



New Five-Year Study Shows Landmark Gains in Land Conservation in Wisconsin

Data collected between 2005 and 2009 show a dramatic increase in the numbers of acres being conserved by private nonprofit land trusts in Wisconsin. The published results show a higher level picture of Wisconsin's private, voluntary land conservation movement.

During this five-year time period land protection jumped from 80,000 protected acres to 220,000 acres – or an increase of 261%. From a start at 24,000 protected acres just ten years ago, this nearly 10-fold increase is a significant accomplishment for land trusts doing good work in Wisconsin.

These figures are especially noteworthy when considering that over the past five years, the number of land trusts has not grown. Instead, land trusts are working to increase their capacities to keep up with the pace of private, voluntary land protection.

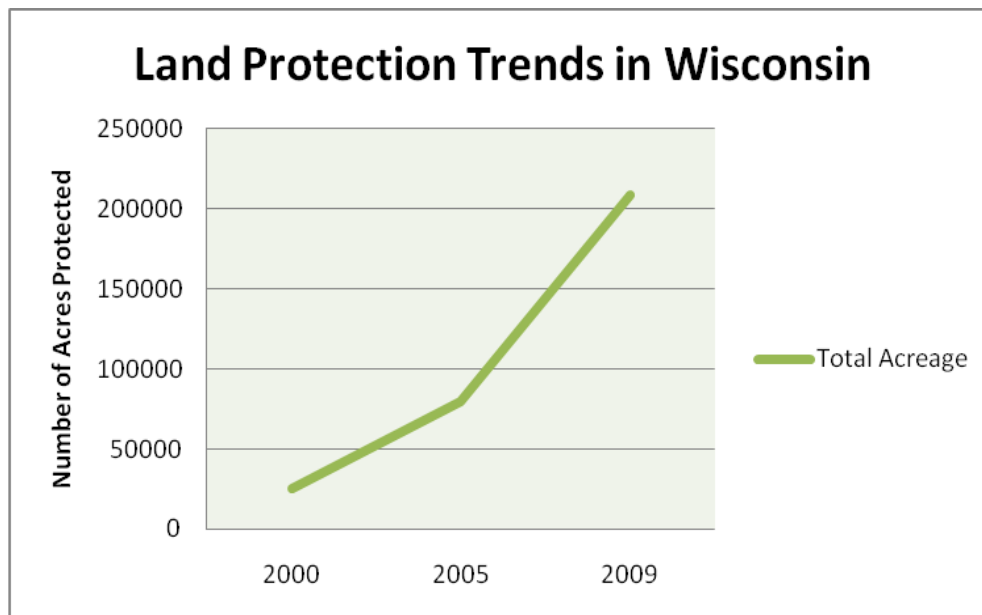
"Gathering Waters is a crucial technical assistance and mutual advocacy organization for all of Wisconsin's 50 land trusts. We are all more efficient and more effective because of GWC's outstanding training, direct assistance and public policy efforts on our behalf."

--Bryan Pierce, Northwoods Land Trust



Land trusts in each state are working to conserve important land in their communities, including farms, forests, waterways, nature preserves, and urban green spaces. These protected lands safeguard water quality, protect wildlife habitat, preserve working family farms, and create opportunities for kids and adults alike to enjoy the places that make Wisconsin special.

Building Trail with the Ice Age Trail Alliance in 2009.



Wisconsin Trends in Conservation, 2005-2009:

- Wisconsin land trusts have protected 220,529* acres in total. Of this, 60% is open to the public.
- The total land protected by land trusts in Wisconsin represents a little over \$175 million in assets.
- There are over 5,000 volunteers devoted to land trust work in Wisconsin (not including another 350 or so board members). In the year 2000 there were just a little over 1,000.
- Despite the tremendous growth in the land trust movement, the numbers of contributors to land trusts in Wisconsin has remained fairly constant. Land trusts need this individual support to keep pace with the demand for their land protection services.
- 14 land trusts are considering applying for accreditation before the end of 2012. This new national program holds land trusts to a high level of excellence in legal, ethical, and operational standards.

** These data represent the results of 30 of 50 voluntary land trust responses.*

Additional information about this survey can be attained by contacting Gathering Waters Conservancy, 211 S. Paterson Street, 270, Madison, WI 53703 or 608.251.9131.

Gathering Waters Conservancy's mission is to help land trusts, landowners, and communities protect the places that make Wisconsin special. Our goal is to increase the amount of protected land in the state through private voluntary action.