

# **DNR: Partnership and pride in public lands highlight Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund's historic first grant on two properties**

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***\$50,000 investment marks beginning of efforts to ensure users of all types can enjoy Wisconsin's public lands***

MADISON - In the days leading up to [National Public Lands Day](#), the Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund is set to make its first disbursement to care for public lands at Bluff Creek and Clover Valley Fen State Natural Areas and the Tyrone Tract of the Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area.

This successful public-private partnership fund is a permanent endowment funded through optional donations made by those who purchase a hunting or fishing license or reserve a campsite. These projects represent work done by the Natural Resources Foundation and Department of Natural Resources to identify high priority properties for conservation work.

"Cherish Wisconsin is a perfect example of the passion that our partners share with DNR for the outdoors - I look forward to seeing the great work on these properties be enjoyed by users of all kinds, from hunters to wildlife watchers," said DNR Deputy Secretary Kurt Thiede.

The first project will focus on 552 acres of prairie and savanna restoration at Bluff Creek and Clover Valley Fen State Natural Areas in the Southern Kettle Moraine

State Forest in Walworth County. The project will improve trout stream habitat, native prairie, fen, and sedge meadow, and reduce woody brush in the oak woodlands. This work will improve hunting and angling opportunities and enhance accessibility for other types of outdoor recreation in the area.

The second project will focus on 180 acres of oak savanna and native prairie restoration at the recently acquired Tyrone Tract of the Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area in Dunn County. This project will involve intensive removal of woody brush and other invasive vegetation in savanna and prairie habitats. Restoration work will greatly improve wildlife habitat and enhance the recreational experience for many hikers, bikers, paddlers, hunters and anglers.

“When the Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund was established, the Natural Resources Board members committed to participate with personal donations and we’re excited to envision the benefits for all Wisconsinites,” said Natural Resources Board Chairman Terry Hilgenberg. “These two very worthwhile prospects illustrate what we can achieve when we collectively work together, and we look forward to many more projects and encourage our fellow Wisconsinites and businesses to consider a financial commitment.”

Projects for the first disbursement period were chosen through a rigorous grant application process that involved review by an engaged stakeholder group including Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, Wisconsin Waterfowl Association, National Wild Turkey Federation, Friends of Wisconsin State Parks, Ruffed Grouse Society, and Wisconsin Conservation Congress. The stakeholders’ final recommendation was approved by the Natural Resources Foundation’s Board of Directors following additional review.

### **About the Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund**

The Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund is a permanent endowment created in 2012 by an act of the Wisconsin State Legislature and serves to enhance Wisconsin’s public lands and waters. The Fund is held by the [Natural Resources Foundation](#) of Wisconsin, a private nonprofit 501c3 organization.

Donations to the Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund are derived primarily from hunters and anglers who choose to make a \$2 donation when purchasing a license through the [GoWild](#) system. Additional donations are also made by campers using the Reserve America system and individual donors committed to Wisconsin’s wealth

of public lands.