

Preserving The Public Land Survey System

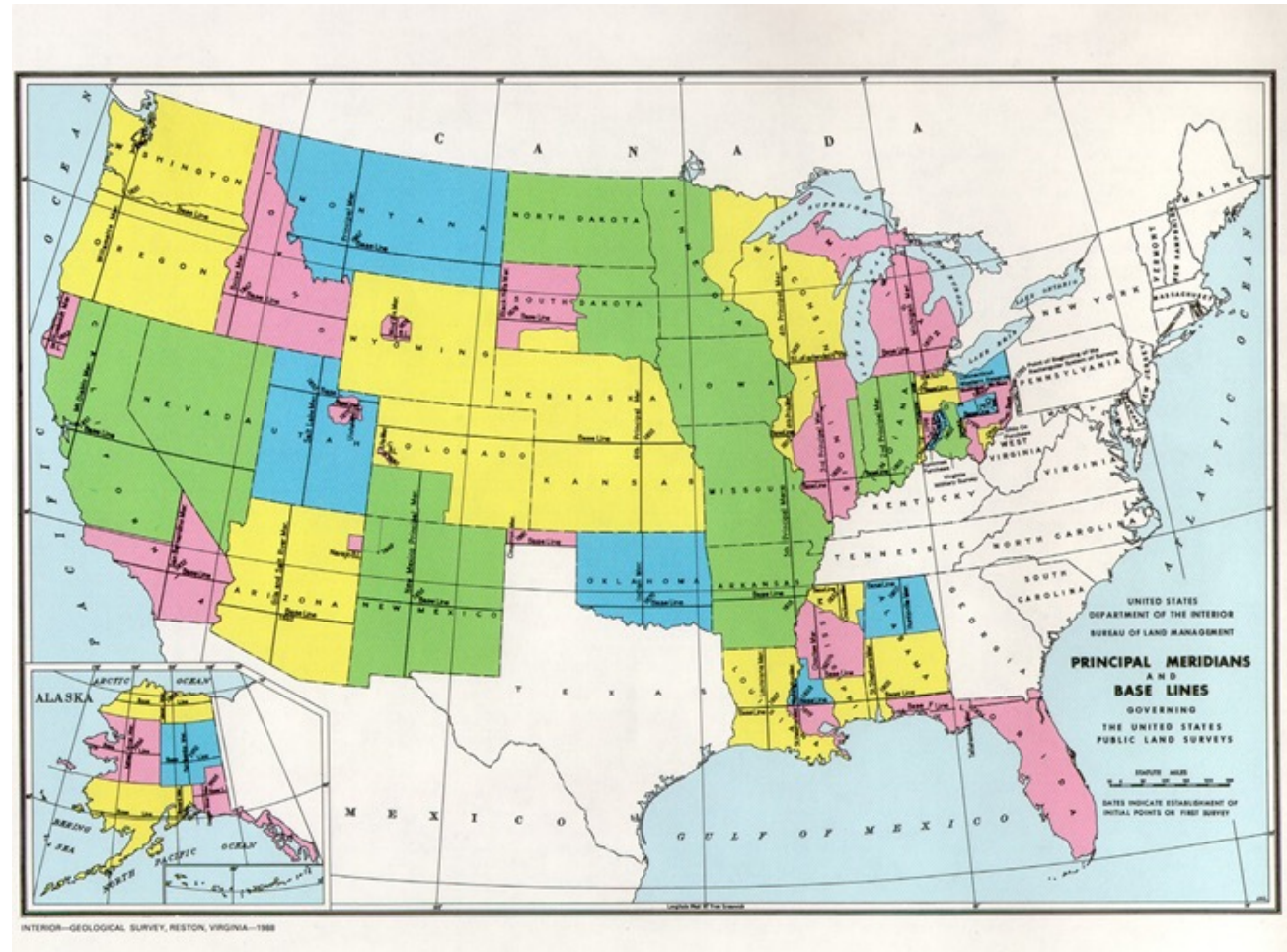
Ensuring that Minnesota's Public Land Survey System (PLSS) Monuments are available for everyone

Public Land Survey System Monuments are essential for all property descriptions, location of infrastructure, and are the basis for accurate digital geospatial data.

Minnesota Society of Professional Surveyors for Senate State Government Finance 1/28/24

The Public Land Survey System is?

