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**LOCAL LANDOWNER'S VOLUNTEER EFFORTS REWARDED**

*Dave Jacobson, of Sauk Centre, to receive Minnesota Land Trust award*

**ST. PAUL, October 13** – Being half Norwegian, half Swedish and 100% farm boy, Dave Jacobson knows the value of hard work—and keeping busy. Later this month, he'll receive an award for his old-fashioned virtues.

Jacobson, a retired educator who grew up on the family farm just north of Sauk Centre, will be awarded the John Peck Volunteer of the Year award by the Minnesota Land Trust on Saturday, October 24 at the Linden Hill Mansions in Little Falls, Minnesota.

The award was created in 2005 by the Minnesota Land Trust to honor the extensive volunteer land-protection efforts made by retired St. Cloud biology professor John Peck. Peck is well-known throughout central Minnesota for his on-going work to preserve and protect land in the Sauk River watershed where he's lived for many years. Jacobson is the fifth recipient of the award. The event also recognizes the contributions of the other 386 private landowners throughout the state who have protected their land with the Land Trust.

Jacobson was selected by fellow volunteers and Land Trust staff for his many years of service as a conservation easement monitor. The Land Trust, which specializes in the use of conservation easements to protect natural and scenic land, counts on volunteers like Jacobson to visit each protected property annually in order to build goodwill with its owners and to ensure that the land continues to be used in a manner that preserves its conservation values. Jacobson became involved with the Land Trust in 1995 when he worked with the organization to create a conservation easement that protects his 160-acre Century Farm forever.

“Selecting Dave as the John Peck Volunteer of the Year was an easy decision” says Kris Larson, executive director of the Minnesota Land Trust. “Because he's protected his own land, he's very knowledgeable about conservation easements; and he also relates very well to others”, adds Larson.

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In addition to protecting his land with a conservation easement, Jacobson completed a ten-year plan to restore the land's tall and short native prairies, oak and conifer savannas, 30 drained wetlands and a 20-acre woodlot. Today, the farm resembles the land that once greeted his Swedish grandparents, August and Albertina Jacobson, who homesteaded it in 1885. Jacobson's conservation easement ensures that the land will never be developed or subdivided and his restoration accomplishments serve as a model for other conservation-minded landowners.

Each year when he's not busy working his own land, he travels throughout the region, monitoring about a dozen of the nearly 400 protected properties under the Land Trust's care. The organization trains and dispatches about 100 volunteers annually to assist its staff.

"My volunteering for the Land Trust is really just a way for me to pay something back to the organization for all the help they offered me when I was looking for ways to keep my own land protected" says Jacobson.

The Minnesota Land Trust is a private, non-profit conservation organization working extensively with perpetual conservation easements – legal, recorded agreements by which landowners agree to limit the development and use of their land to preserve its natural and scenic values. The Minnesota Land Trust has completed 387 conservation projects protecting over 34,000 acres of land and 690,000 feet of shoreline. These projects provide benefits to the public by conserving important plant and animal habitats, protecting water quality, and preserving scenic landscapes that contribute to a community's sense of place.

More information can be found on the organization's website: [www.mnland.org](http://www.mnland.org) or by calling 651-647-9590.

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