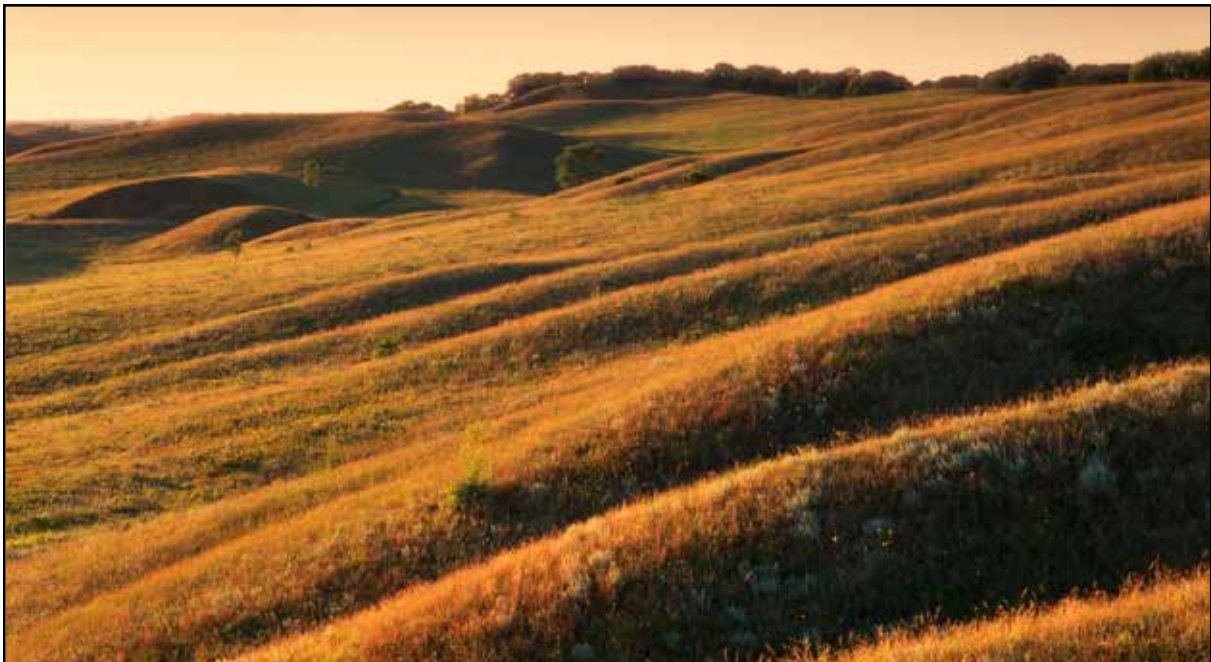




People Saving Special Places



Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota



Annual Report 2005

Dear Friends

Minnesotans value our interconnected system of parks and recreational trails because they give us access to our state's most outstanding natural and scenic resources as well as places to recreate and enjoy solitude. That is why the Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota has worked vigorously for more than 50 years to acquire, protect and enhance critical lands for the public's enjoyment now and in the future.

Inside the pages of this Annual Report you will find a number of examples where the Parks & Trails Council has made a significant difference in helping to make our state's park and trail system the envy of the nation. There is no doubt that the important work we do is only possible thanks to the generous support of our members and donors.

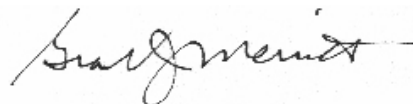
In 2005, we reached some important milestones including proudly surpassing the 3,000 member mark in late December. We also embarked on a new partnership with the publishers of *Minnesota Trails* magazine, a quarterly publication with news, features, park and trail guides and a comprehensive listing of park and trail events throughout the state. We are pleased to be able to include subscriptions to *Minnesota Trails* as one of our many member benefits.

And while we were all disappointed that the Minnesota Legislature was unable to pass a bonding bill in 2004, we are pleased to report that the one that eventually passed in April, 2005 included \$12.8 million in critical state park and trail investments. We will also remember June 30, 2005 as the day citizen demand that state parks remain open helped avoid a total state government shutdown.

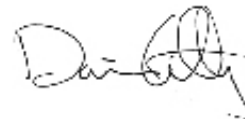
As you are already aware there is no other organization like the Parks & Trails Council – able to move swiftly to purchase strategic parcels of land for eventual incorporation into public ownership. The organization also provides guidance, advocacy and counsel to community partners committed to protecting or expanding local parks and trails. Thanks to committed members and community partners like you, the Parks & Trails Council continues to grow and gain statewide influence.

