

Item #12:
Village Trustee Lyman
Conserve Lake County Eco-best Practice Property

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Our Story

People and nature. That's what Conserve Lake County has always been about.

Since 1995, we have served people like you who care about nature and want to protect and restore the land and water around us. Today, we help people preserve Lake County's precious landscapes. We help people improve the health of the land with land stewardship projects that bring vitality back to prairies, wetlands, and woodlands. We inspire people to care about conservation and are involved in planning and advocacy for nature. And because farming practices affect the health of our ecosystems, we are involved in collaborative efforts to increase local food production and expand sustainable agriculture.



We are strategic, collaborative, service-oriented, and have a can-do spirit. We are also committed to making it possible for as many people as possible to be engaged in land conservation. This has led us to launch the Conservation@Home* program in 2011 to help and encourage Lake County residents to bring nature home to their own landscapes. As people apply more eco-friendly landscaping practices on their own private lawns and gardens, the collective result will be cleaner water, richer soils, and more resilient ecosystems.

Lake County is our home. Like you, we believe that keeping nature healthy is essential to keeping it a great place to live, work, play, and raise a family. A place for people and wildlife. Working together, we can make a difference.

History

- We were established in 1995 as the Liberty Prairie Conservancy by citizens concerned about development pressures that threatened a unique public/private conservation effort known as the Liberty Prairie Reserve. Early on we focused on land use planning and ecological restoration within the 5,800 acre reserve where today, more than 3,300 acres have been protected from further development hundreds of acres of habitat are being restored. [Read More \(/what-we-do/liberty-prairie-reserve\)](#)
- In 2004 we expanded into a countywide land conservation organization—an organization that can directly preserve open space from development through land purchases, land donations, and the acceptance of conservation easements.
- Since 2004, Conserve Lake County has preserved over 300 acres, through land acquisitions, easements, land donations, and landowner negotiations. We were also instrumental in creating a countywide [Open Space Vision \(/what-we-do/land-preservation/countrywide-vision-for-open-space\)](#) in partnership with 17 private and public conservation organizations. The vision sets an ambitious but achievable goal of preserving 20% of Lake County by 2030.
- In 2007 we purchased the historic Casey Farm just north of Libertyville, saving the woods, pastures, and farmland from development. The purchase was made possible by two substantial donor gifts as well as partnerships with the Lake County Forest Preserve District and Libertyville Township which subsequently purchased portions of the farm



“The mission of Conserve Lake County is to preserve open land, restore natural areas, and inspire a commitment to land conservation for the benefit of people and wildlife in Lake County.”

from us. This important purchase made possible the linkage of two important Lake County trail systems. The section of trail linking the two trail networks is scheduled to open in 2013.

- In 2011, we launched the [Conservation@Home \(/conservationhome/natural-landscaping-native-gardening-with-native-plants\)](/conservationhome/natural-landscaping-native-gardening-with-native-plants) program to improve the health of the land and water of Lake County by helping residents take care of nature in their own backyards.
- In 2011, we also became part of a collaborative effort designed to bring more local food production and sustainable agriculture to Lake County. Read about the [Local Food Initiative \(/what-we-do/planning-and-advocacy\)](/what-we-do/planning-and-advocacy).

You can help! And in the process you'll meet great people and reconnect with nature in ways that are richly satisfying. Please explore more of our website. Please feel free to contact us with questions and ideas. Please help Conserve Lake County today.

Our Story

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Lake County

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Partners

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Board of Directors

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Job Opportunities

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Contact Us

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Members Matter! [Read how your donation makes a difference \(/ways-to-help/join-and-donate\)](/ways-to-help/join-and-donate)



DONATE

<https://npo.networkforgood.org/Donate/Donate.aspx?npoSubscriptionId=3258>

**Conservation@Home is a program of The Conservation Foundation and is offered in Lake County by Conserve Lake County through funding from the Grand Victoria Foundation and others.*

Conservation@Home is also funded in part through a grant program supported by the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area, State and Private Forestry in support of the oak assessment and recovery plan for the Northeast Illinois Region's tree canopy. USFS grants of federal monies are administered by the Chicago Wilderness Trust.

