

Joseph M. Pavelko

Summary of Qualifications

A dynamic leader with a proven track record of delivering results and building strong relationships.

Relevant Experience

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc. – Land Acquisition Contractor (2015 – Current)

- Program Management: Managed, coordinated, and facilitated the transfer of fee-title acquired lands to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for inclusion in the Federal National Wildlife Refuge System and Federal Production Area Programs throughout southern and metropolitan Minnesota. Work included review of legal documents such as purchase agreements, title policies, abstracts, appraisals, and surveys. Work required intimate knowledge of federal land acquisition policies and procedures in addition to state and federal grant land protection requirements.

Pheasants Forever, Inc. – MN Director of Conservation (2009- 2014)

- Leadership: Managed, directed, and supervised Pheasants Forever's conservation mission and programs within Minnesota. Identified priority program objectives within the state and created rules, policies, and implementation plans to efficiently achieve those goals while balancing resource, social, and economic values. Consistently presented at and facilitated stakeholder meetings, seminars, and legislative hearings. Lead and facilitated numerous meetings with multiple stakeholders including local, state, and federal agencies, legislators, private landowners, and other conservation groups. Additionally, served on numerous state wildlife and habitat committees and groups including the Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Prairie Section Review Team.
- Government Relations, Policy, and Partnerships: As primary contact worked with all levels of government, agencies, legislators, and decision makers to develop and secure sound natural resource policies and decisions related to conservation and agriculture. Developed and monitored legislation and provided testimony to numerous committees on policy and funding initiatives and carried issues from recommendation to appropriations and Minnesota Law. Developed and monitored legislation and provided testimony to numerous committees on policy and funding initiatives and carried issues from recommendation to Minnesota law and resulting appropriations. Consistently made policy recommendations on federal farm programs and other agricultural initiatives.
- Government Funding / Grants: Authored, secured, and implemented numerous federal and state wildlife habitat grants including LSOHC (Outdoor Heritage Fund), LCCMR (Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund), Conservation Partners Legacy Grants (CPL), and North American Wetland and Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants totaling more than 75 million dollars. In addition, successfully leveraged over 23 million dollars of federal and private funding. Work included development of proposals and budgets, project criteria and scoring development, interest and support generation from decision and policy makers, efficiency and service delivery review, etc. Extensively analyzed, evaluated, managed, and reported grant and project budgets to ensure successful completion of projects in accordance with company policies consistent with program goals. Responsible for over 50% of Pheasants Forever's grant revenue nationally.
- Program Development, Management, and Implementation: Directed and facilitated the creation, development, and implementation of statewide land acquisition and restoration conservation programs and partnerships working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the MN Department of Natural Resources to protect, restore, and enhance over 20,000 acres working with hundreds of private land owners. Developed and oversaw strategic messaging, policies, and procedures to ensure successful implementation. Programs included: statewide WMA/WPA acquisition programs, MN Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership, Minnesota's Habitat Conservation Partnership (coordinator), Enhanced Public Lands Grasslands, and USFWS private lands partnerships.
- Land Protection: Extensive knowledge and experience in state and federal real estate and land acquisition principles, policies, and procedures. Land acquisition duties performed on a regular basis included: private landowner meetings and negotiations, partner and stakeholder meetings, authoring legal documents such as purchase agreements, title reviews, appraisal and land valuation, authoring and negotiating leases, boundary surveys, contaminate and Level 1 surveys, closings, etc. Personal purchase success rate is 85%.
- Habitat Restoration and Enhancement: Extensive knowledge and experience in both state and federal restoration and enhancement principles, policies, and procedures on wetland, prairie, forest, and stream habitats. Restoration and enhancement duties performed on a regular basis included: private landowner meetings and negotiations, partner and stakeholder meetings, County Ditch Authority meetings, restoration potential assessments, wetland delineations and design, soil assessments, RFP solicitation and selection, payment approvals, project monitoring, public use facilities development, etc.

