

WILDLANDS PHILANTHROPY

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Matthew Hueston, a soldier under Anthony Wayne, first saw what is now Hueston State Nature Preserve in 1793 when he marched north from Cincinnati to fight Indians at Fallen Timbers. Soldiers at that time were rewarded for their service with land. Hueston claimed the land he had seen that day along Four Mile Creek. He cleared much of it, but did not log two hundred acres on the east bank of the creek. A hundred and fifty years later, commercial loggers threatened the woods that Hueston had spared. A local banker, Morris D. Taylor, therefore bought them and held them in trust for six years until, in 1941, he was able to sell them to the state.

Wildlands philanthropy is a great American tradition. Countless individuals and families have made donations of money or land, either directly or through organizations and agencies. The natural landscape would be more fragmented than it is today were it not for wildlands philanthropy. Despite its honorable history, however, wildlands philanthropy represents only a small fraction of total giving. The tradition merits strengthening.

Who are the wildlands philanthropists

The nation owes many of its parks, forests, refuges, and preserves to individuals or families who have amassed or inherited wealth and chosen to devote at least a portion of it to wildlands preservation.¹ John D. Rockefeller, Jr., helped make possible Great Smoky Mountains National Park, among several other designated areas. George B. Dorr devoted his family's

¹ All examples in this paper are only isolated examples. We do not come near to mentioning the many participants in each of the types of wildlands philanthropy that we discuss.

money, much of their land, and his time to the preservation of Maine's 30,000-acre Mount Desert Island. Under his leadership, and with the support of Rockefeller, the island became Acadia National Park. Maine's former governor Percival Baxter bought what is now the 201,000-acre Baxter State Park for the people of Maine in thirty separate purchases between 1930 and 1962. Joseph Battell gradually purchased over 30,000 acres of forestland in Vermont, almost all of which he left in his will to the public. The 20,000-acre Bread Loaf Wilderness in Green Mountain National Forest is a part of his legacy. T. Coleman DuPont offered to buy the 1657-acre Cumberland Falls area in Kentucky to save the Cumberland River from being dammed. In 1931, after his death, the DuPont family donated the land to the state, as promised, for Cumberland Falls State Park. Katharine Ordway funded The Nature Conservancy's purchase of the 463-acre Devil's Den wild area, now a part of the 1746-acre Lucius Pond Ordway Preserve/Devil's Den in Connecticut. Later she made possible the establishment of grassland preserves totaling around 31,000 acres in five states.

In the past, the wealth that made large-scale philanthropy possible generally stemmed from business or industry. This is still true today. Founders of Esprit, Patagonia, Microsoft, CNN, and Burt's Bees are among the business leaders and former business leaders involved to a greater or lesser extent in wildlands philanthropy. However, entertainers and athletes may also accumulate fortunes and some entertainers, if not athletes, are wildlands philanthropists. Members of the Seattle-based rock groups Pearl Jam and Soundgarden donated \$400,000 to The Land Conservancy of Seattle and King County to permit the conservancy to purchase from a mining company 220 acres of unspoiled land next to the Alpine Lakes Wilderness Area in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains. Paul Newman is narrating radio and television public service announcements for The Nature Conservancy as well as contributing to it a portion of the profits from Newman's Own Line of natural products. Recording artist Don Henley created the Walden Woods Project in the spring of 1990 to prevent construction of an office building and condominium complex in Massachusetts' Walden Woods, made famous by Thoreau. In eight years the project raised more than \$18 million for the purchase and preservation of nearly one hundred acres of land near Walden Pond.

People who devote their lives to conservation are likely to engage in wildlands philanthropy to the extent that their financial means permit. For them, donations for wildlands preservation are one among many tools. Dr. Mary Wharton helped students to appreciate the

natural world by teaching biology at Georgetown College, wrote the standard field guides on the trees and flowers of Kentucky, spoke out on local environmental issues, and, through fifteen to twenty purchases, put together a 278-acre nature sanctuary on cliffs near the Kentucky River. In her will, she directed that her estate be sold to create an endowment to maintain and protect the sanctuary. Genevieve Gillette, the first woman to graduate from the Michigan State School of Landscape Architecture, was the founder and first president of the Michigan Parks Association and a member of the Michigan Natural Areas Council. She greatly influenced the Michigan state park system, and was instrumental in the establishment of Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. In her will, she provided for the creation of a trust to acquire land with certain scenic and natural qualities and to convey them to the state of Michigan. Her estate acquired the 945-acre core of what is now the 5000-acre Thompson Harbor State Park.

Wildlands philanthropy is also the domain of people who are neither wealthy nor, in other respects, conservation activists. The stories of some donors of modest means have been recorded, for example those of Lilley Cornett and Jean Williams. Starting in 1918, Cornett, a coal miner in eastern Kentucky, bought five tracts of woods totaling 550 acres. Of the total, 260 acres were old-growth, mixed mesophytic forest. He refused to sell the timber as did his children after his death. In 1968 the state bought the woods and created a preserve, which is administered by Eastern Kentucky University. In Minnesota, Jean Williams, a clerk for Northwest Airlines, moved in 1959 from St. Paul to an old, 80-acre farm. She added an adjacent property to bring her holding to 205 acres, removed the farm animals, and restored the land. By 1992 she had fifty acres of native prairie, seventy-five acres of woods with good groundcover, and thirty acres of wetlands. She then donated a conservation easement valued at \$347,000 to the state Department of Natural Resources, which allowed the department to use \$347,000 of Critical Habitat Match funds for another project.

