



MINNESOTA LAND TRUST | 2011 ANNUAL REPORT



TWENTY YEARS OF PROTECTING MINNESOTA'S TREASURED PLACES.



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STEVEN DOUGLAS SMITH

THE **HIGHEST** USE IS THE EFFECT THESE LANDS HAVE
ON THE **SPIRITUAL WELL BEING** OF OUR PEOPLE. - **SIGURD OLSON**

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear members and friends of the Minnesota Land Trust:

With this annual report, we celebrate 20 years as one of Minnesota's leading conservation partners. From our humble beginnings in 1991 as the all-volunteer Washington County Land Trust (with one desk, one file cabinet and an answering message machine) to today's robust organization with four regional offices, twelve professional staff and more than 100 dedicated volunteers, the story of the Minnesota Land Trust has been one of innovation, dogged persistence and an ongoing commitment to excellence.

At the center of this story are people like you, our members and volunteers who have helped build the foundation of the Land Trust and ensured that we remain an organization with the strength and strategic wherewithal to match the state's future conservation needs and opportunities.

This 20th year was one in which, despite the economic uncertainties in the world around us, the Land Trust remained committed to helping Minnesota families secure the conservation values of their land for the good of the public and those who follow after them. By continuing to build on our legacy of on-the-ground results, we completed 21 new land conservation projects, protecting high-priority conservation lands including a nature sanctuary along Lake Superior's North Shore, a working harbor and public park in Red Wing, a summer camp for youth in Minnetrista, rare goat prairie in the Root River watershed and so much more. All told, in 20 years you've helped us complete 424 unique projects, protecting more than 38,000 acres of Minnesota's most cherished places.

And during this time, the Land Trust has grown to become a leader of major conservation initiatives. It is in this spirit of innovation that we launched our St. Louis River Restoration Initiative in which we are assisting the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and our other conservation partners to recover the grandeur of the St. Louis River Estuary, one of the Great Lakes most important and biologically productive aquatic systems. In the years to come, this work will contribute to the return of drinkable water, edible fish and swimmable beaches in western Lake Superior.

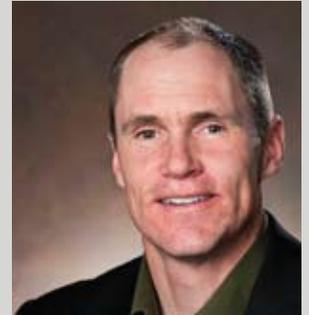
Our humble beginnings remind us that each individual regardless of their interests and contributions matters greatly to the Land Trust. With partners and supporters like you, we have come a long way. But there is so much more to do. Each year, Minnesota loses more of its forestland, shoreline and prairies. Each year, communities struggle to balance real economic pressures with conservation of its natural and scenic resources.

The great challenges—and opportunities—of our time include protecting our threatened lands and waters, discovering new ways to balance economic and environmental objectives, and helping to prepare the next generation of Minnesotans to care for the lands we have spent our lives protecting.

