

## **Capacity Building Grant to Assist Nonprofit Conservation Organizations**

### **Report to the Wisconsin Legislature Fiscal Year 2013 (July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013)**

Gathering Waters Conservancy (GWC or Gathering Waters, in this report) is proud to present the accomplishments achieved through this grant in fiscal year 2013 (FY13) to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the Wisconsin State Legislature. Now more than ever, land trusts (a.k.a. nonprofit conservation organizations, or NCOs) are playing a role in critical private-public partnerships. This grant funding helps us strengthen the land trust community to reach mutual goals with the State of Wisconsin for the benefit of the public.

In addition to the donations received from individuals, corporations, land trusts, and private foundations, our land trust capacity-building work and outreach efforts would not have been possible without funding through the state grant managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The following report outlines our activities to strengthen the quality and durability of land conservation by providing guidance and technical assistance to Wisconsin NCOs.

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## I. Project Description

This report documents the activities and achievements garnered through the support of the Wisconsin DNR Statewide Support for Non-Profit Conservation Organizations grant for fiscal years 2012-2013. We used the grant funding, as proposed, and in accordance with statutory requirements, to support our direct technical assistance to land trusts and our outreach efforts. This report is an accounting of activities carried out during FY13 but does also update progress for activities initiated in FY12.

During the grant period, our *direct technical assistance work* focused on the successful implementation of our Wisconsin Land Trust Excellence and Advancement Program (LEAP). This innovative partnership with the national Land Trust Alliance has allowed us to provide a variety of enhanced tools and services to Wisconsin's land trusts, while also leveraging staff expertise and funding. Through LEAP, Gathering Waters provides Wisconsin land trusts with tailored training, consultation, technical assistance, and other support they need to become more effective at protecting land and ensuring long-term organizational sustainability. Our work helped to further build land trusts' organizational capacities to ensure that they are permanently protecting and stewarding land for the public benefit.

Additionally, during the grant period, our *outreach work* focused on maintaining a statewide communication network for land trusts and others working to conserve private lands. We aim to help land trusts become well-known and valued community institutions and to see land trusts strongly supported and sought out as conservation leaders. Strong relationships between land trusts and other community institutions will yield additional acres protected beyond what land trusts can achieve working alone. To this end, we utilized our expanding outreach toolbox to increase individual and community support for private, voluntary land conservation in Wisconsin in order to leverage support from the public sector.

Thanks to the support of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, in fiscal year 2013 we have made significant progress on the following six goals listed in our grant proposal:

- Strengthening each individual land trust's operations and developing their expertise to improve the quality of land conservation and ensure its permanence;
- Facilitating relationships among land trusts in order to enhance and strengthen Wisconsin's land trust community;
- Educating land trusts on the national Land Trust Accreditation process and preparing land trusts to pursue Accreditation;
- Advancing strategic, collaborative conservation so that the highest priority land and water resources in Wisconsin are protected and multiple funding sources are leveraged;

- Maintaining a statewide communication network for land trusts and others working to conserve private lands by maintaining a Wisconsin Land Trust Listserv; regularly utilizing Currents, our electronic technical bulletin to land trusts; hosting the annual Wisconsin Land Trust Retreat; and providing timely information about upcoming training opportunities; and
- Efficiently and effectively utilizing a diverse outreach tool box to develop timely and compelling content and to communicate our message of promoting private land conservation and a strong land ethic to varied, targeted audiences, including: media, funders, land trust professionals, strategic alliances, landowners and other citizens interested in protecting Wisconsin's special places.

