

THE STORY OF EARTHKEEPERS 2004-2014



*An Environmental Initiative of the
Interfaith Community in Northern Michigan*

BENCHMARKS OF HEALING

- 13,200 trees planted in 15 Michigan counties
- 640,000 lbs (320+ tons) of outdated computers and electronic waste collected and recycled
- 94,000 lbs (47+ tons) of hazardous household products collected and safely disposed
- 2,321 lbs of unwanted pharmaceuticals collected for proper disposal in a “Clean Sweep”
- 40 energy conservation audits of faith-based public buildings in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula
- \$30,000 of financial grants distributed to 40 congregations to implement energy conservation measures
- 7 community gardens established across the Upper Peninsula, 23 additional sites confirmed
- 37 presentations and workshops on spirituality and environment for regional churches and faith communities
- 15 strategic retreats for 64 faith-based volunteers
- 500 Earthkeeper booklets written, designed, and distributed
- 19 stories and 12 editorials about Earthkeeper projects published in The Detroit Free Press, The Mining Journal, NMU’s Northwind, Lake Superior Magazine, and The Marquette Monthly
- 3 Public Service Announcements (PSAs) distributed to local radio stations
- 3,547 page visits to www.earthkeepersup.org
- 3 Public presentations for 500 participants by nationally known theologians addressing spirituality and environment—Dr. Walter Bruggemann 2007, Dr. Audrey West 2010, Dr. Larry Rasmussen 2014



Student Earthkeepers river cleanup, April, 2009

Earthkeepers has set national records for pollution prevention by combining two powerful forces; the faith community and the environmental community. In short, neither could have done it quite so effectively alone. It took two very different skill sets working together to achieve such unprecedented results for the Great Lakes!

-CARL LINDQUIST, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SUPERIOR WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP

THE VISION

AN EARTH KEEPER COVENANT

CARING FOR CREATION

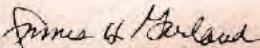
"And God saw all that was made and behold, it was very good."

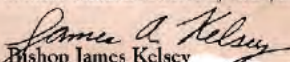
—Genesis 1:30

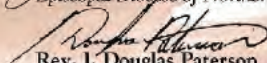
In conviction of the Goodness of Creation, the undersigned spiritual leaders and Bishops of our faith communities in Michigan's Upper Peninsula make a commitment to the stewardship and protection of the natural environment in the Great Lakes Basin. Because of our concern for the waterways, the forests, the fish and the wildlife

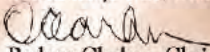
we pledge the following on this seventeenth day of July, two thousand and four:

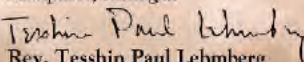
- (1) To support The Cedar Tree Institute, The Central Lake Superior Watershed Partnership and The Nature Conservancy in providing resources for our local faith communities, educating us about environmental issues, inviting us into a more creative, responsible stewardship of creation.
- (2) To initiate annual *clean sweeps* in collaboration with state and federal programs, encouraging our spiritual communities to collect and dispose of toxic chemicals that threaten our neighborhoods, towns and villages.
- (3) To work alongside The Lake Superior Binational Forum, a citizen advisory body for the Canadian and United States governments, to coordinate a network—a spiritual shield—of faith communities committed to protecting air and water quality in the Great Lakes Basin.
- (4) To encourage partnerships of our faith communities with American Indian tribes and agencies in Northern Michigan, addressing issues of environmental concern, sharing a common vision for future protection of the Earth's natural resources.

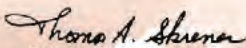

Bishop James H. Garland
Roman Catholic Diocese of Marquette

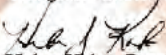

Bishop James Kelsey
Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan

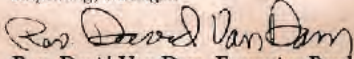

Rev. J. Douglas Paterson
Superintendent, Marquette District
Detroit Conference, United Methodist Church

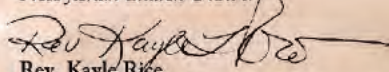

Rodney Clarken, Chair
Baha'i Spiritual Assembly
Marquette, Michigan


Rev. Teshin Paul Lehmberg
Lake Superior Zendo (Zen Buddhist)
Marquette, Michigan


Bishop Thomas A. Skrenes
Northern Great Lake Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America


Helen Kahn, President
Temple Beth Shalom
Ishpeming, Michigan


Rev. David Van Dam, Executive Presbyter
Presbytery of Mackinac
Presbyterian Church-U.S.A.


