



Door County Land Trust

Protecting Door County's Exceptional Lands and Waters...Forever



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Barnard Family Preserves Five Generations of Legacy with Door County Land Trust Conservation Easements



Conservation Easement Program Manager Drew Reinke at the Barnard family property that is now permanently protected by conservation easement agreement.

DOOR COUNTY, WI —The Door County Land Trust is celebrating a milestone conservation effort that will preserve a piece of local history for years to come. The Barnard brothers, William and Carl, have taken a powerful step to protect their family's cherished 120-acre property—a legacy that has been in their family for nearly 150 years.

"Our family has our blood in this farm," said William Barnard. "This land represents five generations of care and dedication. By working with the Door County Land Trust, we are ensuring that this land will remain protected for farming and as a haven for wildlife, untouched by future development."



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A Legacy of Farming and Stewardship

The Barnard family's history is deeply intertwined with the agricultural heritage of Door County. During the early 20th century, their orchard contributed to Door County's reputation as "Cherryland," a hub for tart cherry production. Over the decades, the family has adapted their farming practices while remaining committed to preserving the ecological integrity of the land.

The conservation easements will allow the Barnards to continue traditional uses of their property, including farming and forestry, while ensuring the land remains protected from development. Carl Barnard reflected, "Because we're the first working farm protection with Door County Land Trust, we're hoping that this is a model for hundreds of other farms and families to protect land in the area too."



A Milestone for the Door County Land Trust

For the Door County Land Trust, 2024 is shaping up to be a banner year. With 18 land protection projects already completed, including this one, the organization is on track to set new records that will surpass 10,000 acres protected by early next year.

"This is one of our first working lands conservation easements, demonstrating that farming and conservation can go hand in hand," said Emily Wood, Executive Director of Door County Land Trust. "By preserving the Barnard family's land, we are protecting both the cultural history and ecological health of Door County. This success is a testament to the incredible support we receive from our members and the dedication of landowners like the Barnards."

Drew Reinke, Conservation Easement Program Manager at DCLT, added, "Orchards are such a large part of Door County's history that it only makes sense that the Land Trust would accept a conservation easement on the Barnard Family Orchards property to protect the scenic and open space values for the public to enjoy!" (*Note: The parcels enrolled in the conservation easements are not open for public access/use without prior permission from the landowners.*)

The Barnard Family Orchard, an 80-acre property, is a special mix of agricultural plots, small timber stands, and historic structures. What makes it even more valuable? Its scenic views and



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role in protecting water quality and maintaining an important wildlife corridor. The working forest conservation easement, a second property of 40 acres, preserves a mature northern mesic forest that provides critical bird habitat, water resource conservation, and ecological corridor protection.

A Collaborative Effort

The conservation project was made possible through a cost-sharing agreement with the Barnard family and generous support from DCLT members. Rebecca Barnard, daughter and niece of the property owners, spearheaded the family's efforts to ensure the easements were finalized in a timely manner and allowed for a balance of active management and conservation activities, thereby providing flexibility for future owners to continue to enjoy and use the property while achieving holistic economic, social and environmental outcomes for the good of the land and future generations. Rebecca's adjoining 18-acre property, which includes part of the Niagara Escarpment, will also be protected through a future conservation easement donation.

Looking to the Future

The Barnard family's commitment aligns with DCLT's mission to protect Door County's natural landscapes while supporting sustainable land use. As development pressures increase, conservation easements like these serve as critical tools to balance growth with environmental stewardship.

"Preserving working lands ensures that the cultural and natural heritage of Door County endures for generations to come," said Drew Reinke, Conservation Easement Program Manager at DCLT. "This partnership with the Barnard family demonstrates how conservation can support traditional land uses while protecting critical habitats and water quality."

Join the Conservation Effort

Door County Land Trust invites other landowners to explore conservation easements as a way to protect their land while maintaining private ownership. For more information on how to safeguard your property's ecological and scenic value, visit www.DoorCountyLandTrust.org or call (920) 746-1359.

About Door County Land Trust

Door County Land Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting Door County's exceptional lands and waters for the benefit of all. Through conservation easements, land acquisitions, and community support, DCLT safeguards the natural beauty, ecological integrity, and cultural heritage of Door County.