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Spring/  
Summer  
2016

*This mighty resident of the Harris Lake Easements now has his habitat and home protected forever by UPLC*

Information and updates from the Upper Peninsula Land Conservancy

# U.P. Land Conservancy

connection



## By the Numbers ...

**Number of Easements: 20**  
**Acres: 2,951**

**Number of Preserves: 9**  
**Acres: 1,473**

**Number of Reserves: 24**  
**Acres: 1,468**

**Trade Lands: 0! (almost...see inside!)**

**Total Acres Protected by the UPLC: 5,892**



### Officers:

*President* Jim Peck  
*Acting Secretary* John Yonkers  
*V. President* Jean McClean  
*Treasurer* Bruce Ventura

### Board Members:

Jeremy Orr Robb Ferguson  
Lauren Rusin Don Miller  
Lora Loope Grant Petersen  
Bob Anderson Andrew Rickauer

### Staff:

Chris Burnett Andrea Denham  
*Executive Director* *Assistant Director*

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## Chocolay Bayou Preserve Project Update!

**-Successfully partnering with more than 20 local and national organizations-**

What a whirlwind the last few months have been! Almost immediately after sending out the last newsletter, we launched into two months packed with events, including the amazing "Save the Bayou!" fundraising silent auction and concert at the Chocolay River Brewing Company and Restaurant, which was a roaring success!

**On that night alone, we raised more than \$6,550,** and kept on dancing to the tunes of the Eastside Ramblers even in the dark with a power outage. What a night! **THANK YOU** to everyone who came out! We have been awarded multiple grants, from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, from the Hirvonen Foundation, and from the Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition. **The amazing generosity of more than 150 individual donors, in combination with the grants, have raised ALL of the money needed to purchase the Chocolay Bayou Nature Preserve.** We have even made headway into the \$20,000 needed for the Forever Fund, the additional money needed beyond purchasing the property for creating and maintaining trails, installing signage, and paying staff. **Now we are simply waiting for the final survey to be completed before we close and officially celebrate the creation of the Chocolay Bayou Nature Preserve with you.**



*There is absolutely no way to adequately express our gratitude to YOU, for acting as a part of this community, for accomplishing this goal with us. Keep your eyes out for an invite to the celebration coming soon!*

**THANK YOU.**

## Always Something Fun Happening in the North Woods!

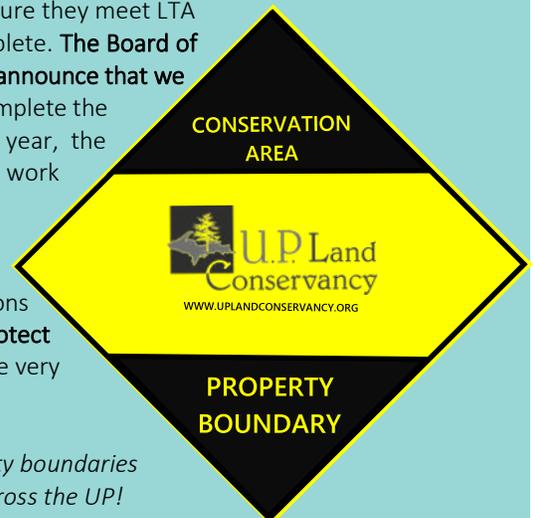
*In case you missed them, here's a brief rundown of the winter's events:* The annual meeting was a relaxing evening of learning about the unique ecosystem that exists at the mouth of the Chocolay River where it empties into Lake Superior from Dr. Strand of NMU. We also learned some of the important history of the Chocolay Bayou area from Kathy Peters, long-time UPLC supporter and local historian. At the meeting, we were able to meet with many new people who came to hear what UPLC does in our community and we are so excited to deepen the relationships that were made that night. The Second Annual "Over the River and Through the Woods" snowshoe race and trek was on a sunny day despite the frigid temperature and road-closing weather the days prior. Our intrepid racers flew through the course with a bald eagle circling over head! The "Save the Bayou!" concert and silent auction with the Eastside Ramblers at the Chocolay River Brewery and Restaurant the next weekend left us overwhelmed with gratitude. We raised more than \$6,550 in one night, with an estimated 100 people of all ages in attendance —what a way to kick off fundraising for the purchase and stewardship of the future Chocolay Bayou Nature Preserve! Upcoming events this summer and fall will focus on getting folks out to our preserves across the Upper Peninsula—Two botany inventory work days will get folks out into rarely-accessed properties to hunt for rare flora and fauna, multiple workdays will improve the access to local Preserves, and educational outings with local schools will help the next generation of conservationists fall in love with the land that they will rely on for the rest of their lives. Dates are listed on the back of this letter, and the calendar is on the website!

