



2022 Annual Report

Dear Friends,

One of the pleasures of producing an annual report is the opportunity to take stock in what has been accomplished to support the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

Here are just some of the highlights from Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends for 2021-2022.

Because of generous support from members like you, as well as funders that include the Minnesota Valley Trust, Minnesota Valley River Audubon Chapter, Cargill, and the Bosch Community Fund, Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends has been able to:

- Transport thousands of students from nearby schools during the 2021-2022 school year to and from the Refuge with the Blue Goose Bus Fund. Schools where at least half of the student population receives free/reduced-cost lunches qualify for free transportation.
- Provide countless volunteer hours to staff the front desks at the Refuge visitor centers, operate the Blufftop Nature Store, assist in environmental education learning, and support events both at the Refuge and throughout the community, including the Minneapolis Monarch Festival.
- During the pandemic and during the constantly changing health environments, we've supported the Refuge staff in its efforts to pivot to virtual events and establish the Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends YouTube channel, now home to a treasure trove of online environmental education resources developed by Refuge staff.
- Provide support for interns at the Refuge in community outreach, conservation, and environmental education, giving them opportunities to grow as conservation leaders.
- Conduct habitat-related projects on the Refuge, including chloride testing in Ike's Creek, a restored brook trout stream steps away from the Mall of America.
- Funding the position of our organization's part-time Executive Director, Alison Schaub.

No National Wildlife Refuge "gets by" without a little help from its Friends. Through these and many other activities, YOU are helping the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge secure its rightful place as one of the country's premier urban refuges. Thank you! With time and your continued support, we hope we can also say one day that the Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends is one of the nation's premier Refuge Friends groups.



Our Mission

Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends assists the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife in its mission to “work with others to conserve, protect, and enhance the fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.”

2021-2022 Board of Directors

President: Robert Petzel

Vice President: Dave Guzzi

Treasurer: Barb Corriveau, Mark Jensen

Secretary: Pat Graham

Directors: Shannon Breimhurst, Andy Grewell, Michael Kurtz, Loreen Lee, Jessica Tormoen

Ex-Officio: Steven Sutter, Founder

About the MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge

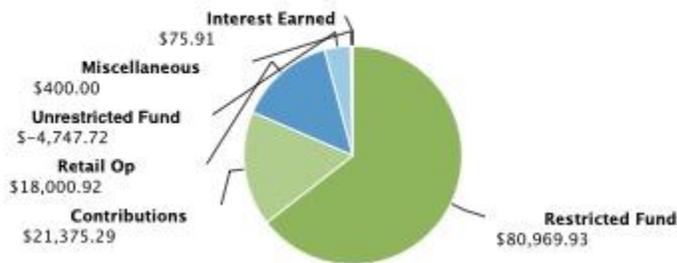
The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge is a part of a corridor of land stretching nearly 70 miles along the Minnesota River, from Bloomington to Henderson, Minnesota. Comprising more than 17,000 acres, the Refuge has 12 units, offering a variety of free outdoor recreational experiences for individuals and families. The Refuge also manages a 14-county Wetland Management District.

The Refuge is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). These public lands and waters are set aside to conserve America’s wild animals, insects and plants. The USFWS is supported at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge by the nonprofit organization Minnesota Valley Trust, which works with landowners who wish to sell or donate their land to expand the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends, a mostly volunteer nonprofit organization, also supports the Refuge by managing the Nature Store at the Bloomington Education and Visitor Center; recruiting volunteers for information desks as well as Refuge activities and events; fundraising to support environmental education, habitat restoration, urban outreach, mentoring, arts and other Refuge programs; promoting Refuge programs and advocating for local environmental issues; and creating opportunities for the public to engage with nature.

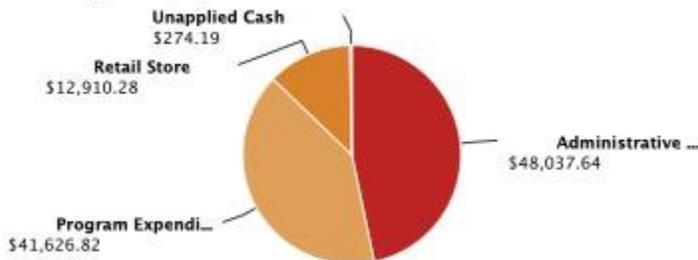


2021-2022 MVRF Revenues and Expenditures

MN Valley Refuge Friends
Revenue By Category



MN Valley Refuge Friends
Expenditure By Category



Government funding does not cover all that is necessary to manage Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. According to the National Wildlife Refuge Association, the National Wildlife Refuge System encompasses more than 850 million acres of lands and waters across 568 National Wildlife Refuges and Marine National Monuments. The Fish and Wildlife Service receives 59 cents per acre to maintain lands and waters and meet the needs of its more than 59 million annual visitors (pre-pandemic figures). In comparison, the National Park Service receives \$31 per acre for land management. As a result, wildlife refuges depend on "Friends" groups such as the Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends (MVRF) to fill in the gaps, providing financial and volunteer support. In 2021-2022, total philanthropic support and other income sources to MVRF were **\$122,822**. For more than half of the fiscal year, one of the primary funding sources — the Nature Store at the Bloomington Education & Visitor Center — was closed due to the pandemic.



While many programs and services were reduced due to COVID-19, **55%** of the budget went directly to helping the Refuge in the areas of environmental education, conservation, wildlife protection, research and outreach. Refuge support includes items such as displays, exhibits, student busing, equipment, interpretive signage, intern stipends, and research. Almost 45% of our expenses were administrative, taking the organization through the resignation of our Executive Director to hiring of new staff approximately six months later. Administrative expenses included updating our website and database, print and outreach materials, and other fundraising platforms.

Our Programs

- Water Quality at Ike's Creek
- Urban Bird Collective
- Confluence Art Gallery
- Mentoring Programs
- Blufftop Nature Store
- Environmental Education
- Supporting the Intern Program

New Friends' Executive Director

Alison Schaub started her work with the Friends' in April 2022. She brings more than 20 years of experience leading nonprofit organizations.

Member Perks & Events

- The monthly *Currents* newsletter
- A 10% discount on select items at the Blufftop Nature Store
- Personal invitations to Refuge events, education and training opportunities for you and your family
- Assurance that your contribution is maximizing Refuge success
- Philanthropic Dollars at Work