Parks and trails are part of what makes Minnesota great. With your help, we promise we will continue our work to preserve Minnesota's legacy of a great park and trail system by making necessary and smart investments in these special places for us and for future generations.

Sincerely,



Grant Merritt, President
Parks & Trails Council



Dorian Grilley, Executive Director
Parks & Trails Council



Grant Merritt, President,
Parks & Trails Council



Dorian Grilley,
Executive Director
Parks & Trails Council

Government and Community Relations

THE PARKS & TRAILS COUNCIL OF MINNESOTA'S ability to effectively communicate the needs of the state's park and trail system and its users to legislators and government officials has made it the preeminent voice for parks and trails throughout Minnesota and at the Capitol. Always determined and forward thinking, the Parks & Trails Council heads into each legislative session armed with a comprehensive agenda seeking necessary and smart investments in our park and trail system. Whether it is the high-profile purchase and preservation of aesthetic, ecological and cultural places like Gold Rock Point on the scenic North Shore, or advocating for restoring funding for seasonal naturalists, the Parks & Trails Council is ready to mobilize.

Reminiscing about highlights from 2005

Looking back at 2005, one can only conclude that it was a dynamic, exciting and frustrating year all rolled into one for the Parks & Trails Council's Government and Community Relations programs. Nothing illustrates this point more than how the 2005 Legislature's inability to get its job done in a timely manner nearly forced the closing of state parks over the Fourth of July weekend. Thankfully, parks and trails supporters at the Capitol forged ahead in a bipartisan effort to avoid such a nightmare.

January 2005 legislative workshop

More than 100 park and trail advocates gathered at the Kelly Inn in St. Paul to receive background information on the issues being considered by the 2005 Legislature, for training on the budget and bonding processes and for training on how to prepare and present testimony in committee.

Banning Junction, Mankato workshops

These annual workshops provided park and trail advocates and friends groups the opportunity to get briefed on what was happening at the 2005 Legislature, training on how to work with media and important networking opportunities with peers.

2005 Afternoon on the Hill

The highlight of the 2005 Afternoon on the Hill was the opportunity for our members to testify on state park budget concerns before the Senate Environment, Agriculture and Economic Development Budget Division. Later in the session, citizens also provided testimony before the House Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

Passage of the 2004-2005 bonding bill

The 2005 Legislature passed the 2004 bonding bill in early April, 2005. A year late, the bonding bill provided \$12.8 million in critical investments in state park land acquisition, rehabilitation and trail acquisition and development.

Sign of the times

The Legislature did not make any General Fund budget reductions for the operations and maintenance of Minnesota's state parks and trails, but it did not provide any new funding either.

2006 Legislative Agenda

Working with park and trail groups and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Parks & Trails Council's Legislative Committee developed the 2006 Legislative Agenda with a strong commitment to continue investments in Minnesota's park and trail system. The agenda was adopted and reaffirmed by the Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

Afternoon on the Hill participants representing the Paul Bunyan and Cuyuna Lakes trails visit with Sen. Paul Koering (third from left)



Land Acquisition

THE PARKS & TRAILS COUNCIL OF MINNESOTA works to acquire, protect and enhance land that is critical to our state's park and recreational trail system so that its aesthetic, ecological and cultural character can be preserved for the public's enjoyment now and in the future. Since 1954, we have been instrumental in adding more than 8,700 acres valued at more than \$11.75 million to key areas within the state's vast network of parks and trails.

Lands acquisition in 2005

Gateway State Trail

The Parks & Trails Council acquired a critical right-of-way from the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation for \$223,000 so that the Gateway State Trail could be extended four miles near Square Lake in Washington County. The right-of-way was immediately transferred for the same price to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and is now part of the state trail system.

George Crosby Manitou State Park

The Parks & Trails Council led the way in finalizing a complex land exchange deal that was in the works for several years, preserving old growth hardwood forest with astounding scenic value known as Horseshoe Ridge and incorporating it into George Crosby Manitou State Park. The Parks & Trails Council sold 520 acres of the land it acquired to the DNR in two installments for \$442,000 as an addition to the park. It plans to sell part of the remaining 1,140 acres to the DNR in 2006. As part of the exchange, land was also transferred to Lake County including 840 acres near Split Rock Lighthouse State Park and 620 acres of what is referred to as Schoolhouse Creek, located west of George Crosby Manitou State Park. Lake County

will manage the land it acquired as part of its county forest system.