- Legal & geographic framework covering 2/3 of the USA
 - Underpins the land tenure system in the PLSS states
 - Basis for all property descriptions
 - Enables the secure transfer of property
 - Foundational documents of MN
 - Legally set by Federal Government
 - Cannot “move boundaries,” must put PLS back in original location
 - Goal is to be within a coffee canister, modern standard is $\frac{1}{4}$ inch



The current state of PLSS monuments



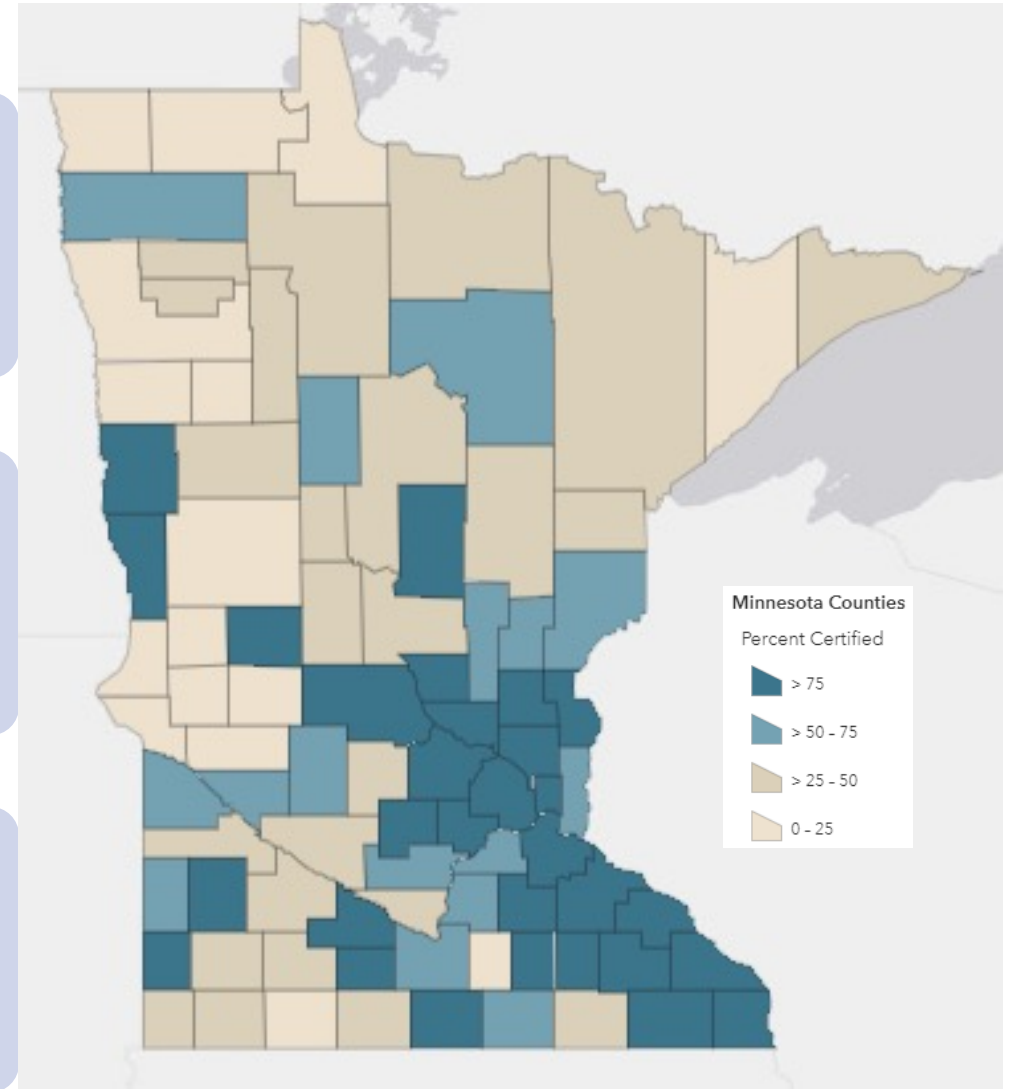
325,000 + PLSS Monuments set in MN (Originally set in 1850-90)

