

Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan addresses the primary causes of species population declines:

- Habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation
- Non-habitat issues such as low reproduction, poor dispersal ability, disease, or over exploitation
- Climate change impacts

Minnesota receives about \$1 million annually in State Wildlife Grant funds, which leverage other funds for match. Since the inception of the State Wildlife Grants Program, Minnesota has received over \$18 million which has supported over 60 projects throughout the state that addressed a few of the many unmet needs associated with SGCN conservation. Many of these projects inform investment of other conservation funds, including the Legacy Amendment and the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

Increased funding to implement State Wildlife Action Plans would allow MNDNR to provide additional incentives to public and private landowner to implement projects targeted specifically to SGCN and their habitats. Additional funding would increase MNDNR's ability to implement longer-term monitoring to better assess the distribution, abundance and conservation status of SGCN and to work with partners to improve project effectiveness through adaptive management.

Minnesota Teaming With Wildlife Coalition Members:

Audubon Minnesota

American Fisheries Society–Minnesota Chapter

Fish & Wildlife Legislative Alliance

Izaak Walton League Minnesota Division

Minnesota Conservation Federation

The Wildlife Society–Minnesota Chapter

National Wild Turkey Federation

Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society

Society for Conservation Biology

The Nature Conservancy



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INVESTING IN WILDLIFE SINCE 2000



STATE WILDLIFE GRANTS

February, 2016

Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan 2015 - 2025



working with partners for

*Wildlife
Conservation*

State Wildlife Grants In Action: *Benefitting Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)!*

Congressional Districts 1 & 7:



State Wildlife Grants (SWG) are funding survey and research efforts to identify the most important areas where conservation groups can focus efforts to benefit SGCN, including Dakota skipper (federally listed), monarch butterfly, grasshopper sparrow, and western meadowlark. SWG funds are used to annually monitor the Topeka shiner (federally listed) to inform the recovery of this species. A State Wildlife Grant with Iowa is also funding stream restoration to benefit this species. Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan works in partnership with the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan to maintain, restore and connect prairie, grassland and wetland habitats to benefit SGCN and other wildlife.

Congressional District 1:



Bluff prairies and grasslands, oak woodlands and savannas, and the Root and Mississippi Rivers and their tributaries provide habitats for fish, mussel, and reptile SGCN. State Wildlife Grants are funding the restoration of Bluffland habitats critical to SGCN in SE Minnesota in partnership with private landowners, National Wild Turkey Federation, Prairie Enthusiasts, Iowa DNR and Wisconsin DNR. MNDNR is working with partners in the Root and Cannon

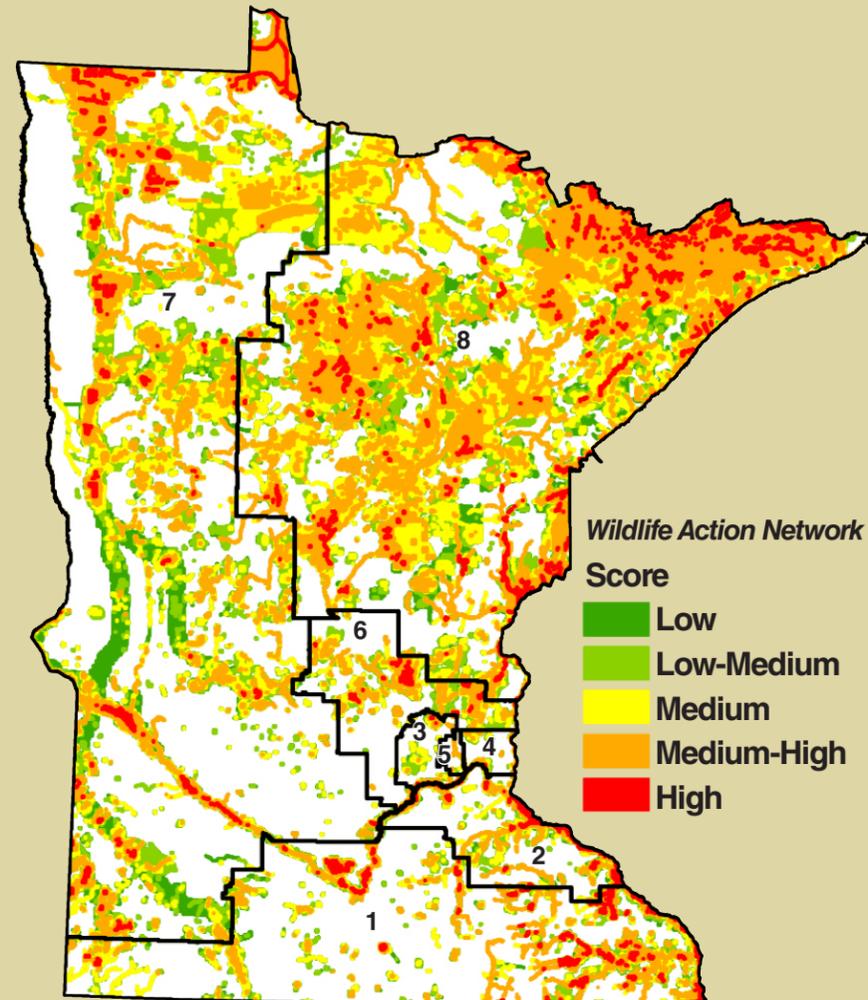
River Watersheds to include the Wildlife Action Network in area watershed plans.

Congressional Districts 4, 5, 6:



The St Croix River is the most important site for SGCN mussels in Minnesota. For the past 13 years SWG funds have supported a mussel propagation and reintroduction project in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the University of Minnesota. As a result, successful breeding of the reintroduced federally

endangered Higgins eye mussel has been documented in the Mississippi River Gorge.



The **Wildlife Action Network** identifies quality terrestrial and aquatic habitats for Species in Greatest Conservation Need. Higher scores (red, orange) indicate areas of particular importance based on a number of factors (SGCN populations, biodiversity, and stream/lake quality for example).

Congressional District 6:



Sand Dune State Forest, Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge and Uncas Dunes Scientific and Natural Area provide important habitats for SGCN including red-shouldered hawk, eastern towhee, Uncas skipper, Leonard's skipper, Blanding's turtle, plains hog-nosed snake and gophersnake. SWG funds are being used to monitor the response of target SGCN as habitat in this area is being restored. The results of this work will help tailor management to benefit SGCN.

Congressional District 8:



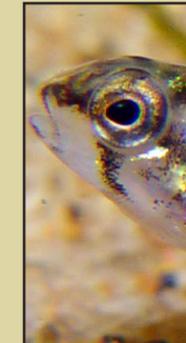
Helping to proactively conserve Minnesota's highest quality forests, SWG funds have been used to identify forest habitats most important to species in greatest conservation need. Minnesota WAP priority habitats include lowland conifer and mesic hardwood forests as well as High Conservation Value Forests. SWG funds will be invested in demonstration projects to identify options for managing forests for ecological and economic benefit.

Congressional District 2:



MNDNR is working with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Cannon River Watershed Partnership to include the Wildlife Action Network in their Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy. A SWG funded survey of bird populations helped inform the designation of the Vermillion Bottoms-Lower Cannon River as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by Audubon Minnesota.

Congressional District 3:



SWG funds have been used to conduct fish and mussel surveys in the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers, which provide information on the distribution and abundance of SGCN such as black buffalo. Three Rivers Park District is an important conservation partner, implementing SWG-funded monitoring of overwintering sites for reptile SGCN and improving habitat for

Blanding's turtle.