



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[2/18/2015]

[Hancock, MI] Our natural resource assets play a significant role in the overall health and wellness of our community. The public access we enjoy to many nationally significant lands is something we have come to appreciate, and in some cases even take for granted. The Portage Health Foundation recognizes that our natural resources provides many opportunities to enjoy the types of activities that contribute to the overall physical and spiritual wellness of our citizens.

Recently, the Keweenaw Land Trust, a community partner in protecting land, water and quality of life through conservation, education, and stewardship, acquired a parcel of property located at Princess Point near Jacobsville that includes 360' of waterfront on the Keweenaw waterway. The parcel has beautiful views of undeveloped lands adjacent to the property and is a common area for fishermen, hunters, and recreational paddlers. As part of the project, the KLT needed to raise additional funds needed to complete the project and was presented with a recent award of \$13,375.00 from the Portage Health Foundation.

“The Portage Health Foundation grant is helping us establish the Princess Point Nature Area along the Portage Waterway. This area will be accessible for kayakers and canoeists as part of the Keweenaw Water Trail.” said Evan McDonald, executive director of the Keweenaw Land Trust.

The land was donated by several members of the Uitti family and is located in an ecologically rich area near the Sturgeon Sloughs. The land owners desired to see this land be put to use for the general public. With the donation of the land and some matching funds, the Keweenaw Land Trust was able to secure most of the funding necessary to develop this property into useable community resource. The award from the Portage Health Foundation will allow the KLT to perform the site preparations needed for a safe and useable public space. The Princess Point project is just one step in developing a more comprehensive Keweenaw Water Trails route with safe pull-out stations and rest areas for recreational paddlers.

McDonald commented that he and his colleagues are excited to know that the Portage Health Foundation recognizes the important role that our natural resources play in the community's overall health. “There is a definite correlation of individual health and spiritual wellness within those people that routinely access nature,” declared McDonald. “It (nature) has incredible healing characteristics and we want to ensure the public has continued access to some of the most significant lands in our community.”

Store stated that the Portage Health Foundation is working to identify many avenues to influence and build a healthier community. “We want to build community-assets; we want to establish lasting partnerships that will truly influence the health of our community and be impactful for generations to come.” Store added. “We know that natural resource education and wellness will be one part of the puzzle as we move forward.”

The Portage Health Foundation is a 501(c)3 charitable organization that receives and contributes charitable donations which support the health needs of the community through enhanced philanthropy and community collaboration throughout Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw and Ontonagon counties.