

McAuliffe Property



Project Description: This property may be relatively small in size but harbors an intact ecosystem that it is quite mighty! It provides an excellent example of how protecting diverse and resilient lands can mitigate climate change. The parcel is largely defined by the Rubicon River, which flows north along much of its eastern and northern boundaries. The southern and western regions feature a southern mesic forest, which is highlighted by an impressive array of trees that includes a more than 300-year-old white oak. Historically, these forests were quite common throughout southern Wisconsin, but over time the majority were cleared for agricultural use. As a result, areas of southern mesic forest are now rare and serve as an important habitat for endangered animal species such as the four-toed salamander and both the hooded and Kentucky warbler as well as a diversity of important plant life.

The majority of the protected property is surrounded by a locally-owned organic farm that is permanently protected by a conservation easement held by Tall Pines Conservancy.

Why: Claudeen McAuliffe preserved her property and donated the development rights for the following reasons:

- 1.) To fulfill a commitment to protect the habitat of all the living things that depend on the property for their existence.
- 2.) To preserve the rare southern mesic forest, including the existing oaks, maples and basswood, through ongoing property management.
- 3.) To protect water quality in the Rubicon River.
- 4.) To mitigate climate change.

Where: Town of Rubicon, Dodge County

Size: Approximately 5.6 acres

Owner: Claudeen McAuliffe

Easement Holder: Tall Pines Conservancy

Completion: 2021

“I had a feeling. The river, the trees, the floodplain – and there were creatures who depended on the patch of woods, and the wetland and river. The feeling involved a sense of place, a need to give back, and... a vision of what could be. I recall a specific sentiment that I’ve never forgotten: a commitment to all the living things that depended on this small slice of real estate for their existence and the survival of their species. I made a promise to protect their home in perpetuity. And Tall Pines helped me to fulfill that promise.”

—Claudeen McAuliffe

