



We champion stewardship of
the land and waters.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VSN's Conservation on Tap continues on January 8th at Rooted Spoon

VIROQUA, WI December 19, 2019 – Join Valley Stewardship Network (VSN) for the second presentation in our *Conservation on Tap* series. The event takes place, **Wednesday, January 8th** at 7 pm at the Rooted Spoon in Viroqua with Peter Allen presenting **Savanna Pastures - Regenerating Earth's Ultimate Ecosystems**.

Oak savannas were the dominate ecosystems across much of North America including the Driftless for millions of years. Prairie grasslands with scattered fruit and nut trees and shrubs, savannas were the most diverse, functional, and productive ecosystems on this continent that nourished indigenous communities for millennia, and megafauna for millions of years prior. Peter Allen, of Mastodon Farms, will explain that although they are now the most rare and endangered ecosystem in North America, he believes oak savannas offer the ultimate model for productive and profitable agro-ecosystems. Come learn about savanna history and ecology and how we can reclaim our role as keystone species and regenerate Earth's Ultimate Ecosystems across the Driftless.

Peter is an ecologist-turned-farmer who runs Mastodon Valley Farm, a 220-acre regenerative farm near Viola, WI. Using the historic oak savanna as a model, Peter has planted over ten thousand fruit and nut trees and shrubs, converted over 40 acres of cropland into native tall grass prairie, and rotationally grazed herds of cattle, sheep, goats, hogs, and poultry across their steep wooded hillsides, ridge top fields, and lush valley pastures. Peter also builds timber framed buildings from their valley's trees and lives in their off-grid timber framed homestead with his wife Maureen and their two kids.

The other topics in the *Conservation on Tap* series are: February 12: Changing Landscapes and pre-European Native Americans in the Driftless Area: A Brief Overview with Dr. James Theler, Professor Emeritus, UW-Wisconsin La Crosse at the Mississippi Valley Archeology Center; March 11: Driftless Prairie, Savanna, and Woodlands-a journey of discovery by Armund D. Bartz, Driftless Area Ecologist-Natural Heritage Conservation, WI- DNR; concluding April 8: Taking Stock of Tweety – the State of our Birds by Craig Thompson, WI- DNR.

This series is held the second Wednesday of day of each month, January – April at the Rooted Spoon, 219 South Main Street in Viroqua beginning at 7 pm – 9 pm. There is a suggested donation of \$5 and a cash bar will be available. Sponsorship for this second season is generously provided by Rooted Spoon, shopdriftless.com, Kickapoo Coffee Roasters, WiscoPop and Organic Valley.

For questions, please call 608-637-3615 or email info@valleystewardshipnetwork.org.

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Valley Stewardship Network is celebrating 19 years of land and water stewardship in the Kickapoo Valley and adjacent watersheds. Best known for its water quality monitoring programs, VSN also offers outreach and education programs to help farmers, landowners, residents and visitors understand and support our local ecology for the health of our communities. More at www.valleystewardshipnetwork.org