friend of the Land Trust, June Swango, provided the majority of the funding. Other contributors included Jeff and Lawana Davenport, Matt and Jane Griswold, Don Miller and Jayne Langan, and Carl and Laurel Zangerl-Salter. Thanks to all of you who donated!



Big Walnut Creek, as seen from Hemlock Ridge Nature Preserve, will benefit from an erosion control project and an additional ten acres of protected land.

LAND PROTECTION PROJECTS IN THE HOPPER

We have, for many years, described our newly protected properties and projects that were getting close to completion but money was needed to bridge the gap. We thought it would be interesting for our members to get an insight into some of our current projects "in the hopper."

Right now, we are working on 14 projects covering 857 acres in eight counties. These sites, collectively, would protect two groundwater wetland seeps, old growth forests, an emergent marsh, working farmland, two prairie plantings and support five state endangered species as well as two species of special concern as listed by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

Stay tuned to future newsletters as we complete projects and protect more illustrative examples of why central Indiana is such a special place!

COMING SOON... THE HANK HERON KIDS CLUB!

Check our website and winter newsletter for upcoming details!

CENTRAL INDIANA GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN UNDERWAY

The last few months have been very busy collecting data for the Green Infrastructure plan the Central Indiana Land Trust has initiated with the Conservation Fund. This plan will take a science driven approach to protecting a network of natural areas, greenways, conservation easements, and working lands with conservation values while contributing to the health and quality of life for our communities.

Working with partners including the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, Indy Parks, and surrounding county park systems, we are putting together maps that represent protected lands, rare species habitats, stream water quality, and trail networks. These will overlay map land cover types that currently exist, such as forests or wetlands.

On July 30th, nearly 50 individuals including professionals from government agencies, professors from local universities, city and county planning offices, and representatives from other non-profit organizations met to discuss the planning effort thus far. Feedback from these individuals will guide us as we move forward in the planning process.

A technical review team has also been assembled including a diverse group of scientists from central Indiana. The team will work with Cliff Chapman, our Conservation Director, to select a group of focal wildlife species. These species represent certain habitat types whose landscape requirements will help shape the design of the Green Infrastructure plan.

A series of public input meetings will be announced later for this fall after we have a design for the plan that can be represented spatially on maps. Keep an eye on www.conservingindiana.org for updates!

Photo by M. Steiner



Close to 50 community leaders met to discuss the Green Infrastructure plan for Central Indiana on July 30th.

Special thanks to Friesner Herbarium and the Center for Urban Ecology @ Butler University for hosting this event.

LAND TRUST ITEMS FOR SALE

Order a plush blue heron, a baseball cap embroidered with our new logo, or the second edition of our preserve guide. Purchase online or mail in the form below.

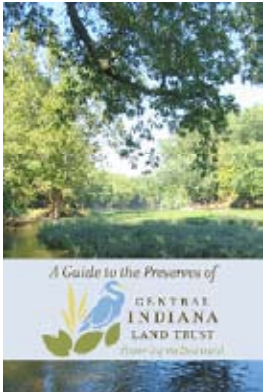


This 6" x 7" plush great blue heron will be a treat for a child or child at heart. Produced by Wild Republic in partnership with Audubon, he makes a bird call and comes with a booklet describing his migration patterns.

\$10.00 includes shipping.

Baseball caps with our new logo are now available, and come in adult and youth sizes. Adult caps come in stone or navy, and youth caps come in navy only.

\$18.00 includes shipping.



Over 300 copies of *A Guide to the Preserves of Central Indiana Land Trust* were distributed in 2007. A second edition has now been printed, with updates based on additional acres protected in 2007. This fifty-page guide not only highlights each of our nature preserves, but also includes a ten-page section on the natural history of central Indiana, written by Indiana Department of Natural Resources Regional Ecologist Tom Swinford.

\$12.00 includes shipping.

Please mail the form below to Central Indiana Land Trust, 324 W. Morris Street, Suite 210, Indianapolis, IN 46225.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

Number of Great Blue Herons: _____ x \$10.00 each = _____

Number of Baseball Caps: _____ x \$18.00 each = _____ Color: _____

Number of Preserve Guides: _____ x \$12.00 each = _____

Total: _____

Please make checks payable to the Central Indiana Land Trust. If paying by credit card, please fill out the information below:

