



2016 ANNUAL REPORT

DEAR FRIENDS

JAY COOKE STATE PARK BY JANELL WESENBERG



People love parks and trails, there's no doubt about that. So, one would be forgiven for thinking that our work is easy. But fostering the political will that's necessary to protect and fund these places is hardly done without obstacles and resistance.

Lately that resistance has shown itself in unfortunate ways with some voices calling for a halt on extending the protections of state parks and trails to any more lands. As an organization that has been working for more than 60 years to acquire critical lands for parks and trails, we understand that this sentiment carries with it dire implications that may not be obvious on its surface. Such action, rather than fixing the current underfunding of operations and maintenance, would further contribute to it. It is a tell-tale sign of retreating from supporting parks and trails as a whole. And that's a future no one wants to see.



That is why we are diligently advancing the imperative to both acquire and maintain our parks and trails. At a time when leading environmental scientists are calling for a momentous increase in amount of lands we protect for nature, we will not back down from this important job. And we will continue to impel legislators to fund their maintenance. As such, we celebrated the supplemental funding we helped secure for state parks and trails in 2016 for the coming year, which prevented staff cuts that were looming ominously over the system and provided funds for acquisition (more details on page 6).

This past year, while state parks and trails were slowed in their work of adding critical lands, we were heartened by the strong efforts to add more lands by county and regional parks and trails leaders in Greater Minnesota. The Legacy Fund has been invaluable in aiding this effort. Working with Isanti County to secure critical lands for two county parks was especially rewarding, as land rich in natural beauty and outdoor recreation potential is at a premium in this quickly growing county. Too often the foresight to protect these lands happens too late. But thanks to this visionary action, future generations will continue to benefit from access to these protected parklands.

Of course, the past year was also the year we celebrated 125 years since the creation of Minnesota's first state park at Itasca. What a great reminder of the impact of people's actions for future generations. Here's to another 125 years of visionary action in creating and protecting land for parks and trails in Minnesota!



Julie Gugin,
President of the Board



Brett Feldman,
Executive Director

OUR MISSION

To acquire, protect and enhance critical land for
the public's use and benefit.

OUR VISION

We envision an interconnected system of parks,
trails, waterways, natural areas and open spaces
that provide all Minnesotans with outstanding
outdoor recreational opportunities and that
preserve the natural diversity of our state.

Published May 2017

Cover photo: Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota members at Irving and John Anderson Park in Isanti County.
Photo by Brett Feldman.

LAND PROTECTION



Preserving a river gateway and pristine lakeshore

Isanti County, located just north of the Twin Cities metropolitan area, has long been a rural county, but growth in the cities of Braham, Cambridge and Isanti has spurred rapid development. As such, preserving natural lands for parks and trails becomes more urgent than ever.



In 2016 we partnered to add critical land to two Isanti County parks. The first project was for a park we helped to establish in 2004: Becklin Homestead Park and Wildlife Management Area. Resting along the scenic Rum River, Becklin Homestead is a peaceful place with 2.5 miles of trails. The 9.5-acre addition is critical for welcoming visitors as it is located right at the entrance. The land will undergo restoration from its past agricultural use to native prairie.

For Parks & Trails Council to come in with the funds and expertise to quickly and smoothly handle this, it's beyond beneficial to a small county like us.

~ Barry Wendorf, Isanti County Parks Director

The other Isanti County Park we added to was at Irving and John Anderson Park. This park, which was established in 2007, underwent an intensive transformation to be restored from a farm into the thriving ecosystem it boasts today. In 2015 we acquired a critical parcel on the east side of the park that was virtually untouched by development throughout its ownership history. Shortly thereafter, we added another critical area expanding the northeastern boundary along the shore of Horseleg Lake. Together, these areas of land preserve a natural shoreline along two lakes that provide critical habitat for birds and a unique recreation experience for park visitors.

Saving special places for future generations

We partner with state, regional, and local agencies as well as volunteer Friends Groups and others across Minnesota to acquire critical lands for parks and trails, ensuring the protection of their natural beauty and access for people to enjoy for generations to come.

