

Mississippi Valley
CONSERVANCY

Building Resilience

Join us in celebrating successes that make the future brighter.
Together we can do much more.



Those who
contemplate
the beauty of
the earth find
reserves of
strength that
will endure
as long as
life lasts.

~ *Rachel Carson*

2018 Annual Report



Stronger for the future

Together we can sow resilience and together we can reap a future filled with nature.

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FRONT COVER: Yoga hike on Hass Bluff (*top right*) and prairie grasses (*lower right*) courtesy of Drake Hokanson. Farmer Jim Munsch and his great-granddaughter Tyla (*lower left*) photographed by a Conservancy intern.

ABOVE: Monarchs by Bruce Bartel

For the past couple of years, after a delicious Thanksgiving dinner of home-grown food from our farm, I've taken my grandchildren on a nature treasure hunt. It's become a tradition. I create clues and a map and hide "treasures": new winter mittens, warm socks, and small bags of candy under logs, in tree holes, behind stumps, and under leaves. They quickly catch on to the clues – "Look for the forked birch tree and under the leaves you will see...at the bend in the trail follow the rocks to find your socks..." – well, you get the picture. It's a little silly and a lot of fun! But most important, it gets all of us outside to experience the abundance and beauty that we are blessed with.

Every day I drive to the office and spend the day working with a top-notch, professional team to protect our beautiful Driftless Area. I love my work immensely and I never go home at night and ask why. I know why I do what I do. It's because of you. It's because of your children and grandchildren.

When I see the news filled with stories of floods and fires and horrific storms, I know there's more we can do. I know from the family that reported how their stream bank held because of the conservation practices they put in place. I know from the farmer who showed me clear water that's filtered by her prairie before it flows into the river. It makes me realize that we are becoming resilient. Able to withstand, able to continue on.

If we don't work together to protect our trees, prairies, bluffs, streams, and farms, who will? Together we can sow resilience and together we can reap a future filled with nature.

I hope you will join us as often as you can in the coming year to help out. You can be a part of the team by volunteering in our office or on the land. You can grow our team by taking a friend on a hike or bringing one to an event. You can help by supporting land protection with your generous gifts or by protecting your own land.

Together we can protect our "treasures" for our children and grandchildren.

Carol Abrahamzon

Carol Abrahamzon
Executive Director



Resilience in the Driftless Area

Scientists define resilience as the ability of a system to withstand change. Once a system changes, it may be unable to support those who previously depended upon it. A land cleared of its trees can no longer support its native birds. A wetland filled with sediment can no longer absorb water to help prevent floods. And children who never enjoy outdoor experiences may never understand why conservation is necessary to feed their children and grandchildren.

The following inspiring examples of resilience were made possible by you and the generous landowners who are conserving land and water for the future.

PROTECTING FARMLAND

In Buffalo County, Al Kube has been managing soil and water on his farm for countless years. He uses many of the best available techniques, including no-till crop production, appropriate crop selection, waterway restoration, sediment control, and aiding run-off with grass waterways. His most effective tool? Strict standards by which the renter of his land must abide. How does he know it's working? He sees no discoloration in the water coming off his land during major rain events. Al says he rarely sees mosquitoes, thanks to a healthy population of amphibians, birds, and bats.



NURTURING BIODIVERSITY

In Grant County's Blue River watershed, Susan and Steve Carpenter have seen a more diverse and healthy natural community result from their streambank restoration efforts. And they've watched that community repeatedly bounce back after increasingly varied weather events, including heavy rains and droughts. Thanks to their twenty-year project, deep-rooted prairie plants are once again attracting the threatened rusty-patch bumble bee – just one of many signs of the improving health of their land

Photo by Susan Carpenter

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH THE LAND

In 2018, you helped us engage nearly 3,000 people in outdoor activities on the nature preserves we protect for public enjoyment. Their diverse experiences included snowshoeing, bird-watching, photographing, cave touring, treasure hunting, brush cutting, garlic mustard pulling, seed collecting, prairie planting, mushroom foraging, stargazing, and simply walking in healthy natural places. Science has shown the health benefits of getting outdoors. We believe all who participated will care more about the land for the future, too.



Inspired Gift Embraced by Partners

Photo courtesy of Robert Hurt, Landscape Photography



The donor of the land said the gift was inspired by the life of Beatrix Potter, the English writer, illustrator, natural scientist, and conservationist best known for her children's books, including *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. Potter (1866-1943). Her career was divided between publishing and farming, and she spent most of the proceeds from the sale of her work on the purchase and donation of farmland in an effort to preserve the hill country landscape of England's Lake District.

Illustration from *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter

When Lois Larson, the superintendent of Perrot State Park, received an inquiry about a landowner's wish to donate eighteen acres of land adjacent to the park for conservation purposes, she knew the Park was in no position to accept such a gift. The added management responsibilities that would come with the land would require planning and budgeting that were not likely to happen quickly. That's when she and Friends of Perrot State Park referred the landowner to Mississippi Valley Conservancy.

Upon learning about the Conservancy's services, the landowner, who chose to remain anonymous, offered to donate the property. The opportunity was ideal for the Conservancy – a chance to help a partner and to meet a goal in its own strategic plan.

