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2024 RES-050

**DANE COUNTY CONSERVATION FUND GRANT AWARD TO
SOUTHERN WISCONSIN BIRD ALLIANCE (GUNNULSON)**

Southern Wisconsin Bird Alliance (SWBA), formerly known as Madison Audubon Society, has applied to the Dane County Conservation Fund Grant Program for financial assistance for the acquisition of approximately 348 acres in the Town of Christiana from David Gunnulson. The property is approximately 2 miles south of CamRock County Park in between CTH A and CTH A on Hillside Road. The property contains a farmstead, 270 acres of cool season grasses, 51 acres of woods, and 19 acres which SWBA has worked with Mr. Gunnulson to restore to prairie. The property will be known as Koshkonong Prairie Sanctuary if acquired.

The property has been in the Gunnulson family for nearly two centuries and has not been row cropped for the past 30 years. The grasslands provide crucial habitat for wildlife including birds such as bobolink and dickcissel and the native milkweed provides needed monarch habitat. Acquisition of this parcel would allow SWBA to preserve this large tract for birds and other wildlife, restore significant acreage to prairie and provide outdoor recreational activities and educational opportunities for the public.

The estimated project costs for the acquisition are \$2,404,120. SWBA has been awarded a Knowles Nelson Stewardship grant in the amount of \$1,491,000 and is seeking a Dane County Conservation Fund grant for the remaining funds. The Dane County Park Commission recommends granting up to \$912,900 in County matching funds.

The term of the debt issued to support this expenditure will be 20 years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that a grant of up to \$912,900 to Southwest Wisconsin Bird Alliance 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.