



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**McHenry County Conservation Foundation Secures
an Illinois Department of Natural Resources Habitat Fund Grant
to Benefit Bison Grazing Area at Pleasant Valley Conservation Area**

McHenry County Conservation Foundation was awarded a \$36,630 grant from The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Illinois Habitat Fund to assist with restoration efforts at the newly-established bison grazing area at Pleasant Valley Conservation Area in Woodstock, IL.

The grant will allow McHenry County Conservation District to convert 90 acres of row crop to prairie, and enhance 33 acres of grassland and 50 acres of oak savanna within the bison grazing enclosure. McHenry County Conservation Foundation secured the grant, while also partnering with McHenry County Conservation District and Ruhter Bison LLC to provide \$285,782.33 in matching funds. This restoration work will improve habitat for multiple species in the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan including Eastern Meadowlark, Grasshopper Sparrow, Monarch Butterfly, Henslow's Sparrow, Upland Sandpiper, Bobolink and Ring-necked Pheasant.

The grant also supports the reimbursement of a Flail-Vac seed harvester which allows the Conservation District to collect more than 1,300 lbs. of native seeds per year that are used in habitat restoration projects on Conservation District properties throughout the county.

The Conservation District and Ruhter Bison LLC introduced six bison at Pleasant Valley in December of 2021 as a natural land management tool for prairie ecosystems and grassland habitat to benefit breeding birds and other wildlife. Bison are a native species that historically played a keystone role in the ecology of prairies and grasslands. For more information visit MCCD.ME/BisonGrazing.

The Illinois Habitat Fund provides grants to appropriate not-for-profit organizations and to governmental entities for projects designated exclusively for the preservation and maintenance of high-quality habitat lands. Funding for the Illinois Habitat Fund Special Wildlife Funds Grant Program comes from the sale of Habitat Stamps to sportsmen and sportswomen.

The McHenry County Conservation Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. For more information, visit mchenryconservation.org or call (815) 678-4532 ext 8204.

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