

WWTLC

ANNUAL REPORT 2023





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FOR WOMEN. FOR GIRLS. FOREVER.



LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

ANNEMARIE SERRA, PRESIDENT

Friends of We Want the Land Coalition,

We are delighted to have a full summer schedule planned for 2024 - from mid-July through mid-August - and we can't wait to see you. This is our fifth summer being back home together on The Land. The 2023 schedule of events appears on page 8 - check it out!



It is always energizing to see the schedule of events take shape - from application through implementation - with each event having its own unique culture and "vibe", while still prioritizing, front and center, the elevation, education, and empowerment of women and girls. 2023 brought a vibrant mix of programming to the community, including serenity and sobriety, music instruction and performance, singing in sacred circles, programming for girls (children and teens), community organized workshops, and, of course, tons of concerts as well. It's a testament to the vibrant diversity in our community.

2023 was a year of tremendous growth and change for WWTLC. Change is sometimes challenging to navigate, and I always feel hopeful and inspired - because it has been proven true time and again: together we can accomplish everything we set out to do. Since late 2022, we grew the size of our board significantly - from seven to thirteen. Most recently in 2023, we added four key committee chair positions: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Donor Relations; Organization Compliance; and Volunteer Management/Coordination. Our incredible all-volunteer Board continues to amaze me with how everyone works in service to the organization's mission and to our community - over and above all that they do in their regular lives (work, family, all of it!).

Looking ahead to 2024, we will continue working to solidify our business systems and processes to ensure viability and sustainability for the long term. We've also planned a number of infrastructure improvements to support improved accessibility and future growth - including construction of new showers in the RV area and a major asphalt path restoration project; and will implement a long-range plan for taking care of the trees as stewards of the forest. This is in addition to the steady stream of activities required to "raise the village" for summer events.

There is never a shortage of activities that need doing, that's for sure - and I continue to be so excited to be a part of our ongoing learning and progress. As we round the bend towards making our 8th and final land contract payment in 2025, I am feeling great about where we've been and where we're headed.

As always, I hold an enormous amount of gratitude and admiration for us as a community. We really are in this together.

With kindness and gratitude,
Annemarie



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Anne Drake - Secretary

Anne Drake is a social worker with the Ann Arbor Veteran's Administration in Ann Arbor, MI where she lives with her wife, Christina and their daughters, Thea and Zora.



Phyl Gorman - Volunteer Chair

Phyl earned PhD from the Ohio State University in Sociology and taught part-time for 35+ years while serving in a variety of HR leadership roles in the state government. A founding member of momazons - a lesbian mom's organization, Phyl served 32 years in the Main Kitchen of Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. She lives in Columbus, Ohio with her partner Dr. Diana Erchick.



dianna Huddleston - DEI Chair

dianna Huddleston, LCSW, is a veteran leader and advocate for mental health and well-being. She is currently the Vice President of Community Partnerships at Aspire Indiana Health. She received a certification in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Workplace and Ethical Leadership in the Workplace from the University of South Florida in 2021.



Nedra Johnson - Vice President

Nedra is the Vice President of WWTLC. She handles web site related content and promo. She is also an Event Organizer and singer songwriter. And was a long time festival worker and performer. She loves The Land. And loves that it is still a powerful healing space for women and girls. For women. For girls! Forever!



Brenda Millhouse-Huebner - Treasurer

Brenda is a financial planner and coaches others to be the best planners they can be. She has been in finance for 20 years and brings her expertise to the detailed work of WWTLC. Brenda is married to her wife, Barb and they have 3 amazing kids, 4 wonderful grandchildren, and 2 lovable dogs!



Kris Ray - Land Stewardship Chair

Kris serves as the Industry Technical Leader for Plante Moran's Not-for-Profit Grants Compliance Practice, which is one of the largest providers of federal awards consulting and audit services in the country. Kris is a national speaker on a wide range of technical, operational, and governance issues impacting not-for-profits.



DiAnna Ritola - EO Liaison & Summer Readiness

DiAnna is a self-employed spiritual director with previous experience as a social worker with non-profit organizations devoted to women and children. She lives in Flushing, Queens (NYC) with her wife, Michele, and their cats and a dog.