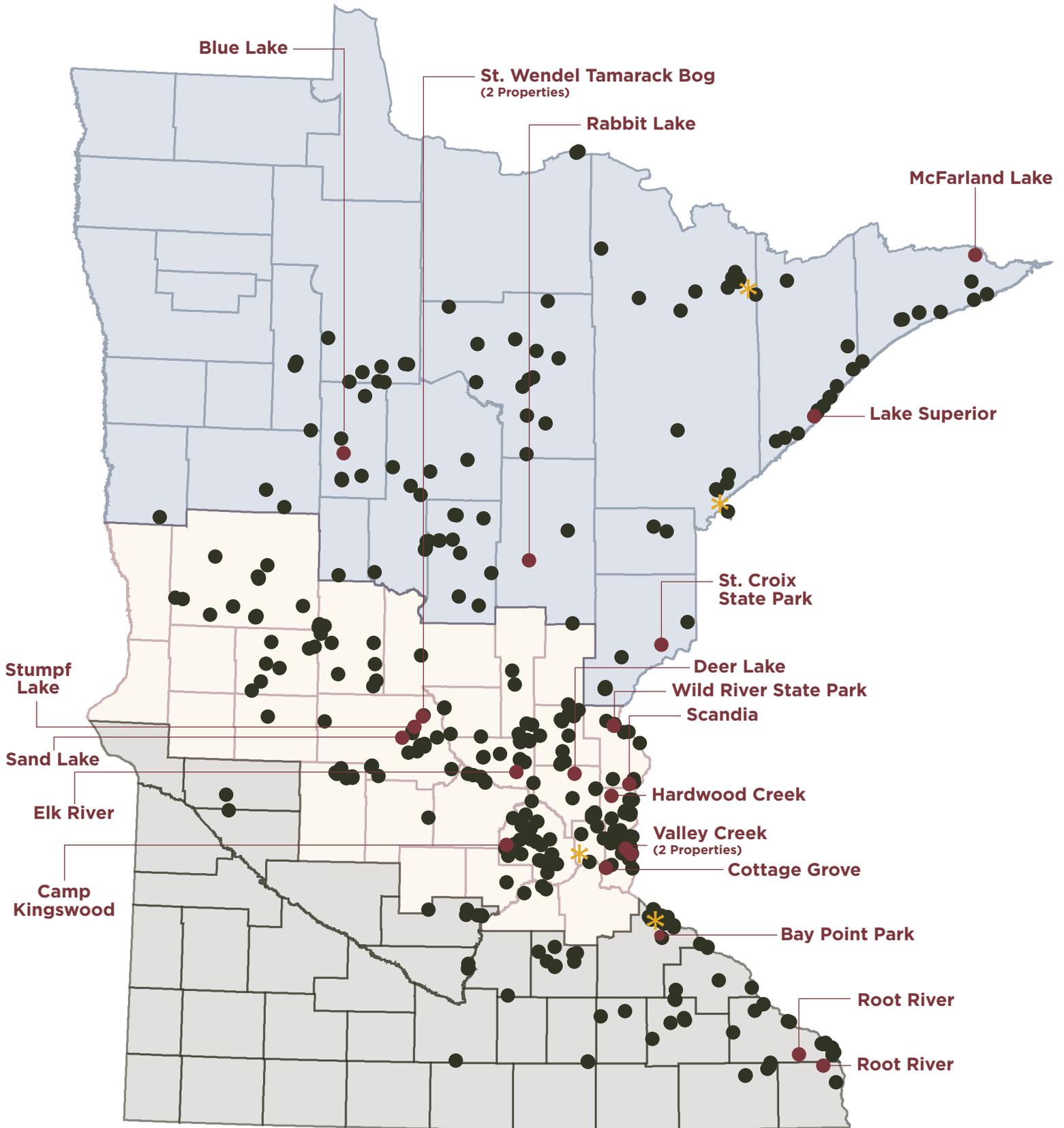
We want to thank you for keeping land conservation a priority; the Land Trust simply could not be as effective without your help. And with your renewed support we will continue to write the story of the Land Trust for many years to come. Please join us in this next chapter as we protect the places we all treasure and leave a Minnesota legacy of healthy land and clean water.



Kris Larson
Executive Director



**...THE STORY OF THE
MINNESOTA LAND TRUST
HAS BEEN ONE OF
INNOVATION, DOGGED
PERSISTENCE AND AN
ONGOING COMMITMENT
TO EXCELLENCE.**



COMPLETED LAND PROTECTION PROJECTS

- Projects Completed in FY11
- Projects Completed Prior to FY11
- ✱ MLT Offices
- Northern Region
- Central Region
- Southern Region

A SUMMARY OF SUCCESS

Twenty-one projects were completed in Fiscal 2011, an achievement in numbers but even more in the quality of the results. With your help, nearly 2,000 acres of woodlands, prairie and wetlands and over 66,000 shoreline feet have been permanently protected from development.

Blue Lake: This 38-acre property in Hubbard County contains 653 feet of undeveloped natural forested shoreline along Blue Lake and a relatively natural mixed forest habitat that supports diverse wildlife and plant species.

Cottage Grove: This 11-acre property in Washington County is a mix of forest and grasslands on a highly visible bluff known as “Camel’s Hump” overlooking Highway 61 in the City of Cottage Grove and is adjacent to an existing Land Trust easement.

St. Croix State Park: Grey wolves, bobcat, black bear and fishers will benefit from this project in Pine County which adds 73 acres of land to the original 128-acre easement with the same landowner. It features wetlands, woodlands, and forest that provide high quality natural wildlife habitat.

The following projects were funded in part with the generous support of the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). Currently 40% of net Minnesota State Lottery proceeds are dedicated to building the Trust Fund and ensuring future benefits for Minnesota’s environment and natural resources.

Bay Point Park: This 201-acre scenic property features a mixture of natural, recreational and urban land within the City of Red Wing, Goodhue County, and protects 8,893 feet of Mississippi River shoreline and 5,597 feet along both sides of Hay Creek, a state designated trout stream.

Camp Kingswood: Adjacent to an existing easement and part

of a larger complex of protected property, these 44-acres in Hennepin County contain rolling hills of restored prairie, grasslands and forest with pockets of wetlands, woodlands, and a unique floating tamarack bog.

