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December 12th, 2021

Dear Current and Future Members & Donors:

The last time I wrote an annual fundraising letter was in 2020; a bookend to an eventful year for all of us. I also had a different job title then, and it was still early in my personal journey with Seno K/RLT Conservancy. In the last two years, so many things have changed. But as I sit down to write this letter, I find that despite the many anecdotes and stories that can be offered about Seno, I feel frustrated that it still didn't feel like it was "enough".

In many ways Seno K/RLT has grown and succeeded. We have overhauled internal procedures and policies which permits us to operate at a higher level. We work hard to achieve our perpetual obligations to both landowners and the community. We have begun the important task of building relationships with both people and businesses that value conservation, forestry, and natural resource education; something integral to our growth as we rely on the kindness of donors and volunteers. While we cultivated donors new and old, we have served well over 600 adults and children as students in our educational programs this year alone. I feel great promise when I think of the future of Seno K/RLT Conservancy.

However, somehow in the broad scale of climate changes, dwindling natural resources, and the fragmentation of habitat both in Wisconsin and beyond, I sometimes feel discouraged; discouraged by the limitations of what a small land trust like Seno K/RLT can contribute in the face of dauntingly large-scale concerns. Perhaps this isn't the uplifting end-of-year message you want to hear, but honesty and transparency are important values. That said, I often re-focus my perspective to realize that conservation has to start somewhere, and that small incremental changes will meet larger goals. I remind myself of something I learned from talented people along the way; There is value in building the systems you want to see in the world, by starting at the "grass roots" level of engagement within a small local community. This is the first step in larger change. There is great importance in cultivating a sense of hope which drives action, to counter the paralyzing outcome of despair. I find energy and hope in seeing children captivated by something new about the natural world during our educational programs. I find motivation in the conversations I have with landowners while walking their land, as they reflect on the love and care that permeates their stewardship and hard work, and the joy they find in nature. And I find so much hope in the words of every person who tells me about the solace they find while walking the Seno hiking trails.

With those reminders, I can see that we are making a difference. In the last two years, we have worked hard to set the foundation for something bigger; engagement of local businesses for sponsorship, more opportunities to raise funds, enhanced outreach within the greater Racine and Kenosha communities. While in many respects I wish to do more, I know that our board of directors is creating the path, in stepwise fashion, that we can easily follow toward greatness. We can only do this with your continued support and donations. I know that your contribution to Seno K/RLT permits us to move forward on our path. This letter is my attempt to express my gratitude and appreciation for your priceless belief in us, and that you will share my hope for greater gains in 2023.

Please donate now using the enclosed envelope, or you can use the appropriate links on our website, senokrlt.org. Thank you for your ongoing and future support.

Stacy Santiago
Executive Director
Seno K/RLT Conservancy, Inc.

Seno K/RLT Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) dedicated to sustainable forestry, natural resources education, conservation and land preservation. Your donation is tax deductible.