Forestville/Mystery Cave State Park

In June 2005, the Parks & Trails Council acquired nearly 21 acres as part of the Harmony-Preston trail extension to Forestville/Mystery Cave State Park for \$76,125. This connects DNR holdings from the northwest portion of the park to the South Root River.

Maplewood State Park

In July 2005, a small in-holding of one acre was purchased for \$17,500, and later sold to the DNR. This parcel is completely surrounded by Maplewood State Park and could have ended up as a private residence. The parcel was sold to the DNR in September for \$14,000.

Tettegouche State Park

During 2005, the Parks & Trails Council acquired 425 feet of Lake Superior shoreline in Tettegouche State Park for \$600,000. This purchase secures one of the four private parcels on the Palisade Coast added to the park in the 2004 state park boundary bill. Purchase of this parcel was made possible with a loan, payable in the beginning of 2007, of \$475,000 from The Conservation Fund.

Whitewater State Park

The Parks & Trails Council completed a deal in March 2005 with the McCarthy Family Farms LLP to acquire about 215 acres of its 500-acre farm in Whitewater State Park for \$970,000. The deal secured mostly wooded land and includes about 1.25 miles of bluff line to the north and west of the park's visitor center and campground. Development of this property would have significantly changed one of Minnesota's most spectacular parks and river valleys. The Parks & Trails Council plans to sell this property to the DNR in the fall of 2006.

Horseshoe Ridge

Photo courtesy of Mark and Joan Strobel





THANK YOU!

*In 2005, donors
generously contributed
\$36,300 to the
Samuel H. Morgan
Land Acquisition Fund.*

From the Land Acquisition Committee Chair

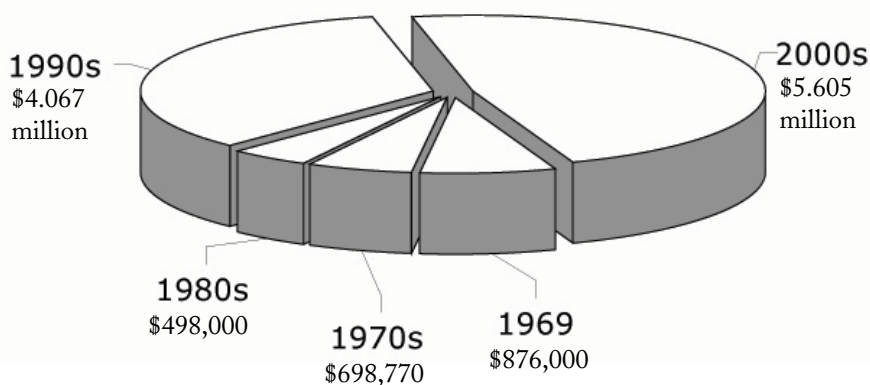
In 2005, the Parks & Trails Council continued to benefit from the generous financial and in-kind support of its donors with respect to land acquisition projects. Bill Buell, Kathy Connelly, Al Tschida, Ken Rowe and the firm of Oppenheimer, Wolff & Donnelly and Steven Hettig of the firm of Kraft, Walser, Hettig and Honsey provided many hours of legal expertise. Donors provided more than \$536,300 in pledge and current year payments, including the WM Foundation's payment of its 2004 pledge of \$1 million. These donations have greatly expanded the Parks & Trails Council's land acquisition capacity.

Unfortunately, the 2005 State Legislature only authorized \$2.5 million for state park land acquisition (\$500,000 of which was earmarked for Greenleaf Lake State Park). This was far short of the amount necessary to acquire, from existing willing sellers, many lands that could otherwise be included as part of our state park and trail system.

