

# THE TRUST *for* PUBLIC LAND

LAND FOR PEOPLE



## CONSERVATION FINANCE SUCCESS *Minnesota*

Minnesota enjoys a long history of progressive conservation. But beginning in the late 1990s, the percentage of the state's general fund going to conservation each year gradually began to drop. In response, The Trust for Land helped forge a broad coalition of nonprofit groups to work toward a statewide ballot measure that would create a dedicated source of funding for conservation and other needs.

Organizers were confident that voters would pass a measure, but it took nearly ten years to construct one with enough support from various constituencies that the legislature would agree to put it on the ballot. Passed with 56 percent of the vote in 2008, the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment to the Minnesota Constitution increased the state sales tax by 0.375 percent for 25 years and divided the increased revenue into four dedicated funds: for clean water;

parks and trails; arts and culture; and habitat restoration, protection, and enhancement. To forestall the possibility that the legislature might cut existing funding as the new money became available, the measure stipulated that these funds were to be an "additional investment" in these areas.

Working closely with The Nature Conservancy and other organizations, The Trust for Public Land's Conservation Finance team helped with polling, fundraising, coalition building, and ballot language development—and oversaw a series of educational ads funded by an area foundation. Projected to generate \$280 million a year—\$7.6 billion over the life of the measure—Minnesota's Legacy Amendment is the largest single conservation finance ballot measure ever passed in the U.S. Full information on the measure, with an ongoing tally of funded projects, can be found at [www.legacy.leg.mn](http://www.legacy.leg.mn).

## About the Conservation Finance service

The Trust for Public Land is the nation's leader in helping state and local governments design, pass, and implement legislation and ballot measures that create new public funds for parks and land conservation. Our technical services include feasibility research, public opinion polling, measure design, and the design and evaluation of conservation programs.

To pass ballot measures, we work with our lobbying and campaign affiliate, The Conservation Campaign (TCC), a 501(c)(4) nonprofit corporation that mobilizes public support for measures that create public funds for land conservation.

Since 1996, we've helped pass more than 450 measures—an 81 percent success—creating \$34 billion in voter approved funding for parks and open space.



### Measure snapshot

**Year:** 2008

**Name:** Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment

**Measure type:** constitutional amendment

**Goal:** to create a stable and dedicated source of state conservation funding

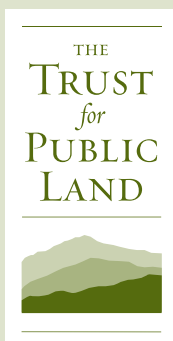
**Services provided:** polling, coalition building, fundraising, assistance with ballot language, management of advertising campaign

**Passing percentage:** 56 percent

**Funds generated:** \$7.6 billion over 25 years

**Lessons learned:** the importance of building a broad coalition to gain support

**Conservation results:** full results at [www.legacy.leg.mn](http://www.legacy.leg.mn).



*The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come.*

*[tpl.org](http://tpl.org)*

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