



# news release

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## **LAND CONSERVANCY OF WEST MICHIGAN APPOINTS VAUGHN MAATMAN AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

*Grand Rapids* – The Land Conservancy of West Michigan announced today the hiring of Vaughn Maatman as its new executive director. Maatman begins in February and replaces Brian Obits, the Land Conservancy’s development officer who has been serving as interim executive director.

Maatman most recently served as executive director of Lake Louise Christian Community, Camp and Retreat Center, a nonprofit located in Boyne Falls, MI. A former college and university dean who has also taught applied ethics, including environmental ethics, Maatman has strategic planning experience, a passion for land conservation and a history building relationships with donors, Board members and landowners.

“Working with the Land Conservancy of West Michigan aligns with my personal values and gifts, and connects with my interests in ecology and environmental ethics,” Maatman said. “There is nothing like nature as a place to walk or play or to engage the imagination.”

During his tenure at Lake Louise, Maatman, an avid backpacker and kayaker, led the application process for a conservation easement protecting 750 acres in collaboration with a regional conservation organization and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

“The Land Conservancy celebrates its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, and Vaughn’s leadership talents and experience will help lay the groundwork for the future of the organization,” said Penny Ladd, president of the Land Conservancy’s Board of Directors.

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*The Land Conservancy of West Michigan is a nonprofit organization that preserves natural land and open space in eight West Michigan counties. It is the only organization devoted solely to preserving natural and scenic lands that are an important part of West Michigan’s community character. With thirty-five years of experience keeping nature nearby, the Land Conservancy has protected nearly 8,000 acres with nature preserves, conservation easements, and project assistance to local governments.*

Photo:



Vaughn Maatman (*photo by Tom Crowe*)