



# NORTH CENTRAL CONSERVANCY TRUST

## **Annual Report, Fiscal Year 2015-16 (October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016)**

*Aaron Thompson, President*

*Prepared by Janet Smith, Executive Director*

### **Moving Forward**

Although the 2015-16 fiscal year has been one of transition, NCCT continues to move forward, planning for our future as a conservation organization. As described in our Summer 2016 newsletter, besides hiring Janet Smith as our new Executive Director, NCCT's biggest news of the year was the gifting of the 160 acre Bagley farm to NCCT by the Mildred I. Bagley Trust and Kay Aanensen, Mildred's Trustee. The conservation easement and baseline document for this beautiful property were signed on July 29, 2016, conveying ownership to NCCT.

The eventual sale of the now-protected Bagley and Starpoint properties is anticipated to generate significant funds, which NCCT is planning to use to kick-off a capital campaign to create a permanent endowment. Such an endowment fund would ensure NCCT's ability to maintain permanent staff and to further our mission to conserve the worthy scenic lands in north central Wisconsin.

NCCT is in the process of finalizing two conservation easements, and a state Lake Protection Grant application. We have been successful in obtaining a Wisconsin DNR River Planning Grant for the Plover River Lands Initiative spearheaded by NCCT staff April Opatik and Sean Piette. Thus far, this project has resulted in two landowners who expressed interest in more information on conservation easements.

NCCT also received grant money to support conservation easements on properties from the Portage County Land Preservation Fund, and from the Aldo Leopold Audubon Society. NCCT benefited from a total of \$13,211 in grant funding in Fiscal Year 2015-16.

### ***Henry Hoffman***

We were saddened to lose one of our easement donors when Henry Hoffman passed away on August 3, 2016. Mr. Hoffman donated a conservation easement on his 120 acre farm in 2005, and generously willed \$2,500 to NCCT *"to be held and used toward any expense related to protection and defense of the conservancy easements I intend to provide on my farm."*

### ***David Worth and The Worth Company***

Through the generosity of David Worth of The Worth Company, based in Stevens Point, NCCT continues to occupy their office at 214 Sherman Avenue. In addition to the office space, The Worth Company also donates use of their conference room, equipment, and telephone services. This continues to be one of the largest donations NCCT has received. We are grateful to David Worth and The Worth Company for providing a home base to conduct the important work of NCCT.

### ***UWSP Land Conservation Society (LCS) Annual Summary***

The Land Conservation Society is a student organization at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point that partners with NCCT and other Wisconsin land trusts to promote conservation of public and private lands. As an organization LCS mainly works with private land owners by helping them achieve their land management goals. Some of the landowners that we had the great fortune to work with this year are Bob Freckmann, Alan Haney, Doug Henderson, and other NCCT members on NCCT-owned lands. LCS also had the pleasure of hosting NCCT President Aaron Thompson in the spring and NCCT Executive

Director Janet Smith in the fall for discussions on how to further develop the partnership between the two organizations. LCS also hosted NCCT member and UWSP soil science professor Dr. Jacob Prater, who led a small group discussion on the importance of conserving working lands and how LCS can take an active and ethical approach. One of the LCS members, Sean Piette, had also been interning with NCCT as a senior undergraduate in the Natural Resource Planning program. In October, members of LCS went to the NCCT annual meeting and, to wrap up the year of 2016, members are excited to join NCCT for a potluck and White Elephant Gift Exchange at Central Rivers Farmshed in downtown Stevens Point. What's even more exciting is that LCS and NCCT already have many exciting events for spring 2017!

In addition to Henry Hoffman, David Worth, and the LCS' contributions, we are grateful to Mildred Bagley, Kay Aanensen and all of our easement donors, members and volunteers who care deeply about protecting the beautiful central Wisconsin landscape where we work, play, and live. Conservation easements help protect in perpetuity quality habitats, species diversity, watersheds, and beautiful places with inspiring histories.

### **Financial Management**

NCCT's investment portfolios saw an improvement in fiscal year 2015-16 over 2014-15. This comes, in part, from good investments and from our supporters. At the end of September our total assets, including the land that we own, was \$1,530,162.62. This includes \$95,856.61 that we have with the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin, \$476,030.05 professionally managed with the assistance of Robert W. Baird & Co. and Associated Bank, \$951,850 in land we hold (four properties), and \$6,425.96 in fixed assets.

Annual giving in the last year increased slightly, by 2.5%, excluding easement funding, which decreased, since the two easements we acquired this year were both in the form of land donations. NCCT's Board of Directors has set a goal of increasing membership donations in fiscal year 2016-17. Thank you to our contributors who renew their membership annually. We would also like to especially thank our members who provided an additional contribution to help us celebrate at our Annual Meeting. Continued growth is expected through the Land Conservation Society at UWSP, and as we continue to develop and expand our community connections. If you know of a business that would benefit from sponsoring the only land trust serving central Wisconsin, please contact Janet Smith at 715-344-1910.

### **Reminders**

- **Please send any email address changes to us – it saves mailing expenses!**
- Let us know if you would prefer to receive your newsletters via email instead of the US Postal Service.
- *Remember to check our website, [www.ncctwi.org](http://www.ncctwi.org), frequently for all NCCT news and updates on all of NCCT's events.*
- *And don't forget to like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ncctwi](http://www.facebook.com/ncctwi) and follow us on Twitter to stay up-to-date on all NCCT news and events.*

***Your support matters!  
We depend on your financial giving, and welcome your direct participation as a  
volunteer.***