

Program Title:

550 Acre Land Acquisition along the Rum River and Cedar Creek in Anoka County

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title:

550 Acre Land Acquisition along the Rum River and Cedar Creek in Anoka County

Date: 10/01/09

Manager's Name:

John VonDeLinde

Title:

Director, Anoka County Parks and Recreation

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Funds Requested (\$000s)	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs <i>For programs that may want to request OHF funds in future recommendation rounds, complete the columns below. One time requests enter zeros in all 3 fiscal years</i>		
		FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	1,900	0	0	0

A. Summary

This project will acquire and protect 550 acres of prairie, wetland, forest and shoreline habitat for fish, game and wildlife along the Rum River and Cedar Creek in the cities of Oak Grove and Andover and will provide additional opportunities for public fishing, hunting and wildlife conservation.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The problem this acquisition project addresses is the urgent need to protect and enhance 550 acres of land that will provide an excellent conservation area along the Rum River and Cedar Creek. The proposed acquisition parcels are currently owned by a development group planning to sell the land for residential construction. The acquisition and protection of these parcels is of utmost concern, because without

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immediate action, this opportunity could be permanently lost. By acquiring this land, the L-SOHC has an excellent opportunity to protect prairie, wetlands, forest and shoreline habitat and increase and enhance the biological diversity in the area, as well as create additional hunting and fishing opportunities in the region.

2. What action will be taken?

The action to be taken will be the acquisition of 550 acres of prairie, wetlands, forest and shoreline along the Rum River and Cedar Creek.

3. Who will take action and when?

In 2009, the Legislature appropriated the first of two installments in the amount of \$1,900,000. Upon funding of the second appropriation, Anoka County will implement the acquisition process. Appraisals have been conducted and negotiations are continuing with the seller for the purchase of the 550 acres as proposed in the 2009 Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council recommendations.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

After acquisition, this project will be coordinated with other grant opportunities supported through the Legacy Funding to restore approximately 250 acres of the 550 acres to a prairie/grassland habitat. Restoring and enhancing the land will provide the biological diversity needed to support game populations, which will enhance hunting and fishing opportunities in the area.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Existing non-agricultural land on the site is recognized by the MNDNR as a high quality ecologically diverse corridor along two major greenways, the Rum River and Cedar Creek. With the acquisition, this corridor would be protected and enhanced to increase the number of species and increase the ease with which they move through this corridor.

After acquisition, the County proposes to restore approximately 250 acres of the 550 acres to a prairie/grassland habitat. The ecological restoration plan will include restoring the forests, wetland and prairies. Restoration work will include introducing over 30 species of native grasses, sedges, and forbs to restore the mosaic of dry, mesic and wet prairie habitats. In addition, the existing high quality fens, wet meadows, shrub swamps and oak savannas will be managed to sustain their high quality value. Restoring and enhancing the land back to its native habitat will help provide the necessary biological mosaic needed to support a diverse variety of wildlife.

The acquisition of these parcels will protect 550 acres of habitat at the confluence of the Rum River and Cedar Creek. There is approximately 1-1/2 miles of shoreline along the Rum River and about 3/4 of a mile of the Cedar Creek that runs through the property. The Rum River provides angling access opportunities for some of the most sought after game fish, such as walleye, northern pike, and small mouth bass; the river provides exceptional fisheries habitat for these game fish.

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As future funding is available, restoration of the flood plain and riparian edges along the Rum River and Cedar Creek will enhance habitat and cover for white tail deer, wild turkeys and migratory waterfowl.

6. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**
If not, how will you finance completion?

7. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

The Anoka County Parks and Recreation Department is a governmental agency that currently manages a large natural resource based parks and open space system throughout the County. The County has the budget, equipment and staff with the expertise to manage this project and the on-going maintenance required. Maintenance of these accomplishments will be paid for through the Anoka County Parks and Recreation Annual Operations and Maintenance Budget.

8. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

The acquisition by Anoka County will directly protect 550 acres of prairies, wetlands, forests and shoreline habitat along the Rum River and Cedar Creek.

9. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land? N/A

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**
If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

10. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

As a governmental agency, Anoka County will ensure transparency by following the State Statutes mandated in the Minnesota Data Practices Act and Open Meeting Laws. Information regarding this project and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars will be disseminated through committee reports, County Board Minutes, press releases, the Anoka County Parks and Recreation website and signage at the site.

11. When do you expect to see these changes?

Restoration work would start immediately after acquisition as funding allows. The majority of the restoration work is anticipated to be completed within three years of acquisition. Restoration monitoring and maintenance will be provided on an on-going basis.

12. Why will this strategy work?

The strategy for this project will work because the Anoka County Parks and Recreation Department is a governmental agency that currently manages a large natural resource based parks and conservation system throughout the County. The County has the budget, equipment and staff with the expertise to manage this project and the on-going

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maintenance required. In addition, it has the support of the Anoka County Board of Commissioners and the local communities.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

The Anoka County Board of Commissioners unanimously supports this project. The Andover City Council has written a letter of support for the acquisition. The Oak Grove City Council concurs with the County's plans to proceed with funding requests for the acquisition. Strong support in favor of the project has been expressed by area residents. There are no known barriers to the success of this project.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

☒ YES

☐ NO

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

☒ YES

☐ NO

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? If so what kind of use? N/A

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easements as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever? N/A

☐ YES

☐ NO

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate? N/A

_____ Years

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

☐ Northern Forest

☒ Forest/Prairie Transition

☐ Southeast Forest

☒ Prairie

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☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ YES

☐ NO

If yes, please explain.