#### **A. How We Identified and Addressed Our Goals**

As Wisconsin's land trust community has grown in size and sophistication since Gathering Waters' founding, our land trust services have expanded and evolved. For the grant period, we identified needs and goals by:

1. Working closely with our eight-member Wisconsin Land Trust Council to help us better understand the challenges facing the land trust community and to improve communication and coordination among land trusts. The Land Trust Council is an advisory body, representing the diversity of Wisconsin land trusts in scope, size, and geography. The current Council members include Dan Burke, Door County Land Trust; Bryan Pierce, Northwoods Land Trust; Tony Schuster, Chippewa County Land Conservancy; Bur Zeratsky, Green Lake Conservancy; Kevin Thusius, Ice Age Trail Alliance; Bob Fitzwilliam, West Wisconsin Land Trust; Kimberly Gleffe, River Revitalization Foundation (Chair); and Jim Welsh, Natural Heritage Land Trust.
2. Tracking national trends in the land trust movement by partnering with the Land Trust Alliance, attending the national Land Trust Alliance conference, and sitting on the National Leadership Council of Land Trusts.
3. Working closely with agency staff at the Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin DATCP, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, and USDA-NRCS to assist with facilitating helpful partnerships with NCOs.
4. Interacting regularly with executive directors, board members, and supporters of Wisconsin's land trusts.
5. Drawing upon the input and guidance of Gathering Waters Conservancy's board of directors, comprised of representative members of nonprofit conservation organizations from around the state.

#### **B. How We Assessed Our Progress**

Throughout this fiscal year and the past, we used a variety of metrics and data collection to assess and report on our progress. Our evaluation methods are both qualitative and quantitative. Qualitatively, we continuously assess the effectiveness and impact of our direct technical assistance work and our outreach efforts in pursuit of our stated goals. Quantitatively, we judge our progress based on the specific benchmarks in each of our *Indicators of Project Success* and reported on them above.

Throughout FY13 we developed and refined our work based on our training evaluations, feedback from our eight-person Land Trust Council, and through direct contact on a daily basis with the land trust community. During the reporting period we additionally harnessed our use of Web analytics to gauge the effectiveness of our outreach work online and refined our stories, messages, and strategies to best reach the community we serve.

We additionally laid the groundwork for a comprehensive evaluation of LEAP based on the evaluation methods developed by the Land Trust Alliance at the national level. We will use these data to improve our direct technical services and outreach program in the coming years.

### **C. Activities Directed to Our Goals**

Per our proposal, we pursued the following activities in order to achieve our goals:

**GOAL:** Provide universal and customized services through LEAP.

**ACTIVITY:** During FY13 we provided universal services to all Wisconsin land trusts virtually as well as in person to maximize inclusive and timely learning. As a complement to our universal services we also provided a suite of customized services including guided Land Trust Standards and Practices assessments, implementation plans, coaching and mentoring, and grants to address specific organizational priorities identified. Where land trusts were not prepared, or ready, for the full suite of Standards and Practices we also offered special services and grants to meet one organizational priority or need through re-grants and/or mentoring.

**GOAL:** Advance Wisconsin's land trusts toward full implementation of Land Trust Standards and Practices – the measure of a land trust's ability to operate in an ethical, legal and technically sound manner.

**ACTIVITY:** We worked with 20 land trusts in FY13 through LEAP. Each committed to and executed an implementation plan to fulfill Land Trust Standards and Practices with Gathering Waters' support. Gathering Waters staff conducted four guided Land Trust Standards and Practices assessments as part of our LEAP customized services to land trusts. These assessments were delivered to Tall Pines Conservancy, The Prairie Enthusiasts, Natural Heritage Land Trust, and the Friends of Pheasant Branch.

**GOAL:** Guide land trusts towards national Land Trust Accreditation.

ACTIVITY: Though not all are accredited yet, we assisted seven land trusts with preparation for Accreditation including guided assessments, liaising between the Land Trust Accreditation Commission and land trusts, clarifying questions specific to the Accreditation process, and assisting with the application preparation checklist itself.

GOAL: Provide competitive grants to land trusts to address key areas of organizational need.

ACTIVITY: We developed a special services and grants program to address organizational priorities. In fiscal year 2013 we continued the work for four land trusts awarded in FY12 as well as opened a new round of grants for land trusts in June, 2013 to be executed in FY14.

GOAL: Offer training to land trusts' board members on a variety of topics including organizational development and leadership development.

