

Tallgrass Aspen Parklands

Protecting and Restoring Minnesota's Important Bird Areas

AUDUBON MINNESOTA & MINNESOTA LAND TRUST

WHAT IS THE IBA PROGRAM?

The goal of this Program is to preserve high quality prairie and wetland habitat in northwestern Minnesota within the Tallgrass Aspen Parklands (TAP) region. Audubon Minnesota and Minnesota Land Trust will work with landowners to permanently protect outstanding habitat through a fair market approach for purchasing conservation easements.

HOW ARE PROJECTS CHOSEN FOR THIS PROGRAM?

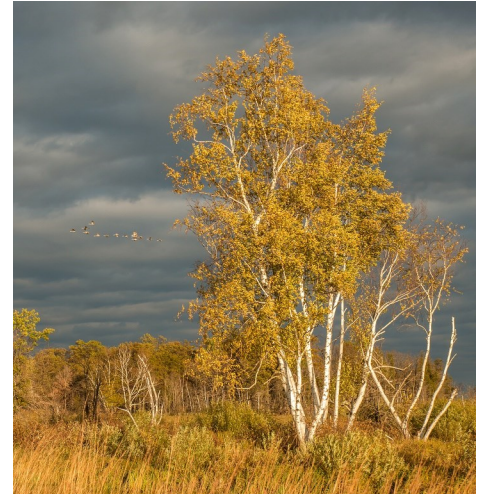
Landowners will be contacted to discuss the Program and how conservation easements work to protect the conservation values of their land. Eligible properties will initially be ranked based on the habitat qualities of the land, including: the size of the parcel, ecological features, and proximity to other protected lands. Based on the initial ranking and landowner interest, certain projects will be chosen to proceed. **Landowners who graze or hay their land are encouraged to apply.**

WHAT ARE CONSERVATION EASEMENTS?

Conservation easements are legally binding land use restrictions through which landowners voluntarily limit the use and development of their lands to permanently preserve its natural features. These perpetual easements, which remain in private ownership, contain provisions to assure prairies, wetlands, lakes, streams, and other natural habitats are protected.

EASEMENT LAND ELIGIBILITY:

- * Location within the Tallgrass Aspen Parklands Province (shown on map on the reverse side), **and** located within one or more of the following: an Important Bird Area, a Prairie Core, Prairie Corridors, or the Prairie Strategic Habitat Complexes, as defined in the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan.
- * Tracts 80 acres or more will receive a higher priority over smaller tracts.
- * Land comprised of prairie and/or wetland habitat.
- * Agricultural land consisting of row crops, tree farms, etc. may not comprise more than 10% of the property. This acreage will not be eligible for payment.
- * Acres already enrolled in preservation programs, such as term-RIM, CRP, or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's conservation easements may be eligible, depending on the level of protection of that program.
- * A Habitat Management Plan will be required for grazing or haying.
- * Feedlots are not allowed.
- * Maximum of one single-family residence and associated buildings allowed per parcel.
- * Future subdivision of parcels are limited.



Tallgrass Aspen Parklands Habitat

Photo: John Pennoyer



Sharp-tailed Grouse Photo: Audubon

**For more information
please contact:**

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Audubon Minnesota is a state office of the National Audubon Society and a non-profit, tax-exempt charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3). Established in 1979, Audubon Minnesota shares Audubon's 100+ year heritage of working for bird conservation and protecting our environment.

