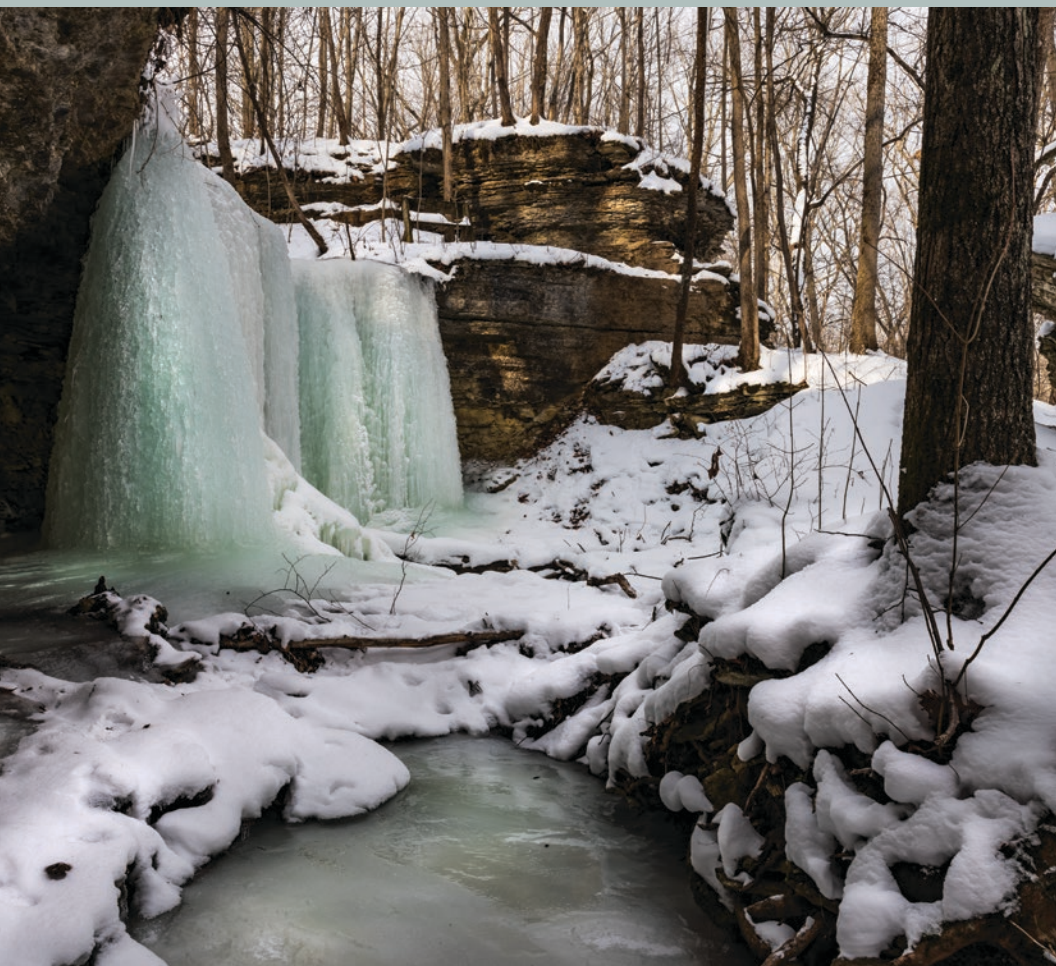


THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Winter 2018 | Vol. 57 – No. 4



ACRES
LANDTRUST

Field Notes From the Land You Love

*Taking Responsibility at Mackel
Nature Preserve*

Your Vital Role in Our Growth

Exploring A Mixed-Use Natural Area



From the Executive Director

Photo by Thomas Sprunger

Dear Member,

Since ACRES protects land forever, I often engage in conversations envisioning what natural areas will look like during the course of forever. We think about how much bigger trees will be in a hundred years, how some lakes will become bogs in a thousand years, how rivers will move. We wonder what plants and animals will dominate, what will no longer be here, what will take their place, etc. Such worthwhile conversations help us understand the scope and importance of ACRES' work in the context of nature's ever-changing reality.

But to notice change, we don't have to look hundreds or thousands of years into the past or future.

As I've come to work at the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve for the past 12 years, I've noticed the animal species walking past my office window have changed. Eight years ago we began seeing wild turkeys; now I watch several trekking past my window on their daily morning commute. This summer we noticed the first black squirrel. We occasionally see river otters. A few years ago, bald eagles resumed patrolling Cedar Creek.

In the Dustin Preserve, it's not just animals changing. Horse pastures have become young forests; wildflower and wild leek populations have migrated. Under unsuspecting oaks and hickories, young beech and sugar maples have begun their slow ascent to dominance. During the last 12 years we watched all the property's large ash trees die due to the emerald ash borer. There's a chance we have witnessed the last large-diameter ash trees on this property forever.