Annemarie Serra - President

Annemarie is a founding member and is excited to apply her years of product and events marketing and program/project management experience, plus an MBA from Northwestern University in strategy, marketing, and organization behavior, to We Want the Land Coalition - a labor of love and passion. She studies guitar and ukulele and is an amateur arborist - growing mighty oaks from wee acorns.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Kathleen Severt - Fundraising

Kathleen comes from a 25+ year corporate background specializing in technical operations and customer relations/sales support. In the late '90s she got the "bug" to volunteer on festival crews, including MichFest, Ohio Lesbian Fest, MFR, Cinema Systems, and National Women's Music Festival. Kathleen loves to snorkel to visit her "free-range" aquatic pets!

A Note about WWTLC's Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

WWTLC has been committed from our inception, to accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion, in order to best meet the needs of our unique community. In 2023, the board was expanded to include the addition of a DEI chair, to align with our core values and elected dianna Huddleston to the position. She brings with her Camper Come Early experience from the Differently Abled Resource Team (DART) at Michigan Women's Music Festival, and her personal connections with the DART community. In the first year of her term, she has been setting the foundation of this new role and is dedicated to providing a voice for the concerns of our community. Areas of dianna's impact include:

- **Providing input on the path restoration project to improve accessibility.**
- **Working with event organizers to provide more support for women with disabilities, similar to support provided by DART.**
- **Assisting with updating WWTLC's Service Animal policy.**
- **Drafted a Risk Management Safety Plan to ensure all are treated with dignity and respect, free from violence or coercion while attending events on The Land.**
- **Held many conversations regarding the differences in structure, support, and regulatory environment between the Michigan Women's Music Festival (sole proprietorship) and WWTLC (non-profit organization) and the related impacts on WWTLC's ability to make changes on the land.**

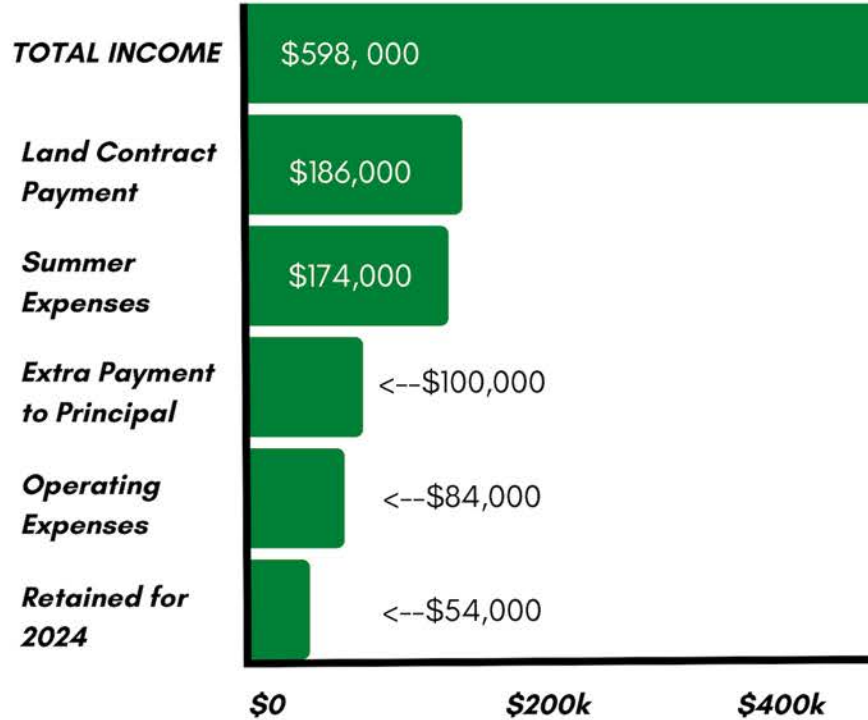
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

- BRENDA MILLHOUSE-HUEBNER, TREASURER



Income & Expenses:

- Total raised in 2023, including donations and summer event income, totaled approximately **\$598,000**.
- Annual operating budget of **\$544,000** included **\$186,000** – land contract payment, **\$100,000** extra to land contract principal, **\$84,000** in regular operating expenses, and **\$174,000** in summer operating expenses.
- After paying those expenses, that left WWTLC with approximately **\$54,000**.



