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**Wisconsin Land Conservation Leaders to be Honored
for Outstanding Achievements**

This year Gathering Waters will present awards to people and organizations protecting Wisconsin's land through direct conservation efforts, applied technology, or gifts of land worth millions of dollars.

(September 19, 2019 – Madison, Wis.)—[Gathering Waters: Wisconsin's Alliance for Land Trusts](#) will honor the achievements of five land conservation leaders from around the state at its 2019 Annual Land Conservation Leadership Award Celebration. The ceremony will take place at 5:30 p.m. on September 26, 2019, at the Monona Terrace in Madison, Wisconsin.

The Land Conservation Leadership Awards recognize individuals, land trusts and others for outstanding commitment and leadership in helping to protect Wisconsin's land, water, wildlife and way of life. This statewide conservation event brings together hundreds of land trust leaders, supporters and volunteers from all areas of Wisconsin.

"This year's nomination pool was incredibly competitive," said Mike Carlson, Executive Director of Gathering Waters. "We are pleased to host an event that recognizes the amazing accomplishments of these conservation leaders. They are helping us preserve valuable natural spaces that protect our land and water for the next generation."

Conservationist of the Year – Chambers Island Nature Preserve Executive Committee

[The Chambers Island Nature Preserve Executive Committee](#) is made up of four individuals who own property on Chambers Island in Door County: Mary Brevard, Suzanne Fletcher, Barbara Frank and Mary Jane Rintelman. Appreciating the unique ecological value of the island, these four set out to create a 1000-acre preserve. With a clear vision, plan and resolve, they demonstrated commitment and leadership. By the end of 2019, nearly 850 acres will be permanently protected as a direct result of their extraordinary efforts. The Chambers Island Nature Preserve will be managed by Door County Land Trust.

Harold "Bud" Jordahl Lifetime Achievement Award – Ben Niemann

[Ben Niemann](#) of Sawyer County has been improving conservation practices and outcomes in Wisconsin for over 50 years. Niemann used his background as a landscape architect and Director of Land Information and Computer Graphic

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Facility (LICGF) to harness the power of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to make informed decisions about land use, planning and conservation. The application of these technologies has helped to preserve innumerable acres throughout the state, including his most notable project, the establishment of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway.

Harold “Bud” Jordahl Lifetime Achievement Award – Bryan Pierce

[Bryan Pierce](#) of northern Wisconsin built an incredible conservation legacy throughout Vilas, Oneida, Forest, Florence, Iron, Price and northern Langlade Counties. He founded the Northwoods Land Trust (NWLTL) in 2001 and went on to lead the organization for 18 years. His approach centered on sustainability, community cooperation, long-term thinking and integrity—resulting in the protection of over 13,000 acres of forestland and 70 miles of shoreline in northern Wisconsin.

Land Legacy Award – The Yawkey Lumber Company

The [Yawkey Lumber Company](#) of Oneida County made an incredible gift to the Northwoods Land Trust in 2018. Company shareholders, who are all great-grandchildren of the late Cyrus C. Yawkey, donated 431 acres, including woodlands, wetlands, islands, wildlife habitat and 4.4 miles of natural shoreline on Lake Katherine, a highly scenic, clear water lake in the town of Hazelhurst. The total appraised value of the property was over \$12 million, making it one of the most valuable and sizable outright gifts of land to a land trust in Wisconsin. The Yawkey Nature Preserve’s natural shorelines and old-growth forests will now be protected and available for people in Wisconsin to explore and enjoy for years to come.

Land Trust of the Year – Landmark Conservancy

[Landmark Conservancy](#), which serves 20 counties in western and northwestern Wisconsin, was born of a merger between two nationally accredited land trusts: West Wisconsin Land Trust and Bayfield Regional Conservancy. The merger was completed in 2018, after 2 years of careful deliberation. The two organizations determined a unified and more robust organization could have greater impact on land and water conservation within their service area. The integrated staff of conservation and advancement professionals will help ensure the quality, visibility, and permanence of the conservancy’s work. Landmark Conservancy protects and preserves clean water, healthy soils, habitat for wildlife, sustainable food sources and the space to enjoy the beauty of nature.

The Land Conservation Leadership Award Celebration is open to the public; tickets cost \$60 per person. Sponsors receive complimentary admission. In addition to the awards program, the evening will include a raffle, string quartet, savory hors-d’oeuvres, desserts, a free drink and other surprises in honor of Gathering Waters’ 25th Anniversary. For additional information or to register, visit gatheringwaters.org/awards.

The mission of Gathering Waters: Wisconsin’s Alliance of Land Trusts is to help land trusts, landowners and communities protect the places that make Wisconsin special.