
KEWEENAW LAND PROJECT

Opportunity

The people and communities of the upper Keweenaw Peninsula have a unique opportunity to purchase approximately 32,600+ acres of timber land which is currently being sold as a single parcel by the timber investment company that owns it. The public access, recreational uses, local tax revenue and forest products jobs this land provides are vital to the interests of residents and visitors, and to the future economic health of the area. If a purchase cannot be arranged within a few months, the owners are likely to fragment the property through smaller parcel sales to interests that have little incentive to maintain current benefits or pursue opportunities to manage the lands to grow local prosperity.

Context

These lands help define the identity of Keweenaw County and its residents. They contain many sites of unique ecological, historic, cultural, and scenic beauty and most of these sites are currently available to residents and visitors to access and enjoy. The assets contained on and within these lands are the reason many residents choose to live here and thousands more people come to visit annually. There are many diverse public and private interests who recognize and would like to preserve the existing benefits of these lands provide including

- The ability of residents and visitors to access, use and enjoy these lands.
- Maintaining or increasing the tax revenue local communities rely on to provide vital services to residents and visitors, including the tax revenue generated by property taxes paid by tourist-dependent businesses and, to a lesser extent, taxes paid by the investment companies on the timber property itself.
- Businesses that have leased their land from the lumber companies would like the opportunity to purchase the underlying property to secure their long-term future. Tourism-dependent businesses want to ensure the continued access that is critical to their ongoing viability.
- The State of Michigan has economic interests in protecting the long-term environmental benefits and tourism value of the property. In addition, with the recent creation of a Michigan Office of Rural Development, the State has demonstrated an expanded

commitment to supporting and building the economies of the rural portions of the state.

- Local Communities need access to some lands to provide needed services such as housing, utility expansion, infrastructure, and public safety

The Process

Many individuals in the community already have invested significant time and resources into beginning a process to create a vision and define the outcomes they would like to see from this property going forward. The State of Michigan and The Nature Conservancy are committed to assisting in finding and funding the path to achieve that vision in a sustainable manner. To that end, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), in partnership with the State, has been taking the lead on a process to assemble the resources to purchase the entire 32,600 acres and then transfer that to the most appropriate long-term owner(s) to meet the communities' objectives.

A necessary part of that process is formalizing the initial local consensus on a vision and to forge a plan for ownership, management and use of the land that can implement and sustain that vision. Such a plan will recognize and optimize the balance of recreational, civic, economic, environmental, public service and safety, and other interests. TNC has secured resources to support this process, and has engaged RES Associates, LLC, and its principal John Molinaro for the visioning, planning and documentation aspects of this project.

To date:

- More than 250 local leaders and other stakeholders have participated in interviews or group meetings to provide input.
- More than 1800 individuals have responded to an online public survey
- More than 800 people have signed up to receive project updates

