



MINNESOTA
LAND TRUST

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



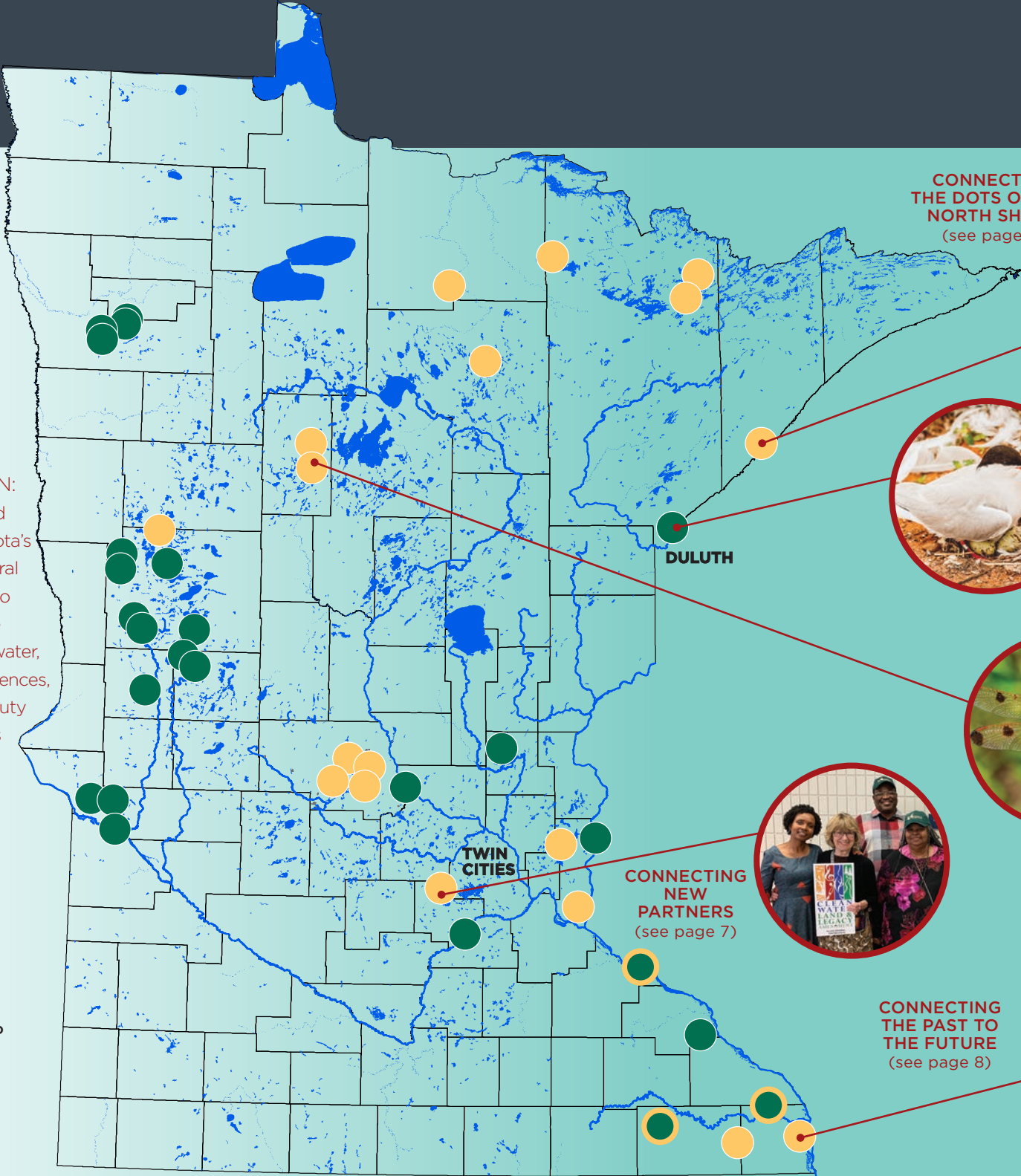
OUR MISSION:

We protect and restore Minnesota's most vital natural lands in order to provide wildlife habitat, clean water, outdoor experiences, and scenic beauty for generations to come.

2019 PROJECTS

-  **PROTECTED**
-  **RESTORED**
-  **PROTECTED & RESTORED**

COVER IMAGE:
MALE CALICO
PENNANT BY
ALAN OLANDER



**CONNECTING
THE DOTS ON THE
NORTH SHORE**
(see page 6)



**CONNECTING
CONTINENTS**
(see page 9)



**CONNECTING TO
CREATURES, BIG
AND SMALL**
(see pages 4-5)



**CONNECTING
NEW
PARTNERS**
(see page 7)



**CONNECTING
THE PAST TO
THE FUTURE**
(see page 8)



“WHEN WE TRY TO PICK OUT ANYTHING BY ITSELF, **WE FIND IT HITCHED TO EVERYTHING ELSE** IN THE UNIVERSE.”

—JOHN MUIR

Dear Friends:

As I close out my 10th anniversary as Executive Director at the Minnesota Land Trust, it's humbling to think back on this wonderful conservation journey and the incredible Minnesotans I've been privileged to work with through the years. And 2019 was no different. The Land Trust engaged new voices in conservation, launched our first-ever private lands restoration program, and permanently protected thousands of acres of natural land and miles of shoreline. But these milestones by themselves don't truly show you the impact of what we've accomplished together.

I think our achievements are best summed up by the incomparable John Muir, who said, “When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe.”

The real story of our work is not about the numbers, it's about the personal and lasting connections we have around the state. These connections help bring people together, all joining in the effort to preserve the very best of Minnesota. This work weaves together an ever-growing tapestry of natural lands so that wildlife can thrive. And it brings people closer to nature, whether it's kids hearing the mystical call of the loon for the first time, anglers watching the trout rise in the morning calm, or families sharing the maple syrup harvested from their maple trees.

As Muir suggested more than 150 years ago, you can't pick out any one of the Minnesota Land Trust's successes without finding it connected to another project, another person, another partner.

So, this year I thought we'd do something a little different for our annual report. In addition to telling you about the wonderful places we've protected together, I also want to highlight how our connections form a stronger, more enduring story of conservation.

Before diving in, I want you to know how much the Land Trust appreciates our connection to you. Everyone who has volunteered, donated, supported or spread the word about the Land Trust has played a crucial role in advancing conservation for the next generation.

Thank you for being a part of this journey.



Kris Larson, Executive Director



We are grateful to our donors, partners, and the generous landowners who protect their land forever.

Finally, these projects would not be possible without funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund and the Minnesota Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund.



2019 RECAP: **3,777** NEWLY PROTECTED ACRES / **149,256** FEET OF PROTECTED SHORELINES / **487** ACRES OF RESTORED HABITAT



by Josephine Marcotty

CONNECTING TO CREATURES, BIG AND SMALL

It was the kind of bright, cool day in fall that brings dragonflies out into the sun to warm up. John Weber, an amateur naturalist, was armed with his camera and a peripheral vision honed by years of looking for insects when he saw it — a glitter of iridescent wings and a flash of color against the dark bark of an oak tree.

Every year he tracks butterflies and dragonflies at Wolf Song, the 420-acre property on the edge of the Paul Bunyan State Forest, owned by Alan and Kathy Olander and protected



this year by a conservation easement with the Minnesota Land Trust. There, on the biologically rich tract of bogs, ponds, forests and meadows, Weber has counted

thousands of monarchs, plus dozens of other species of butterflies and dragonflies.

But not until that gorgeous fall day in 2015 had he ever seen a Subarctic Darner dragonfly, one of the rarest in Minnesota and a species of special concern.

“It could be a once in a lifetime experience,” he said.

But it did not surprise him that this experience occurred at Wolf Song.

Back in 1993, Alan and Kathy fell in love with the area when they were looking for rural property. “We came over a hill and saw another meadow,

and we were just enchanted,” said Kathy. They moved into the 100-year-old farm house and turned the dairy barn into a clinic for their veterinary practice.