Protecting land, not owning it, is the mission of the Conservancy. There are times, however, when land acquisition plays a key part in the process of protecting native habitats. The Conservancy board was easily convinced to accept the land donation, due to its ecological significance and location in one of its priority areas.

The property abuts Perrot State Park on two sides. Its features include rugged topography, oak woodlands, and archaeological resources. The land is a component of the Mississippi River migratory flyway and provides nesting habitat for songbirds including the American redstart, eastern towhee, and yellow-throated vireo. It is highly visible to the public from the village of Trempealeau along the edges of Perrot State Park, which is visited by more than 390,000 people each year.

Park and village officials were supportive of the Conservancy's acquisition of the land, as were several organizations working to protect the natural and cultural heritage in and around Trempealeau. "With shared conservation values, we're piecing together a larger area that's protected for the benefit of wildlife, residents, and visitors," said Abbie Church, Conservancy conservation director, "It's our hope to transfer the land in the future to Perrot Park for long-term ownership and management. Meanwhile, it's great to be able to protect this forested habitat for songbirds and wildlife."

"The newly acquired Mississippi Valley Conservancy property provides another buffer for the park and park visitors, and it further protects the heritage of this place," Larson said.

Trempealeau Village president Kurt Wood said, "The Village board was in favor of this. It's good to protect the upper bluffs."

The land in and around Trempealeau is also a focus of Friends of Little Bluff, an organization that's working to protect archaeologically significant property that also connects with Perrot State Park. According to Michael Pelech, vice president of the Friends group, the cultural history of the land and artifacts found in and around Trempealeau hold the stories of many historical events, and they're closely tied to the beauty and the ecological value of the land.

"When an opportunity of this kind occurs, we don't always know in whose hands the donated land will ultimately be held," said Carol Abrahamzon, "but we can protect it with a conservation easement that prevents development from damaging the native ecological systems. If ownership ever changes, its protected status will go with it, into the future, forever."



Together, the park and the Conservancy land are an oasis of old growth oak, walnut, and hickory trees that are the preferred habitat of shy birds that are sensitive to habitat fragmentation.



Lois Larson, Perrot State Park Superintendent, Brady's Bluff

Birds of Perrot State Park – photos courtesy of Allen Blake Sheldon, Trempealeau resident

The newly protected Conservancy land provides an additional eighteen acres of refuge for many colorful species along the Mississippi River flyway for migratory birds.



Scarlet Tanager



Pileated Woodpecker



Yellow-throated Vireo



Photo by Megan Kabele

170
a c r e s

Newly conserved land in the Bad Axe River watershed, with its diverse forested habitat, will continue to protect wildlife and downstream communities as it has for millennia. Its conservation is a gift to all of us.

82
a c r e s

Tom and Sharon Sharratt generously conserved additional land in 2018, bringing the total of their protected acres to 230. Thanks to their land stewardship, they saw only minor damage to their land after recent floods.



360
a c r e s

J.W. "Bill" and Mary Ann Hein take comfort in knowing their land will remain unchanged. "You can't put back a hill. You can't replace wetlands. Years from now, we want people to see what it was like," says Bill.

15
a c r e s

When Larry Jost sold his Alma bluffland to Mayor Jim Wilke, the two agreed this natural landmark should be protected forever. The town's signature bluff, now conserved, once helped steamboat captains navigate from Lake Pepin.



Photo by Abbie Church

48
a c r e s

Bob and Lori Wallock signed their fourth agreement, adding protection to land adjacent to other private and public conserved land in Crawford County, for a total of 2,804 contiguous acres of prime protected land!

40
a c r e s

Judy Kingsbury and Leslie Grossberg are biologists who enjoy the relaxation of restoring natural habitat during their getaways from the city on their bluff land where native species like this red fox continue to live.



Photo courtesy of A. B. Sheldon



Photo courtesy of Drake Hokanson

Nature Heals Us:

Doctors & Scientists Begin to Prove the Poets & Mystics Right

By Drs. Tim Johnson and Kelly Sultzbach

Many of us seek out wild places because lingering there brings solace and healing from the stress of daily life. Poets and mystics have praised the benefits of nature therapy for many years. The 13th century mystic Meister Eckhart noted how nature transforms the human spirit: "If I spent enough time with... a caterpillar I would never have to prepare a sermon, so full of God is every creature." In 1807, William Wordsworth reminded us what "wealth" even humble daffodils can bring us: "When on my couch I lie / In vacant or in pensive mood, / They flash upon that inward eye / Which is the bliss of solitude; / And then my heart with pleasure fills, / And dances with the daffodils."