Deer Lake: This property provides habitat for a variety of species, including sandhill cranes and American badgers, both of which have been observed on the property. Its 44-acres in northern Anoka County lie adjacent to the Sandhill Crane Natural Area and contain a mixture of lakeshore, forest, woodlands, wetlands, and grasslands.

Elk River: This 148-acre property in Sherburne County features a mix of high quality oak woods, natural and restored wetlands, and rolling, open fields of restored native prairie and grasslands with 2,527 feet of undeveloped shoreline along two ponds.

Hardwood Creek: Two pieces of Hardwood Creek Wildlife Management Area are connected with this 157-acre property in northern Washington County. It contains a diverse mixture of forest, woodlands, wetlands, and grasslands.

Lake Superior: This 11-acre property in Lake County contains birch-aspens and white cedar forest cover with undeveloped steep cliffs and approximately 1,589 feet along the rugged Lake Superior shoreline.

Rabbit Lake: This 171-acre property in Aitkin County contains forest, wetland, grassland, and a hay field that is gradually being restored to prairie, as well as 169 feet of

shoreline along Rabbit Lake. The property provides critical habitat that supports a diversity of wildlife including bald eagles, sandhill cranes, trumpeter swans, and gray wolves.

St. Wendel Tamarack Bog (2 Properties): This 41-acre property and 56-acre property in Stearns County feature high-quality hardwood swamp and tamarack swamp. The wetlands, springs and small ponds on the properties provide habitat for a variety of aquatic wildlife, birds, and waterfowl, including trumpeter swans and red-shouldered hawks.

Sand Lake: This 43-acre property in Stearns County contains a diverse mixed hardwood forest, wetlands and grasslands, which are key habitats for a variety of species, including the white-throated sparrow and bald eagle.

Scandia: This project adds approximately 5 acres of land to the original 15-acre easement owned by the same landowner in Washington County. The property features prairie restorations, wetlands, woodlands and grasslands.

Stumpf Lake: Rolling terrain with mixed hardwood forest, wetlands, planted pines, and native grasses dot this 215-acre property in Stearns County. The property also lies within the Avon Hills Important Bird Area.

Valley Creek: One of two easements completed this year in Washington County’s Valley Creek watershed. The properties protect extended complexes of forests, woods, grasslands, and wetlands.

Wild River State Park[†]: This easement in Chisago County touches Wild River State Park at the northeast corner and lies adjacent to other Land Trust easements. Its 39 acres provide excellent habitat for resident and migratory wildlife.

The following projects were funded in part by the Outdoor Heritage Fund as recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC).

McFarland Lake: Over twelve hundred feet of shoreline along the eastern side of McFarland Lake are now protected on this 37-acre property in Cook County within the boundaries of the greater Superior National Forest.

Root River (2 Properties): Scenic bluffs, forested hillsides, and both remnant and restored prairie areas are protected within these two 145-acre and 244-acre properties located in Houston County’s Root River watershed.

Valley Creek[†]: This 17 acre property enhances the habitat and open space value of an extended complex of protected forests, woods, grasslands, and wetlands, and also provides an important public access to Valley Creek.

[†] *These projects also were made possible with a grant from The Conservation Fund in partnership with the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.*



VISITING MINNESOTA LAND TRUST PROJECTS

People often ask how they can visit some of the Land Trust properties that they have helped protect. While most of the lands we protect are still owned privately, we have a number of projects that are on publicly accessible land. These include parks, harbors, camps and nature sanctuaries stretching all across Minnesota. We invite you to get in your car, slip into your hiking boots or don your cross-country skis and visit one of these projects soon.

GALE WOODS FARM

Located in western Hennepin County, Gale Woods Farm is a bucolic oasis in a rapidly developing area just west of Lake Minnetonka. Owned and managed by the Three Rivers Park District, Gale Woods is a real working farm that features unique education opportunities for visitors of all ages. The farm produces fresh food that can be purchased on site. You can even find hand-knit scarves made from wool produced from the farm's flock of sheep. The expansive meadows and miles of trails provide multiple, year-round outdoor recreational opportunities.

threeriversparks.org/parks/gale-woods-farm.aspx



DEREK DUNN

GRAND MARAIS HARBOR

On a bright summer's day, gentle waves nudge a dozen small sailboats bobbing in Grand Marais' small, yet lovely, harbor. People gravitate with coffee in one hand and a fresh donut in the other toward the pebbly shore to watch the acrobatic antics of both seagulls and small children. Large-scale condos, hotels and retail developments along the harbor would irrevocably change the low-key ambience of this natural asset.

grandmarais.com

WWW.BRYANHANSEL.COM



WHY WOULD A PUBLIC PARK NEED A CONSERVATION EASEMENT?

