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## Leadership Planning Update

Happy New Year! And a notable year 2016 is as the Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy marks its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in August.

We start the year with an update on the strategic planning process the Board of Trustees began in 2015. Our work celebrates the progress of the Conservancy over these 25 years and prepares to continue the progress over the next 25+ years.

A shorter **Mission Statement** is the first visible result of our planning. It appears below and will be on the first page of every newsletter. The mission has not changed, but reducing it to one sentence keeps us better focused.

A second focus is on Conservancy **resources**. The Conservancy funds its mission in two ways: **grants** and donations. The page 2 article on the acquisition of the Somers property demonstrates the value of grants—in this case, a grant from the Bicentennial Nature Trust. Expanding grants for Conservancy projects is a major role for Bridget and the Board.

**Donations** from Clear Lake community members and supporters are the other critical source of funding. CLTLC is a 501(c)(3) organization so donations are tax-deductible. We are immensely grateful for the support of the many donors listed on page 3 of this issue of *Clear Thinking*. There's also a list of seven ways to donate to the Conservancy—directly or through two funds at the Steuben County Community Foundation. Thank you and please continue to give generously. Contact Bridget or any Board member with questions or to donate.

Building **partnerships** across the community is embedded in our planning. The "Partner's Spotlight" on page 4 features the Clear Lake Association, a long-time key partner and generous donor for Conservancy projects.

Finally, the strategic planning process identified an opportunity to use working **committees** to leverage volunteer resources to accomplish the CLTLC mission. Active committees led by trustees can bring greater focus to key areas in our mission: Land Acquisition, Management and Maintenance; Finance; Communications; and Water Quality. Community volunteers will be needed on several of these committees.

In the upcoming March issue, we'll outline specific Conservancy projects planned for 2016.

All of this planning can be summarized as **good stewardship**. All of us can be involved in preserving, protecting and managing the valuable resources we enjoy in the Clear Lake watershed and township. We invite your ideas, support and shared stewardship for future generations.



Nancy Webster, President

Bridget Harrison, Executive Director



## CLTLC Mission Statement

The mission of the Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy is to preserve, protect, and manage the natural environment within the watershed and township for future generations.\*

\*The success of the Conservancy depends on the tax-deductible contributions of individuals and the community.

## Water Quality

The Water Quality Committee and volunteers have been collecting water sampling data from the Lake and the four ditches that drain into the Lake for most of CLTLC's existence. Testing parameters include temperature, pH, nitrate, nitrite, E. coli, dissolved oxygen, orthophosphate, biological oxygen demand, and turbidity. This section of Clear Thinking will continue to explain these testing parameters.

Nitrogen is found in all living things and occurs in water as nitrate (NO<sub>3</sub>), nitrite (NO<sub>2</sub>), and ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>). We test for nitrate (NO<sub>3</sub>) and nitrite (NO<sub>2</sub>). Nitrogen in these forms enters Clear Lake from human and animal waste, decomposing organic matter, and runoff of fertilizer from lawns and fields. Nitrogen, like phosphorous, feeds aquatic plant growth causing algae and weeds to flourish and increases the potential for an algal bloom. As we read in the last issue, algal blooms can impact swimming and recreation on Clear Lake and have the potential to impact human health.