KATHY AND ALAN
OLANDER



THE SUBARCTIC DARNER DRAGONFLY
PHOTOGRAPHED IN 2015 BY JOHN WEBER



**“THEY ARE THE KIND OF STEWARDS THAT WE
NEED MORE OF ON THIS PLANET.”**

—JOHN WEBER



Since then, they planted some white spruce and a couple of pollinator gardens and have built deep connections to the species that call this land home. The Olander property attracts a diverse range of creatures, from the small — like the darner — to wolves, deer, and a variety of birds. Alan and Kathy have managed this habitat with a light touch, ensuring that the cycle of nature continues undisturbed.

And it seems to be working. At night the

song of the wolves that gave the property its name resonates deep in the woods, and during the day pollinators flit from plant to plant in the open prairie and around the cool ponds on the property.

While Weber's annual count of butterflies at other sites in the area have consistently declined over the years, the numbers at Wolf Song have stayed steady.

"They are the kind of stewards," Weber said of the Olanders, "that we need more of on this planet."





THIS PROTECTED PROPERTY HAS OVER 7 MILES OF COLD-WATER STREAMS THAT FLOW INTO THE GOOSEBERRY RIVER.

CONNECTING THE DOTS ON THE NORTH SHORE

Kyle and Robin Weideman wanted to find the perfect wilderness property for their family, while at the same time preserving the natural features which make the North Shore such a gem.

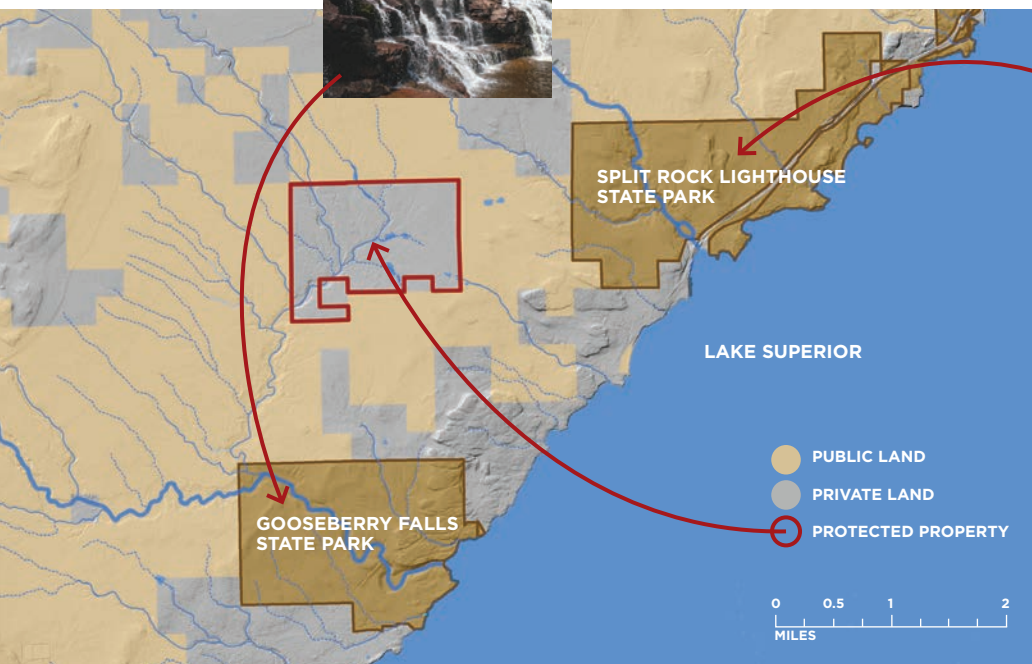
Last year they found just that property — nearly 1,000 acres of magnificent forested land with several crystal-clear trout streams running through it. Located within two miles of Gooseberry Falls and Split Rock Lighthouse, this property was one



of the last privately-owned parcels adjacent to a large complex of public lands. Working with the Land Trust and the previous landowners, Kyle and Robin permanently protected the property this spring with a conservation easement. This protection added the final piece to a puzzle connecting two of Minnesota's favorite state parks, creating an extensive block of contiguous wildlife habitat covering thousands of acres. In addition, located at the headwaters of the Gooseberry River, this protected property ensures that the river itself will maintain

the water quality and cold temperatures necessary to sustain its trout population.