In reality, most public land, including local parks, can be sold for development at any time. While such a sale would require full public disclosure, it's not too difficult to imagine how budgetary pressures may induce a community to sell off part of its parklands as a quick-fix solution to sagging finances.

Conservation easements held by a third party like the Minnesota Land Trust add a layer of protection that is permanent and legally binding, providing iron-clad security and increased value to public parks, trails and other natural spaces.

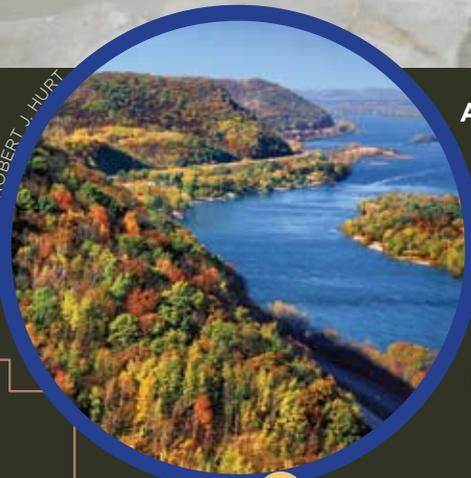
JON YEAGER

APPLE BLOSSOM SCENIC DRIVE - EAGLES BLUFF PARK

Rolling hills, winding roadways and quaint family farms create some of the most scenic byways in southeastern Minnesota. Apple orchards dot the landscape, alongside bubbling streams that flow through the majestic bluffs and into the mighty Mississippi. Apple Blossom Scenic Drive, a State Scenic Byway, passes through the town of La Crescent where Eagles Bluff Park provides grand views of the river valley from its protected, undeveloped bluff top.

byways.org/explore/byways/2238

ROBERT J. HURT



Filed Articles of Incorporation as the Washington County Land Trust

1991

2nd Easement completed, Belwin Conservancy. Continuing partnership which includes Washington County and Trout Unlimited

1st Easement outside of metro area, Beaver Bay on North Shore of Lake Superior

First Executive Director hired

1994

The popular harbor of Grand Marais along the shores of Lake Superior protected

Presented first training session for appraisers, launching the Land Trust's commitment to professional training

1996

100th project completed

1998



GEORGE HOWE



MINNEOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1993

Linkert family farm protected, the Land Trust's first conservation easement

Organization goes statewide as the Minnesota Land Trust

Land Trust joins Blufflands Alliance, funded by McKnight Foundation; now with thousands of acres including bluff prairie, Apple Blossom Drive and Bay Point Park in Red Wing

1995

Howe Family Farm protected, home of peregrine falcons that return each year to nest on the property

1997

First of many conservation development pioneered in the City of Lake Elmo, including the award winning Fields of St. Croix, which provides protected open space within the context of new residential development. The Land Trust is a national leader with more than 40 easements in conservation developments

2000

Listening Point protected, inspirational home of author and naturalist Sigurd F. Olson

The massive 2700-acre Red Wing Wildlife League property along the Mississippi River protected

200th
project
completed
|
2002



CRAIG BLACKLOCK



JON YEAGER

300th
project
completed
|
2006



The historic Rainy Lake island home of famed conservationist Ernest Oberholtzer protected

Minnesota Land Trust among the first land trusts accredited by the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission

2008

Land Trust takes on major restoration initiative in the St. Louis River estuary in Duluth Harbor

2011



2003

Eagles Bluff Park in La Crescent preserves stunning views of the Mississippi River blufflands

2007

Land Trust assists in protecting the historic Bay Lake Camp on Church Island in Bay Lake

2010

400th
project
completed

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS

Minnesota's future may be visualized in many ways. The Board and staff of the Land Trust think in terms of water quality, scenic viewsheds and viable habitat. By focusing on these clear objectives, we can prioritize our work and our funds. Four of the 21 projects completed during fiscal 2011 illustrate how our work impacts the future of Minnesota. >>



CRAIG BLACKLOCK

^ **BLACKLOCK NATURE SANCTUARY**

Almost as much a part of the landscape as the rocky shoreline they photographed, the Blacklock family has been committed to communicating the beauty of Lake Superior's North Shore for decades. So it's not surprising that the sanctuary's board would protect property adjacent to Split Rock Lighthouse State Park that's been in use as a nature center available for artists, writers and others who seek inspiration from the Great Lake. This property includes a kayak campsite, part of the Gitchi Gammi bike trail, and will maintain undisturbed views from the lake and parts of Split Rock Lighthouse State Park.