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Ways to Help

[\(/ways-to-help/join-and-donate\)](#)

Conservation@Home Eco-Friendly Landscaping Ideas and Certification Criteria

The biggest reward for using eco-friendly **practices** on your property is knowing you are contributing to clean water, rich soil, and resilient ecosystems that support people and wildlife. You can also become a certified Conservation@Home property by earning 100 points or more. Certified properties receive our attractive garden sign to display. (Certification is valid for five years and is renewable by a return visit.)



Start by choosing your approximate property size

Under one acre

Over one acre

Start by earning these 50 points

Start by earning these 50 points

One shrub or tree native to northeastern Illinois
<http://conserve.lakecounty.org/native-shrub-or-tree>

5

An annual record of the year's activities has been created ([Use ours \(http://conserve.lakecounty.org/images/pdf/cah-annual-activity-log.pdf\)](http://conserve.lakecounty.org/images/pdf/cah-annual-activity-log.pdf) or create your own)

5

A simple map of the property has been sketched showing the path of rain water flow
<http://conserve.lakecounty.org/criteria-a-simple-map-of-the-property>

5

An aerial map has been created which shows the main types of plant cover (e.g., lawn, woods), water features (e.g., pond, cree), and arrows showing the direction of rain water flow ([images/pdf/Aerial-Map-Examples.pdf](http://conserve.lakecounty.org/images/pdf/Aerial-Map-Examples.pdf))

5

Lawn chemicals are minimal (or nonexistent!)
<http://conserve.lakecounty.org/criteria-lawn-chemicals-are-minimal>

10

Lawn chemicals are minimal (or nonexistent!) ([criteria-lawn-chemicals-are-minimal](#))

10

Invasive species collectively cover less than 5% of the property (<http://conserve.lakecounty.org/criteria-invasive-species-listed-collectively-cover-less-than-5>)

10

At least 10 trees or shrubs native to northeastern Illinois are present (<http://conserve.lakecounty.org/criteria-plants-native-to-northeastern>)—OR— perennials native to northeastern Illinois make up at least 5% of the landscape (<http://conserve.lakecounty.org/criteria-plants-native-to-northeastern>)

10

Plants native to northeastern Illinois make up at least 5% of the landscape (<http://conserve.lakecounty.org/criteria-plants-native-to-northeastern>)

20

An ecological plan has been created that identifies 1) ecologically valuable features, if present, and a simple plan to care for them; 2) invasive species, if present, and a simple plan to reduce them; and 3) opportunities to improve ecosystem health ([images/pdf/Ecological_Plan_example.pdf](http://conserve.lakecounty.org/images/pdf/Ecological_Plan_example.pdf))

20

You are on your way! To finish earning the 100 points you need for certification, choose 50 points from below. Not interested in certifying? That's fine—this list can still help you contribute to clean water, healthy soil and resilient ecosystems.

Most songbirds, butterflies and other beneficial wildlife cannot survive on the Eurasian plants that dominate our landscape. Rather, they depend on trees, shrubs and other plants native to NE Illinois.

<u>Each native shrub (/criteria-each-native-shrub-beyond-original)</u>	2
<u>Each native tree (/criteria-each-native-tree-beyond-original-2)</u>	5
<u>Each additional 10% of the landscape in natives (/criteria-additional-backyard-landscape-in-native-plants)</u>	10
<u>Landscape supports at least 15 species of natives (/criteria-landscape-supports-at-least-15-species-of-native-perennials-shrubs-and-trees) (/criteria-landscape-supports-at-least-30-species-of-native-perennials-shrubs-and-trees)</u>	10
<u>Landscape supports at least 30 species of natives (/criteria-landscape-supports-at-least-30-species-of-native-perennials-shrubs-and-trees)</u>	20