Nature's power to heal takes at least three different paths: plants that become medicines; the many ecological systems, like photosynthesis, that sustain the planet, keeping us all healthy; and the benefits to body, mind, and spirit from being in nature. The first two paths are well established scientifically. Research on the benefits of being in nature is in its infancy, but thanks to scientists and volunteers around the globe, it is beginning to show that a regular habit of walking in the woods will not only boost the cells that control viral infections

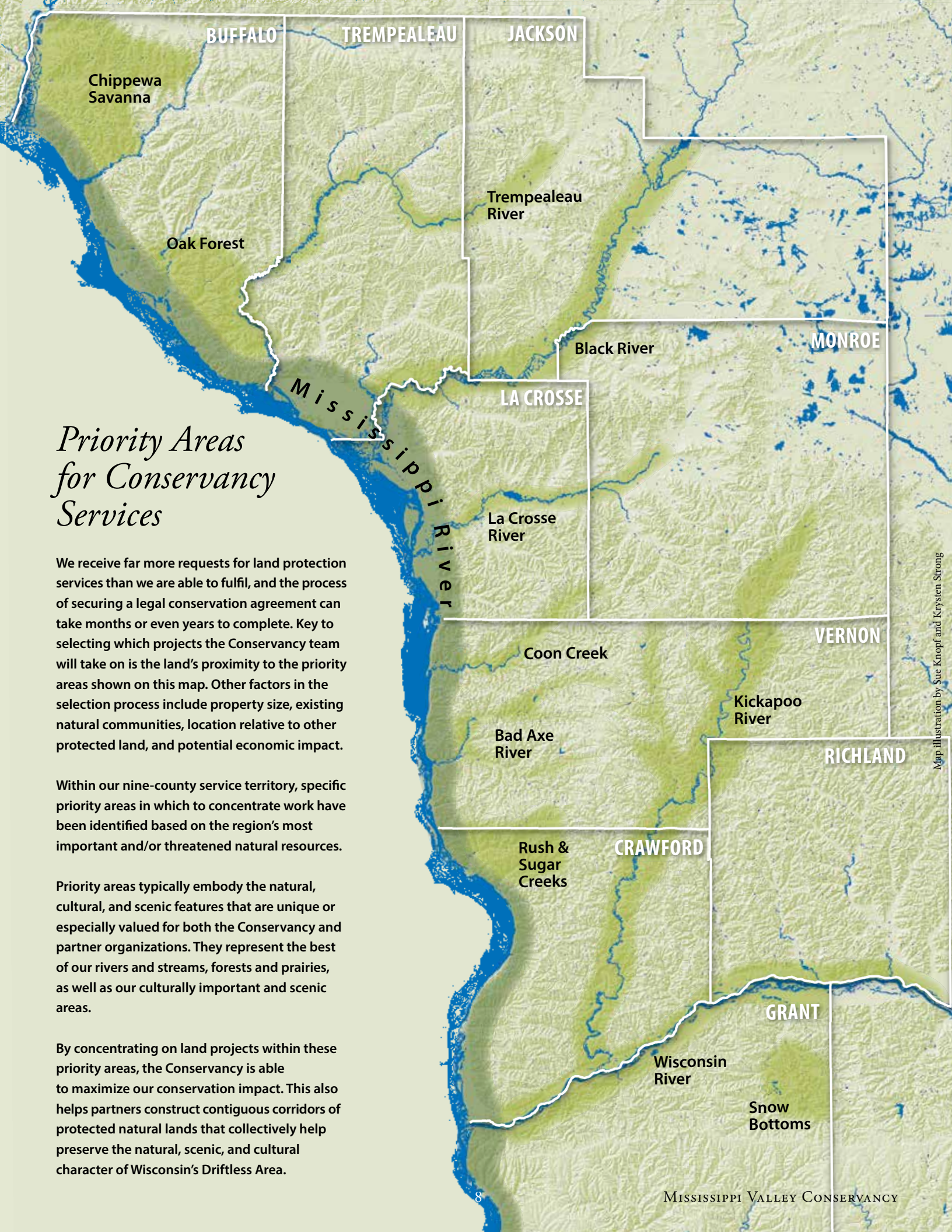
and promote immune system health,¹ but it also alleviate stress and promote creative problem-solving.² Additionally, the science suggests that time in nature reduces cortisol levels, decreases heart rate and blood pressure, positively impacts heart rate variability, and decreases death rates. With a recommended minimum dose of five hours a month in natural places,³ these health benefits start to take effect. Conserving these natural places does much more than just save scenic spots; it can be a healing prescription for what ails us.

"I go and lie down
where the wood drake
rests in his beauty
on the water,
and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace
of wild things"
so that
"For a time
I rest in the grace of the
world, and am free."
~ Wendell Berry

Poets and mystics are able to see and know things holistically. They have been doing it for millennia. Science reduces these same experiences until it knows by experiment and data. Scientifically proving time-honored wisdom is a slow process, often taking centuries. There is more than one way to verify knowledge, and how we know is not as important as that we know: *the wild places heal*. It is important that we conserve them. We have much more to learn from them. Even more important, we must conserve them because those daffodils and caterpillars deserve to exist for their own sake.

Above: Hikers enjoy an easy yoga session on a bluff-top clearing.

