

Dept. of Natural Resources: Grants from Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund will help improve public lands in Bayfield and Walworth Counties

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) today announced that funding from the Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund will help improve public lands in Bayfield and Walworth counties thanks to a successful partnership between the department and the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin.

“Donations from hunters, anglers and nature enthusiasts to the Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund make restoration and management work at places like important natural, fish and wildlife areas possible,” said David Clutter, Executive Director of the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin. “As the Cherish Fund continues to grow thanks to generous contributions by individuals, the positive impact on Wisconsin’s natural resources will grow in kind.”

The Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund, a permanent endowment benefiting Wisconsin’s public lands, will make its third disbursement for the White River Fishery Area in Bayfield County and Lulu Lake State Natural Area in Walworth County.

“The Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund continues to grow and is currently over \$1.5 million,” said DNR Assistant Deputy Secretary Steven Little. “This funding helps critical habitat improvement projects on DNR-managed lands for all to enjoy.”

The two selected projects for this year represent high-priority habitat restoration

work from across the state. Funding for the Bayfield County project will be critical in restoring riparian areas along the South Fork of the White River, a state-designated Outstanding Water Resource. The final funding for the projects is \$31,689.

“These Cherish Funds will be used to enhance recreational opportunities, like fishing and hunting, along this important stream by removing invasive shrubs,” said Cristopher Sand, the DNR’s Property Manager for the White River Fishery Area.

In Walworth County, the funds will aid oak savanna restoration efforts at Lulu Lake State Natural Area, a premier property in one of the state’s most populated areas.

“Lulu Lake State Natural Area contains a diverse mosaic of habitats that host an impressive variety of plant and wildlife species,” said Pete Duerkop, DNR District Ecologist for the Natural Heritage Conservation Program. “The Cherish-funded restoration efforts will afford unique and enhanced opportunities for wildlife observation, hiking and other recreation in addition to providing a haven for rare species.”

Projects were chosen through a grant application process and reviewed by an engaged stakeholder group including Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Natural Areas Preservation Council, Pheasants Forever, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Ruffed Grouse Society, Trout Unlimited, Wisconsin Bird Conservation Partnership and the Wisconsin Conservation Congress. The DNR and the Natural Resources Foundation are grateful for these organizations’ involvement.