In recent years, more and more private land along the North Shore has been developed, fragmenting natural landscapes and negatively impacting the wildlife habitat, waterways, and scenic beauty of the area. By working with conservation-minded landowners like the Weidemans to put the puzzle of habitat lands together, the Minnesota Land Trust has helped balance this development with the need to protect this area's natural attributes.



NORTH SHORE TROUT STREAMS ARE **EXTREMELY FRAGILE ENVIRONMENTS** THAT REQUIRE FOREST COVER TO KEEP THEM COOL ENOUGH TO SUPPORT TROUT IN A WARMING CLIMATE. THIS AREA CONTAINS MINNESOTA'S HIGHEST CONCENTRATION OF DESIGNATED TROUT STREAMS.



CONNECTING NEW PARTNERS

Established in 1956, Camp Katharine Parsons for years provided low-income youth from North Minneapolis outdoor education opportunities as a day camp managed by the Phyllis Wheatley Community Center (PWCC), an important human services agency for African-Americans in the Twin Cities. Covering over 106 acres on beautiful Oak Lake in Carver County, the former camp is less than an hour's drive from North

Minneapolis. At its peak, hundreds of youth from North Minneapolis experienced the great outdoors annually through nature-based programming. Unfortunately, as costs grew, in the 1990s Camp Katharine Parsons was forced to shut its doors.

That closure created a gap in access. For youth growing up in North Minneapolis, this camp had offered a rare opportunity to experience nature and outdoor environmental education activities. With the closing, an important community asset was gone.

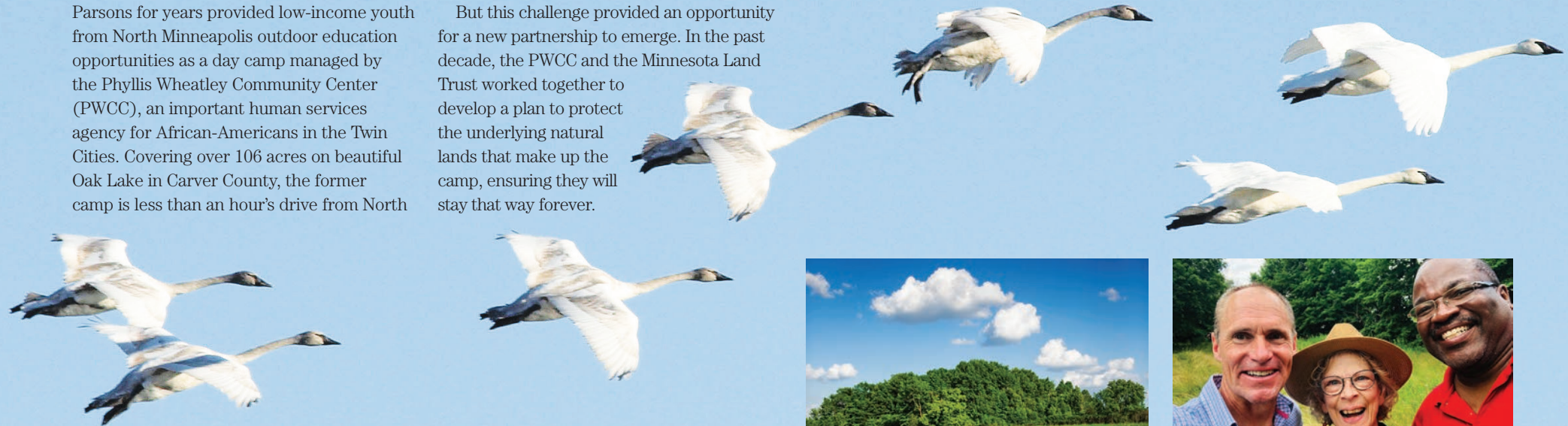
But this challenge provided an opportunity for a new partnership to emerge. In the past decade, the PWCC and the Minnesota Land Trust worked together to develop a plan to protect the underlying natural lands that make up the camp, ensuring they will stay that way forever.

And this summer the plans were completed, with a conservation easement through the Land Trust.