Notes:
1 See Roger S. Ulrich et al., "Stress Recovery During Exposure to Natural and Urban Environments," *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, vol. 11: 201-30, and Qing Li et al., "Effect of Phytoncide from Trees on Human Natural Killer Cell Function," *International Journal of Immunotherapy and Pharmacology*, vol. 22, no. 4 (2009): pp. 951-59. Both referenced in *The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes us Happier, Healthier, and More Creative*, by Florence Williams (Norton, 2017). 2 See Berman et al., "The Cognitive Benefits of Interacting with Nature," *Psychology Science*, vol. 19, no. 12 (2008): pp. 1207-12. Referenced in *The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes us Happier, Healthier, and More Creative*, by Florence Williams (Norton, 2017). 3 See Williams, pp. 243. 4 See Twohig-Bennett, Caoimhe and Andy Jones. "The Health Benefits of the Great Outdoors: A systematic review and meta-analysis of greenspace exposure and health outcomes." *Environmental Research*, vol. 166 (October 2018), pp. 628-37.



Priority Areas for Conservancy Services

We receive far more requests for land protection services than we are able to fulfil, and the process of securing a legal conservation agreement can take months or even years to complete. Key to selecting which projects the Conservancy team will take on is the land's proximity to the priority areas shown on this map. Other factors in the selection process include property size, existing natural communities, location relative to other protected land, and potential economic impact.

Within our nine-county service territory, specific priority areas in which to concentrate work have been identified based on the region's most important and/or threatened natural resources.

Priority areas typically embody the natural, cultural, and scenic features that are unique or especially valued for both the Conservancy and partner organizations. They represent the best of our rivers and streams, forests and prairies, as well as our culturally important and scenic areas.

By concentrating on land projects within these priority areas, the Conservancy is able to maximize our conservation impact. This also helps partners construct contiguous corridors of protected natural lands that collectively help preserve the natural, scenic, and cultural character of Wisconsin's Driftless Area.

Map illustration by Sue Knopf and Krysten Strong

2018 Year in Review

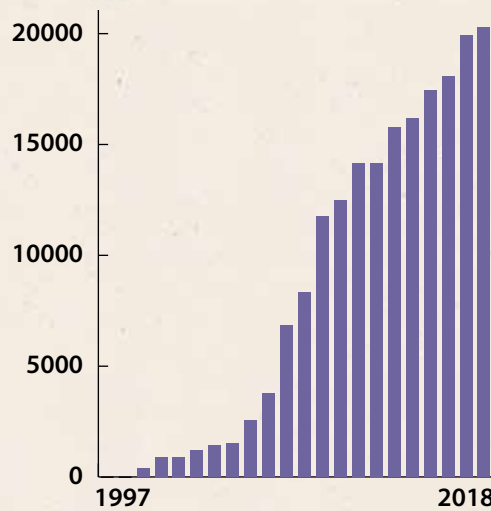
Over the past year we've seen the generosity of more hard-working families permanently protecting their bluffs, forests, prairies, streams, and farms. After years of restoring prairies, oak savannas, and streambanks, they wanted to make sure their efforts were not in vain. And we experienced *your* generosity – giving just a little more so we can do just a little more. Giving more of your time, your skills, and your resources.

You are building the trail we follow into the next year. You are leading us to the opening ahead. Challenges will cross our path, but together we will find solutions. In the next year we will come together to teach a child, improve a habitat, and conserve this place we all cherish. We look forward to seeing you in the field, at the office, and on the trail!

MORE PROTECTED LAND MEANS INCREASING RESPONSIBILITIES. YOUR SUPPORT MAKES IT POSSIBLE.

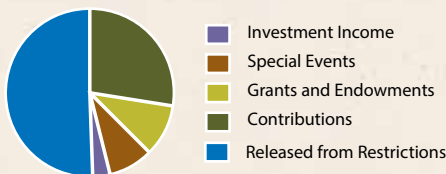
Every protected property requires an investment of scientific, legal, and administrative resources to assess, document, and monitor the health of the land. Fundraising and education efforts require time and resources to create awareness among landowners and keep the community engaged.

The bars on this chart show the growing number of acres protected by the Conservancy – now 20,290 acres and growing!



Fiscal Year 2017–18 Income

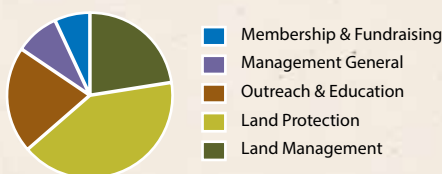
Total Revenue \$962,748 (unrestricted)



Investment Income	\$ 31,665
Special Events	83,359
Grants & Endowments	95,747
Contributions	266,491
Released from Restrictions	485,486
Total Revenue	\$ 962,748

Fiscal Year 2017–18 Expenses

Total Expenses \$559,616



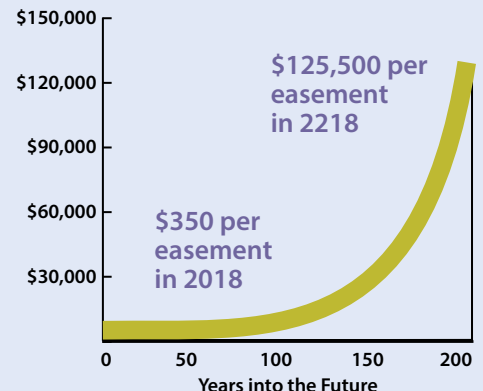
Membership & Fundraising	\$ 37,343
Management General	48,931
Outreach & Education	116,815
Land Protection	229,896
Land Management	126,631
Total Revenue	\$ 559,616

THE LONG VIEW

One of the Conservancy's most important obligations is protecting landowner conservation easements into and beyond the foreseeable future – in other words, for hundreds of years. The responsibilities include annual property visits, legal services, and documentation. A fund has been designated specifically for this purpose – the Conservation Easement Stewardship Fund. To meet future costs of land protection, all new landowners are asked to contribute to this fund to help guarantee their land will, in fact, be safeguarded. But land protection is costly and inflation is anticipated to continually push costs to ever higher levels, as the graph shows. Can our Stewardship Fund really cover these future costs?

