



CENTRAL  
INDIANA  
LAND TRUST

Spring 2016





# From the Leadership



CENTRAL  
INDIANA  
LAND TRUST

*Preserving the Heartland*



*Cliff Chapman*

Last December, we celebrated our 25th Anniversary with a wonderful gathering of friends and supporters spanning the last quarter century. It was inspiring to connect with folks who served on the board of directors during those first, very important years. Protecting nearly 4,500 acres in that span of time might seem like a lot to some, and not very much to others.

Why? We target specific parcels of land in identified areas that represent the very best of Central Indiana to protect. We actively pursue sites with rare or endangered species, and more importantly, in areas that are large enough to support populations of those species into the future. This way of doing business is focused, diligent and inherently slower than models employed by some other land trusts across the country.

Why? Many land trusts, particularly in the West, only protect land with conservation easements (as explained later in this issue). Sometimes these are tens of thousands of acres at a time, dealing with large ranches or timber companies and often not with natural areas.

We use conservation easements, too, as a way to protect land in our identified priority areas or in more urban settings when we can't afford to purchase the land or the owner wants to retain ownership. To date, about a quarter of all the land transactions we've completed have been conservation easements.

So it may not be a surprise, that when Congress passed historic legislation making increased tax incentives for conservation easements permanent last December, we didn't send out a press release like many land trusts did. We've never felt a tax incentive was the basis for a landowner to approach us to protect land, and would be a little wary if one did.

We are focused on saving the best remaining natural areas in Central Indiana through gifts, purchases, and conservation easements, and can only do so with the support of our members. As we look ahead to the next 25 years, we plan to have a suite of beautiful natural areas protected so plants, animals and people have refuge from an ever more hectic life outside the boundaries of the lands we protect.

Cliff Chapman  
Executive Director

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## On the Cover:



Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*)





## Welcome New Members!

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## Where there's a will there's a way...

to make a gift that lasts for conservation in Central Indiana. By including the Central Indiana Land Trust in your will, your passion for nature serves as a legacy for generations to come. The Burr Oak Society was established in recognition of CILTI's donors who have created such a legacy. If you have made a provision for the Central Indiana Land Trust in your will or trust, please let us know so we can include you as a member of the Burr Oak Society and thank you during your lifetime.

### Members of the Burr Oak Society

Anonymous  
Christine Carlson  
Joe Collins  
Oliver Daugherty\*  
Aron DiBacco

Rebecca and Thomas Dolan  
Van Eller\*  
Sharon Horvath and Andy Pike  
Tom Hougham and Ann Deutch  
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Ruth Ratcliff\*  
Reta and Rob Rutledge  
Deb Smith

\*deceased

If you would like more information about including the Land Trust in your plans and becoming a member of the Burr Oak Society, please contact Rachel at [reble@conservingindiana.org](mailto:reble@conservingindiana.org) or 317-631-5263.



# Conserving Land in the City

The Central Indiana Land Trust is focused on protecting and managing high quality natural areas. Places with rare and endangered species. Places that inspire. But what about land located in more urban settings? CILTI believes having open space in the city can be inspiring too. Two recent projects highlight the reason CILTI also occasionally protects land in more urban areas.

Typically, CILTI doesn't actively pursue land to protect in the city as land values are very high, but we do have land owners who approach us. Sometimes it is to purchase small parcels of land with large price tags, and we just can't do it. But sometimes, land owners are interested in donating a conservation easement, and if we feel there are sufficient conservation values present, we move forward to work with them.

Remarkably, that happened twice the same week in December of 2013, and we completed both, the day after each other, in February of 2016. The two sites are about as far apart as possible within the City of Indianapolis, one being in the very southeast corner, the other adjacent to Eagle Creek Park on the city's northwest side.



*Hide A Way Farm*

**The 88 acre Hide A Way Farm conservation easement is stunningly beautiful with rolling grassy fields accentuated by white horse fencing. That is appropriate since it is a working horse farm and has been since 1940. If someone says Indianapolis is flat, they need to come by this**



*Hide A Way Farm*

place; its gently rolling fields are bisected by Buck Creek from the north and Maze Creek from the west carving steep bluffs throughout the property.