With its extensive shoreline, this lakefront property could have been sold off and built into a number of large lake homes, destroying the habitat that makes it a magnet for the trumpeter swans, pelicans, and songbirds which frequent Oak Lake. It would have meant the place where hundreds of campers created their first memories of nature — and

the potential for new memories to be created someday in the future — would have been lost forever.

Congratulations to the PWCC for protecting this iconic property and becoming one of the Minnesota Land Trust's newest conservation partners. This property will remain an important piece of the shared history with the North Minneapolis community. And now, future generations will be able to experience the beauty and solitude of Oak Lake — forever.



STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS FROM PWCC AND THE LAND TRUST GATHER AT THE PROTECTED PROPERTY.



CONNECTING THE PAST TO THE FUTURE

Southeastern Minnesota has a rich agrarian tradition, and family farms still dot the landscape. Established in 1940, the small farm of Bob and Michelle Scanlan has been passed down through the generations, creating a family legacy. The Scanlans have ensured the future of their cherished property by connecting to their roots and embracing natural land solutions.

As farms around them have succumbed to development pressures from growing residential expansion, Bob was faced with the prospect of losing the land that meant so much to his family. In response, he looked back to his grandparents' farming practices to find balance in producing food with maintaining the health of the land. The Scanlans transitioned from intensive row cropping to conservation grazing

practices. And ultimately, they protected the natural areas of their property through the Minnesota Land Trust — ensuring it will stay undeveloped forever.

Wildcat Creek, which meanders through the property, will see reduced impact, protecting downstream communities and eventually the Mississippi River. This transition to a more natural condition helps migratory birds that utilize the Mississippi Flyway. Sandhill cranes, bald eagles, and several types of raptors have all been seen on the property. And as native plants regain a foothold around the creek, they will continue to improve water quality and filtration.

By connecting to the sustainable farming practices of the past, the Scanlans have protected the future of their farm and also made a positive impact on the environment.



"I'M ABLE TO **KEEP FARMING** MY LAND THE WAY I HAVE BEEN, GRAZE CATTLE, AND **PROTECT** THE ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY OF MY LAND. **IT'S A WIN-WIN.**"

—BOB SCANLAN

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS: MINNESOTA AND WISCONSIN DEPARTMENTS OF NATURAL RESOURCES, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA NATURAL RESOURCES RESEARCH INSTITUTE, AND U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE.