mn.audubon.org/TAP



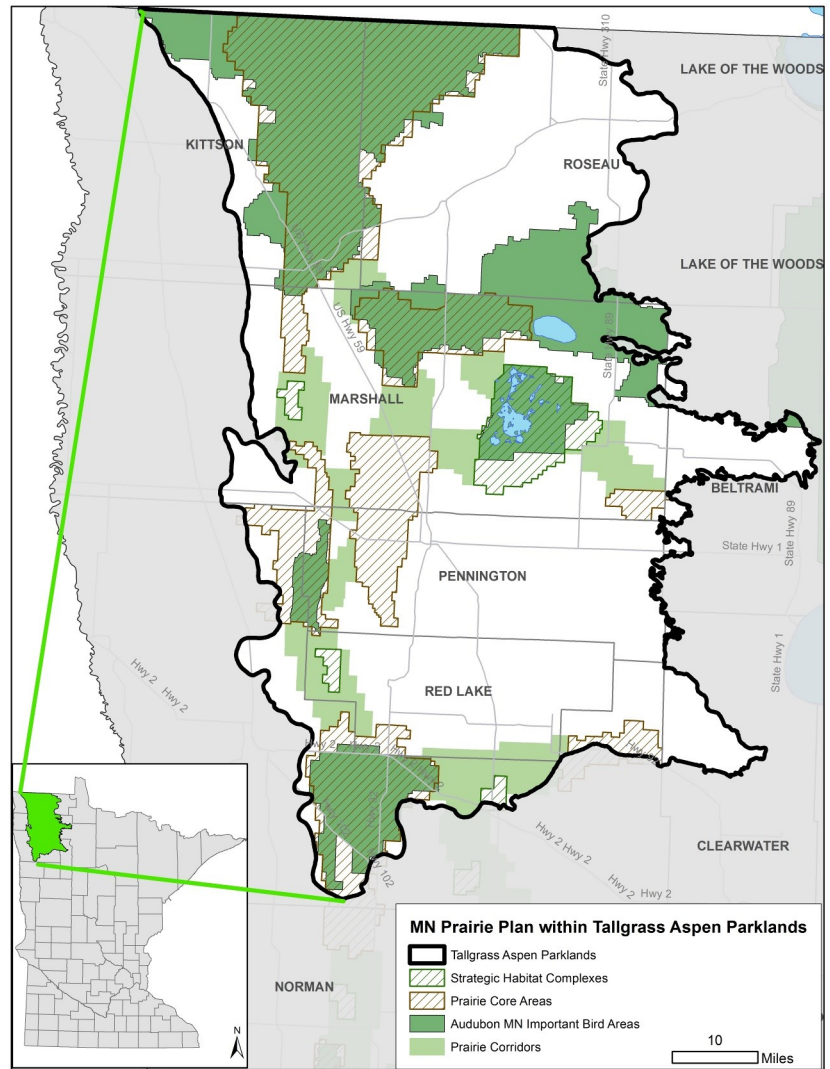
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Founded in 1991, Minnesota Land Trust has completed more than 500 projects to date, protecting over 45,000 acres of land and over a million feet of shoreline throughout Minnesota. One of the first nationally accredited land trusts in the country, it is a Section 501(c)(3) nonprofit conservation organization.

www.mnland.org



Funding for this program was provided by the Outdoor Heritage Fund as recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council.



Fair Market Value, Bids and Payment:

The maximum amount paid to a landowner for a conservation easement is determined by a qualified appraisal after easement terms have been negotiated. When considering what amount to bid per acre, a good place to start is to look at the value per acre assessed by the county assessor. The county-assessed values are for the full title ownership of the land. The value of a conservation easement is usually less than the assessed value since the landowner still retains ownership of the land and only agrees to restrict certain uses. Typically, values in the range of 30% to 70 % of the county-assessed value are supported by the qualified appraisal.

To participate in this program: Applications must be received via email or U.S. mail to Alex Wardwell.

Applications will be prioritized based on a competitive bid method which considers the habitat value and the bid amount to compile a project value rating. Donated conservation easements may also be eligible for the permanent conservation easement tax incentive.

All applications are non-binding on the landowner and the Land Trust until both parties agree to and sign final conservation easement documents. Successful applications will be provided a one-time payment upon finalizing a conservation easement with the Land Trust.

**For more information please visit this website:
mn.audubon.org/TAP**