



The

Prairie Enthusiasts

Annual Community Report

2025-2026

Board of Directors



President
Jim Rogala



Vice President
Alice Mirk



Treasurer
Jay Rutherford



Secretary
Katie Hahn

Chapter Board Representatives



Chippewa Savannas
Katie Hahn



Coulee Region
Jon Rigden



Empire-Sauk
Rich Henderson



Glacial Prairie
Nancy Gloe



Many Rivers
Addeline Theis Paradis



Minnesota Driftless
Peter Hartman



Minnesota Oak Savanna
Greg Heberlein



Northwest Illinois
Jay Rutherford



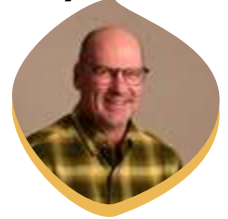
Prairie Bluff
Jerry Newman



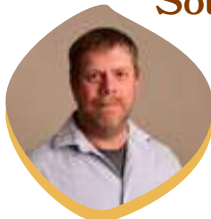
Prairie Sands
Cheri Salzberg



Southwest Wisconsin
Kay Wienke



St. Croix Valley
Peter Fritz



Sunrise
Shawn Kadlec



Emeritus
Gary Eldred

2026-2029 Strategic Plan

At our 2026 annual retreat, The Prairie Enthusiasts Board of Directors and staff met to determine the organization's direction and priorities for the next three years. Our 2026-2029 strategic plan was the culmination of our collective review and collaboration. This plan focuses on strengthening our foundation and increasing our mission impact. We're excited to share our plans with you, and appreciate your support for this important work!



1 Support long-term growth through organizational structures

The Prairie Enthusiasts will celebrate 40 years in 2027, and we are building the foundation for the next 40 years. By focusing on organizational foundations, including succession planning, Board of Directors structures, Chapter Support staffing, and strong policies and procedures, our work will be more strategic and efficient, increasing impact.



2 Improve financial resilience

The majority of The Prairie Enthusiasts' support comes from individuals like you. And being good stewards of financial resources means we have a long-term funding plan in place to ensure prairies will continue to get the care they need. The Prairie Enthusiasts will ensure funding sources are diversified and its reserves are robust.



3 Drive membership and volunteer growth

When more people learn and care about prairies, more prairies receive the land stewardship they need. We envision a future where our membership and volunteer bases are strong and consistently growing.



4 Increase prescribed fire capacity

Fire is an essential tool for restoring and maintaining prairies. Understanding and resolving the challenges to putting more fire on the land is crucial to keeping these habitats healthy. The Prairie Enthusiasts will ensure Chapters are better-positioned to implement the fire regimes needed to steward properties they care for.



5 Expand educational opportunities

Education is a key element to connecting people to prairies as well as deepening their relationships with these rare habitats, and The Prairie Enthusiasts will be well-positioned to reach interested audiences.



6 Advance land protection and stewardship program

Remnants are slipping away every day. In order to save these threatened places and the wildlife they support, it's pivotal for The Prairie Enthusiasts to be in a position to act quickly and ensure that the land is not only protected but responsibly stewarded for generations to come.

From top to bottom: pale purple coneflower by Dave Kelly. Monarch on swamp milkweed by Catherine McKenzie. Field trip by Bob Jankowski. Prescribed burn by Jim Wilson. Blister beetles by Dan Winkler. Mounds View Grassland by Sarah Barron.

Thank you for your support last year!



It is with great pleasure that The Prairie Enthusiasts' Board and staff can present this Annual Community Report. The strength of our community was evident this year in our growth in volunteers and donors, and the accomplishments that resulted in our successes on the ground. Our aggressive approach to building a stronger organization didn't come without challenges, but we feel poised to consolidate our gains and look forward to greater mission impact. We appreciate the role all of our community members and staff played in our successes in the past and their contributions towards a future where more fire-dependent ecosystems are protected and well-stewarded.

— Jim Rogala, The Prairie Enthusiasts Board President

Education & Outreach



*Empire-Sauk Chapter Interns.
Photo by Andy Sleger.*



Reid Bartholomew and Mark van der Linden learn bumblebee identification from Northwest Illinois Chapter Members Laura Dufford and Barb Siekowski. Photo by Sarah Barron.

