

## UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER WATERSHED FUND

# Maiden Rock Bluff State Natural Area Oak Savanna Restoration

The Upper Mississippi Forest Partnership and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation jointly initiated the Upper Mississippi River Watershed Fund. The Foundation funds projects that benefit the forests of the Upper Mississippi while improving wildlife habitat and water quality.

## Background

Oak savannas were once a dominant feature in the Wisconsin landscape, covering more than 5 million acres. Today, just 500 acres remain, scattered in remnants across the region. Considered a globally rare ecosystem, the growing scarcity of oak savannas creates an urgent need for restoration. They harbor dozens of at-risk species including timber rattlesnake, peregrine falcon, dragon wormwood, and prairie sagebrush. As remnants shrink in size, species that require savanna and grassland habitat are likely to disappear from these sites.

## Location

Pepin County, Wisconsin, near the village of Stockholm

## Goals

Return the oak savanna to a more natural condition and provide habitat for species of concern

## Results

The project focuses on intensive restoration of 40 acres of degraded oak savanna on a limestone bluff overlooking the Mississippi River. The treated acreage lies within the Maiden Rock Bluff property, a 250-acre oak savanna parcel protected from development by the West Wisconsin Land Trust (WWLT) and buffered by another 340 acres of WWLT-protected lands.

Due to many years of fire suppression, the Maiden Rock Bluff oak savanna is overgrown with invasive woody vegetation. Initial treatments and followup will include invasive species control and prescribed fire to encourage the growth of ground-level vegetation. Vegetation will be monitored before and after restoration to assess results.

## Outcomes/Accomplishments

Restoration will enhance and expand habitat for at-risk species already using the site. Other at-risk species, such as the red-headed woodpecker, may begin to use the site after it has been enhanced and restored.

## Partners

West Wisconsin Land Trust

## Grant Amount

\$ 25,000



For more information:

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