

Partnership Protects More Than 2 Miles of Lake Superior Shore

The Challenge

The threat of development for second homes is a major concern in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Development can break up ecologically sensitive tracts of forest land and decrease their suitability for use in sustainable forestry. Hunting land, recreational trail systems, forest ecosystems, and wide-ranging wildlife species all benefit when large parcels remain intact.

Beginning in the late 1980s, local businessman Tad Malpass began to piece together several tracts of land in Michigan's northern Upper Peninsula. He eventually created a contiguous forest parcel totaling 3,810 acres and spanning more than 2 miles of Lake Superior's south shore. Directly adjacent to the Crisp Point Lighthouse property, the parcel also includes the 83-acre Brown's Lake and is situated near and adjacent to State, Federal, and conservancy lands.

In recent years Malpass considered selling the land; however, the purchase price for a parcel of this size with Great Lakes shoreline was daunting. He received offers from private individuals who were interested in purchasing smaller pieces within the larger tract.

The Solution

In 2008, the nonprofit land trust Little Traverse Conservancy began working with Malpass out of concern that the land should remain unbroken and ecologically productive for future generations. A partnership emerged between Malpass, the Little Traverse Conservancy, J. A. Woollam Foundation, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The J. A. Woollam Foundation offered to become the primary match funding partner in a fee acquisition application to the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program. As part of an ongoing partnership, the Michigan DNR began working with Little Traverse Conservancy to prepare an application in 2009. The project ranked third in the nation in priority for funding in Fiscal Year 2011, and a grant of \$4,500,000 was awarded. The J. A. Woollam



View of the property's scenic shoreline along Lake Superior from the adjacent Crisp Point Lighthouse (Photo: Neal Bungard)

Foundation provided a funding match of \$1,500,000. In late 2012, the respective parties signed the deed, adding the 3,810-acre Crisp Point property to the forest holdings of the Michigan DNR.

Resulting Benefits

Today, the property provides critical game and nongame wildlife habitat. The property also protects threatened and endangered species, provides refuge for Neotropical migratory birds, and offers multiple recreational opportunities. The acquisition eliminates the possibility of development, ensures sustainable forestry practices, and provides multiple new recreational opportunities. Also, wildlife habitat, soil and water resources, and the scenic values of the forest land and undeveloped Great Lakes shoreline will be preserved. The protected land is located in the middle of existing State forest and is directly adjacent to a completed Forest Legacy project, the 150,000-acre Northern Great Lakes Forest.

Sharing Success

The property's inclusion as part of a dual certified working forest supports a network of nearly 1,400 forest product related businesses in Michigan's Upper Peninsula that help the region's local economy, which is based on forest products, tourism, and outdoor recreation.

Over 2 miles of forested shoreline along Lake Superior will remain forested and open for public recreation access.



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