Nevertheless, there are thousands of donors of wildlands or of conservation easements who will receive no more public recognition for their gifts than their names in the annual report of a land trust. More numerous and also unnoticed as individuals are the donors of modest sums to campaigns to raise money for specific pieces of land. The gifts to such a campaign, when viewed as a whole, typically assume the shape of a pyramid, with a few large donations on top, a mass of small donations at the bottom. The successful campaign to raise money to purchase Blanton Forest, 2350 never-logged acres in southeastern Kentucky, received money from

foundations and, to a lesser extent, from corporations, but the key to success was individual donors. More than a thousand people, mostly Kentucky residents, gave from one dollar to hundreds of thousands of dollars each for a total of \$1.6 million. During another campaign, in Washington state, several thousand individuals gave to the Loomis Forest Fund, which amassed \$13.1 million from varied sources, to compensate the state for not logging lynx habitat that it owns near Seattle.

A surprising number of foundations give grants for acquisition of wildlands or themselves purchase land, although many do so only occasionally. Most, in order to make an appreciable impact, limit their work to specific geographical areas. The Richard King Mellon Foundation stands out in the scale of its giving—it is among the twenty largest foundations in the United States-- and in the fact that it purchases wildlands across the nation through its American Lands Conservation Program. Gifts have included \$10 million to help the state of South Carolina to buy 32,000 acres of mountain wilderness from Duke Power (total cost \$21 million) and more than 10,000 acres of land for the Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge in St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana.

The Sweet Water Trust is dedicated to conserving wild nature in New England. In the past five years it has protected more than 36,000 acres through acquisition and “highly leveraged grants”. The newly formed Paul G. Allen Forest Protection Foundation seeks to protect and sustain the endangered forest ecosystems of the Northwest and Hawaii. Among its donations is almost \$2 million towards acquisition of the Canyon Lake Creek Forest in Washington State. The David and Lucile Packard Foundation announced in 1998 that it would spend \$175 million during the next five years to protect a quarter of a million acres in California. Many of the acquisitions made with its funds are farmland, but its 1999-2000 grants included five to conservation organizations that resulted in the preservation of over 8000 acres of wildlands in the Sierra Nevada.

As a general rule, each foundation owes its existence to the vision of an individual or a family. The Weeden Foundation, which has helped to purchase and protect approximately 200,000 acres of wildland, mostly in Africa and South America, was founded in 1963 by Frank Weeden, who determined that the foundation’s resources were to be used to address “the adverse impact of growing human populations and overuse of natural resources on the biological fabric of the planet.” Behind the Norcross Wildlife Foundation is Arthur D. Norcross, Sr. He

assembled a 3000-acre (now 4000-acre) wildlife sanctuary in southern Massachusetts. Some thirty years later he established the foundation, the first two purposes of which are ensure the integrity of the sanctuary and to protect wild land wherever it is threatened. The Helen V. Froehlich Foundation was created by a woman of that name who deeply loved Lake George and the surrounding hillsides in New York state. The Foundation has given a series of gifts to the Lake George Land Conservancy, the last of which was \$175,000 for the protection of Pilot Ridge.

Numerous organizations, called land trusts or conservancies, specialize in the preservation of land. The Nature Conservancy, the best-known such organization, concentrated in the past on preserving lands with special biological attributes, particularly rare and endangered species. Often these areas were small. The Conservancy now emphasizes saving large areas; but it acquires and helps to acquire not only wildlands but also so-called “working” landscapes, that is areas from which humans “sustainably” extract resources. Therefore, its overall statistics—more than 12 million acres protected in the United States--do not equal wildlands preserved. The Trust for Public Land (TPL) another national organization, works on occasion with other organizations and agencies to preserve wild areas. However, the organization’s main focus is aptly expressed in its slogan, “The Trust for Public Land, Conserving Land for People.”

The same is certainly true of most of the roughly 1200 local and regional land trusts and conservancies that are members of the umbrella Land Trust Alliance. The Alliance sent us a list of 234 organizations that protect wild lands, but relatively few have such protection as their main purpose. These few include the Wilderness Land Trust, which acquires private lands within federally designated wilderness areas and transfers them to public ownership, and the Wildlands Conservancy in California. In 1999 the Wildlands Conservancy donated to the federal government for inclusion in Joshua Tree National Park, 14,000 acres of former railroad land that it had previously purchased for \$2.5 million to prevent the land’s falling into the hands of developers. The Conservancy’s 93,000-acre Wind Wolves Preserve in the San Joaquin Valley, is the largest privately owned preserve on the West Coast.

Land trusts operating on an international or national scale include the Conservation Land Trust and The Conservation Fund. The Conservation Land Trust, which was founded by Doug Tompkins, also founder of the Foundation for Deep Ecology, has placed under conservation protection more than 1.25 million acres of wild lands in Chile and Argentina. It has also helped

to secure the protection of more than 250,000 additional acres by other organizations. The Conservation Fund describes itself as “the first national conservation organization whose charter includes economic development and conservation as primary goals.” It is particularly skilled in negotiating conservation arrangements among multiple parties. Not all the land that it helps to save will be preserved as “forever wild,” but its acquisitions include such key habitat as critical inholdings in Hells Canyon National Recreation Area in Idaho and in Wood-Tikchik State Park in Alaska.