ACTIVITY: During the fiscal year we offered in-person trainings, Webinars, and ask-an-expert teleconferences to land trust board members on organizational development and leadership development, among other topics. See the specifics of these trainings in our Indicators of Project Success section starting on page 6.

GOAL: Develop a peer mentoring network that promotes best practices and encourages learning, sharing, and a more cohesive land trust community in Wisconsin.

ACTIVITY: As we reported in our FY12 report, we developed a Wisconsin & Michigan Peer Mentoring Program consisting of five peer groups based on the categories of work of the program participants (in WI & MI): stewardship staff, land protection staff, fund-raisers, executive and associate directors, and board members. During FY13 we continued executing teleconferences for peer groups, reimbursed peers for individual peer visits, and organized three in-person peer gatherings.

GOAL: Work to strengthen strategic, regional partnerships among land trusts.

ACTIVITY: In FY13 we continued our facilitation of the Lake Michigan Shorelands Alliance as well as our involvement in the ongoing development of the Blufflands Alliance in the Upper Mississippi watershed. We additionally began to coordinate new regional partnerships around Wisconsin.

GOAL: Maintain our statewide communication network for land trusts and other organizations working to conserve private lands.

GOAL: We maintained our communications network through our eNews, the WI Land Trust Listserv, our print newsletter (*CrossCurrents*), our electronic technical bulletin (*Currents*), regular and timely updates to our website ([www.gatheringwaters.org](http://www.gatheringwaters.org)), our online resource library, our Facebook page, and the use of our blog ([www.wisconsinlandtrusts.org](http://www.wisconsinlandtrusts.org)).

GOAL: Identify new opportunities to educate the public and promote land trust work through our website, our blog, and other venues.

**ACTIVITY:** In FY13, we identified new opportunities to educate the public and promote land trust work by making a concerted effort to define how and when we engage communities. With the help of a consultant and the work of GWC staff and board, we refined this framework into two areas of work: 1) Celebrating our successes, and 2) Expanding our horizons. As a result, we have shifted our storytelling style to focus on how our work impacts people and communities, instead of simply touting number of acres protected. Throughout the year we refined our images, messages, Website, blog, and other media to reflect our new framework. We've created a dynamic content management strategy for our social media platform that emphasizes an inclusive culture for a diverse statewide audience beyond just our membership. And, we've ensured that our website remains on the cutting edge of viewer engagement for non-profit causes.

**GOAL:** Pursue opportunities with Wisconsin media to tell the story of how our programs and the land trusts we serve protect special places in Wisconsin.

**ACTIVITY:** Nearly every day in FY13 we captured and amplified news stories and events that tell the story of how our programs and the land trusts we serve protect special places in Wisconsin on our website, Facebook page, and blog.

**GOAL:** Explore the possibility of partnering with organizations outside of the land trust community to educate a wider audience about land trusts and private land conservation in Wisconsin.

**ACTIVITY:** In FY13 we piloted a new grant program with the aim of encouraging community partnerships to educate a wider audience about land trusts and private land conservation in Wisconsin. We offered three grants in the first year of the program and one land trust established its first ambassador landscape: a fee-owned parcel directly adjacent to a community boundary with the goal of engaging people in nature through hunting, fishing, and appreciation of the outdoors. The property will also serve as an outdoor classroom for the adjacent K-12 school. With our grant support, this land trust also kicked off a partnership with the local library to hold a preschool nature story time, created an explorers club summer camp for youth, and raised their income and membership at the same time. We were overwhelmingly pleased with the results of this pilot and will look to expand the program in the next fiscal year. Additionally, we pursued partnerships for GWC outside of the land trust community. In FY13, we met with leaders from one of the largest health care providers in the state to explore partnership opportunities with land trusts. Through this partnership we laid the groundwork to spread wellness and grow the community of people who support land conservation by demonstrating its connection to issues of health about which we all care. We will continue to advance this work in the coming year.