Funding for this project was provided in part by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR).

MINNESOTA BLUFFLANDS



The Root River watershed of southeastern Minnesota hosts scenic bluffs, forested hillsides and deep ravines. This dramatic topography, with its unique geological features, provides critical habitat for a number of rare wildlife and plant species. Ken Visger chose to protect a rare goat prairie, and Kent and Cheryl Holen protected part of their farm where they've been working on buckthorn removal for years. Both projects are great examples of individuals who recognize that their actions can impact the success of a whole host of threatened creatures from timber rattlesnakes to peregrine falcons.

Funding for this project was provided in part by the Outdoor Heritage Fund as recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC).



MAC MCHENRY

CAMP KINGSWOOD

Kids who visit Camp Kingswood, located just 25 miles west of downtown Minneapolis, find the usual fare: swimming, campfires, hearty meals and starlit nights. Staff at the Land Trust and Hennepin County (our partner in this project) see restored tall-grass prairie, a remnant Maple-Basswood forest known as the Big Woods, and a rare floating tamarack bog. It's a piece of a larger natural complex in Hennepin County that includes other area conservation easements. Protecting Camp Kingswood enhances a corridor for wildlife, preserves more than 6,000 feet of shoreline and adds stability to another "endangered species," the summer camp.

Funding for this project was provided in part by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR).