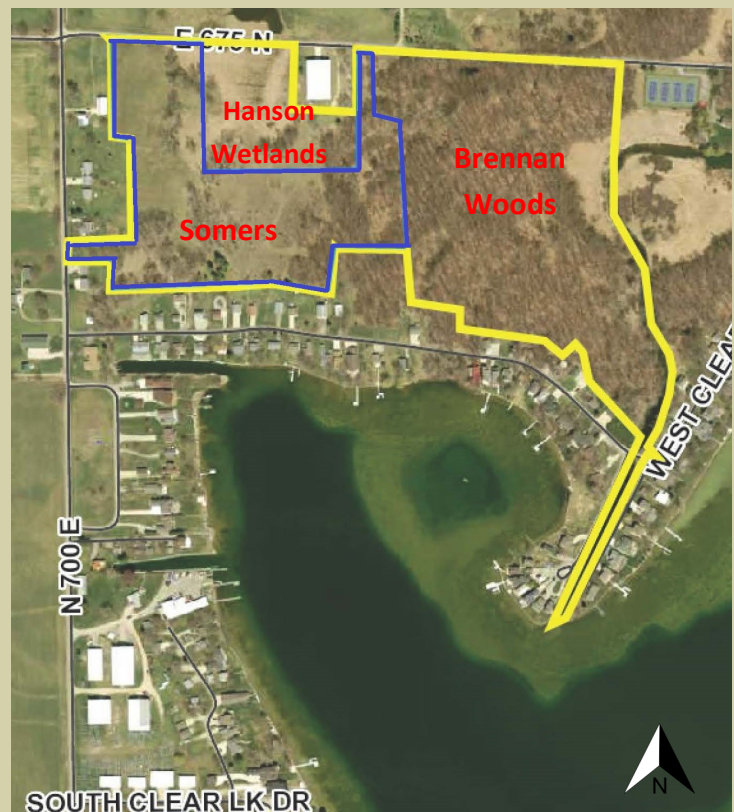
What can you do to help reduce nitrogen inputs into Clear Lake? Clean up your pet's waste, avoid over applying fertilizers and only fertilize your lawn when there is no rain in the weather forecast, and avoid dumping leaves and grass clippings into Clear Lake, the adjacent wetlands, and ditches that flow into Clear Lake.

## Natural Area Preservation

We are thrilled to announce the addition of 15.6 acres to our protected properties within the Clear Lake watershed. This project, outlined in blue, unified and increased environmental value for two existing Conservancy properties: the Hanson Wetlands and the Brennan Woods, featured in our last issue of Clear Thinking. In acquiring the Somers property, we are able to extend protection and enhancement to 15 additional acres and the water flowing through this parcel into Clear Lake. This contiguous 45 acre preserve, outlined in yellow, provides wildlife habitat, educational opportunities, and the protection of important wetlands and open space.

We are grateful to the Somers family for working with us on this project. We would not have the opportunity to protect this beautiful land without their shared vision of a family farm left intact and protected from development. We are honored to know that they are entrusting us with the protection of their family's farm—in perpetuity.

We will be able to preserve this important property for future generations because of the generous support from Richard D. and Jill L. Waterfield, the Clear Lake Community Fund at the Steuben County Community Foundation, an anonymous donor, and with a grant from the Bicentennial Nature Trust (BNT). We are grateful for your support on this project! Additionally, we would like to thank the Steuben County Board of Commissioners, Blue Heron Ministries, and the Steuben



County Community Foundation for providing letters of support for our grant application process with the BNT. Finally, we thank Rick Eckert, Jim Skinner, and John Schenkel for volunteering their time to make this project happen.

One of the goals of the newly created Lands Committee will be to create a management plan and determine the best use for this 45 acre preserve. The acquisition of the Somers property presents a unique opportunity in the Clear Lake community for education and recreation with the potential development of walking trails and environmental interpretation programs. If you have ideas we would love to hear from you.



