

THE RIDGES SANCTUARY

Preservation, education and research since 1937

Pathway for Success

2008 - 2012

STRATEGIC PLAN

Adopted December, 2007 by the Board of Directors

Our Mission

To protect the Sanctuary
and inspire stewardship of natural
areas through programs of
education, outreach, and research.



Thanks to all of our members,
visitors and Door County
residents who have provided their
time and insight in creating our future.



Our Vision

The Ridges Sanctuary, Inc. will be the Center for Environmental Stewardship, an organization that believes in:

Land Protection:

Protecting its land through acquisition and stewardship, and providing opportunities for people to enjoy the land forever;

Education & Outreach:

Encouraging stewardship throughout Door County, by becoming an education and information resource partner for members, residents, visitors, municipalities, businesses and institutions;

Research:

Serving as a regional, national and international destination for research on The Ridges' and Door County's landscapes, ecosystems and individual species.

Our Founding Members (1937)

Frank Oldenburg
President

Anna McArdle
Vice President

Emma Toft
Treasurer

Olivia Traven
Secretary

Albert Fuller
Jens Jensen
John Matter
Arthur Gochenour
George Sieker

Our Values

The Ridges Sanctuary, Inc. will follow these guiding beliefs and principles as we move forward with our mission and vision.

- Our land is a sanctuary – protecting the diversity of flora and fauna and the unique geological formations for untold generations.
- We take pride in our cultural history – sharing the stories of our successes so others may be inspired to act as stewards.
- It's a place for everyone – a quiet refuge for individuals and families, to foster a sense of appreciation and wonder towards nature.
- We are committed to preserving the personal connection to The Ridges' organization – an identification with the land and closeness and friendliness between staff, members, volunteers, donors, Door County residents and all other Ridges' constituents.
- We are committed to maintaining the public trust - acting in a professional and fiscally responsible manner.

The Ridges Sanctuary's Strategic Plan

In 1937, The Ridges' founding members started a journey to protect The Ridges. Through their success in land protection, education, outreach and research, the founders defined the meaning of stewardship. To build on their efforts, The Ridges Sanctuary, Inc. will:



Land Protection

Protect The Ridges' lands, flora and fauna from harmful impacts of human activity, invasive and nuisance species, and other potential threats.

"Love the
wild things."

- Emma Toft,
Founding Member

Rationale:

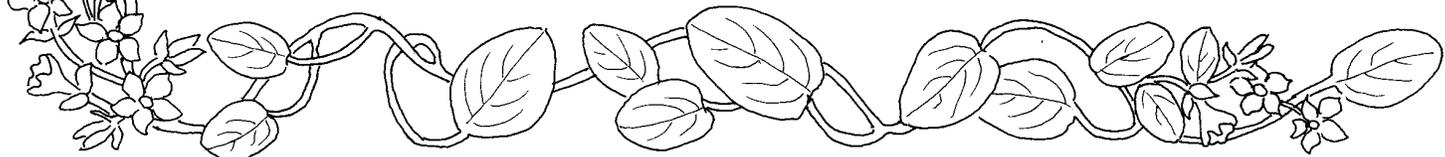
The Ridges Sanctuary (Baileys Harbor, Wisconsin) and its surrounding landscapes have been recognized as the most biological diverse area in the State. The Ridges is characterized by a series of low, sandy ridges, alternating with wetlands called swales. The Ridges is dominated by a boreal forest with a variety of plant communities supporting 475 vascular plant species, 63 breeding birds and 12 threatened or endangered species, including the federally endangered Hine's emerald dragonfly. Because of this diversity, The Ridges Sanctuary has been designated as a National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service, a Wisconsin State Natural Area by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and a National Audubon Important Bird Area.

The Ridges Sanctuary's Logan Creek property (Jacksonport, Wisconsin) is comprised of a variety of habitats, including upland hardwood forest, lowland cedar-hemlock forest, and frontage along Clark Lake and Logan Creek. The Logan Creek property has been designated as a primary Sensitive Area in the Clark Lake Watershed Plan by the Center for Watershed Science and Education, UW – Stevens Point, protecting the primary fishery habitat.

Strategies:

- Monitor flora, fauna, water quality and other environmental factors to define best management practices to protect individual species, ecosystems and landscapes.
- Partner with communities to promote conservation practices within each watershed, protecting water quality and biodiversity beyond our boundaries.
- Use appropriate management practices to control invasive species on Ridges' property and encourage invasive species control throughout each watershed.
- Use land acquisition and conservation easements as techniques to protect significant habitats and create conservation buffer zones in The Ridges and Logan Creek watersheds.