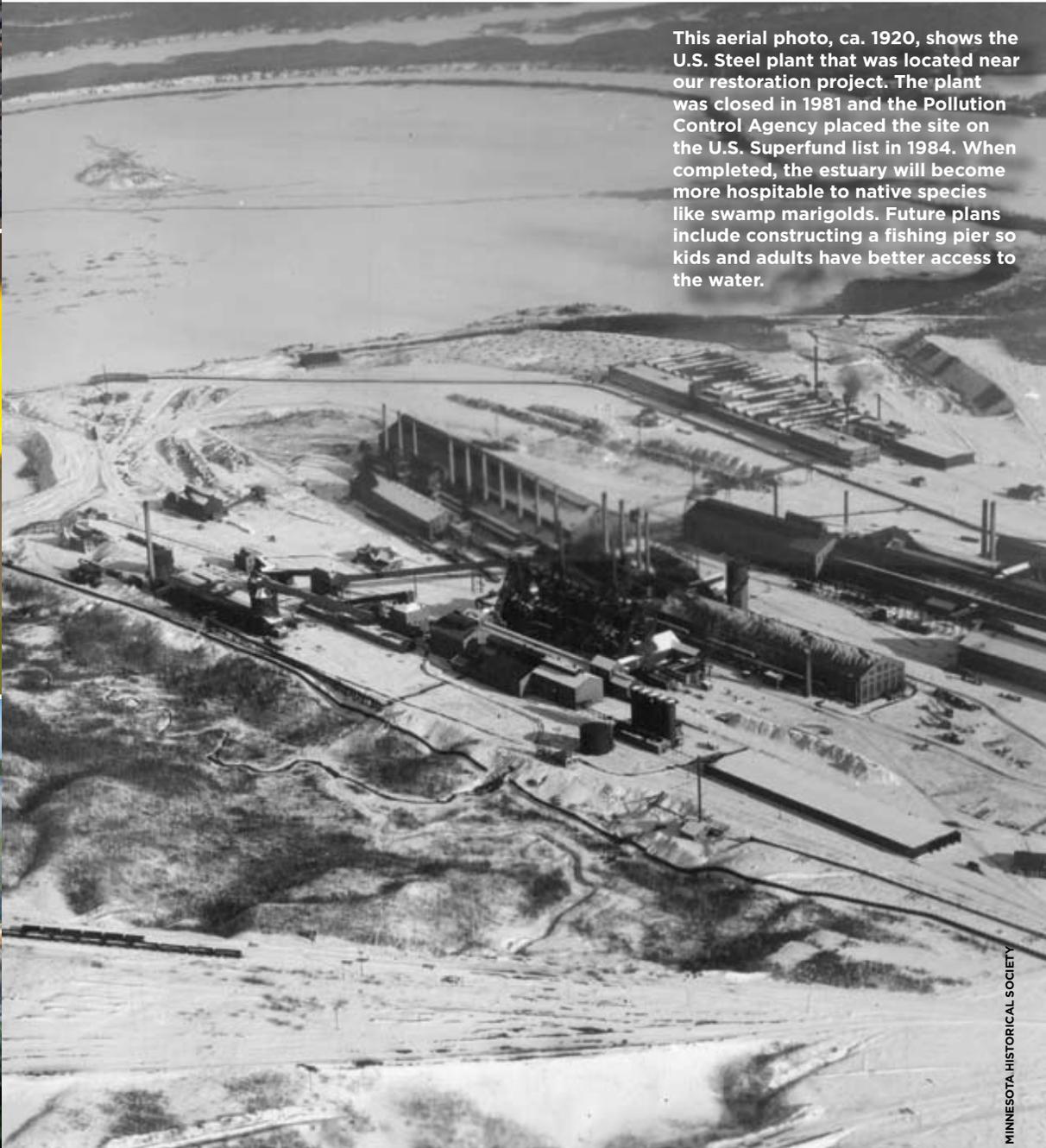
FIND IT ONLINE

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT PROJECTS COMPLETED BY THE LAND TRUST,
GO TO WWW.MNLAND.ORG/PROTECT.

FIND IT ONLINE

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ST. LOUIS ESTUARY PROJECT COMPLETED BY THE LAND TRUST, GO TO

WWW.MNLAND.ORG/ST-LOUIS-ESTUARY, OR WWW.STLOUISRIVER.ORG.



This aerial photo, ca. 1920, shows the U.S. Steel plant that was located near our restoration project. The plant was closed in 1981 and the Pollution Control Agency placed the site on the U.S. Superfund list in 1984. When completed, the estuary will become more hospitable to native species like swamp marigolds. Future plans include constructing a fishing pier so kids and adults have better access to the water.

>> It's hard to imagine, but below the beautiful blue waters of the St. Louis River Estuary not all is well because of a legacy of unregulated dumping from sawmill tailings, untreated wastewater and chemically contaminated debris (see top photo inset). But someday in the not-too-distant future, this 12,000-acre wetland area will once again become a place of refuge for people, fish and wildlife. The Estuary is visible as you travel north on Highway 35 into Duluth, cresting the hill near Spirit Mountain. Look to the southeast, and you'll see a huge expanse of trees and the St. Louis River as it opens up into Duluth Harbor.

The Minnesota Land Trust is taking a leading role in a multi-year, multi-million dollar clean-up with the goal of making the beaches swimmable, the fish edible and the water drinkable. Senior Project Manager

Daryl Peterson, an expert in aquatic resource management, is leading the effort at Radio Tower Bay, just one of many sites in need of restoration.

Work over this past summer has centered on laying the necessary groundwork for a successful clean-up project, including documentation that will help measure success upon completion. The area has been surveyed for structures of archeological or historical significance. The current biological condition of Radio Tower Bay has been cataloged and compared to a relatively clean site upstream called North Bay.

This winter the actual clean-up work begins. That involves removing concrete pylons, wooden pilings and other debris that will make the estuary a much nicer place to be.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

BALANCE SHEET

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2011

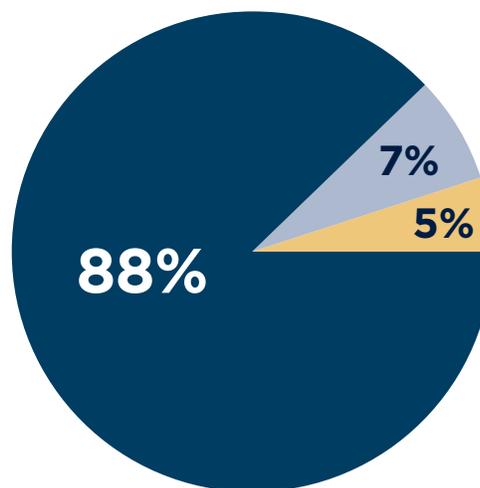
ASSETS	2010	2010
CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS	\$3,876,348	\$3,221,401
NET FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT	\$21,684	\$11,729
LAND HELD FOR RESALE/CONSERVATION	\$9,000	\$73,800
TOTAL ASSETS	\$3,907,032	\$3,306,930
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS		
ACCRUED PAYABLES	\$57,097	\$65,576
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$3,849,935	\$3,241,354
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$3,907,032	\$3,306,930

The Minnesota Land Trust is committed to strong fiscal health and socially responsible investments. The financial summary that follows is based on the complete financial audit which was conducted by HLB Tautges Redpath, Ltd. Their full report is available online at www.mnland.org or by contacting the Land Trust at 651-647-9590.