Rev. Kayle Rice
Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Marquette, Michigan

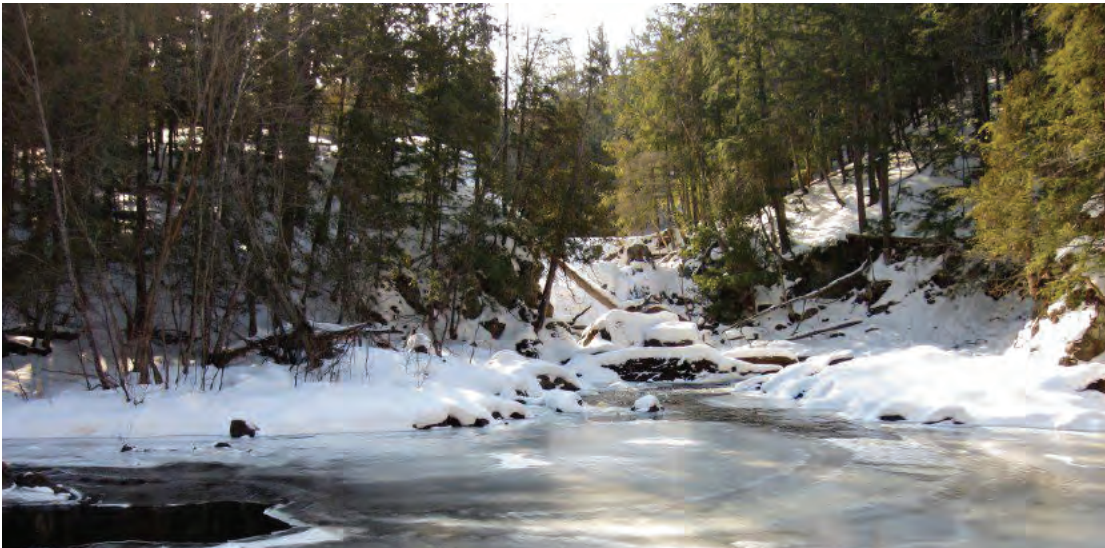
For further information contact:

Any of the above signers • The Cedar Tree Institute (906)228-5494 • Rev. Charlie West (906)225-0616 or mqrchas@earthlink.net

This original Earthkeeper Covenant was signed in 2004 and renewed in 2009 with four additional signatories.

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Iron River, Powell Township

EDITOR'S NOTE

*"Sing to the Lord a new song
for he has done marvelous things."*

-Psalm 98

While at Northern Michigan University, I majored in Environmental Studies and Sustainability. My four years were filled with the typical 'doom and gloom' message that environmentalists frequently preach. Knowing the depth of the hole that we have dug for ourselves impacted my life.

My senior year I was invited to serve in a leadership position with the Earthkeepers II Northern Michigan University Student Team. I accepted the position unknowing that my perspective on the environmental movement was soon to be completely turned around. Earthkeepers showed me that emphasizing hope, rather than cynicism, in environmental work is the key to real change. I began to understand that faith can bring something unique to the environmental movement: a heart.

Our EK II Student Team led me to facilitate workshops, lead retreats, organize book discussions, and build friendships. My appreciation of the spiritual connection to the earth vastly deepened. Being able to tie in my faith with my interest in science has been a blessing. Earthkeepers taught me that in order to appreciate creation, a Creator must first be appreciated.



ADAM MAGNUSON, MARCH 1, 2014,
NMU CLASS OF 2013



*Earthkeepers II 2013 NMU Student Team:
Adam Magnuson, Katelin Bingner, & Tom Merkel*

"Earthkeepers is all about the stewardship of what has been given to us by God. The beauty and wonder of this area has been handed down to us as a gift—and we are called to share the miracle of this creation with all those who come after us.

Earthkeepers reminds us of our responsibility and our privilege. God is at work."

-BISHOP TOM SKRENES, NORTHERN GREAT LAKES SYNOD ELCA

THE STORY...

Kyra Lane Ziolkowski has been inspired by the natural world since she was a child. At 22, she went to live in Alaska in a small Yupik village on the Bering Sea. She came to appreciate the hunting and gathering life style of the native peoples.

Kyra currently lives with her husband and six children in Marquette, Michigan where she studies plants and herbs, picks berries, fly fishes, writes, and builds community with her neighbors. She holds a Master's degree from Michigan Technological University in Biological Science and has served as Project Coordinator for Earthkeepers since 2005. I sat down with Kyra to reflect on her ten years of work...



ADAM: What is your background in terms of faith and the environment?

KYRA: I was raised Catholic. My dad's family is Irish and Polish Catholic, so that's the culture in which I was raised. After I left home for college, I wasn't attending Mass regularly until I moved to Alaska to live in a Yupik village, which had a long-standing Catholic influence. Everyone in the village would go to this little Catholic church, which was a tiny little white structure on the tundra. It had a spotted seal skin with a wood cross as the only religious symbol in the church. We started to go mainly to be a part of the community. There was a visiting priest that would come once a month or so but, other than that, there was just a deacon or lay people that would run the services. There were always children present; it was a family place that was really relaxed. I found there a deepening in my spirituality from being out on the

tundra and the link to that community. At that time it was a 90% subsistence village culture. The people lived on mostly fish, ducks, geese, and seal. They were very attuned to the land. It was very inspiring in terms of that connection between spirituality and the environment.

There were a lot of rituals. If you were given seal to eat, they expected you to suck the marrow from the bone. If you left anything, it was dishonoring. After eating, they would throw the extra back into the water for their ancestors. They believed that would ensure that you would catch a seal next year. There was a definite circle of life in the village.