Don't let this hard-to-grasp concept of forever prevent you from paying attention during your own time in it. The preserves are dynamic, their changes noticeable in increments of millennia, centuries, decades, and to the keenly observant, days and even minutes. Participate in forever today: **Visit a preserve**. While you're there, try to recall the past couple hundred years of change in this place, and try to predict what the next couple hundred years will bring. Then enjoy today's experience of forever.

Sincerely,

Jason Kissel

jkissel@acreslandtrust.org
260-637-2273 ext. 2

Cover photo by Thomas Sprunger, taken at Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run near Wabash. See this incredible place for yourself at one of a few upcoming hikes—or all three. See pages 12–13 for details.



ACRES Land Trust preserves, protects and manages 115 properties totaling 7,052 acres.

You can explore more than 70 miles of trails through forever-protected nature preserves, dawn to dusk, thanks to your member support.



1802 Chapman Road
PO Box 665
Huntertown, IN 46748-0665
260.637.ACRES (2273)
acres@acreslandtrust.org

acreslandtrust.org



WELCOME 34newmembers!

Kurt and Katie Briner
Douglas Bishop
Ross Bitzel
from Mathew Kendig
Rachel Burkholder
Nathaniel Devine
from April Allen
Helen Didion
Carrie and Todd Duerfeldt
Sarah Gothe
Melissa and Charles Howarth
Anthony Juliano
Ronnie Kohn and Julie Schurz
Richard Kuster
Margaret Lambert
Jim MacDonald
Kay Munger
Julie and Jason Newburg
Cyndy and Tim O'Brien

Wendy and Dennis Oberlin
Linda and Jason Pickerman
Diane Quance
Gene Ramsbey
Linda Raichart
Buck Rogers
Julie and Gregg Sappenfield
Beth and Scott Seiler
Shirley Shipley
Rick and Cindy Spear
from Deborah Kaiser
Deb Voors
Red and Sue Walter
from Janet Canino
Rob Wilder Jr.
Jaime Wilson and Lori Meyers
Diana and Steve Woolley
Mark Workman
Andrea and Kevin Wyatt

Many thanks to Kelly Shepherd, ACRES' temporary contractual outreach specialist, for her service with direct outreach. As her work giving presentations, hosting community booths, connecting to partner organizations, leading our Share the Trails volunteer crew, and more, comes to an end, ACRES reflects in gratitude on the new people she connected to our mission, to our preserves and to the natural world. We had fun, Kelly! Best wishes!

tributes

Pam Barcalow
from Carol Ringenberg
Gene S. Ramsbey
from all of his children

David Van Gilder
from Eric and Kay Beemer, Michael Hand and
Sherry Hartzler-Hand and Angie and Dan O'Neill

memorials

Ralph Campbell
from David Anderson, Theresa Anderson,
Suzanne Brown, Pam Havlin, DeVon and
Sonia Lyon, Tina Puitz, Gary and Sherri Sible,
Tom Trentadue, Jack and Penny Tuttle and
Greg and Cathy Vick
Edward Eberhardt
from Art Eberhardt, Fred C. and Mary Anna
Feitler, Dan and Judy Kaufman, Angie and
Dan O'Neill, Janel Avery Rogers and Ted
and Linda Wehrenberg
Jacob Fiechter
from CFS, Inc., Christopher and Karen Flick,
Jean Troup Hartman and Momper Insulation.
Ronald Highland
from Steve and Lee Burris, Pamela Farrell
and Jim and Mary Lou Sorg and Karen Sorg
Steve Morrell
from Tim and Carol Gaham
Gerry Nagel
from Auburn Garden Club

John Charles Nichter
from Old Fort Tee Company
Matthew Shumaker
from Suzanne K. Dunn
Phillip R. Smith
from Sheri and Mike Carney, Pamela and
Terry Fausz, Dan and Judy Kaufman, Dennis
Klein, Ned Snyder, Dane and Patricia Strait,
Richard and Judy Yoder, Mastermind
Consulting Network
Carol Summers
from Diana L. Harris
Daniel R. Thiel
from LeElla Balliet, Sara and Richard Conrow,
Joel and Linda Eberhard, C&A Tool Engineering,
Inc., Daniel R. Thiel, Jr. and Karen Thiel
Margret Winicker
from Lutheran Social Services of Indiana



STEWARDSHIP UPDATE: Field notes from the land you love

By Lettie Haver, outreach manager, with Casey Jones, director of land management

ACRES ON THE MOVE

Salamonie Property* | Wabash County | Scaling up land management with your support

In late 2017, ACRES acquired a 96-acre preserve near our Kokiwanee preserve and within the confluence of the Wabash and Salamonie Rivers. A surprise mitigation funding offer from NiSource not only helped acquire this land, but also bought our first heavy equipment, to tackle thickets of non-native invasive plants. The skid steer, pictured above, as well as the trailer to haul it, allows ACRES the chance to boost our efficiency managing land.