Some conservation organizations that do not have land protection as their primary purpose acquire and manage preserves. Various chapters of the National Audubon Society, for instance, own preserves. Outstanding among them is Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, 11,000 acres including 700 acres of old-growth bald cypress, in Naples, Florida. The Museum of Natural History and Science at Cincinnati Museum Center co-owns and manages, with the Ohio Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, a series of ten nearly contiguous preserves in southern Ohio, the Richard and Lucile Durrell Edge of Appalachia Preserve System. The system is critical habitat for some one hundred rare species of plants and animals.

Moreover, wildlands philanthropy is practiced on occasion by organizations that are not devoted to conservation. The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America provided the \$75,000 that Rutgers University needed to purchase from Thomas Mettler a 65-acre old growth forest, which had been protected by eight generations of his family, and a buffer. The Brotherhood gave the gift in honor of their founder William L. Hutcheson after whom Rutgers renamed the New Jersey forest. The Huron Mountain Club in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan has set aside for preservation 8000 acres of old growth forest and lakes. The Club owns an additional 10,000 acres of forest, most of which had been clearcut before the Club obtained them. The Club was organized in 1889 as the Huron Mountain Shooting and Fishing Club, but the bond among members, as expressed by the club’s conservation committee, is “their love of the still unspoiled natural beauty of the place.”

Residents of a locality in which a natural area is threatened may band together, informally or in a new organization, to raise money to save it. Such was the case in southern New Hampshire in 1994-95. The Sheldrick family, which had owned a mature 227-acre forest near Wilton since 1897, sold the forest to a developer who planned to log it and then sell residential lots. The Nature Conservancy obtained an eleven-month option to purchase the

property at a cost of \$550,000. Citizens met the challenge. Two neighbors jointly pledged \$100,000, which the Arthur Vining Foundation matched; other pledges ranged from \$2 to \$5000. Fundraising walks, concerts, and poetry readings were held. A nine-year-old girl raised \$350 by selling cookies at her father's office and sending letters of solicitation to friends and family members. The forest is now The Conservancy's Sheldrick Preserve.

In western Virginia residents of Wythe County pooled their resources to pay for a biological inventory of a privately-owned 9000-acre property near Wytheville in the hope that the discovery of rare wildlife would cause the state to purchase the land for the state's natural areas system. The Western Virginia Land Trust collected and disbursed the funds. When the results of the inventory were not such as to make the property a high priority for the natural areas system, the land trust persuaded the Conservation Fund to buy the option and hold the property until the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries could purchase the land. The area became state land in June 2001. It will be a wildlife management area rather than a preserve, but the land is too steep to lend itself to much habitat manipulation, Rupert Cutler, former director of the Western Virginia Land Trust reports.

Religious organizations also may exemplify wildlands philanthropy. The Sisters of Saint Benedict in Madison, Wisconsin, an ecumenical monastic community of women who follow the Benedictine tradition, has restored to prairie with native grasses and wildflowers over half of its 130-acre grounds. The non-profit Appalachia—Science in the Public Interest (ASPI) protects 182 acres of largely forested land in Livingston, Kentucky. The organization was founded and is directed by Albert Fritsch, a Jesuit priest. ASPI obtained its land through a series of transactions including the sale by two local men of 150 acres at greatly reduced prices. The Sisters of St. Joseph of Cincinnati donated \$22,000, which covered the purchase price. Religious organizations own thousands of acres of "green space," in some cases wildlands, particularly in and near cities. For religious orders that are not recruiting young people, the question of what to do with their land looms large.

Corporations on occasion donate wild land and money to acquire wildlands. According to The Nature Conservancy the first major gift of land from a US corporation was Union Camp Corporation's donation of 49,000 acres of the Great Dismal Swamp to the US Department of the Interior for a National Wildlife Refuge. The company, which had owned the land for more than fifty years, deeded the land in 1973; full conveyance was completed in 1975. The Union Camp

land represented about half the swamp in Virginia. Sixty per cent of the swamp's total acreage is in North Carolina. Another significant corporate gift was the 1984 donation to the federal government by Prudential Life Insurance Company of 118,000 acres of pocosin (wetlands with organic soils) in eastern North Carolina. The resulting Alligator National Wildlife Refuge, now 152,000 acres because of additions purchased with Congressional appropriations, is the site of a successful red wolf introduction program. It is also home to alligators and one of the largest remaining concentrations of black bear along the mid-Atlantic coast. DuPont gave to the states of Delaware and Pennsylvania, what is now the 1253-acre White Clay Creek Preserve; Monsanto to Alabama's "Forever Wild" land-acquisition project, 209 acres of land that had become a gathering place for bald eagles; Bridgestone/Firestone to the state of Tennessee, 4000 acres of "wild land" in White and Cumberland Counties that will be open to hunting but apparently otherwise preserved under an easement held by The Conservation Fund.