1,783

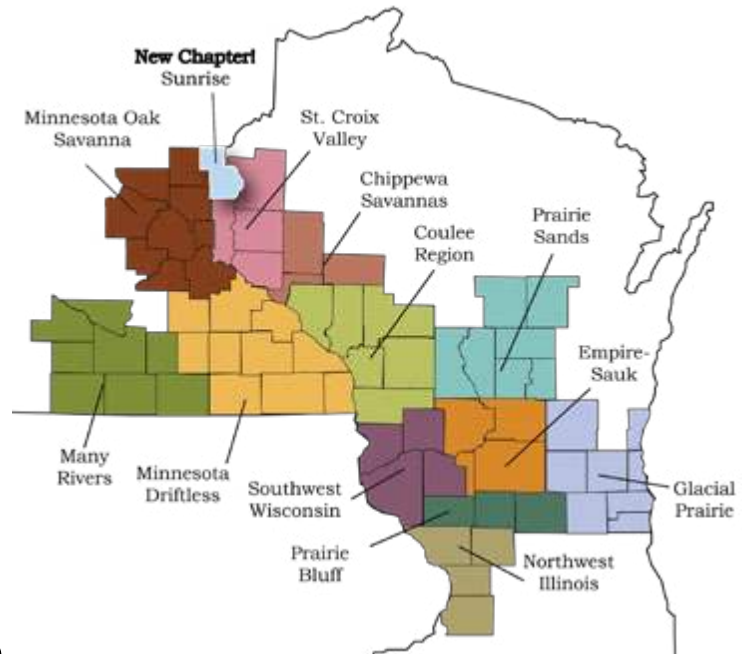
CONTRIBUTING
MEMBERS



Sunrise Chapter kick-off event.
Photo by Chelsea Hanson.

NEW CHAPTER

SUNRISE



132

OUTREACH EVENTS



Left: Members take a closer look at plants in the pathway of Pleasure Valley Conservancy in the Empire-Sauk Chapter. Photo by Sarah Barron.

Below: Minnesota Driftless Chapter tour of Prairie Creek Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Stephen Winter.

399

NEW MEMBERS



Stewardship



500+
WORK PARTIES

5 LAND MANAGEMENT
PLANS COMPLETED



**ADVISORY VISITS
WITH LANDOWNERS
AND SITE STEWARDS**



Top: Empire-Sauk Chapter volunteers seed collecting at Mounds View Grassland. Photo by Rob Baller. Bottom Left: Dan Carter surveying at Mathy Bluff Prairie. Photo by Jon Rigden. Bottom Right: Observing a prescribed burn at Mounds View Grassland. Photo by Reid Bartholomew.

Protection



4,643

TOTAL ACRES
PROTECTED & STEWARDED

MUKWONAGO RIVER OAK BARRENS 61 ACRES PROTECTED LAST YEAR

An hour outside of Milwaukee, this gorgeous property features sand barrens habitat, with over 323 native vascular plant species, and access to the pristine Mukwonago River. This habitat is quickly gaining an abundance of biodiversity with help from the 1,565 volunteer hours on this site last year.



All photos from Mukwonago River Oak Barrens by Dan Carter.

