

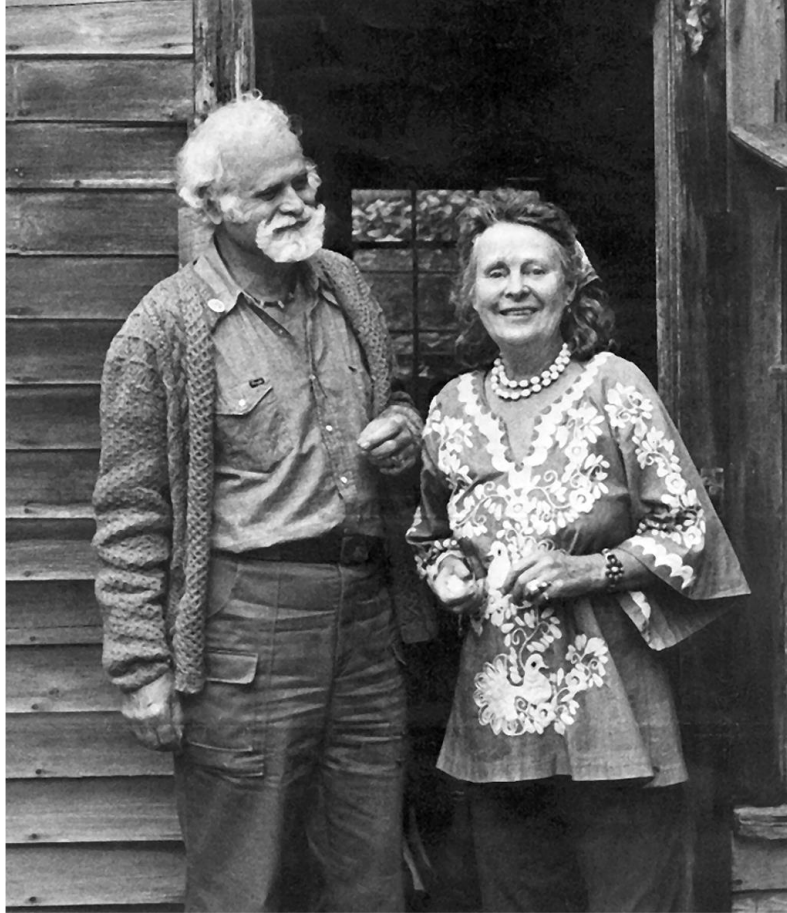
Wisconsin's Greater Prairie-chickens

Lessons from the Power (and Pitfalls) of Partnerships

Sharon Schwab, M.S.

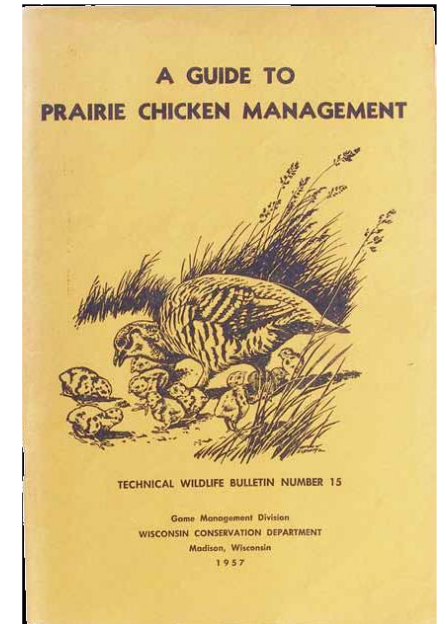


Drs. Fred & Fran Hamerstrom



Spent their professional lives in Central WI – living in a Civil War home without amenities.

Together, prevented the extirpation of Greater Prairie-chickens from Wisconsin through vital research and with the help of critical **PARTNERS**



The Beginning...

- ❑ Dane County Conservation League (Madison)
- ❑ Society of *Tympanuchus cupido pinnatus* (Milwaukee)