GLACIAL LAKES STATE PARK BY PHILLIP HUGH

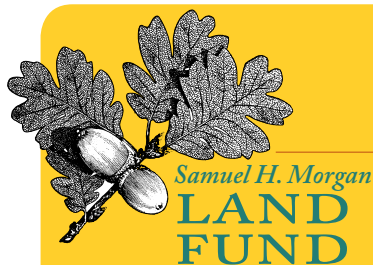
Our 2016 Land Acquisition Projects

CONVEYED TO A PARK OR TRAIL IN 2016

Location of Land	Acres	Land Value	Year Acquired	Description
Irving & John Anderson Park (Isanti County)	24.80	\$155,000	2015	Land straddles and provides the only canoe access between Horseleg and Horseshoe Lakes. Ski trails were added in winter 2016. Hiking trails with benches planned for spring 2017.
Irving & John Anderson Park (Isanti County)	55.00	\$310,000	2016	Expands NE boundary of park along eastern shoreline of Horseleg Lake. County currently removing structures with plans to add trails, picnic area and parking. Access from Vassar St.
Becklin Homestead County Park (Isanti County)	9.58	\$147,868	2015	Located at the gateway to the park, this land will substantially enhance the entrance and may provide additional miles of ski and hiking trails.
TOTAL	89.38	\$612,868		

HELD IN TRUST FOR A PARK OR TRAIL AT 2016 YEAR END

Location of Land	Acres	Land Value	Year Acquired	Description
Casey Jones State Trail (in the city of Lake Wilson)	0.58	\$2,500	2015	Land for a trailhead in the city of Lake Wilson where there is currently a 1.5-mile segment of natural surface trail and efforts to connect to segment into Pipestone.
Crow Wing State Park	5.00	\$135,000	2004	Long-term holding acquired as excess, non-park land as part of a project that expanded Crow Wing State Park by 55 acres.
Finland State Forest (for Crosby Manitou State Park)	3.50	\$16,400	2004	Remnant land acquired as part of a land exchange with Lake County that helped expand Crosby Manitou State Park by 2,060 acres.
Sibley State Park	153.06	\$460,000	2014	Rolling grassy hills at SE corner of Sibley State Park necessary to build a spur for the Glacial Lakes State Trail to lead into the park.
Superior Hiking Trail (at Devil's Track River near Grand Marais)	40.00	\$28,000	1995	Long-term holding of land to which we have granted a permanent easement to the Superior Hiking Trail for use as part of the trail with a primitive campsite.
Tettegouche State Park	2.50	\$19,200	2013	Forested wetlands providing scenic views from Hwy. 31. and a quarter-mile buffer between highway and the Sawtooth Trail. Donated by Mark and Joan Strobel.
TOTAL	204.64	\$661,100		



As our founders bore witness to pristine lands being sold and torn up for development, they made a commitment to dedicate their resources to a strategically managed land fund. The Samuel H. Morgan Land Fund operates as a revolving account that gets spent many times over to ensure critical lands are acquired for protection and incorporation into Minnesota's park and trail system. Our members have added to this fund over the years, making it a powerful force in the effort to preserve parks and trails. Volunteer attorneys and their firms from around the state generously donate all legal expenses.

RESEARCH & PUBLIC POLICY



Funding Secured to Keep Park Staff Another Year

We were able to play a key role in securing an additional \$4.1 million for operating Minnesota State Parks and Trails in the coming year. These funds were passed in the supplemental budget bill in May 2016. Without these funds, staff cuts were being planned. Keeping staff working to care for and engage with visitors is essential.

A portion of the the additional funds, approximately \$1.15 million, will be used to ensure that key parcels within state park boundaries are acquired.

Investments Still Overdue

As we celebrated the 125th anniversary of Minnesota's first state park at Itasca, we urged legislators to invest in the restoration and rehabilitation of the aging buildings, trails and essential infrastructure within our state parks and trails.