Visa/Mastercard/Discover Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

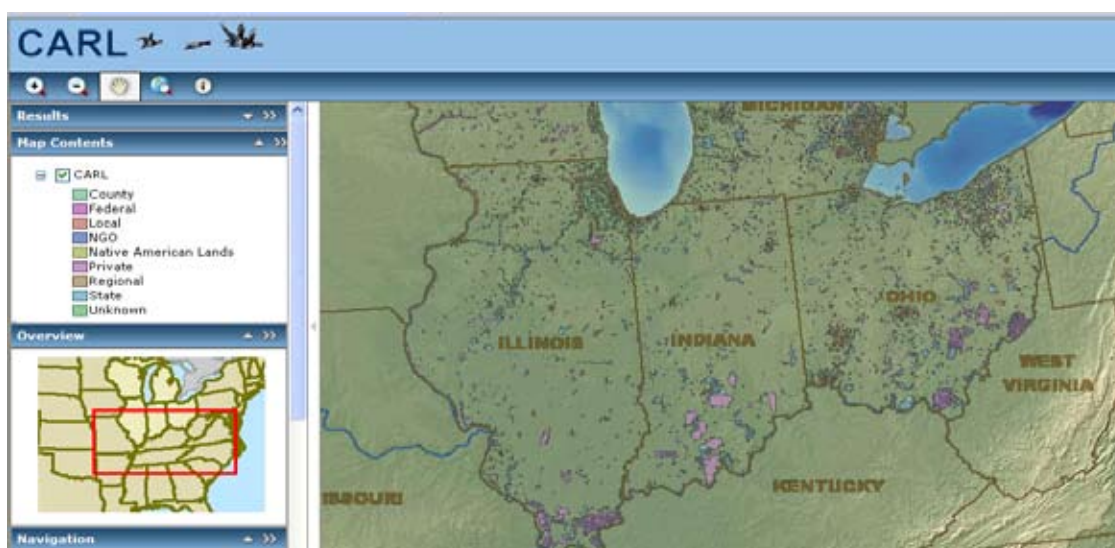
Signature: _____ Amount to Charge: _____

CONSERVATION AND RECREATION LANDS INDIANA UPDATE COMPLETE

With generous support from the Land Trust Alliance and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Central Indiana Land Trust partnered with Ducks Unlimited to update the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) database for Indiana. Although some information is not available to the public, such as conservation easements on private land, much of it can be seen on the web at: <http://www.ducks.org/Conservation/GLARO/3750/GISCARL.html>.

This valuable asset is important for regional conservation planning efforts, but can also be used by families planning a weekend trip. Indeed, the Indiana CARL database is being used by a land trust in Nashville, TN for a comparative study in public lands and is turning out to be one of the best sources of data for the Green Infrastructure plan also discussed in this newsletter.

We will continue to work with Ducks Unlimited to update the CARL database as new preserves are protected keeping this a dynamic tool for conservation.



MUSICIAN JACK JOHNSON SUPPORTS THE LAND TRUST

The Central Indiana Land Trust recently benefitted from the Jackson Ohana Charitable Foundation, founded by internationally known musician Jack Johnson. \$2,500 was donated by Land Trust board members, which was then matched by the Foundation. Additionally, the Land Trust had an opportunity to exhibit at Johnson's local concert, allowing for interaction with thousands of concert-goers.



Maria Steiner and Cliff Chapman had the opportunity to meet musician Jack Johnson.

THE FOLLOWING TRIBUTES HAVE BEEN MADE

In Honor of the Birthday of Reta Rutledge by

Barbara and Paul Jablonski
Don and Donna McCarty
Bill Murphy and April Sterling
John and Patricia Bengs
Matthew and Paula Hannigan
The Chris Thaman Family
Scott Evenbeck
Judy and Ray Laffin

In Honor of Howard and Julia Baxter

by Sara Steckbeck

In Memory of Nonie Krauss

by George and Christine Plews

In Honor of James and Jill Wilson

by Bill and Maurya Wendling

In Honor of Kathryn Yost

by the Indianapolis Art Center

In Honor of Steve Simon and Cathy Garvey

by Craig and Cheri Price

In Memory of John Rowland

by Nancy Foerster

FALL EVENTS

RSVP's are required for all events.

Saturday, Sept. 13, 9:00 am

Burr Oak Bend Nature Preserve, Hamilton County

River clean up

Saturday, October 4, 9:00 am

Burr Oak Bend Nature Preserve, Hamilton County

Weed control and tree marking with IUPUI Center for Earth and Environmental Science students

Sunday, October 19, 1:00 pm

Dedication of Wapihani Nature Preserve, Hamilton County

Directions provided upon RSVP

Saturday, October 25, 9:00 am

Burnett Woods State Nature Preserve, Hendricks County

Bush honeysuckle removal

Sunday, October 26, 1:00 pm

Dedication of Hajji Hollow Nature Preserve, Parke County

Directions provided upon RSVP

Please sign up by contacting Maria at msteiner@conservingindiana.org or 317-631-5263 x114. Detailed information will be emailed out to those who have signed up the week before each event.

PRESERVATION PILSNER



Thank you to all members and friends who attended the July 17th launch of Upland Brewing Company's Preservation Pilsner. All proceeds from the sale of Preservation Pilsner that evening will benefit the Central Indiana Land Trust. A portion of the proceeds from future sales of this great beer will benefit the Central Indiana Land Trust. Request your favorite pub to carry it! Thanks to our friends at Upland for supporting local conservation.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Sue Arnold
John and Patricia Bengs
Dave Benson
Mr. and Mrs. Lowell H. Black
Vince and Jamie Brady
Betsy K. Friedenberg

Indianapolis Art Center
Pam and Gary Jursik
Judy and Ray Laffin
Edward McCartney
Eldon Palmer
Richard Patterson

Keith and Susan Spencer
William Titus
John Ulmer
Karl and Wanda Werner
Dan Woodhouse

THE WINNER OF OUR FIRST ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST



Congratulations to Richard Miller who submitted the winning photo *Prairie Blooms Restored*, taken at Burr Oak Bend Nature Preserve.

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE! WWW.CONSERVINGINDIANA.ORG



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CENTRAL
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Preserving the Heartland

Before you recycle this newsletter, please share it with a friend!