



KEWEENAW HEARTLANDS ECOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL INVENTORY

TIMELINE: January - December 2023

BACKGROUND

The Keweenaw Peninsula features ancient volcanic rocks, cascading streams, scenic Lake Superior coastlines and lush forests that harbor globally rare plants and wildlife, as well as a wide variety of historic and culturally significant features and artifacts. Since 1982, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has worked with partners to ensure the protection of this dynamic area. With the recent purchase of more than 32,000 acres—known as the Keweenaw Heartlands—in October 2022, we have the opportunity to assure the careful management of these resources into the future.

Because the Keweenaw Heartlands are largely an intact forested landscape, in addition to contributing to the health of one of the world's largest freshwater systems, the Great Lakes, it offers the opportunity to sequester significant amounts of atmospheric carbon. It is also a focal point for issues faced by forests around the world, and by the communities that depend on them—from habitat fragmentation, economic instability to increased and sometimes conflicting human uses.

Finally, this is an opportunity to model an approach that balances the use and management of natural lands for people AND nature, to acknowledge a region's cultural history and address future community needs.

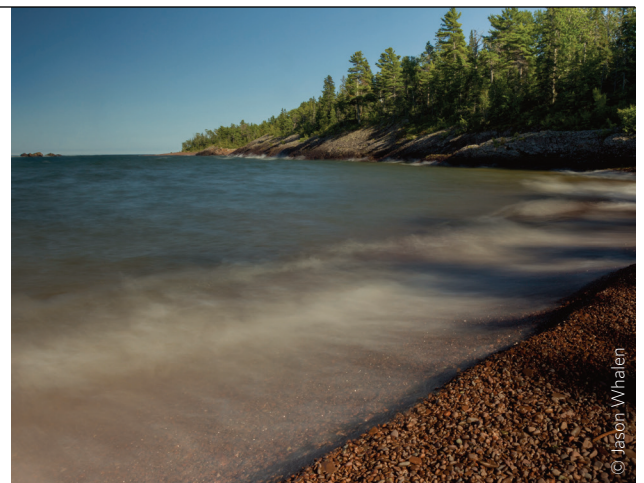
TNC is committed to partnering with and continuing to serve as a contributing member of the Keweenaw community as it builds a future around the sustainable use and management of the rivers, lakes and forests of this globally unique landscape. We are dedicated to maintaining and promoting outdoor recreation, environmental services (like sustainably produced timber and carbon sequestration) and outstanding quality of life and economic opportunities that it offers for residents, visitors and businesses.

To write the plans and develop the strategies necessary to achieving this long-term vision, a baseline understanding of the ecological and cultural assets that exist across the Keweenaw Heartlands and adjacent lands.

PROJECT GOAL

The goal of the Keweenaw Heartlands Ecological and Cultural Inventory project is to document the status of ecological, cultural, timber and infrastructure features to inform:

- Any needed legal mechanisms (e.g., easements, deed restrictions, etc.) that ensure long term protection of natural and cultural resources.
- The required information to develop plans that will guide management of natural and cultural resources.
- The required information to develop plans that will guide recreational uses, including development and maintenance of infrastructure needed to support such uses.



APPROACH

To achieve the project goal, we will:



Compile existing data and information on cultural, ecological, timber and infrastructure features.



Map the extent and condition (where possible) of terrestrial and aquatic natural communities through analysis of remotely sensed data (such as Lidar).



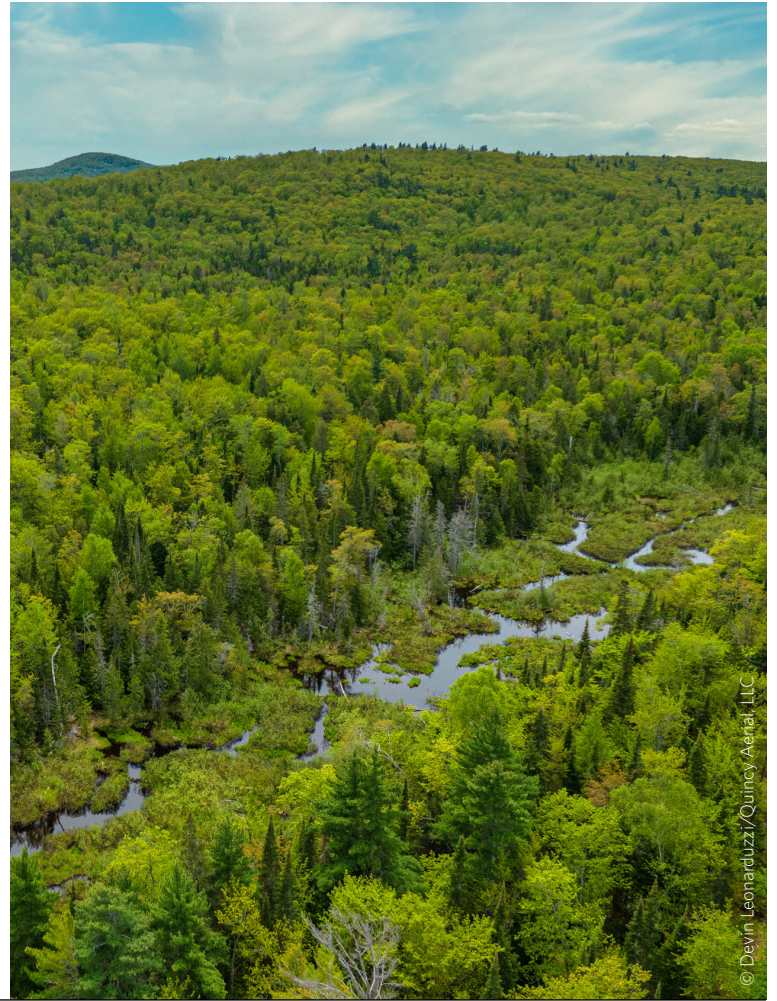
Map the extent and condition of historic and cultural resources and document historic uses.



Conduct strategic field surveys, based on analysis of imagery and current and historic records, to confirm the location of special features and to ground-truth the information on ecologic, historic and cultural assets.



Synthesize data and produce spatially specific summary data and maps to inform management planning.



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HOW YOU CAN HELP

Local community members, both residents and visitors, have a long history and deep knowledge of the Keweenaw Heartlands.

In the next few months, TNC will develop a data portal that will enable you to share that knowledge with us. This will allow us to create a richer, better-informed inventory to help current and future managers of the Keweenaw Heartlands make informed decisions about the use and care of this property so it can be enjoyed by everyone, including future generations.

For updates on this project, visit the Keweenaw Heartlands Project Page on the Keweenaw Community Foundation website:

bit.ly/keweenaw-project