



**MINNESOTA VALLEY TRUST**  
Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Lincoln Waterfowl Production Area Expanded to 520 Acres;  
Major Wetland Restoration Work Slated for 2010**

The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc. recently purchased another 200 acres to expand the Lincoln Waterfowl Production Area (WPA) in Blue Earth County to 520 acres. After restoration, the WPA will be donated by the Trust to the US Fish and Wildlife Service for permanent protection and management as conservation lands.

The Lincoln WPA is in Lincoln Township of Blue Earth County, just a few miles southwest of Lake Crystal. It is in the Watonwan River Watershed, a tributary to the Minnesota River.

Major wetland restoration works is slated for 2010, once engineering plans are finalized and agreements reached with the Blue Earth County Ditch Authority and the highway department. The property includes the head of Judicial Ditch 15, creating the opportunity to remove the land from the county ditch, break significant amounts of private tile, and restore 120 acres of wetlands. Associated uplands will be seeded with a diverse mix of grasses and prairie forbs.

The Lincoln WPA is close to more than 1,000 other acres of permanently restored habitat. "The restoration of this land will provide excellent prairie and wetland habitat for a host

of wildlife species,” said Charlie Blair, manager of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and Wetland Management District.

Blair continued, “The benefits of retiring and restoring these marginal croplands are many. In addition to providing habitat for wildlife, these lands will help improve the water quality in the Watonwan and Minnesota Rivers. These lands also will provide recreational opportunities for the public.”

The purchases for the Lincoln WPA have been completed by the Minnesota Valley Trust, a nonprofit corporation that works closely with the US Fish and Wildlife Service on expansion of the Refuge and Wetland Management District. Three landowners sold property to create the WPA.

To date, the Trust has acquired 1,468 acres in the Minnesota River Watershed in Blue Earth County for Waterfowl Production Areas.

“The Trust and USFWS are pleased that landowners in this area want to see their marginal cropland be restored and protected for conservation purposes,” said Deborah Loon, executive director of the Minnesota Valley Trust. “This means we can protect and restore critical habitat for wildlife and the public’s enjoyment.”

Partial funding for the purchase was provided through two grants to the Habitat Corridors Partnership (HCP) through the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources. HCP is a partnership of public and nonprofit conservation agencies that is accelerating and enhancing habitat protection by targeting limited funds toward high-priority focus areas and better coordinating the efforts of conservation organizations. For more information, go to the Trust’s website at [www.mnvalleytrust.org](http://www.mnvalleytrust.org).

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The Minnesota Valley Trust is a private, nonprofit corporation established in 2000 through a settlement between the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Metropolitan Airports Commission. The

Minnesota Valley Trust works to mitigate the impacts of the north-south runway under construction at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, which will send thousands of inbound and outbound flights every month over popular units of the Refuge near the airport. The Minnesota Valley Trust manages the settlement funds for the purposes of expanding the Minnesota Valley Refuge by at least 4,090 acres, constructing a new visitor and environmental education center and developing other public use facilities, such as trails, parking lots and interpretive kiosks.