



Forest Legacy Success

Crisp Point—Luce County

Photo Courtesy of The Nature Conservancy/Jeff Knoop

Crisp Point, Luce County - The Forest Legacy Program was established in the 1990 Farm Bill to protect environmentally important forest lands threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. It provides federal funding for states to either buy land or easements of forest lands. Every year, states submit applications of high value forest for potential funding by the Forest Legacy Program. In 2010, the State of Michigan applied to protect a large unique property in Luce County. The project ranked third in the nation in priority for funding in Fiscal Year 2011 and a grant of \$4,500,000 was awarded.

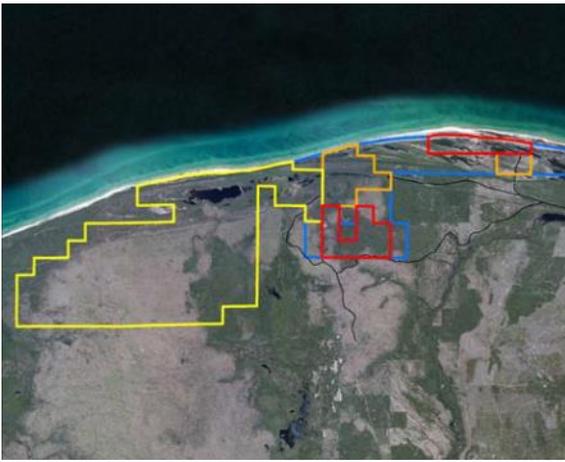
At its roots, the property's protection had a conservation-minded landowner. Beginning in the late 1980s, local businessman Tad Malpass began to piece together several tracts of land in northern Luce County. He eventually created a contiguous forest parcel totaling 3,810 acres and spanning more than 2 miles of Lake Superior's south shore. Directly adjacent to the Crisp Point Lighthouse property, the parcel also includes the 83-acre Browns Lake and is situated near and adjacent to State, Federal, and land trust lands.

In recent years, Malpass considered selling the land, but the purchase price for a parcel of this size, with Great Lakes shoreline, was daunting. He received offers from private individuals who were interested in purchasing smaller pieces within the larger tract.

Through a unique partnership involving a private land trust, a private family foundation and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the property was protected with negotiation and funding between 2008 and 2011, and in 2012, ownership was transferred to the DNR.

A public event was held in August of 2013 to celebrate the acquisition and thank all the groups that helped conserve the property. Speakers at the event included DNR Deputy Director Bill Moritz, Forest Legacy Program representative Dennis McDougall, and Little Traverse Conservancy Executive Director Tom Bailey.

“We are most grateful to the US Forest Service, Forest Legacy Program and to the Michigan Congressional delegation who supported the funding.”



Map of the area showing Crisp Point, in yellow; orange and red are additional land trust preserves, and blue is DNR. —Photo Courtesy Little Traverse Conservancy

In addition to the stretch of Lake Superior shoreline, the property is comprised of extensive forests, steep bluffs, streams, an inland lake and sand dunes. It contains approximately 2.5 miles of DNR snowmobile trail No. 8, a major trail connector across the northern Upper Peninsula, and it offers numerous public outdoor recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, wildlife viewing and kayaking.

The completion of the Crisp Point project not only ensures the protection of wildlife habitat, sustainable forest management, and opportunities for public outdoor recreation, but it will also preserve a portion of the Lake Superior shoreline.

Michigan residents and visitors alike will forever have the opportunity to enjoy this piece of the Upper Peninsula.

The Crisp Point project protects the following public values:

- Approximately 3,810 acres of prime forestland consisting of sugar maple, aspen, beech, yellow birch, white birch, spruce, balsam fir, red maple white pine and hemlock.
- Approximately 12,200 feet of Lake Superior shoreline.
- 83-acre Browns Lake, as well as another small inland lake and multiple streams.
- Habitat for both federal and state listed threatened and endangered species, including: piping plover, gray wolf, bald eagle, spruce grouse, Lake Huron Tansy, Lake Huron locust, Houghton's Goldenrod, and Calypso orchid.
- Habitat for game and non-game wildlife, including: moose, black bear, white-tailed deer, fisher, pine marten, beaver, mink, otter, and many Neotropical migratory birds.
- Direct watershed protection for Lake Superior, which is the largest freshwater ecosystem in the world.
- New public recreational access for hunting, trapping, fishing, hiking, bird watching, kayaking, canoeing, snowshoeing, skiing, wildlife viewing and snowmobiling.
- Protection of the designated scenic Lake Superior shoreline.

Resulting Benefits

Today, the property provides critical game and nongame wildlife habitat. The property protects threatened and endangered species, provides refuge for Neotropical migratory birds, and offers multiple recreational opportunities. The acquisition eliminates the possibility of development, ensures sustainable forestry practices, and provides multiple new recreational opportunities. Also, wildlife habitat, soil and water resources, and the scenic values of the forest land and undeveloped Great Lakes shoreline are preserved. The protected land is located in the middle of existing state forest and is directly adjacent to a completed Forest Legacy project, the 270,000-acre Northern Great Lakes Forest Project.

Sharing Success

The property's inclusion, as part of a dual certified (both by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and the Forest Stewardship Council) working forest, supports a network of nearly 1,400 forest product related businesses in Michigan's Upper Peninsula that help the region's local economy. Ensuring long-term dedication of part of a cross-peninsula snowmobile trail means snowmobilers can travel longer distances and stay and spend money in several areas during a trip. This project is a great example of using Federal money to create a win-win for recreation users, the forest economy, and conservation of the Great Lakes.

Getting There

Getting to Crisp Point can be difficult for the unprepared. The roads are winding dirt or sand, not well marked. Directions are provided below, but please visit <http://crisppointlighthouse.org> for more information including mileage points and photos. The most direct way to reach the lighthouse is by taking Luce County Road 500 which is 18 miles from both Paradise and Newberry on M-123.

- Turn north onto Luce County Road 500.
- You will come to a sign with an arrow pointing both ways - go right, staying on County Road 500.
- Take the left fork in the road north of Culhane Lake and stay on County Road 500. The other (County Road 437) goes to Bodi Lake.
- After 0.8 miles, take the right fork. You will see Little Lake Harbor through the trees on your left.
- Go right on County Road 412 . (This is a small sand road.) This is a seasonal road and is not plowed in the winter.
- Turn left onto a smaller road, which is still County Road 412. There is a County Road 412 sign on the right side of the road with an arrow pointing to the left.
- You will come to the old parking area and you will be able to see Lake Superior. Follow the road and signs to the lighthouse.

An alternate route to the lighthouse is available from Paradise and ends at Browns Lake.

- From Paradise, go west on U.S. 123 toward Tahquamenon Falls for about 4½ miles.
- Turn right onto Farm Truck Road (also marked as designated snowmobile route #452).
- Go north on Farm Truck Road about ½ mile and go left at the fork, staying on Farm Truck.
- Go 4 miles then turn right at the fork onto Mapleblock Road (still marked as #452).
- Go north on Mapleblock 5.4 miles and at a log landing area, go right following signs for #452. Stay on Mapleblock, keeping to the right forks. The road will eventually narrow and end north of Browns Lake.

More Information

Little Traverse Conservancy. Summer 2013 Newsletter. Little Traverse Conservancy. Vol. 35, No. 2.

Forest Legacy Success Story—https://www.na.fs.fed.us/ss/14/CrispPointSS_140207.pdf

DNR—Press Release—https://www.na.fs.fed.us/ss/14/CrispPointSS_140207.pdf