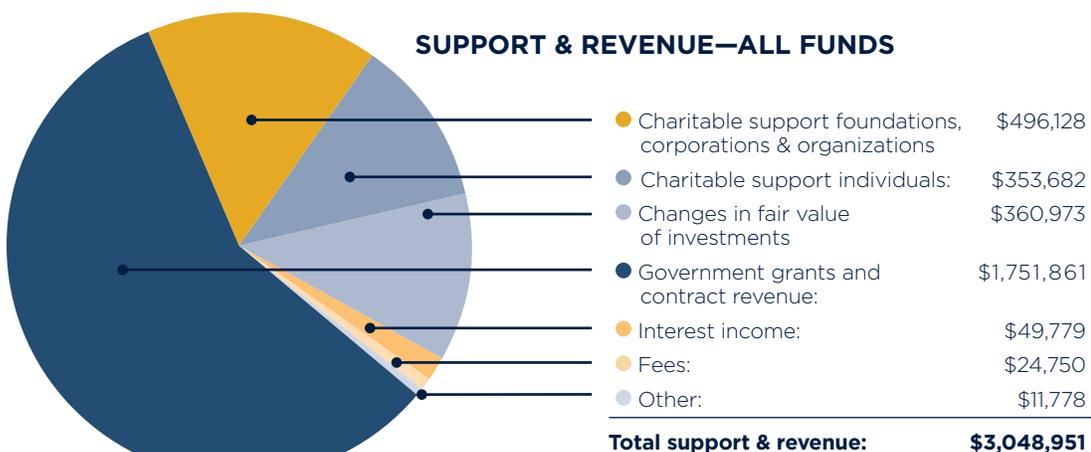
EXPENSE ALLOCATION

● Program:	\$2,107,672 (88%)
● Fundraising:	\$165,681 (7%)
● Management:	\$130,423 (5%)

Total expenses: \$2,403,776



SUPPORT & REVENUE—ALL FUNDS



**THANKS TO
THESE DONORS
WHO MAKE
POSSIBLE THE
WORK OF THE
LAND TRUST.**

DONORS FROM JULY 1,-2010 –JUNE 30, 2011

**GIFTS OF LAND AND
CONSERVATION
EASEMENTS**

Belwin Conservancy
Blacklock Nature Sanctuary
The Estate of Henry S.
Crosby
Alcuin Eich
David and Claire Forsberg
Curt and Pat Hadland
Tim and Holly Larson
The Lindell Family
Minnesota Annual
Conference of the United
Methodist Church
Mike Niziolek
Arthur Pierskalla
Steve and Sonja Ramsey
City of Red Wing
Esther San Felippo
Lawrence Schug and
Juliann Rule
Ken and Terry Visger
Jessica Wirth

ANNUAL GIFTS

Gifts that support operations, special projects and long-term stewardship of protected lands.

\$1000 and above

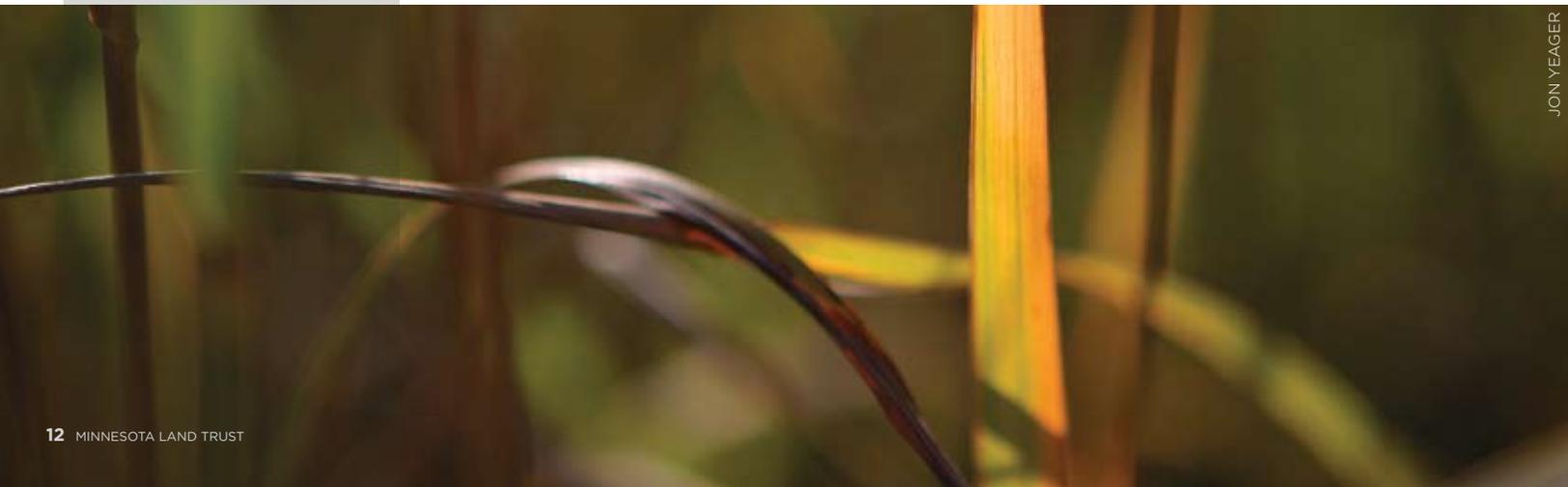
Anonymous
Rocco Altobelli/Me Men and the
Environment™
Howard and Camilla Alton
Allan and Ginna Portman Amis
Eric S. Anderson
Prospect Creek Foundation, a
family foundation of Martha
and Bruce Atwater
John Baird, through the Sandy Hills
Fund of the St. Croix Valley
Community Foundation
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Kate Budd
Sonia Cairns
Colleen Carey and Pam Edean
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Theodore Chien, in honor of
Eric Chien
The estate of Henry S. Crosby
Jeff and Susan Danielson
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Claire Olson
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The Edward Dayton Family Fund
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Edward Dayton
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Alfred Gale
David and Leslie Gardner
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Hendrickson-Schurke
Adam Schwartz-Lowe
Mariana and Craig Shulstad
Dean Skallman
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Nancy Gibson and Ron Sternal
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The Saint Paul Foundation
The Voelbel Family Fund
Patricia Williams
Susan and Steve Wilson