Paul Olson, DCCL



Dory Valier, STCP



Bill Sullivan, STCP

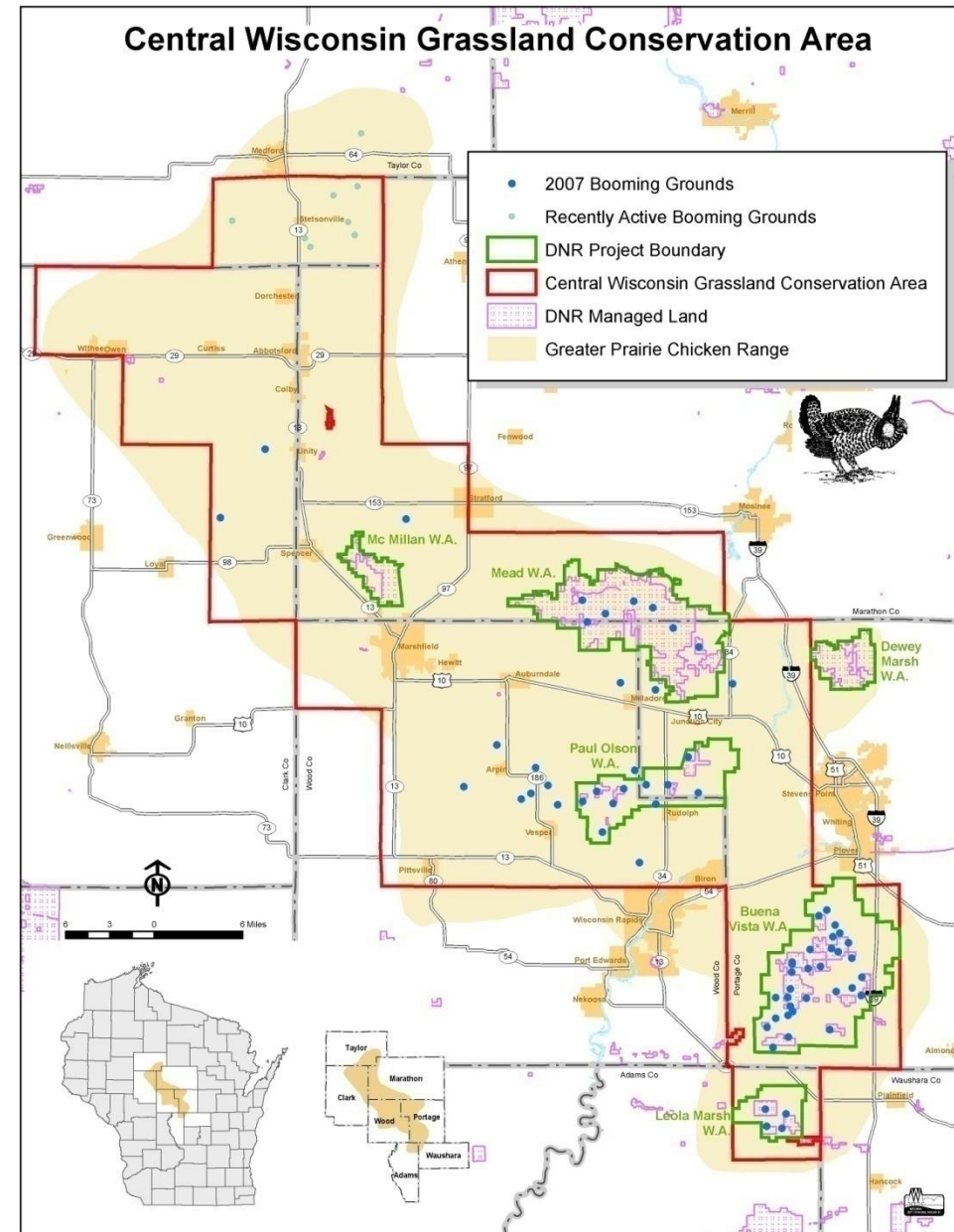
Central Wisconsin "Grasslands"

Result: Thousands of acres purchased with funds from generous supporters of the two organizations from the late 1950s – 1970s; securing a future for Wisconsin's Greater Prairie-chickens (GRPC).



Central Wisconsin Grassland Conservation Area Partnership

- Establish 15K acres grassland by 2014
- Maintain open, undeveloped landscape
- Offer limited, low-impact recreation
- Promote GPCH management & grassland conservation
- **Facilitate cooperation with partners**



“It takes a (really big) Village...”



This is a **LOT**
of work!

Agencies

- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Land Conservation Departments (6 counties)
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Farm Service Agency
- Local Government (Towns & Villages)
- Wisconsin Department of Tourism
- ...to name a few...



Organizations

- Local Audubon groups
- International Crane Foundation
- North Central Conservancy Trust
- Field Trialers (pointing dogs)
- Grassworks
- Pheasants Forever
- Waupaca Field Station
- Wisconsin Society of Ornithology
- Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra
- Wilderness Sportsman's Club
- Friends of Powers Bluff
- Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.
- Wisconsin Center for the Book
- ...to name a few...