Buck Creek's wooded bluffs harbor ancient oak trees that were spared the saw as they would have been gnarly 150 years ago when this area was cleared for farming. Mostly open, Hide A Way shows off the gently rolling topography of Central Indiana.

The current owner of Hide A Way set up a foundation to own and manage the farm into the future. By protecting the land with a conservation easement, he is insured that the land will always remain undeveloped, even if managing a horse farm on the property isn't feasible in the future.



*Hide A Way Farm*



On the other side of town, at Eagle Creek Park's northeast corner, sits the Phil's Folly conservation easement. Its 31 acres are home to an open field, a wood with many remnant trees from pre-settlement times and a beautiful home and grounds. The house was built in the early 1930s and you can tell the woods behind it grew up around some ancient trees beginning about that time. Mixed throughout a forest of 80 year old cherries, maples, and tulip poplars are oaks that must be hundreds of years old. Those oaks would have seen grazing animals under them 100 years ago, replaced now with mayapple, trillium and maple-leaved viburnum.



*Phil's Folly*

The open field is going to be nurtured to remain open but with native plants to benefit pollinators and other wildlife species. A camera set up on the property by the owner caught a photo of a bobcat, as identified by state wildlife biologists. This is the third conservation easement we've protected adjacent to Eagle Creek Park and the bobcat sighting seems proof enough that protecting private land around it provides habitat for species that need more area than it can provide.



*Phil's Folly*



*Phil's Folly*

The easement's donor, Debra Potts, purchased the property in 2013 with the express interest in donating a conservation easement over it. "This place found me, I like to think. A lovely home and a chunk of nature and wildness to protect: I couldn't be happier."

While we remain focused on protecting the highest quality natural areas in Central Indiana, we also remain the local land trust for the Indianapolis area. Protecting these two sites forever helps retain the character of our home, and adds beauty to the landscape of our future.

*Photos by D. Potts.*

## What is a Conservation Easement?

A conservation easement, or CE for short, allows a land owner to protect the conservation values of their land while still owning the property. A CE is a legal agreement created collaboratively between a landowner and CILTI, placing specific land-use restrictions on a property according to the landowner's express wishes. One key feature of a conservation easement is that it stays with the title to the property forever. This guarantees the terms of the easement remain intact regardless of new ownership and requires all future owners to abide by the CE. Central Indiana Land Trust's responsibility is to monitor and ensure that the terms of the CE are observed forever. Being privately owned, land protected by a conservation easement is generally not open to the public. If you would like more information on conservation easements contact us at 317-631-5263.



# Species Spotlight: The bobcat (*Lynx rufus*)

The bobcat is Indiana's only native resident cat, although historically mountain lions roamed here too. As elusive as this mammal is, bobcat sightings have occurred throughout the state in the last few years, including right here in Central Indiana. As featured in this issue's cover story, we recently protected a property in Indianapolis that had a bobcat sighting that was verified by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) as well as have one identified near our Hills of Gold Conservation Area in Johnson County.

Indiana has historically been home to bobcats. They were once found in abundance prior to the settlement of our state. According to Marion T. Jackson's *The Natural Heritage of Indiana*, bobcats have roamed Indiana for more than 125,000 years. The bobcat was placed on Indiana's state endangered species list in 1969 and remained there until 2005.

Bobcats are now classified as a Species of Special Concern in Indiana. This means they are not to be hunted or trapped. Between 1970 and 2012, IDNR confirmed bobcat reports in 52 Indiana counties. Reported road-kills and other related mortalities suggest the population of

bobcats is expanding across the state. IDNR conducted a study in south central Indiana revealing that bobcats are capable of dispersing distances from 50 up to 100 miles allowing them to gain access and recolonize available habitat.