**e-Newsletter:**

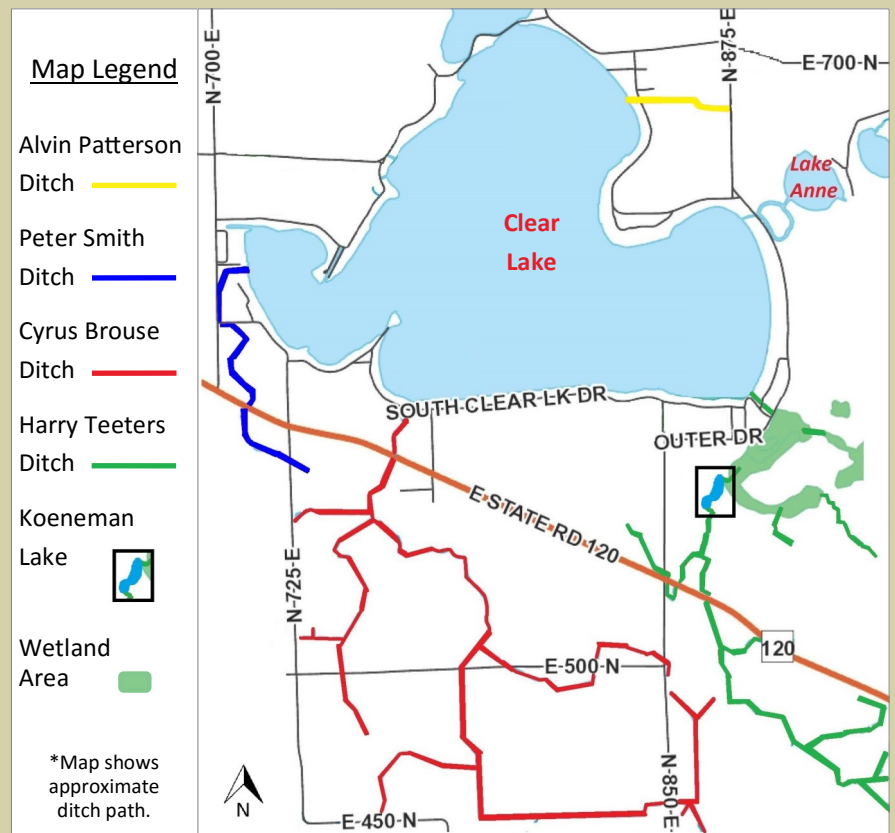
To signup for our e-newsletter email:  
[info@clearlakeconservancy.org](mailto:info@clearlakeconservancy.org)

## Environmental Education

Ditches are sometimes mentioned as factors that affect the water quality of Clear Lake. What are they, where are they located, and how does the Conservancy monitor their effect?

Depicted on the map\* are the Alvin Patterson ditch (installed in 1883), the Peter Smith (unknown), the Cyrus Brouse (1909), and the Harry Teeters (1910). The ditches, named for those who petitioned the court for their installation, serve to quickly and efficiently drain the land. They meander over and under the land both as open ditches and tiled drains. Prior to the 1960's they were managed by the court system. Now they are regulated and maintained by the County Surveyor and the County Drainage Board.

Our Water Quality Committee tests samples from the inlets of the 4 ditches for pollutants and sediments that may be draining off the nearby land and roads into Clear Lake. The Conservancy partners with the County and landowners to solve drainage and pollutant issues.



## THANK YOU TO OUR RECENT DONORS!\*

Including Jeanne Coffman, Ken Fankhauser, Mary Jo Fitzenrider, Joanne Sweeney, Terry & Ann Melton, Chuck Phelps, Donald Bieberich, Margaret & Bill Bloebaum, Tom & Wendy Voigt, Claudia Sundberg, John & Nancy Wilhelm, Alex & Susan Connett, William & Carol Berning, Bev Maxfield, Richard D. and Jill L. Waterfield, the Land Trust Alliance

**Memorial/Honorary:** Jane McMaster, Eric Fankhauser, Nancy Fenton & Richard Karlsson, Dan & Angie O'Neill, Mary Ann Wehrenberg, Zumbrun Construction, Scot C. Schouweiler, Tom & Pam Reith, Gary Probst, Clear Lake Yacht Club, Rick & Joyce Eckert, George & Kathy Schenkel, Marjorie & William Eyster, Janet Paflas, Dick & Annie Robinson, Bonnie Brown, Don & Sandy Ayres, Joe & Linda Sorg, Robert Y Keegan Jr, Dale Howard, Tom & Mary Ferrer, Kristin Westover, Tom Shank Family, Tom & Lynne Hicks, Steve & Annmarie Rhinehart, Clifton & Judith Fenton, David & Donna Eckert, Katy Hoehn, Peter & Vernell Fettig, Stephen & Mary Long, Richard D. Waterfield, Julie Hanchar, Ted & June Despos, Tom & Deb Kelly, Steve & Karla McArdle, Gail Schroeder, Sandi Borneman, Kay Armstrong, Mike & Mary Jo Todoran, Dave & Zo Matson, Mary Jane & Michael Millikan, Jim & Annie Skinner, Bill & Chris Geiger, Evy Schlosser, Tom & Erin Poiry, Richard & Martha Berghoff Ryan, Joan & Thomas Baughman, James & Kelly Lohman, Sally Eckrich, Laura & Timothy Schiel, Charles & Beverly Doehrman, Thomas & Deborah Stafford, John & Carol Hoeffel, John & Sheila Bradley, Jane & Bernard Kearns, Anthony & Patricia Hoeffel, Carlyn Kramer Obendorfer, Brian Oberley, Jennifer Adair, Joel & Denise Harter, Carol McArdle, Daniel & Madelyn Coughlin, Daniel & Laura McArdle, Kathy Latz, Harold & Cheryl Hahr, Ellen Newcomer, Michael & Patricia Franz, Ellen & Fritz Poffenberger, Jane Thompson, Jayne De Lawter & Ken Koppelman **In-Kind:** Lawrence Building Company, Bill & Judy Greffin