Recent analysis by a team of staff and board members suggests that within the not-too-distant future the Stewardship Fund could become large enough to start covering present and future costs of easement stewardship. Of course, this prediction comes with important caveats, including assumptions about rates of inflation, annual earnings, and continuing contributions from new landowners. Permanent success can never be assumed. But there is another reason for cautious optimism – the Conservancy is actively doing its best due diligence to ensure fulfillment of its stewardship obligations.

Projected Cost to Protect a Conservation Easement



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Raising Conservationists

Love for land and water runs in the family.



Perhaps Mary and Van Elston's greatest gifts to the environment are their two amazing daughters – both conservationists today. Susan is an oceanographer/consultant and Kathy is an advanced practice nurse and an avid ocean sailor.



One doesn't have to look far to see where these accomplished women got their drive and inspiration. Their mother, after her own career in nursing, went on to earn a degree in dairy herd management so she could help her dad manage the 560-acre McIntyre Century Farm, near Muscoda. She was the only woman in her 1986 class at Western Wisconsin Technical College, and she was soon managing the farm with its 66-cow dairy operation, 220 acres of cropland, and 200+ acres of managed forest. Along the way, Mary learned many lessons about farmland management from her father.

When her father's farmland sold, Mary and Van hung onto 40 acres with Blue River frontage to enjoy with friends and family. They still own the land, and they cherish their memories of playing with their beloved dogs and swimming and fishing in the river with their daughters. They also take pride in their restoration of Mary's great-grandfather's house in nearby Muscoda. Through them, their children learned the value of protecting special places.

Mary and Van Elston (*upper right*) raised two beautiful conservationists, Kathy and Susan. The playground at the Gundersen hospital was created in memory of their little Vanny.

WHY WAIT TO GET YOUR MOBILITY BACK?



At Mayo Clinic Health System, restoring function is a highly coordinated effort involving all orthopedic disciplines: surgeons, rehabilitation specialists and therapists all working toward a common goal. Close collaboration produces new ways to restore function, relieve pain and speed healing.

Franciscan Healthcare

For a consultation call: 608-392-9876
mayoclinichealthsystem.org



Thanks to *YOU*, amazing things are happening.

MEMBERS OF 2018

\$10,000 & Above

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Anonymous
Anonymous
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Roy Campbell and Ellen Ullsvik
Cece Caron and Thomas Erb
Jim Fowler
Franciscan Sisters of
Perpetual Adoration
Barbara and Donald Frank
Gelatt-Gephart Foundation, Inc.
Greater Milwaukee Foundation
Warren and Denise Loveland
David R Morrison
Mike and Sylvia O'Brien
Sue Anne Gelatt Foundation c/o
Trust Point
The Paul E. Stry Foundation
The PMG Foundation, Inc. c/o
Trust Point
Rob and Kathie Tyser
Nick and Yonok Zeller

\$5,000 - \$9,999

William and Peg Agger
ALM Charities
David Bange
Michael and Barbara Baroni
Gundersen Health System
Bill and Mary Ann Hein
J.F. Brennan
Tim and Regina Johnson
George and Sharon Kerckhove
Kenneth and Deneen Kickbusch
Judy Kingsbury and Leslie Grossberg
Mayo Clinic Health System
Radisson Hotel
Jon and Ann Rigden
David and Gretchen Skoloda
WLAX/WEUX Fox 25-48

\$1,000 - \$4,999

Michael Aleckson
American Transmission Company
Associated Bank N.A.
Gretchen Benjamin
Brian and Barb Benson
Sara Bentley
Cindy and Bill Berg
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Jennifer and Mark Brumm
Thomas Byerly
Charles and Diane Canniff
Steve and Susan Carpenter
John and Sandra Castek
Ursula Cejpek
Clif Bar Family Foundation
Crawford County Community Fund
James and Joyce Czajkowski
Dahl Automotive
Dairyland Power Cooperative