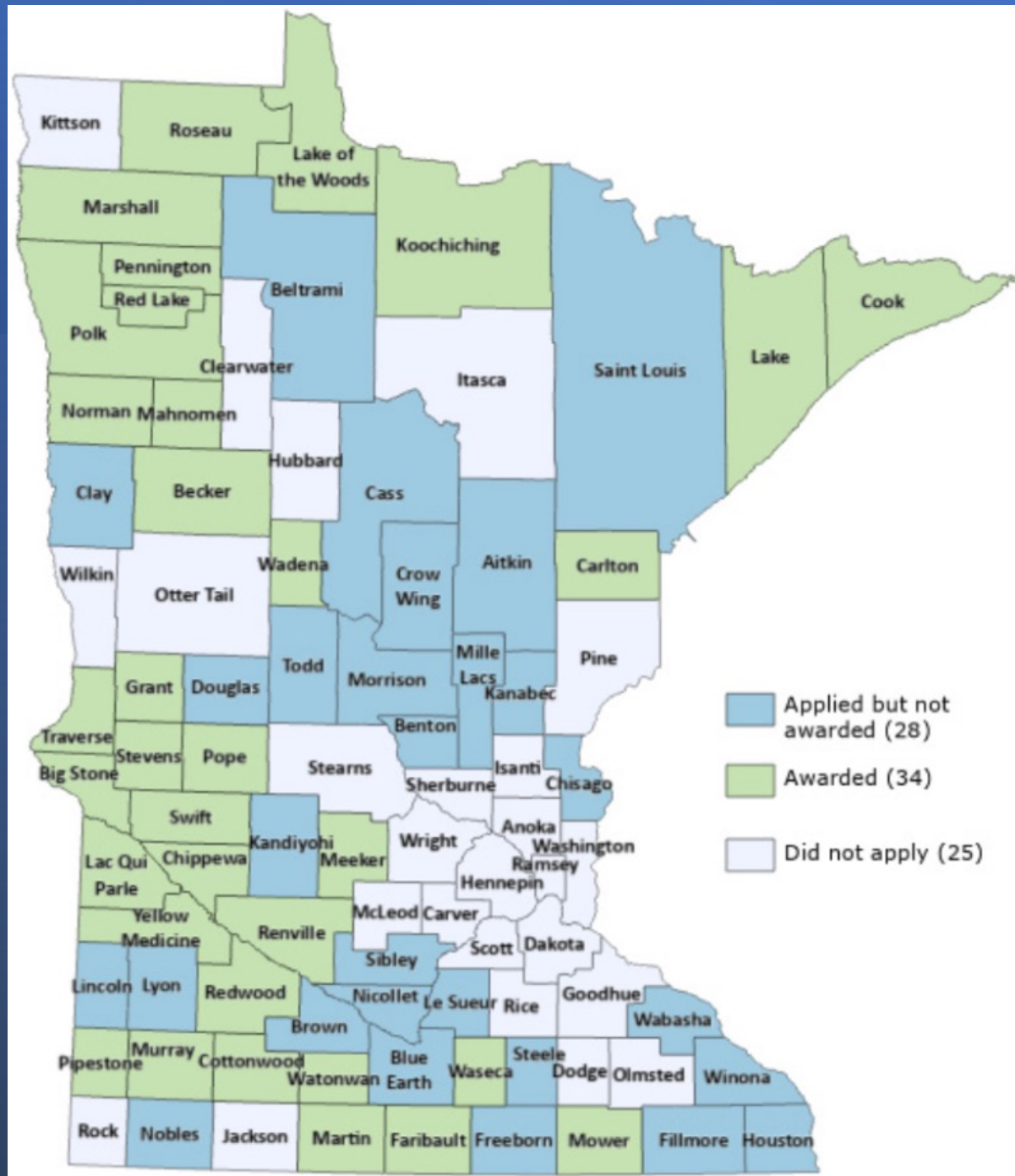


Feds devolved authority to the states who gave that to the counties.



Less than ½ of the monuments (150,000) have a known location.





Need for Preserving the PLSS, but over time

- Delay means landmark tie-ins are lost
- Assumptions of boundaries become set in peoples' minds
- \$2,000 per monument average times 150,000 unknown monuments is \$300 million.
- 435 in-state and 125 out-of-state licensed surveyors are not sufficient to do the job in 3 years, and licensure takes time



Lawsuits Won't Help



Each PLS marker re-established will impact between 100 and 100,000 people. Lawsuits could be crippling.



All corner certificates are filed with the county.



Having a methodical program to preserve the future by perpetuating the PLSS is the key.



Good PLS markers mean good fences.