Corporate donations of money are more frequent than donations of land, since the number of corporations that own wild lands is limited. In March of this year the 3M Foundation donated to The Nature Conservancy \$5.1 million to support its land conservation activities in Minnesota and Texas. A portion of the funding will be used for acquisition of land: near the Wallace C. Dayton Preserve (named after a wildlands philanthropist) in the tallgrass aspen parkland region of Minnesota; between the Conservancy's Ordway Prairie Preserve and its Moe Woods Preserve also in Minnesota; and around the Chihuahua Woods Preserve in Texas. However, giving at this level by corporations is infrequent. A spokesperson for the campaign to purchase Blanton Forest told us that in her experience with land acquisition campaigns, the bulk of the money comes from individuals and foundations. Corporations may give but not significant amounts.

In discussing wildlands philanthropy, we should also mention government agencies. To conservationists, land in private hands and government land are generally considered to be completely different categories. From the point of view of philanthropy, however, the distinction often becomes blurred. Government agencies buy land with the money of taxpayers, and in some states, taxpayers may donate to land purchases through a check off on income tax returns or through the purchase of special automobile license plates. Government land-buying programs are generally the result of pressure from conservationists. Furthermore, government agencies often work with private organizations to acquire specific areas for protection purposes.

At the federal level, the land conservation programs are, according to The Land Trust Alliance: matching grants to states from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (\$40 million in fiscal year 2000); Federal Agency Land Acquisition (\$420 million); Forest Legacy (\$30 million), North American Wetlands Conservation Act (\$15 million); Historic Preservation Fund (\$75 million). Funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund must be appropriated annually, and for the six years prior to 2000 the fund had zero money. Unfortunately Forest Legacy money generally if not always goes to so-called “working forests.” The value to wildlands of the other programs varies with the individual projects and, even in individual cases, the bag may be mixed. The US Fish and Wildlife Service awarded the Columbia Land Trust in Vancouver, Washington, \$999,000 in 2000 to acquire more than 1500 acres of wetlands and associated habitat and “to restore and enhance” additional wetlands. The acquisition is presumably positive, but one cannot help but wonder if the enhancements will all be benign.

At the state level, Florida has for years been considered to have the finest land acquisition program. Under Preservation 2000 and related programs Florida acquired over a ten-year period 1.4 million acres of “exemplary land and water areas” at an estimated cost of \$2.4 billion. The lands are “primarily managed for preservation and outdoor recreation.” The 1999 legislature created the follow-up program Florida Forever, \$300 million a year for ten years for land acquisition and environmental restoration. Not all the lands purchased under these programs are wildlands, but wildlands have been significant beneficiaries. Purchases have included the Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods, in southwest Florida, with extensive unlogged slash pine, red-cockaded woodpeckers, bald eagles, and the endangered pawpaw shrub; Tate’s Hell, swamp dominated by stunted, uncut pond cypress, in northern Florida near Apalachicola National Forest, and the Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge near Melbourne, one of the few remaining turtle nest areas in the state. New York and California have also acquired extensive state lands. A series of bond issues has helped New York to obtain the state-owned land within Adirondack and Catskill Parks and elsewhere. California has financed land acquisition through bonds, legislative appropriations, and mitigation fees. Now more and more states are getting into the land preservation business. To mention only three, Maryland purchases easements, sometimes on wildland, through its Rural Legacy program; Pennsylvania has a Growing Greener

initiative; and Alabama has a Forever Wild program, financed by a portion of the interest earned on profits from the sale of offshore natural gas.

Towns, counties, and, water districts may have land acquisition programs even in states with strong state-level programs. Numerous Florida counties have their own programs, and the state's water management districts also make purchases. Support for local open space programs is growing. According to the Land Trust Alliance, voters approved 174 of 209 ballot measures to fund open space protection in 2000, authorizing \$7.5 billion in local taxing authority and bonds for conservation. Needless to say, only a portion of the land protected by this money will be wildland.

In regard to "wildlands philanthropy" by government agencies and also by corporate donors, we need to state one reservation—certain activities that may sound like philanthropy are actually "mitigation" for destructive activities. A case in point is Sandy Island Preserve in Georgetown County, South Carolina. The South Carolina Department of Transportation purchased the land for the preserve in 1996. It includes between 2500 and 3000 never-plowed acres of old Longleaf Pine. The only logging has been single tree selection. The land that is not in longleaf pine is forested wetlands, recovering from having been drained and used as rice fields. The land is unquestionably worthy of preservation. The catch is that the Department of Transportation (DOT) provided money for the purchase as wetlands mitigation. The South Carolina Chapter of The Nature Conservancy also contributed to the purchase price and manages the property. The Conservancy will own the preserve only after DOT has destroyed enough wetlands elsewhere to use up all the mitigation credits that it received for the purchase.

Because of the high cost of land today, especially, in certain areas of the country, acquisitions, even of small areas, often involve a variety of entities, both public and private. Moreover, they may entail exchanges as well as donations. In the summer of 2000, the Door County Park System in Wisconsin obtained eighty-six acres of the Ellison Bay Headlands, with 2000 feet of undeveloped Niagara Escarpment along Green Bay, a rarity. On the cliffs are a "vertical forest" of ancient stunted northern white-cedar, and snails that were once thought to be extinct. The owner, a B. W. Heineman had spent years piecing the acreage together from small tracts. The appraised value was \$3.1 million. The Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy (on condition that the tract be dedicated a State Natural Area), the Door County Supervisors, and individual members of the community all contributed. The Conservancy's

donation included buying a separate parcel in the Town of Liberty Grove for \$200,000. The town, by the terms of the sale, contributed the Conservancy's money to the Ellison Bay purchase.