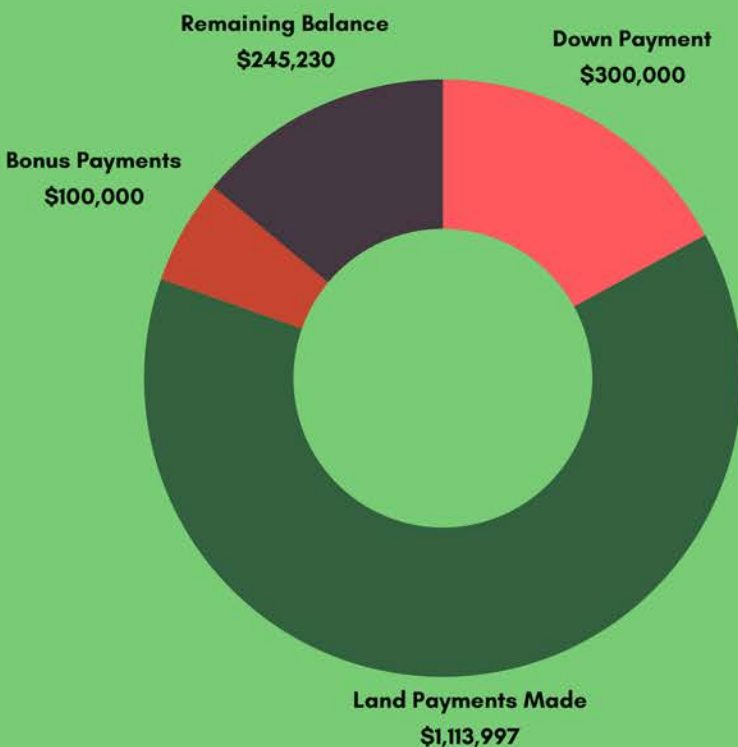
Land Payments = Purchase Price
\$1,500,000

Status of Land Purchase:

The purchase price of The Land was \$1.5 million.

Under the terms of the land contract, we agreed to a down payment of \$300,000, leaving \$1.2 million in principal. We planned eight annual payments of roughly \$186,000 each.

We made our sixth of 8 payments in 2023, plus two bonus payments of \$50,000, leaving approximately \$245,000 left to pay in principal and interest. We are getting closer!



FUNDRAISING AND DONOR RELATIONS

- KATHLEEN SEVERT



We Want The Land Coalition consists of two things: The Land and our community.

Without either, we wouldn't be here. This past year we made our sixth of eight annual land contract payments and were once again able to return to The Land to enjoy many glorious weeks of learning, exploring, and celebration. It is only because of the generous support of our community that we continue to walk The Land. We don't have any corporate sponsorships, large grants, or wealthy celebrity benefactors. Grassroots fundraising has allowed us to expand our time on The Land and ensure that its pristine ferns and forest are preserved. And we couldn't do it without YOU!

Fundraising Campaigns:

WWTLC had two main fundraising campaigns in 2023:



Name A Tree



The Name A Tree project is a testament to our community's heart and soul. Individuals or groups can honor specific women, women's organizations or performance groups, an influential foremother, or a special location on The Land. Each tree on the tour is curated by a team of volunteers. The geocode of the tree, along with a beautifully written tribute to the honoree and amazing photos are available to view online at www.wwtlc.org/treetour.

In 2023, 11 additional trees were generously "named" raising \$10,500. We have a total of 102 trees on the tour. Go to www.wwtlc.org/name-a-tree to learn more or to name a tree yourself.

Landmothers



The lifeblood of our nonprofit has been our recurring donors. Recurring donations cover 90% of our business operating and infrastructure budget and contract payments for The Land. "Landmothers" are community members who pledge \$25 or more per month in recurring donations.

In 2023, we welcomed 35 new Landmothers while another 25 existing Landmothers increased their monthly donations. This increased our annual recurring donations by \$28,700. Thank you!

2023 Landmother Thank-You Gifts:



FUNDRAISING AND DONOR RELATIONS

- CONTINUED

Our fundraising efforts start and end with individuals in our community.

- An amazing twenty-two separate Facebook Fundraisers were established by community members, collectively raising over **\$4,728**.
- Fundraising for special projects was presented to the community in our “Ten for Tuesday” campaigns before the events on The Land during the summer. Funds totaling **\$7,553** were raised specifically to finance two additional electric panels, security tents for the front gate, lighting for the new community tent (“Kitten”), trailer for storage of all the electric panels, and another ADA toilet.
- On Giving Tuesday, November 28, 2023, the community donated enough funds to allow us to purchase 7 additional Vermont Garden Carts which are so helpful at the gear drop stations on The Land.