CONNECTING CONTINENTS

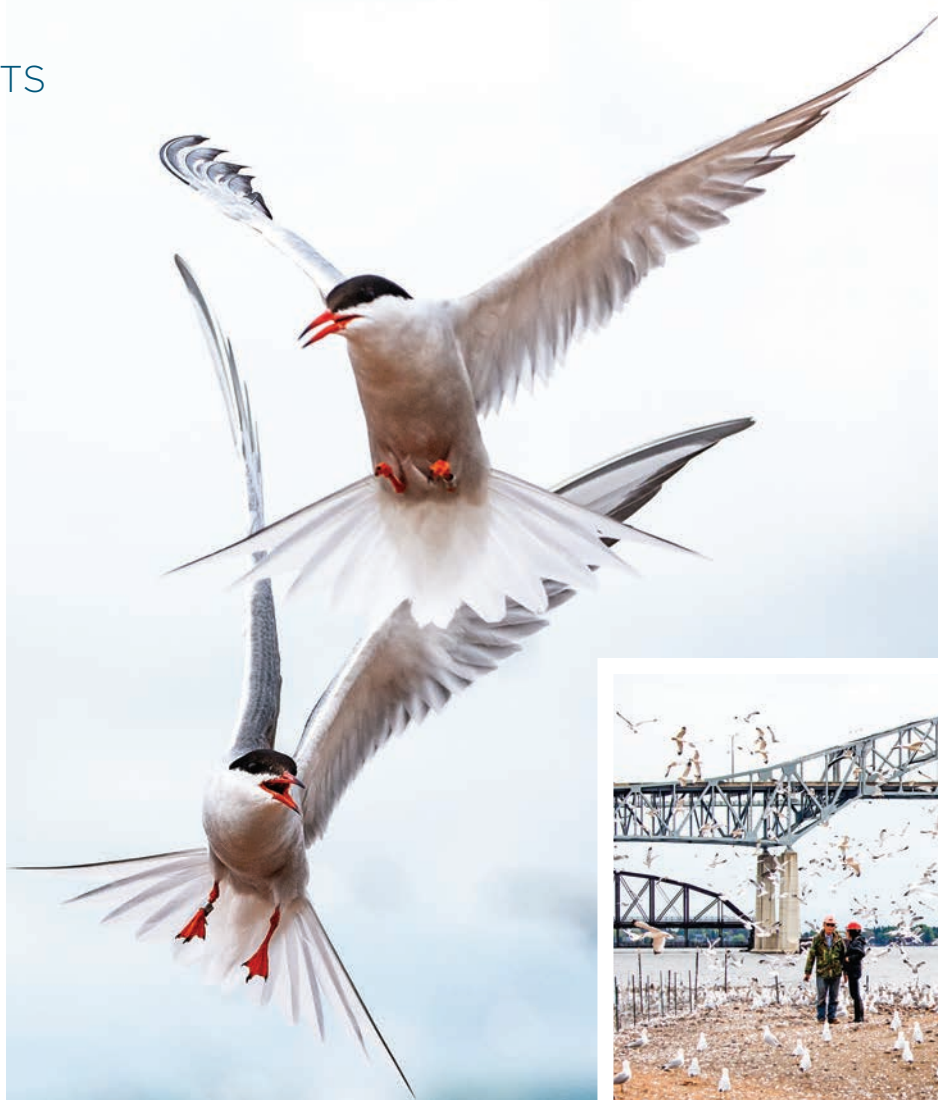
Imagine returning home after an exhausting journey of thousands of miles, only to find someone else moved into your home. Such is the plight of the Common Tern. These slender, fork-tailed inhabitants of Interstate Island between Duluth and Superior are truly international travelers. Every spring this hardy bird makes the long-distance journey from South America to this little island, one of only two Common Tern nesting sites on Lake Superior.

However, the future of this intercontinental connection is at risk.

This threatened species — only 900 pairs remain in Minnesota — is being crowded off the island by 40,000 Ring-billed gulls which are aided by a steady supply of French fries from nearby Canal Park tourists. Climate change has only made the problem worse by increasing the severity of storms in Lake Superior, causing floods and erosion that have reduced the 5-acre island to half its size.

Recognizing this dire situation, the Land Trust is partnering with several organizations to combat the loss of nesting habitat. Sand and gravel will be added to the island to increase its overall size and elevation, providing 5.5 acres of habitat, even during high water levels.

With this coalition of partners working together to restore the island, the terns will have their place to nest and thrive in the future.



EVERY SPRING BANDED BIRDS
RETURN FROM SOUTH AMERICA



CHICKEN WIRE AND STRING GRIDS MAKE
IT DIFFICULT FOR PREDATORY GULLS TO
MANEUVER AMONG TERN NESTS.

40% OF OUR VOLUNTEERS HAVE BEEN MONITORING FOR AT LEAST 10 YEARS.

Every year over 100 volunteers monitor Land Trust protected properties and support our mission in important ways.

CONNECTING THROUGH OUR VOLUNTEERS

For the dozen years that Twin Cities residents Paul Scobie and Teresa Thews have monitored in the Ely area, they have fostered deep connections with the families they visit. And the relationships they've built are deeper than their stack of monitoring workbooks. They've learned the history of Sig Olson at Listening Point, they've fed the sled dogs at Wintergreen Dogsled Lodge owned by Paul and Susan Schurke, and even joined the Schurkes as they paddled out to greet Amy and Dave Freeman who were coming out of the BWCA after living in the wilderness for a full year.

This year however, Paul and Teresa stepped back from long-distance monitoring and said their goodbyes to the people they'd gotten to know so well.

"It's a friendship," says Teresa. "In fact, when we said our goodbyes, they all told us they were counting on us to stop by again if we're up in Ely!"

Steffi O'Brien, executive director of the Listening Point Foundation concurs, "You make a connection with people like Paul and Teresa—who are so friendly and enthusiastic—and you know that they care about the land and what they're doing. I'll miss seeing them every year."

