Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2018 / ML 2017 Request for Funding

Date: May 26, 2016

Program or Project Title: Fairmont Lakes Foundation Dutch Creek Habitat Restoration (HRE08)

Funds Requested: $1,580,000

Manager's Name: Mike Katzenmeyer
Title: Chair
Organization: Fairmont Lakes Foundation, Inc.
Address: PO Box 523
City: Fairmont, MN 56031
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County Locations: Martin

Regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

Activity types:

- Restore
- Enhance

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Prairie

Abstract:

The Fairmont Lakes Foundation Dutch Creek Habitat Restoration project will restore the floodplain wetlands and upland habitat of an important waterbody and wildlife complex in Martin County.

Design and scope of work:

The Fairmont Lakes Foundation, Inc, a 501(c)(3) organization, is partnering with the City of Fairmont and the Martin Soil and Water Conservation District to restore two wetland basins along Dutch Creek, which flows into the Fairmont Chain of Lakes. The basins will be restored with wetland hydrology and seeding with native wetland vegetation. The upland areas of the site will be restored with native prairie plant species. A diversion weir and cross vanes allowing for fish passage will be installed in the Creek to divert overflow water into the wetland basins.

The project will improve the habitat and water quality of the City of Fairmont's Chain of five lakes. This shallow lake system, located in Southern Minnesota, is a critical part of the Fairmont economy and is a place where many in Martin County, and the region, go to recreate. By restoring this habitat, additional spawning areas for fish, in particular Northern Pike, will be created. Waterfowl habitat will also be increased.

The Fairmont Lakes Foundation was reconstituted in 2013 and has been active in promoting stewardship of Fairmont's five lakes, George, Sisseton, Budd, Hall, and Amber. The group has organized multiple lake cleanups, has restored in-lake aquatic vegetation, and has completed multiple lakeshore restorations with project partners. Through the organization's planning, one of the next steps identified to improve the Lakes was increased habitat, water storage, and water treatment along Dutch Creek before it enters Hall Lake. This is also a priority project for the City of Fairmont and is a priority identified in the Martin County Water Plan.

Which sections of the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan are applicable to this

project:

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Long Range Plan for Fisheries Management
- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda

Describe how your program will advance the indicators identified in the plans selected:

The broad goals of the Fisheries Management Plan include: To make recreational fishing as good as it can be in the state of Minnesota for the present and future; To conserve, maintain, enhance, or rehabilitate Minnesota's aquatic resources to serve environmental, social, and commercial purposes; To foster an ethic of natural resource stewardship among all Minnesotans. Our program advances this Plan by conserving and improving aquatic habitat, both in the spawning habitat provided by the wetland restoration and improving the water quality of the Fairmont Chain of Lakes resulting in a healthier fishery. This project would also provide increased educational opportunities.

The goals identified in the DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda will be advanced by protecting acres of prairie wetlands and grasslands and by increasing nongame wildlife populations.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Prairie:

- Protect, enhance, or restore existing wetland/upland complexes, or convert agricultural lands to new wetland/upland habitat complexes

Describe how your program will produce and demonstrate a significant and permanent conservation legacy and/or outcomes for fish, game, and wildlife as indicated in the LSOHC priorities:

Native prairie will be protected and expanded into cropped areas to provide a permanent buffer for the project wetlands adjacent to Dutch Creek. Northern Pike spawning is expected to be developed to provide a large predator fish for the chain of lakes. Restored wetland and adjacent areas will add habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds. Local source plants will be used in habitat restoration areas and native habitats will be permanently protected. A goal of habitat and species diversity will guide plans to maximize the establishment of pollinator habitat and meet the needs of at-risk species and species in greatest conservation need.

The Fairmont Lakes Foundation is made up of private landowners. This project will increase their participation in habitat projects and create new opportunities for Martin County, and Southern Minnesota, residents to appreciate and enjoy species in the Prairie Section. The Dutch Creek floodplain wetlands will also provide water storage, preventing degradation to the Fairmont Chain of Lakes, which is connected to the Blue Earth River Basin.