The year that I lived there had a huge impact on me. I brought that experience back with me to Michigan when I left. The idea of gathering food and remembering where our food is coming from, made the connection between the earth and a thankfulness to the Creator. I had my first child at

"Since joining the NMU Earthkeepers team, I have met people who share my passion for seeking to improve the environment, and who do so with positivity and hope for the future. Through our meetings, I have also gained insight into others' ideas about spirituality, which has helped expand my horizons and led me to think in new ways about my own faith."

-PAUL FLAMINIO



Earthkeeper I Volunteer Team, 2004

24; my husband and I wanted to instill in our family that reverence for life.

ADAM: When you got back to Michigan, how did you hear about the Earthkeeper project? How did it begin?

KYRA: My father had worked with Jon Magnuson, a Lutheran pastor, university chaplain, and director of the non-profit Cedar Tree Institute. They were looking for representatives from various faith communities to work on this project. I was invited to serve as the Catholic representative, and in 2005 our newly formed interfaith coalition did a household hazardous waste clean-up. The year after that, we received support from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and I began doing some part-time administrative work with the Cedar Tree Institute. That's how I started coordinating things for the next sweep which was an electronic waste collection.

ADAM: Was it difficult to involve faith communities with this environmental work? Any resistance or disapproval?

KYRA: Most responses were positive. Some were, of course, more apathetic. The majority of people understood the basics of what we were doing and trusted that. We had flyers and newsletters they could put in their bulletin about our clean-sweeps; we were able to recruit 30 collection sites with various church parking lots. We collected 320 tons of e-waste in just 3 hours.

ADAM: How did the idea of the clean-sweep come to light?

KYRA: It started from conversations between Charlie West, a Methodist pastor, Carl Lindquist, from the Superior Watershed Partnership, and Jon. Paul Lehmborg from the Buddhist community brought important and fascinating perspectives to the vision during those years. The Superior Watershed provided the technical expertise. The Cedar Tree Institute coordinated the faith communities.

ADAM: Did you have any problems with the clean-sweep?

KYRA: When we coordinated the e-waste clean sweep in 2006, we had a company out of Detroit that we contracted to come up and collect at the 30 sites. They were hauling the waste down to dispose of all the parts properly, up to EPA standards. They came up to the St. Ignace area



Messiah Lutheran Church, Marquette, Earthkeeper Clean Sweep, 2006

and went to the first couple of parking lots, filled their trucks, and went home. We still had 28 sites left throughout the Upper Peninsula!

There was a scramble to find more trucks to remove all the e-waste. We ended up renting a hanger at a former Air Force Base and moved everything there. It took a few days longer so that Sunday, pastors ended up calling me saying, “You said this would be gone, what I am supposed to do, it’s time for Mass on Sunday morning and there’s nowhere for anyone to park!” Our response to this was, “Well, that’s the lesson, this is the waste we created. Now we have to deal with the sacrifice of what do we do with it. It may be an inconvenience for us but it is our waste. We need to realize what we created”.

This was a great lesson for us all. The degradation of the planet is our problem. We cannot just shove it off. We have to look at it and see how much

waste we actually have accumulated. Let’s take responsibility. That was a blessing for us. We were left with a bunch of junk in a parking lot and the inconvenience of that. Some of the pastors actually ended up using this message as their sermon that day.

ADAM: When you first started working with Earthkeepers, what was the first big challenge?

KYRA: The clean sweeps were the first projects: hazardous waste clean-up in 2005, e-waste in 2006, and then the pharmaceuticals in 2007. During the hazardous waste clean sweep, we collected over 47 tons. For the e-waste clean sweep we collected over 320 tons, and for the pharmaceuticals clean sweep we collected over 1 ton of unwanted drugs and medicines. Each clean sweep was conducted in just three hours. These big projects caught the interest of the EPA.

Federal officials were astounded, wondering how we collected so much waste so quickly. They underestimated, as many people do, the power of faith communities when we choose to work together. People were desperate to get rid of unwanted pharmaceuticals. People brought medicines that were 10-15 years old, once used by loved ones that passed away. Their families didn't know what to do with what was leftover in medicine cabinets. They came with tears in their eyes, grateful to be able to get rid of that memory of the illness, and how their loved ones had suffered. We weren't expecting that to be a part of the clean-sweep.

Another big Earthkeeper event was in 2009. Again, we approached it by setting aside just three hours on a Saturday morning. We used church

parking lots during the Christian liturgical season of Lent and distributed over 13,000 seedlings to 100 congregations. In 2010, we went on *sabbatical*, as Jon likes to say, until 2013 when we received donations from individuals and additional grant support from the U.S. EPA for Earthkeepers II.

ADAM: Is there a direction that you and the faith-based volunteers are work towards in Earthkeepers II?

KYRA: We are now focusing on three new goals for 2013-2014. First, energy conservation awareness for faith communities in the U.P. We're offering energy conservation audits for 40 places of worship. Following those recommendations, the U.S. government is distributing \$30,000 of mini-grants that we will provide for energy upgrades.