Daniel Deetz and
Rebecca Haack-Deetz
Mary and Leland Drangstveit
Tim and Sue Durtsche
EarthShare
Eric and Kay Edquist
F.J. Robers Co., LLC
Jay and Diane Fernholz
Joan Filla
First Supply LLC
Robert and Barbara Fisher
Fowler & Hammer, Inc.
Mike and Kathy Giese
Jeannie and Jim Groskreutz
Sigurd and Jean Ann Gundersen III
Werner and Dianna Haas
Bruce Harvey and Nancy Ettenheim
Edwin and Nancy Hill
Joe and Deb Hooyman
Kirk Jacobson and Donna Pittman
George and Carmeen Johnston
Daniel and Katherine Kern
Maureen Kinney
Ralph Knudson and
Nancy Heerens-Knudson
La Crosse Community Foundation's
Robert and Eleanor Franke
Charitable Fund
David and Karen Lange
Joel Lazinger
John and Louise Leary
Chuck and Linda Lee
Richard and Dorothy Lenard
Laurie Logan and Alice Bachop
Tom Lukens and Pam Saunders
Mike and Carol Mader
Mill Creek Land & Cattle Company, LLC
Michael and Susan Mosling
Marilyn and Willie Nieckarz
Dennis and Sarah Ohlrogge
Kenneth Osowski
Ron and Jane Rada
Scott Reber and Marilyn Shultz
Rotary Works Foundation
Susan Ruedisili
Gerard Rugowski and Jayne Stokke
Patricia Schmid
Robert and Carol Schmidt
Rosalie "Roz" Schnick
Paul and Joan Schoenfeld
Alan and Rosanne Schulz
Jeff and Kris Sexton
Tom and Sharon Sharratt
S and J Skemp Family, LLC
Robert C Skemp
Katherine Spriggs
Karen Steingraber and John Durbrow
The Sinsinawa Dominicans
James Theler and Suzanne Harris
Robert and Judith Thompson
Craig and Mary Thompson
Three Amigos
Keith and Lynne Valiquette
Dr. David and Betty Van Dyke
Robert and Lori Wallock

Walmart Community Grants
Edward and Roberta Walsh
Dorothy Wetterlin
Jim and Jo Ann Wickizer
WI-DNR
Jim Wilkie
Pat and Bobbie Wilson
Wisconsin Land Fund
Women's Fund of Greater La Crosse, Inc.
Xcel Energy

\$500 - \$999

Julie Abrahamson and TJ Clark
Dennis and Leslie Adams
Altra Federal Credit Union
Constance Arzigian
Allan Beatty
Randall Bekkers and Laurie Harmon
Frank and Mary Anne Brazelton
Dianna Brown
Cleary-Kumm Foundation
Matthew and Marilee Cole
James and Sue Dillenbeck
Mark and Jane Domroese
Duck Creek Cattle Company, LLC
Dynamic Lifecycle Innovations
Annette Friedewald
Ruth Frise
Jim and Jan Gallagher
Dianne Greenley
Mary Helgren and Richard Radek
Clare Henneman
Timothy and Bridget Hill
Drake Hokanson and Carol Kratz
Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins and
Glen Jenkins
Tom and Annemarie Kasper
John Kelly
Tom Kirch
Peter and Kathy Kirkegaard
Catherine E Kolkmeier
Forrest and Sue Ann Krause
Nancy Kroner
Barbara and Joseph Kruse
Patricia Kulig
La Crosse Community Foundation's
Fred and Mary Ann Funk Family Fund
Jean and Mark Ledman
Lance and Carol Meyer
Mike Mulroy
Dr. James H Munn
James and Phylis Munsch
Loran Nordgren
Norse Holding Group, Inc.
Rita Oldenburg
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People's Food Cooperative, Inc.
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Shelley Roberts and Dewey Moore
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Dr. David and Kial Rushlow
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Jed and Melanie Schaller
Jeri Sebo
Fred and Jean Skemp
Dave and Barb Skogen
Dennis and Betsy Stannard
Nancy Steinhoff
Rev. Allan and Carla Townsend
Trane
Audrey Uber
Jonathan and Debera Uy

Steve Ventura and Margaret Krome
Kathy Wehrs
Wells Fargo Advisors
Eric and Vicki Wheeler

\$250 - \$499

Carol and Bill Abrahamson
Dr. Vance Baker
Ruthann Benson
Anthony and Barbara Binsfeld
Daniel L Blumer
Ann Brice and Bill Haviland
Pauline Buckland
Martin and Kathleen Buehler
Jac and Susan Bulk
Kristi and Frank Cadwell
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Lloyd and Mary Croatt
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Don Foltz
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Dr. Robert and Maureen Freedland
Fritz Funk
Mrs. James and Jo Glasser
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Sandy and Kurt Grunwald
Wendelin A Guentner
Mike and Mary Carole Hoffman
Philip and Monique Hooker
Mike and Linda Jawson
Niels Jensen
Larry and Susan Kirch
Dr. Fredric and Marion Kleinberg
Sue Knopf
Robert Koehler
Peter and Krin Krause
George and Elizabeth Kruck
Al Kube
Land Trust Alliance
Tim and Margaret Larson
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Mary J Linville
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Pete and Barb Putnam
Brian Ramsey
Riley Reinhart
Tom and Cindy Rhorer
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Jim Ringstrom
Mike and Kathy Ripp
Robert W. Baird & Co.
Michael Ross
James and Kathryn Rozovics
Vicky Schultz
John Selby and Denise Dipert
Dr. Charles and Judy Shepard



Your support gave this Environmental Ethics class from UW-La Crosse an outdoor classroom in which to explore the concepts of conservation and preservation with Associate Lecturer Jon Evans (center).

