

FINAL REPORT

OCT 19 2001

1999 Project Abstract
For the Period Ending June 30, 2001

Title: Implementing the Chisago and Washington Green Corridor Project

Project Manager: Matthew Mega

Organization: 1000 Friends of Minnesota

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Legal Citation: ML 1999, Ch. 231, Sec 16, Subd. 13 (i)

Overall Project Results: The Green Corridor implementation project established the State's first Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs and through the pilot phase of the project permanently protected 142 acres of land. The total allocation of funds was \$400,000. Of which \$304,000 was directed toward land protection. The project leveraged an additional \$864,400 (\$300,000 required local match) to purchase conservation easements.

Washington County established its PDR program in February 2000. During the first phase of this voluntary program 12 landowners applied for participation representing 657 acres of land with an estimated value of \$4,629,300. The County Board, upon recommendations of a citizen advisory committee, narrowed the field to the top four properties and protected 142 acres of land. A total of \$1.2 million was spent to purchase conservation easements and to acquire fee title for three of the four properties (102 acres). To ensure the ongoing success of the program, the County Commissioners are seeking permanent funding through the County budget process.

Chisago County adopted a TDR ordinance in May 2001 and is currently working to identify and complete development right transfers. The TDR ordinance represents a unique opportunity for landowners and citizens to proactively address growth and development without compromising private property rights. TDR is voluntary and in Chisago County will focus on accommodating new growth with the preservation of critical natural resources. This project represents a cooperation among county, city and local officials as well as landowners, developers and citizens. Chisago County also had an opportunity to establish a PDR program, but after running into unforeseen difficulties and tight timeline constraints relinquished the \$150,000 earmarked for PDR to Washington County. Washington County used the additional dollars to complete the land transaction with the four property owner.

Project Results Use and Dissemination: The results of this project are action oriented, attempting to implement land conservation on the ground. Other interested communities can use the information gained to implement their own programs without re-inventing the wheel. Several communities are already utilizing the information available to explore the feasibility of TDR and PDR in their communities. Copies of the ordinances, policy and procedure documents as well as general advice are available from each county or any of the project partners.

Project completed June 30, 2001

Date of Report: July 1, 2001

LCMR Final Work Program Report

I. PROJECT TITLE: C15 Implementing the Chisago and Washington Counties Green Corridor Project – Continuation

Project Manager: Matthew Mega

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Total Biennial Project Budget:

\$ LCMR:	\$400,000	\$ Match:	\$300,000
- \$ LCMR Amount Spent:	\$400,000	- \$ Match Amount Spent:	\$300,000
= \$ LCMR Balance:	\$0	= \$ Match Balance:	\$0

A. Legal Citation: ML 1999, [Chap.231], Sec. [16], Subd.13.

Appropriation Language: (i) Implement the Chisago and Washington Counties Green Corridor Project – Continuation \$200,000 the first year and \$200,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with 1000 Friends of Minnesota for land protection activities, including at least \$300,000 for cost-share grants to local governments for fee or less than fee acquisition.

B. Status of Match Requirement: Secured

II. and III. FINAL PROJECT SUMMARY

Overall Project Results: The Green Corridor implementation project established the State's first Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs and through the pilot phase of the project permanently protected 142 acres of land. This project also leveraged an additional \$864,400 (\$300,000 required local match) to purchase conservation easements.

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landowners and citizens to proactively address growth and development without compromising private property rights. TDR is voluntary and in Chisago County will focus on accommodating new growth with the preservation of critical natural resources. This project represents a cooperation among county, city and local officials as well as landowners, developers and citizens.

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IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

Result A1 Implementation of PDR

Washington County

The implementation of Washington County's PDR program went fairly smoothly. The PDR ordinance was adopted in February, 2000 and over the course of a little over a year the procedures, policies and conservation easement acquisition occurred. In the end 142 acres of land were permanently protected through cooperation with four willing landowners. Each of the four properties had unique characteristics and presented challenges to the project. The four properties were chosen from 12 total applications, representing 657 acres of land and an estimated market value of \$4,629,300. Final decisions were made by the County Board of Commissioners based on recommendations from a citizen advisory committee and technical advisory committee. Each of the four properties also gave great opportunity for collaboration and cooperation. To complete the transactions significant partnerships were formed. Washington County partnered with the Department of Natural Resources, the City of Woodbury, The South Washington Watershed District and the Minnesota Land Trust to make these transactions successful.

Each property is summarized briefly below.

City of Woodbury (Doerr Property): Located in Woodbury, this parcel is approximately 30 acres of land adjacent to 28 acres of City property, ultimately becoming part of the City's green way plan. The site is located at the headwaters of Valley Creek Trout Stream and contains highly erodible soils, which could adversely affect the water quality of the stream if not protected. Great vistas are part of the highlights of this property as well as 9,000 trees that were planted by the landowner under the Conservation Reserve Program. The site is partially wooded and represents a great opportunity for the City of Woodbury and Washington County to work toward a common goal of critical resource protection. This project represents a joint effort between the City of Woodbury and Washington County with the property being purchased in fee title for a total cost of \$300,000. Washington County contributed \$55,000, the City of Woodbury contributed \$190,000 and \$55,000 of the LCMR money was utilized.

John and Nancy Baird property: The Baird property is 40 acres in size located in May township and adjacent to the existing Gateway Trail. The landowner has agreed to allow the extension of the Gateway Trail across this property and also will be giving the county a bargain sale for the conservation easement on this property. As zoned this 40 acres could be developed into 4 lots with no trail extension requirement. Through the PDR program the owner has reserved the right for 1 lot and has agreed to extend the Gateway Trail. In addition the Baird's have previously placed a private donated conservation easement on an adjacent 60 acres of land, limiting the development potential and maintaining the rural character of the area. The total cost of this easement was \$20,000 with \$10,000 contributed by Washington County and \$10,000 contributed by the LCMR dollars.

Amherst H Wilder Foundation: This property represents a joint effort between several monetary and management partners. The property is 60 acres in size and is one of the last parcels needed to complete a 4-mile greenway from the St. Croix River to Warner Nature Center known as the *St. Croix Greenway Corridor*. The total cost of acquiring the fee title and conservation easement is \$509,600. Washington County contributed \$67,800, an additional \$67,800 of LCMR money was used and the DNR Metro Greenways Program contributed \$374,400 total dollars for the remaining conservation easement cost and fee title for the property.

The land will be jointly managed by the collaborative of landowners forming the 220-acre St. Croix Greenway Corridor and include Camp Kiwanis, Dunrovin Christian Brothers Retreat, Lee and Rose Warner Nature Center, Minnesota DNR Metro Greenways, St. Croix Watershed Research Station (Science Museum of Minnesota) and the Wilder Forest (A.H. Wilder Foundation). The Conservation Easement will be co-held by the Department of Natural Resources and Washington County.

South Washington Watershed District (Ratzlaff Property): This 12-acre parcel of land located in Woodbury is a key property for the water management plan adopted by the South Washington Watershed District (SWWD). The 12-acre parcel consists of the upland area of a larger 52-acre parcel of land identified for acquisition. The fee-title of the property will be held by the SWWD as part of their water management duties. This acquisition will also allow the extension of the City's trail system and will provide a buffer of upland protection for the ponding area needed for flood mitigation in the city. The SWWD will purchase the low-lying areas needed for ponding and together this joint effort will maintain water quality in the watershed and allow public enjoyment of the resources. Washington County has contributed \$17,200, a total of \$168,800 LCMR dollars were utilized and the SWWD contributed \$150,000 (as a local match to the LCMR dollar).