"We're scaling up, rapidly accelerating land management to meet the demands of our ever-increasing acreage," says director of land management Casey Jones. "ACRES is grateful to the many funding sources and our members who make it possible to invest in caring for land."

With support from the Barrett Land Management Endowment and restoration funding programs, ACRES hired a second land management specialist in the spring. (Matt Dunno joined Evan Hill in the field.) Until now, ACRES has paid contractors to perform site-specific restoration work. By hiring our own staff and investing in our equipment, rather than a contractor's, we can manage more land, well beyond a particular project or place. Additionally, Blue Jean Gala donors helped purchase a utility vehicle to save time and labor.

To double your end-of-year investment in ACRES, The Cairn Foundation will provide a matching grant for annual donations to purchase new equipment. As a result of diverse and generous support for the land, our team and our fleet is growing. Fiscal responsibility means ACRES must increase its capacity to manage its increasing lands. As our land holdings grow, we need your help. Volunteers and donor investment remain essential to our work. We invite you to celebrate our, remarkable growth, built upon your continued support. Your membership makes it possible for major investors to join you in ACRES' work caring for the land we protect together.

**The Salamonie property in Wabash County is being conserved, in partnership with ACRES Land Trust and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, by funding and technical assistance made available as habitat mitigation for impacts we anticipate through the Greentown Reynolds Transmission Line construction. This funding partnership with NiSource allows the utility to meet its mitigation requirements and, together with your support, ensures the habitat will be protected forever.*

Walter H. and E. Marie Myers Nature Preserve on Flowers Creek | Miami County



ACRES is using our newest equipment to haul dead, fallen, nonnative invasive Ailanthus ("Tree of Heaven") out of this preserve, making room for native plants. Funding to fight the Ailanthus comes from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Then—a first for ACRES—we'll prepare for a future reforestation by establishing a shallow-rooted cover in the tree planting. Over winter, we'll frost-seed 80 acres of field with a native wild rye grass from a local genotype harvested within 100 miles of the nature preserve. We're planting the rye to suppress weeds to prepare for a native hardwood tree planting.

Want to pitch in for this preserve? Saturday, December 8, you can help ACRES finish removing tires from this preserve. Work Day details, page 13.



Pehkokia Woods | Mitigation Update | Huntington County

By summer's end, mitigation crews had completed earth work here, restoring more natural drainage, adding gradual sloping banks to a constructed pond, and moving the parking area closer to the road. We're wondering: Will visitors spot a meandering stream trickling through these new, gently sloping banks when they're covered in snow?

In time, the mitigation team will plant a number of 6- to 7-foot tall trees here in Pehkokia Woods. For cost-efficiency on our larger-scale tree plantings, ACRES typically plants seedlings no bigger than small twigs.

For our general reforestation purposes, we don't need each plant to thrive, just the majority. However, because of the Pehkokia Woods project's specific mitigation funding source, it has distinct criteria for success. Thus, they're planting these larger, more expensive trees because they have a higher success rate. Once planted in large trees, this reforestation will look quite different from other ACRES restoration projects in their initial years. You can enjoy the transformation of Pehkokia Woods by visiting it in all seasons.

MANAGING LAND

James P. Covell Nature Preserve | DeKalb County

When ACRES acquired this preserve south of Auburn, about 40 of its 96 acres were in corn and soybean production. This spring, look for ACRES to reforest the northernmost 17-acre field, along County Road 427 (most recently planted in soybeans), in native hardwoods. Funding for these trees comes through the Wetlands Reserve Program via the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Taking it on the road: Tech Tips with Casey

By year's end, Casey Jones will have made two presentations on ACRES' use of technology to combat non-native invasive species. At the 2018 Indiana GIS (geographic information system) Day & Conference in Indianapolis, he'll share the team's experience using Esri's GIS (Environmental Systems Research Institute) collector app for mapping their tracks while they spray herbicide. He'll really take both the show and the crew on the road to share ACRES' success with land management professionals from across the country at Invasive Plant Control Inc.'s "Innovations in Invasive Species Management" in Nashville, Tennessee.

Over winter, Jones will evaluate how to incorporate volunteer preserve steward reporting into the same GIS system.

ACQUISITION UPDATE

Kristie Fuller expands Hurb and Francis Fuller Woods

Wells County land donor Kristie Fuller recently added an 18-acre life estate to the 56-acre preserve named for her grandfather and father, that she donated in 2017.

"I don't have children. I'm the last one on my line. I think my family would have thought this was a good thing to do, to keep the place taken care of in perpetuity, with their names on it," says Fuller.