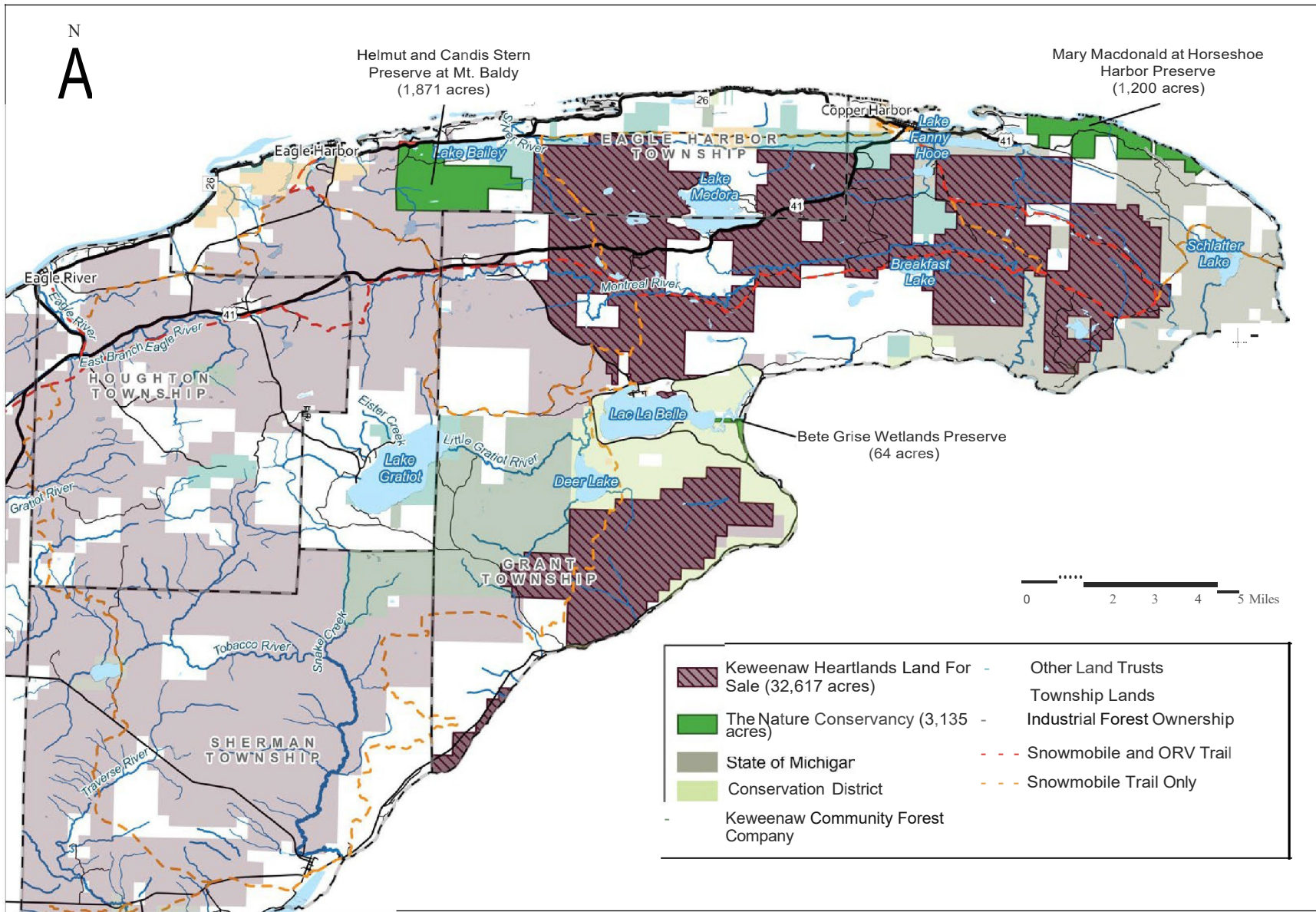
Frequently Asked Questions

- Where is the land currently for sale located?
See the map below at the end of the FAQ.

- Who is planning to buy the timber land currently for sale?
The Nature Conservancy (TNC), in partnership with the State of Michigan, has been taking the lead on a process to assemble the resources to purchase the tract for the benefit of the area.
- Is there a timeline for when a sale might be completed?
There is no definitive timeline at this point.
- Would TNC own these lands permanently?
No. TNC is currently working in partnership with the State on a process to assemble the resources needed to purchase the land for the benefit of the area. If the purchase is completed, TNC would then work with local leaders to put the completed vision into practice, transferring lands to appropriate ownership as outlined in the plan.
- What will happen to public access to these lands if the sale to TNC is completed?
One of the primary objectives of TNC, the State of Michigan and the community is to maintain public access and use. For generations, these lands have been open to hunting, fishing, gathering and public recreation. The community visioning plan would help outline where recreation and access are most critical and beneficial to local individuals and economies and the best way to assure the access going forward.
- Why can't the State just purchase the land?
The Michigan DNR has made significant investment in lands in Keweenaw County, including 8,000 acres of state forest lands at the Tip of the Peninsula and Fort Wilkins State Park. Additional investments would require additional staffing for management and operations of the property. The DNR is evaluating which portions of the land would complement and enhance management of the existing state lands. Then, a funding model must be developed to maintain the lands and provide staffing. Currently, the DNR believes it may be able to obtain sufficient resources to purchase, manage and operate between 4,000 and 9,500 acres of land located between existing state forest lands and Fort Wilkins. Acquiring these lands is consistent with natural resource protection, outdoor recreation, and community priorities. A Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant application has been submitted requesting funds for an initial purchase of approximately 4,000 acres and additional funding may be requested in later grant rounds.
- Who has been involved in the planning process so far?
To succeed, the effort to create a plan for the long-term ownership of these lands will

require a community-wide and community-led process. A planning committee has been selected that broadly represents most of the stakeholder groups and major current uses for the land. Planning committee members are as follows:

Local Advisory Committee Members	
Richard Marsh	Calumet Keweenaw Sportsman's Club
Adam Yoeman	Copper Harbor Trail Club
Rich Probst	Eagle Harbor Township
Scott Wendt	Grant Township
Mike McMahon	Keweenaw ATV Club
Brigitte LaPointe	Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
Gina Nicholas	Keweenaw Community Forest Company
Brad Barnett	Keweenaw Convention & Visitors Bureau
Don Piche	Keweenaw County
Bob Demarois	Keweenaw County
Curt Pennala	Keweenaw County Sheriff
Jeff Ratcliffe	Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance
Evan McDonald	Keweenaw Land Trust
Dave Donnay	Keweenaw Snowmobile Club
Don and Peg Kauppi	Mariner North
Dave Reed	Michigan Tech University
Sean Gohman	Keweenaw Nat. Park Advisory Committee
Project Team	
Scott Whitcomb	Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Helen Taylor	The Nature Conservancy
Rich Bowman	The Nature Conservancy
John Molinaro	RES Associates, LLC
Dr. Solveig Spjeldnes	RES Associates, LLC
Robin Meneguzzo	Keweenaw Community Foundation
Sara Fletcher	Keweenaw Community Foundation



N
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Helmut and Candis Stern
Preserve at Mt. Baldy
(1,871 acres)

Mary Macdonald at Horseshoe
Harbor Preserve
(1,200 acres)

Bete Grise Wetlands Preserve
(64 acres)

0 2 3 4 5 Miles

EAGLE HARBOR
TOWNSHIP

HOUGHTON
TOWNSHIP

GRANT
TOWNSHIP

SHERMAN
TOWNSHIP

Lake Bailey

Lake Madora

Lake Fanny Hope

Breakfast Lake

Schlatter Lake

Lac La Belle

Deer Lake

Lake Gratiot

Eagle River

East Branch Eagle River

Ester Coey

Little Gratiot River

Deer Lake

Tobacco River

Snake Creek

Traverse River

Eagle Harbor

Copper Harbor

Gratiot River

Montreal River

Gratiot River

Tobacco River

Traverse River

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	Keweenaw Heartlands Land For Sale (32,617 acres)		Other Land Trusts
	The Nature Conservancy (3,135 acres)		Township Lands
	State of Michigan		Industrial Forest Ownership
	Conservation District		Snowmobile and ORV Trail
	Keweenaw Community Forest Company		Snowmobile Trail Only