Overall the PDR program in Washington County was a great success and will act as a great model/template for other counties seeking incentive-based land protection strategies. The only downfall of the Washington County program was the failure of the Citizen referendum to set aside \$13 million for the PDR program. The vote as many now know was close, 52% to 48%. In fact because of the closeness of the vote the County Commissioners have received a number of phone calls from concerned citizens that something be done to ensure the future of the PDR program. Because of these citizen phone calls

the Commissioners are looking into the feasibility of placing permanent PDR funding into the County budget without having to raise tax dollars. The results of these actions will be known by the end of this year. It is the intent of the County Commissioners to have an annual budget of approximately \$200,000 for PDR.

In hind-site one of the major reasons the referendum failed may have to do with timing. The LCMR timeline mandated that the referendum be held in November of 2000, which unfortunately corresponded with the presidential election. Many referendum guide literature suggest this is not a good idea. Also related to timing, many referendum campaigns are conducted on an 18-month timeline, the Washington County referendum tried to accomplish this task in a much shorter time period. Funding was also an issue the ambitious LCMR workplan stated the need to secure permanent funding for the PDR program but no state dollars could be used in this effort. As such funding for the referendum was conducted separate to LCMR tasks and funding. This could be looked upon as further leveraged dollars to this LCMR grant, above those reported here.

There are currently new strategies for permanent funding of the Washington County PDR program, including the community of Stillwater Township taking action to place PDR in their local budget and numerous citizens groups working to bring back a referendum in the future. Whether or not tax dollars are used to fund PDR in the future, it is clear that the citizens desire resource protection in the County.

Besides the referendum as an obstacle the issue of time constraints was also a factor. The two-year timeframe that required a fully implemented PDR program and the acquisition of between 85-300 acres of conservation easement was quit ambitious. In the end Washington County staff did an incredible amount of work just to get the projects done under the time constraints. Looking back in hindsight a conservation easement acquisition program should have more time to complete the deals. Land deals are very personal and should not be rushed into. One of the primary concerns is to ensure the landowner is comfortable with the process and the outcome. As such short-circuiting the process is not advisable. Also in order to achieve the final success of the program Washington County relied on many partners to help complete the process. While partnerships are important and necessary they do increase the level of complexity and administrative time. Completing four land transactions with conservation easements in about one-year time frame is a remarkable accomplishment that Washington County and the partners of the Green Corridor should feel good about.

Chisago County

The implementation of Chisago County's PDR was a bit rough. However, to Chisago County's credit they felt that it was important to utilize both PDR and TDR as land protection tools. As such the County will continue to move forward on both programs. However, the fact remains that TDR was the tool of choice for Chisago County and they may have underestimated the amount of work needed to adopt a countywide TDR program that is politically and technically uncertain.

Chisago County utilized a citizen advisory group to discuss PDR in conjunction with TDR. Specific criteria were developed and the process to create a PDR program was put into place. In early 2001 the county tried to move forward with their PDR program by advertising a call for landowner applications, establishing protection criteria and marketing the program. A packet was available to interested landowners that included the criteria for selection, an application form, information on the Green Corridor and a series of maps to help landowners complete the application. A public advertisement was also placed in the local newspaper.

The county received eight applications from interested landowners, reviewed those applications with county staff and citizen volunteers and prioritized applications based on merit. A meeting was held with all interested landowners (and open to the public) to explain the process and attempt to solidify a few conservation easement transactions. After the public meeting the County decided to make offers to landowners based on their property's rank among other landowners. The intent was to only solicit bargain sales from landowners that would accept an offer of no more than 50% of estimated market value. However, based upon the advice of the County attorney offers to landowners were never made. It was determined that there were too many risk factors involved to ensure that the process could be completed by the June 30, 2001 LCMR deadline and be fair to all participants. As a result Chisago County decided to transfer their portion of the \$150,000 of LCMR to Washington County, who used the money to acquire an additional conservation easement on the fourth property selected by the County Commissioners. Chisago County did however pledge to keep the original \$150,000 of local matching dollars in the bank and utilize that money for land conservation as time permits. In the end this resulted in an additional \$150,000 leveraged as part of this LCMR grant.

LCMR Budget \$43,500

LCMR Balance \$0

A2 Implement TDR

Chisago County

Chisago County successfully adopted a TDR ordinance in May 2001. This ordinance provides the foundation for the county to administer a TDR program in the southern portion of Chisago County. The TDR overlay district that sets the legal ability for transfers of development rights corresponds with Independent School District 2144 and part of Osceola School District in Chisago County. This overlay district covers approximately 110,000 acres of land. This acreage includes approximately 45,000 acres within the sending or protection zone and approximately 36,000 acres within the receiving or development zone. The County chose a pilot approach for several reasons, including the correspondence with school district boundaries to minimize the potential tax burden shift. If all development increases and decreases are maintained in a single school district no effects of additional school children should be incurred. The second reason for the pilot within one school district is to avoid land value fluctuations. Chisago County is a very diverse county with dramatically different land values from north to south. The citizen advisory group felt it important to minimize the chances for land value effects. A third reason for the pilot was the need to ensure an appropriate housing market to generate demand for transfers. The TDR overlay district corresponds with the Highway 8, and Interstate 35 growth corridors. As such sufficient housing demand is expected. Finally, the pilot was chosen to ensure appropriate administration of the program and ensure that the county does not over commit themselves to this program. As the program establishes itself and the County to add staff personal there are plans to expand the geographic range of the overlay districts to the entire county. Several of the private landowners interested in PDR also correspond with this first TDR district and may be interested in attempting TDR. The county is currently working on ways to market and educate interested landowners and developers on the TDR program. An active citizen group is still in place and eager to monitor and help out with the further implementation of this program.

Washington County

Early on in the process Washington County decided that a countywide TDR program was not feasible. Instead the County suggested that individual communities investigate TDR on a local level and the County would lend help in the most appropriate manner. During this grant timeframe two communities have explored (and continue to debate) TDR. The City of Lake Elmo and the City of Afton are both interested in TDR and have looked into the matter. For all practical purposes the debate of TDR continues in both of these communities with no definitive programs in site. Hopefully over the next year or so Chisago County will be able to demonstrate the potential advantages of a TDR program and move the process along in Washington County.

The following is discussion of Washington County's investigation and debate over TDR on a countywide level.

A transfer of development rights program is a more cost-effective approach to protecting large areas of agricultural land, especially where land values are so high that it would be impossible for the public to buy all the development rights.

Administratively Complex

Many people find TDR programs to be complex, administratively challenging, and confusing to landowners, developers and local officials. Again, to be successful, the goal of this program needs to be consistent with the community values, have citizen support and many willing sellers, and requires a legitimate public purpose and strong policy guidance in the community's comprehensive plan.

Much care is needed in determining the parameters of the receiving and sending areas and the value involved in order to make it attractive for the private sector to participate.

Strong Market

TDR's can be used in areas where there is an active real estate market and where development is occurring at a brisk pace. To work, landowners must be able to find a potential buyer for their development rights. If the market is not strong, the landowner may not be able to sell his rights. A land bank could be used to buy TDR's from landowners that are having difficulty selling them and need to sell fast. If a bank approach is used exclusively, it is easier for the developer because they don't have to go through several land transactions.

Cross Jurisdiction

A program within a single community may not have a strong enough market to make the program work. Developers would prefer to cross jurisdictions, rather than be limited to sending and receiving within the same community, because it gives them more options. However, when crossing jurisdictions, there is much concern over the loss of tax base. Those communities with sending zones would lose tax base to communities with receiving zones.

Townships, in Washington and Chisago counties, are concerned about transferring development credits outside the township because they have to maintain the roads anyway, but with less revenue (the largest portion of a townships expenditures). This could be overcome with revenue sharing agreements between communities.

