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For Immediate Release:

Contact:

John Lenczewski, TU Minnesota Council Chair: 612-670-1629

Jeff Hastings, TU Driftless Area Project Manager: 608-606-4158

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Improving Trout Habitat Statewide

Three restoration projects funded by Outdoor Heritage Fund are complete.

St. Paul, Minn.--Three trout stream habitat restoration projects in Minnesota funded by the state's Outdoor Heritage Fund have been completed by Minnesota Trout Unlimited chapters.

The restoration projects were completed on the Vermillion River in Dakota County, Kabekona Creek in Hubbard County and Crow Spring and the Middle Branch of the Whitewater River in Olmsted County.

"This is a fantastic opportunity to utilize Minnesota's dedicated funding for projects that will not only directly benefit Minnesota trout anglers, but also every Minnesotan who values clean water and the economic benefits of coldwater angling throughout the state. We are honored to have this opportunity to improve Minnesota's natural resources," said John Lenczewski, chairman of TU's Minnesota Council.

Last spring, at the recommendation of the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, the Minnesota Legislature appropriated over \$2 million from the state's Outdoor Heritage Fund to Minnesota Trout Unlimited chapters to carry out 12 separate on-the-ground habitat projects in 10 Minnesota counties. The \$2,050,000 grant became available in July. By the time fieldwork ceased in mid-October, in order to protect fall trout spawning activity, three projects were completed.

The Twin Cities Chapter of TU recently restored a 3/4-mile stretch on the Vermillion River near Farmington in Dakota County, on a 46-acre site that was purchased by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in 2008. Twin

Cities TU volunteers also restored 2,200 feet of Hay Creek near Red Wing, using non-state funds as part of their “match” for 2010 fieldwork being funded from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

Volunteers from the Hiawatha Chapter of Trout Unlimited, in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Lanesboro regional fisheries office and local contractors, repaired and improved a 3.1 mile stretch of the Middle Branch of the Whitewater and Crow Spring in Olmsted County.

The Headwaters Chapter of Trout Unlimited worked to restore Kabekona Creek, near Laporte, in north central Minnesota, one of the state’s premier brook trout fisheries. This collaborative effort included the local landowner, DNR Fisheries, and members of the Headwaters Chapter, who volunteered over 180 hours to plan, prepare, and carry out the project. Additional savings were gained from donated material and equipment.

“We had a great summer; we were able to complete three projects on a very tight timeline. This wouldn’t have been possible without all the volunteers that came out to work, and the support we received from the DNR, local businesses and communities.” says Lenczewski, “People are excited about these projects, and are glad to see their tax dollars directly improving their communities.”

In spring 2010, TU’s seven Minnesota chapters will continue working with the Minnesota DNR and other conservation groups to complete the following projects: Hay Creek in Goodhue County; Lawndale Creek in Wilkin County; Little Rock Creek in Benton County; Mill Creek in Fillmore County; Pickwick Creek in Winona County; Trout Run Creek in Fillmore County; Straight River in Becker and Hubbard counties; Sucker River in St. Louis County and a second project on the Vermillion River in Dakota County.

By June, 2011, Minnesota Trout Unlimited and its partners plan on having restored over 14 miles of trout stream habitat.

For more information about Minnesota Trout Unlimited and these projects, go to: www.mntu.org

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