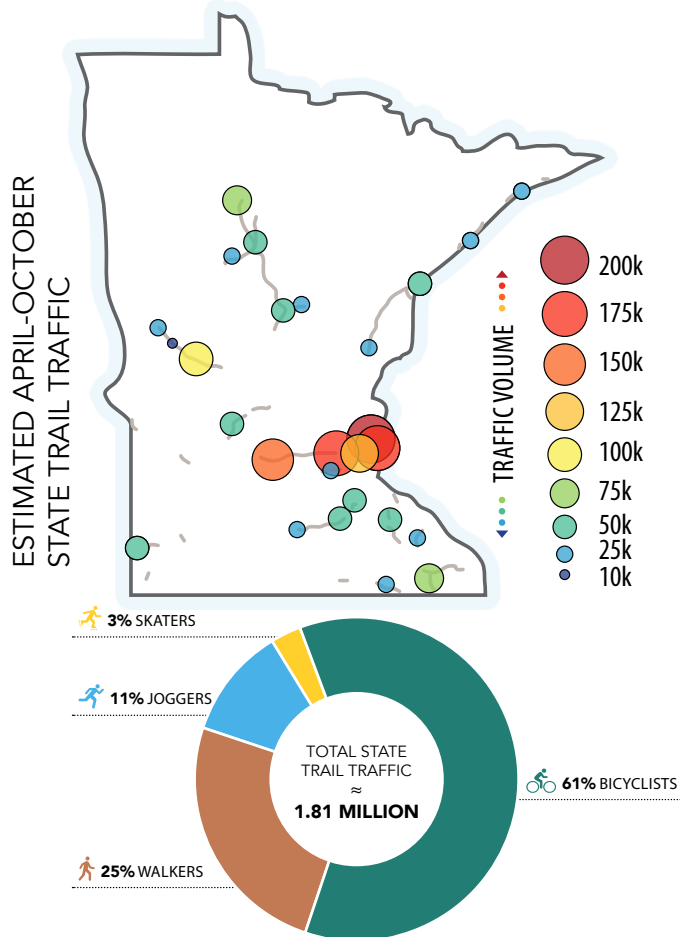
Mildew-infested bathrooms, contaminated water pipes, crumbling roads and trails—these are becoming too common in state parks and trails as funding for basic maintenance has been inadequate leaving projects to get deferred until they become rehabilitation projects. Unfortunately, zero funds were appropriated for capital improvements in 2016, meaning that these problems will only get worse before they can get better. But we will continue to ensure that legislators know how critical this work is.



An independent, honest and forthright voice

By effectively researching and communicating the needs of Minnesota's parks and trails to legislators and government leaders, we play a vital role in ensuring these special places are created, maintained and protected for generations to come.

JAY COOKE STATE PARK BY LISA FILTER



Delivering a First-of-its-kind Report on Minnesota State Trail Use

How many people use Minnesota State Trails? Sounds like a simple question, but one that has remained elusive until now. In 2016 we tackled the question head on with the help of 82 volunteers who spent a total of 235 hours observing and recording the number of bicyclists, walkers, joggers and skaters using trails at specific locations as well as how many were children and how many were walking dogs.

As we advocate for the continued development and maintenance of these assets, understanding the amount of use they receive is critical. The benefits these trails deliver in the form of economic vitality, healthy citizenry, and quality of life make them an important part of our state.



Our 2016 Day on the Hill

Our annual "Day on the Hill" event was held on Feb. 24 and due to the construction at the state capitol, we met away from there at Harriet Island Park in St. Paul. This event brought nearly 100 supporters from across the state to gather to learn about key issues facing parks and trails.

The day included sessions on "your role in the legislative process," working with media and understanding Legacy Funding. In addition, our government relations consultant led a panel discussion with Rep. Urdahl (R-Grove City), Rep. Dean (R-Willernie), Rep. Hausman (DFL-St. Paul) and Sen. Tomassoni (DFL-Chisholm).

MEMBER & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Celebrating 100 years of Minnesota State Parks

As Minnesota celebrated the 100th anniversary of the creation of our first State Park at Itasca, we commemorated the milestone at our Annual Dinner. Director of State Parks and Trails, Erika Rivers, shared the unique creation stories from some of the 75 state parks and recreation areas and numerous state trails. Our members and supporters, in turn, shared their personal memories from being in a Minnesota State Park or Trail.

Share a State Park/Trail Memory

Celebrate 100 years of MN State Parks and Trails by joining about a memory and making it last or share online at mn.gov/parksandtrails. Stories will be shared at our events & online.

Please share even if you can't attend the dinner. Thank you!

Your Name <small>(no last name required)</small>	
Park/Trail Name	
Year Experienced <small>(if not used)</small>	
Your Email <small>(if available for sharing)</small>	

Ideas to get you remembering your moment:

- ☐ Favorite of the wildlife kind
- ☐ First-time L...
- ☐ Fish tale
- ☐ Time I arrived
- ☐ Life lesson learned
- ☐ Young I got out/ready/ready
- ☐ Meeting new friends
- ☐ Time I quietly observed
- ☐ Saying hello with new eyes
- ☐ Other

Go for it, start writing! Want to see others' too? Go to www.ParksandTrails.org

P.S. You'll be entered in drawing for a \$500 prize gift card. If you share. Drawing held on March 28, Grand luck!

Passing it on

In March, as our board president Mike Tegeder was completing his many years of dedicated service and simultaneously facing the end of his life to cancer, we expressed a "token" of our appreciation by distributing wooden tokens that encouraged people to "Bike/Hike/Paddle/Recreation with a loved one." These experiences grow as people pass the tokens on to loved ones with whom they shared the outdoor experience.



Honoring Outstanding Service

Dave Lais received the Reuel Harmon Award for his 38 years of dedicated service as one of Minnesota State Parks' most highly respected park managers and his continued service through 15 years, and counting, as a leader in the Sibley State Park Improvement Association.



Biking the Minnesota Valley State Trail and more

A group of 69 members participated in our day-long bike ride on June 25 led by Keith Ottoson. Traveling along the newly paved segment of the Minnesota Valley State Trail that runs from The Landing heritage park in Shakopee to the Bloomington Ferry Bridge, riders heard from DNR trail planners and legislators about the effort to continue to trail development to the Minnesota Valley Wildlife Refuge. Riders continued on traveling a mix of trails and streets and stopping at several city and regional parks in the area.

Engaging people to protect parks and trails

Our motto, "people saving special places" reflects the grassroots nature of our work. Members provide the largest and most important source of our revenue--members make this important work possible. We work to keep our members informed and motivated.

WILD RIVER STATE PARK BY BAILEY MILLIGAN

Partnering with Friends Groups

Friends Groups are key to enhancing Minnesota's parks and trails. They step up with the necessary people-power to advocate for their development and maintenance. They are there to support special events and activities that engage users. And they pitch in to raise funds for special projects. We work to increase these volunteer-groups' capacity.

Fiscal Sponsorship

By acting as the fiscal sponsor for these Friends Groups, we enable them to effectively raise funds in support of their park and trail.

- Central Lakes Trail Association
- Friends of Anderson Park
- Friends of Bertram Chain of Lakes
- Friend of Casey Jones State Trail
- Friends of Hayes Lake
- Friends of Jackson County Trails
- Friends of Lake Maria
- Friends of Lashbrook Park
- Friends of Luce Line West Association
- Friends of Maplewood State Park
- Friends of Nerstrand Big Woods State Park
- Friends of Scandia Parks and Trails
- Friends of Whitewater State Park
- Friends of Wild River State Park
- Gateway-Browns Creek Trail Association
- Glacial Ridge Trail Association
- Goodhue Pioneer Trail Association
- Minnesota Horse Council
- Sibley State Park Improvement Association



Grooming ski trails in Northern Minnesota

Winter and nordic skiing go hand-in-hand in northern Minnesota. So, when ski trails stopped being groomed here in 2015 we began to work with the Friends Groups and other local volunteers to put a plan in place to ensure trails could once again be groomed. We partnered with volunteers at Hayes Lake, Lake Bronson, McCarthy Beach and Zippel Bay State Parks for a successful 2016 winter ski season, including several candlelight ski/walk events.

Building a Sugar Shack at Maplewood State Park

After many years of dedicated persistence, the Friends of Maplewood State Park celebrated the completion of a new maple syruping facility at the park. As their fiscal sponsor, we facilitated their efforts as they coordinated with park staff, fundraised, applied for grants and contracted with workers to build the facility. Now, this park made famous by its maple trees has an active demonstration facility to engage visitors in the process of making maple syrup.



5K "Otter Trotter" for Wild River State Park

The annual tradition of running through Wild River State Park's trails continued. As the sponsor, we provide the necessary liability insurance. Runners raised funds to support the work of the Friends Group.

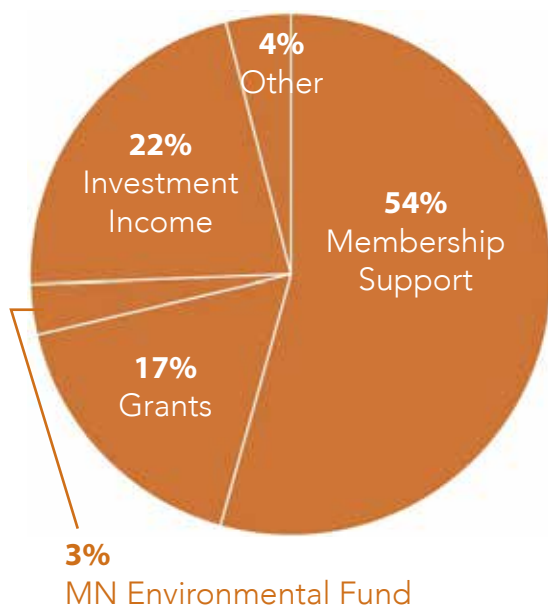
FINANCIAL HEALTH

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

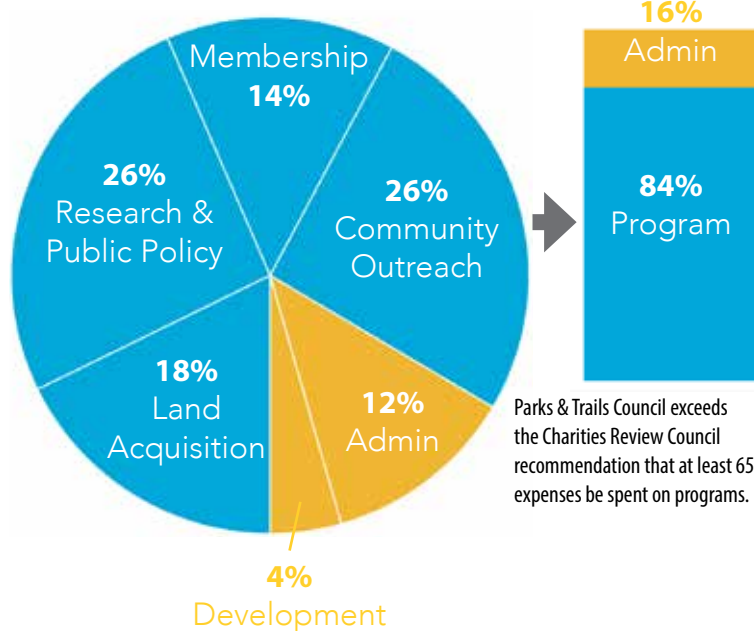
Support & Revenue	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Grants & Contributions	\$ 399,187	\$ 35,000	\$ 434,187
Membership Support	81,760	-	81,760
Special Events (net expenses of \$11,841)	2,891	-	2,891
Investment Income	195,818	-	195,818
Loss on Sale of Property ^a	(46,264)	-	(46,264)
Other Income	25,005	-	25,005
Satisfaction of Time Restrictions	-	-	-
Satisfaction of Program Restrictions	-	-	-
Total Support & Revenue	658,397	35,000	693,397
Expenses	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Land Acquisition	102,019	-	102,019
Community Outreach	148,238	-	148,238
Membership	82,092	-	82,092
Research & Public Policy	147,973	-	147,973
Administration	69,286	-	69,286
Development	25,505	-	25,505
Total Expenses	575,113	-	575,113
Change in Net Assets	83,284	35,000	118,284
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	7,052,739	-	7,052,739
Net Assets at End of Year	\$ 7,136,023	\$ 35,000	\$ 7,171,023

(a) Parks & Trails Council holds land in trust for public partners that occasionally declines in value by the time of sale. This decline in value is absorbed by P&TC's Samuel H. Morgan Land Fund.