#### **D. Indicators of Project Success**

Throughout FY13 we used the *Indicators of Project Success* from our grant application to measure and report on our achievements.

Success Indicator: At least eight land trusts will participate actively in the customized services of the LEAP program during the grant period, advancing their organizations toward full implementation of Standards and Practices, and preparing them for Accreditation.

*During FY13 we worked with 20 land trusts in total through LEAP. They are:*

- *Ozaukee Washington Land Trust, West Bend*
- *Northwoods Land Trust, Eagle River*
- *Natural Heritage Land Trust, Madison*
- *Kettle Moraine Land Trust, Elkhorn*
- *Green Lake Conservancy, Green Lake*
- *Ice Age Trail Alliance, Cross Plains (works statewide)*
- *The Prairie Enthusiasts (works in WI, IA, MN, IL)*
- *Door County Land Trust, Sturgeon Bay*
- *North Central Conservancy Trust, Stevens Point*
- *Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy, Middleton*
- *Glacial Lakes Conservancy, Sheboygan*
- *Baraboo Range Preservation Association, Baraboo*
- *Tall Pines Conservancy, Neshotah*
- *West Wisconsin Land Trust, Menomonie*
- *Geneva Lake Conservancy, Lake Geneva*
- *Madison Audubon Society, Madison*
- *Kinnickinnic River Land Trust, River Falls*
- *Driftless Area Land Conservancy, Dodgeville*
- *Caledonia Conservancy, Racine*
- *Mississippi Valley Conservancy, La Crosse*

Success Indicator: Four Wisconsin land trusts will be Accredited and/or prepared to submit a successful application to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. A land trust's readiness is determined by the organization's ability to document compliance with Land Trust Standards and Practices, thus operating in an ethical, legal and technically sound manner.

*Currently (at the start of FY14), there are eight accredited land trusts in Wisconsin. In fiscal years 2012 and 2013 the following Wisconsin land trusts were awarded Accreditation status:*

- *Bayfield Regional Conservancy*
- *Caledonia Conservancy*
- *Kettle Moraine Land Trust*
- *Mississippi Valley Conservancy*
- *The Nature Conservancy – Wisconsin Chapter*

*Since the end of the fiscal year, Northwoods Land Trust and Ozaukee Washington Land Trusts have also been accredited and Ice Age Trail Alliance has applied. Each of these land trusts participated in LEAP services, both universal and/or customized during fiscal years 2012 and 2013. Gathering Waters staff worked directly with Caledonia, Kettle Moraine, Northwoods, Ozaukee Washington, and Ice Age on their applications directly. Additionally, Kinnickinnic River Land Trust received LEAP Standards and Practices services in order to prepare for their accreditation renewal in FY14.*

**Success Indicator:** Five Wisconsin land trusts will advance measurably through competitive grants which address key areas of organizational need, such as filling vital staff positions, accomplishing high priority goals as determined by an organizational assessment or in a strategic plan, or completing other activities that strengthen the organization.

*Though not an exhaustive list, we worked with five land trusts to advance the following specific priorities in fiscal year 2013:*

- *Board development, capacity evaluation, and strategic conservation planning facilitation for Glacial Lakes Conservancy – August, 2012-January, 2013*
- *Facilitation of new strategic direction and preparation for collaboration and/or a merger with the Baraboo Range Preservation Association – July, 2012 to present*
- *Dissemination of land protection & stewardship database for all interested Wisconsin land trusts – throughout fiscal year 2013*
- *Completion of a USDA Compliance Audit for West Wisconsin Land Trust – July, 2012 - March 2013 (settlement successfully closed March 21, 2013)*
- *Creation of a new website and strategic plan for Geneva Lake Conservancy – Winter, 2012*

**Success Indicator:** One land trust executive director will attend an intensive leadership development course (a two-year program).

*In fiscal year 2013, two executive directors (from Tall Pines Conservancy and Driftless Area Land Conservancy) attended the intensive leadership development course. This two year program involves two in-person expert-led trainings among other national peer leaders as well as ongoing mentoring and a cash grant to accomplish one high priority task for the individual's organization.*

**Success Indicator:** At least one-hundred land trust board members and/or staff will receive training on a variety of topics from land transactions to organizational development, from stewardship funding to leadership.

