



MADLINE ISLAND WILDERNESS PRESERVE

P.O. Box 28, LaPointe, WI 54850

“Conservation is a cause that has no end.

There is no point at which we will say our work is finished.”

Rachel Carson

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December, 2020

Dear Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve Members,

Your investment in the Wilderness Preserve has allowed many to seek refuge in nature on the Island during 2020, this very difficult year. It has reinforced the value of your previous contributions, enabling the Wilderness Preserve to purchase and maintain Island lands for islanders and visitors to explore and enjoy today and in the years to come.

In this time of Covid 19, the Wilderness Preserve board paused our programs to protect attendees from any danger that gatherings might have caused. In so doing, our organization respected the ordinances agreed on by our community and the health of our members and program participants. The board will continue to look to you and the Town of La Pointe for guidance as we navigate decisions in 2021. Meanwhile, your generous support allows the Wilderness Preserve to continue our work despite the pandemic. We:

1. Strive to contain invasive species: Nile Merton (Bay Area Environmental Consulting), hired to contain the spread of Buckthorn and Barberry, made noticeable progress in his second of a five-year contract. He identified the spread of these species on the Island, mapped their general locations, and established a perimeter of spread on both Wilderness Preserve and private lands. He also reduced some of the larger stands and re-treated areas initially treated last season. Invasive eradication has been an on-going commitment of the Wilderness Preserve for ten years that continues.

2. Improve our trails (thus maintaining the lands entrusted to us): Through the summer and fall, volunteers cleared deadfall, blazed pathways through the forest, and revitalized signage. The Nucky Meech trail is now walkable; the Burroughs trail sign is readable; and the trails on the north end-- re-blazed and groomed-- invite hikers and skiers to pass without obstruction or confusion.

3. Sustain interest in our education programs: Excellent speakers lined up for 2020 summer talks at the museum have all agreed to join us next summer (or, when we deem it safe to reconvene).

4. Explore land purchase and donation opportunities: We continue to respond to donor inquiries and to actively pursue purchases of land meeting our criteria (i.e. environmental significance, adjacent to our properties, and not lakeshore). We encourage owners to explore options to gift the Wilderness Preserve lands that they wish to conserve and for which the benefit of giving surpasses the market value.

Sometimes we need to walk on a trail and listen to the chatter of the chickadee, the scolding of the red squirrel or the laugh of a Pileated Woodpecker; view majestic hemlocks, oaks and maples and the turning of the seasons; or savor the smells of sweet white pine needles. Your previous support has enabled the Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve to offer these wonders to those who cherish our beautiful island. Together, we have offered a lasting gift to those who will follow.

Your support in 2020 will ensure that our stewardship continues. Please renew your contribution to the Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve. You also may want to consider leaving a conservation legacy by gifting land or remembering the needs of the Wilderness Preserve in your will or trust. We are happy to talk with you about these legacy options.

Thank you for your continuing support. I look forward to seeing you out on the trails!

Be Well,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Mueller", with a stylized, flowing script.

Steve Mueller, Board President
Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve