

## Wendell and Pat Maltby, Goodhue County



**Partners:** **USDA-NRCS**  
**Cannon River Watershed Partnership**  
**USDI-FWS**  
**MN Department of Natural Resources**  
**Pheasants Forever - Goodhue Co.**

In the early 1900's, the Chicago Great Western Railroad constructed a 2000 foot rail spur to a small mill town called Cascade, along the Cannon River to ship goods and gravel from the area. Grazing and crop production eventually replaced mining. In the 1980's Wendell and Pat Maltby purchased 95 acres of woods and cropland along the Cannon River as an alternative to a northern Minnesota cabin. Today, the mill town turned ghost town is visible from the property.

The Maltby's along with their son Jeff, have established the 36 acre Maltby Family Nature Preserve. Within three years the Maltbys plan to construct an interpretive center and amphitheater, develop campsites and nature trails, and provide wildlife watching. Eventually, the preserve will offer programs for children ages preschool through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

The Maltby's approached NRCS District Conservationist Thomas Steger for ideas on restoring historic prairie and improving remaining remnant Big Woods (Maple, Basswood) and Oak Savanna forests located in the Cannon River Watershed, a state high priority watershed. The request quickly



transformed into a multi-agency effort. A Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) contract was approved for wetland restoration and timber stand improvement on approximately 75 acres. Existing hardwoods will be released to improve natural and planted regeneration of native species and ecosystem restoration. These practices combined with native grass plantings will improve the habitat for the loggerhead shrike, a state threatened bird. Additionally, common buckthorn, an invasive exotic understory shrub will be removed. A wetland was enhanced by including tile flows to the

Cannon River. The wetland will benefit the existing riparian habitat that is within the known range of a variety of at risk amphibians and reptiles, including the Blandings turtle and wood turtle.



The US Fish and Wildlife Service in cooperation with the Cannon River Watershed Partnership and Goodhue County Pheasants Forever is assisting in the restoration of 14 acres of native tallgrass prairie using more than 40 species of native grasses and wildflowers which include local germplasm for the most part.

The prairie restoration is adjacent to known populations of two federally listed plant species, the dwarf trout lily and the prairie bush clover. Also, state special concern species plains pocket mouse and prairie vole.