

## St. Croix Valley Chapter of The Prairie Enthusiasts (TPE) Scholarship

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**Recipient:** *Ellie Gruber*

**Hometown:** *Stillwater, Minnesota*

**Scholarship Amount:** \$1000

*This scholarship is extremely helpful for me because it helps lessen the burden of tuition for me as I pay for college myself. This will allow me to save up more for next semester and not be as stressed during the school year if I am not able to work as much as I would like to. Due to help of it, I also be content knowing it would allow me to be able to take a day off of work if needed in order to focus on my homework and get ahead of due dates without any stress of missing those hours on my paycheck. I am very grateful to have received this scholarship, and I will put it to good use as I continue my education journey in conservation. I am excited to move forward to next semester, knowing some of my tuition has been taken care of.*

### **Proudest Academic Achievement**

*My proudest academic achievement would be graduating from high school receiving the white cords and an academic achievement award for my high GPA. I was proud of this because I was the first one in my family to graduate with cords, and I was the youngest. It made me smile knowing that I was able to do something before my siblings could. As long as I can remember I have always been outdoors or with animals enjoying my time. I had a huge love for both and originally started off my college journey in pre-vet thinking about becoming a veterinarian. However, after my first year it did not seem like the right path for me, so I turned to something else that I loved, the outdoors, a major in conservation. I love our state and national parks and I love the wildlife that inhabits them. I thought, if I can protect our natural habitats I can protect the wildlife that call that area their home as well. To me this was a win-win, I get to spend my time in the outdoors, seeing and experiencing new things. I get to protect our environment and in doing so I get to protect all the animals that we share this beautiful planet with. I know I made the right decision and I am excited to see where I go after graduation.*

### **Aspirations, Career Goals and Life Plans**

*This question is a little tricky, because there are so many different paths that a major in conservation has to offer! There are so many different ecosystems all over the world, all different from one another. It is difficult to choose what would be the best*

*fit for me. I do have a couple ideas in mind, but there are still so many others to consider. I can often see myself doing habitat restoration with the DNR. Because with habitats, it is not only the ecosystem itself, but a home to the wildlife there. I have thought about the Wildlife Fisheries Service as well, I have looked into their website and have enjoyed reading what they do and I imagine myself doing that as well. I hope to get an internship with them one day to truly get a feel for their line of work. There are many things that I aspire to accomplish in this field of work, but my overall goal is to make our environment better off than when I left it. To make our ecosystems thrive again, not just for their function but for the biodiversity that will thrive along with it.*