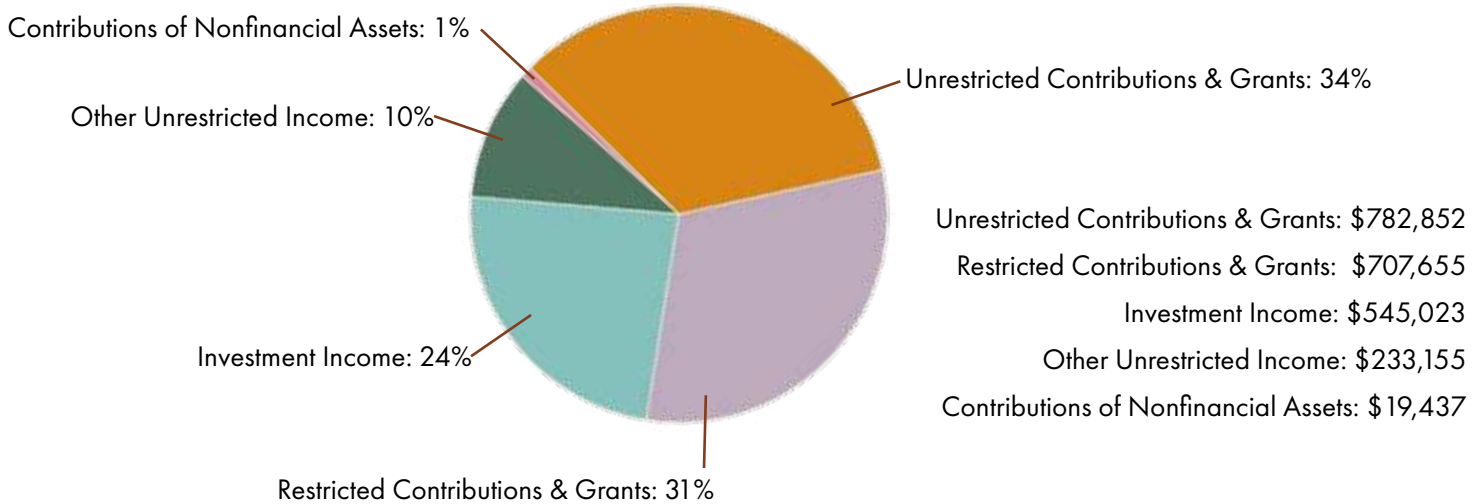


Financials

April 1, 2025-March 31, 2026

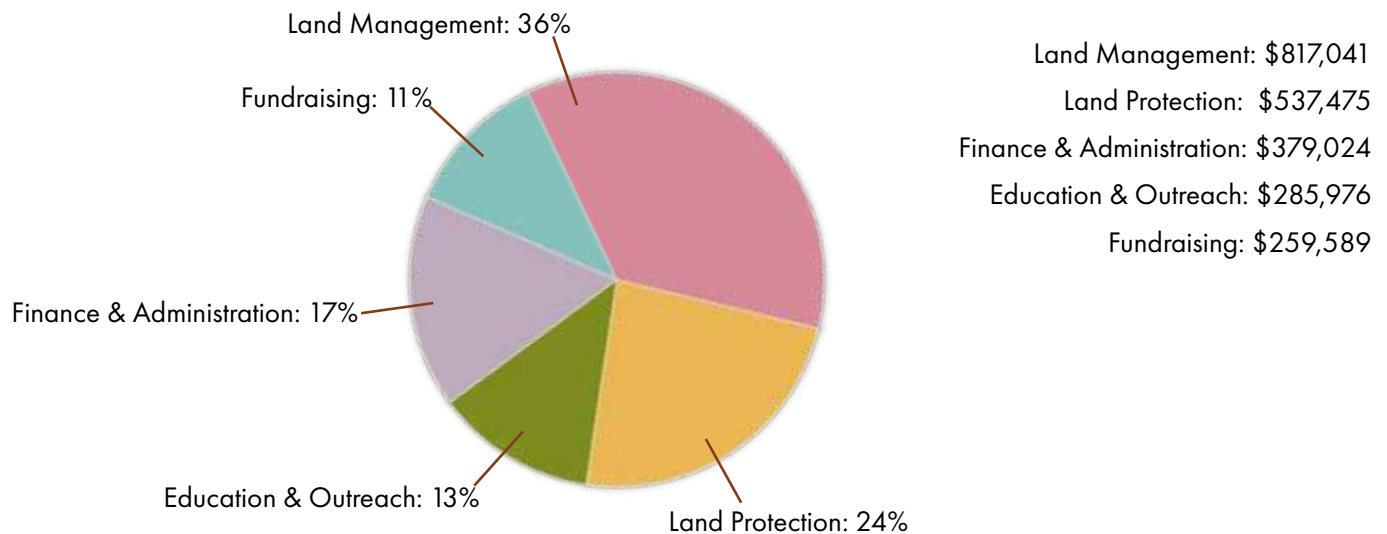
Revenue and Other Support

TOTAL: \$2,288,122



Expenses and Acquisitions

TOTAL: \$2,279,105



Notes:

1. Includes both The Prairie Enthusiasts, Inc. and the Prairie Enthusiasts Trust
2. Financial statements audited by CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen LLP)
3. Land Management amounts includes \$58,524 of capital equipment purchases included in Equipment Assets on the statement of financial position
4. Land Protection includes \$362,036 of capital land purchases included in land on the statement of financial position

Assets

Current Assets:

Cash & Equivalents: \$192,528

Receivables: \$41,388

Other: \$119,781

Total: \$353,697

Property & Equipment:

Land & Improvements: \$14,051,716

Equipment: \$423,764

Depreciation: (\$362,406)

Investments & Restricted Cash: \$5,227,487

TOTAL ASSETS: \$19,694,258

Liabilities & Net Assets

Liabilities:

Accounts Payable: \$148,397

Deferred Revenue: \$10,078

Accrued Salaries & Expenses: \$63,551

Total: \$222,026

Net Assets:

Without Donor Restrictions: \$602,612

With Donor Restrictions: \$18,869,620

Total: \$19,472,232

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS: \$19,694,258

Join Our Legacy Society!

Perhaps you remember the first time you heard the call of a dickcissel in the prairie. Or maybe you remember the camaraderie of a burn crew wrangling a grassland fire. Or the sight of a whole group of people on their hands and knees to get a closer look at a spring ephemeral. You can make a lasting impact for the places that spark these memories and the community that you've made them with.

Legacy gifts, also known as planned gifts, are a powerful way you can help to ensure the future of prairies, oak savannas and all the wildlife that depend upon them. Through a legacy gift to the Prairie Enthusiasts, you can enable future generations to experience the vast array of life.

**Learn more about our planned giving program by calling or emailing our
Mission Advancement Coordinator, Reid Bartholomew.**

RBartholomew@ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org ■ (608) 888-6872

Legacy Society member Sue Steinmann. Photo by Rob Baller.



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  ThePrairieEnthusiasts



Old Growth Ecosystems

Hidden Knowledge and Ancient Stories

2027 Virtual Conference | February 17-19