



THE KINNICKINNIC RIVER LAND TRUST

WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY TO PROTECT THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND SCENIC BEAUTY OF THE KINNICKINNIC RIVER WATERSHED

PRESS RELEASE
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Kinnickinnic River Land Trust Announces Acquisition and Transfer of Critical Wildlife Habitat to WI DNR

[RIVER FALLS, WI] [RIVER FALLS, WI] The Kinnickinnic River Land Trust, Inc. (KRLT), along with its partners the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Kinni Chapter of Pheasants Forever, today announced that the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board has approved a request by KRLT to donate a 158.4 acre parcel of critical wildlife habitat in Clifton Township to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for long term protection and management as a wildlife management area.

According to KRLT Executive Director Nelson French, “This project is located adjacent to the scenic and ecologically rich Kinnickinnic River Canyon and is a priority with many organizations and the local community. We are thrilled to announce the long-term protection of this property that will provide significant public nature-based recreation opportunities (such as bird watching, cross-country skiing, hiking and hunting) and will also help protect the water quality of the Kinnickinnic River.”

The property contains rolling upland topography, mixed hardwood forests, oak savanna/woodlands, bluffs, goat prairies, spectacular scenery and large cool-season grassland areas. This rich variety of plant communities provide for quality wildlife habitat that benefit both game and non-game species. Runoff on the property drains through adjacent properties to the Kinnickinnic River. The protection of the property from development will prevent soil erosion and will therefore help maintain the water quality of the river.

Connie Manion Light, a member of the family that sold the property to KRLT said, “Our family is pleased to have been a part of the process to protect the natural resources and scenic beauty of this beautiful property. We were fortunate enough to have enjoyed this property for years and we are thrilled that the public will be able to enjoy the new Manion Wildlife Habitat Area far into the future”. The Manion Family provided significant resources to make this project possible by selling property to KRLT at a bargain price in January, 2008.

“This property presents a spectacular opportunity for the public,” said Harvey Halvorsen, area wildlife manager for the WI Department of Natural Resources, “and we are thrilled that our local wildlife management team will be able to add this Pierce County site to our managed areas. We plan to work with local groups and citizens to enhance the property and restore prairie plant communities where appropriate.”

David Lackey, Land Acquisition Coordinator for the local Kinni Chapter of PF stated, “The acquisition and permanent protection of the Manion property is an outstanding conservation achievement that we are very proud of. This project was so important to us that our chapter stepped up to support the acquisition of this property as part of the KRLT *Protect the Kinni Campaign*. We encourage others to do the same.”

Acquisition of the Manion property was completed with resources made available by the Manion Family and funding from the Wisconsin Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund, and the Kinni Chapter of Pheasants Forever. The KRLT is seeking additional private funds as part of its \$5.0 million *Protect the Kinni Campaign* to help retire the lines of credit which also made this project possible.

The **KRLT** is a community-based non-profit organization with over 600 individual and business members. Since 1993 **KRLT** has protected over 2,400 acres of land and 8.6 miles of stream bank in the Kinnickinnic River Watershed. Learn more about **KRLT** by visiting www.kinniriver.org . View **KRLT**'s most recent annual report at http://www.kinniriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/11021_2007-2008-krlt-annual-report_lowres.pdf

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Manion wildlife area in the fall

Photo © Burt Levy



Connie (Manion) and Rick Light are recognized by KRLT for the Manion Family bargain sale of land to the Kinnickinnic River Land Trust. The WI DNR Natural Resources Board approved long term protection of the new Manion Wildlife Habitat Area on December 14, 2009. Pictured: Dan Wilkening, KRLT President; Connie Light and Rick Light.