Finding a Receiving Zone

The most difficult hurdle we found in trying to apply this tool in Washington County was finding a receiving area. Many areas didn't want the density. Other areas that seemed like good candidates to accept greater density could just zone at a higher density without participating in a formal TDR program.

A program may be more successful on a regional level where some possible incentives for communities might be:

- receiving a block grant for taking density
- early extension of MUSA /urban services

What we do know is, that to work, the TDR program has to be the only way to get the density and there needs to be mutual benefit to communities/areas in the sending and receiving zones.

Voluntary or Mandatory

TDR programs do not assure continuation of the critical mass of farmland needed to sustain the long-term viability of the local farm economy. To successfully preserve the farming economy, a TDR program must be comprehensive and mandatory in the preservation area. If not, they do not prevent the scattered subdivision of farmland tracts that disrupt the farming economy. Making the program mandatory may not be acceptable to the community

LCMR Budget \$43,500

LCMR Balance \$0

A3 Landowner Outreach

Washington County

The focus of landowner outreach in Washington County was to act as an information base for interested landowners in the PDR program. Two public meetings were held at the County to answer specific questions about the PDR program and help interested landowners fill out applications. These meetings were the first contact with the twelve potential participatory landowners. In addition to these two public meetings one large meeting was held at the end of the project to provide a summary and wrap-up. This meeting unfortunately was not well attended and in the future a better means of disseminating the final information should be sought. These three public meetings were supplemented with numerous one-on-one meetings with potential landowners in the Green Corridor to survey the level of interest and ensure a good turnout for the original application process. Many of these meetings were requested by the landowners, but the project partners sought out some meetings. Washington County staff also spent considerable time discussing the PDR program with interested citizens who walked into the County offices. Finally, information about the Green Corridor project in general and specific information regarding the referendum and PDR application process was available at the Washington and Chisago County Fairs as well as a few other public meetings attended by the Minnesota Farmers Union. These meetings were beyond the required workplan meetings and provided an excellent way to keep citizens up-to-date.

Chisago County

Considerably more time was spent engaging the citizenry in Chisago County. This was a result of two needs. First the complexity of the TDR program mandated more education and outreach and secondly, the County worked more closely with potential PDR landowners in an attempt to get land deals completed. Two official large public meetings were held one to summarize the project in late June and the other to work through landowner applications in mid-April. In addition to these formal meetings numerous informal small scale meetings were held throughout the course of the project.

Estimates of other meetings related to landowner information include 15 community meetings and 25 individual landowner meetings.

Public interaction also included all citizen advisory meetings and County Board or Planning Commission meetings, all of which are open to the public and contained agenda items related to the Green Corridor project. Many meetings addressed specific questions regarding the two

programs, including how to participate, timelines, explanation of the concepts and helping with specific landowner questions or issues concerning whether to participate or not.

LCMR Budget \$9,000

LCMR Balance \$0

B Local Government Land Protection:

The goal of the land protection element of the workplan was to implement a PDR program and protect between 85 and 300 acres of land. Through the timeframe of this grant a PDR program was implemented in Washington County and 142 acres of land was permanently protected. In addition, Chisago County established a PDR program but did not protect any land as of yet.

\$300,000 of LCMR money, \$300,000 of local matching money and \$564,400 of addition leveraged dollars were all used to protect land in Washington County. Some of this land was purchased in fee title as well as having a conservation easement placed on the property. In total the \$400,000 dollars of LCMR money leveraged an addition \$864,400.

Considerable work had to go into implementing the PDR program and acquiring conservation easements or fee title for the four chosen properties. These actions included:

- numerous County Board meetings and approval,
- acquiring and interacting with the legal County's legal staff,
- contracting for land appraisal services,
- contracting for abstract updates,
- negotiating with landowners,
- preparing conservation easement language,
- conducting title review,
- conducting environmental review,
- conducting base line information surveys,
- coordinating real estate closings,
- preparing memorandum of agreements with the Minnesota Land Trust and DNR for coholding of easements,
- preparing information dissemination and landowner needs.

Together these land protection actions provided a solid foundation and framework for future land conservation efforts related to PDR. Under this LCMR grant a true pilot PDR was established that will act as a guide for other communities or counties seeking help, information and ideas regarding PDR and more importantly the implementation of incentive-based land protection strategies.

LCMR Budget: \$304,000

LCMR Balance: \$0

Match Budget: \$300,000

Match Balance: \$0

IV. DISSEMINATION

Five large public meetings were held concerning the Green Corridor project and considerable more than 28 smaller meetings. Many of the smaller meetings were directly aimed at single landowners interested or have questions about the two programs. Often these meetings were in the form of one or two landowner at a time, although some were phone calls and others were larger gatherings.

In addition to these meetings several County Board meetings were held to discuss issues related to the Green Corridor, the project was frequently updated in 1000 Friends of Minnesota's newsletter and web page. Washington County also maintained information on their web page. A press conference was held in August to celebrate the four PDR properties and several newspaper articles were written on the status of the program. A few fact sheets, a press release and one of the more significant newspaper articles are included in this final report.

Chisago County is currently working on a TDR information guide and more detailed information about the project will be forthcoming on 1000 Friends of Minnesota web page and potentially written documentation.

II. CONTEXT:

- A. **Significance** – This proposal is designed to permanently protect at least 85 – 300 acres of natural areas, farmland, and other open spaces in Chisago and Washington Counties with a long-term goal of ultimately protecting and/or connecting tens of thousands of acres utilizing a variety of incentive-based tools. As such, it builds on the significant work done by the Green Corridor Collaborative under its 1997 LCMR work program to develop a plan for the corridor and create a pilot project. This proposal is designed to capitalize on the research, planning, and public education of the 1997 Green Corridor work program to begin to physically implement the corridor, permanently protecting lands within it. Importantly, it will help create self-sustaining local land protection programs that will build on the momentum and leverage the LCMR's investment far beyond the life cycle of this grant request.

The collaborative's work has received substantial interest and local support throughout Chisago and Washington counties. Leveraging that support to implement the corridor will require diligent efforts to create, promote, and fund self-sustaining programs in the two counties for PDR and TDR with adequate staff, administration, public support, and stable funding. Funding is also necessary to help educate landowners about the new programs and seek their participation.

A minimum of \$300,000 of this grant will be earmarked for 1:1 cost share grants to local government for acquisition of development rights. Land protection efforts covered under this grant will occur within the Green Corridor Opportunity Areas developed and mapped as part of the 1997 workprogram. The new programs will build on the draft plans and ordinances for PDR and TDR that have been developed. The acquisition funding being sought will provide critical seed money and help secure matching funds from local governments, federal programs, and private foundations. As such, it will provide an

important incentive for local governments to create dedicated, long-term funding sources. The 1:1 match for \$300,000 of the requested \$400,000 will leverage LCMR investments.

Minnesota is the fastest growing state in the Upper Midwest. The Twin Cities Metropolitan Region, despite all its wonderful assets, has the dubious distinction of being the third most sprawling (least dense) of the largest 25 metropolitan areas in the United States. Not only are we growing fast, but we are using vast acreages of land to accommodate that growth. Washington County is the second fastest growing county in the State. By 1994, Chisago County has already passed its projected population growth for the year 2000 by 41 percent.

This explosive growth and development costs us money, creates traffic congestion, threatens our drinking water, chews up our open land, and fragments our communities. We certainly can continue to grow and thrive. But retaining the strength of our environment, communities, and economy requires that we make proactive, community-wide decisions to keep important lands in production and open space uses. Land protection is a community investment and is a key element to any holistic approach to sustainable development. By investing in land protection, communities are investing in their future.

- B. Time** - The proposed project will be for two years. Funding assistance for on-going acquisition efforts will continue through individual donations, foundations, land trades, local governments and public financing.