Five-Year Outcomes:

- Initiate a citizen monitoring program supported by research initiatives and volunteers, to inventory key flora and fauna species and monitor environmental factors. (Completed in 2008)
 - Act as a resource for Door County residents on conservation practices to protect local biodiversity, water quality and techniques to control invasive species. (Completed in 2008)
 - A watershed protection plan, identifying lands affecting The Ridges and Logan Creek properties for future acquisition or protection through conservation easements. (Completed in 2009)
 - A comprehensive management plan for The Ridges and Logan Creek properties, including best management practices to protect flora, fauna and water quality and control invasive species. (Completed in 2010)
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Education

Act as an education and information resource to help educate youth and adults in the ethical, aesthetic, economic and ecological values of our natural heritage, in the importance of stewardship, and in opportunities for personal participation and responsibility.

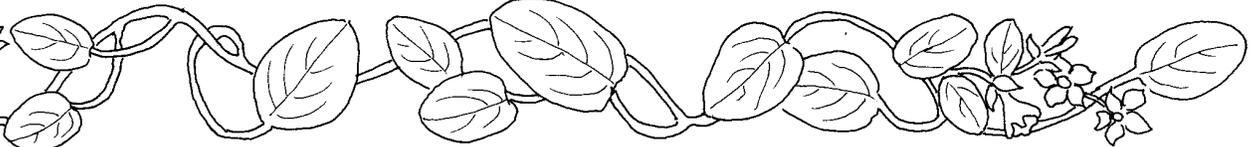
Rationale:

The Ridges needs to connect children and adults to nature, fostering a sense of wonder and providing lifelong learning experiences in order to encourage everyone to act as land stewards.

Strategies:

- Establish The Ridges as a resource for members, residents, visitors and community leaders on environmental information and training related to The Ridges, Door County, the Niagara Escarpment and the Great Lakes Basin.
- Coordinate a land steward program with individuals participating in workshops and monitoring programs to help protect The Ridges and Door County.
- Host family programs, on site and throughout Door County, to support parents in connecting children to the outdoors.
- Develop and conduct programs for adults of all ages.
- Work with local schools to connect interdisciplinary science units to real-world explorations of local environments.
- Provide adequate facilities and trails for individuals or small groups to enjoy the scenic beauty of The Ridges and Logan Creek.
- Use appropriate self-guided media (brochures, displays, trail signs, website and other media) to educate visitors about The Ridges and its embodiment of Door County's natural heritage.

Five-Year Outcomes:

- A volunteer stewardship program training volunteers to help interpret The Ridges' cultural and natural history or to act as citizen scientists monitoring flora, fauna and other environmental factors. (Completed in 2008)
 - An education master plan, based on a needs assessment of audiences, to direct future programs for schools, families and adults, including needed staff, volunteers, partnerships, resources and facilities. (Completed in 2009)
 - Partnerships with community organizations and two of the local school districts to coordinate science-based programs which actively engage students in community environmental studies. (Completed in 2009)
 - An interpretive master plan, balancing land protection with visitor use of trails, education sites and appropriate self-guided media (displays, trail signs, brochures, and a website). (Completed in 2010)
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"A major task facing The Ridges is to strengthen its voice: to make its point to enough people so that its message will count. Culture does not pass to new generations without conscious and persistent efforts...mere custodianship of the last few such spots is futility."

- Dr. James Zimmerman,
University of Wisconsin
-Madison Professor



Outreach

Communicate interactively with The Ridges' members and non-members, to encourage participation in stewardship activities for the protection of the Sanctuary and Door County.

Rationale:

The voice of The Ridges needs to go beyond our boundaries to help educate individuals, from one generation to the next, on the importance of protecting biodiversity and instill the value of stewardship.

Strategies:

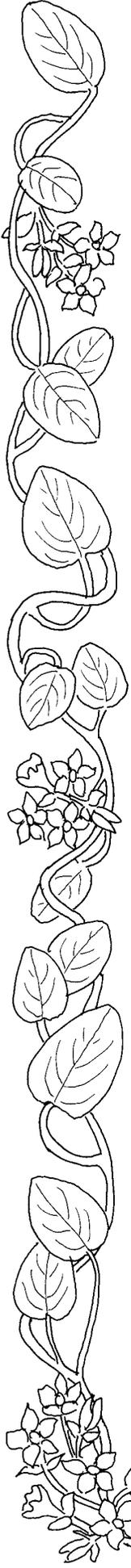
- Create outreach presentations telling The Ridges' cultural and natural history story and encouraging others to act as land stewards.
- Communicate the Ridges' vision, values and program initiatives to members, Door County residents, visitors, organizations and communities while providing avenues for sharing ideas.
- Work with local municipalities, businesses and residents on issues pertaining to the sustainability of the Door County community, addressing the need for environmental protection as well as economic and social development.
- Connect The Ridges to the arts through a collaboration with the Door County art community.
- Work with private landowners in Door County on appropriate conservation techniques to protect biodiversity and water quality.

