



# Madeline Island

## Wilderness Preserve News

Summer 2019

### “WHAT WE’RE ALL ABOUT”

*By Fred Koerschner, President*

In 1987, a group of forward-thinking pioneers were alarmed by how quickly natural lands on Madeline Island were being developed. They rallied support and formed the Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve to:

- *Acquire, hold, preserve, and protect in their natural state, lands, woods, and forests on Madeline Island in the town of LaPointe, Ashland County, Wisconsin so that they and the wildlife and plants therein and thereon are saved from damage or destruction.*
- *Promote an awareness and appreciation of the beauty and benefits to be derived from the preservation in their natural state of portions of Madeline Island, including, through the development of trails on or access to the land held by the Preserve.*
- *Receive property through gift or bequest if the foregoing stated purposes will be attained and advanced thereby.*
- *Engage in only those activities of an educational or charitable nature which meet the requirements of a not-for-profit organization.*

Thirty-two years later the Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve holds true to the original purpose set forth by our founders. It is our passion to protect and preserve the natural areas on Madeline Island for the enjoyment of everyone. It is what we’re all about.

As we continue our mission together, I’d like to review some of our recent accomplishments and plans moving forward:

**Trails on Wilderness Preserve Land** In the past year we have focused our attention on the north-end trails. With member financial and volunteer support, we ensured that the trails were mowed, and brush and deadfall were cleared. We widened trails so they could be enjoyed more fully by those who love to hike, ski, and snowshoe; we also added additional signage on trails to enhance those experiences.

**Land Acquisition** Through generous donations and targeted acquisitions, the Preserve has added four additional land parcels to our holdings since 2016. All of these parcels are interior land adjacent to parcels already owned by the Preserve. They allow us to protect an additional 163 acres of Island nature.

*(President’s letter, continued on page 2)*



*Ancient hemlocks along the Preserve’s North End Trails*

*(President's letter: Continued from page 1)*

**Invasive Species Management** In 2018, the Preserve hired a local firm skilled in invasive management to survey targeted sections of the Island and assess the current infestation level of invasive buckthorn, honeysuckle, and barberry. Armed with this data, in 2019 we will begin the first phase of an invasive treatment plan on selected Island zones to address the current growth of invasive plants and to reduce the spread of invasives to other areas of the Island.

**Education** Our very popular educational series continues this year and will be bigger than ever! In 2018, we sponsored five educational lectures and three guided hikes. In 2019, we will sponsor nine lectures and four hikes. More details are available elsewhere in this newsletter. Mark your calendar!

**MANY THANKS** for your ongoing support of the Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve!



## ADVANCING OUR PURPOSE

...is only possible because of the generous support of our members. We ask for your continued support to further the work described here:

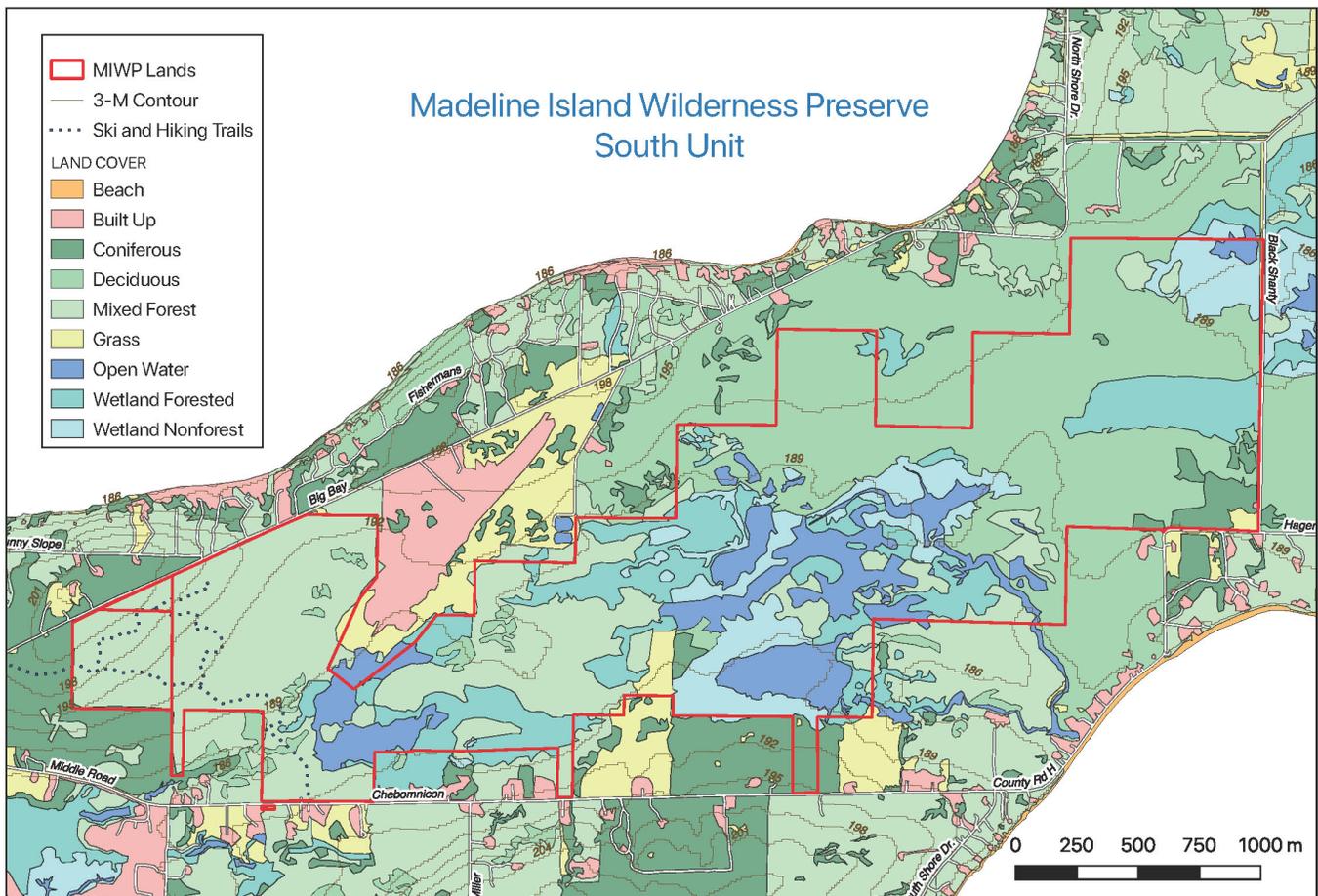
**Visit** the Preserve's areas on the Island and appreciate their beauty. MIWP lands and hiking trails are open to everyone.

**Donate** If you are not yet a member, please join the MIWP. If you have already donated this year, consider an additional gift. Also please consider estate and land gifts. Because the Preserve is a not-for-profit organization, all member donations are 100% tax deductible.

**Volunteer** your ideas and energy. MIWP is a 100% volunteer organization. We welcome and need volunteer time and your opinions and ideas to support the work we do.

Please visit our website for more details: [miwp.org](http://miwp.org)

"Like" our Facebook page: **Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve**



*The Wilderness Preserve's South Unit is a 1150 acre mosaic of upland forest, wetland meadow, and open water. It was recently enlarged through a major charitable donation.*

## CONSIDER DONATING YOUR LAND TO MWIP

During the last two years, the Wilderness Preserve has been the recipient of three land donations totaling 123 acres. Two donations were from estate settlements and one was from a member who wanted to have their land protected from future development.

The MIWP is a federally registered 501c3 charitable land trust so all donations, including land, are 100% tax deductible for the donating party. The value of the donation can be determined by the appraised value that appears on your property tax statement or it can be valued and documented by a real estate professional with experience in land values on the island.

If you are settling an estate that contains your family's favorite hiking/hunting land or you simply want to preserve your land from future development, please consider donating your land to the MIWP. We will pay all related closing costs. The title transfer can be completed in as little as two weeks without having to pay a commission to a real estate agent. Contact Tom Kromroy at 651-271-8533 to discuss the land donation process.

## A NEW APPROACH TO HALTING ISLAND INVASIVES

By Victoria Erhart

The MIWP has been wrestling with woody invasive species for a long time now. Eradicating common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) and the non-native honeysuckles (*Lonicera* spp.) has been near the top of our to-do list for a lot of years, but only recently have we begun to acknowledge that it may be close to impossible. In heavily affected areas, getting rid of these invasives is labor-intensive, expensive, and pretty much temporary, at least until some kind of biological control is found. In spite of our best efforts, and there have been many of them, we still see a lot of these plants on the ground.