Read more about Fuller family land: acreslandtrust.org/fuller

SCRAPBOOK (top left, clockwise) 1) ACRES hosted our first-ever Stewardship Gathering over a humid couple of days in August, inviting land managers from the tri-state area to learn, share and explore. 2) Our summer Land Management interns enjoyed time networking and learning during the Stewardship Gathering. 3) Interns also helped teams from Purdue Fort Wayne and the University of Saint Francis sample Cedar Creek for fish and mussels prior to our proposed low-head dam removal project. 4) Cedar Creek is home to a variety of native mussels. 5) Cedar Creek sampling teams were thrilled to find an American brook lamprey. 6) Casey Jones, director of land management, shares successes killing Ailanthus, or Tree of Heaven, at the Walter H. and E. Marie Myers Nature Preserve on Flowers Creek, with land managers at the Stewardship Gathering. 7) Stewardship Gathering participants traveled to Roann to explore the fish ladder created by Manchester University to help fish migrate around Stockdale Dam. 8) (center of row) Summer Cedar Creek sampling introduces land management interns to new techniques, species and potential careers. 9) Regional land managers appreciated the opportunity to explore ACRES' unique Grass Lake nature preserve in LaGrange County, perhaps the state's largest marl flat. Photos 3, 4 and 8 by Cathie Rowand.

SUMMER LAND MANAGEMENT SCRAPBOOK



MANAGING LAND

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY:

Removing the low-head dam at Mackel Nature Preserve

By Lettie Haver, outreach manager, with Dr. Jerry Sweeten, board member; Photos by Cathie Rowand

“What did the fish say when he was swimming upstream and hit concrete?” “Dam!”

Dr. Jerry Sweeten, ACRES board member, retired Manchester University biology professor and expert on low-head dam removal, enjoys a good laugh and talking waterways. He loves fish, river ecology, teaching and preservation. He’s led the charge in removing three low-head dams on the Eel River through the Eel River Watershed Initiative.

As part of a bequest from Dr. Frederick Mackel, ACRES recently acquired a low-head dam on Cedar Creek. With Dr. Sweeten’s help, we aim to remove it, addressing two major issues:

HUMAN SAFETY. Though low-head dams appear harmless, even charming or alluring, they are dangerous.

Water flowing over a low-head dam gains speed and power as it is squeezed over the wall. It plunges across the dam with great force, hits bottom, then recirculates in a forceful, repeating cycle. This current, called a hydraulic boil, is nearly impossible to escape. But the danger is not apparent, least of all to unsuspecting paddlers, and to children.

ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY. Removing low head dams opens fish passageways and offers rivers and streams the ability to behave as they need to, unobstructed.

“If you take out the low-head dam, the stream knows what to do,” says Dr. Sweeten. “The science is good, predictable. Comparisons of sampling done both before and after dam removal, show that within every 100 feet of the dam, “species and numbers of fish taper by 25 to 30 percent.” Sweeten predicts early sampling on Little Cedar Creek will show the same. He also predicts victory: removing the dam will equalize distribution. The creek will find integrity.

As you might guess, Dr. Sweeten’s initial interest in removing low-head dams was...fishy. He was unaware of the dangers these dams posed to people. His view has shifted significantly: “I don’t want to speak with one more mother who lost her child to a low-head dam accident. Let’s get this thing out so nobody gets killed here.”

“This is one of the biggest no-brain ecological exercises ever.”

– Dr. Jerry Sweeten

Though the benefits of removal are agreed upon by all the governing agencies, removing low-head dams requires a mighty pen and tenacious persistence.

The first obstacle is permission. Most dams are owned by private citizens as part of the deed to their property. While private landowners don’t own the water, they do own the land under the water. In earlier times, landowners could and did put dams on a river, often to grind grain or to generate hydroelectric power for mills or breweries.

In our case, ACRES now owns the dam at Mackel Nature Preserve and is eager to remove it. Here’s our process for removal:

GENERAL TIMELINE

SUMMER AND FALL 2018 | Purdue Fort Wayne and the University of Saint Francis sampled the creek for fish and mussels. See more photos and details on page 7.

WINTER 2018 | Submit two funding requests for dam removal and compliance monitoring.

SUMMER 2019 | Learn the status of funding requests. If funded, monitor the biological and physical parts of the creek above and below the dam.

FALL 2019 AND WINTER 2020 | Solicit permitting applications from Indiana Department of Environmental Management, the Army Corps of Engineers, and Department of Natural Resources.

FALL 2020 | Remove the dam. Since up to 80 percent of riverine fish species migrate upstream and spawn during spring and summer, fall is the ideal time to avoid disturbing fish spawning and mussels. And stream levels are lower.

SUMMER 2021 | Sample Cedar Creek again, looking for the predicted equal distribution of species.