There are many ways YOU can continue to make a difference!

- Donate directly via DonorBox (www.donorbox.org/wwtlc-for-women-for-girls-forever) or PayPal
- Add WWTLC to your will. See www.wwtlc.org/donate for instructions.
- Research if your employer will match your charitable deductions.
- Create your own Facebook Fundraiser celebrating your birthday, anniversary, or dog’s “gotcha” day. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9qp7MUiwhWY>
- Check with your financial advisor to see if you can make a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) or required minimum distribution (RMD) to WWTLC.
- Shop for WWTLC Swag and Merch at Goldenrod. <https://www.goldenrod.com/product-category/we-want-the-land-coalition/>
- Attend an event on The Land! Check out the 2024 Summer Events schedule <https://wwtlc.org/summer/>



We Want the Land Coalition Inc

For Women. For Girls. Forever.



WWTLC is very excited to welcome Mads Young to the Board of Directors in 2024. She will be serving as the Donor Relations Chair. Mads works on the back-office work for all our fundraisers. She is also the person to contact when you have any changes in your address, phone number or have questions regarding your donations. You can reach Mads at mads.wwtlc@protonmail.com.



Thank you to each one of you.

Whether you donated funds, helped stitch the beautiful quilt (gorgeous quilts made from within our community are awarded as a gift to a randomly drawn donor each year), volunteered your research skills to find applicable grants, were a member of the summer volunteer crew or you cleaned out your closet and offered items to LSS or other WWTLC auctions – your contributions have all added up. You are the community, and together we are procuring, preserving, and stewarding those 650 acres that we affectionately refer to as The Land.

We so appreciate you!

EVENTS ON THE LAND

2023 Events Schedule

July 18 - 23	Singing & Playing On The Land + Girls Fest,
July 18 - 23	Serenity & Sobriety on The Land: A Week of Recovery in The Woods
July 25 - 30	Big Mouth Girl - Gathering on The Land WPI Festival on The Land
August 1 - 6	Fern Fest



We were THRILLED to have seen so many of you at one of the six events, held over 3 weeks on The Land in the summer of 2023.

Women of all backgrounds came "home" to celebrate, dance, learn, share, and be healed along the paths and under the stars.



3 WEEKS OF EVENTS ON THE LAND IN 2024

July 16 - 21: Amazon Spirit Week

July 23-28: Big Mouth Girl - Gathering on The Land

July 30 - Aug 4: WPI Festival on The Land

July 30 - Aug 4: RISE - Reigniting Intergenerational Sisterhood Everywhere

MORE INFO: WWTLC.ORG/SUMMER

THE LAND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The Land Stewardship Committee focuses on the efforts needed to ensure the Land is protected and preserved for women and girls forever. We carry out this important work by planning projects that focus on sustainability and accessibility in a way that minimizes impact on our forest and the varied species who call it home year round, engaging with volunteers and contractors with forestry expertise, and working with the Land Conservancy of West Michigan to ensure we are stewarding the Land in a manner consistent with best practices for land conservation. The Land Stewardship Committee also leads the planning and execution of major infrastructure projects and works with the Summer Readiness Committee to ensure the Land is ready to welcome women and girls home each summer.



2023 was a busy year for the Land Stewardship Committee

In the summer, we embarked upon our first major invasive species removal efforts. During summer events and at work weekends in the fall, a group of tireless volunteers removed massive amounts of Autumn Olive, starting in the main festival areas and moving our way along Lois Lane toward the front gate. This important work will continue for the foreseeable future.

In the fall of 2023, we engaged a tree safety expert to perform a risk assessment of the trees in our main and volunteer camping areas. That survey resulted in extensive arborist work in the Spring of 2024 to address branches and trees that posed an imminent risk to campers. Nearly 100 previously hazardous trees will be addressed through critical pruning or removal. The focus on this work was to balance the priorities of human safety with allowing the forest to follow her natural life cycle, therefore we only removed or pruned trees when absolutely necessary to protect our campers. While the bulk of this work has been completed, the Land Stewardship Committee will be executing a **5-year plan** to address more critical pruning in the coming years.