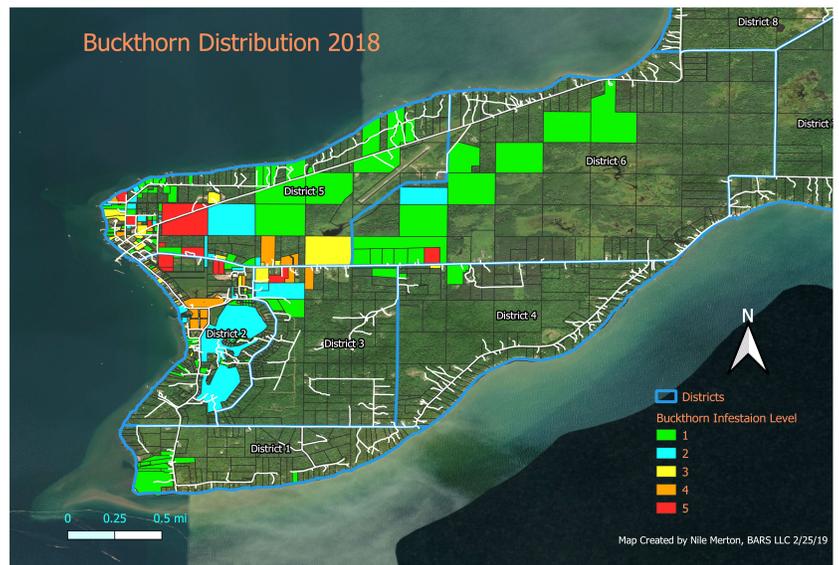
Recognizing this reality, over the last couple of years the MIWP has gently moved our goal away from eradication and towards containment. Conceptually, this is a huge change. We are able to consider containment because on Madeline, unlike most other places, invasives are concentrated in the southwest corner of the island where the gardens and the humans are. The rest of the island, with a few small exceptions, is still buckthorn/barberry/honeysuckle-free, for now. This will change, we know, because over time we have seen invasive plants moving north and east.

The key to stopping something from spreading outwards, be it barberry or a paint spill, is to know where the margins are and to contain the spread from the outside in. Believing that, we needed to figure out as precisely as possible the infestation's outer boundaries. In the fall of 2017, we tried partnering with remote-sensing specialists at the

University of Minnesota to do a series of experimental drone fly-overs, funded by an anonymous donor, taking advantage of the different times of leaf-drop in the fall. While conceptually brilliant, in the end, drone technology was not discriminating enough to answer what we needed to know and we had to abandon the project, or, for the optimists among us, defer it until the technology improves.

Back to basics, and enter Nile Merton, a Northland College graduate and the founder of Bay Area Restoration Services. After the drone failure, Nile stepped in and did what we had hoped the drones were going to do, gather data, but he did it by himself and on foot.

(Invasives, continued on page 4)



Buckthorn infestation on Madeline Island (1 = lowest, red = highest)

*(Invasives, continued from page 3)*

During the summer of 2018, Nile divided the part of the island west of Black Shanty Road into 6 districts, and mapped each district in detail with type and density (graded 1-5) of invasives. Unsurprisingly, the largest number of invasives is found in areas around the town; invasive spread most often follows the roads, with isolated pockets in areas of forest blow-downs. If you are interested, ask to see his maps (one shown here), they are fascinating and informative.

Which brings us, now fully informed, to 2019. Having a much more detailed picture of where and how dense the problem areas are, Nile envisions 6 treatment zones, distinct from the districts above. Each treatment zone will be visited three times: treatment (varies depending on the age and type of plant) in year one, re-treatment in year three, and reevaluation in year five.

Nile will not be treating all zones at the same time. For example, in 2019 he will be treating only zone 1, the most peripheral of the zones (prioritizing this zone makes sense given our focus on controlling the margins).

In 2020 he will be treating only zone 2, just to the west of zone 1. In 2021, he will treat zone 3 and re-treat zone 1, etc. This schedule has endless flexibility, and I can imagine it changing with our priorities, dollars and successes.

There are a few things I would like to point out about the plan. First of all, and distinct from what we have done in the past, Nile hopes to be working on both private land and land owned by the MIWP or the town. This is going to require education and permission of landowners. If you know of anyone who is being asked to consider treatment on land they own, feel free to have them contact a MIWP board member. Second, I am struck by the observation about invasives in areas of blow-down. This suggests that we should be extremely cautious about opening gaps in the canopy. And third, following this plan does not preclude doing other work on invasives. Getting rid of mother (fruit-bearing) buckthorn trees is always a priority. There is talk about organizing a group cutting day. Stay tuned.



