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New and Expanded Wildlife Management Areas in Cannon River Watershed

St. Paul, MN: The Trust for Public Land, Great River Greening, and the Cannon River Watershed Partnership today announced the protection of nearly 280 acres in additional Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) to be managed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). This newly protected public land is available for people to get outside and explore in the Cannon River Watershed, and offers exceptional hunting, fishing, hiking, and bird-watching opportunities.

Managed by the DNR, WMAs are the backbone of wildlife management efforts in Minnesota, while also an important part of the state's outdoor recreation system and are established to protect lands and waters that have a high potential for wildlife production, public hunting, trapping, fishing, and other compatible recreational uses.

Additions to Warsaw WMA near Dennison and Factor WMA south of Lake Volney further protect these habitat complexes while adding much needed public access points. The creation of Trout Lily WMA, located just northeast of Faribault, and Gray Fox WMA, west of Shields Lake, establish new areas where people can get outside and enjoy the beautiful landscape of this area. In total, The Trust for Public Land has now created seven new WMA's, and considerably expanded three others, totaling over 2,000 protected acres as part of its ongoing Cannon River program. These protected places include wetlands, prairies, Big Woods forest, and provide key habitat for wildlife, and offer quality hunting opportunities for waterfowl, deer, pheasant and turkeys within an hour of the Twin Cities.

“These land protection projects are representative of the great work The Trust for Public Land is doing as a part of our work to protect Minnesota’s rivers,” said Susan Schmidt, the Minnesota State Director for The Trust for Public Land, “By working closely with local partners, like Cannon River Watershed Partnership, we’re able to protect land that not only provides unique recreation opportunities for Minnesotans, but also protects habitat for wildlife.”

These acquisitions were completed as part of the Cannon River Watershed Habitat Complex program, a partnership between The Trust for Public Land, the Cannon River Watershed Partnership and Great River Greening. In this partnership, The Trust for Public Land acquires and protects land, Cannon River Watershed Partnership coordinates outreach for the project, and Great River Greening restores and enhances land. The program gets its funding primarily from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

Currently, acquisition funding is available for the permanent protection of high habitat value lands within the watershed. If you’re interested in learning more about the program please contact Alan Kraus, Conservation Program Manager for the Cannon River Watershed Partnership at "alan@crwp.net" or at 507-786-3913 for more information.

About The Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. Millions of people live near a Trust for Public Land park, garden, or natural area, and millions more visit these sites every year. To support The Trust for Public Land and share why nature matters to you, visit www.tpl.org.

About Cannon River Watershed Partnership

One of Minnesota’s seven Wild and Scenic Rivers, the Cannon River drains nearly 1 million diverse acres of agricultural and forest land before emptying into the Mississippi River at Red Wing, MN. The Cannon River Watershed Partnership (CRWP), a member-based, nonprofit organization, envisions a watershed where people can swim and fish in healthy rivers and lakes and drink clean water from their wells. The mission of CRWP’s nearly 400 members is to engage people in protecting and improving the water quality and natural systems of the Cannon River watershed. Learn about and support CRWP’s work with farmers, small communities and the Annual Watershed Wide Clean-up at www.crwp.net.

About Great River Greening

Great River Greening is Minnesota’s leader in community-based restoration of the land and water that enrich our lives. We are devoted solely to stewardship, working side-by-side with 2,000 volunteers every year to transform degraded land into beautifully resilient habitat that supports wildlife and climate resilience. Since our beginning in 1995, we have engaged 42,000

volunteers and planted 485,000 native trees, grasses & flowers in 20,000 acres on 400 sites throughout Minnesota.

Great River Greening recently launched Restore Minnesota, a multi-year campaign to address the current threats to our Minnesota heritage: By 2020, we will impact 10,000 acres of working lands in Greater MN, including critical wildlife areas; reduce water pollution entering 20+ of Minnesota's rivers and lakes; increase resiliency, biodiversity, and pollinator habitat across 4,000 acres of public land, and inspire 3,000 youth, including ethnically diverse kids and teens, to care for our natural world.

www.greatrivergreening.org

Possible photos below:



