

Minnesota Pheasants, Inc. – Blue Earth County Chapter was incorporated in February of 1987. The birth of the chapter was the result of a meeting one afternoon between Jerry Bersaw, Quint Lundberg, Tony Bauer, Howard Ward and Don Schuster. It was their feeling that there was a need to establish a group in Blue Earth County dedicated specifically to the habitat needs of the ringneck pheasant.

From that meeting, a letter was mailed to various sportsmen's groups and conservation clubs in the area. One of those letters went to the **Pintail Club** of Good Thunder, which had been established in 1946. The Pintail Club was already in the process of switching directions from a national organization to refocusing on local habitat. The membership of this club had been running a successful banquet fundraiser for a national conservation organization since 1982. They realized that the monies they had raised were going to large scale needs, but nothing was being done to stop the loss of local habitat. When they learned others in the area were also starting to organize locally, it was decided to form one strong group that would cover the Blue Earth County area.

A series of additional meetings were held and representatives from both *Pheasants Forever* and the *Steele County Chapter of Minnesota Pheasants Inc.* were invited to give presentations about their organizations. After much deliberation and discussion, it was determined to move forward with the formation of a local Minnesota Pheasants Incorporated Chapter. Elections were held, articles of incorporation were written, non-profit status was applied for, and planning was begun for our first fund raising event. The purpose of the corporation was deemed to be the development and maintenance of wildlife and wildlife habitat; to include the acquisition of real or personal property for that purpose. The first banquet was held in the spring of 1987. Profits from early banquets were used to buy a tractor, no-till drill, tree weeder and storage shed. These were made available to landowners wishing to establish or improve wildlife habitat. Policies were written to provide cost share support for the planting of trees, native grasses and the restoration of wetlands on private land. We continue to support these programs. Over the years the chapter has provided free seed corn and sorghum to be planted for winter food and cover plots. Emergency winter feed and feeders have been provided when extremely harsh winters have justified this action.

The above programs received first priority because of a need, their cost effectiveness and, because initially funds were insufficient to support property acquisitions. As additional funding became available through larger and more effective fundraising efforts, we began to allocate dollars to acquire land for permanent wildlife habitat that would be accessible to the general public. We continue to strive to fulfill our charter to this day. We have become a bit more sophisticated in our methodology but the core principals and focus remain the same as it was in 1987. We maintain our commitment to the acquisition, restoration and preservation of natural wildlife habitat. Our activities are restricted to the Blue Earth County area – all dollars raised through donations and fundraising efforts are spent right here in the Blue Earth County area. We undertake these objectives through a variety of methods, the most common being:

- **Direct acquisition of real property utilizing Minnesota Pheasants dollars, grants, cooperative efforts with Federal and State governmental entities and cooperative collaborations with likeminded sportsman's groups and wildlife oriented organizations.**
- **Direct restoration efforts utilizing Minnesota Pheasants funding, equipment and volunteer labor (including in-kind labor). Similarly, we may partner with other organizations in habitat restoration projects utilizing joint funds and/or equipment and labor.**
- **Indirect restoration projects through donations or in-kind labor with Federal and State governmental entities as well as other wildlife oriented organizations.**