Describe how the proposal uses science-based targeting that leverages or expands corridors and complexes, reduces fragmentation or protects areas identified in the MN County Biological Survey:

Just downstream of the site is a designated Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS) spot with moderate biodiversity significance, Hall Lake Woods. This woodland park was identified as a basswood - bur oak - green ash forest by MCBS in 2008. This native riparian forest extends south along the west shore of Hall Lake and Bud Lake for over a mile and is included in the 260 acre City of Fairmont Cedar Park. The Dutch Creek wetlands will expand the habitat corridor along the west side of the Fairmont lakes. The five lakes in the City of Fairmont are part of a habitat corridor that expands from the south edge of Martin County, into Iowa, and to the north edge of Martin County, into Watonwan County. Improving the habitat around Dutch Creek will improve this whole habitat corridor.

How does the proposal address habitats that have significant value for wildlife species of greatest conservation need, and/or threatened or endangered species, and list targeted species:

Restoring floodplain wetlands and improving upland habitat will benefit Blanding's Turtles, a State of Minnesota threatened species. While no Blanding's Turtles have been identified at the Dutch Creek site, this species has been found on the north part of the lake chain habitat corridor and the south part of the lake chain habitat corridor. This site will provide suitable habitat for the introduction of listed plant species and has the potential to support species like the Monarch, pollinators and other insects in need of habitat. Burrowing owl, Trumpeter swan, Horned grebe, American bittern, Sandhill crane, Wilson's Phalarope, are species that have been seen recently in Martin County, utilizing similar habitats to the habitat planned for the proposed project area.

As part of the Minnesota River Prairie Ecological Subsection, prairie and non-forested wetlands are the two key habitats. Two main Priority Conservation Actions identified for both of these types of habitat is to manage invasive species. This project will remove invasive plant species and restore the area with native species. Future action to remove invasive species will occur by working with the Cooperative Weed Management Area established in Martin County.

Identify indicator species and associated quantities this habitat will typically support:

The wetland basins and buffers can be expected to hold four pairs of mallards, produce three harvestable rooster pheasants, hold six pairs of bobolink, and five pairs of grasshopper sparrows. With several species of milkweed established the area should add 50 monarchs to the population. Serving as a spawning area for northern pike, the wetland is expected to produce enough fry to the Fairmont Lakes to support a population of 200 adult pike.

Outcomes:

Programs in prairie region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced shallow lakes and wetlands *The number of acres restored and protected. The diversity of the restored and expanded native prairie habitat. The number of people who learn more about habitat and Species in Greatest Conservation Need. Improved water quality in the Fairmont Chain of Lakes.*

How will you sustain and/or maintain this work after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended:

The Fairmont Lakes Foundation is an ongoing steward of the Lakes and will work to maintain this site, in cooperation with project partners, after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended. The Foundation has already committed funds to monitor the water quality of Dutch Creek and the five lakes and many of the Foundation Board members are citizen lake monitors.

Explain the things you will do in the future to maintain project outcomes:

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2021	Non-Profit Partners	Monitor	Vegetation Management	Structural Management
2022 and Annually	City and Partners	Monitor Veg/Diversity	Monitor Structural Integrety	Maintenance as needed
2025 Ongoing	City and Partners	Monitor for Sedimentation	Cleanout as Needed	Revegetate as Needed

What is the degree of timing/opportunistic urgency and why it is necessary to spend public money for this work as soon as possible:

This project will require a significant amount of sediment removal. If done now, the timeline will match that of a project less than a mile away that will require enough fill to accept all of the fill created by the excavations on this project. If not done now, disposing of fill will make this project extremely costly as well as the other project of decommissioning the city's lime pits.

How does this proposal include leverage in funds or other effort to supplement any OHF appropriation:

The City of Fairmont purchased the 35 acres for this project in 2003. The land is included as match for this project.

Upstream water quality treatment practices will continue to be a priority for this watershed. A separate Clean Water Fund application will be submitted to further reduce downstream impacts including the project area. These practices will include soil health initiatives and structural practices, like woodchip bioreactors, to reduce the amount of sediment and nutrients in Dutch Creek. Permanent water storage has been installed upstream, but additional storage is still being planned.