What methods do wildlands philanthropists use

The simplest forms of wildlands philanthropy may be an outright gift of land that is already in the possession of the donor, to an entity that will protect it "in perpetuity" or a gift of money to a nonprofit organization for the purchase of wild land. There are, however, a multitude of others ways in which an individual or group may participate in preserving wildlands. Below we describe a few of them starting with those involving land that the donor already owns, then purchase of land by the donor for the purpose of wildlands philanthropy, and finally gifts that do not entail giving either land or money.

Not everyone who would like to protect land permanently can afford to give it away or is willing to stop using it. Donation of a conservation easement (giving up certain rights that normally belong with land, such as development rights) is one possible option. (Another is donating a remainder interest.) Unfortunately many conservation easements ban only full-scale development; and logging or limited development may still take place. However, an easement that decrees that the land must remain "forever wild" is a legitimate wildlands preservation tool, provided that the entity that accepts the easement is capable of enforcing it over the long term. The Jackson Hole Land Trust recently purchased an easement on nineteen acres held in trust by the Wyoming State Land Board for the benefit of Wyoming schools. The purchase completed protection of the southwest boundary of Grand Teton National Park. The Jackson Hole Trust paid the land board \$1.2 million that the trust raised from private donors. Wyoming schools will benefit from the money, and the land will continue to provide habitat for such species as grizzly bear and mountain lions.

Bargain sales are an option for the owner who does not want to retain the land but needs to recoup part of the sale price—the owner sells land at less than fair market value to an organization or agency that will protect it. In 1994, under such an arrangement, an Atlanta businessman Charles Smithgall, Jr. sold 5,500 acres of "prime mountain land" in north Georgia at half its appraised value to the state for a nature preserve. Use of the resulting Smithgall Woods-Dukes Creek Conservation Area is limited to passive recreation such as hiking and

picnicking. An editorial in the *Atlanta Constitution* stated that the best way for the state to say thank you is to honor the philanthropist's dream of preserving the area.

Conservationists may purchase land and hold it for a period of time in order to further a philanthropic goal. The aim may simply be to maintain the land in a wild condition, but philanthropists may buy land at least in part for the purpose of restoring it. Ted Turner owns some 1.7 million acres, mostly on the Great Plains and on the edge of the Rocky Mountains. Replacing the cattle with bison, antelope, deer, elk, and prairie dogs, he tries to let the land remain natural. Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest near Louisville, Kentucky, is another example. Isaac W. Bernheim, an immigrant from Germany, achieved financial success by founding a distilling company in Kentucky. In gratitude to the people of Kentucky, he gave them numerous gifts including 14,000 acres of land, which he entrusted to the Isaac W. Bernheim Foundation in 1929. The land had been depleted by farming, and heavily logged. Workmen initiated soil improvement and reforestation. Today the property is composed of 12,000 acres of natural woods and 2,000 acres with an arboretum, picnic area, and other facilities. The staff still engage in restoration, as they are now working to remove exotic species.

Purchasing a piece of property to hold it until a government agency or conservancy can buy it to protect it is a much-needed form of philanthropy. The Nature Conservancy, the Trust for Public Land, and The Conservation Fund often act as a bridge between the property owner and an appropriate agency. However, these organizations are not willing or able to become involved every time that a piece of land that should be conserved goes up for sale. Henry Dalton bought Nanny's Mountain, an undeveloped monadnock in northern South Carolina in 1996 and held onto it until a conservation deal could be arranged. Nation Ford Land Trust eventually bought the land from him at a bargain price with money from the Palmetto Foundation and York County. In the portion of Adirondack Park near Lake Champlain the Eddy Foundation has purchased two thousand acres of private land in numerous transactions over the last two years with the intention of protecting them until the state is willing to purchase them for the park's Forest Preserve. The foundation intends to use any money that it may eventually receive from the sale of land to acquire and protect additional land. A family in the same area obtained a loan to purchase an old 160-acre farm, because the forest on it was in

imminent danger of being logged. Their goal was to sell the 110 acres of forest to the state for permanent protection in its Forest Preserve. Since the forest was bordered on three sides by state land, such a sale appeared feasible. The state paid for the 110 acres approximately three years after the family made its purchase.

Some conservationists create a wildlife preserve by buying adjacent pieces of land held by a variety of owners. The process of acquiring the various tracts of land may demand many years and usually requires ingenuity, patience, and determination as well as money. Between 1923 and 1965 Judge J. C. Hunter and later his son, J. C. Hunter, Jr., purchased piece by piece 72,000 acres in the Guadalupe Mountains of Texas. As early as 1925 Judge Hunter tried without success to persuade Congress to establish a National Park in the area. In the mid-sixties, his son sold the amassed land to the National Park Service for Guadalupe Mountains National Park at the bargain price of \$1.5 million, about \$21 per acre. The value of the gift lies in the work of consolidating the holdings as much as in the land's dollar value per acre. The judge and his son pieced together the land before it was developed or in high demand. Had the work of consolidation been left until 1966, it would likely have been impossible.

Individuals and families may be steered to ecologically valuable purchases by conservation buyer programs, that is programs that match conservationists interested in buying land with land in need of protection. Some land trusts operate such programs. The Crested Butte Land Trust in Colorado is among them. As part of the program an individual or group buys property and gives an easement on it to the land trust. The easement, agreed to by the buyer and trust, may allow a house to be built in a location deemed suitable or even limited development, but ideally the easement instead protects the land in a natural state. The trust works with local real estate agents to identify land for the program, but does not accept a commission on any purchases made through its referrals.