"DURING THEIR ANNUAL VISITS, TERESA & PAUL INSPIRED US WITH THE PASSION THEY REFLECTED FOR SPECIAL PLACES LIKE THIS AND ABOUT THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE MINNESOTA LAND TRUST AND ITS MISSION."

—PAUL AND SUSAN SCHURKE



LANDOWNERS SUSAN AND PAUL SCHURKE (FAR LEFT AND RIGHT) AND VOLUNTEER MONITORS TERESA THEWS AND PAUL SCOBIE (CENTER)

VOLUNTEERS

Bob Adair
Marcia Adair
Marge Amberson
Graham Ambrose
Todd Armbruster
Rob Axtmann
Polly Bayrd
Tom Beaver
Matt Bredesen
Jim Brewer
Jim Burkett
Michael Burnett
Robert Callery
Frankie Cody
Craig Cold
Jaron Cook
Mark Crawford
Annette Drewes
Maya Edstrom
Dave Ethier
Richard Fetterly
Fitz Fitzgerald
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Fay Simer
Greg Solberg
Jim Stark
Teresa Thews
Steve Thompson
John Velin
John Wachlarowicz
Craig Weingart
Mark Wendt
Erick Westerback
David White
Margie White

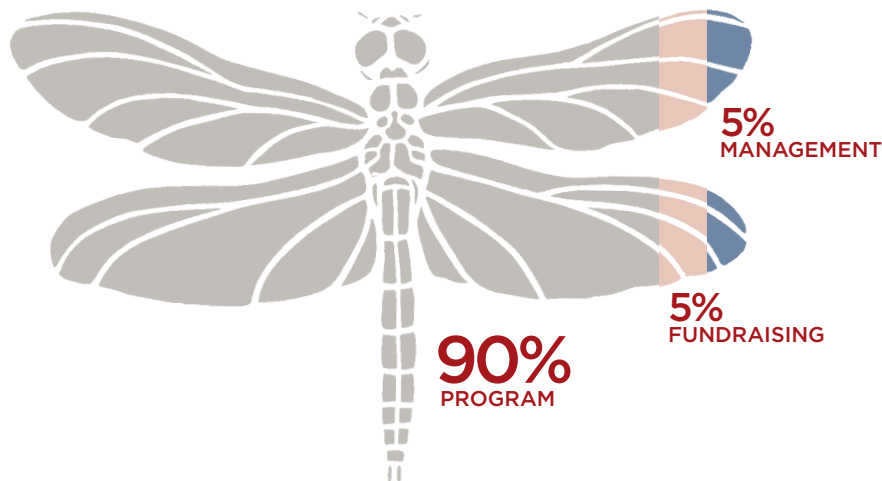
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

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 Redpath and Company, Ltd. Their full report is available online at www.mnland.org or by contacting the Land Trust at 651-647-9590.

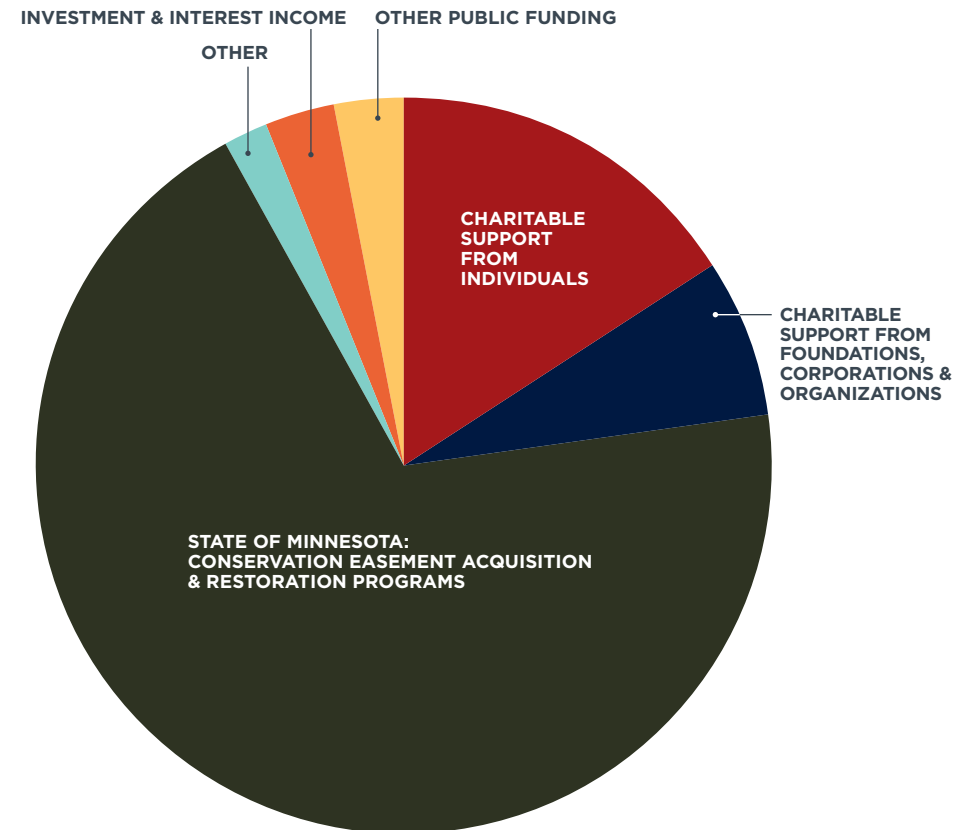
BALANCE SHEET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2019