Earthkeeper Community Garden, Zion Lutheran Church, Marinette, WI, 2013



Installing solar panels for energy conservation, Calvary Lutheran Church, Rapid River, 2012

Our second goal is to establish 30 community gardens across the Upper Peninsula. We are working with the U.S. Forest Service and receiving support from Thrivent Financial, an insurance company that provides regional community grants. Part of our project is focused on connecting lower income people with food sources. The U.S. Forest Service is also helping us educate faith communities, providing information about plants, pollinators, and invasive species.

These community gardens are designed to be a collective effort. The office for the Northern Michigan Episcopal Diocese in Marquette is downtown. People from the neighborhood are invited to share the summer and fall harvest. Some of the plants and vegetables are growing between the sidewalk and street. There's corn, squash and everything growing there, including sunflowers. We'd like to see gardens like that everywhere.

The third goal of our Earthkeepers II initiative is to deepen spiritual connections between faith and the environment. Our volunteers travel to different faith communities throughout the U.P., giving workshops on spirituality and the environment. We are bringing in a nationally known ethicist and theologian this spring. Larry Rasmussen will be speaking to the Northern Michigan University community and religious leaders on issues of religion, ethics, and the environmental crisis. We have a newsletter that is distributed each month called *Earth Words*, in which Charlie West, a retired United Methodist pastor, connects scripture with environmental concerns. A link can be found on our website www.earthkeepersup.org.

In December of 2013, our EK Student Team designed and compiled a booklet of interfaith prayers for 250 congregations in our network. A copy was also sent to the Vatican, to Pope Francis,

"I've been with EarthKeepers since its inception, and with each passing year, it strikes me that our work is more and more important—not so much the collecting and disposing of our malignant trash, though that is valuable enough. EarthKeepers' main mission, to my mind, is not collecting trash but passing the word. It is only in the resulting raised consciousness that we shall save ourselves from ourselves. I feel fortunate to be part of such important work."

-REVEREND PAUL LEHMBERG, MARQUETTE ZENDO BUDDHIST

the newly elected leader of the world's Roman Catholic community.

ADAM: What have been responses that you experienced from faith communities to this emerging vision over the years?

KYRA: Some of our faith traditions have a strong social justice tradition. They see this fitting right in. They are excited and interested in seeing how Earthkeepers can help them do more. We discovered other congregations have little if any idea about how the environment connects with their faith or their spirituality. They have been really surprised that the two are connected and are motivated to participate in these projects because this is new and inspiring.

I've presented at workshops where people say they had no clue what to expect when we say we are going to talk about the environment and issues of faith. They recognized that most of the things we were talking about, they had already felt. Now they have an avenue to express those convictions by planting a garden, or by helping their parishes establish new pollution prevention measures. They are beginning to see these opportunities as ways of being good stewards of creation.

ADAM: What will you personally take away from the Earthkeeper Project?

KYRA: I am so grateful for this opportunity. The goal that I set for myself in college was to someday be part of a community movement that sought to improve and protect the natural environment. My spirituality is important to me. Earthkeepers has brought these two worlds together.

I feel like it's what I am supposed to be doing. I'm proud of all the projects we've done, all the people

that I've been able to meet. Unlike other secular organizations that I've been involved with that have also done important work, when dealing with faith communities you get to talk to a lot of people with different points of view. We work with ten different faith traditions.

ADAM: How has this project changed your view of the world?

KYRA: When I was younger, I was much more militant about my environmental beliefs. I was black and white in my thinking, cynical about people who didn't believe in the importance of the environmental movement as much as I did.

Working with Earthkeepers has changed that. I see most people want to do something. They feel a natural connection with the earth. When you get away from only talking about the dark side of environmental issues, and instead focus on what we can do, and what we feel is the right thing, it's hopeful.



A gift from the forest floor

A LAND AND HER PEOPLES

Northern Michigan's Upper Peninsula

- Number of Gray wolves: 664
- Acreage of forest land: 8,700,000 •
Percentage of entire State's forest lands: 80
- Superfund Sites (toxic lands and lakes, remnants of past industrial activities, identified by the Federal Government for remediation): 3
- Waterfalls: 440 +
- Federally recognized American Indian Reservations: 5
- Land area as percentage of State of Michigan: 29%
- Population of the Upper Peninsula: 311,323
- As percentage of State population: 3%
- Abandoned mines: 636 +
- Closed mining shafts: 1847+
- Unemployment rate in the Upper Peninsula 9 – 15%
- Unemployment rate for the United States: 7%
- Population density per square mile: 19
- Population density of Macau, China: 48,003
- Salary of Cliffs Natural Resources (mining company) CEO: \$5,595,592
- Per Capita income in the Upper Peninsula: \$24,525
- Black bear roaming Upper Peninsula forests: 14,000
- Estimate of white tail deer population in Upper Michigan: 400,000+
- Moose in the Northern Michigan: 420
- Number of National Forests: 2
- Annual visitors to Isle Royale National Park: 26,330
- Annual visitors to Mall of America (Minnesota): 40,000,000



View from Sugarloaf Mountain, Marquette County

PROTECTING THE WOLF

The wolf hunt controversy was one of the biggest political issues in 2013 in the state of Michigan. Below is an editorial published from the Earthkeeper II NMU Student Team, raising questions regarding Michigan's first proposed wolf hunt.