- Efficiency: Extensively analyzed, evaluated, and managed grant and project budgets to ensure successful completion of projects in accordance with company policies and consistent with program goals. In addition, analyzed data to help streamline and create work efficiencies relating to grant and accounting procedures within Pheasants Forever. Created efficiencies within external and internal acquisition policies and procedures that reduced average length of project by 40%.
- Leadership: Served on numerous committees and groups including: NRCS technical committee, Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Prairie Section review committee, Walk-In-Access working group, DNR acquisition working group, MN Noxious Weed Advisory Committee, the MN Prairie Plan committee, and others. Consistently presented to multiple audiences at local banquets, seminars, DNR roundtable, legislative hearings, LSOHC / LCCMR hearings etc.

City of Victoria, MN – City Council Member – (non-partisan) (2013 – 2015)

- Leadership: Elected in November of 2012 to serve a 4 year term for the City of Victoria, MN.

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc. – Conservation Projects Manager (2005 – 2009)

- Program Development: Identified high priority land acquisition areas, habitat restoration potential, funding procurement, and managed all aspects of habitat restoration work on acquired lands totaling over 3,500 acres and managed \$1.5 million in restoration funding. Following completion of restoration work, donated the land to the US Fish and Wildlife Service to become National Wildlife Refuge Units and Waterfowl Production Areas. Work also included development of public use trail systems and infrastructure that included parking lots, paved and unpaved trails, signage, pedestrian bridges, and public wildlife viewing areas.
- Grant Writing: Successfully wrote, received, and implemented conservation grants that included: NAWCA, SWCD Grants, USFWS Grants, and Private Foundation Grants. Secured numerous partnership donations from groups including Pheasants Forever, local hunt clubs, and other non-profit organizations.

Friends of the Minnesota Valley – Conservation Projects Manager (2006 – 2009)

- Program Development: Identified strategic conservation priorities, developed new conservation program by implementing innovative public/private partnerships. Increased Friends of the MN Valley's conservation and restoration funding by 500% and increased acreage accomplishments from 40 acres to 400 acres annually.
- Government Relations: Acted as a liaison between private landowners, county governments, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to implement the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in South-Central Minnesota to complete more than 30 restoration projects.

Habitat Restoration Services, LLC – Owner/President (2005 – 2009)

- Self-Starter: Environmental consulting business working with conservation groups to assess conservation programs and made recommendations for potential growth, funding, and implementation strategies. Managed and implemented habitat restoration projects and state and federal government grants.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (2003 – 2005)

- Field Experience: Coordinated and supervised wetland restorations and enhancements on Waterfowl Production Areas and private land through the USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife program. Restorations included delineation, engineering, GIS, and water control structure design while working closely with FWS biologists and engineers to implement high quality restoration projects. Acted as liaison to landowners and NRCS conservation programs and addressed water management issues such as public and private tile lines, county ditch systems, and wetland/wildlife management techniques.
- Field Experience: Certified Fire Fighter Type 2 completing numerous prescribed fires within both rural Minnesota and urban Twin Cities metropolitan area. Proficient in fire line equipment and methods, specialty fire equipment operation, and safety procedures. Served 2 week wildfire deployment to South Texas Border.
- GIS Proficiency: Analyzed data and created maps using Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to efficiently utilize resources, assess environmental impacts, and calculate watersheds on a daily basis.

Education

Undergraduate Degree

Bachelor of Arts: St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota

Double Major: Biology and Environmental Studies (May 2004)

Restoration Ecology Certificate: University of Idaho (August 2009)

Graduate Level Coursework in Natural Resources – 14 credits: University of Idaho (2008-2009)

Job Related Skills

- Partnership building and negotiation
- Conservation program design and implementation
- Large Scale Project Management
- Practiced in state and federal land acquisition processes and procedures
- Grant Writing and Implementation
- Problem solving
- Habitat Restoration Processes
- Wetland restoration design and engineering
- Legislative processes
- Aerial Photo / Topographic Map Interpretation
- Microsoft Office
- Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
- Watershed Analysis and Wetland Delineation
- Erosion control and storm water management

Volunteer Experience

- MN DNR / USFWS Youth Hunt Mentor
- Richfield High School Assistant Varsity Baseball Coach
- Richfield American Legion Baseball Coach
- Richfield High School Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Guide
- Young Waterfowler Program – MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge
- Project Friendship