\*List reflects contributions received after our Nov. issue of Clear Thinking. We make every effort to be as accurate as possible, please contact us if you see a mistake.

- 1) Unrestricted donation;
- 2) Honor gifts for weddings, birthdays, anniversaries and births;
- 3) Sustaining gifts to CLTLC Operating fund at the Steuben County Community Foundation;
- 4) Sustaining gifts to CLTLC Maintenance fund at the Steuben County Community Foundation;
- 5) Memorial bequests for Clear Lake community members;
- 6) Gifts to specific projects such as education, dredging, or land acquisition;
- 7) Include CLTLC as a beneficiary in your will or trust

Contact us for more information on how you can support CLTLC.

Seven Ways to Support CLTLC

**Volunteer or Donate:**

(260) 316-1397 • [www.ClearLakeConservancy.org](http://www.ClearLakeConservancy.org)

111 Gecowets Drive – Clear Lake • Fremont, IN 46737



## Partner's Spotlight

Many of our accomplishments rely on successful partnerships. In this *Partner's Spotlight*, we highlight the Clear Lake Association.

The mission of the Clear Lake Association is to maintain and support projects that benefit the Clear Lake community and to inform and represent the Association members in regard to proposals and activities that impact them.

The Association sponsors projects that add value, supports important Clear Lake organizations, informs the community about the news of the Town with the *Clear Lake News*, and the Association supports the efforts

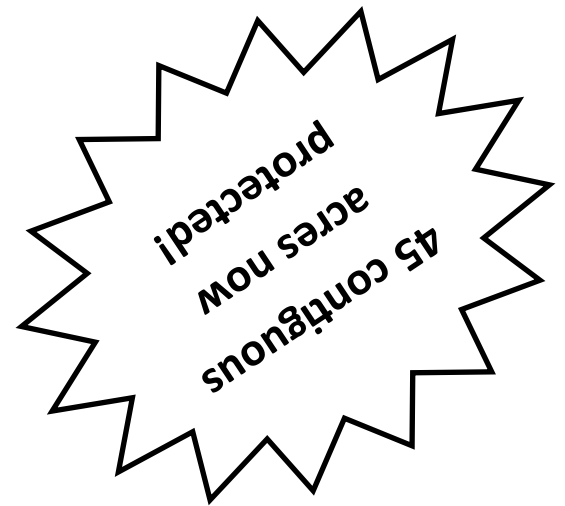
of the Steuben County Lakes Council to preserve the water quality of Clear Lake.

Several Clear Lake Association initiatives are well-known annual events. They organize and sponsor the Boater's Safety Course as well as the fireworks display that we enjoy each Independence Day. The Association also provides support for the annual water quality testing completed by the Steuben County Lakes Council.

As a Clear Lake organization, the Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy has been the recipient of the Clear Lake Association's support. We have received financial backing for important projects, we have the opportunity to share our news in the quarterly publication of the *Clear Lake*

*News*, and we hold an 'ex officio' position on the Board of Directors.

By joining and supporting the Clear Lake Association, you directly support the well-being of our Clear Lake community. The Clear Lake Association is here for us and for you and we thank them for their efforts and look forward to a continued partnership for the ongoing improvement of our community.



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