C. Budget Context:

The Land Stewardship Project and its 1000 Friends of Minnesota program received the following grants for work on the Green Corridor Project from 1997 - 1999:

LCMR Budget History:	\$530,000
LCMR 1997 Workprogram: New Models for Land-use Planning, E4, L3	
Non-LCMR Budget History:	
1. McKnight Foundation:	\$ 80,000
2. Carolyn Foundation:	<u>\$ 65,000</u>
TOTAL:	\$675,000

For work from 1999 - 2001, several of the collaborators are fundraising to support additional work and plan to provide in-kind contributions of time in addition to that funded by this workprogram.

1. BUDGET:

Wages, Salaries, Benefits:	\$ 87,270
1000 Friends of Minnesota	\$ 29,500
Matthew Mega	28%
Intern	10%
Chisago County	\$ 23,000

Existing staff or p/t to be hired	23%	
Washington County		\$ 25,000
Existing staff or p/t to be hired	25%	
Land Stewardship Project		\$ 1,850
Caroline van Schaik	2%	
Minnesota Land Trust		\$ 3,500
Jeanne Wright	4%	
Minnesota Farmers Union		\$ 1,850
Ron Hauglie	3%	
Rural Community Initiative		\$ 2,570
Bill Neuman	4%	
Land Rights Acquisition:		\$275,000
Other		
Space Rental, Maintenance, Utilities		\$ 3,650
Printing/Advertising		\$ 1,780
Communications		\$ 650
Consultants		\$ 4,000
Travel		\$ 2,150
Supplies		\$ 500
Land Transaction Costs		\$ 25,000
TOTAL		\$400,000

2. BUDGET DETAIL: See Attachment A and B

D. Additional Context:

1000 Friends of Minnesota grew out of citizens' concerns with the serious ramifications of Minnesota's sprawling growth patterns. The group coalesced after a major presentation, sponsored by the Land Stewardship Project (LSP) in 1993. The group continued to meet under the direction of LSP's program staff and eventually evolved into a program of LSP. Throughout this time, a dedicated group of planners, activists, attorneys and environmentalists served as a Steering Committee to staff. They have now transitioned into the Board.

Growing interest in land use issues, sprawl, and Smart Growth requires the dedication and focus of an entire organization. To enhance the work of both LSP and 1000 Friends, the LSP board decided to create a separate 1000 Friends organization. 1000 Friends of Minnesota was incorporated on May 12, 1998. Its 501(c)3 IRS letter was received on July 6, 1998.

1000 Friends of Minnesota will continue its efforts in two primary focus areas: 1) to strengthen citizen involvement in the creation of strong local, regional and state land-use planning practices and policies; and 2) to create on the ground demonstration projects and tools that help communities grow in ways that promote self-sufficiency by being socially,

economically and environmentally sound. The Green Corridor Project is one of the primary foci of our demonstration projects.

The original LCMR proposal submitted in February, 1998 was sponsored by the Land Stewardship Project, through the work of its 1000 Friends of Minnesota staff. Therefore, both LSP and 1000 Friends of Minnesota have decided that leadership of this workplan is best served under 1000 Friends of Minnesota.

III. COOPERATION:

Chisago County, Land Stewardship Project, Minnesota Farmers Union, Minnesota Land Trust, Rural Community Initiative, and Washington County

IV. LOCATION: Chisago and Washington Counties. Attachment C of this proposal provides a map of the state indicating where the project is located.

V. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: Periodic workprogram progress reports will be submitted no later than January 15, 2000; September 15, 2000; and March 15, 2001. A final workprogram report and associated products will be submitted by June 30, 2001, or by the completion date as set in the appropriation.

Attachment A:Original Workplan Budget Detail

Project Title: Implementing the Chisago and Washington Counties Green Corridor Project

Budget Item	1000 Friends of Minnesota	Washington County	Chisago County	Land Stewardship Project	Minnesota Land Trust	Minnesota Farmers Union	Rural Community Initiative	Consultants	Row Total
Wages, Salaries, Benefits	29,500	25,000	23,000	1,850	3,500	1,850	2,570		87,270
Space rental, Maintenance, Utilities	3,650								3,650
Printing/Advertising	500						1,280		1,780
Communications, tel., mail, etc.	400				250				650
Contracts									0
Professional/technical								4,000	4,000
Other Contracts									0
Local automobile mileage paid	600			250	250	200	400		1,700
Other travel expenses in MN	300			150					450
Travel outside MN									0
Office supplies	100					200			300
Other supplies	200								200
Tools and equipment									0
Office equipment and computers									0
Other capital equipment									0
Other direct operating costs									0
Land Transaction Cost		12,500	12,500						25,000
Land rights acquisition		137,500	137,500						275,000
Buildings or other land improvement									0
Legal fees									0
Indirect costs (1)									0
COLUMN TOTAL	35,250	175,000	173,000	2,250	4,000	2,250	4,250	4,000	400,000

Attachment B: Final Budget Detail

Project Title: Implementing the Chisago and Washington Counties Green Corridor Project

Budget Item	1000 Friends of Minnesota	Washington County	Chisago County	Land Stewardship Project	Minnesota Land Trust	Minnesota Farmers Union	Rural Community Initiative	Consultants	Row Total
Wages, Salaries, Benefits	29,788.73	24,337.00	22,660.00	1,765.35	4,000.00	1,850.00	3,950.58		88,351.66
Space rental, Maintenance, Utilities	3,650.00								3,650.00
Printing/Advertising	592.04					290.00			882.04
Communications, tel., mail, etc.	571.80			17.75					589.55
Contracts									
Professional/technical		2,638.00	1,837.50					162.50	4,638.00
Other Contracts									
Local automobile mileage paid	422.22	25.00	340.00	60.14		110.00	706.18		1,663.54
Other travel expenses in MN	65.25								65.25
Travel outside MN									
Office supplies	59.96								59.96
Other supplies	100.00								100.00
Tools and equipment									
Office equipment and computers									
Other capital equipment									
Other direct operating costs									
Land Transaction Cost									
Land rights acquisition		300,000.00							300,000.00
Buildings or other land improvement									
Legal fees									
Indirect costs (1)									
COLUMN TOTAL	35,250.00	327,000.00	24,837.50	1,843.24	4,000.00	2,250.00	4,656.76	162.50	400,000.00

THURSDAY,
AUGUST 2,
2001

CITY EDITION

WASHINGTON COUNTY

140 acres
saved
for open
space

FROM PAGE 1B

Open space

(continued)

islativ Commission on Minnesota Resources along with several hundred thousand dollars from the South Washington Watershed District, the City of Woodbury and the Department of Natural Resources' Metro Greenways program.

Landowners who participate in the program receive a one-time payment in exchange for a conservation easement that allows them to retain ownership and use of the land but prohibits future development.

"This program has something for everyone," Washington County Commissioner Dick Stafford said in a press release announcing the easements. "The landowner has an opportunity to realize some of the value of their land without selling it for development. The public has the opportunity to preserve the natural beauty that makes the county a desirable place to live. And local government continues to collect property taxes."

The county and DNR hold the easements on the properties, which include:

- 60 acres in central May Township, which will help link

Warner Nature Center to the St. Croix River.

- 40 acres in southern May Township, which will allow the extension of the Gateway Trail.

- 30 acres in Woodbury at the headwaters of the Valley Creek trout stream.

- 12 acres in southern Woodbury that will help link storm water basins and extend the city's trail system.

Lee Ronning, executive director of 1000 Friends of Minnesota who has been involved in the project from its inception, said the sites are critical parts of a larger "green corridor" that the fast-growing county hopes to preserve.

The key, she said, will be finding stable and substantial funding for future acquisitions to complete the corridor, something that open space backers hoped would happen last November.

