



Three Photos by Rudi Hargeshemer



People Saving Special Places



Voyageurs National Park photo by Gary Alan Nelson

Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota

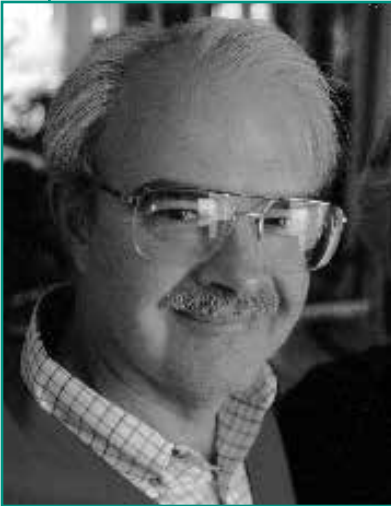


Annual Report 2009

Dear Friends

Our Mission:

The Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota exists to acquire, protect and enhance critical lands for the public's enjoyment now and in the future.



Tim Farrell



Brett Feldman

It's always fun to look back at the accomplishments of the previous year. It's so easy to get caught up in the day-to-day operations of carrying out Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota's mission to acquire, protect and enhance critical land for the public's benefit that we can lose sight of what we have done.

We can confidently say that 2009 was a good year. First and foremost, we balanced our budget, a claim not every non-profit can make as people and foundations reduce their giving. But thanks to you, our generous and dedicated members, and the hard work of our small staff to spend every dollar wisely, we were able to finish the year in the black.

As you will see in the following pages, Parks & Trails Council also carried on the activities that protect and enhance the parks and trails throughout Minnesota. For instance, the organization:

- Helped pass the Legacy Amendment appropriations in the Legislature in an equitable and balanced way between state, metro and regional parks and trails;
- Transferred the last 360 acres, of its 2,060 acres purchased in George H. Crosby Manitou State Park, to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. It will protect old-growth hardwood forests and the beauty along the Superior Hiking Trail;
- Transferred to the DNR, on the last day of December, about 156 acres of the 264 total in the Greenleaf Lake State Recreation Area between Litchfield and Hutchinson; and
- Purchased a key 2.5-acre easement on the future Gateway Trail extension that will connect Scandia with William O'Brien State Park.

Parks & Trails Council continued to energize members, volunteers and friends organizations through Day on the Hill, action team alerts and the annual Labor Day weekend Bike Minnesota event.

We said goodbye to the executive director over the summer and turned the daily operations for the time being over to communications director Brett Feldman. We expect to hire a new full-time executive director in early 2010.

Like most people, we look forward to what 2010 might bring. We expect continuing battles at the Legislature, but also tangible spending from the Legacy Amendment portion that goes to parks and trails. We hope to negotiate some land deals.

But always, we appreciate your continued financial, volunteer and verbal support. We look forward to exciting possibilities in 2010.

Sincerely,



Tim Farrell, President



Brett Feldman, Acting Executive Director

Government Relations

THE PARKS & TRAILS COUNCIL OF MINNESOTA'S *ability to effectively communicate the needs of the state's park and trail systems 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

Good funding plan marks legislative session

When everyone knows going into a legislative session that the state faces a \$4.6 billion deficit, expecting to win a lot of funding victories would be delusional.

Still, Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota was happy with a few of the outcomes in the session. The way the Legislature decided to spend the \$65 million in sales tax money from the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment over the next two years for parks and trails went about as hoped.

Parks & Trails Council, and especially Government Relations Director Judy Erickson, pushed hard for a balanced and equitable distribution of the money among the state, Metropolitan area and Greater Minnesota regional parks. In addition, it allows each of those systems to set their own priorities.

The final bill provided \$27.78 million each for Minnesota state parks and Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. The smaller Greater Minnesota Regional parks system received \$8.87 million in the biennium.

"The Parks & Trails Council especially appreciates the fact that legislative leaders worked diligently to ensure this new source of funding will address the priorities and needs of Minnesota's state, metro and regional parks and trails," said then Parks & Trails Council Executive Director Beth Coleman. "Minnesotans will see improved visitor services, enhanced natural resource protection and facility maintenance and innovative new ways to connect people to the outdoors."

The Legislature also provided the University of Minnesota's Center for Changing Landscapes with \$400,000 to develop a framework for spending the parks and trails portion of the legacy funding. The study would look out to the year the legacy fund amendment ends in 2034. The university study will develop an inventory of all recreational areas in the state that are based on natural resources.

That report is due to the Legislature in early 2011 and Parks & Trails Council will be interested in the information the university team gathers and its recommendations.