The gift of this land gives ACRES the unique opportunity to act—to take responsibility for both stream ecology and human safety. That’s a good dam story.



Center spread by Thomas Sprunger, taken at Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run. You’re invited to explore this wild preserve with ACRES during a few weeks when up to 100 Bald Eagles roost nearby and can be seen hunting waterways during the day. See pages 12–13 for hike options: a Java Jaunt, a Swift Hike and Creek Stomp—Winter Edition.



SHARE THE TRAILS HIKES

Free to the public, donations encouraged. These casual, non-interpretive, volunteer-led hikes are easygoing social walks, welcoming new folks to the trails and to ACRES.



Saturday, December 1, 10 am

LaGRANGE COUNTY | Fawn River Nature Preserve
Just west of 10100 E. 800 N, Orland, IN 46776

Refresh your senses with a trek on the trails of this 135-acre state-dedicated preserve.

FIRST HIKES

Tuesday, January 1

Celebrate the New Year with an exhilarating hike (or two)—and cocoa!

1 pm | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve, ACRES Office
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

We'll share the trails and warm-up in the beautiful ACRES office.

4 pm | Wing Haven, Studio Cabin
180 W. 400 N, Angola, IN 46703

Let's hike, then gather 'round the wood-burning stove in Helen Swenson's former studio cabin

WORLD WETLANDS DAY

Saturday, February 2, 10 am

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Part of a community-wide celebration of wetlands with conservation partners Allen County Parks, Fort Wayne Parks, Little River Wetlands Project and Purdue Fort Wayne's Environmental Resource Center. *Presented by Jason Kissel and Share The Trails volunteers.*

BALD EAGLES & FROZEN WATERFALLS—MIAMI & WABASH COUNTY WONDERS

For a few weeks a year, up to 100 Bald Eagles roost near our preserves in Wabash and Miami counties. Trek these spectacular places, taking in frozen waterfalls and geologic formations, watching eagles hunt the rivers all day and fly in and out to roost. Wander on your own, or join us:

JAVA JAUNT

Wednesday, February 13, 10 am

MIAMI COUNTY | Seven Pillars Nature Preserve
3555 E. Mississinewa Road, Peru, IN 46970

Followed by "treat yourself" stop for coffee at Modoc's in Wabash

BALD EAGLES & FROZEN WATERFALLS BRRRISK HIKE

Saturday, February 16, 2–6 pm

WABASH COUNTY | Kokiwanee
5825 E. 50 S, Lagro, IN 46941

Then to Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run, Asherwood and Seven Pillars Nature Preserve

We've expanded last year's most popular Swift Hike! Stop for a restroom break and to warm up with cocoa at Asherwood, then head up the road to spot Bald Eagles and hike. ACRES volunteer Janelle hosts these fast-paced multi-preserve hikes as an introduction to the preserves. This will be a fast, challenging walk; you are welcome to drop to your own pace and leave the caravan as needed. Are you ready to get moving? Space is limited. *RSVP by February 14 to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or at 260.637.2273.*

WORK DAY

Saturday, December 1, 9:30 am–noon

ALLEN COUNTY | Founders Forest Expansion

Meet at: Bicentennial Woods, 340 E. Shoaff Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Join land management specialists Matt Dunno and Evan Hill to remove piles of debris—tires, appliances—from a new, closed preserve. Meet at Bicentennial Woods for directions to the closed property.

WORK DAY

Saturday, December 8, 8:40 am–1 pm

MIAMI COUNTY | Walter H. and E. Marie Myers Nature Preserve on Flowers Creek—a closed preserve; 2610 East Chili Mill Road, Denver, IN 46926

Will you help remove tires from this beautiful place? The day begins with a full country breakfast at 8:40 am in the 1900s farmhouse, lovingly restored by land donors Dana (Myers) and Duane Davis; the homestead belonged to the Myers family for over a century. *RSVP by December 5 to Casey Jones at cjones@acreslandtrust.org or to the ACRES office at 260.637.2273.*

MEMBERS-ONLY TAI CHI

Saturday, January 12, 10 am

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Tai Chi instructor Hitomi Griswold will lead you through this gentle, energizing practice in the beautiful setting of the Dustin home. All levels welcome. Space is limited.

RSVP to hbarth@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273.

MEMBERS-ONLY BOOK CLUB ROUND-ROBIN

Friday, January 18, 6 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Bring your favorite nature book(s) to share while gathered 'round the fire. We'll introduce our titles in fast, enticing two-minute snippets. Depending on attendance, you may only have time for one book. What will you share?

