The Natural Heritage Land Trust is a land protection group that permanently protects lands with significant conservation values in the Dane County area of Wisconsin. We believe natural areas, working farms, scenic landscapes, and access to public land for outdoor recreation enrich our quality of life and contribute to a healthy economy. We protect natural areas—bluffs, prairies, creeks, wetlands, and woods. And we help ensure that prime farmlands can remain in agricultural production. Generally, we protect lands through voluntary agreements (called conservation easements) with landowners. Occasionally, we buy land to create nature preserves and parks that will be open to the public for hiking, picnicking, and other outdoor activities. Since our inception in 1983, we—working in partnership with our members, local groups, government agencies, and funders—have protected more than 3,260 acres of land.

The places we’ve protected

Financials

The Natural Heritage Land Trust's fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30.

Between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005, the Land Trust received $1,615,365 and spent $834,082. The Land Trust’s income and expenses fluctuate annually depending on its land protection work in a given year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>$1,615,365</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions &amp; membership income</td>
<td>$216,467</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Funds*</td>
<td>$1,366,460</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>$32,438</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>$1,615,365</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>$834,082</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
<td>$721,365</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management &amp; Administration</td>
<td>$60,655</td>
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<td>Fundraising</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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Please contact us if you would like a copy of our audited financial statements for July 1, 2004 - June 30, 2005. The Land Trust's federal tax returns (990s) are available on Guidestar, which provides information on non-profit organizations (www.guidestar.org).

* Includes Wisconsin’s Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Funds and Dane County Conservation Funds.
Protected land in key areas.

In 2004/05, we focused our land protection work in four areas: the Black Earth Creek Watershed, Patrick Marsh Natural Resource Site, the Upper Sugar River Watershed, and the Town of Dunn.

Black Earth Creek Watershed

Helped Dane County purchase land for a new conservancy park. In the first part of a two-part land protection deal, the Natural Heritage Land Trust and Dane County purchased 73 acres of one of the largest undeveloped tracts of land (294 acres) in the Town of Middleton. This property is located in the northwestern area of the Town of Middleton along Highway 14. It includes more than 3,000 feet along Black Earth Creek, which is a regionally important and locally treasured trout stream.

We plan to help Dane County acquire the remainder of the tract for a conservancy park. The entire property will be open to the public for hiking, deer hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities. The State’s Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program and the Dane County Conservation Fund provided the money to purchase this property.

Protected 215 acres of high-quality farmland. Working with conservation-minded landowners, the Natural Heritage Land Trust helped protect 215 acres of high-quality farmland in the Black Earth Creek Watershed. The conservation easements on this property also help protect Black Earth Creek and the valley’s scenic views.

The property has been in the same family for more than 100 years. The landowners have a deep appreciation for the land and for its ability to grow crops. According to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), more than 60% of the soils on this property are classified as prime or of statewide importance. The conservation easements ensure that the land won’t be developed and that it can remain in agricultural production.

Because this property provides a large “recharge” area for the creek, restricting the amount of development helps maintain the quantity and quality of water making its way to the Creek.

The Land Trust purchased the conservation easements with financial support from the federal farm and Rural Lands Protection Program, the State’s Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, the Dane County Conservation Fund, and the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

Patrick Marsh Natural Resource Site

Purchased a 35-acre parcel of land at Pataskala Marsh near Sun Prairie that will restore to wildlife habitat and open to the public for outdoor recreation.

The Natural Heritage Land Trust purchased 35 acres of land within the Patrick Marsh Natural Resource Site near the City of Sun Prairie. This site encompasses 785 acres. Only a portion of it has permanent protection. The Site includes a 225-acre state Wildlife Area that provides habitat for more than 100 species of birds. It is used by outdoor enthusiasts who hike and picnic in the area and by Patrick Marsh Middle School students. The Site also includes a former Ho-Chunk village and hunting ground.

The Patrick Marsh Natural Resource Site has been identified for protection in the Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan 2001-2005 and in the Department of Natural Resources’ Land Legacy Report.

The Land Trust worked closely with the Patrick Marsh Conservancy to raise community support and the funds to buy this land. The State’s Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, the Dane County Conservation Fund, the City of Sun Prairie, Ducks Unlimited, and local residents, businesses, and service organizations provided financial support.

Upper Sugar River Watershed

Assessed conservation opportunities within our focus areas. As a result of site conservation planning, the Natural Heritage Land Trust decided to focus its land protection work in the watershed in two areas—the Verona Sugar River Valley and the area around Riley where conservationist Aldo Leopold experimented with wildlife habitat in the 1930s.