As expected, one of the battles that began in 2009 and will continue in 2010 is making sure that the general fund money for parks and trails does not take disproportionate cuts and that money from the Legislative-Citizens Commission on Minnesota's Resources continues to flow in the historical amounts.

Ready to act!

Advocacy plays an integral role in the Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota's work to fulfill our mission. The Parks & Trails Action Team is made up of dedicated people who actively work on behalf of our state's interconnected systems of parks and trails. Our influential Action Team presence is felt at the Capitol and in cities and local communities throughout the state.



Members of the Cuyuna Lakes Trail Association and the International Mountain Biking Association led a delegation to the Capitol for Parks & Trails Day on the Hill on March 3. The group is shown here meeting with Rep. Loren Solberg (DFL-Grand Rapids), Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee (third from left).



Sen. Patricia Torres Ray (DFL Mpls), Chair of the Senate Parks and Trails Legacy Subcommittee (left) and Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown), Chair House Cultural & Outdoor Resources Finance Division (right) answered questions from the more than 100 people attending Parks & Trails Day on the Hill. Parks & Trails Government Relations Director Judy Erickson (center) facilitated the session.

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 systems so that Minnesota's scenic, 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 10,000 acres valued at more than \$29 million to key areas within the state's vast network of parks and trails.

Land acquisitions in 2009

True to our mission, the Parks & Trails Council continued to strategically add critical new lands to our public parks and trails. Here is a brief summary of some of the things we accomplished in 2009.

Scenic State Park

The Parks & Trails Council purchased 151 acres inside Scenic State Park in northern Itasca County from the Don Bastiansen family. The property includes 1,000 feet of shoreline on 67-acre Isaac lake. The property is made up primarily of mixed hardwood forest, but also wetlands and open meadow. The property also has an old log cabin, three regular cabins, a garage and a woodshed.

Gateway State Trail

In July, the Parks & Trails Council purchased a key 2.5 -acre easement from Joel and Mari Erickson in Scandia that will become a future Gateway Trail extension. The extension is intended to connect Scandia with the nearby William O'Brien State Park and its trails.

Root River State Trail

A complicated deal with British Bank HSBC added 2.5 acres that will eventually go to the Root River State Trail and the proposed extension to Forestville/Mystery Cave State Park. The purchase, and eventual transfer to the state, should allow the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to build a bridge over the Root River and extend the trail a half mile.



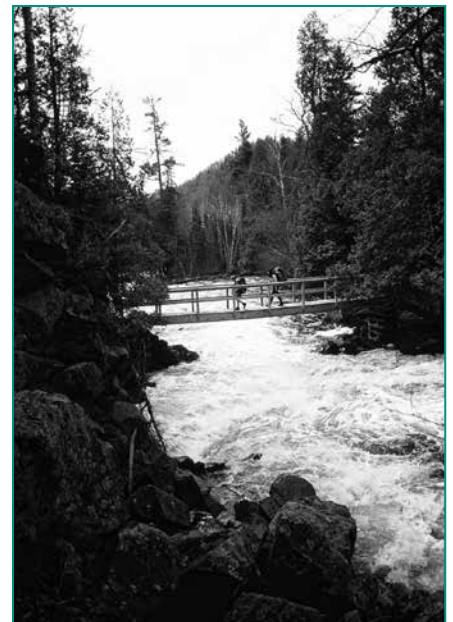
The transfer of a 360-acre parcel in George H. Crosby Manitou State Park to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will protect one of the largest old-growth hardwood forests on the North Shore. Minnesotans will be able to hike amid the red, yellow and brown leaves of the forest. Superior Hiking Trail photo courtesy of Gary Alan Nelson.

Greenleaf Lake State Recreation Area

The state's newest recreation area at Greenleaf Lake halfway between Litchfield and Hutchinson is one step closer to reality thanks to the Parks & Trails Council. This year, as part of our ongoing effort to establish the recreation area, we transferred about 155 acres of the 264 total purchase in the Greenleaf Lake State Recreation Area. The land includes prairie and oak savanna as well as a peninsula and islands between Greenleaf and Sioux Lakes.

George H. Crosby Manitou State Park

Transferred the last 360 acres of a 2,060-acre purchase to the DNR. The property includes one of the largest old-growth hardwood forests on the North Shore and by preventing logging there, will maintain the beauty of the Superior Hiking Trail.



Superior Hiking Trail crossing in George H. Crosby Manitou State Park. Photo courtesy of Rudi Hargesheimer, North Shore Photo Art.

The Samuel H. Morgan Land Acquisition Fund

Samuel Huntington Morgan (1911-2000) was a tireless advocate for public parks and trails. He dedicated nearly 40 years of service to the Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota and its predecessors, the Minnesota Council of Parks and the Minnesota Parks Foundation. He was the longest-serving president in the Parks & Trails Council's history and had served in various capacities on the board from 1962 until his death in 2000. Shortly after his passing, the Parks & Trails Council established the Samuel H. Morgan Land Acquisition Fund to honor his extraordinary vision and leadership in helping to create Minnesota's world-class metropolitan and state park and trail systems.

With so many urgent park and trail projects to complete, the Parks & Trails Council must be strategic in getting the biggest benefit for each dollar contributed to the Samuel H. Morgan Land Acquisition Fund. Essentially, the fund functions as a revolving account that gets spent many times over. This is possible because most of the time when we transfer land we own to a public agency, it is sold at the purchase cost so that funds can be returned to the account where they are used to purchase the next critical parcel. The public agency pays only the direct expense and principal balance while the Parks & Trails Council absorbs related costs and makes an occasional donation of land when it can be used for leveraging additional funds or when it is necessary for completing a transaction.

To make a donation to the Samuel H. Morgan Land Acquisition Fund, use the enclosed envelope or donate online at www.parksandtrails.org.

Land Holdings 2009

Park/Trail	Cost/Value	Acres	Notes
Blufflands State Trail system - Preston to Forestville segment	\$ 33,000	2.5	Key trail crossing over Root River
Crosby-Manitou State Park	\$346,000	360	Sold to DNR in 2009
Crow Wing State Park	\$560,000	13.54	Critical habitat at the confluence of Mississippi and Crow Wing rivers
Cuyuna Lakes State Trail	\$ 19,260	9.25	Long-term holding of easements for key trail connections
Cuyuna Lakes State Trail	\$ 75,000	5	Connects trail to recreation area
Gateway State Trail	\$ 11,000	4.87	Easement for trail extension
Gateway State Trail	\$ 83,427	3.7	Easement for trail extension
Gateway State Trail	\$ 92,000	4.5	Easement for trail extension
Gateway State Trail	\$ 64,710	2.5	Easement for trail extension
Grey Cloud Island	\$ 5,400	10.1	Long-term holding
Greenleaf Lake SRA	\$960,000	164	Core land for state's newest rec area. Sold to DNR in 2009.
Paul Bunyan State Trail	\$ 60,000	5	Connection at Crow Wing State Park
Scenic State Park	\$335,000	151	Land at park entrance with shoreline on Isaac Lake and Lake of the Isles
Superior Hiking Trail	\$ 28,000	40	Long-term holding of critical hiking trail segment on Devil's River
Tettegouche State Park	\$380,000	57.5	1/2 mile of Baptism River shoreline
Voyageurs National Park	\$300,000	3.6	One of 55 remaining inholdings
Whitewater State Park	\$340,000	17	Key parcel at park entrance
	\$ 432,710	156	Total added in 2009
	\$1,306,000	524	Total sold to the DNR in 2009
	\$2,386,797	329.76	Total holdings at end of 2009

Special thanks to the volunteer attorneys who assisted with land transaction in 2009

In 2009, the Parks & Trails Council saved critical trail and parklands valued at \$432,710 while transferring ownership of land valued at \$1.3 million to public park and trail agencies. Because the Parks & Trails Council has no attorney on staff, much of the legal work involved in these transactions is handled by generous attorneys who donate their time on behalf of Minnesota's parks and trails. We especially thank the attorneys and law firms who showed their commitment in 2009 by contributing pro-bono legal expertise. Many thanks are due to: Jeff Benson of the firm Fredrikson & Byron; Steve Hettig of Kraft, Walser, Hettig and Honsey; Andrew Jacobson of Maslon Edelman Borman & Brand, LLP; Dave Magnuson of Magnuson Law Firm; Mike Prichard; Kathleen Connelly; Timothy Eschweiler; and Thomas A. Gump.

Membership and Development

DONOR AND MEMBER GENEROSITY for the past 56 years has enabled the Parks & Trails Council to acquire and protect more than 10,000 acres for public parkland and trails. Thanks to this steadfast support, Minnesotans today and tomorrow will enjoy pristine rivers and creeks, quiet stands of oaks, shorelines teeming with wildlife — as well as naturalist-led learning opportunities, sturdy camper cabins and clean campsites for families to gather, and well-maintained trails for hikes and rides. These special places are preserved

People making parks and trails

The support of our newest friends and renewing members alike is a sustaining force in the well-being of Minnesota's parkland and trails. The dedication of 3,400 members statewide inspires the Parks & Trails Council to advocate for protected natural spaces. Members offer gifts of money, time, testimony and action. Whether volunteering at educational workshops and events in every corner of the state or rallying their neighbors and fellow residents to contact their legislators, our members are out making parks and trails happen! Their willingness to give freely for the well-being of all Minnesotans is truly astonishing, and we are grateful.

Polar Explorer Ann Bancroft packs the house for 55th Annual Dinner

Minnesota's parks, trails and other assorted wild outdoor places have long been celebrated as part of our state's Great Outdoor heritage. On Wednesday, April 8, 2009, at the Town & Country Club in St. Paul, world renowned polar explorer Ann Bancroft helped us celebrate this heritage while honoring the extraordinary work of outdoorswoman and conservationist Eleanor Winston, who was presented with the Parks & Trails Council's highest honor – the prestigious Reuel Harmon Award.

Winston received the award for her more than two decades of accomplishment on behalf of Minnesota's parks, trails and special outdoor places. Continuing the

theme of inspiring women, later in the program found Parks & Trails Council members contemplating the rigors and gifts of Arctic travel with the keynote speaker, Ann Bancroft. Ann's teamwork and leadership skills have undergone severe tests during her polar expeditions and provided her with opportunities to shatter female stereotypes. Ann recounted several stories that demonstrated the power behind unleashing one's dreams.

Ann Bancroft (left) and Eleanor Winston headlined the 55th Annual Dinner.



THANK YOU!

In 2009, Magney Circle membership remained steady at

Magney Circle: Leading others to give

Late in 2004, the Parks & Trails Council launched a new program named in honor of the organization's founder and Minnesota State Parks champion Judge Clarence Magney. Now all Parks & Trails Council members can step up in support of parks and trails in the tradition of Judge Magney by making an annual contribution of \$500 or more.

The Magney Circle, whose members have made substantial unrestricted gifts to the general operating fund of our organization, continues to offer a great base of support! In addition to providing funds that we can use where most urgently needed, donations from Magney Circle members also inspire others to give. We are thrilled to list 80 members or households as Magney contributors in 2009. To them, a special thank you.

Community Partners



Members year-end generosity overwhelming

Our members said "Yes!" loud and clear to supporting the state's most powerful voice for parks and trails. We asked you to give a little to give a lot during the holiday season and you responded with 320 gifts of membership and \$71,640 in total giving. By giving the gift of membership, you quadrupled your donation. Members' donations brought in the maximum return as the matching fund, established by Mary Lee Dayton, Eleanor Winston and Peter Seed, was completely tapped. The fact that you chose to support our work during these challenging economic times means the world to us. Rest assured your contribution is a wise investment in our highly effective programs to protect, expand and enhance Minnesota's parks and trails. We are just as dedicated to our mission today as we were when we were founded in 1954.

Special thanks to volunteers who helped in 2009: Rene Cardarelle, Tonia Donat, Tim and Noreen Farrell, Ann Johnson, Elizabeth Haugen, Jeanne and John Hynes, Arlene Jones-Swenson, Mark Larson, Sue Martinez, Rick Meierotto, David Minge, Bill Morrissey, John Oldendorf, Jeff Olson, Linda Picone, Peggy Prowe, Kathy Steinberger, Mike Tegeder and Jim Young.

THE PARKS & TRAILS COUNCIL has long valued the creative ideas and energy that individual members and local groups bring to park and trail efforts. A statewide organization, the Parks & Trails Council serves as a hub for all of this energy. We are the coordinator that links individual efforts together and the conduit that brings knowledge gained on a project in one region to a developing idea in another one. The Parks & Trails Council attends local planning meetings in communities throughout the state and hosts workshops and a Labor Day bike and camping adventure. In 2009, we continued to strengthen this vital network we call the Community

Fifth Annual Bike Minnesota with Parks & Trails

For the fifth consecutive year, Parks & Trails Council Board Member and Minnesota Court of Appeals Judge David Minge led 77 adventure-seeking bicyclists on the *Bike Minnesota with Parks & Trails* ride over the Labor Day weekend.

Hosted in 2009 by our good friends at Houston County Tourism and Economic Development, the 142-mile, three day journey showcased southeastern Minnesota and its many natural and cultural resources. Based out of Beaver Creek Valley State Park's group campground in

Caledonia, MN, the event consisted of three daily loop trips that took participants on the Root River State Trail and included tour stops at the historic Stone Church and cemetery, an orchard on Apple Blossom Scenic Drive, Houston County Fairgrounds, Wildcat Park and Landing on the Mighty Mississippi River, Houston County Historical Village, Schech's Mill and the Stagemeyer Stave Mill. For the fifth consecutive year, the fun and informative weekend adventure generated both fond memories and many new friends!