Revenue



Expenses



Parks & Trails Council exceeds the Charities Review Council recommendation that at least 65% of expenses be spent on programs.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets	2016	2015
Current Assets		
Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$ 4,621,517	\$ 4,339,374
Pledges Receivable	35,000	-
Prepaid Expenses	8,574	11,269
Accounts Receivable	10,641	2,493
Protected Property	732,148	1,027,582
Property - Net	13,275	8,550
Investments	2,241,843	2,288,221
Insurance Policy	86,739	83,157
Total Assets	7,749,737	\$ 7,760,646
Liabilities & Net Assets		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	133,190	\$ 126,566
Accrued Expenses	10,466	7,971
Deferred Revenue	-	800
Funds Held for Friends Groups	147,033	182,685
Long-term Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	-	115,000
Notes Payable	-	274,885
Total Liabilities	578,714	707,907
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	7,136,023	7,052,739
Temporarily Restricted	35,000	-
Total Net Assets	7,171,023	7,052,739
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 7,749,737	\$ 7,760,646

NET ASSETS BY FUND

Fund	2016	2015
General Fund (Unrestricted)	\$366,157	\$ 310,285
Samuel H. Morgan Land Acquisition Fund ^b	\$4,644,061	4,685,094
Reuel Harmon Endowment Fund ^c	\$2,125,805	2,057,359
Temporarily Restricted	\$35,000	-
Total	\$7,171,023	\$ 7,052,739

(b) The Samuel H. Morgan Land Acquisition Fund is a revolving account that covers acquisition costs and is reimbursed when land is transferred to a public agency.

(c) The Reuel Harmon Endowment Fund provides up to 5% of its balance annually for general operations.

Financial information is based on an independent auditor's report conducted in accordance with auditing standards for the years ended Dec. 31, 2016 and 2015. To obtain a copy of the complete audit, please contact the Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota office at 651-726-2457.

The background of the entire page is a vibrant landscape photograph. In the foreground, there are tall, green grasses and some wildflowers. A small pond or stream flows through the middle ground, surrounded by lush greenery. In the background, there are rolling hills and a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

Thank YOU!

Our members make this work possible. We want to extend a big thank you to our 3,800 members who all contributed to this work and who, together, add up to a powerful force for parks and trails. Our ability to advocate for Minnesota's parks and trails is strengthened not only by the financial resources our members provide, but by the momentum we gain in knowing that so many people care deeply about acquiring, protecting and enhancing these places.

We are People Saving Special Places!



SIBLEY STATE PARK BY DON OLSON

OUR SUPPORTERS



Magney Circle

The legacy left by our founder Judge Clarence Magney inspires our work today. His vision for conserving land for everyone to enjoy, created treasured places where memories and connections continue to be made long after his life and will continue for generations to come. Our Magney Circle members continue this legacy of generosity on behalf of parks and trails in Minnesota with their gifts of \$500 or more annually.

\$5,000+

Richard "Dick" and Mary Brainerd
Louise Fester
Frank Janezich
Katherine M. Nielsen
Peter and Linda Seed
Fred and Eleanor Winston

\$1,000+

Bruce and Martha Atwater
Bob Bierscheid
Roger Bock and Claire Larson Bock
Peter K. Butler
David Chizek M.D.
Patricia A. Colburn
Mike and Julia Costello
Steve and Amy Culbert
Mr. Thomas E. Daggett and Dr.
Barbara L. Zajicek-Daggett
Robert and Nancy Erickson
Tim and Noreen Farrell
Brett Feldman and Elizabeth Haugen
Gail L. Fiskewold
Jon and Laura Gilmore
Mike Helgeson
Theresa Horan
Chris Howard
Ms. Carol E. Jennings
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Neil and Deborah Krueger