"For some folks, this is the end of nearly five years of long work, with all of the ups and downs that go with it," Ronning said. "But to me, it's just the

Program believed to be first of its kind in state

BY DOUG PETERS
Pioneer Press

Nearly five years after starting an effort to preserve a corridor of open space, Washington County has acquired easements protecting four parcels totaling more than 140 acres from development.

The acquisitions are the first for the county's purchase of development rights program, which officials say is the first program of its kind in the state. The easement purchases come about nine months after Washington County voters narrowly defeated a tax increase that would have provided \$13 million for open space protection.

The easement acquisitions will be formally announced Monday in May Township.

The current easement purchases were made using about \$450,000 in grants from the Leg-

OPEN SPACE, 3B

beginning."

Jane Harper, principal planner for Washington County, said the parcels are the first of what the county hopes will be an ongoing program of linking open space.

"They're pieces, beginnings of broader green-space networks," Harper said. But, she said, "To really make significant progress in establishing a countywide-scale greenway, it's going to take some kind of large revenue source" such as the tax increase the referendum would have provided.

Harper and Ronning said they hope Washington County's program will provide a model for other counties to follow.

"I hope and feel ... that other communities and counties will say, 'Hey, we can do that,'" Ronning said. "There doesn't have to be just one or two options to protect the land that's out there. Here's another option."

Doug Peters can be reached at dupeters@pioneerpress.com or (651) 228-2173.



News Advisory

August 1, 2001

For more information contact:

- Lee Ronning, 1000 Friends of Minnesota: 651-312-1000
- Jane Harper, Washington County: 651-430-6011
- Al Singer, DNR Metro Greenways: 651-772-7952

Purchase of development right program first in state

Unique Washington County partnership protects green spaces

A unique collaborative program aimed at preserving the open spaces and rural character of Washington County will soon mark a major milestone.

On August 6, 2001, officials from local and state government, along with representatives of non-profit conservation organizations, will hold a press conference and celebration to mark protection of the first four parcels of land under the Washington County Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program. The properties, totaling nearly 150 acres, will remain permanently preserved as green space.

"Washington County is growing rapidly, and many people who live here want to make sure the rural atmosphere that makes our area such an attractive place to live doesn't get swept away by expansion," said Washington County Commissioner Bill Pulkrabek. "The protection of these first properties represents a milestone in helping balance our growth with the need to preserve green space."

Last year, county officials augmented a \$300,000 grant from the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR) with \$150,000 to fund initial implementation of the open space program. Those funds leveraged an additional \$150,000 from the South Washington Watershed District, \$190,000 from the city of Woodbury, and \$374,000 from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Metro Greenways program to protect four parcels of open space:

- 60 acres in central May Township, that with funds from Metro Greenways and the Wilder Foundation, protects a key link in a four-mile, ecological corridor stretching from Warner Nature Center to the St. Croix River;
- 40 acres in southern May Township that was offered to the county at significantly less than full-market value; just north of Pine Point Park, the parcel will provide right-of-way and a buffer for an extension of the State of Minnesota Gateway Trail;
- 30 acres in Woodbury at the headwaters of Valley Creek which, with additional lands proposed for protection via city and Metro Greenways funds, will help create a 200-acre greenway and protect one of the last viable trout streams in the metro region;
- 12 acres in southern Woodbury that, with further funds from the South Washington Watershed District and Metro Greenways, will help link a number of stormwater

infiltration basins into a 52-acre corridor offering opportunities for upland habitat restoration and extension of a city trail system.

Under the purchase of development rights program, property owners receive a one-time payment for a conservation easement that allows them to continue to own and use the land, but forever prohibits further development of the parcel. This is the first time that such an approach has been used in Minnesota as part of a countywide conservation effort.

"This program has something in it for everyone," said Washington County Commissioner Dick Stafford. "The landowner has an opportunity to realize some of the value in their land without selling it for development. The public has the opportunity to preserve the natural beauty that makes the county a desirable place to live. And local government continues to collect property taxes."

The Washington County PDR program is one of four conservation tools promoted by the Green Corridor Project, a local initiative aimed at preserving some of the remaining natural areas in the county. Launched nearly five years ago, the Green Corridor Project came about in response to rapid growth in Washington County and local concerns that the farm lands, natural areas and scenic views that make the area so attractive could well be gobbled up by development.

"There was a realization that this wasn't a quiet little hamlet of a county anymore," said Lee Ronning, executive director of 1000 Friends of Minnesota and a driving force behind the initiative. "People were seeing on a daily basis how quickly development could occur."

While Washington County has been a leader in balancing growth with conservation, it is hardly alone in facing the issue, said Al Singer, coordinator of the DNR's Metro Greenways program, which works to facilitate creation of a regional network of natural areas, parks and other open spaces. Nor is the significance of the county's recent accomplishments merely local in nature.

"The importance of this milestone goes beyond Washington County," Singer said. "Across the region people are seeing that natural resources -- our green infrastructure -- is the foundation for healthy communities and a good quality of life."

"They're saying, 'Hey, we can have a say about what our communities are going to look like in the future.'"

For Ronning, achieving that vision is a long process that has just begun.

"My hope is the county and the state will find a permanent revenue stream to continue the effort, and it will spur other counties to do the same," Ronning said. "Once people realize this was a good deal and the landowners are satisfied, I think we're going to see a lot more of it."

- END -

Editor's Note: A press conference and celebration to mark the first four properties protected under Washington County's Green Corridor Project will be held from 3 to 5 p.m. on Monday, August 6, 2001. Representatives of Washington County, 1000 Friends of Minnesota, DNR Metro Greenways, the Trust for Public Land, the Minnesota Land Trust, landowners and others involved in the Green Corridor Project will be on site at one of the protected properties in May Twp. from 3- 4 p.m. for comments and questions. A celebration of the Green Corridor's conservation milestone will follow at the nearby Wilder Center. See attached map for directions, or call: 1000 Friends of Minnesota, 651-312-1000.



Washington County

Purchase of Development Rights Program

Amherst H. Wilder Foundation

**2001 ACQUISITION
Conservation Easement**

Project Description

The conservation easement on this property permanently protects one of the last three parcels linking ecologically significant sites to create a continuous four-mile long greenway known as the *St. Croix Greenway Corridor*. This corridor contains 1,965 acres of high-quality natural areas and open space extending from the Warner Nature Center eastward to the St. Croix River (a 252-mile long protected corridor of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway). Directly across the river in Wisconsin and extending an additional two miles inland is the 1,400 acre Rice Lake Wildlife Area. With protection of two additional parcels, the corridor could extend an additional two miles to the west linking the Warner Nature Center lands to Washington County's 2,000-acre Big Marine Regional Park.

