

GIS HABITAT MODELS PRIORITIZE ROADSIDE PRAIRIE RESTORATION SITES IN MINNESOTA

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Abstract: With limited physical and financial resources available for roadside prairie and habitat restoration, prioritizing roadside restoration and management sites is critical. A series of GIS-based habitat models were developed for the 14 county area of the Blue Earth River watershed in south-central Minnesota and north-central Iowa to assist the Roadsides for Wildlife Program at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and cooperating partners with prioritizing roadside restoration sites. The GIS models identified priority roadside segments that have the greatest potential to reestablish ecological links between existing high quality natural resource areas within and adjacent to roadsides. The presenters will discuss the process used in this project including the data sets and GIS models utilized in this project. We will also discuss how the data from the maps and models are being used at the local and state level to prioritize projects, build partnerships and coalitions, and seek outside funding sources to complete roadside prairie restoration projects in the Blue Earth River watershed in Minnesota.