The Land Stewardship Committee led projects in 2023:

- **Set the foundation for a major asphalt restoration project, which will replace crumbling asphalt from the new main stage area (heristorical Day Stage) to Triangle and crack-fill and seal the remaining asphalt on The Land. This work will allow greater accessibility and ease of movement for all visitors to The Land and prolong the useful life of our asphalt paths.**
- **Began the process to build a new community shower in the RV camping area. The first step involved installing two 1,250 gallon septic tanks in the fall of 2023. The concrete pad will be poured in May 2024, and our amazing summer crew will build the new shower structure when they arrive to prepare for summer events in 2024.**



The Land Stewardship committee also organizes several work weekends in the spring and fall. During 2023, we held five work weekends, with up to 20+ volunteers camping on the Land and contributing to various projects, such as invasive species removal, tree work, and other projects to prepare the Land for summer events.

If you are interested in joining in on any of the planning for the work weekends or other projects, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator at:

PhylGormanWWTLC@gmail.com

Or our Land Stewardship chair at:

Kris.WWTLC@gmail.com



LAND HOSTS AND DAY VISITS



There are two ways you can visit and spend time on The Land during the "off-season" in addition to attending any of the events that happen during the summer.

First, you can make a **Day Visit to The Land**. During a day visit you can walk the trails, reconnect with your favorite fern meadow or bring a picnic to eat by your special tree. You can just relax and enjoy spending time in the woods or one of the open meadows. You just might see some of the other "day visitors," like the wild turkeys, porcupines, deer, and the vast variety of birds that also call The Land "home." It is so peaceful spending time there in the "off-season," so if you are at all able, we highly recommend carving out some time for day trips to The Land. There are over 650 acres to explore!



Another way that you can visit The Land is by being a **Land Host**. Land Hosts spend anywhere from a long weekend to two weeks on The Land. While you are a Land Host you can enjoy The Land as noted above, knowing that your presence on The Land and keen observations of what's happening there are vital to our ability to maintain it during the months we don't have a crew there to note fallen trees, etc. Land Hosts also greet any day visitors and share information about the Land Conservancy of West Michigan and WWTLC with them.



Land Hosting and Day Visits occur between April 1st and October 31st when there are no events taking place. There is no water or electricity provided during this timeframe – you are responsible for true off-grid camping. Camping is pack-it-in-and-pack-it-out and rustic. For your convenience, there will be an ADA-accessible portable toilet (serviced weekly), and the firepit is waiting for you to warm up and share your stories!

If you are interested in being a Land Host, please [fill out a Land Host Application](#).

We ask all who visit The Land to please leave no trace behind.

VOLUNTEER CHAIR UPDATE

- PHYL GORMAN

WWTLC is fundamentally a volunteer driven organization!

Volunteer impact—Our most essential resources are the women who give their hearts, time, and labor (largely without compensation) in support of the Land and this community of girls and women that we want to forever walk her sacred paths. In 2023, a dedicated and passionate group of **Board of Directors** expanded from nine to thirteen. This - of course - expanded the length of our Zoom meetings but as new directors learn their roles and take up responsibilities the workload is shared, and more work is accomplished. Learn more about our Board at <https://wwtlc.org/our-board/>.

Much of the volunteering for WWTLC occurs on the Land. Our committed **2023 Summer Event Volunteers** and leadership team numbered over seventy women strong. Hailing from seventeen different states; traveling both internationally and from as far as Maine, California, Florida, and Texas to experience the joy of being in community! A full 35% were new to the summer crew. These women give deeply of their sweat, time and talents to prepare the Land and support the infrastructure needs of our summer event organizers and event attendees..

Crews - of mostly local women - joined us on the Land for spring and fall Work Weekends. Here women tend our forest, do invasive species mitigation, repair paths and create natural barriers to reinforce the physical boundaries at the property's points of entry. Similarly, **Land Hosts** - stay on the Land during the "off season" and welcome day visitors, as well as helping us maintain "eyes on the Land with their physical presence.

Beyond the Board of Directors there are other volunteers who work year-round including **our Quilters** - a special shout out goes to the volunteers from the **WWTLC Fundraising Committee** - who support and cultivate donors by raising money throughout 2023 for our ongoing fundraising campaigns (see pages 7-8 in this report for more details on the sustaining work of this group). A special acknowledgement and thank you goes to the all-volunteer effort of the **Land Sustainment Shop** for dedicating their separate 501(c)3 organization to providing funding for WWTLC!