Relationship to other funds:

- Not Listed

Describe the relationship of the funds:

Not Listed

Describe the source and amount of non-OHF money spent for this work in the past:

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2002	State and Federal	24,000
2003	State and Federal	78,000
2003	State and Federal	97,500
2004	State and Federal	50,900

Activity Details

Requirements:

If funded, this proposal will meet all applicable criteria set forth in MS 97A.056 - **Yes**

Will restoration and enhancement work follow best management practices including MS 84.973 Pollinator Habitat Program - **Yes**

Is the activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, subd 13(f), tribal lands, and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15 - **Yes (County/Municipal)**

Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program - **No**

Land Use:

Will there be planting of corn or any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program - **No**

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Finalize the Engineering Plans for the Project	2018
Construct the Wetlands	2018
Install Weir Structure and Cross Vanes	2019
Restore Wetland Vegetation	2019
Restore Prairie	2020

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: $1,580,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	$0	$0		$0
Contracts	$1,280,000	$10,000	Local Funds	$1,290,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	$0	$0		$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	$0	$77,000	City of Fairmont Property	$77,000
Easement Acquisition	$0	$0		$0
Easement Stewardship	$0	$0		$0
Travel	$0	$0		$0
Professional Services	$300,000	$0		$300,000
Direct Support Services	$0	$20,000	Local Funds	$20,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	$0	$0		$0
Capital Equipment	$0	$0		$0
Other Equipment/Tools	$0	$0		$0
Supplies/Materials	$0	$0		$0
DNR IDP	$0	$0		$0
Total	$1,580,000	$107,000	-	$1,687,000

Amount of Request:	$1,580,000
Amount of Leverage:	$107,000
Leverage as a percent of the Request:	6.77%
DSS + Personnel:	$0
As a % of the total request:	0.00%
Easement Stewardship:	$0
As a % of the Easement Acquisition:	-%

Does the amount in the contract line include R/E work?

Yes, the entire amount is for restoration and enhancement.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

The parcel has already been acquired by the City, which is listed under Fee Acquisition leveraged funds. The Direct Support Services will come from local partners paid with local funding.

Does this proposal have the ability to be scalable? - No

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	22	11	0	0	33
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	2	0	0	2
Total	22	13	0	0	35

Table 1b. How many of these Prairie acres are Native Prairie?

Type	Native Prairie
Restore	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Easement	0
Enhance	2
Total	2

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	$1,480,000	$80,000	$0	$0	$1,560,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Protect in Easement	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Enhance	$0	$20,000	$0	$0	$20,000
Total	$1,480,000	$100,000	$0	$0	$1,580,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	33	0	33
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	2	0	2
Total	0	0	0	35	0	35

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	$0	$0	$0	$1,560,000	$0	$1,560,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Protect in Easement	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Enhance	$0	$0	$0	$20,000	$0	$20,000
Total	$0	$0	$0	$1,580,000	$0	$1,580,000

Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	$67,273	$7,273	$0	$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	$0	$0	$0	$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	$0	$0	$0	$0
Protect in Easement	$0	$0	$0	$0
Enhance	$0	$10,000	$0	$0

Table 6. Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest
Restore	$0	$0	$0	$47,273	$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Protect in Easement	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Enhance	$0	$0	$0	$10,000	$0

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

0

I have read and understand Section 15 of the Constitution of the State of Minnesota, Minnesota Statute 97A.056, and the Call for Funding Request. I certify I am authorized to submit this proposal and to the best of my knowledge the information provided is true and accurate.

Parcel List

Explain the process used to select, rank and prioritize the parcels:

Not Listed

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

Martin

Name	TRDS	Acres	EstCost	Existing Protection?
Dutch Creek Habitat Restoration	10230219	35	$1,200,000	Yes

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type protect.