Arnie Kurmis
Drs. Jim and Penny Langland
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Dan Luna
Sheila and Chris Martin
Walt McCarthy and Clara Ueland
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Richard and Joan Newmark
Mark and Jackie Nolan
Jim Nystrom
John and Yvette Oldendorf
David and Marla Olson
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Kem Pomeroy
Peggy Prowe
Maureen Reed and Jim Hart
Cathy Stepanek
Tom Stoa and Christine Boudin Stoa
Mark and Joan Strobel
Rupert and Jeanne Strobel
Donald and Bente Winston
Tom and Diane Witzig
Steve and Ellen Young
Anonymous

\$500+

Karla and Brad Anderson
Dr. Dorothy H. Anderson
Rebecca Arenivar
Carsten O. Bjornstad
Bill and Beth Blank
Ms. Thelma Boeder
Leila Brammer
Henry and Nancy Brantingham

Gerald C. Bren
Richard Brennan
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Paul H. Brown
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Ward Denaway
Stephen Dickhaus
David Dixon
Senator Dave Durenberger and Susan
Foote
Sheila R. Faulkner
Charles and Iris Fried
Florence K. Gleason
Peter and Mary Gove
Kevin Gregerson
Julie Gugin and John Hall
Mary Hauser
Richard Heine
Bill and Linda Holley
Don Janes
Verónica Jaralambides and Chris
Polston
Bruce E. Johnson
Norbert L. Johnson
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Chuck and Cindy Laszewski
Greg and Mai Lauer
Brenda Leatherman
Kathy and Allen Lenzmeier
Pam and Harry Lienke
Kellie and Dwayne Lowman
John Malone
Michele Marrinan
Phil & Stephanie Martineau

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Massee
Anne McKinsey
Sarah and Andrew Meister
Karen and David Minge
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Lori Ricke and Eric Dunn
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Dominique Conseil and Misato Sakai
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Joan L. Smith
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John and Teresa Swoyer
Tom Tegeder and Dorothy Seitz
Nan Upin and Ed Murphy
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Vantine
Jane Harper and John Velin
Lee Wenzel
Joseph Wilhelmy
Bruce Hendrickson and Laura Wolf
Arno Wuenschmann
Phil and Anne Zink
Kurt E. Zuppke
Anonymous

\$15,000+

3M Foundation
Patrick and Aimee Butler Family
Foundation
Minnesota Environmental Fund
WM Foundation
Anonymous

\$1,000+

Mary C. Dolan-The Longview Foundation
Gateway-Brown's Creek Trail Association
United Health Group

\$500+

The AFG Fund
Ameriprise Financial
Blue Cross & Blue Shield of MN
IBM International Foundation
Medtronic Foundation
RBC Wealth Management

\$100+

John and Tracey Abbott
John M. Adolphson
Dr. David A. Ahlquist
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Arlene and Tom Alm
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Gerald Bird
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Lockwood and Darlene Carlson
Jon Paul Carlson
William A. Carlson
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Sarah and Whitney Clark
Margaret Cleveland
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Michael Cole
Sharon and Neil Columbus
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Hope Esparolini
Barbara Esselman
Lorraine and Tom Evans
Cheryl Evans
Tim and Maria Faacks
Alan and Sara Felix
Kay Fellows
Brian Ferch
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Robert and Yvonne Fiedler
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& Ramsey County
Frontenac State Park Association
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 Gloria Gervais
 R. James Gesell
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 Gitchi Gami Trail Association
 Glendalough Park Partners
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 Eric and Patti Grube
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 Victoria Helmuth
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Minnesota parks and trails lost one of its most ardent supporters with the death of our past president, Mike Tegeder, 67, on July 9, 2016. Since his passing, we have been moved by the outpouring of support shown by those who knew him both personally and from his writings and work with this organization. The following people made gifts totaling \$9,545 to Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota to honor his memory.



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