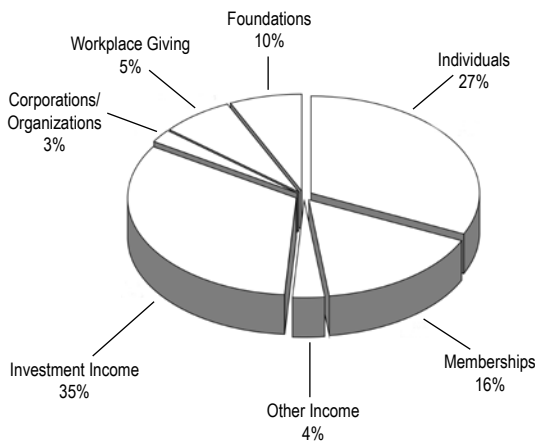


Bike Minnesota with Parks & Trails event participants learned about the history, the landscapes and the communities of southeastern Minnesota during a four-day Labor Day weekend adventure. The group is shown here at the Houston Nature Center.

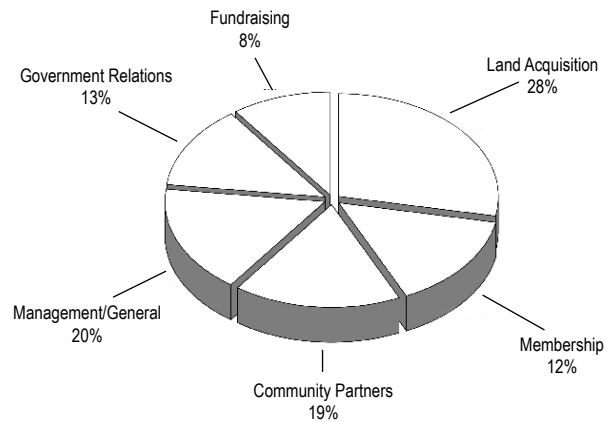
Statement of Activities and changes in net assets

2009	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Support and Revenue:			
Grants and Contributions	\$ 274,145	\$ 100,000	\$ 374,145
Membership Dues	\$ 136,663	-	\$ 136,663
Special events (Net of expenses of \$29,705 in 2009)	\$ 5,420	-	\$ 5,420
Investment Income/ (Loss)	\$ 291,426	-	\$ 291,426
Gain on the sale of Property	\$ 10,967	-	\$ 10,967
Other Income	\$ 11,171	-	\$ 11,171
Satisfaction of Time Restrictions	\$ 57,000	\$ (57,000)	-
Satisfaction of Program Restrictions	\$ 17,805	\$ (17,805)	-
Total Support and Revenue	\$ 804,597	\$ 25,195	\$ 829,792
Expense:			
Program Services	\$ 483,968	-	\$ 698,043
Support Services:			
Management and General	\$ 135,054	-	\$ 135,054
Fundraising	\$ 55,124	-	\$ 55,124
Total Support Services	\$ 190,178	-	\$ 190,178
Total Expense	\$ 674,146	-	\$ 674,146
Change in Net Assets	\$ 130,451	\$ 25,195	\$ 155,646
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	\$6,658,289	\$ 74,805	\$6,733,094
Net Assets - End of Year	\$6,788,740	\$ 100,000	\$6,888,740

Income 2009



Expenses 2009



Fund Balances

	2009	2008
General Fund (Unrestricted)	\$ 108,667	\$ 63,724
Samuel H. Morgan Land Acquisition Fund	\$5,066,942	\$5,182,990
Reuel Harmon Endowment Fund	\$1,613,131	\$1,411,575
Temporarily Restricted	\$ 100,000	\$ 74,805
TOTAL	\$6,888,740	\$6,733,094

To obtain a complete 2009 Financial Report, please contact the Parks & Trails Council office at (651) 726-2457. This is not an 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 2009. We would like to thank the following donors who have made gifts of \$100 or more in 2009. If you believe your name should be on this list, please contact the office so we can

Magney Circle

(Recognizing individuals who made an outright gift of \$500 or more to general operating funds in 2009)

Anonymous (3)
Bruce and Martha Atwater
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Bruce Blackburn
Paul H. Brown
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(Includes gifts to both land and general operating funds)

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Fred and Eleanor Winston
Great River Energy
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Henry N. Somsen Trust
Mary Lee Dayton
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Published by the Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota, Fall 2010

Cover photos by Rudi Hargesheimer, North Shore Photo Art – www.northshorephotoart.com
and Gary Alan Nelson – www.garyalannelson.com

Editing and design by Brett Feldman