*In total, over 231 Wisconsin land trust board and staff members participated in training opportunities through LEAP in FY13. Throughout fiscal years 2012 and 2013, over 1,300 land trust staff and board members attended our in-person trainings, a little less than half of them from Wisconsin alone. In addition to our annual Land Trust Retreat, during FY13, we offered the following learning opportunities to all Wisconsin land trusts:*

*Virtual Learning Opportunities:*

- *Beyond Policy: Shaping the Culture of Your Organization, September 7, 2012*
- *Conservation Easement Amendments, November 2, 2012*
- *Building Greater Support for Nature and Your Organization: Ambassador Landscapes, December 4, 2012*
- *Organizational Life Cycles: Standing the Test of Time, February 2, 2013*
- *Environmental Site Inspections, March 1, 2013*
- *Telling the Right Story: Why Branding Matters for Nonprofits, April 5, 2013*
- *Transforming Your Land Protection Criteria Into a Strategic Conservation Plan, June 7, 2013*

*In-Person Opportunities:*

- *Baseline Documentation: The Blueprint for Success, July 19, 2012*
- *Community Engagement, August 7, 2012*
- *Strategies for Drafting Agricultural Easements, December 4, 2012*
- *Running Effective Meetings, March 18, 2013*

Success Indicator: Recruit at least 20 land trust member participants to our annual Land Trust Retreat.

*We hosted 60 board and staff members of 24 land trusts at our fiscal year 2013 retreat. Each year we invite our participants to come together to learn from each other and industry experts in order to promote continuous learning and improvement as well as build community and enthusiasm for our work. Topics discussed at our FY13 Retreat included Real Estate Transaction Practical Pointers & Due Diligence, Environmental Site Assessments, Managing Wetlands on Land Trust Properties, Contingency Planning for Conservation Easements, Strategic Planning, and Financial Essentials, among others.*

Success Indicator: A peer-to-peer mentoring network will be established to facilitate learning, sharing, and the development of a cohesive land trust community on the individual level.

*The peer mentoring program has become a mainstay program for Gathering Waters. During fiscal years 2012 and 2013 we held numerous teleconferences for each of the peer group participants, hosted three two-day in-person training opportunities, and reimbursed individual peer visits to spur ongoing learning and long-term contacts between the two states. In fiscal year 2013 we hosted the following teleconferences for Wisconsin and Michigan land trust peers (18 in total):*

- *Fund-raisers teleconferences: 10/18/12, 1/17/13, 2/28/13, 5/9/13, 6/20/13*
- *Stewardship teleconferences: 9/5/12, 12/5/12, 2/4/13, 5/14/13*
- *Board members teleconferences: 9/11/12, 1/18/13*
- *Executive director & associate director teleconferences: 9/2012, 1/23/13, 3/20/13*
- *Land protection teleconferences: 10/11/12, 1/10/13, 3/12/13, 6/5/13*

*We invited all staff members from each category of work in both states to attend the following in-person peer gatherings held during fiscal year 2013:*

- *Fund-raising staff peer gathering on August 6-7, 2012 in Madison, WI*
- *Land Protection & Stewardship staff peer gathering on August 17-19, 2013 in Watervliet, MI*
- *Executive & associate directors peer gathering on May 2-3, 2013 in New Buffalo, MI*

Success Indicator: Strategic partnerships among land trusts will be enhanced and land trusts' connections to other community institutions will be strengthened.