| Assets | 2019 | 2018 |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|
| Cash, Pledges & Investments | \$9,372,246 | \$7,912,935 |
| Net Furniture & Equipment | \$43,393 | \$15,565 |
| Land Held for Resale/Conservation | \$163,260 | \$199,650 |
| Beneficial Interest in Real Property | \$752,500 | \$744,200 |
| Total Assets | \$10,331,399 | \$8,872,350 |
| Liabilities & Net Assets | | |
| Accounts Payable | \$201,119 | \$297,582 |
| Net Assets | \$10,130,280 | \$8,574,768 |
| Total Liabilities & Net Assets | \$10,331,399 | \$8,872,350 |

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| EXPENSE ALLOCATION: | Program | \$7,340,960 |
| | Fundraising | \$421,963 |
| | Management | \$367,957 |
| | Total Expenses | \$8,130,880 |



FUNDRAISING & REVENUE



FUNDRAISING & REVENUE

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Charitable support from individuals | \$1,529,936 |
| Charitable support from foundations, corporations & organizations | \$684,154 |
| State of Minnesota: | |
| Conservation easement acquisition & restoration programs | \$6,682,797 |
| Other public funding | \$174,722 |
| Investment & interest income | \$334,468 |
| Other revenue | \$280,310 |
| Total Support & Revenue | \$9,686,386 |



DONORS FROM JULY 1, 2018 – JUNE 30, 2019



This past winter the conservation community lost one of our greatest advocates, with the passing of **LUCY HARTWELL**. Lucy was a supporter of many causes throughout her life and was a supporter of the Land Trust's mission from day one.

She volunteered her time, energy, and financial support to make sure the birds, fish, and outdoors she enjoyed would be there forever. Lucy epitomized what it is to be a conservationist in Minnesota, and her generous spirit will guide our work for years to come. As a final parting gesture, Lucy left a legacy gift to the Land Trust, which enables us to expand our programs, engage new conservation leaders for tomorrow and protect the places that mattered most to Lucy. We can't thank Lucy and the entire Hartwell family enough for their support and all they've done for conservation.

To learn more about including a gift to the Minnesota Land Trust in your will, please contact Alex Tsatsoulis at atsatsoulis@mnland.org or call him at 651-917-6289.

ANNUAL GIFTS

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

\$10,000 and above

Allan Amis & Ginna Portman Amis
Louise Anderson
Ellie Crosby - The Longview Foundation*
Edward & Sherry Ann Dayton*
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\$5,000 – 9,999

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Stewart & Lesley Crosby
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Kiren Ghei
Raman Ghei
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Teresa Thews & Paul Scobie*

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Prospect Creek Foundation, a family foundation of Bruce & Martha Atwater*



2019 RECAP:

NUMBER OF NEW DONORS = **742**



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\$500 - 999

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\$250 - 499

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Terry Kidner

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