The Mining Journal: *A Letter to the Editor* November 2013

"I spent the past summer in the remote woods and mountains of Washington State, hiking nearly 1,000 miles on the Pacific Northwest Trail over the course of 50 days. Wildlife was abundant and diverse. Rattlesnakes, bears, moose, and bald eagles added to the pristine, majestic landscape of the northwest. However, one dominant species was missing from my list, the wolf.

Here in the Michigan's Upper Peninsula, we are blessed to have this apex predator lurk through our diverse forests. After spending four decades of Michigan tax payer's money in efforts to revive the dwindling Gray wolf population, the state successfully brought the population back off the federal Endangered Species List in 2011. Last year, a wolf hunt was proposed in Michigan.

Earthkeepers II Student Team felt this was a premature and environmentally unsound action. Our student team held a series of events to gather signatures protesting the hunt and to raise awareness on the issue.

The Earthkeeper covenant encourages a partnership between faith communities and Native American tribes to address issues of environmental concern. We felt it was our duty to help the native people voice their opinion on the issue and also share our environmental concerns of the wolf hunt.

We worked with the Native American Students Association at Northern in attempts to stress the importance of wolves in Native American culture. In Native American creation stories, the wolf was



created alongside man, as a companion and a sacred animal.

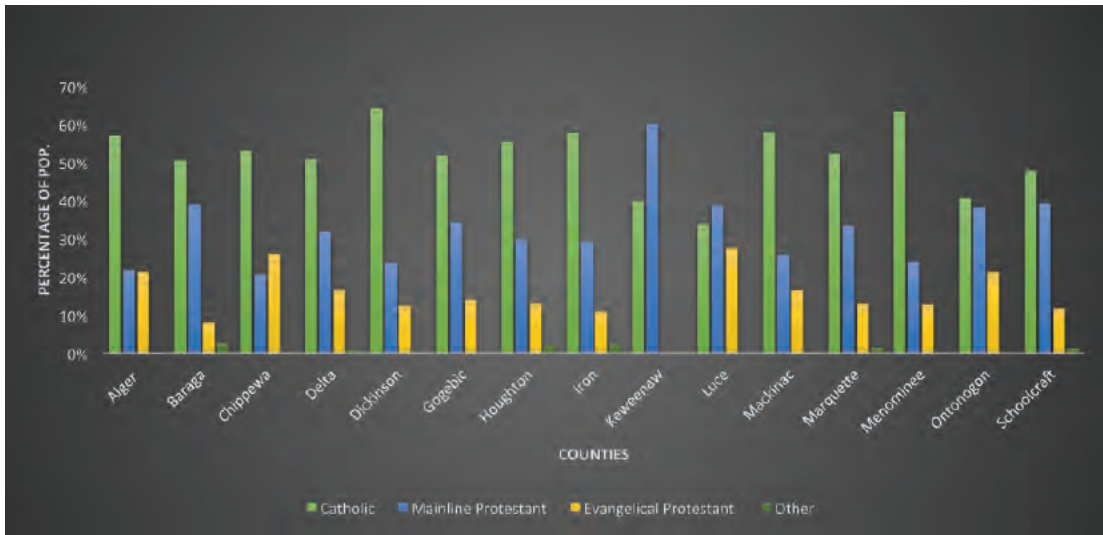
Through working with various organizations and community members, we contributed to the 225,000 signatures that were gathered in favor of making the hunt an issue to be voted on by the residents of Michigan. However the petitions were overruled and the hunt became in effect on Nov. 15.

A total of 1,200 licenses were sold, mainly to residents living downstate, for 43 gray wolves to be hunted in the U.P. Unlike other game that will be harvested this hunting season, the wolf will be hunted as a trophy species, not for meat.