*We are committed, now more than ever, to connecting land trusts with their communities. In fiscal year 2013 we pursued our traditional facilitation role with the Lake Michigan Shorelands Alliance throughout the year. The Lake Michigan Shorelands Alliance is a coalition of 10 land trusts operating in the Lake Michigan basin of Wisconsin. We also assisted the Blufflands Alliance, a coalition of six land trusts in the Upper Mississippi watershed, with setting and executing a new direction in the wake of lost funding and staff turnover.*

*We additionally explored new ways to connect land trusts with each other and community partners. In northwest Wisconsin we brought together three land trusts and facilitated a discussion of potential shared services in the areas of conservation easement monitoring, creation of financial reports for board and staff, and legal support for transactions. We will continue to pursue this potential collaboration in the next fiscal year and beyond.*

*We also facilitated the creation of Wisconsin's first land restoration collaborative effort in southeast Wisconsin at the end of FY13; brought Will Allen, nationally-recognized community leader and urban gardener, to our annual barn dance event; and in FY12 created the Rod Nilsestuen Award for Working Lands Preservation; all in an effort to enhance new connections for Wisconsin land trusts.*

Success Indicator: Host four annual meetings of the Lake Michigan Shorelands Alliance with participation from agency and non-profit partners in attendance.

*Due to scheduling, we canceled our summer meeting and held just three in-person gatherings of the Lake Michigan Shorelands Alliance in FY13. They were held on October 18, 2012, February 20, 2013, and April 23, 2013. Throughout the year we had participation and/or presentations from representatives from agency and non-profit partners including Ducks Unlimited, Wisconsin Wetlands Association, Wisconsin DNR, US Fish & Wildlife Service, the Stewardship Network, and the WI Natural Resources Board.*

Success Indicator: Track and enhance the internet traffic directed to our website through our blog, Facebook, and other means.

*Throughout the fiscal year and moving in to the next, we are using Web analytics and click-through data to inform our online strategies, timing, and messages. During FY13, 97% of our internet traffic*

*came from the United States, with 65% from Wisconsin solely. We learned that nearly half of our traffic comes from Search engines (Google, Bing, Yahoo) with the remaining half of total traffic coming organically from Facebook, our blog, the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies at UW-Madison site, and new visits.*

**Success Indicator:** Publish bi-monthly editions of *Currents*, our technical bulletin for land trusts, biennial editions of our print newsletter *CrossCurrents*, and produce an annual report that documents our overall organizational progress.

*In fiscal year 2013, we published 16 editions of Currents to approximately 750 land trust practitioners around the state. We produced one print newsletter and developed our fiscal year 2012 report. We made the conscious decision to focus our efforts on growing our virtual communications presence and in turn scaled back our print materials in the fiscal year.*

**Success Indicator:** Assess the open rates for our electronic communications to our land trust community and enhance our outreach tools and content to steadily increase this rate.

*During FY13, we sent out 20 eNews editions and increased our open rates from around 20% at the start of the year to just under 30% by the end. For Currents, a longer-standing Gathering Waters e-newsletter medium, our open rates went from around 28% to 31% throughout fiscal year 2013.*

*During fiscal year 2013 our average daily hits to our blog went from 9 in the first month of the fiscal year to 22 in the last month. We posted 46 total blog posts in our 2013 fiscal year and a rising average number of hits. Our blog increases awareness of land trusts and their work around Wisconsin, while engaging the community in our work. We also noted that traffic to our blog came to us from referrals from Facebook, our own website ([www.gatheringwaters.org](http://www.gatheringwaters.org)), and google.com. We have used this information to harness our content and frequency of posts.*

*Our Facebook fan base is ever expanding; gaining 839 new likes during our FY13, we have learned how to attract new supporters and spread news and events to friends of supporters. Facebook has proved to be our most successful medium, reaching as many as 8,000 people with one post. With brief messages that link to articles, events, videos, and pictures, we were able to share 361 stories with our supporters and their friends during the fiscal year 2013.*

*In FY13, we also featured just fewer than 200 land trust events on our website and shared 118 articles garnering 762 unique views.*

**Success Indicator:** Create and publish ten new land trust stories on our homepage, which highlight conservation success stories from around Wisconsin.

