

The  
*Prairie*  
*Enthusiasts*



# 2019 Annual Report



2020 TPE Photo Contest Winner - "The Beauty of the Burn" (Photo by Sue Steinmann)

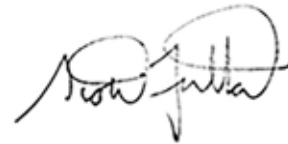
# Executive Director's Message

The year 2019 was a good one for TPE. We continued our land protection work as an accredited land trust with the addition of a major donated easement as well as four smaller but important additions to existing preserves. Our land management activities continued in full swing, carried out in all eleven of our local chapters by both volunteers and contractors on TPE preserves, easements, public conservation lands, and private lands. We also continued our growth in educational outreach programs, with chapters conducting innovative field trips, courses, workshops, and other events and activities.

The finances of the organization continue to be strong. One major achievement for the year was the adoption of a new income allocation policy which fully funds our central Chapter Support organization while putting the maximum amount of revenues to work carrying out our mission at the chapter level, distributing the centralized costs equitably between chapters with widely differing budgets.

The year ended with news that we had received a major 3-year grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to fund new staff providing educational outreach and support services for private landowners. With all these many achievements, we are looking forward to a great 2020.

I very much wish to express my personal thanks to all of the members of the greater TPE community - the board and chapter leadership, staff, committee members, site stewards, and, most especially, all of the many members and other volunteers who provide the countless hours and financial support that make our work possible. We are all truly Grassroots Conservation in Action!



**Scott Fulton**  
President & Acting Executive Director

## Land Protection

TPE's largest land protection project in 2019 was a donated conservation easement on the Horseshoe Mound Preserve in East Galena, Ill. The preserve is owned by the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation (JDCF) and is located on a high bluff with dramatic scenic views of the city of Galena and the Mississippi River. The property contains prairie, oak savanna and dry-mesic upland forest and an extensive trail system. The ability of TPE to take ownership of the conservation easement enabled JDCF to expand this important preserve from 28 to 150 acres in total size.



Dedication of the Foslin Addition to the Avon Ridge Preserve in Rock County, Wis. (Photo by Jerry Newman)

In addition to Horseshoe Mound, TPE made several additions to its existing preserves. These additions provided additional habitat, as well as critical access for parking and management, and buffering from adjacent properties.

- **Cultrano Addition to Muralt Bluff / Iltis Savanna**  
1.2 acres (Green County, Wis.)
- **Foslin Addition to Avon Ridge Preserve**  
6 acres (Rock County, Wis.)
- **Wilken Addition to Parrish Oak Savanna**  
4.3 acres (Dane County, Wis.)
- **Addition to Rattlesnake Ridge Preserve**  
16.1 acres (Iowa County, Wis.)

In total TPE has permanently protected:

**36 owned preserves (2,651 acres)**  
**14 conservation easements (889 acres)**  
**3,540 acres total conservation land**

# Restoration & Land Management

All of TPE's eleven chapters are highly active in land restoration and management, engaging in a year-round cycle of tree and brush control, prescribed burns, invasive plant removal, and seed collection, processing and spreading. Increasingly, chapters are working collaboratively with other organizations and local landowners to develop projects at a larger landscape scale.



Spring 2019 burn on Pleasant Valley Bluff, Winona, Minn. (Photo by Gabe Ericksen)

One of the more exciting projects is the Pleasant Valley Corridor led by Roberta Bumann and Gabe Ericksen of the Minnesota Driftless Chapter. For several years, the chapter has done major management work on Pleasant Valley Bluff, a privately owned hill prairie on an enormous bluff with spectacular views of downtown Winona, Minn. and the Mississippi River. In 2019, the group initiated a new project to work with landowners in planting pollinator habitat along roadsides, in meadows, and in pocket gardens in their yards with the intent to create a corridor of the various landscapes complimentary to the prairie bluffs in this Driftless Area valley. In January 2020, the group received a grant from the Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources in the Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood program.

**TPE devoted 52% of its 2019 expenses to restoration & land management**

# Education & Outreach

This year saw continuing major growth in the education and outreach activities of TPE's chapters. Many provided training opportunities for burn crew members in order to expand our capacity to get fire on the ground. The field trip program continued strong, and the chapters hosted or participated in an extraordinary number of other educational and outreach activities, including public events, workshops, internships and other programs for students.