The most well-known feature used to distinguish bobcats from other felids is by their distinctive tail only 5 to 7 inches long with a black tip at the end. Bobcats are generally brownish tan in color, with black spotting and have a well-defined white band on the backside of each ear. Generally, the bobcat weighs between 15 and 35 pounds and stand about 2 feet tall with a body length of 3 feet. Having large eyes, the bobcat is mostly nocturnal but they can be active and hunt during the day. Bobcat tracks are easy to distinguish- look for a roundish paw, four toes, and no claw markings.

Indiana's remote rocky outcroppings and heavily wooded areas are preferred habitats for bobcats. As further sightings of bobcats have occurred in Indiana, we now know that the bobcat range is growing and there is suitable habitat allowing them to thrive. Continue to keep your eye's peeled for these cryptic cats!

## Thank you for the following tributes

### In honor of...

**Curt DeVoe**

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# Spring Stewardship: Welcome Joanna!

Joanna Woodruff is the Stewardship Specialist for Central Indiana Land Trust, joining the organization in October of 2015. Joanna graduated from Purdue's Department of Forestry and Natural Resources. Prior to her work with CILTI, Joanna worked as a staff scientist for an environmental consulting firm and also for The Nature Conservancy as a land steward in northeastern Montana.

During her college years, Joanna worked in Jackson, Wyoming for the Conservation Research Center at Teton Science School. Her summers in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem were spent working on various wildlife projects including mule deer, mountain lions and song birds. Joanna also studied abroad at a Swedish University focused on the sustainability of natural resources. She graduated in 2013 with her degree in Wildlife Biology.

Joanna is originally from Central Indiana and is passionate about conservation and the protection of natural places, especially of the land she's happy to call home. She lives in rural Hamilton County and enjoys the simplicity of a small town life.

When she's not working on CILTI's nature preserves, Joanna still prefers to spend her time outdoors. Her interests include: kayaking, fly-fishing, tending her chicken herd, hiking, horseback riding, gardening and adventuring with her little Australian Shepherd sidekick.

Joanna is happy to be a part of the CILTI team and is looking forward to making her unique impact on the work to protect natural places.



*Joanna Woodruff*

## Notes from the Field

As spring is upon us, CILTI is anticipating a busy volunteer season and looking for volunteers willing to help with work on our nature preserves.

For example, as we work to open Meltzer Woods this year, the Purple Winter Creeper (*Euonymus fortunei*), a non-native, rapidly spreading evergreen plant that is used by landscapers and landowners alike as an ornamental ground cover plant, will be of special concern. Due to its rapid growth and spread across the ground as well as its ability to climb into trees, winter creeper is detrimental to natural areas, like Meltzer Woods. The plant often forms such dense vegetation cover that it impedes the growth of other native plants.



In the coming years, working to remove as

much of the winter creeper as possible from the property will allow other native plants to thrive, allowing the preserve to obtain a more diverse array of plants which will aid in the overall health of this forested ecosystem.

There are several volunteer events already scheduled for this spring at an array of CILTI properties. Work days will include restoration techniques used to improve the qualities of the preserve for all of us to enjoy.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our volunteer days!





# 2015 Financial Report

Income	2015 (unaudited)	2014 (audited)
Contributions and Grants	\$1,324,305	\$982,081
Investment Income and Interest	\$11,102	\$20,017
Other Revenue	\$66,556	\$76,665
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,401, 963</b>	<b>\$1,078,763</b>
Expenses		
Conservation Programs	\$271,488	\$301,117
Fundraising	\$52,122	\$45,619
Administration	\$59,120	\$30,835
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$382,730</b>	<b>\$377,571</b>
<b>Total Protected Land Assets</b>	<b>\$13,803,989</b>	<b>\$13,019,689</b>

## Thank You 2015 Donors

We are pleased to thank the following donors who generously supported conservation right here in Central Indiana with their support of the Central Indiana Land Trust during fiscal year 2015 (January 1 – December 31, 2015)

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[conservingindiana.org](http://conservingindiana.org) to report any  
 changes or corrections.





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Central Indiana Land Trust, Inc.  
1500 North Delaware Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Please visit our website:  
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