CREEK STOMP—WINTER EDITION

Saturday, January 26, 2 pm

WABASH COUNTY | Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run
1866 E. Baumbauer Road, Wabash, IN 46992

During the winter months, this active creek reveals a whole new batch of discoveries: 20-foot icicles, frozen waterfalls and fossils. Come see what you've been missing! Weather depending, we'll either be walking through frigid water or on ice—waterproof boots suggested. Regardless, you'll be cold, wet and captivated. *Presented by the Kissel Family.*



MEMBERS-ONLY "LAY OF LAND"

DISCUSSION—NEW, CLOSED PRESERVE & HOME

Saturday, February 23, 2 pm

HUNTINGTON COUNTY | New, closed preserve

Discuss ACRES' work protecting this area from a newly protected nature preserve and woodsy, open-concept home (reminiscent of the ACRES Office) on the ancient bank of the Wabash River, a bluff overlooking the river today. *Presented by Jason Kissel.*

Space is limited. *RSVP for location by February 20 to: outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260.637.2273 for address.*

MEMBERS-ONLY ASHERWOOD MAPLE SYRUP MAKING & PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Saturday, March 16, 9 am–noon

WABASH COUNTY | Asherwood Environmental Center
7496 W SR 124, Wabash, IN 46992

Can you smell the warm pancakes and fresh-made syrup? Feel the cool, crisp air of the winter woods on your cheek? It's sugar bush season! You're invited to breakfast and a guided tour of ACRES' maple sugaring operation. Volunteers needed. See page 18 for details. *Presented by Bill Harmsen and Jason Kissel.*

No reservations required. \$5/person, children under 5 free. Come early or stay late and explore this incredible place that your membership helps protect.

IN YOUR WORDS

Sharing ACRES: Your vital role in our growth

By Lettie Haver, outreach manager; with Carol Roberts, board member and *Quarterly* editor

Ask any ACRES member about finding ACRES and their reasons for deciding to join, and you'll most likely get responses ranging from naming other members, social media, and their own, often exceptional experiences hiking in the preserves.

As part of ACRES' strategic plan to evaluate our work, starting last winter, we began surveying new members in their welcome packet, and this summer, we sent survey requests to current and lapsed members and donors.

If you responded to either of these inquiries, thank you! Your contributions will help us grow.

Both surveys reinforce that you, our members, and ACRES preserves are our top referrals for new participants.

New members' responses to "What convinced you to join?" inform and inspire:

"ACRES' absolutely vital agenda to preserve land. I decided to invest in what I believe in!"

"I've enjoyed many hikes the past few years. It's time to give back."

"Something I believe in: preserving land for future generations to know what earth used to look like. The need to care for areas here that I love."

"Compassion for the land."

"The love of natural areas, and the desire to see this area...protected forever!"

Current and lapsed members and donors choose these words to describe their personal motivations for participating in ACRES:

RESPONSIBILITY	53.68%
BEAUTY	33.68%
SENSE OF PLACE	27.37%
SENSE OF COMMUNITY	25.26%
RESPECT	18.95%
LEGACY	14.74%
HERITAGE	14.74%

Both surveys reinforce that while some learn about ACRES by chancing upon preserves, and becoming curious to explore, many said they discovered and joined ACRES because you invite them to, because you take them on hikes, because you tell them—in person and on social media—about our work.

This means that when you share a news clipping, a personal story, an event promotion, a Facebook post, a preserve postcard, your *Quarterly*, you're offering someone the opportunity to participate in ACRES.

Did you know: many say they've read the *Quarterly* and/or hiked in the preserves for years before joining as a member, or participating in an event, or volunteering? It's as if many people are simply waiting to be asked. Hikers may not read preserve signs or recognize the land is protected by a local nonprofit. We even hear from people who think ACRES preserves—the places you help protect—are part of park systems maintained by tax dollars.

You can help us tell our story and clarify how your participation helps protect land.

When you talk about ACRES with friends, family members, neighbors and co-workers, you not only support our growth, you also raise awareness of the value of preserving local land. Thank you!

Here's more, from our newest members, on why they joined ACRES:

"I love hiking with my grandpa at your preserves. Conservation is one of the more important things we can do, so joining made sense."

"Local, practical land preservation."

"The hikes, the ideals and goals of the organization, my curiosity about a nearby preserve."

"The love of natural areas, the desire to see this area protected by ACRES so it's protected forever!"

"Interested in getting reconnected to the outdoors."

"Grew up on Cedar Creek and want to take care of it."

"Getting ready to retire, will have free time to participate."

"Have been meaning to join for quite a while...kept seeing it on Facebook."

We invite you to invite your friends and family to walk in a preserve, to join ACRES and to find ways to more intentionally share your love for ACRES, for the land we protect.

Will you give the gift of an ACRES membership this season?

Through December 31, if you give friends or family a \$25 gift membership, ACRES will also send your gift recipient a bonus Preserve Guide, a \$10 value at no extra cost to you. You can help ACRES grow and introduce your friends to the benefits of protecting land together. Use the enclosed gifted membership envelope to send in your gifts. For additional gifts, please enclose a note listing your gift recipient's name and address. Thank you!