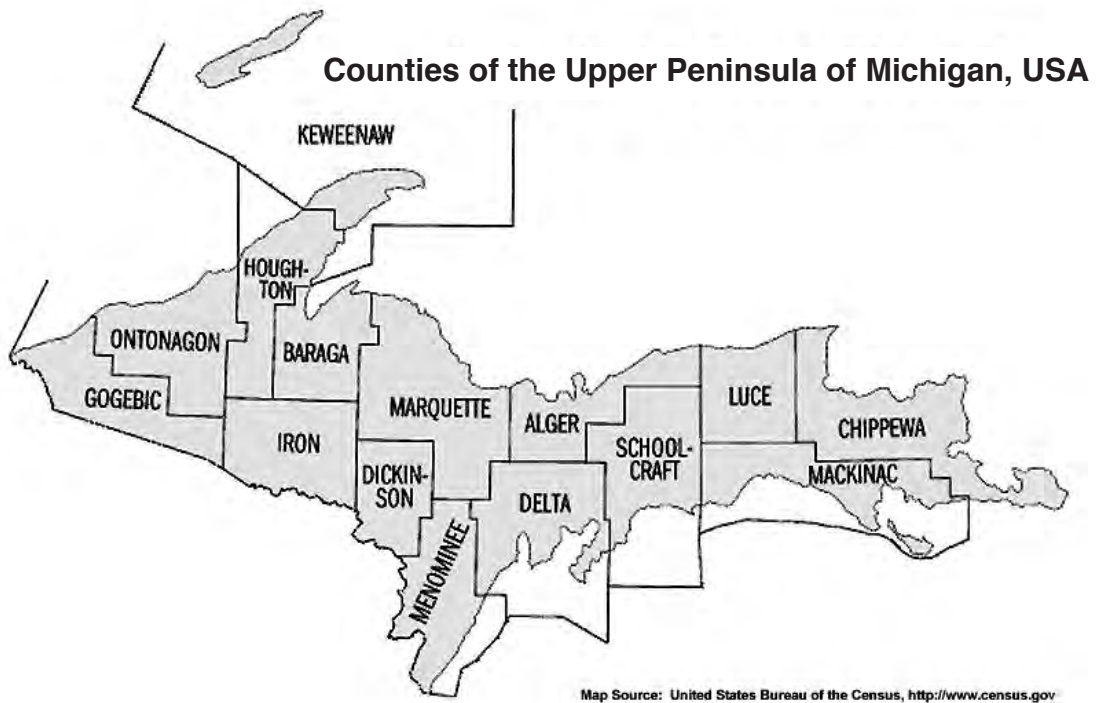
Wolves hold a special place in the hearts of Native Americans as well as those who enjoy a walk in the woods. Wolf encounters are seen by native people as symbolic of the regaining strength of the land. Perhaps this too is symbolic; as wolf encounters will become an even more infrequent occurrence, signifying the weakening of the land."

DEMOGRAPHICS OF FAITH COMMUNITIES

Religion in the Upper Peninsula (Ref: 2009 Census)



County	Catholic	Mainline Protestant	Evangelical Protestant	Jewish, Greek Orthodox, Buddhist, Unitarian, Baha'i, *Native American Indigenous Religion, Brethren, Covenant
Alger	3150	1201	1176	3
Baraga	2477	1908	389	132
Chippewa	7295	2845	3584	19
Delta	10547	6595	3410	157
Dickinson	14460	5315	2817	7
Gogebic	5588	3695	1518	1
Houghton	9810	5268	2290	386
Iron	4736	2377	887	191
Keweenaw	386	583		2
Luce	676	776	551	
Mackinac	2572	1139	731	2
Marquette	19217	12305	4744	541
Menominee	11072	4172	2225	3
Ontonogon	1751	1638	915	
Schoolcraft	1959	1607	478	53
Total	95696	51424	25715	1497



“When I was first asked to join Earthkeepers, I admit I was skeptical of it! I didn’t trust that there could be much of an interest within faith communities to really connect with each other, let alone get out and DO things together.

Oh, how wrong I was! In my year of working as a student intern, I’ve found my own beliefs strengthened by the overwhelming support and zeal of so many people working together to protect and preserve all things great and small here in the UP. I’ve been forced out of my comfort zone, introduced to new ways of seeing, and found connections with people I never would have known otherwise. My time working with Earthkeepers has been nothing short of a gift.”

-KATELIN BINGNER, EARTHKEEPER II STUDENT LEADER,
NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

INTERFAITH VOLUNTEERS

Strategic Planning Team 2004-2014

Joanne Sved – Zen Buddhist	Carl Lindquist – Superior Watershed Partnership
Paul Lehmberg – Zen Buddhist	Sarah Swanson – Lutheran NMU Student
Al Valentine – Presbyterian	Jennifer Simula – Lutheran NMU Student
Margie West – United Methodist	Michael Rotter – Zen Buddhist NMU Student
Charlie West – United Methodist	Doug Russell – Technical Advisor
Christine Bergquist – United Methodist	Leslie Putman – NMU Faculty EK Advisor
Amanda Litts – Lutheran	Ashley Ormson – Interfaith NMU Student
Michelle Larson – Lutheran	Andy Richard – Interfaith NMU Student
Vicki Ballas – Lutheran	Sarah Goodman – Interfaith NMU Student
Elizabeth Zant – Lutheran	Rev. Tari Stage-Harvey – Lutheran
Joe Johnson – Lutheran	Rev. Donna Lindberg - United Methodist
Bre Johnson – Lutheran	Don Watson – United Methodist
Keith Kolstad – Lutheran	Jon Magnuson – Cedar Tree Institute
Steve Gauger – Lutheran	Joy Ibsen – Lutheran
Dannille Bennet – Episcopal	Sue Piasini – Presbyterian
Melissa Robinson – Episcopal	Ron Sundell – NMU Faculty, Presbyterian
Anita Wingert – Episcopal	Lynnea Kuzak – Presbyterian
Nancy Auer – Episcopal	Kelly Mathews – Big Bay Faith Community
Linda O'Brien – Catholic	Kristen Kohrt – Lutheran, NMU student
Helen Grossman – Jewish	Larry Ziolkowski - Roman Catholic
Mike Grossman – Jewish	Rev. Peter Andersen – Lutheran
Jacob Silver – Jewish	
Ann Arnold – Jewish	
Sari Embley – Unitarian Universalism	
Heidi Gould – Unitarian Universalism	
Gail Griffith – Unitarian Universalism	
Sue Roell – Presbyterian	
Jill Martin – Presbyterian	
Dennis McCowen – Baha'i	
Elma Strom – Baha'i	
David McCowen – Quaker	
Martha Hayward – Quaker	
Katelin Bingner – Lutheran NMU Student	
Tom Merkel – Roman Catholic NMU Student	
Adam Magnuson – Lutheran NMU Student	
Paul Flaminio – Episcopal NMU Student	
Kyra Ziolkowski – Coordinator	
Jan Schultz – U.S. Forest Service	