Land holdings 2005

Park/Trail	Cost/Value	Acres	Notes
Crosby Manitou State Park	\$533,710	1,660	Land exchange with Lake County
Devil's Track property	\$28,000	40	Long-term holding for Superior Hiking Trail
Forestville State Park	\$81,100	20	On Root River
Forestville State Park	\$100,400	40	Protects top of watershed
Gateway State Trail	\$11,000	1.4	Donated for trail extension
Gateway State Trail	\$223,000	23	Easement for extension, sold to DNR in '05.
Grey Cloud Island	\$5,400	10	Long-term holding
Charles Lindbergh State Park	\$265,500	96	Holding until park boundary is expanded
Maplewood State Park	\$17,500	1	In-holding, sold to DNR in '05
Tettegouche State Park	\$12,900	40	Land exchange with Lake County
Tettegouche State Park	\$5,000	18.5	Right of first refusal
Tettegouche State Park	\$600,000	7.25	Lake Superior shoreline
Cuyuna Lakes State Trail	\$19,300	9.25	Trail easements (1.8 miles)
Great River Bluffs State Park	\$357,100	40	Hillside near park entrance
Crow Wing State Park	\$412,000	59.99	On Mississippi River
Whitewater State Park	\$970,000	215	1.25 miles of bluff line
	\$3,133,300		Total at start of 2005
	\$463,400		Total added in 2005
	\$679,000		Total sold to DNR
	\$2,917,700	1,761	Total holdings at end of '05

Value of land acquired 1969-2005 (Total of 11.745 million at time of purchase)



Membership and Development

MORE THAN 8 MILLION PEOPLE visit Minnesota state parks annually. Millions more visit regional parks and bicycle, hike or inline skate our trails. These users are able to enjoy these magnificent facilities, in part, because of the dedication and support of the members of the Parks & Trails Council. Members are the foundation that allow Parks & Trails to continue to advocate for these special places, to acquire important lands and to build these facilities into the fabric of our communities. Parks & Trails members give time, money and testimony in supporting the value of providing special places – our beloved parks and trails – for people to use and enjoy today and tomorrow.

Membership milestone reached with 3,000 members!

In late 1999, Parks & Trails Council board members dreamed of having 3,000 members within five years. That seemed overly optimistic at the time, as membership stood at only about a third of that. However, in mid-December of 2005, we did it – reaching 3,000 members and still growing! Thanks to each and every one of you who helped to realize the dream, and thank you also to the nearly 80 percent of you who renew every year. Your commitment sustains a stable membership base at the same time new members join, growing the community. We are honored and thrilled to reach this milestone, and even more thrilled to be leaving it behind, as we continue to welcome new members every day! Thank you for being a part of that community, and remember to invite a friend to join!



Parks & Trails volunteers help find new members

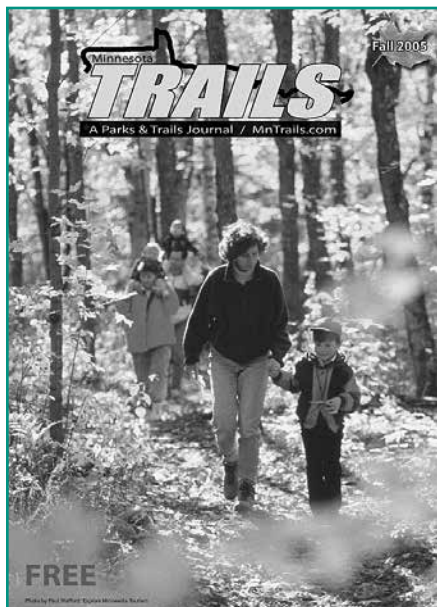
In 2005, the Parks & Trails Council increased our effort to share our mission with new audiences. Many of you stopped by the Parks & Trails booth as we exhibited at numerous events and expos around the state. More importantly, members volunteered at our booths, talking with others about membership in the Parks & Trails Council community. More than 200 people joined as a result of your efforts. Thank you!

The inaugural Magney Circle event



Judge Magney Circle introduced in 2005

It takes support at all levels to make a nonprofit successful. The Judge Magney Circle, established in 2005, is a member program designed to bring together that group of members able and willing to support the Parks & Trails Council's mission at a higher level. The inaugural Magney Circle members' gathering was hosted by Fred and Eleanor Winston in May 2005. Participants shared favorite park and trail experiences and explored the big woods ecosystem that is protected at Wood-Rill Scientific and Natural Area. If you would like more information about how you can join the Magney Circle, please call the Parks & Trails Council office at 651-726-2457.