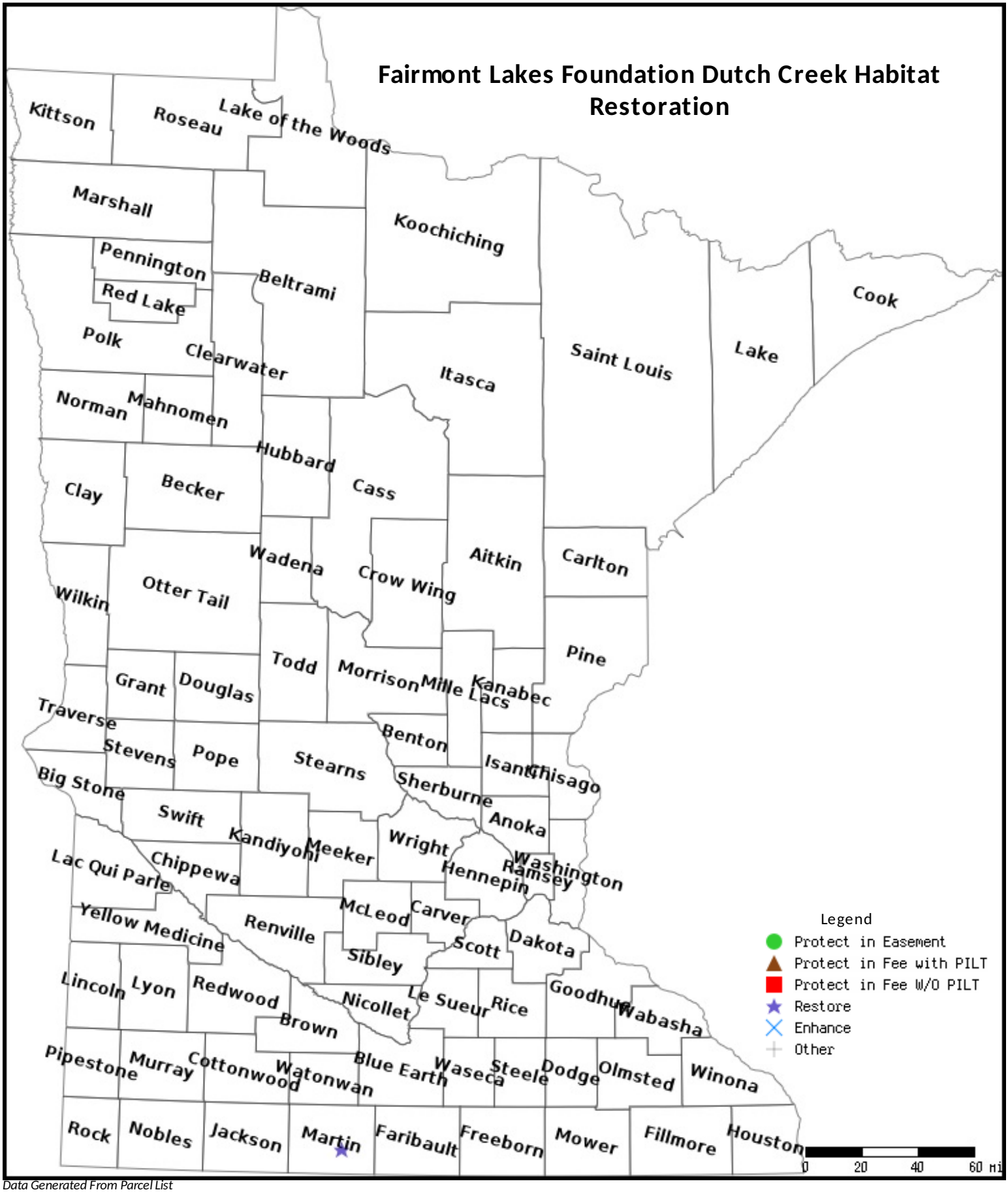
Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map



Data Generated From Parcel List

FAIRMONT Lakes Foundation, Inc.

The general purpose of the Fairmont Lakes Foundation is to enhance the quality of the lakes within the city of Fairmont, to promote the enhancement of the quality of the lakes, and increase awareness of the need for the enhancement and preservation of the quality of these resources. Incorporated in 1988, the Fairmont Lakes Foundation is dedicated to protecting, preserving, and promoting Fairmont's Lakes, whether through lake cleanup events, educating the public by stenciling storm drains, or working on lakeshore restoration projects.

Pictured left: Fairmont Lakes Foundation Board Member participating in a lake cleanup event.

Pictured above: Fishing pier purchased by the Fairmont Lakes Foundation to improve the community's access to the water.

The Dutch Creek Habitat Restoration project will restore the floodplain wetlands and upland habitat of 35 acres along Dutch Creek before it enters the City of Fairmont's Chain of Lakes. This project will provide habitat, water storage, and water treatment for an important corridor in southcentral Minnesota. This site is a priority identified by project partners in Martin County.

Dutch Creek Habitat Restoration Project Site

Pictured above, clockwise from top left: Deer on the project site; Native wildflowers (Bird's Foot Violet) on the project site; Dutch Creek; Upland area that will be restored to native prairie

Images of Existing Habitat & Water Storage in the Dutch Creek Watershed