Expressing Gratitude—It is with utmost sincerity that I thank all the WWTLC volunteers for their individual and collective efforts to support the mission of this organization. The opportunity to be in collaboration with women who love the Land, who give generously both as donors and volunteers is a humbling honor. Together we facilitate the ability of girls and women to continue to enjoy and gather at this place so many of us call Home. Beyond community building, the ongoing conservation of sacred acreage makes an important contribution to the health of the world we share. Connecting through **WWTLC**, new friendships are made, and old friendships are renewed. Your volunteer contributions are seen and deeply appreciated!



Updated information about volunteer opportunities are available at:
<https://wwtlc.org/volunteer/>
Mark Your Calendars for 2025!



HIRING COMMITTEE UPDATE

In addition to our amazing volunteer team (see the Volunteer section), we continue to rely on a handful of paid consultants for some key year-round work functions with highly specialized skill sets. Examples include a lawyer, a certified public accountant, an arborist, and a consulting firm who facilitates the state solicitation registration process which enables us to receive donations from donors in states other than Michigan. We have built strong relationships with these subject matter experts who have come to understand our unique operation, and we are looking forward to ongoing engagement with them. In support of summer events, we have two categories of crew members who receive a small stipend - work crew volunteer leads and the Summer Land Management team.

- WWTLC offers modest stipends to some summer work crew volunteer leads who have very specific skills and availability to do the necessary work and/or supervision required to operationalize the infrastructure on The Land.
- WWTLC engages short term temporary independent consultants in a few key positions to support summer programs on The Land: Summer Land Manager (SLM), Assistant Summer Land Managers (ASLM).

In addition to the time they spend working on The Land in support of the summer events season, this small but mighty team of women, led by the board, volunteers throughout the year. They ensure the systems and processes needed to operate as a rustic campground, and The Land itself, are ready to welcome women and girls home for events. Enough cannot be said about the work they contribute to make Events on The Land possible. Open positions are posted to the general community each year, with a focus on completing the hiring decision process to allow ample time for those joining us on The Land to plan appropriately to relocate to the woods for weeks at a time. Through the wonders of technology, our summer staffing process - from online applications to video interviews - is now online. We are energized by the enthusiastic responses we receive.

Grace Pifer (Summer Land Manager), Ginny Irish (Assistant Summer Land Manager - land operations), and DiAnna Ritola (Assistant Summer Land Manager - volunteer kitchen operations) are returning in 2024 and are an integral part of our success. The summer volunteer crew "call for applications" is now live for 2024. We invite you to fill out an application to help us on The Land this summer! We are so grateful to have such amazing talent in our community with so many women who are willing to raise the village each summer! If working with We Want The Land Coalition, whether it be serving on a committee year-round, joining the board of directors, volunteering for a work weekend, or during the summer events season, sounds like something you might be interested in - please send us a note.



MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Our WWTLC community is inspiring! Many hands tirelessly working together to build a rustic campground in the middle of the beautiful trees, ferns and wildlife each summer...building a "village", feeding each other, weathering every storm (literally), and supporting incredible performances and workshops at consecutive weeks of Summer Events.

It is easy to see our community through that perspective, by thinking about the Summer Events and considering both those who make it all happen and those who come to join the experience by attending events.



Email subscribers:

More than 2,500 folks already receive our emails (we only email noteworthy info - no spamming from WWTLC!)

[Click here](#) to be added!

We Want the Land Community (WWTLC) Facebook group:

We had a lot of active members in 2023 (those who view, post, comment or "react")

There are over 6,200 members - WOW!

Fun fact - Thursdays and Fridays are the most popular days in the group

Other ways to stay engaged:

- Follow WWTLC on Twitter
- Look for pics on our [Instagram](#) page
- [Volunteer](#) for one of our year-round committees this summer
- "Like" the We Want the Land Coalition Facebook page

We appreciate our donors!

- We received donations made in 2023 from **743** of you.



The Land is what connects us and our community members are who sustain us. We are so grateful for each of you. Thank you for helping our mission.

For Women. For Girls. Forever!

HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY SUCCESSES OF 2023

- ANNEMARIE SERRA

2023 was a whirlwind success: it was another year exemplifying the resilience and persistence of our community, which is a hallmark, of sorts.