Minnesota Trails magazine's first cover

Minnesota Trails magazine launched

In August 2005, thousands of people across Minnesota were introduced to the Parks & Trails Council when the *Minnesota Trails* magazine came off the press for the first time. A quarterly publication with news, features, park and trail guides and a comprehensive listing of park and trail events, *Minnesota Trails* has something for everyone. This unique partnership between a for-profit magazine and the nonprofit Parks & Trails Council gives readers the chance to read stories of our special places and get to know the fascinating people who enjoy the recreational opportunities provided by them. Published in March, May, August and November, *Minnesota Trails* magazine subscriptions are available only as a benefit of membership in the Parks & Trails Council, although single copies can be picked up at various park and community locations across the state.

THE PARKS & TRAILS COUNCIL has long valued the creative ideas and energy that individual members and local groups bring to park and trail efforts. As a state-wide organization, the Parks & Trails Council can serve as a hub for all this energy. We are a coordinator that links the individual efforts together and a conduit for sharing knowledge gained on a project in one region with a developing idea in another part of the state. The Parks & Trails Council provides training workshops around the state and attends local planning meetings. In 2005, we brought all these activities together, defining a new program area that can further strengthen this network – the Community Partners program.

Meander the Minnesota with Minge: Bike Minnesota with Parks & Trails event

Participants had a chance to really see what our partnerships produce during the first ever Bike Minnesota with Parks & Trails event, held over Labor Day weekend. Sixty people of all ages, from various locations, some with extensive biking experience, some riding their very first ever bike event, came together to explore the upper Minnesota River Valley. Tail winds, scenic byways and great food were enjoyable, but the highlights of this three-day, 120-mile (or so) event had to be the informative and thought-provoking presentations along the way. Special

thanks are due to Parks & Trails board member David Minge, whose deep understanding and unending passion for the region gave participants an unparalleled experience. Thanks also to co-sponsors, including C.U.R.E. and the Friends of the Minnesota Valley.

Regional workshops

Parks & Trails continued regional workshops in 2005. More than 150 Parks & Trails members and local park and trail groups gathered together, sharing successes and ideas, and lessons learned.

Meander the Minnesota with Minge Labor Day bike event participants couldn't pass up this photo opportunity.