Exercising stewardship over land that a family already owns by restoring it if necessary and maintaining it in a natural condition is an important aspect of wildlands philanthropy. An individual need not have purchased land for his or her efforts to "qualify." Timothy Barnett, former director of the Adirondack Nature Conservancy/Adirondack Land Trust believes, in fact, that a report on wildlands philanthropy should be less concerned with donations than with "private families who create a wilderness on their own land and safeguard it." Robert and Sandi Friedman, who own the 4500-acre Hopkinton Tract and the 5400-acre Giddings Tract in the

northwestern part of Adirondack Park are examples of people who safeguard a wilderness on their own land. The only logging on the Hopkington Tract has been the removal of a few white pines, probably for ship masts, during the Civil War. The Giddings Tract was selectively logged by the US Forest Service as part of a silvicultural experiment

An indirect form of wildlands philanthropy for those without the wherewithal to donate wildlands is the gift of property that can be sold to generate money for the purchase of wildlands. Greenleaf Chase, an ardent conservationist and a long-time employee of the New York Department of Conservation, willed his house to the Adirondack Nature Conservancy because he wanted the Conservancy to sell the property and put to good use the money realized. Laura Oakes Cushman, a descendant of pilgrim John Alden, gave 27 acres, now Captain David Cushman, Jr. Preserve, to the Wildlands Trust of Southeastern, Massachusetts. After her death, most of the contents of her house on the property were auctioned as she had wished. The auction raised \$350,000 for the trust. [Boston Globe, June 7, 1998] One of the many means by which the Santa Barbara Land Trust in California raises money is selling paintings of endangered sites. In forty exhibitions, painters have raised \$350,000 for the trust and other environmental organizations.

An additional means of participating in wildlands preservation is influencing others. Conservationists who are convinced of the need for wildlands preservation and who are able to convey their conviction to others may make major contributions to wildlands philanthropy without donating land or large sums for land themselves. Renowned botanist E. Lucy Braun played a key role in the creation of the Edge of Appalachia Preserve system in southern Ohio even though she could not afford to buy land. She studied and reported on the land in the 1920s, and she encouraged her students to donate. Two of them in particular, Richard and Lucile Durrell were early leaders in efforts to protect the area, and they willed more than \$13 million to the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History and Science, largely for the preserve. The conservation leader Rosalie Edge is rightly credited with creating Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania, but she apparently did not donate any money for the purchase. She arranged in mid 1934 for a lease of \$500 a year on two square miles of land, with an option to buy the land for \$3500. A friend lent her the first year's rent. She then set about raising the needed purchase money, through the Emergency Conservation Committee of which she was the secretary. By the end of 1935, she had accumulated the purchase price.

Among the many inspirers of wildlands philanthropy in our own time are John Ripley Forbes of Atlanta, who founded the Southeast Land Preservation Trust, and James K. Bissell, coordinator of natural areas at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Bissell has induced numerous individuals to donate to a preserve system that the museum is creating in northern Ohio. [Preserve Directory of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, revised March 2001; James K. Bissell, Personal Communication] One reason for the success of the campaign to purchase Blanton Forest is that, not only did individuals give money but they also asked their friends to give. Whether or not inspiring others, or even donating time to the running of money-raising campaigns, is wildlands philanthropy per se, it can be a key part of the process.

Why do people donate?

The basic reason why people become wildlands philanthropists is that they appreciate the value of wildland, whether they feel an emotional or spiritual attachment to a specific area, assess intellectually the importance of the natural world, or simply are most at home in the wilderness. This basic appreciation of land may be intermingled with other motives. Here we present a few patterns that recur. (We avoid, however, treating the financial advantages in terms of estate planning and income taxes. These subjects are thoroughly discussed in publications by Stephen J. Small on “preserving family lands” and by the Land Trust Alliance.)

A factor underlying much wildlands philanthropy today is peoples’ realization that wildlands are fast disappearing. One philanthropist who was acutely conscious of this fact was Charles Lindbergh, who became an active conservationist in the sixties because his travels, and particularly his vantage point from airplanes, made him acutely aware of the encroachment of “civilization” on land and sea. He and his wife, Anne Morrow Lindbergh, gave The Nature Conservancy “thousands of dollars” toward the extension of Hawaii’s Haleakala National Park and also contributed to other Conservancy acquisitions “from the Lubrecht Forest in Montana to the Four Hole Swamp in South Carolina.” Anne donated Big Garden Island, off the coast of Maine, which her parents had given to her as a wedding present.

The gift of a specific area may be prompted by a threat to its integrity. In 1907 a water company condemned for use as a reservoir forty-seven acres of the land on which Congressman William Kent and his wife Elizabeth Thacher Kent lived north of San Francisco. Kent, who

had had a career as a municipal reformer in Chicago, deduced that the water company wanted not so much the land as the giant redwoods that grew on it. To prevent the company from seizing the land by eminent domain, he and his wife donated it to the federal government as a national monument to be named after John Muir.