Margaret and Angus Wurtele
Ron and Diane Yanish through the
Yanish Family Donor
Advised Fund of the Rochester
Area Foundation

\$500 - \$999

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Melissa Peterson
Mike and Roxanne Schlasner
John and Mary Fritz Shardlow
Robert Sivertsen, through the
Charles A. Weyerhaeuser
Memorial Foundation



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Chris Valavanis
Joanne Von Blon
Wendy Walker
Eleanor and Fred Winston
Molly and Bill Woehrlin
Steve Wolf

\$250 - \$499

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John Borgert
Conley and Marney Brooks
William Blum and Susan Brown
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Sharon and Bill Clapp
Elaine and Foster Cole
Catherine Coult
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Wally and Cecy Faster
Charles and Anne Ferrell
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Dwight and Marjorie Peterson
Bill Petty
Kate Piper
Anne and Brian Purrington

J. Timothy Ritchie
Norman & Emily Rosenberg
Gena and Steve Setzer
Bruce R. and Jane Scharding Smedley
Lucy and David Sontag
William and Carol Steele
Don and Sonja Steinke
Sarah and Jon Strommen
Rolf and Patricia Svendsen
Anna Lisa Tooker
Marcia Townley
Delon and Gail Underbakke
Bonnie and Gary Van Erp
Eric Watkins
Laurel Westrom
Frank and Frances Wilkinson
Charles and Vicky Willcox
Richard M. Williams
Chase Winton and Mark Campbell
Michael Wolsted

\$100 - \$249

Dorothee Aepli
Jeraldine Steinwall Ahrens
Shirley and Charles Anderson
Cindy Angerhofer
Scott Armitage
Tom Arneson
Robert Axtmann
Dave and Carla Bahls
Brad and Sherrie Beal
Rob and Camilla Beattie
Robert E. Becker
Bernard and Pamela Bidelman
Dan Michaels and Micki Blenkush
Thelma Boeder
Karen Bohnert
Andy Bond
Mark and Susan Bonitz
Will and Margee Bracken
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Bill and Kate Cullen
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Fitz and Heather Fitzgerald
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Flavia Franta
Craig O. Freeman
Marge Frost
Elizabeth Furber
Bruce and Lois Garbisch
Kevin and Barbara Gardiner
Linda Gawthrop
Kate Gill
Barbara Glaser
Melvin Goldenbogen
Edward and Eileen Gordon
Wilfred and Justine Gould
Germaine and Donald Grant
Greg Grazzini
Janet and John Green
Jan and Kevin Gregerson
Matthew J. Grigal
Karin and Jeff Grosscup
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Dan and Nancy Haley
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Margaret Harder
Jane Harper and John Velin
Mary and Louis Hauser
Van and Liz Hawn
Carter and Florence Hedeem
Carolyn and Robert Hedin
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Mike and Karel Helgeson
John and Diane Herman
Kevin Hinze
Timothy Hinze
Randall and Pamela Hinze
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Darryl and Jo Holmstrom
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Wood Kidner
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