Five-Year Outcomes:

- Outreach presentations to tell The Ridges' story in Door County and beyond. (Completed in 2008)
- Communication plan - identifying tools to convey our message and receive input from members, visitors, donors and local communities. (Completed in 2009)
- Assist Door County municipalities, businesses and residents addressing environmental issues with appropriate workshops, grants, literature and other resources. (Completed in 2009)
- "Arts at The Ridges" program, encouraging individual interpretation of the natural world through different media. (Completed in 2009)
- Landowner stewardship program, helping Door County landowners protect biodiversity and water quality on their lands, creating more viable habitats for Door County's flora and fauna. (Completed in 2011)

"Conservation...is the practice of common sense, and applies to everyone. Human know-how has developed nothing to take the place of Nature, nor can we replace her supplies, once they are exhausted."

- Phoebe Erickson
*Ridges' Member,
Author and Illustrator*



Research

Encourage, promote and facilitate research on the biota, physical and chemical environment of the Sanctuary and other relevant Door County habitats

Rationale:

The Ridges and surrounding landscapes have been recognized as the most biologically diverse area in the State by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. To protect The Ridges, research initiatives must provide an understanding of biodiversity and ecosystem dynamics and connections to the larger landscapes or watersheds.

Strategies:

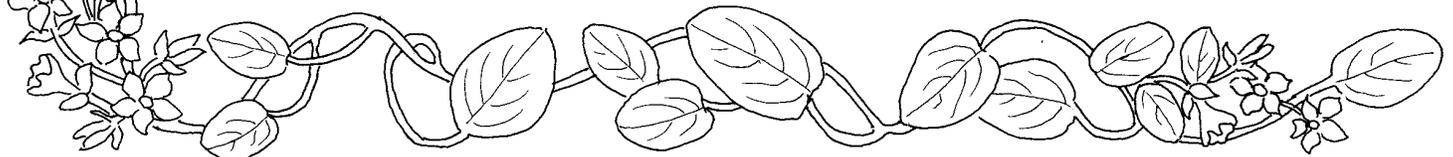
- Divide The Ridges property into management zones and develop a baseline assessment of the biota and physical-chemical environment of the Sanctuary. This includes a complete species list of all plants and multicellular animals present in the Sanctuary and baseline data on the water, air and soil.
- Collaborate with scientists and other organizations managing land in the Ephraim/Baileys Harbor Forest Corridor (North Bay south to The Ridges Sanctuary) to identify research needs for individual populations and ecosystems unique to this landscape.
- Collaborate with other organizations managing land in the Logan Creek watershed to understand changes in flora, fauna and water quality.
- With appropriate limits on sensitive information, maintain research results, data and specimen collections to be shared by visiting scientists, volunteers and members.

Five-Year Outcomes:

- A research conference and other communication techniques to pool resources among Door County and Niagara Escarpment organizations and communities. (Completed in 2008)
- Flora and fauna inventories of The Ridges' management zones, performed by a collaborative effort of scientists, graduate students and volunteers. (Completed in 2009)
- Develop a microclimate monitoring program within the Ridges, to monitor for changes and explain differences in plant phenology and distribution. (Completed in 2010)
- A Research Advisory Committee made up of qualified scientists charged to provide direction on a management plan for The Ridges and to develop an extramural funded research program. (Completed in 2012)

"This bit of nature (The Ridges) shall remain for untold generations so all that wish can reap the lessons taught by the undisturbed ways of nature."

- Jens Jensen,
Founding Member





Development

Create and execute a comprehensive funding and development program.

Rationale:

To achieve our vision, we will need to establish the financial resources to execute this strategic plan and to sustain The Ridges' program initiatives for many generations to come.

Strategies:

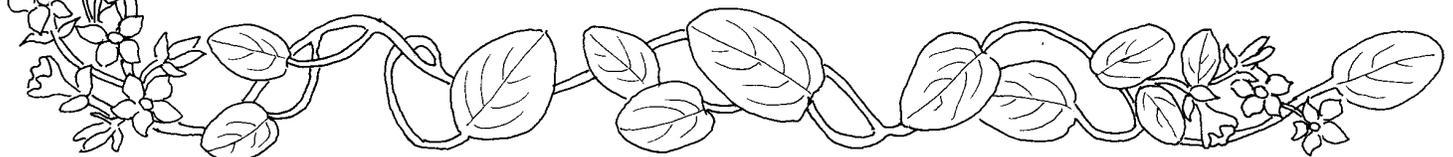
- Within the guidelines of our values, implement development strategies (individual and business memberships, annual appeal, grants, planned giving, sponsorships, memorials, fundraisers, capital campaign) to financially support program initiatives.
- Communicate our funding needs to members, Door County residents, businesses, visitors, supporting organizations and other potential donors.
- Conduct a feasibility study for a capital campaign to support programs and facility needs.