Specifically, this parcel links the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation land holdings to the west to the Science Museum of Minnesota land to the east. The property is 15-20 percent oak-dominated woodland that has not been grazed in more than 30 years. The remainder of the site is in agricultural use. The land will be jointly managed by a collaborative of landowners forming the 220-acre St. Croix Greenways Common Area, which includes:

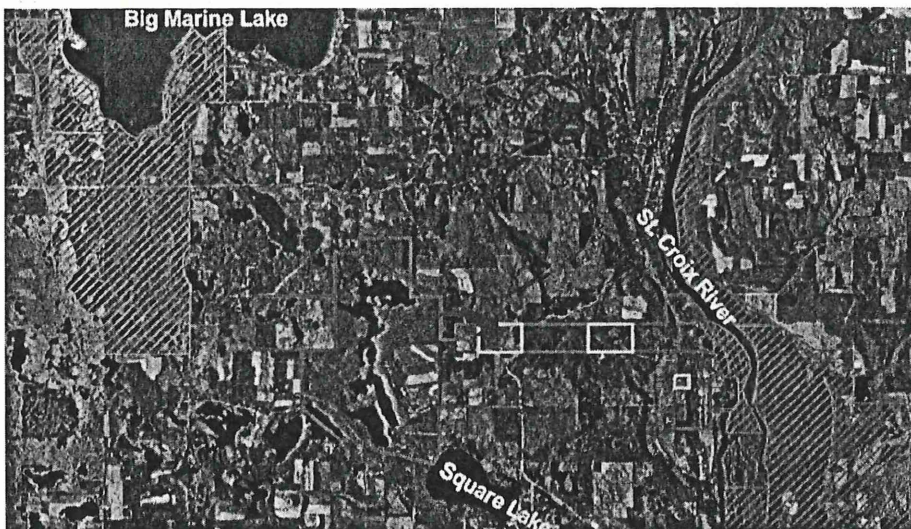
- Camp Kiwanis, BSA (St. Paul Kiwanis),
- Dunrovin Christian Brothers Retreat (Christian Brothers Midwest),
- Lee and Rose Warner Nature Center,
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Metro Greenways,

- St. Croix Watershed Research Station (Science Museum of Minnesota),
- Wilder Forest (A.H. Wilder Foundation).

The goal of this collaborative is to restore the site over the next 10 years to prairie or other native plant communities appropriate to the site and compatible with those plant communities on adjacent lands.

In addition to completing this important link, the conservation easement will:

- Provide expanded educational and scientific learning opportunities,
- Link wildlife and native plant communities that provide critical habitats important to both resident and migratory wildlife species and shelter rare natural features,
- Allow for extension of the State of Minnesota Gateway Trail over a portion of this site.



- PARCELS FOR ACQUISITION
- PRIVATE NONPROFIT FOUNDATIONS
- ▨ BIG MARINE REGIONAL PARK
- ▨ WISCONSIN DNR
- ▨ NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
- ▨ AMHERST H. WILDER FOUNDATION
- ▨ PROTECTED PROPERTY

Location:

May Township
SE ¼ and E ½ of SW ¼ of NE ¼
Section 14, R 20 W, T 31 N

Size:

60 acres

Landowner:

Amherst H. Wilder Foundation

Funding:

Conservation Easement

- \$67,800 Washington County
- \$67,800 Minnesota State Legislature through the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources
- \$244,350 DNR Metro Greenways Program

Fee Title

- \$135,600 DNR Metro Greenways Program

Management Partners:

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Washington County co-hold the conservation easement.

(over)

Washington County Purchase of Development Rights Program

In February 2000, the Washington County Board of Commissioners established a Purchase of Development Rights Program (PDR Program) to provide the County with another tool to protect green spaces and preserve undeveloped land within a designated "Green Corridor Opportunity Area." The Green Corridor Opportunity Area contains high quality agricultural land, natural habitat, scenic areas, environmentally sensitive areas, important shore lands, and connections between these high-quality lands.

The goal of the PDR Program is to connect these types of natural areas to create a network of contiguous green spaces throughout the County. Although all types of natural lands could qualify for protection under this Program, the initial priority is to protect lands adjacent to waterways, recreational trails, parks and other public facilities; lands that are adjacent to already protected lands; and lands serving multiple public purposes.

Landowners participate in the PDR Program on a voluntary basis. Participating landowners are paid not to develop their property, but retain all other ownership rights to the land. Landowners can sell the land, but future landowners would not be able to develop the land. The landowner maintains title to the property, and the County is granted a permanent conservation easement.

Conservation Easements

Conservation easements are the principal legal mechanism used to protect land in a Purchase of Development Rights Program. A conservation easement is a legal mechanism whereby a property owner agrees to place a deed restriction on the land to permanently prohibit future development. The terms of the conservation easement are negotiated with each landowner and are based on the particular resource values to be protected. The terms of the easements may vary from parcel to parcel. Generally, future use of the land is limited to agricultural or open space uses. The easements run with the title to the property so that all future owners of the land are bound by the original agreement.

Importance of Green Corridors

Green corridors can help communities protect remnants of the rural landscape today that create the green infrastructure for the communities of tomorrow. They help communities accommodate fast growth while retaining important connections between communities, between already protected lands and between people and the land. Protecting corridors of green space will help Washington County maintain its rural character and many of the features of the land that attracted people to move to this County.

For information, contact:

Jane Harper

Washington County
Office of Administration
651/430-6011
jharper@co.washington.mn.us

Al Singer

Metro Greenways Program
Department of Natural Resources
651/772-7952
al.singer@dnr.state.mn.us

Mary Kay Palmer

Amherst H. Wilder Foundation
651/659-6014
mkp@wilder.org



Wilder Foundation Property: This permanently protected parcel will be restored to prairie or other native plant communities as part of the St. Croix Greenways Common Area.



Washington County

Purchase of Development Rights Program

John and Nancy Baird

**2001 ACQUISITION
Conservation Easement**

Project Description

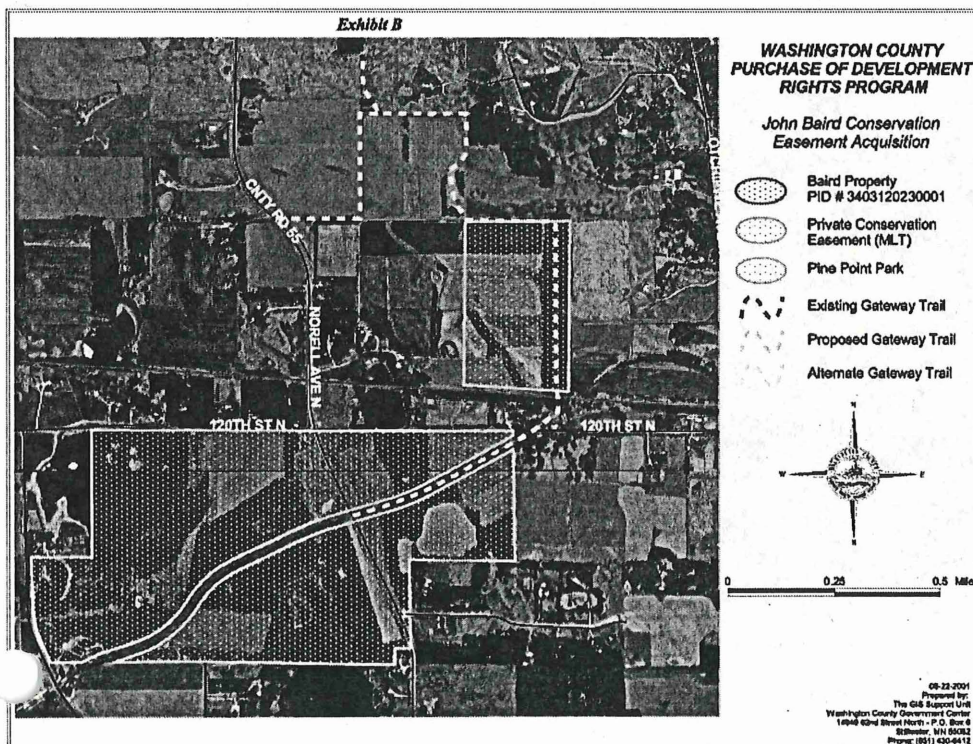
With development encroaching from the west, a permanent conservation easement limiting development of this parcel will help to maintain the rural character in the vicinity of the intersection of County Roads 7 and 55. The land is presently used for farming. Under the conservation easement, the land will continue to be cultivated as part of a hobby-farm type land use.

This parcel is part of 100 acres of a 190-acre, six-lot subdivision that are permanently protected by conservation easements. The land is currently zoned by May Township as agricultural, allowing one lot per 10 acres to be developed. The conservation easement over this protected 40-acre parcel allows only one house rather than four to be developed. A private conservation easement with the Minnesota Land Trust encumbers the easternmost 60 acres of the two lots immediately to the south preventing further subdivision of the land in the future. Together, these conservation easements reduce the overall development of the original 190-acres from 19 to 6 lots.