We completed a parcel-by-parcel analysis of the lands in 8 focus areas to determine the conservation characteristics and the likelihood of securing funding to purchase conservation easements or other interest in the parcels. We will use this information to set priorities for land protection with landowners who want to protect their land.

Town of Dunn Through its purchase of development rights program, the Town of Dunn protected 66 acres of land that includes farmland and wetlands. The Natural Heritage Land Trust and the Town co-hold this conservation easement and 12 others. The Land Trust and the Town jointly monitor all of their easements annually.

Steward protected lands.

We monitored 30 parcels of land on which we hold conservation easements to ensure landowners are complying with the terms of the easements and to assist them with management issues.

The Land Trust and Dane County hold the conservation easement. The Land Trust will annually monitor and enforce the terms of the easement.

Land Trust leaders serve on Collaboration Council. Natural Heritage Land Trust executive director Jim Welsh was appointed to the Collaboration Council. The Council is a regional economic development effort composed of a cross-section of leaders from Dane County’s business, government, education, and nonprofit communities. The Council seeks to enhance the county’s economy in ways that advance the community’s quality of life.

Land Trust adopted Standards and Practices. The Land Trust and Dane County co-hold the conservation easement and 12 others. Land Trust and the Town jointly monitor all of their easements annually.

This property has been in the same family for more than 100 years. Thelandowners have a deep appreciation for the land and for its ability to grow crops. The conservation easements ensure that the land won’t be developed and that it can remain in agricultural production.

The Land Trust and Dane County co-hold the conservation easement. The Land Trust will annually monitor and enforce the terms of the easement.

Protected land in key areas.

Assisted others working to protect important areas outside of our key areas.

Buffered Cave of the Mounds and a section of the Military Ridge State Trail from development. The Natural Heritage Land Trust, Dane County, and landowners collaborated to place a conservation easement on a nearly 30-acre parcel of land adjacent to Cave of the Mounds, a National Natural Landmark. Cave of the Mounds is just east of the Village of Blue Mounds in western Dane County.

The Cave is referred to as the “jewel box” of America’s major caves. It attracts tourists from throughout the region and helps bolster the local economy.

In addition to protecting the natural setting of Cave of the Mounds, a section of the popular Military Ridge State Trail is now buffered from development. Furthermore, the conservation easement allows Dane County to create a new section of recreational trail between the Military Ridge State Trail and Bingham County Park.

The Land Trust and Dane County hold the conservation easement. The Land Trust will annually monitor and enforce the terms of the easement.

Land Trust leaders serve on Collaboration Council. Natural Heritage Land Trust executive director Jim Welsh was appointed to the Collaboration Council. The Council is a regional economic development effort composed of a cross-section of leaders from Dane County’s business, government, education, and nonprofit communities. The Council seeks to enhance the county’s economy in ways that advance the community’s quality of life.

Land Trust adopted Standards and Practices. The Natural Heritage Land Trust adopted the Standards and Practices developed by the Land Trust Alliance. The Standards and Practices are guidelines to help ensure a land trust is run in an ethically and technically responsible manner. The Land Trust Alliance is a national umbrella group that assists land trusts throughout the country.

Assisted others working to protect important areas outside of our key areas.

The Natural Heritage Land Trust is grateful to all of its members for their support and wishes to recognize its major contributors. $100,000 + City of Sun Prairie • Dane County Conservation Fund • Wisconsin Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program • US Department of Agriculture Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program

$50,000 + Estate of Stephen Ashman • Estate of Hazel Kudsunon $10,000 • Evjue Foundation, Inc. • Knupp & Watson • Madison Community Foundation • Pan O’Gold Baking Company $5,000 + Sherrem Clark • Eugenie Mayer Bolt Foundation • Veridian Homes Foundation • Vendura Industries, Inc. $2,500 Southern Wisconsin Chapter Trust Unlimted • Wick & Stacey Meeuwsen • Wick & Fred Meeuwissen $1,000 + Chisholm, Inc. • Tom & Herika Bergstrom • Robert & Anne Belz • Lloyd & Pat Eagan • William Fairbanks • John A. Frautschy Foundation • Rob Gottschalk & Joyce Stiegelt Gottschalk • Larry Hitch • Hooper Foundation/Hooper Construction & General Heating and Air Conditioning • Hugh J. & Nancy K. Kittredge • Randy & Ruby Miller • Howard M. & Verona “Jerry” M. Nelson • Michael K. Nash • William Neill • Yvonne San Jose • Keith Spurr • Jerry & Dorrie Smith • Town of Windsor • Williams Environmental Associates, Inc. • Rob & Nan Woodburn