The 2019 Wisconsin Master Naturalist class learns about soils from instructor and organizer Pat Trochlell at TPE's Mounds View Grassland Preserve barn. (Photo by Rob Baller.)

A great example is the Wisconsin Master Naturalist Program, conducted for the fourth time by the Empire-Sauk Chapter. Participant Roger Reynolds said:

“The course brought together an incredible mix of passionate, knowledgeable, creative, curious and fun people, both the educators and students. I so enjoyed learning more about nature, with an emphasis on the fire dependent ecosystems, while also looking at so many facets of the natural world of Wisconsin. It's amazing to see how geology, the water cycle, millions of years, and ice ages all influenced where badgers live, how fire spreads, how parasitic Wood Betony helps kill cool season grasses, restoring prairie for so many plants, insects, birds and mammals.”

**In 2019 TPE hosted or participated in:**

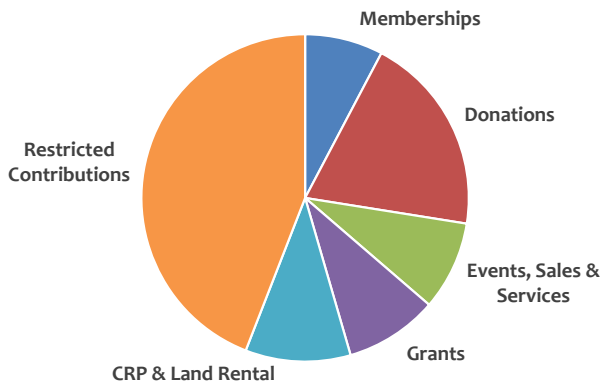
**40 field trips  
126 other events & activities**

# Statement of Activities

# Statement of Position

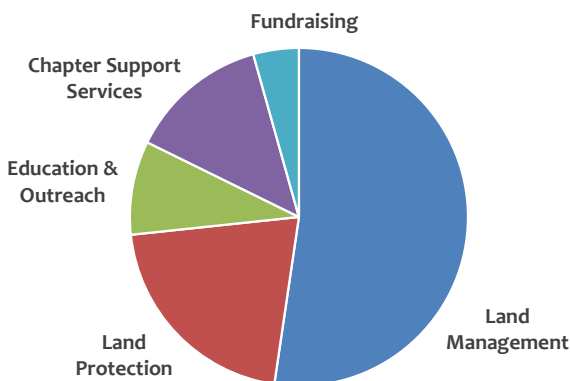
## Revenues, Gains & Other Support

Memberships	\$ 71,648	8%
Donations	\$ 183,791	20%
Events, Sales & Services	\$ 81,757	9%
Grants	\$ 85,396	9%
CRP & Land Rental	\$ 96,501	10%
Restricted Contributions	\$ 409,315	44%
	\$ 928,409	100%



## Expenses

Land Management	\$ 358,310	52%
Land Protection	\$ 143,704	21%
Education & Outreach	\$ 61,338	9%
Chapter Support Services	\$ 91,525	13%
Fundraising	\$ 29,839	4%
	\$ 684,717	100%



## Assets

### Current Assets

Cash & equivalents	\$ 462,469
Receivables	\$ 46,364
Other	\$ 34,253
	\$ 543,086

### Property & Equipment (net of depreciation)

Land & improvements	\$ 9,395,134
Equipment	\$ 22,113
	\$ 9,417,247

### Investments & Restricted Cash

	\$ 2,175,366
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<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	\$ 12,135,699
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## Liabilities & Net Assets

### Liabilities

Accounts payable	\$ 5,058
Deferred revenue	\$ 3,850
Accrued salaries & expenses	\$ 22,558
	\$ 31,466

### Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$ 576,382
With donor restrictions	\$ 11,527,851
	\$ 12,104,233

<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	\$ 12,135,699
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## Notes

1. Financial statement as of Dec. 31, 2019, audited by Johnson Block & Company.
2. Includes both The Prairie Enthusiasts, Inc. and The Prairie Enthusiasts Trust.
3. Donated land and easements totalling \$737,400 not included in Restricted Contributions.