Prior to platting the subdivision, the landowner conveyed a trail easement to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources across the lots to the south and along the perimeter of this parcel. This easement would allow the Gateway Trail to be extended nearly one

mile, from Pine Point Park to the northern boundary of Section 34. This conservation easement provides a permanent buffer of open space along the Gateway Trail.

Protection of this property also creates a corridor of open space that extends southwest to the Washington County Pine Point Park via adjacent property that is protected by a private permanent conservation easement and a short segment of the Gateway Trail.



Location:

May Township
S ½ of W ½ of NW ¼
S 34, T 31 N, R 20 W

Size:

40 acres

Landowner:

John and Nancy Baird

Funding:

Conservation Easement

- \$10,000 Washington County
- \$10,000 Minnesota State Legislature through the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources

Management Partners:

Minnesota Land Trust and Washington County co-hold the conservation easement.

(over)

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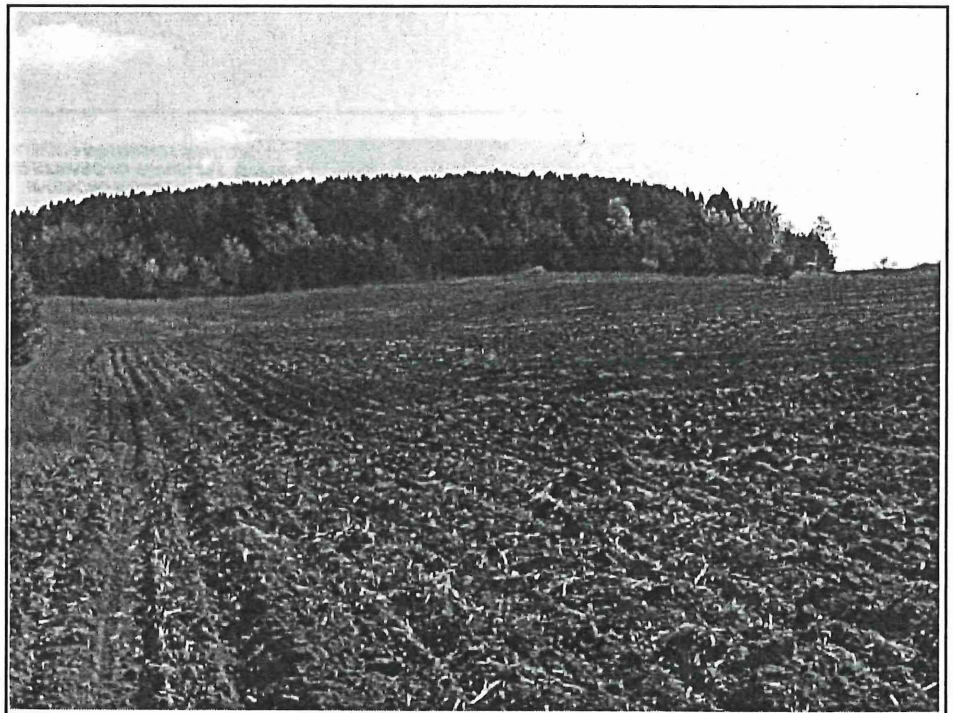
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For information, contact:

Jane Harper
Washington County
Office of Administration
651/430-6011
jharper@co.washington.mn.us

Minnesota Land Trust
651/647-9590



Baird Property: Looking east over farmland that will be permanently protected as a buffer to the future Gateway Trail extension. The trail will run right to left through the woods in the distance.



Washington County

Purchase of Development Rights Program

City of Woodbury

(formerly the property of Lawrence and Evelyn McCrossan Doerr)

2001 ACQUISITION Conservation Easement

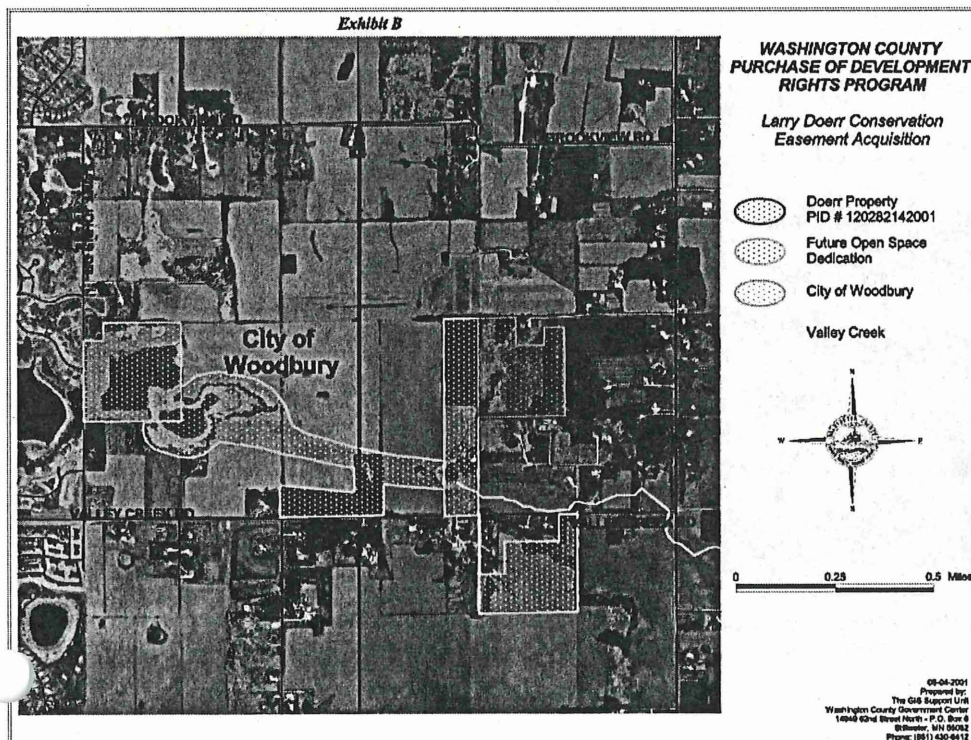
Project Description

This parcel is located on the eastern edge of the fast-growing City of Woodbury within the headwaters of the Valley Creek Trout Stream. Protecting this parcel from development is critical to maintaining the Valley Creek Trout Stream as one of the last few viable trout streams within the Metropolitan Area. The parcel sits at the top of a subwatershed divide with storm water runoff and spring snow melt draining into Falstrom Pond, a landlocked basin to the northeast and into the Valley Creek Trout Stream to the southwest. Restricting development on this parcel will minimize the amount of runoff into the Valley Creek Trout Stream. The property is at a high elevation affording a 360 degree view from the highest point on the property and providing scenic vistas of the property when travelling on nearby roadways. The majority of the land cover is immature trees. About 9,000 trees were planted in 1990-91 under the Conservation Reserve Program.

By acquiring this conservation easement, the County intends to preserve the natural wooded areas, planted trees, wildlife habitat, vistas to and from the property, and provide water quality and quantity benefits to Valley Creek Trout Stream and Falstrom Pond.

The City of Woodbury has planned the land as Urban Reserve. Utilities will not be extended to this area for at least 20 years. Until such time, it will be zoned rural residential, allowing one lot per 40 acres to be developed.

The property is adjacent to a city-owned parcel of green space. The City of Woodbury negotiated with the landowner to pay the additional increment of value to purchase fee title to the property. In doing so, the City has assembled a larger tract of green space which ultimately will connect to other green space areas, creating a greenway corridor west to Powers Lake. The City intends to use this land for low-impact recreation and wildlife habitat.