## SUMMER 2019 PROGRAMS

**Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. *Annual MIWP***

***Spring Bird Hike*** Victoria Erhart, MIWP board member, will lead a hike for beginners and experts alike. Bring binoculars and wear good waterproof footgear. Big Bay State Park. Meet in the parking lot beyond the main entrance; admission will be free.

**Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. *MIWP's 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spring Meeting & Reception: The Lights of the Apostle Islands***

Speaker: Mark Weller, board member, Friends of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. At the Madeline Island School of the Arts. *(see detailed announcement, page 6)*

**Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. *Life on the Soggy Edges: the Importance and Vulnerability of Apostle Islands' Coastal Wetlands***

Speakers: Drs. Matt Cooper and Sarah Johnson, Professors of Natural History and Natural Sciences, Northland College. Learn about the types of coastal wetlands in the Apostle Islands and the habitat they provide for regionally unique flora and fauna. At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor.

**Wednesday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. *Reading the Water: A Lake Superior Literary Sampler***

Speaker: Alan Brew, Professor of English at Northland College and Director of the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute. For many, the northern regions of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and Ontario are defined by water. Prof. Brew will introduce the authors who have written about waters of the Lake Superior region and share some favorite passages from their essays, stories and poems. At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor.



**Wednesday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. *Prohibition – The Noble Experiment Comes to the Northland: 1920 – 1933*** Speaker: Bob Mackreth, retired Apostle Island Historian. The Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution effectively outlawed alcohol in the U.S. What factors made such an idea seem plausible, and how did the law play out in northern Wisconsin? Local historian Bob Mackreth will share stories of passionate moral crusaders and crafty smugglers in a look at an experiment that did not work out as planned. At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor.

**Wednesday, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. *What's the Buzz, Planting for Pollinators*** Speaker: Cynthia Dalzell, landscape architect. The program will illustrate how to plant gardens to attract native bees and butterflies with examples of successful pollinator gardens on Madeline Island. At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor.

**Wednesday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. *Climate, Weather and Great Lakes Water Levels*** Speaker: Julia Noordyk, University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute. After a record low period of 15 years followed by the fastest rise in recorded history, there are many questions currently surrounding the mystery of Great Lakes water levels. In this presentation you will learn about the drivers of lake level changes, how lake levels got to where they are today, and future projections. At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor.

**Wednesday, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. *Nothing Like Them on Earth – Unique Forms of Lake Trout and Whitefish of Lake Superior*** Speaker: Dr. Titus Seilheimer, Fisheries Specialist, University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute. Lake Superior is a unique freshwater system with diverse habitats, extreme depths, and relatively few human impacts. Since the glaciers receded, lake trout and several species in the whitefish family (such as deep water ciscoes), have diversified widely in their forms and habitat use. At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor.

**Wednesday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. *Facing the Challenges of Mining, Resource Supply, and Environmental Stewardship in a Changing World*** Speaker: Dr. Tom Fitz, Professor of Geosciences at Northland College. Large quantities of mineral resources are in demand by the growing human population, particularly in developing countries. As demand increases, so does the need for environmental stewardship. What are possible solutions to these issues at the local and global scale? At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor.

**Wednesday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. *Mushrooms of Madeline Island*** Speaker: Tavis Lynch, mushroom farmer, commercial forager, and instructor at the University of Wisconsin and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College. This presentation will introduce local mushrooms and their seasons and habitats, including specific trees that some mushrooms share. Learn which ones are edible or poisonous. At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor.



**Thursday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, a.m. *Mushroom Hike with Tavis Lynch*** Location and time will be announced at the evening lecture.

**Saturday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 9 a.m. – 12:00 noon. *Labor Day Work and Hike*** Location: Meet at the Burroughs trail head, 2.5 miles north of Benjamin Boulevard on the North Shore Road. Join us for a working hike on the Wilderness Preserve's North End trails. We will divide into groups to cut brush and refresh blazes on the trails. Please bring any trail tools you may have. We will provide all paint for blazes. The North End forest includes stands of old-growth maple, oak, and hemlock, and an abundance of wild mushrooms. The trails are rustic so good hiking boots and an adventuresome spirit are required.

**Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m. – 12:00 noon. *Guided Fall Hike on the North End Trails*** Location: Meet at the Burroughs trail head, 2.5 miles north of Benjamin Boulevard on the North Shore Road.

**Our Annual Fall Potluck Picnic** follows the October 5<sup>th</sup> hike. All are welcome. Location to be determined. For updates and details see the MIWP Website: <https://www.miwp.org>.

*All Events are free (except the Spring Reception) and open to the public*

## 32<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL SPRING MEETING AND EVENING RECEPTION

The Wilderness Preserve will be hosting its 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spring Meeting this coming Memorial Day weekend, Saturday May 25<sup>th</sup>, at the Madeline Island School of the Arts. The event will be an evening reception with an informal buffet of elegant and hearty hors d'oeuvres, choice wine service, and coffee/tea and assorted desserts. A social gathering and food service begins at 6:30 pm, with the program beginning at 7:30 pm. This year's program features:

### MARK WELLER

PHOTOGRAPHER AND VICE CHAIR – FRIENDS OF THE APOSTLE ISLANDS NATIONAL LAKESHORE

### “THE LIGHTS OF THE APOSTLE ISLANDS”

For over ten years photographer Mark Weller has led a quest for spectacular nighttime shots of the Apostle Islands historic lighthouses. Set against the outstanding dark skies of Lake Superior, his mission has been to capture the Milky Way rising behind the lighthouses, which celebrates one of the most beautiful scenes in the upper Midwest.

#### The price of the Spring Reception is \$35 / person

Reservations can be made (through May 20<sup>th</sup>)  
by contacting:

MIWP Treasurer, Ned Hancock  
1204 Mount Curve Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55403  
(952-221-7878) ✉ ktwj@aol.com

**NEW VENUE: Madeline Island School of the Arts**



## BIRDS TAKE WING AT 4TH OF JULY PARADE

by Victoria Erhart

I blush. I mean, really, how is it possible to have won the Madeline Island Fourth of July parade Grand Sweepstakes three times in a row? I know that our entry, “2018: The Year of the Bird”, was pretty cool, with some familiar large birds masquerading as celebrities, not to mention a few swanky exotics (Reese Witherspoonbill, anyone?), but the highlight had to be the float itself: The Crow Bar, a realistic pub packed with massive corvids, all Picking Up Chicks. A million thanks to Eric who spent two hours on each one of those incredible crow masks. My debt grows bigger every year.

I have wanted to do a float about climate change for the last five years, but it's a tough one: complicated, data dense, and above all not very funny. But climate change is the granddaddy of environmental issues, and this year we are going to take the plunge, at least in a small way. The 2019 entry makes the statement that climate change causes crazy, random weather; the float will be loosely based on Wheel of (mis)Fortune, complete with Mother Nature and Vanna White (I think). Because I know you will want to join us for this one, costumes are easy: just wear a



bathing suit and a heavy winter parka, a flip-flop on one foot and a snow boot on the other, a snorkel mask and a heavy winter hat, whatever you've got. All 2- and 4-legged species are welcome as long as they are dressed appropriately. Plan to meet at the marina 30 minutes before parade time (the parade usually starts at 10:30 AM, but check with the Chamber of Commerce) under the MIWP banner. For questions, call Toria Erhart at 715-747-2277 in early July.



**Officers**

Fred Koerschner, President  
Steve Mueller, Vice President  
Tom Atmore, Secretary  
Ned Hancock, Treasurer



**MIWP Board of Directors**

**Directors**

Dan Engstrom  
Victoria Erhart  
Phil Greenberg  
Jane Howard



**Directors**

Thomas Kromroy  
Pixie Martin  
Bonnie Matuseski



Madeline Island  
Wilderness Preserve  
PO Box 28  
La Pointe, WI 54850  
www.miwp.org

-----*Detach here and mail today*-----

***Yes, I'd like to support the preservation and protection  
of natural areas on Madeline Island!***

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\$1000 Benefactor    \$500 Sustaining    \$100 Supporting    \$50 Contributor    Other

Please make my gift anonymous.

Gift in memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Gift in honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Send gift card to: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your generous contribution!**

Your dues are tax deductible. Membership is through December 31, 2019  
Please make checks payable to MIWP and send to:

**Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve  
P.O. Box 28 La Pointe WI 54850**