## Land Trust Alliance Accreditation Update...

UPLC has been preparing for the process of becoming an accredited organization by the Land Trust Alliance since 2013. For the past two years, we have been working through this process with consultants MaryKay O'Donnell and Sarah Naperala. We adopted LTA standards as our own baseline and made a commitment to pursue accreditation back in 2013. Since January, we have been updating our policies and procedures to make sure they meet LTA requirements, as well as ensuring that all of our record keeping is clear, accurate and complete. The Board of Directors and staff have been working extra hard the past few months and we are proud to announce that we are now enrolled in the final steps of the accreditation process! We have about a year to complete the application and file all of the appropriate paperwork...to give you an idea of why it'll take a year, the recommendation packet we received back in March was 90 pages long... So, we've got our work cut out for us! After the application process, our organization will undergo an audit before becoming officially accredited in 2018. If you have a penchant for organization of files and databases, an interest in our mission, and some time to spare, we'd love your help! Accreditation through the LTA is the "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval" for organizations like ours across the US. Being accredited is solid proof that when we make a promise to protect land forever, we are able to carry that promise out in a responsible, sustainable way. We are very excited about the progress we are making in the accreditation process.

**Thank you all for supporting us through this very important work!**

*Part of being a nationally accredited organization includes having all of UPLC's property boundaries marked—Introducing our new boundary sign! Coming soon to protected lands across the UP!*



## Spruce River Canoe Camp Pending Sale!



**Big news!** The initiation of the Trade Lands program has had its first success! An offer has been accepted on the Spruce River Canoe Camp, the 4.2 acre camp in Republic on the Spruce River with an historic cabin and traditional sauna. Rick Laister donated the camp to UPLC in late 2015, with the hope that the sale of the camp would promote forest restoration across the Upper Peninsula and that the money from the sale would support UPLC's mission of protecting land today for life tomorrow. **We are so excited to announce the success of this program and the achievement of Rick's dream!** The Trade Lands Program supports UPLC in two ways—the obvious one is that money from the sale will support our increasing budget. The more important way is that **selling this land**

**promotes the mission of UPLC and spreads awareness that we can all protect land today.** The new owners of the camp will be able to protect and restore their land as they enjoy it, and this will spread the word of what UPLC does in their community. Rick's love of quiet, wild places and his passion for giving all people opportunities to fall in love with the land is the same passion and love we all share.

Thank you all for your help spreading the word about the camp, thank you to those who came out to the open house in May, and a **HUGE thank you** to Terry Huffman of Re/Max for your assistance!



**We want to get to know you better!**

**Please take a moment to fill out and return the brief survey card insert.**

## New Faces ...

With the acceleration of UPLC's public recognition and increased span in the reach of our mission, we have attracted the attention of four new board members and several enthusiastic volunteers who are excited to share their talents and skills with the organization and the community of environmental conservationists. I'll let them introduce themselves; say hello and thank them if you see them around!

### Lauren Rusin



A new resident of Marquette, Lauren graduated from Michigan Technological University in May of 2015 with a B.S. in Forestry. She is currently a Forester and Michigan Representative for Steigerwaldt Land Services. Previously, Lauren studied landscape horticulture, working in a family greenhouse and designing gardens for landowners. Lauren enjoys biking, hiking, fishing, and downhill skiing. She has been fortunate to recreate in many beautiful places in the U.S. including Oregon, Colorado, New Mexico, Montana, Utah, and the Carolinas. Lauren looks forward to employing her horticulture and forestry skills to assist UPLC in our mission to "protect land today for life tomorrow"!

Originally from the Upper Peninsula, Jeremy has worked extensively on building multi-sector partnerships and conducting targeted outreach to solve sustainability issues, primarily at the watershed level. He has a B.S. in Political Science from Grand Valley State University, and an Executive Master of Natural Resources from Virginia Tech's Center for Leadership in Global Sustainability. He enjoys working with UPLC to help promote and preserve the outdoor recreation opportunities that the U.P. has to offer. He is an avid fly fisherman, writer, and adventurer.

### Jeremy Orr



### Lora Loope



After growing up in Traverse City Lora studied biology at Alma College (B.S.) and NMU (M.S.). Now retired from Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore where Lora served as an aquatic ecologist, she values natural habitats and admires UPLC's vision and efforts. She participates in Alger Conservation District's stream monitoring program and Michigan DNR's frog-and-toad survey and enjoys cross-country skiing, hiking, reading, and singing with the Marquette Choral Society.

All my life I have been connected with the natural world. Canoes and backpacks were my mode from an early age. Retired now from practicing medicine, I have more time to appreciate the UP's woods and waters at the family retreat on Au Train Bay, which has been under conservation easement with UPLC since 2007.