Grants/Foundation

- Alliant Energy Foundation
- CellCom
- Natural Resource Foundation
- Conservation on the Land Internship Program
- Community Foundation of Central Wisconsin
- Incourage Community Foundation
- Joint Effort Marketing (WI Dept. Tourism)
- Landowner Improvement Program (DNR)
- Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (USFWS)
- Portage County Land Conservation Fund
- Wisconsin State Wildlife Grant (DNR)
- ...to name a few...



Artists and Writers

- **Literary Bash** (authors of nature books & poems)
- **Nature Crawl**
 - Painters
 - Sculptors
 - Potters
 - Jewelers
 - Photographers
 - Kite builders
 - Dancers
 - Costume designers



Businesses

- Local Farms (family owned & commercial)
- Hotels/Motels
- Restaurants
- Breweries
- ...to name a few...

Help Our Grasslands Thrive! ✦ ✦ ✦
Grasslands are essential habitat for many animals and plants, but less than 1% of these lands are protected worldwide. The Central Wisconsin Grassland Conservation Area promotes habitat here for the Greater Prairie Chicken and other native animals and plants.

CENTRAL WATERS
BREWING COMPANY, INC.

Boomin' Brew

Wisconsin's only
Central Wisconsin Grassland Conservation Area

ALL

Thank you for your support! ✦ ✦ ✦

GOLDEN SANDS RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, INC.
YOUTUBE: A SPRING GRASSLAND FESTIVAL ✦ GOLDENSANDSBCD.ORG

GOVERNMENT WARNING: ACCORDING TO THE SURGEON GENERAL, WOMEN SHOULD NOT DRINK ALCOHOL BEVERAGES DURING PREGNANCY BECAUSE OF THE RISK OF BIRTH DEFECTS. CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IMPAIRS YOUR ABILITY TO DRIVE A CAR OR OPERATE MACHINERY, AND MAY CAUSE HEALTH PROBLEMS.

WISCONSIN
WISCONSIN
13 FLUID OZ.

Media

- Travel Writers
- TV (Public Access, Cable & Network)
- Radio (public & private)
- Magazines (Audubon, Birder's World, Country Today, Midwest Living)
- Newspapers - >25 in WI, and a few in IL & MN
and since 2017...
- Facebook
- Website



Schools

- Stevens Point and Wisc. Rapids Parochial & Public
 - Poster contests
 - Conservation writing
- University of WI (Madison, Milwaukee, Stevens Point)
 - Scientific presentations annually
- Both Undergraduate and Graduate Studies research re:
 - Land use trends
 - Landowner attitudes towards conservation

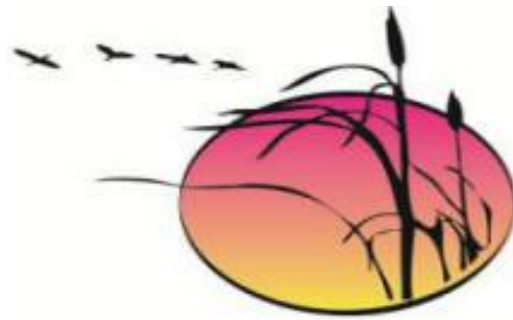


Community Support

- Local landowners with GRPC on their property allowed the public to bird there. Some landowners sold their land for permanent protection
- > 200 volunteers at PC Festivals
- > 1000 observation blind participants or grassland bird viewing participants from throughout the U.S. and:
 - Sweden
 - China
 - Canada
 - ...to name a few...



And now...?



Dane County
**CONSERVATION
LEAGUE** — SINCE 1933 —

"Conserve now, that the future may live."

Continue to support GRPC in cooperation with DNR

- ❑ Owner of 4000+ acres for grassland mgmt.
- ❑ Placed perpetual easements with NRCS to secure land
- ❑ Cooperated with other partners to fund major land acquisitions purchases, for example:
 - >900A in 2008
 - 520 A in 2023
- ❑ Sponsor of GRPC Festival and more!



And now...?

Discontinued to support GRPC with DNR and the organization dissolved; however:

- ❑ Pivotal in the success of translocation of GRPC from MN in the 2000s
- ❑ Although critical of DNR land management eventually sold their land to the Dept. for permanent protection.



And now...? CWGCA Partnership

- ❑ Effectively dissolved in 2014 due to lack of continuity in personnel; DNR funding ended
- ❑ Education and Outreach continued in local elementary schools by County staff
- ❑ Prairie Chicken Festival rebooted in 2017 by volunteers and slowly regaining local agricultural support
- ❑ Artists and writers supported by *Hamerstrom Fund for Writing* at the *Incourage Foundation*
- ❑ Agency staff, local landowners, and birders both in and out-of state continue to support efforts to protect GRPC, other grassland obligates and their critical habitat.



The End!

