



Mississippi Valley Conservancy

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**CONSERVANCY PROMISE BOLSTERED BY \$1 MILLION GIFT
Mississippi Valley Conservancy Launches Campaign to Match Anonymous
Donor's Gift as "Our Children's Natural Heritage Endowment"**

LA CROSSE, WI – Mississippi Valley Conservancy announced that it has received a rare gift of \$1 million from an anonymous donor who wishes to see the donation tripled to become a legacy for the Conservancy. To bolster its long-term commitment to protect designated lands in the nine-county area it serves, the Conservancy has launched an endowment campaign to fulfill the donor's vision with a fund named "Our Children's Natural Heritage Endowment."

The donor, who wished to remain anonymous, is known to be a long-time supporter of the Conservancy who has protected the natural legacy of her own land, through a conservation agreement with the Conservancy. According to Carol Abrahamzon, executive director of the Conservancy, the donor expressed in a letter that the endowment gift is the best way to further her ambition to "promote long term good for our Earth, and our beloved Driftless Area." Abrahamzon said, "The gift will kick off a campaign to grow the funds for Our Children's Natural Heritage Endowment. The vision of the donor is for the endowment to grow to \$3 million dollars through matched gifts and pledges."

Former Conservancy President Warren Loveland said that the "protected forever" signs placed on Mississippi Valley Conservancy-protected properties "suggests the need for an endowment to help provide the financial capacity necessary to ensure that the Conservancy will be there to fulfill its promise." Incoming President, Rob Tyser, said the beauty of the donor's gift is that "this fund will also be 'forever' – an enduring resource for safeguarding these lands in perpetuity."

The Conservancy made a commitment in perpetuity 20 years ago, to protect the unique blufflands, prairies, forests, rivers, and farmlands of the Driftless Area. With the help of many supporters, including individuals, businesses, and foundations, it has now protected almost 20,000 acres and that number continues to grow. "This endowment will help us strengthen the commitment with reserve funds that offer a buffer, in the event of

hardship, to ensure the Conservancy will be here to fulfill our forever promise,” said Abrahamzon.

Abrahamzon added that the “the value of individual donations is in no way diminished by the endowment. In fact,” she said, “the strength that members bring to this organization was a major factor in the donor’s decision to make the gift. Individual memberships make up the largest portion of our budget, now and in the future.”

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ABOUT MISSISSIPPI VALLEY CONSERVANCY

Founded in 1997, Mississippi Valley Conservancy is a nationally accredited regional land trust that has permanently protected nearly 20,000 acres of scenic lands in southwestern Wisconsin’s Driftless Area by working with private landowners, businesses and local communities on voluntary conservation projects. The focus of the Conservancy is to conserve the forests, prairies, wetlands, streams and farms that enrich our communities, for the health and well-being of current and future generations. For additional information about the Conservancy, visit www.MississippiValleyConservancy.org.