

# Door County Land Trust: Protects 37 acres near Rowley's Bay

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Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin – In late August, landowners Bruce and Joan Pikas donated a 37-acre conservation easement on their boreal forest tract to the Door County Land Trust. The conservation easement, located east of Sister Bay adds to existing protected land in the area which includes several other Door County Land Trust conservation easements, The Nature Conservancy's Mink River Estuary and the Land Trust's Three Springs Nature Preserve. Ten rare plant species and 15 rare bird species are found within this protected landscape.

Bruce and Joan Pikas have lived in the Rowley's Bay area for more than 40 years. When the opportunity arose to purchase this forested property, they purchased the land to protect it from being divided and developed. Joan said, "The longer we've owned this land, the more we realized it needed to be protected forever. The conservation easement with the Door County Land Trust ensures it will remain the same."

"We love walking the property in every different season. We see turkeys, coyotes, porcupines, ruffed grouse....And we want to make sure that will never change," says Bruce. More than 150 species of birds have been documented migrating through nearby protected lands.

Door County Land Trust's land protection specialist Drew Reinke says, "Conservation easements are a key tool for protecting wildlife corridors and

ensuring opportunities for wildlife to move freely across the landscape, while keeping the property in private ownership.” A conservation easement is a legal agreement made by landowners which protects the ecological value of property forever, regardless of future ownership.

Land Trust executive director Tom Clay says, “Some of Door County’s most wild and ecologically diverse lands are privately owned, but deserve the same level of protection as our nature preserves. We look forward to partnerships with landowners to create conservation easements that enhance our land protection efforts throughout the county.”

Protection of the Pikas property adds to current conservation efforts of the Door County Land Trust and the Nature Conservancy in this area. The most southern extents of Arctic boreal forest in North America are found along the Lake Michigan shoreline of northern Door County, making the boreal forest of the Pikas property particularly significant. To the east of the property is the North Bay Lowlands Area which contains several high quality wetland communities. The property also lies within an 11,000-acre coastal wetland corridor recognized as a “Wetland of International Importance” by the Ramsar Convention.

About the Door County Land Trust: The Door County Land Trust’s mission is “To protect Door County’s exceptional lands and waters...forever.” It is a nonprofit, community-based organization that actively works to conserve land via the purchase or acceptance of donations of land or conservation easements. Founded in 1986, the Door County Land Trust has protected more than 8,000 acres from Washington Island through southern Door County.

Trail maps for 14 featured Door County Land Trust nature preserves may be found on our website, hiking map and trail map apps. These preserves are open year-round to the public at no charge for hiking, cross-country skiing, wildlife observation, hunting, and other low-impact, non-motorized recreational activities. For more information and to become a Land Trust member visit [www.doorcountylandtrust.org](http://www.doorcountylandtrust.org) or call [\(920\)746-1359](tel:9207461359).

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