LAWN CARE

<u>No watering, except if establishing new lawn (/criteria-watering-is-only-for-new-plantings)</u>	5
<u>Lawn is mowed three inches tall and grass clippings are left in place (/criteria-lawn-mowed-three-inches-tall)</u>	5
<u>Mowed with electric, propane or reel mower (/criteria-electric-propane-or-reel-mower-is-used)</u>	10
<u>Lawn takes up less than 50% of the available landscaping (/criteria-lawns-take-up-less-than-5-percent) (/criteria-lawn-has-been-aerated-and-top-dressed-with-compost-or-compost-tea)</u>	15
<u>Includes no mow or other low-grow grasses (/criteria-lawn-contains-buffalo-grass-or-other-low-mow-species)</u>	15
<u>Aerated and top-dressed with compost or compost tea in past year (/criteria-lawn-has-been-aerated-and-top-dressed-with-compost-or-compost-tea)</u>	15

INVASIVE PLANTS

<u>A large patch of invasive species (http://conservelakecounty.org/criteria-invasive-species-listed-collectively-cover-less-than-5) has been controlled</u>	20
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RAIN WATER

In addition to many other **practices** listed, the following actions specifically improve the quality and quantity of water leaving the property.

<u>Rain-permeable walkway (/rain-permeable-walkway)</u>	5
<u>Each rain garden (/criteria-each-rain-garden) or bio-swale (/criteria-each-bio-swale)</u>	10
<u>Other than buildings, less than 10% of property is paved with asphalt, concrete or other impermeable materials (/criteria-less-than-10-of-property-covered-with-impermeable-materials)</u>	10
<u>Roof downspouts are directed to a garden, flat portion of lawn (/criteria-roof-downspouts) or to a rain barrel or cistern (http://conservelakecounty.org/criteria-each-rain-barrel-in-your-backyard-for-water-conservation)</u>	15
<u>Rain-permeable driveway or parking lot (/criteria-rain-permeable-driveway)</u>	20
<u>Green roof (/criteria-green-roof)</u>	20

SOIL

<u>Autumn leaves remain, not burned or bagged (/criteria-autumn-leaves-remain-in-the-backyard)</u>	10
<u>(/criteria-autumn-leaves-remain-in-the-backyard)Composting takes place (/criteria-composting-takes-place) (/criteria-autumn-leaves-remain-in-the-backyard)</u>	10
<u>Shoreline has protective plantings (/criteria-native-plants-protect-lake-pond-or-stream-shoreline)</u>	10
<u>A soil erosion problem has been eliminated (/criteria-a-soil-erosion-problem-has-been-greatly-reduced-or-eliminated)</u>	20

WILDLIFE

In addition to many other **practices** listed, the following actions specifically support wildlife.

<u>One or more wildlife houses are properly designed, installed and maintained (/criteria-one-or-more-wildlife-houses)</u>	5
<u>Pond, creek or other significant water feature exists as integral part of overall plan</u>	5
<u>Brush pile or large dead tree (safe locations only)</u>	5

MAPS

Go to <http://maps.lakecountylvil.gov/mapsonline/> (<http://maps.lakecountylvil.gov/mapsonline/>). Type your address into Search. When your property appears on the map, click Legend, then Layers, then Aerials. You can now choose from a wide variety of years and other helpful details about your property. For pre-settlement maps, go to www.plantconservation.us/plsmap.phtml (<http://www.plantconservation.us/plsmap.phtml>).

A pre-settlement vegetation map and 1939 aerial map of the property have been printed	5
Soil, watershed and topography maps of the property have been printed	5

LOCAL FOOD

Vegetable garden or fruit orchard	10
Honeybees or chickens (/criteria-honeybees-or-chickens)	10
Farmland in crops or other food for people	15

CHILDREN AND FAMILY

Property features a tree-friendly tree house, fort or similar structure within a natural setting	10
Created a family-friendly environment that encourages nature observation	15

NATURE CHAMPION

Landowner has recruited two or more neighbors for Conservation@Home consultations	10
Landowner has mentored one or more others on land stewardship practices	10
Landowner has hosted or is scheduled to host a group tour of the property's eco-friendly features, or has helped arrange a Conservation@Home presentation	10
For public properties, signs or handouts explain the property's eco-friendly features	10
A portion of the property is protected from development through a conservation easement	20