Knowledge of the ecological importance of an area may also prompt a gift. Simply telling a family of the value of land that they own has often been enough to cause the family to donate a conservation easement if not the land itself. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' County Biological Survey identified as a remnant of the Big Woods, 150 acres of hardwood forest that was owned by Bruce Dayton (of the department store family) and his wife Ruth Stricker. The Big Woods once covered 2 million acres in Minnesota; but only about 20,000 acres remain, mostly in degraded fragments. The head of the department's Scientific and Natural Areas Program, visited Dayton and his wife to ask if they would be interested in cooperating with the department in preserving their land. After giving the matter some thought, the couple offered to donate the land, although it was valued at more than \$3 million and although their previous donations had been in the area. Together with an adjacent 29 acres that the DNR could purchase by means of matching funds, the land is now the Wood Rill State Scientific and Natural Area.

Family tradition may be an important factor, either because a specific tract of land is preserved from generation to generation or because one generation appears to learn the habit of giving from another. An example of the first point is Phyllis Reynolds, who donated 1700-acres of relatively untouched woods in Michigan Upper Peninsula to the Michigan chapter of The Nature Conservancy. The land, which links Laughing Whitefish Falls State Park and Hiawatha National Forest, had been in her family as long as Michigan had been a state. The Rockefeller family illustrates the latter point. Laurance Rockefeller, the son of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., carried on the tradition his father began by purchasing and giving to the federal government in 1996 the land for Virgin Islands National Park, and by enlarging Teton National Park and Haleakeala National Park. Recently Richard Rockefeller, a great grandson of John D. Rockefeller, along with several other family members, contributed \$3.2 million toward the acquisition by The Nature Conservancy of a 40-mile stretch of the upper St. John River in northern Maine. (A portion of the area will unfortunately be open to logging.)

Many donations of land are made by the heirs of a philanthropist who pieced together and protected the land. The lower Clear Creek Valley in Hocking County, Ohio, attracted poor-quality farming at an early stage of settlement. Allen F. Beck, a Columbus businessman, recognized the area's intrinsic values and in the 1920s began buying worn-out farms and restoring the lands. His four children continued his stewardship and, between 1973 and 1982 donated all of the land to Columbus Metro Parks under the condition that they be protected as a nature preserve.

Some donations, by corporations or others, are made because land did not fulfill the expectations that the donor had when the land was acquired or is no longer needed for the purpose for which it was acquired. The daughter and sons of Nisene Marks purchased 9700 acres in California in the 1950s in hopes of finding oil and gas on the property. The exploration was fruitless, and the children decided that they wanted the land preserved. They donated it to the state of California and named the park in honor of their mother who never saw the land. It is now Nisene Marks State Park. The North Carolina Granite Corp. of Mount Airy, donated to the state of North Carolina 14,000 acres of land, which became Stone Mountain State Park. The park is one of the state's largest and most undeveloped, with a variety of mountain plant communities. Stone Mountain itself is a partly forested monadnock of granite, but the park also includes adjacent land. A succession of mining companies had owned the land and tried unsuccessfully to sell the granite. The Radio Corporation of America Global Communications, Inc. donated 7143 acres on Long Island, worth \$16.5 million, to the state of New York in 1978. The president of RCA had acquired the site in the 1900s and, until the advent of satellite communication, it had served as the site of the corporation's overseas communication system. The acreage is at least in part in the Long Island pine barrens.

Owners of lumber companies sometimes preserved as unlogged forest a portion of their land. In the 1870s, for instance, Colonel James Armstrong, decided to set aside from his lumbering activities in California a 752-acre grove of ancient redwoods. Relatives deeded them to the county after his death, and in 1934 the country turned them over to the state. They are now the Armstrong Redwoods State Reserve. Mr. And Mrs. Walter D. Bliss donated to the state almost 600 acres that his father, D. L. Bliss, a sawmill owner and lumberman, had spared from logging because of its beauty. Now, the area is D. L. Bliss state Park, "with one of Lake Tahoe's finest beaches."

In South Carolina, Francis Beidler, a lumberman with extensive holdings who tried to log his forests in a sustainable way, deliberately spared from logging 3415 acres of cypress-tupelo swamp. His family preserved the forest after his death, and in the late 1960s, when his estate was liquidated, The Nature Conservancy and the National Audubon Society raised \$1.5 million to purchase the unlogged swamp. With the addition of another two thousand acres, it is now a National Audubon Society Sanctuary co-owned with TNC.

As with the Marks family, people who donate land often choose to make the gift a memorial by naming the land after relatives or friends. In many cases, the primary interest of the giver is preserving land; the naming, almost an afterthought. However, in some cases land is given because the donor is seeking a way of creating a memorial. A striking instance is the Elaine Loffredo Memorial Preserve. Elaine Loffredo was a flight attendant who died on Trans World Airlines flight 800. Her husband sought among The Nature Conservancy's acquisition priorities and settled upon Turnip Farm on Rhode Island's Block Island, the object of a multi-partner preservation program. The five-mile by seven-mile island is home to numerous rare species and a stopover for migratory birds; and it is separated by only a few miles of ocean from the place where the plane went down.

The family of Jean Farwell purchased 160 acres at the mouth of Michigan's Yellow Dog River, to create the Jean Farwell Wilderness Area, which will be protected by an organization called the Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve. Jean Farwell visited the Huron Mountains every year of her life, and was particularly fond of the area's waters. When she died, her family (husband, four children, eight grandchildren, and other members) wanted to give something to the Mount Huron area, particularly something to do with the river. The land that they purchased was the last intact portion of large tracts of the Yellow Dog River lowlands that had been bought by developers for subdivision into small river-frontage parcels.

