



GREAT RIVER GREENING



Photo nimmerphoto.com

Celebrating restoration of Fish Creek: New trail in Maplewood winds through prairie restored by volunteers

This fall, a hiking trail opened in Maplewood's Fish Creek Natural Area that winds through a prairie of grasses and wildflowers, and uphill through a forest, opening to scenic views from the bluff.

Since 2012, Great River Greening volunteers have pulled buckthorn and planted wildflowers to restore this 70-acre site. Through both public events and the help of employees of 3M, Thomson Reuters, and other corporations, more than 700 people helped restore diversity to its habitat and create a healthier forest.

The parcel is adjacent to Ramsey County's 142-acre Fish Creek Open Space and connects trails from St. Paul to Woodbury. It is one of the last wild places in the Mississippi wildlife migration corridor, and an international flyway.

Up until 2011, it was slated for housing development. But a growing concern for the loss of natural areas in Maplewood prompted the City to acquire it, and partner with Great River Greening to restore it.



Highlights

- Improving Water Quality in Mississippi Headwaters Region
- Bridgeview Park Reserve preserves rare habitat in Sherburne County
- Expanding geographic reach
- New Board Members and Staff
- 10th Annual Business Forum a Success

See inside for more great stories!



Improving Water Quality in Mississippi Headwaters Region

Great River Greening begins working in Itasca County and the Mississippi Headwaters region this fall as part of new partnership with the Deer Lake Association (DLA). Our focus is to improve water quality in Deer Lake by assessing watershed conditions and identifying possible impairments.

Located just north of Grand Rapids, Deer Lake is one of the clearest lakes in Minnesota. It is fed mostly by springs and rain-fed streams, empties into the Deer River, and eventually into the Mississippi River.

"The Deer Lake Association is one of the most active lake associations in the state," said Steve Hockett, Great River Greening Conservation Director. "It is an honor to be partnering with a group so dedicated to practicing natural resource management in conserving our lakes, rivers and streams."

DLA is enlisting Great River Greening to perform an ecological assessment of the lakeshed which will include identifying soil erosion, invasive species, poor vegetation cover, habitat quality, and infrastructure issues. They are also asking for a Stewardship Plan for the area, which comprises upland terrestrial forest, ravines and drainages, floodplain and riparian zones, wetlands, residential and commercial properties and 22 miles of shoreline.

"This projects grows our work in this essential geography. We are excited to extend our geographic reach to this beautiful landscape. The river defines this state for many of us, but more important, the Mississippi Headwaters is the source of drinking water for millions of people, protecting it is critical."

- Great River Greening Executive Director Deborah Karasov

Photo: Deer Lake Association

Welcome new Board Members

Shane Shipman, President and CEO, LeJeune Steel

Barry Hofer, Formerly OptumInsight CFO

Chris Smith, VP & General Manager, Textile Care
North America & Latin America, Ecolab

Bobby Jensen, Grow with KARE 11

In Brief

Expanding our Geographic Reach

We have worked in nearly 350 sites across the state. The shaded areas of the map below signify new geographies we are exploring.



Great River Greening has been meeting with longtime partners and new alliances to discuss opportunities for us to bring our core competency as the primary restoration partner to their work in acquisition, easements, and planning. They include:

- Expanding the Seven Mile Creek Watershed program to include all of Nicollet County
- Restoration in Cannon River Watershed
- Expanding the Great River Greening's Conservation programs to include the Mississippi River Headwaters region



Bridgeview Park Reserve preserves rare habitat in Sherburne County

Great River Greening is partnering with Sherburne County to restore oak savanna on the Bridgeview Park Reserve. The 29 acre public park, has approximately 1,200 feet of Mississippi River shoreline and holds a rare, nearly undisturbed pre-European plant community.

Preserving unique landscapes and shoreline is a priority for the county, which is among the fastest growing in Minnesota. Establishing the Reserve was the result of careful planning to steer growth and still protect critical natural features – the Mississippi River, the Anoka Sand Plain, and widely diverse native habitat.

This winter, we removed 28 semi loads of cedar and buckthorn, and had them chipped for biomass. Current and future work includes broadcast seeding of native grasses, follow up treatment of buckthorn resprouts and seedlings, and prescribed burning.



The science and history of the 7 Mile Creek watershed

7-Mile Creek Watershed Partnership has issued a report that utilizes data collected in recent years and historical

information from the watershed.

Visit GreatRiverGreening.org/7mile-science/



1,500 volunteers joined in our fall restoration efforts, including our public events:

- Reforesting Allemansrätt Park, Lindstrom
- Million Milkweed Challenge
- Tree Planting at Victoria Park, Saint Paul
- Buckthorn Bust at Wolsfeld Woods SNA, Long Lake
- Late Summer Pollinator Surveys

Photo Kent Duyree

RESTORING LAND, WATER AND WONDER

Tenth Annual Business Forum

More than 300 guests joined our Business Forum this year, which featured remarks on the "The Future of Health Care" from Andrea Walsh, CEO and President of HealthPartners.

A Q & A followed, facilitated by Rick Kupchella, former news anchor, serial entrepreneur, and founder of i.e. network. Presenting sponsors were Land O'Lakes and Stoel Rives.

Other highlights:

Great River Greening was the charitable partner of Kellogg Craft Beer Overlook, for a week in July. The beer garden in Kellogg Mall Park, along the river in Downtown Saint Paul, shares a portion of its revenue with select nonprofits.

Buckthorn Beer Bash: Thanks to the generosity of Summit Brewing Company we hosted a party in The Rathskeller to thank Great River Greening supporters.



Thank You!

MAJOR PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS OF PROJECTS AND VOLUNTEER EVENTS FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

3M
Andersen Corporate Foundation
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Capitol Region Watershed District
City of Saint Paul
Connexus Energy
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Ecolab
Friends of Maplewood Nature
Friends of Wolsfeld Woods
Hardenbergh Foundation
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
City of Lindström
Connexus Energy
Minnesota Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund
Minnesota Outdoor Heritage Fund
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Sherburne County
Outdoor Heritage Fund
Ramsey County
Sherburne Soil & Water Conservation District
U.S. Fish & Wildlife, Xerces Society
7 Mile Creek: Nicollet Soil and Water Conservation District, Board of Water and Soil Resources, Bush Foundation, AgriBank, CHS Foundation, ClifBar Family Foundation, Rahr Corporation, McKnight Foundation

In the News June - November

Start Tribune: Pilot Knob in Dakota County is designated as a historic site after 15-year effort

ABC Newspapers: Anoka County partners with nonprofit for conservation project

Star Tribune: St. Paul debuts downtown craft beer happy hour Tuesday

Pioneer Press: Thirty years in the making, Fish Creek Trail to open in Maplewood

KVSC Radio: MN DNR and SCSU are using grant to clear up Talahi Woods

Mankato Free Press: A bit of good news for Seven Mile Creek, but many problems persist

Pioneer Press Opinion: Got Milkweed?

Grow with KARE11 Feature: Great River Greening Milkweed Challenge

St. Cloud State U: Rescuing our bur oaks

See articles at greatrivergreening.org/news

MAJOR DONORS

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Great River Greening inspires, engages and leads communities in conserving and caring for the land and water that enrich our lives