CONNECTING COMMUNITY

A breakthrough in the making: **Exploring a mixed-use natural area**

By Jason Kissel, executive director

ACRES owns a lot of land, and a lot of nonprofits need land to help fulfill their mission. As a result, ACRES gets many requests from nonprofits to use our land, some of which we can accommodate. We love our properties to be used as venues for education, recreation and compatible artistic, health and spiritual activities. However, many programs that nonprofits need to provide in a natural area aren't compatible with ACRES' goals for our properties.

As a result of these community needs, we're exploring a new idea—deemed a breakthrough idea by the Foellinger Foundation of Fort Wayne, Indiana. We envision a 300- to 500-acre natural area development to accommodate multiple uses by nonprofits: a shared cultural area surrounded by nonprofit offices and facilities, giving each nonprofit group access to nature-rich commons in the middle. Thanks to a \$39,050 Breakthrough Grant from Foellinger, ACRES can take the next steps in exploring and determining the feasibility of this idea.

We suspect this model (based on for-profit development models with shared central resources like golf courses or mixed-use retail surrounded by housing) will work well as a nonprofit tool for community enrichment and service.

Although many nonprofit services benefit from easy access to large natural areas such as public parks, the capital and ongoing expenses of owning and maintaining land and amenities are prohibitive. A dedicated nature development—allowing organizations to share common land—would free each organization to concentrate on its mission and strengths, rather than acquiring and managing land. We also envision a shared meeting space and spaces like a boardroom, community room and kitchen, available to all tenants, as well as equipment such as a large-format printer, high capacity copier and commercial-grade document shredder.

This natural area concept closely aligns with ACRES' mission to protect natural areas and encourage an appreciation for those spaces. We value a growing awareness of people's

place within, and responsibility to, the natural world—the intrinsic and diverse benefits of natural places and the life they sustain. We facilitate the compelling desire of individuals, families and communities to preserve our local land. And we believe in supporting other nonprofit organizations in our region with this innovative facility.

Although we regularly hear the call for such a development, we know of no comparable example of this vision realized anywhere else in the country, making this particular multi-use natural property the first of its kind. Because this type of research and development funding is tough for nonprofits to acquire, ACRES is especially grateful to the Foellinger Foundation for their grant fully funding this idea's exploration. While ACRES believes this an idea worth exploring, we may not be the right organization to lead or develop the initiative. We're starting the conversation and curious about where it will go.

Stay tuned for updates as we progress along this exploratory journey!

Potential services that could be offered include:

Youth development
Animal rehabilitation
Equine therapy
Wilderness therapy
Schools
Retreats

Fitness opportunities
Community gardens
Accessible trails
Outdoor classrooms
Fishing
Religious/spiritual practices

Mountain biking
Group camping
Artist studios
Research
Foraging
Scouting groups



Promote Preservation: Give the Gift of ACRES

Seasonal Gift Membership offer: Through December 31, you can give the gift of membership and a Preserve Guide for only \$25—a savings of \$10 and an investment that will last. Use the enclosed envelope to return your gifted membership and we'll send your gift recipient a Preserve Guide with a note about your gift.

New this season: Buy ACRES gear online

acreslandtrust.org/shop

New, limited-edition, hand-screened tees from Yonder Clothing Company featuring a quote from Henry David Thoreau:

"All nature is doing her best each moment to make us well."

\$20 in the office; \$25 online with shipping and handling.

ACRES Preserve Guides, a durable guide to more than 50 trail systems open dawn to dusk. \$10 in the office; \$13 online with shipping and handling.

ACRES double-walled hot/cold stainless steel beverage bottles.

Keep your hot drinks hot this winter and your water ice cold in the summer. \$10 in the office; \$15 online with shipping and handling.

ACRES bottle holder slings. Hike and explore, hands-free. Turquoise, amethyst or gray/green. Slings include a pocket and fold up for storage. \$10 in the office; \$13 online with shipping and handling.

ACRES beanie or sock-cap. Keep your noggin warm in the woods! (And represent ACRES in your 'hood:). \$10 in the office; \$13 online with shipping and handling.

ACRES Acorn window cling, designed by Yonder Clothing Company (pictured bottom right). \$3 in the office; \$5 online with shipping and handling.



Shop online: acreslandtrust.org/shop or in the office: ACRES is open Monday–Friday, 9 am–4 pm. Due to the nature of our work, we may be in the field. Please call ahead to be sure we're here to help you. The ACRES office is closed December 21–25 and January 1.



Outreach Volunteer Opportunities: Will you help?

HOME & GARDEN SHOW, February 28–March 4

You can help at our booth by sharing your excitement about ACRES, greeting guests and selling memberships and gear. Volunteers receive a free pass to the show.