Members of the general public may be readiest to endorse wildlands protection when preservation of the land in question obviously enhances the quality of human life. Viewscapes tend to evoke philanthropic feelings. On a more practical level, watersheds do the same. The state of New York established Adirondack Park to protect the city of New York's water supply. More recently the cities of Asheville, North Carolina, and Spartanburg and Greenville, South Carolina, have donated conservation easements on their watersheds. Asheville by 1927 had purchased 20,000 acres of land surrounding two reservoirs. In 1996 the city gave an easement

on more than 17,000 acres of the land to the Conservation Trust for North Carolina. The easement restricts use of the land to water supply protection. Timber harvesting is allowed only on the lower elevations; three fourths of the land is, in effect, to remain forever wild. People without a longstanding interest in conservation may join in a local effort to conserve wildland, particularly with conservation easements, because the overall program enhances the value of their own property in terms of livability and also in terms of financial value.

The future of wildlands philanthropy

The story of wildlands philanthropy needs to be set in context in order for us to understand the possibilities for expanding its role. According to the American Association of Fundraising Counsel (AAFRC), total giving in the United States by private (as opposed to public entities) in 2000 came to \$203.45 billion. Of this sum, religion received 36.5%, education 13.8%, health 9.3%, human services 8.8%, arts and culture 5.7%, public/society 5.7%, and the environment 3.0% or \$6.16 billion. International affairs alone ranked lower than the environment at 1.3%. (15.8% was unallocated in the statistics). Only a portion of the \$6.16 billion given for environmental causes went to land acquisition and only a portion of the money that went to land acquisition was devoted to wildlands. Many land purchases for purposes of wildlands philanthropy would not show up in these statistics. Nevertheless, the figures suggest that the conservation movement can do better.

Conservationists need to spur foundations, government agencies, and, where appropriate, organizations to become more involved in wildlands preservation. At the same time, we need to work with individuals and their families. Again according to the AAFRC, in 2000 corporations gave 5.3% and foundations 12.0% of the money contributed to all activities. Individuals donated 75.0% (plus 7.8% donated through bequests). With the growing concern about the environment and natural areas among members of the general public, individuals and their families present enormous opportunities for an expansion of wildlands philanthropy.

Acts of wildlands philanthropy are valuable even when they are small in terms of dollar equivalents. Gifts from individuals and families frequently inspire giving by other individuals and contributions from nonprofit organizations and government agencies. The effects may be far-flung, but most frequently the ensuing activities result in an enlargement of the original preserve. Time and time again as we read about wildlands philanthropy we find pairs of

statistics: first the acreage of the original donation and then the current acreage of the protected area. To mention just one example, in 1932 Charles F. and Alice A. Van Damme donated forty acres of waterfront property to the state of California for what is now Van Damme State Park. The park, three miles south of Mendocino, now covers 2160 acres.

Furthermore, action by individuals, families, or small foundations is, as a general rule, the most flexible and rapid means of preserving land. Such philanthropists, provided they have access to sufficient funding, can act more quickly than can government agencies, which often have to wait for the appropriation of funds and almost always have to go through multiple procedures. They can also act more quickly and in more ways than can many land trusts and conservancies, as conservative boards of directors are likely to put the brakes on the planning of forward-thinking staff members.

We need to encourage members of the general public to give for wildlands preservation, and we need to stimulate those who already give to move up at least a notch on the pyramid of donations. Potential large donors may be most successfully influenced by the words and activities of those of their peers who are wildlands philanthropists. More should speak out as Doug Tompkins is known to do. People of more modest means are likely to need technical and financial assistance if they are to shift from giving only money to organizations, to buying or restoring land themselves. Several tools could facilitate their more active participation in wildlands philanthropy:

- 1) A loan fund or funds on which conservationists can draw to purchase land for purposes of preservation. Banks generally refuse to lend money for undeveloped land (ie land without buildings). Undeveloped land is what wildlands philanthropists usually want to acquire. A low interest rate on the available loans would be ideal, though not essential for all would-be buyers.
- 2) A fund that would pay the out-of-pocket expenses of donating a conservation easement. Land trusts and conservancies generally charge donors of easements a fee to cover their costs in setting up the easement and the future costs of monitoring it. Paying to give an easement is beyond the financial means of many would-be donors. Also, donors may have difficulty in understanding why they should have to pay to make a gift.

- 3) A group of attorneys who are willing to work pro bono on wildlands philanthropy transactions.
- 4) Information centers designed to serve wildlands philanthropists and others interested in the preservation of wild land. The centers might best be organized on a state or regional basis. They should be able to give inquirers such information as the agencies or organizations are interested in accepting or purchasing wild land; the terms under which these entities generally operate; the pros and cons of dealing directly with the state instead of through an organization; services available to potential buyers; sources of advice on restoring land; sources of funding for land restoration; even perhaps sources of advice about ways to utilize the old barns that often come with rural property
- 5) Additional conservation buyer programs or other means of pointing conservationists toward land in need of preservation. This service could be a function of the information centers described above.

Many of the areas in which we now hike and watch wildlife are relatively intact only because of the gifts of wildlands philanthropists in years past. We can best express our appreciation for their legacy by continuing and strengthening the tradition in which they worked.

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