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Artwork credits:
Building renderings by The Boldt Company  All other artwork courtesy of Marilyn Mahlberg
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Chester Cook was 16 years old and living in poverty in Milwaukee when he first met Albert Fuller in 1935. In those days, Fuller, Curator of Botany at the Milwaukee Public Museum, was spending a great deal of time traveling to Door County, studying the rare flora which flourished on a parcel of land in Baileys Harbor. Poor eyesight prevented Fuller from driving, so he hired Chester to take him on these trips. They spent many hours together, Chester carrying Fuller’s equipment as the botanist photographed and inventoried the wildflowers.

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dous impact on Door County and occupy an important place on Wisconsin’s ongoing conservation history.

The Ridges Sanctuary is preparing to construct a fine new entrance to the Sanctuary—an Interpretive Center in a prominent location on Hwy 57 in Baileys Harbor. This building will be the first of its kind in Door County and will use green technology in its design. It will honor the founders of this, the state’s oldest and most biologically diverse nature preserve, and serve as a focal point for environmental education on Door County’s unique natural heritage.

As long-standing members of The Ridges and the Door County community, we are pleased to be part of this visionary project.

Thanks to outstanding support from our membership, property was purchased in October of 2011. The complex preparation of the site is complete. Now, it is time to build!

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In 1937, led by Albert Fuller, our founders understood the importance of protecting environmentally significant areas for future generations. In the face of economic disaster and looming war, they became pioneers of Wisconsin’s conservation movement and The Ridges Sanctuary became their lasting legacy to Door County, to Wisconsin and, ultimately, to the nation. Our 75th anniversary gave us the opportunity to reflect and refocus on the vision of our founders. Today the challenges we face in the wake of the Great Recession provide new insight into the obstacles they faced and make their journey even more meaningful.

With this project, we begin our own journey. In October 2011, we purchased the property which will become the site of the Cook-Albert Fuller Interpretive Center. The Boldt Company, one of the largest professional construction service companies in the country, has worked with us to develop the building design and will provide construction management for the project. Once completed, the Center will provide us with a unique opportunity to sustain our founders’ commitment to conservation for many generations to come.

Located on the Door County Coastal Byway at the corner of Hwy 57 and Ridges Road, the Center will provide a visible public entrance, a focal point for the various areas of our campus and a portal to the other natural areas in the county. Through interpretive signage and exhibits developed by Schmeeckle Reserve Interpreters, UW-Stevens Point, it will help us tell our story. It will give us much-needed space to expand in the areas of education and outreach. Most importantly, it will become a place for people of all ages – volunteers, members, residents, businesses, visitors and community leaders alike – to gather in support of land protection, education, outreach and research.

COOK ALBERT FULLER CENTER

A Vision for the Future

Bringing Nature to Life

Enhances Community Connections
• Complies with Baileys Harbor Smart Growth Plan by keeping all commercial property in the downtown area
• Creates a learning campus with the McArdle Library for resources and the Baileys Harbor Town Hall for larger presentations
• Models sustainability
• Is architecturally compatible with the community and Door County
• Supports the local ecotourism based economy by building within walking distance of downtown Baileys Harbor
• Provides additional off-street parking

Supports Operations
• Creates a visible entrance or portal to the on-site experience.
• Improves access for the community and for Door County visitors
• Accommodates expansion of educational programming
• Provides space for the nature store and administrative offices

Serves as an Educational Model
• Models sustainable design
• Best practices for green architecture
• Highest practical LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) rating
• Demonstrates responsible development
• Protects natural aesthetic qualities
• Models protection of natural resources and watershed

SITE DESIGN

• Restores previously neglected ridges and swales
• Models Best Management Practices for protection of Hine’s Emerald dragonfly larval critical habitat:
  • Bioswales filter pollutants in storm water runoff
  • Permeable pavers minimize hard surface runoff
• Uses native species for landscaping to minimize irrigation and maintenance
• Provides a model for “backyard” nature activities and experiences

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**Building Notes**

- Approximate area: 7,400 square feet
- Pursuing LEED certification
- Interpretive space can open into multi-purpose rooms, allowing flexibility for larger exhibits and displays, as needed
- Building divided into three separate mechanical zones, providing flexibility based on level of visitor use and season
- Computer simulations will be used to analyze and evaluate potential building systems
- Storage mezzanine located above nature store area
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Your thoughtful consideration of our request for sup- port of this important project is sincerely appreciated.

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THE RIDGES SANCTUARY

The Oldest private nature sanctuary and land trust in Wisconsin

Protects 1600 acres of the most biologically diverse ecosystem in Wisconsin

Home to over 475 plant species, including a rare dozen rare, threatened or endangered species including the Ram’s Head orchid, the Hine’s Emerald dragonfly and the Dwarf Lake Iris

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A Wisconsin Wetland Gem since 2009

A National Audubon Society Important Bird Area since 2007

A Wisconsin Wildland Gem since 2009

“A slender lady’s slipper is the queen of our wildflowers. The most beautiful, living floral picture that human eyes can see in our woodlands is that of our ‘floral queeness’...”

– Albert Fuller

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