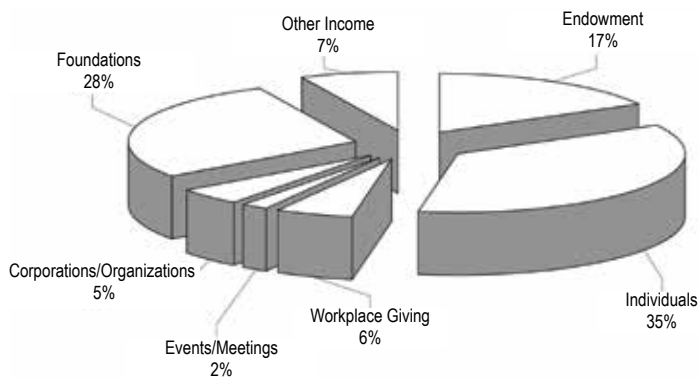


Statement of Financial Position

General Operating Fund

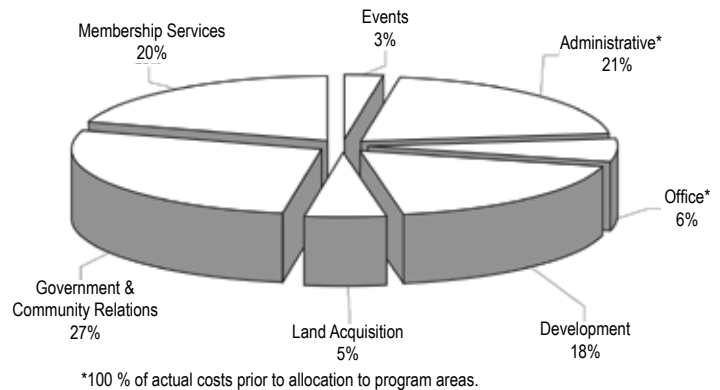
Income 2005

Total Income = \$507,494



Expenses 2005

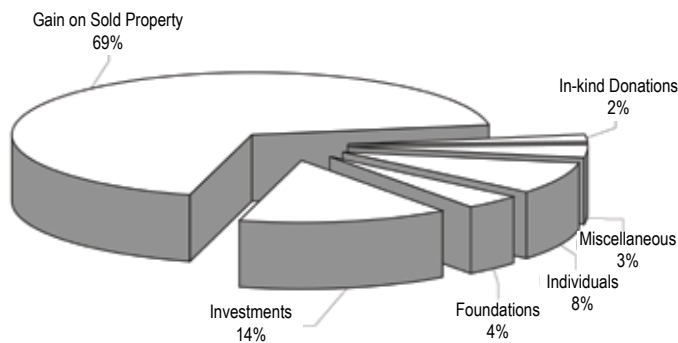
Total Expenses = \$486,162



Samuel H. Morgan Land Acquisition Fund

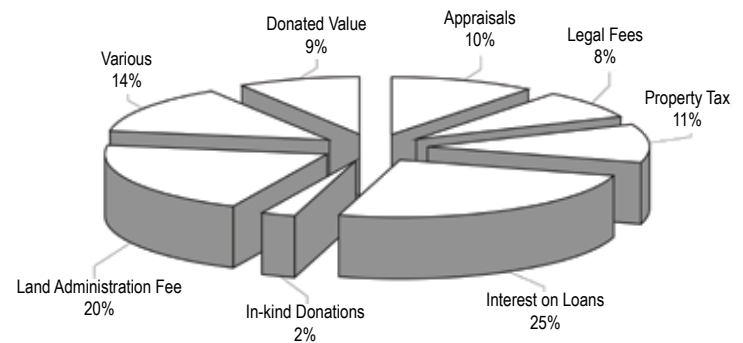
Income 2005

Total Income = \$265,588



Expenses 2005

Total Expenses = \$133,705



Fund Balances

	2005	2004
General Fund	\$168,680	\$167,685
Samuel H. Morgan Land Acquisition Fund	\$4,315,940	\$4,168,010
Reuel Harmon Endowment Fund	\$1,789,240	\$1,769,446
TOTAL	\$6,273,860	\$6,105,140

Functional Expenses in 2005 (combined land and operating funds)

Program Expenses	\$465,240	77%
Administrative Expenses	\$79,240	13%
Fundraising Expenses	\$61,270	10%
TOTAL	\$605,750	100%

To obtain a complete 2005 Financial Report, please contact the Parks & Trails Council office at (651) 726-2457 or (800) 944-0707 (outstate) or by e-mail at info@parksandtrails.org. *Note – this is not an officially audited report.

With Special Thanks

THE PARKS & TRAILS COUNCIL OF MINNESOTA is supported solely by private donations and is grateful to all the individuals, community organizations, corporations and foundations that provided financial support in 2005. Donor generosity over the years has enabled the Parks & Trails Council to acquire and protect more than 8,700 acres in our parks and trails system. We would like to thank the following donors who have made gifts of \$100 or more in 2005. We have tried our best to be accurate, if we have erred, we are sorry. Please contact our office so we can correct our mistake.

Magney Circle

(\$500+ to General Operating Fund)

Howard R. Alton, Jr
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Regina Bonsignore and Richard Garber
Conley and Marney Brooks
Mr. & Mrs. William R. Buell
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Peter M. Butler
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Gary R. Carlson
David Chizek
Mike and Julia Costello
David and Kitty Crosby
Julia Cuchna
Mary Lee Dayton
Bruce Dayton
David Diken
William and Mary Dolan
Thomas Dwight
James H. and Mary Eddy
Robert O. Erickson
Tim and Noreen Farrell
Ms. Connie J. Foote
Ms. Kathy Ford
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Dorian and Margie Grilley
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Rodney and Diana Hanson
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Kem Pomeroy
Michael and Lyne Prichard
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Peter and Linda Seed

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Mark and Joan Strobel
Rupert and Jeanne Strobel
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James E. Ulland
Ms. Jane M. Untz
Fred and Eleanor Winston
Tom Witzig
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Angus and Margaret Wurtele
Phil and Anne Zink
Kent Zoya

Parks & Trails Donors

(Note: Amounts include all gifts to both land and general funds)

\$5,000+

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Gary R. Carlson
Bruce and Ruth Dayton
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Mark and Joan Strobel
Sheldon and Ellie Sturgis
Fred and Eleanor Winston

\$1,000-\$4,999

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David Chizek
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Fax: (651) 726-2458
E-mail: info@parksandtrails.org
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