Here are just a couple highlights:

First, we made the sixth annual land contract payment. We are on target to have The Land paid off in 2025! We really can't do any of this without the generous support of donors and volunteers. We continue to be led by Fundraising Chair, Kathleen Severt, who is always on the lookout for fun ways to raise funds. We are also eternally grateful for the vision and efforts of the all-volunteer run Land Sustainment Shop - a new 501c3 focused on raising additional funds to pay off The Land. In an uncertain economy with ongoing demands on our time and money, we continue to move strongly forward towards fulfilling our mission of preserving and sustaining The Land. For women. For girls. Forever!

Second, in 2023, close to 1,000 women and girls returned home to The Land for 6 unique summer camping events. While it sometimes feels like most of the world is treating COVID-19 as a thing of the past, we continue to monitor and adhere to state and local guidelines so that we can ensure health and safety.

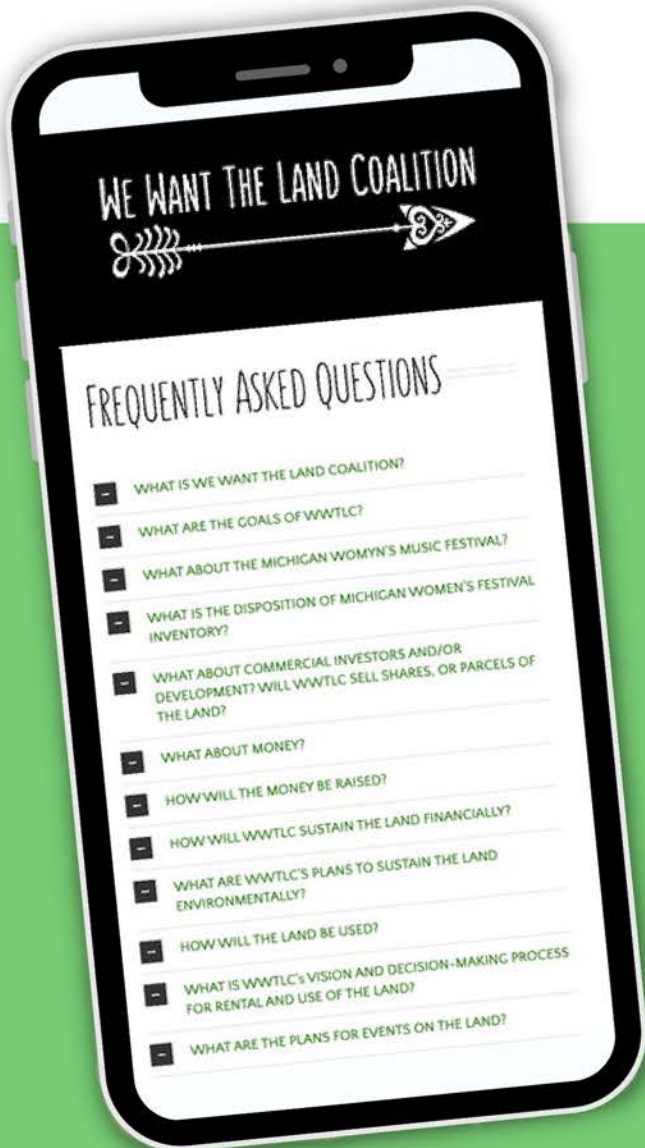
Third, we grew the board's bench strength by adding 3 new positions (Donor Relations, Diversity Equity and Inclusion, and Organization Compliance) and filling 2 vacancies (Land Stewardship and Marketing/Communications). We now have 13 volunteer board positions, sharing their time and talent throughout the year to keep the organization moving forward. We remain a learning organization, and, as such continue to refine our operational processes, balancing resources (people, time, and money), capacity, needs, inventory, infrastructure, etc. There are many moving pieces to consider and we are all guided by and focused on collaborating to ensure sustainable operations and continuous improvement to make the rustic woods of The Land a space that is as comfortable and accessible as possible, in support of our mission.

If you were able to make it to The Land in 2023, we hope you found the peace and rejuvenation needed to recharge your batteries. We are, as of now, getting ready to kick off the 2024 summer schedule of events from mid-July to mid-August and we hope to see you on a path in Michigan this summer!



STAYING CONNECTED IN 2024

Visit our website
wwtlc.org



Learn more by reading our
Frequently Asked Questions
(FAQ's): wwtlc.org/faqs/

FOR WOMEN. FOR GIRLS. FOREVER.