Travis and Sarah Smith
Susan Strehl
The Castle
UMESC River Productivity Team
Kay Vance
Mary Veldey
David Vetrano
Viroqua Area Foundation
Mark Webster
Mary Westlund
John Wetzel

\$100 - \$249

Brian and Joyce Abernathy
Karen Acker
Greg and Molly Aleckson
Tyler Amundson
Garland and Nancy Amunson
David and Janine Andersen
Shirley Anderson
Craig Anderson and Kile Martz
Anonymous
Constance Arneson
The Art Store Gallery, Inc.
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Jim and Marlene Bannen
Tom and Kathy Barth
Craig and Mary Bartos
Laurie Bartz
Bill and Marsha Bateman
Dr. James and Peggy Baumgaertner
Judy Bautch
Howard and Katherine Bell
Barbi Bell and Richie Swanson
Dr. Bill and Heidi Bender
Laurence and Catherine Berg
Sister Sharon Berger
Dr. Joseph and Mary Binegar
Todd Bjerke and Karen Kroll
David Blackey
David and Dorothy Block
Ansel and Shelly Brenneman
Dan and Jane Brodrick
Michael Brown
Bonnie Buchman
Deborah Buffton
David Burbach
Emily Campbell
LaRene Carpenter
Mark and Minda Chamberlain
Deborah and Mitch Cholewa
Rebecca Christoffel and
Andrew Williams
Joan Christopherson-Schmidt
Laura Coglan
Timothy and Cheryl Collins
Mary Jo Coonen
Timothy Cox
Bill and Eileen Daily
Barb and Larry Dalton
Bruce Davidson

Daniel DeGier
Phyllis Dempsey
Susan DesRosiers and David Stickler
Michael and Carmen DeYoe
Doris Doherty
Mary Dresser
Driftless Café
Leo and Marie Dummer
Michael and Janet Ebersold
Greg and Diane Egan
Sr. Helen Elsbernd
Steven and Kathryn Engber
Jen and Andrew Erickson
Gladys Eternicka
Farm USA Trust, LLLP
Fifth Avenue Awards, Inc
Chuck and Debbie Forer
Harold and Mary Frank
Bill and Annette Franz
Donald and Susan Fritsch
Anita Froegel
Joyce Fulford
Dr. Sharon Fuller
Ned and Carol Gatzke
Philip and Melissa Gelatt
Jeff and Elaine George
Michelle Godfrey
Lana Goldsmith
David and Nancy Goode
Greater Green Bay Community
Foundation
Bill and Kathy Gresens
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Amy Groskopf and Kent Turner
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You gave an entire troop of Cub Scouts, and many others, an opportunity to learn about the beneficial role of bats, view live bats, and tour the Kickapoo Caverns property that's now permanently protected in Crawford County.



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MORE WAYS TO PROTECT LAND

Make a tax-free distribution from your IRA.

If you are 70½ or older, you can make a tax-free distribution from your traditional or Roth IRA to Mississippi Valley Conservancy. You can donate up to \$100,000 each year without incurring income tax on your withdrawal – it's an efficient way to protect land, air, and water. For more information, call Carol Abrahamzon today at 608-784-3606 x 4.

Stewardship Circle

The Stewardship Circle is made up of a special group of land conservancy supporters who have made a lasting commitment to land protection through a variety of estate-planning tools. These include bequests in a will or trust, charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, IRA designations, or gifts of life insurance.

Please consider joining this dedicated group of conservationists today by making Mississippi Valley Conservancy a part of your legacy plan.



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On behalf of the next generation of conservationists, we thank our Stewardship Circle of supporters.



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Mark your calendar for outdoor fun in 2019!

You're invited to all of these walks, hikes, and outdoor activities. Get to know the land you've helped to protect.

SEASONS IN THE COULEE REGION – Sponsored by Gundersen Health System. Celebrate the seasons with a fabulous series of seasonal walks and hikes for all to enjoy.

February 22	Moonlight Snowshoe Hike	La Crosse River Conservancy
May 4	Spring Foraging	Boscobel Bluffs
August 3	Kickapoo Caverns Tour	Kickapoo Caverns
September 21	Nature Photography Walk	Holland Sand Prairie

LINKED TO THE LAND

Learn something new at every one of these outdoor events on the lands you've protected.

January 19	Snowshoe Hike & Habitats	New Amsterdam Grasslands
February 16	Valentine's Snowshoe Hike	Romance Woods
Feb 26-Mar 2	Aldo Leopold Celebration	Multiple locations (watch for details)
April 20	Hike & Write	Miller Bluff, La Crosse Blufflands
May 11	Migratory Bird Walk	Sugar Creek Bluff
June 22	Prairie Pollinators	Borah Creek Prairie
July 13	Family Bat Fest	Kickapoo Caverns
August 10	Nature Bathing	Hass Tract, La Crosse Blufflands
September 7	Yoga Hike	Tunnelville Cliffs
October 12	Blufflands Farm Walk	Greshik Farm
November 16	Mississippi Blufflands Archaeology	Eagle Eye State Natural Area
December 7	Caroling for Conservation	Mathy Quarry, La Crosse Blufflands

