

Juneau County Success from the Field

Ho-Chunk Nation and the Natural Resources Conservation Service Partner to Restore Wetland

Background

The Ho-Chunk Nation own a beautiful and diverse 272-acre property in southeastern Juneau County. It is known as the White Otter property. The Ho-Chunk manage the land for native upland, wetland species habitat, and for the quiet enjoyment of their people.

Highlights

The partnership between the Ho-Chunk and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) began in the early 2000s with an initial conversation about multiple potential partnership projects that could restore the acreage. Funding from the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and technical assistance provided by NRCS staff, enabled the design and construction of a 2,600-foot streambank stabilization and aquatic habitat project on the Lyndon Creek, a Class III trout stream. NRCS also assisted in a 41-acre prairie restoration, 1,323 foot use-exclusion fencing project, a stream crossing installation, 2.3 acres of brush management and 0.3 acres of tree planting.

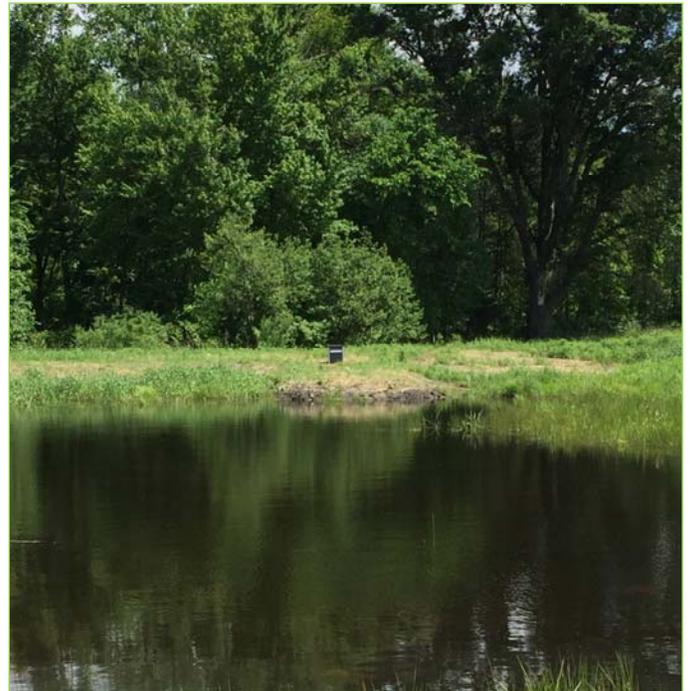
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also aided in the construction of a wetland restoration, including a ditch fill and embankment. In 2016, the Ho-Chunk Nation came to NRCS to talk about a needed repair to the embankment. NRCS Civil Engineering Technician, Luther Teller, surveyed and designed a water control structure needed to handle the stormflow through the embankment and to repair the gully erosion that was causing failure to the embankment. Construction was completed in May of 2017. "The Ho-Chunk Nation is very thankful for the continued partnership with NRCS, for this project and the many other shared conservation projects across the state," said Ho-Chunk Department of Natural Resources Official, Randy Poelma.

Future Plans

The Ho-Chunk Nation have taken the successful projects one step further, for educational purposes. They installed an interpretive trail through the restored property and built an elevated viewing stand to see the wetland and the prairie while teaching about it. The Ho-Chunk Nation plan on continuing to manage their property for wildlife in partnership with NRCS and will continue to teach current and future generations the importance of proper land management.



Before installation of a water control structure.



Installed water control structure.