### Brock Robinson



## New Places ...

### Harris Lake and Harris Lake West Easements Combine

The conservation value of a property depends on what is there *and* where it is. On both counts, the Harris Lake West conservation easement, donated to UPLC in late 2015 by Mark & Christine Troutd, gets high marks. The original Harris Lake easement, donated by the Troutds in 2006, is a 50-acre parcel surrounding Harris Lake, except for a small area of state land. Harris Lake is located in southwestern Marquette County on a landform known as "disintegration moraine" with an *eolian* (wind deposited) cap. Commonly referred to as "knob and kettle terrain," this type of landscape has many small lakes formed in topographic depressions left by melting blocks of glacial ice. The new easement adds 110 acres to the west of Harris Lake and encompasses a 2-acre un-named kettle pond and a large beaver/wetland complex along Squaw Creek. Thus, the Harris Lake West Conservation Easement has high conservation value because of its remote location, its aquatic and wetland habitats, and because it more than triples the size of the previously protected land. The quality of the habitat on these easements has been well documented by the Troutd's trail cameras which have captured many species of wildlife, including moose, bobcat, gray wolf, mountain

lion and great big black bears in photos like the one on the front page. This spring a botanical survey of these properties was begun to catalog the bog orchids and other flora of this special place. We look forward to sharing our findings with you on Facebook as well as on the website!

-Chris Burnett, Ph.D.  
Executive Director



### Vielmetti-Peters Conservation Reserve is Officially Protected!

If you read the winter newsletter, you may recall us mentioning that the site of our recent snowshoe and trail run races were at the "future" Vielmetti-Peters Conservation Reserve...well—as of **March 18, 2016**, the Vielmetti-Peters property at the end of Brickyard Road in Marquette is officially protected in perpetuity by the UP Land Conservancy as a working forest reserve. It is open to the public for passive enjoyment (no motorized travel, or harvesting, please!) for two-legged travelers. Kathy has asked that, out of respect for the "critters" who call this place home, that visitors to the preserve exercise their dogs and horses elsewhere. Hunting may be allowed depending on the conservation needs of the Reserve by written permission from UPLC only. **We are planning a dedication celebration, sign installment, and trail marking day on August 27th. Hope to see you there! Thank you, Kathy!**

## Upcoming Events and Fun Ways to Be Involved...

### —Tory's Woods Trail Work Day, Wednesday, June 22nd

Meet at Tory's Woods Trailhead at 6 PM for some light work

### —Indian Lake Preserve Botany Survey, Saturday July 23rd

RSVP only, best suited for serious botany learners or botanists

### —Vielmetti-Peters Reserve Dedication Celebration, Saturday, August 27th

Bring your friends and family to celebrate the protection of this land

### —Fall Trail Run Saturday, October 1st. Registration open online now!

The second annual 5k Run/Walk and silent auction will be a blast!

### —Chocolay Bayou Nature Preserve Celebration date will be announced as soon as the closing is finalized!

*To RSVP to these events, please call (906) 225-8067 or email [uplc@uplandconservancy.org](mailto:uplc@uplandconservancy.org) and we'll send you specific details and directions. Other various trail work days will be announced on shorter notice to those interested. We'd love to have you join the stewardship committee as a volunteer, even if it's just for the season! **Hope to see you on the trails!***

### Room on the Board!

No matter your skills or background, UPLC will benefit greatly from your dedication, passion, and knowledge. We particularly need someone with financial and non-profit accounting skills to help us keep track of our ever-more complicated budget. Help us spread the word?

### Volunteers Needed!

Not enough time to be on the board but still want to help? Awesome! From addressing envelopes to fixing our computers, to trail building, we can only protect land today for life tomorrow *together*—that means we need YOUR help! Give us a call to chat about what you want to do here or remotely.



Land Today for Life Tomorrow

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## Notes from the Board of Directors...Bruce Ventura, Treasurer

I've been involved with various aspects of land conservation since the mid 1980s. Since then, I've helped build and maintain trails, documented Native American pictographs for the Forest Service, welded gates on caves to protect endangered bats, collected seeds from native prairie plants, and constructed multiple signs and kiosks on nature preserves, for starters. When asked why I am attracted to preservation of natural places, my heartfelt response is always **gratitude for being raised in the Upper Peninsula, the place that instilled in me a love for nature and all its wonders.** About eight years ago, Bill Davis, a past president of the Upper Peninsula Land Conservancy (then Central Lake Superior Land Conservancy), approached me about joining the Conservancy as a Board member. I knew a little bit about what the Conservancy had done up to that time; joining them seemed a good challenge. I volunteered to take over the "job" of Treasurer after being on the Board for several years; that has proved a real learning experience as the Conservancy has grown. There are many things that UPLC does to acquire, protect, steward, and monitor the lands that it is entrusted with. **Learning how to do this well has been a rewarding challenge.** There have been many strategy meetings, seminars, phone calls, conferences, etc. as UPLC has striven to become a first class conservancy. These sessions are important and satisfying as we move forward; however, **some of the most fun happens when I am "out on the land", installing signs, walking boundaries, monitoring preserves, and participating in field trips with volunteers and donors (and, yes, swatting mosquitos).** There is a lot of natural beauty in the UP; the Conservancy has given me ample reasons to get out and explore it. **Many of you are involved in protecting land in the UP in various ways. To the many supporters and donors to UPLC, I say a big "THANK YOU" for your support, for making it possible to do the protection activities that we do.**