LAND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

*These criteria are intended for properties over an acre. Different sites require different **practices**, and some - such as burning and changes to hydrology - require permits. For **best** results and most efficient use of your resources, we recommend consulting a land manager before you begin these types of projects.*

Portion of property has been burned in past 3 years	10
Natural flowing hydrology has been re-established, e.g., drain tile disabled if possible	10
A USDA conservation plan has been created for any farmland on property	10
A portion of the property has been seeded to natives and seeding is under management	10
At least 12 native trees have been planted and cared for	10
At least 12 native shrubs have been planted and cared for	10
Property has been enrolled in Illinois Conservation Stewardship Program	10
Manure piles are placed on level ground away from water	10
The three nearest preserved natural areas have been identified and the landowner has visited at least one to note differences and similarities	10
One of the following books serves as regular reference:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Restoring Ecological Health to Your Land</i> by Steven Apfelbaum and Alan Haney • <i>Invasive Plants of the Upper Midwest</i> by Elizabeth Czarapata • <i>Plants of the Chicago Region</i> by Floyd Swink and Gerould Wilhelm • <i>The Tallgrass Restoration Handbook</i> by Stephen Packard • <i>The Vegetation of Wisconsin</i> by John Curtis 	10

LET'S TALK

We recognize that each property is unique. Tell us about a distinctive **practice** or feature you feel is noteworthy, or have invested a significant amount of resources into a worthwhile project, please let us know. Variable points. [Read More \(/criteria-let-s-talk\)](#)

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Schedule a Property Appointment

Now it's easier than ever for your property to look great while supporting clean water, rich soil and resilient ecosystems.

- Get the information you need so you can use your time and dollars well when landscaping your yard or managing your larger landscape.
- Join the large and growing community of people who are teaming up to create eco-friendly properties that are healthy for pets, people, songbirds and butterflies – while retaining the aesthetics they desire. Thousands of people in Lake County and the Chicago suburbs are making significant contributions with help from their local land conservancies.

Spend an hour walking and assessing your property with one of our experts. Let us know if you have a particular issue of concern or an upcoming project of note. You will learn about –

- Any ecological treasures you might have – and how to protect them
- Ways to add native trees, flowers or other plants – beautifully
- How to identify and control any invasive species you might have
- Eco-friendly lawn care
- Water protection and conservation

We'll make recommendations for projects that fit your lifestyle and send a follow-up email with a summary of them. Just getting started? Simple modifications can go a long way. Does your property qualify for certification? We're happy to help you with that, too

Please fill out the form below to complete your reservation and we will contact you.

* required field

Contact Information

First Name *

Last Name *

Address 1 *

Address 2

City*

State*

Zip*

Your Email*

Phone Number *(for making scheduling arrangements)**

We are generally available on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, with limited availability for additional days

If there is a specific topic or project you need help with, please describe it.

Which of the following best describes your needs?

- I am ready to certify my property.
- I am looking for information and advice.

How large is your property?

- Less than one acre
- Between one and five acres
- Over five acres

How did you hear about this service?

*

- A presentation or meeting
- A newsletter from my village or neighborhood
- An email from Conserve Lake County
- The Conserve Lake County table at an event
- Someone I know told me about it
- Facebook
- A Google search
- Other

Please feel free to provide information on your interests or concerns.

Property Appointment

Properties that certify receive an attractive Conservation@Home yard sign.

Total

50.00 USD

ENTER PROMO CODE

To complete your request for a property appointment, press the "Send" button below and you will be transferred to the secure PayPal site for payment.

Pay

Thank you!

We will contact you shortly to schedule your appointment.

[Welcome to Eco-Friendly Landscaping](#)

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[Let's Get Started](#)

[\(/conservationhome/cah-lets-get-started\)](/conservationhome/cah-lets-get-started)

[Eco-Friendly Lawns](#)

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[How to Attract Songbirds and Butterflies](#)

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