Location:

City of Woodbury
NW ¼ of SE ¼
S 12, T 28, R 21

Size:

30 acres

Landowner:

City of Woodbury

Funding:

Conservation Easement

- \$55,000 Washington County
- \$55,000 Minnesota State Legislature through the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources

Fee Title

- \$190,000 City of Woodbury

Washington County Purchase of Development Rights Program

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Jane Harper
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651/430-6011
jharper@co.washington.mn.us

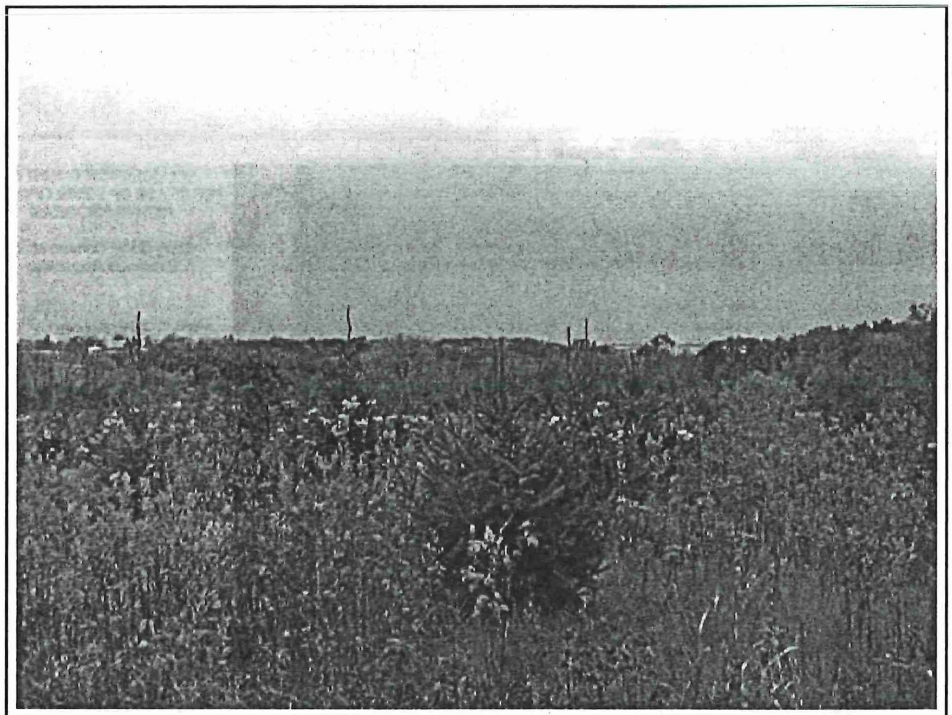
Bob Klatt
City of Woodbury
Parks and Recreation Department
651/714-3583
bklatt@ci.woodbury.mn.us

Conservation Easements

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Importance of Green Corridors

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Woodbury Property: A view looking southwest from the highest point on this protected parcel. Protecting this parcel maintains **scenic views** of green space when travelling on nearby County roads.



Washington County

Purchase of Development Rights Program

South Washington Watershed District
(formerly the property of Dorothy Ratzlaff)

2001 ACQUISITION
Conservation Easement

Project Description

Washington County has partnered with the South Washington Watershed District (SWWD) to purchase the first 52 acres of the District's Central Corridor Basin Project. This basin is part of a series of sub-watershed connections that will serve as the primary storm water conveyance system for the watershed. The series of natural depressions provide for runoff and ground water recharge; conveyance and infiltration of storm water flood control; restoration of upland areas to improve water quality; habitat for fish, wildlife and native plant communities; green space for recreational corridors; and linear park corridors within future growth areas.

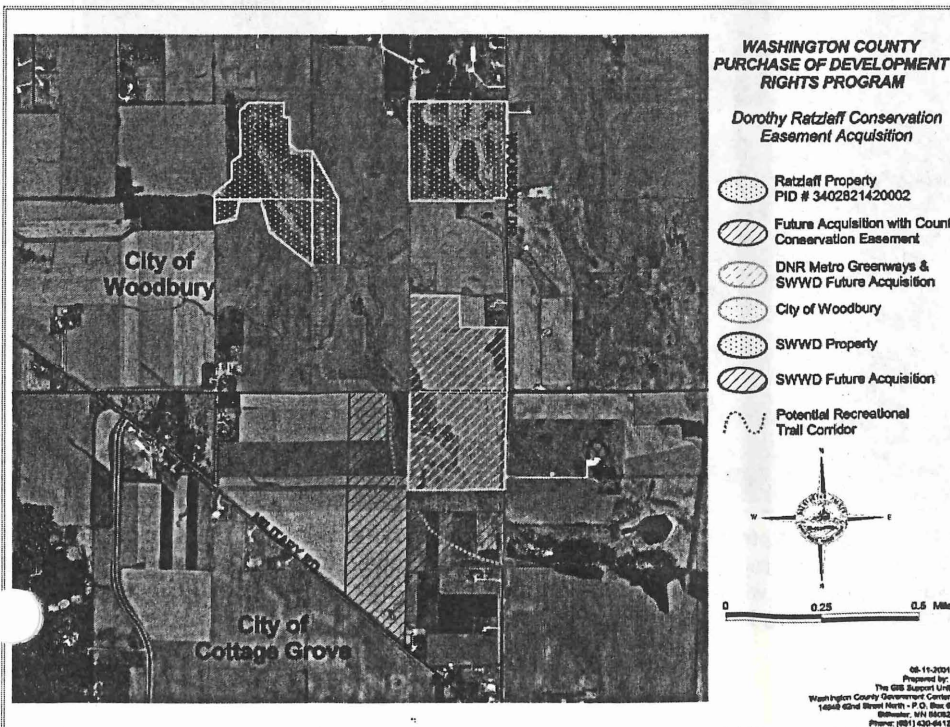
The County has acquired a permanent conservation easement on the western-most 12 acres of the parcel. The conservation easement on this portion of the site is intended to preserve a green space connection between the City of Woodbury green space to the northwest and the SWWD ponding area. This provides an opportunity for the County to work with the City of Woodbury to extend its trail system to link with the trail systems farther south in the City of Cottage Grove and within the Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park.

The SWWD is working with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to permanently protect adjoining parcels to the east and south. Together, these conservation easements would allow the SWWD to assemble a large contiguous upland area that is needed

for remnant natural communities to survive and thrive. Although this protected parcel does not contain any records of rare, threatened or natural communities, the areas being connected via the protected parcel do.

The protected parcel is currently corn field. The SWWD intends to restore the site to presettlement conditions. The lower elevations of the site will be restored to a mixture of mesic prairie, wet prairie and wet meadow depending on the expected depth and frequency of inundation. The upper portions of the site will be restored to mesic prairie, dry prairie, oak savanna, oak woodland and oak forest.

This is the first piece of a larger greenway project that could eventually link green space from Lake Elmo Park Reserve to Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park.



Location:

City of Woodbury
W 12 acres of W ½ of SE ¼
S 34, T 28 N, R 21 W

Size:

12 acres

Landowner:

South Washington Watershed District

Funding:

Conservation Easement

- \$18,000 Washington County
- \$168,000 Minnesota State Legislature through the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources

Fee Title

- \$150,000 South Washington Watershed District

(over)

Washington County Purchase of Development Rights Program

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For information, contact:

Jane Harper
Washington County
Office of Administration
651/430-6011
jharper@co.washington.mn.us

Matt Moore
South Washington Watershed District
651/714-3729



South Washington Watershed District Property: Permanent protection of this parcel is the first piece of a project to assemble a large contiguous upland area as part of a greenway project that will extend south through the Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park and beyond to the Mississippi River.