Training for the show will be 10 am, Saturday, February 16 at the ACRES Office, 1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748. **If you are interested, please contact Natasha Manor at 260.637.2273, ext. 4 or nmanor@acreslandtrust.org.**

SPECIAL thanks

ACRES preserve stewards and caretakers
Annual Member Meeting volunteers

Amanda Amstutz, Chris Fairfield, Danielle Faurote, Charles Lake, Russ Voorhees and Janelle Windsor
leading hikes

Stephanie Bailey, Kris Connerly, Nancy Conrad, Chris Fairfield and Sandra Lamp
native garden work

Larry Biggerstaff, Keith and Louise Pomeroy
hosting annual members-only Popp Open House

Dave Brumm, Steve Hague and Keith Pomeroy
repairs at Mackel Home

Dave Brumm, Laura Colpitts, Nancy Conrad, Norm Cox, Barb Gorney, Jodie Frecker, Jim Haddock, Sandra Lamp, Mark Maffey, Angie O'Neill, Shane Perfect and Judith Schroff
Quarterly collating and distributing

Bushey's Windows, Doors and Sunrooms
discounting new windows at Wildwood

Beth Buyze, Kris Connerly, Nancy Conrad, Mark and Mary Ellen Maffey, Jill Noyes, Louise Pomeroy, Brandon Terry, Jenna Uecker
providing meals for Annual Stewardship Meeting in August

Kris Connerly and Sandra Lamp
welcoming members to Popp Open House

Sue Diefenbach
helping with budget and financial reports, board minutes

Mary Anna Feitler
membership processing

Pam George
coordinating the Annual Member Meeting

Penni Harris, Tyler Montgomery, Pablo Romero, Cathy, Jeremy and Max Wright
Autumn Olive workday at Hathaway at Ross Run Preserve

I-69 Trailer Center
discounting new trailer

Amy Kissel and Kirk Swaidner
hosting Creek Stomp at Hathaway at Ross Run Preserve

LaOtto Brewing
donating beer for Annual Member Meeting

Louise Pomeroy
organizing Quarterly distribution, office volunteer

Sweet Sanity
donating ice cream for Annual Member Meeting

Terry Tucker
grading the office drive

wish list

Order from ACRES' Amazon Wish List: <http://a.co/jgnUxaT>

bird seed

coffee

compostable cups, plates, bowls and dinnerware (no styrofoam, please).

hot cocoa mixes for winter hikes

dust buster or other hand-held vacuum

gas cards

orbital sander

paper

33-gallon trash bags

SAVE THE DATE

ASHERWOOD MAPLE SYRUP MAKING & PANCAKE BREAKFAST FOR MEMBERS

Saturday, March 16, 9 am – noon

WABASH COUNTY | Asherwood, 7496 W SR 124, Wabash, IN 46992

Volunteers are needed for parking, cooking, greeting, check-in and syrup sales.

To volunteer, contact Jason Kissel at jkissel@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273, ext. 2

DIRECTORS: Steven Hammer, President; Carol Roberts, Vice President; Joe Conrad, Vice President; David Schnepf, Treasurer; Norm Cox, Secretary; Connie Haas Zuber, Bob Hake, Ashley Motia, Marc Levy, Stan Moore, Angie Quinn, Dawn Ritchie, Janel Rogers, Wayne Shive, Jerry Sweeten and David Van Gilder.

STAFF: Jason Kissel, Executive Director; Heather Barth, Director of Fund Development; Matt Dunno, Land Management Specialist; Lettie Haver, Outreach Manager; Evan Hill, Land Management Specialist; Casey Jones, Director of Land Management and Natasha Manor, Office and Volunteer Manager.

ACRES Quarterly: Carol Roberts, Editor; Published by ACRES, Inc., at 1802 Chapman Road, PO Box 665, Huntertown, Indiana, for the interest of its members, friends and others similarly dedicated to the preservation of natural areas. ACRES, Inc., is a nonprofit, charitable corporation, incorporated under the laws of Indiana. Contributions are deductible for tax purposes.

MEMBERSHIP: Life Member, \$1,500; Sustaining, \$500; Corporate, \$500; Club/Organization, \$50; Family, \$40; Individual, \$25; Senior or Student, \$15. Dues payable annually.



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

ACRES Land Trust 19

ACRES Land Trust
1802 Chapman Road
PO Box 665
Huntertown, IN 46748



PROMOTE PRESERVATION:

Give the Gift of ACRES!

Seasonal Gift Membership Offer

Through December 31, you can give the gift of membership and a *Preserve Guide* for only \$25—a savings of \$10 and an investment that will last. Use the enclosed envelope to return your gifted membership, and we'll send your gift recipient a *Preserve Guide* with a note about your gift.



acreslandtrust.org