

ACCEPTING DONATIONS FOR PHEASANT BRANCH CONSERVANCY RESTORATION

Dane County purchased 160 acres on the north-end of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy in 2019. The property provides a variety of ecosystem services and expanded recreational access to an incredibly popular but sensitive natural resource area. In 2009, the Wisconsin Wetlands Association identified the Pheasant Branch Conservancy as a “workhorse wetland gem” due to its many connections to surface and groundwater.

Several partners have joined Dane County on the planning and implementation of site restoration. Restoration will significantly reduce stormwater runoff, improve water quality, and provide habitat through a diverse mix of native vegetation.

A high-quality prairie, with as many as 100 plant species per acre, will be established over the next several years and has been dubbed a “platinum prairie” due to the many advantages over prairies dominated by a few plant species:

- The greater diversity of plant species supports a greater diversity of animals utilizing the different flora for food and habitat.
- The variety of flowering plants provide an aesthetically beautiful landscape in bloom from spring to fall.
- Greater biodiversity contributes to ecosystem resilience, better able to adapt to disturbances and changes in climate.
- A healthy prairie can provide carbon sequestration at about one ton per acre per year, with the fully-restored prairie offsetting the carbon dioxide equivalent of over 16,000 gallons of gasoline each year.
- A diverse, resilient prairie will incur reduced management costs.
- A platinum prairie provides a seed collection source for future prairie restoration on other Dane County properties.

The following partners will support the restoration with financial contributions:

- The Nature Conservancy of Wisconsin, in partnership with the Meringoff Family Foundation, will grant \$20,000 to support restoration of historic wetlands.
- The Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy will grant \$25,000 to support the prairie and has pledged to continue fundraising for the project with a goal of contributing \$100,000 to the project.
- The Clean Lakes Alliance will grant \$25,000 to support the prairie and has committed an additional \$25,000 per year for three years for a total contribution of \$100,000.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Land & Water Resources Department is authorized to accept funds from The Nature Conservancy of Wisconsin, Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy and the Clean Lakes Alliance and the County Executive is authorized to execute agreements, if any, necessary to accept the funds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that \$70,000 is appropriated as additional 2021 revenue in the Land & Water Resources Department, Park Operations, Pheasant Branch Restoration Revenue (LWRPKOP NEW) and is credited to the General Fund; and

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that \$70,000 is transferred from the General Fund to the
43 Land & Water Resources Department, Park Operations, Pheasant Branch Restoration
44 Expense (LWRPKOP NEW) and that these funds shall carry forward until expended; and

45 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the County Board of Supervisors and County Executive
46 give thanks to The Nature Conservancy, the Meringoff Family Foundation, the Friends of
47 Pheasant Branch and the Clean Lakes Alliance for supporting the project and for their
48 generous financial contributions.