Little Garlic River, Marquette County

THANKS TO OUR EARTHKEEPER PARTNERS 2004-2014

- Cedar Tree Institute
- Superior Watershed Partnership
- United States Environmental Protection Agency
- The Nature Conservancy
- United States Forest Service
- Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
- Faith Communities: Roman Catholic, Buddhist, Lutheran (ELCA), United Methodist, Presbyterian, Jewish, Unitarian Universalist, American Friends (Quaker), Baha'i, Episcopal
- Demonational Leaders and Bishops: Bishop James Garland, Bishop Tom Skrenes, Rev. Tesshin Paul Lehmberg, Bishop James Kelsey, Helen Kahn, Rev. J. Douglas Paterson, Rev. Kayle Rice, Rev. David Van Dam, Bishop Rayford Ray, Rodney Clarken, Rev. Doug Patterson, Bishop Alex Sample, Rev. Elbert P. Dulworth, Nancy Irish, David McCowen, Shannon Ruiz, Rev. Patricia Megregian, Dennis McCowen, Rev. Grant Lobb, Linda Piper, Rodney Clarken, Constance Arnold, Rev. David Anderson
- Individuals: Greg Peterson – Photographer; Writer
Obadiah Metivier – Web Design;
Jan Schultz – U.S. Forest Service consultant
Larry Ziomkowski – Advisor



A winter afternoon in Northern Michigan

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION



EKII Volunteer Heidi Gould with energy conservation advisors Doug Russell and Kevin Cook

- Governor Jennifer Granholm, Special Commendation State of Michigan 2005
- Lake Superior Magazine Achievement Award 2007
- Special Recognition, United States Environmental Protection Agency 2006
- Great Lakes Conservation Award (SOLEC) 2006
- Sierra Club White Pine Award 2008
- United States Forest Service, Eastern Region 2013
- Lake Superior Binational Forum, 2009
- Recognition, World Magazine, 2008



A view from Hogsback Mountain

CONNECTION WITH A FOREST PEOPLE

A unique component of the Interfaith Earthkeeper Initiative is a relationship with the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community (KBIC). One of five American Indian reservations here in the Upper Peninsula, KBIC continues to support their leaders in recovery of Native plants. Part of that work is to protect traditional teachings regarding medicinal usage of botanical resources found in our region's original ecosystem.

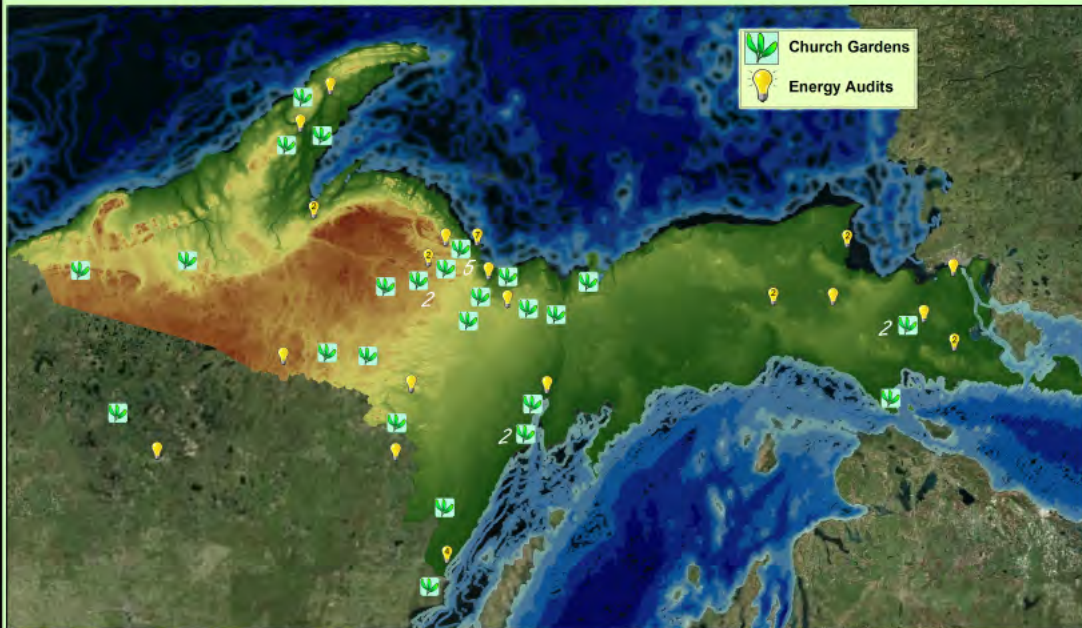
Evelyn Ravindren and Karen Anderson, representatives of the tribe's Natural Resources Department, along with Jan Schultz, Chief Botanist, for the Eastern Region of the United States Forest Service, have spoken at Earthkeeper press conferences and workshops. The tribal greenhouse at Zeba, first established in 2010 with the assistance of The Cedar Tree Institute, will serve as a teaching site for Earthkeeper volunteers. A special contribution from KBIC will be to provide samples of non-genetically modified native seeds for our 2014 interfaith community garden initiative.