SPECIAL EVENTS

March 30	Annual Member Gathering	Gundersen Integrated Center for Education
April 28	Trail Trek Challenge Kick-off	Earth Fair, Myrick Park
September 14	Garden Tour & Stargazing	Celebrating Wisconsin Land Trust Days with FSPA
November 8	Fall Fundraiser	Radisson Hotel La Crosse

**To receive updates and reminders, be sure to sign up for our newsletter (link is at the bottom of our website homepage). "Like" us on Facebook for more updates before, during, and after events.*

Photos courtesy of Tom Rhorer, Drake Hokanson, and Gayle O'Meara Nielsen



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Mississippi Valley Conservancy is a regional, non-profit land trust based in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The Conservancy permanently conserved 20,290 acres of blufflands, prairies, wetlands, and streams in and around the Mississippi, Kickapoo, and Wisconsin Rivers since its founding in 1997. Over 4,000 acres are open to the public for hiking, bird-watching, hunting, fishing, photography, and snowshoeing.

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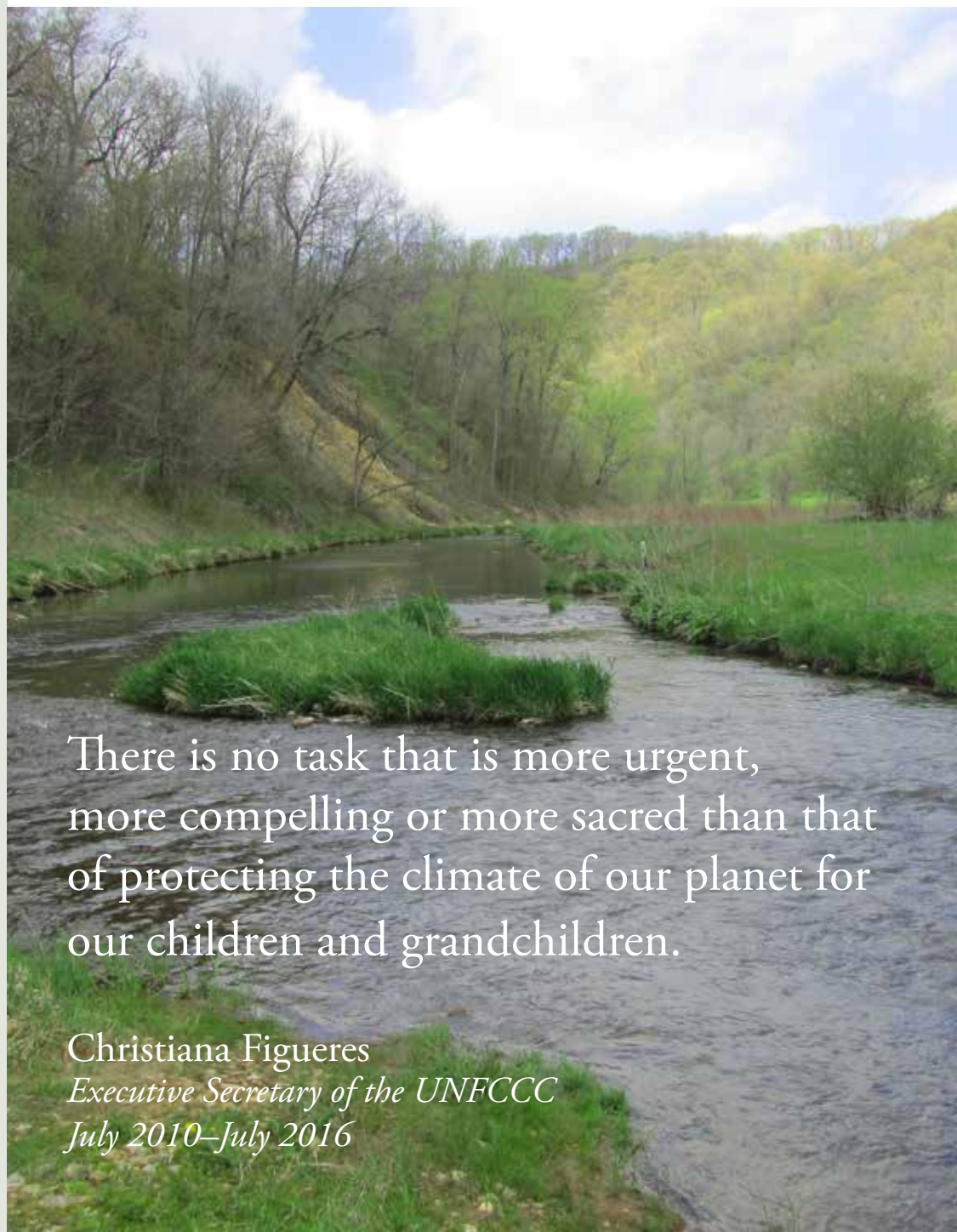
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There is no task that is more urgent,
more compelling or more sacred than that
of protecting the climate of our planet for
our children and grandchildren.

Christiana Figueres
Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC
July 2010–July 2016