

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, JUNE, 15, 2009

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PINE BEND – CONSERVATION, PARTNERSHIP, AND VOLUNTEER MODEL *Flint Hills Resources, Friends of the Mississippi River, and Great River Greening Celebrate Ten Years of Restoration Partnership*



Flint Hills Resources, Friends of the Mississippi River, and Great River Greening are celebrating ten years of partnership in the restoration of Pine Bend Bluffs with a milestone volunteer event Saturday, June 20, 2009.

Pine Bend Bluffs, one of the largest and most diverse natural areas in the Twin Cities metro, is located along the Mississippi River and includes hundreds of acres owned by Flint Hills Resources (formerly Koch Petroleum Group). Old fields and degraded oak savannas have all been restored through an ongoing partnership of government, industry, nonprofits, and volunteers, a model effort that received an award in 2007 from the Minnesota Environmental Initiative.



The Pine Bend Bluffs project was initiated in 1999 when Friends of the Mississippi River began contact with landowners in the area. Great River Greening, Flint Hills Resources, Friends of the Mississippi River, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Trust for Public Land, Dakota County, and hundreds of volunteers began working together to restore and manage this rare landscape.

Volunteers have removed exotic species that had formed a nearly impenetrable understory beneath the large open-grown oaks of the site's oak savanna. They have also planted wetland and prairie plants, collected and broadcasted wildflower and other native prairie seeds, and planted acorns.

To get restoration started, early funding partners included Flint Hills Resources, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Mississippi River Fund, National Park Service – Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, private donors, and the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, as recommended by the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources. For the past several years, the work has been funded directly by Flint Hills Resources.

Great River Greening, Flint Hills Resources, and Friends of the Mississippi River plan to continue their partnership and restoration of this important natural area.

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*restoring the land,
renewing communities*