

DANE COUNTY CONSERVATION FUND GRANT AWARD TO
THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS, INC. (GOPLIN)

The Prairie Enthusiasts, Inc. (TPE) has applied to the Dane County Conservation Fund Grant Program for financial assistance to purchase a 40 acre parcel from Eddie and Cheryle Goplin in the Town of Blue Mounds for its Erbe Grassland preserve. The property is located within the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area and the Southwest Grasslands which are Regional Resource Protection Initiatives under the Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan. The parcel contains remnant prairie, former pasture and cropland which is enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program.

TPE has been assisting the Goplin's in managing this land for the last 20 years, conducting burns and rare species surveys and helping with weed, brush and tree control and providing prairie seed for restoration. Acquisition of this land will fill in a gap between TPE owned land to the north and east, creating a 140 acre preserve that provides critical habitat for rare and declining grasslands birds, prairie vegetation and prairie-restricted insects. It will also provide recreational opportunities to the public all year round including hiking, bird watching, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, hunting and trapping.

The estimated project costs for the acquisition are \$206,900. The Dane County Park Commission recommends up to \$109,400 in county matching funds. A Knowles Nelson Stewardship grant will complete the purchase. Grant funds will come from the Conservation Fund and the term of the debt issued to support this expenditure will be 20 years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that a grant of \$109,400 to TPE is approved by the Dane County Board and the Dane County Executive and that the County will pay up to the grant amount based on actual project expenses.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Dane County Clerk and Dane County Executive are authorized to execute documents necessary to effectuate the grant award, which may include grant agreements, management agreements, and the acceptance of an easement that will vest in Dane County according to Wisc. Stats. 27.05(3), and that the land interests be managed under the jurisdiction of the Dane County Park Commission.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Dane County Land & Water Resources Director and Real Estate Coordinator, are authorized to approve closing and reimbursement documentation for grant projects and the transfer of an easement to Dane County and the Controller is authorized to issue checks necessary to effectuate the transactions authorized through the grant award.