*During fiscal years 2012 and 2013 we published 30 land trust stories to the homepage at our website: [www.gatheringwaters.org](http://www.gatheringwaters.org). In FY13 we hit our stride with telling land trust stories in new, more compelling ways. For example, we posted 21 compelling and insightful land trust stories to our blog: [www.wisconsinlandtrusts.org](http://www.wisconsinlandtrusts.org) and shared daily land trust stories via Facebook (growing our following tenfold in the process).*

## II. Compliance with Statute

Per the contract terms, we acknowledge progress in the completion of the following Description of Work:

As this report reveals, the Land Trust Excellence & Advancement Program has become the centerpiece of our programming. Through LEAP, we provided technical assistance to NCOs, especially in the areas of management, receiving federal tax exemptions, conservation easement monitoring, and real estate transactions. We additionally assisted NCOs in acquiring property for conservation purposes and in managing property acquired for conservation purposes. Through our LEAP universal services program we conducted conferences, workshops, Webinars, teleconferences, etc. on the topics described above. And, through our LEAP customized services program, gave technical assistance grants to NCOs and to those interested in establishing NCOs.

Though we stand at the ready to assist with the establishment of NCOs, we did not need to pursue the objective to establish new NCOs directly during FY13. We have fielded periodic requests and provided a toolkit of information to representatives from Vilas, Washburn, and Sawyer Counties about NCO designation, however. Additionally, the need did not arise during this grant period to acquire a property for conservation purposes where no other NCO exists that is willing to assist or is capable of effectively assisting in the transfer of a property or that can adequately manage the property after it is acquired.

## III. Addendums

### A. Conservation Capacity Grants – Accompaniment to Form 8700-316

*Attached*

### B. Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Grant Application Narrative

*Attached*

### C. Assistance to Nonprofit Conservation Organizations Grant Contract – Fiscal Year 2012-2013

*Attached*

**D. Gathering Waters Conservancy's financial report for fiscal year 2013, including evidence of matching funds**

At Gathering Waters Conservancy we strive to develop programming that advances land trust excellence. In fact, in FY12 and FY13, GWC hired the Land Trust Alliance to conduct a guided Land Trust Standards & Practices assessment for GWC itself. We are currently in the process of implementing the recommendations from the report generated from this assessment. We engaged in this effort to consistently improve and strengthen our internal operations as well as experience and understand first-hand what LEAP means to our land trust community.

Gathering Waters Conservancy has leveraged the state's investment many times over with private and government grants as well as individual donations. In the process, we have made substantial progress toward our mutual goal of protecting Wisconsin's special places. Our 2013 audited financials are included with this report.

Please see page 12 of the audit for Schedule of Program Activities and Funding Source.

**E. A list of Gathering Waters Conservancy's board of directors for fiscal year 2013**

Gathering Waters Conservancy is governed by an active and committed Board of Directors. Our bylaws mandate that at least half of our Directors are representatives of nonprofit conservation organizations. Their names and organizational affiliations (for individuals representing nonprofit conservation organizations) are listed below, as of FY13:

**President:** Rita Hayen, River Hills (Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin)

**Treasurer:** Eric Schumann, Racine (Caledonia Conservancy)

**Secretary:** Terry Hatch, Mahomet, IL (Northwoods Land Trust)

**Past President:** Chris Hughes, Middleton (Natural Heritage Land Trust)

Bill Berry, Stevens Point

Jeff Crawford, Potawatomi Nation, Milwaukee

Kristine Euclide, Madison (Natural Heritage Land Trust)

Nelson French, Duluth (Kinnickinnic River Land Trust)

Kimberly Gleffe, Milwaukee (River Revitalization Foundation)

Ellen Kwiatkowski, Bayfield (Bayfield Regional Conservancy)

Randall Lawton, De Pere (Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust)

Thomas Mitchell, Madison

Tia Nelson, Madison

Ben Niemann, Hayward (Couderay Waters Regional Land Trust)

Rebecca Smith, Middleton (The Nature Conservancy)



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Roy Thilly, Bailey's Harbor (The Ridges Sanctuary)