Five-Year Outcomes:

- Implementation of the necessary programs to sustain The Ridges annual operating budget by the Development Committee. (Completed in 2008)
- A Capital Campaign to support the program initiatives and facilities. (Completed in 2011)
- Endowment Trust earnings sufficient to support one half of the annual operating budget. (Completed in 2011)
- A financially stable Land Fund to support future land purchases in each watershed. (Completed in 2012)

“There have been many who have worked hard to establish and maintain the Sanctuary and we feel that the Sanctuary itself is a fitting memorial to all of them as to all our members who have given funds so generously.”

- Olivia Traven,
Founding Member





Administration, Facilities, and Finance

Identify annual program initiatives and provide necessary personnel, equipment, financial resources and facilities.

Rationale:

Yearly action plans for staff and committees will identify the financial and administrative resources needed to support our program goals in Land Protection, Education, Outreach and Research.

Strategies:

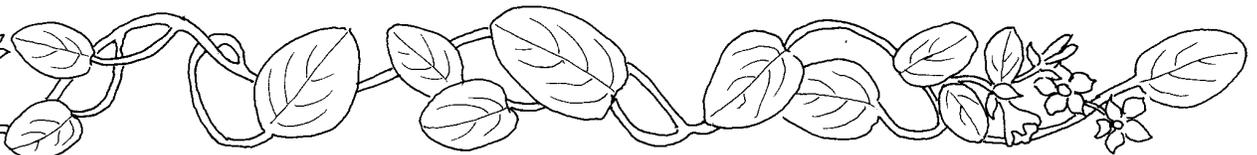
- Coordinate program initiatives and volunteer efforts with yearly action plans – identifying appropriate staff, committees, continuing education, partnerships and equipment.
- Effectively communicate with members, Door County residents, visitors and local communities and businesses to provide knowledge and resources to protect biodiversity and natural landscapes.
- Support program initiatives with appropriate staff, volunteers, technology, financial resources and oversight.
- Support program initiatives with appropriate on-site facilities, in collaboration with other organizations and community facilities off-site to avoid unnecessary construction.
- Celebrate 75 years of stewardship.

Five-Year Outcomes:

- Active committees to coordinate and implement yearly action plans, with support from staff, volunteers, partnerships and appropriate continuing education. (Completed in 2008)
- An information and resource center comprising an information desk, a nature store and a reference library to meet environmental resource needs of volunteers, members, residents, businesses, visitors and community leaders. (Completed in 2011)
- Ridges' Stewardship Program, an expanded volunteer program in size of membership and age diversity supported by training, monitoring equipment, a resource library and facilities to achieve program initiatives. (Completed in 2011)
- Subject to favorable results of the feasibility study, construct a GREEN building, *The Ridges Center for Environmental Stewardship* - a place for everyone, of all ages, to support our efforts in land protection, education, outreach and research. (Completed in 2011)
- Host The Ridges' 75th Anniversary celebration. (Completed in 2012)

"It is almost spectacular that 25 species of orchids should be found in a space of less than 40 acres."

- Albert Fuller,
Founding Member



Pathway for Success Program Outcomes

2008 - 2012

Program Goal	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Land Protection	<i>Citizen Monitoring Program</i> <i>Community Resource</i> <i>Ridges Watershed Plan</i>	<i>Logan Creek Watershed Plan</i>	<i>Management Plans</i>		
Education	<i>Volunteer Program</i>	<i>Education Master Plan</i> <i>Community-based School Program</i>	<i>Interpretive Master Plan</i>		
Outreach	<i>Outreach Presentations</i>	<i>Communication Plan</i> <i>Art Programs</i>		<i>Landowner Stewardship Program</i>	
Research	<i>Research Conference</i>	<i>Flora & Fauna Inventories</i>	<i>Microclimate Monitoring Program</i>		<i>Research Advisory Committee</i>
Development	<i>Development Strategies</i>			<i>Successful Capital Campaign</i> <i>Increased Endowment</i>	<i>Increased Land Fund</i>
Administration	<i>Active Committees</i>		<i>Information & Resource Center</i>	<i>Ridges' Stewardship Program</i> <i>New Facilities</i>	<i>75th Anniversary Celebration</i>