Native Plants Greenhouse, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, Zeba, MI

Earthkeepers II: An Interfaith Environmental Initiative

30 Church Gardens & 40 Energy Conservation Audits



PARTNERS: Roman Catholic*Buddhist*Lutheran (ELCA)*United Methodist*Presbyterian*Jewish Unitarian Universalist*American Friends (Quaker)*Baha'i & Episcopal Communities in collaboration with The Cedar Tree Institute, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency & the U.S. Forest Service

2013-2014

Cartographer:
Adam Magnuson

From collecting Household Hazardous Waste in the church parking lot one year and pallets of e-waste the next, to creating seasonal bulletin inserts for Upper Peninsula churches, to encouraging energy conservation and garden cultivation, to participating in several workshops and retreats on environmental themes, EarthKeepers has provided an opportunity to live out our Christian faith in the world around us, and together with other faith traditions, to express our love for Creation - perhaps the most significant issue in this critical time.

-CHARLIE WEST, RETIRED UNITED METHODIST PASTOR, MARQUETTE



Wetmore's Landing, Marquette County

"I became the Unitarian Universalist representative for Earthkeepers in the Spring of 2013. The three goals of the initiative are very appealing to me. I wanted to be a part of making this positive move forward, not only in my congregation but for the community at large. I appreciate this opportunity to work with such wonderful people of various faith traditions, doing the work of good stewardship."

-HEIDI GOULD, ADMINISTRATOR UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST



NMU Student Earthkeepers Andy Richard and Sarah Goodman, 2010

"I love being with Earthkeepers, gatherings are one of the times I mix my spiritual self with my love and care for the earth and all creation with abandon. It is a group that enfolds many perspectives and accomplishes awareness and grounded activity in how all people can help 'keep the Earth' for generations to come."

-NANCY AUER, EPISCOPAL, FACULTY MEMBER MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY



Lake Superior Shoreline

“Thank you Earthkeepers for your mission. You have given me encouragement to share my time and effort with the Community Garden at Eden Lutheran, to start my own home garden as well, and to help the U.P. congregations complete their Energy Audit project.”

-JOE JOHNSON, EDEN LUTHERAN CHURCH, MUNISING



EK Strategic Planning Team, St. Anne's Catholic Church, Mackinac Island, October, 2012

Earthkeepers II involves diverse communities of faith throughout the Upper Peninsula of Michigan as stewards of our earth through energy audits of our buildings and promoting community gardens. This commitment will made an impact on how we care for our earth. The Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan is committed to this work and is a full partner in carrying out the objects and goals of Earthkeepers II.

-RAYFORD J. RAY, BISHOP OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NORTHERN MICHIGIAN

THE PROMISE

*In Honor of Jim Kelsey
Guide, Visionary, Colleague
Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of
Northern Michigan (1999-2007)*

Thomas Berry, a respected Roman Catholic theologian of the later 20th Century, often spoke during the last years of his life about “The Great Turning.” His reference was to a collective, conscious return to a deep, sacred connection with the natural world.

Many of us believe the interfaith work of Earthkeepers has been a contribution to reclaiming such a sacred understanding of the planet, specifically Northern Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. It has also been a historic witness to the power of community, what can be achieved when people of diverse faith traditions choose to work together with environmental groups, Native American tribes, and federal agencies toward a common goal.

We will continue to seek support to carry on our efforts. We also know that the future of this mission rests with the next generation of those who feel called to carry on this dream.



JON MAGNUSON
THE CEDAR TREE INSTITUTE





Strategic planning meeting, EK Student Team, NMU, February, 2014

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has!”

-MARGARET MEAD

GRANDFATHER, LOOK AT OUR BROKENESS.

We know that in all creation
Only the human family
Has strayed from the Sacred way.
We know that we are the ones
Who are divided
And we are the ones
Who must come back together to walk the Sacred way.
Grandfather, Sacred One, Teach us love, compassion, and honor
That we may heal the earth and heal each other.

Ojibway (*Anishinaabe Native American Prayer*)



Lake Superior Shoreline, Granite Point Road



Michigan's Upper Peninsula, USA

A Collaborative Effort of Northern Michigan's Religious

Communities: Roman Catholic, Buddhist, Jewish, Lutheran (ELCA), Presbyterian, Episcopal, United Methodist, Unitarian Universalist, American Friends (Quaker) and Baha'i, coordinated by the Cedar Tree Institute with technical support from the US Environmental Protection Agency, the Lake Superior Watershed Partnership, and the US Forest Service

www.earthkeepersup.org • www.cedartreeinstitute.org