The proposed acquisition parcels are currently owned by a development group planning to sell the land for residential construction. The acquisition and protection of these parcels is of utmost concern, because without immediate action, this opportunity could be permanently lost. By acquiring this land, the L-SOHC has an excellent opportunity to increase and enhance the biological diversity in the area, as well as create additional hunting and fishing opportunities in the region.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☐ YES

☒ NO

If Yes, list the names of the WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

☒ YES

☐ NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

The project area is identified in the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan; Cedar Creek Conservation Corridor Strategic Plan; Metropolitan Conservation Corridors Plan; Anoka County Comprehensive Open Space Plan; and Anoka Conservation District Open Space Plan.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

The scientific foundation for this project is based off the in-depth studies used to develop the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan; Cedar Creek Conservation Corridor Strategic Plan; Metropolitan Conservation Corridors Plan; Anoka County Comprehensive Open Space Plan; Anoka Conservation District Open Space Plan. These plans examined state and local resources to evaluate, assess and recommend protection, restoration and enhancement of natural resources. This project will enhance public fishing and hunting opportunities and will protect key wildlife habitat.

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

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The Anoka County Parks and Recreation Department sets priorities based on the risk to the natural resource(s), the needs of the open space system and the funding available. Those natural resources that are at greater risk of degradation or loss become the highest priorities. The needs in the system and the funding available provide the ranking for those priorities.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

The project area is identified in the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan as a site of high biodiversity value based on the Minnesota County Biological Survey. In addition, the project area scored high in the areas of integrated terrestrial value and integrated aquatic habitat quality.

This project is supported by the Andover Comprehensive Plan; Oak Grove Parks and Open Space Plan; Cedar Creek Conservation Corridor Strategic Plan; Metropolitan Conservation Corridors Plan; Anoka County Comprehensive Open Space Plan; and the Anoka Conservation District Open Space Plan.

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition	\$1,900,000		
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$1,900,000	(previous FY10 appropriation of \$1,900,000)	

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
N/A		

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F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
County In-Kind (Acquisition)	\$30,000		
TOTAL	\$30,000		

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the "protect" row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

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Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect	<i>Protect 150 acres of wetland.</i>	<i>Protect 250 acres of restored prairie</i>	<i>Protect 150 acres of riparian and upland forests</i>	<i>Protect 2.25 miles of shoreline along Cedar Creek and Rum River</i>
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect	X	X	X	X
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect	<i>\$850,000</i>	<i>\$1,600,000</i>	<i>\$850,000</i>	<i>\$500,000</i>
Enhance				

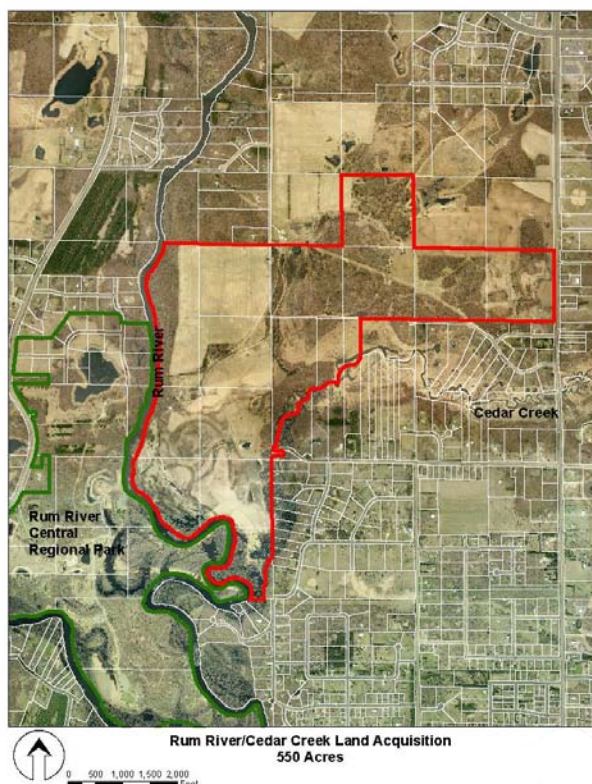
Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect	<i>\$6,500</i>	<i>\$13,000</i>	<i>\$6,500</i>	<i>\$4,000</i>
Enhance				

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Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability	<i>150 acres for \$850,000</i>	<i>250 acres for \$1,600,000</i>	<i>150 acres for \$850,000</i>	<i>2.25 miles for \$500,000</i>
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Acquire 550 acres for protection	Jan. 31,2011	550 acres



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I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

Acquisition of these parcels will be provided through L-SOHC funding. This is new funding and does not supplant existing funding. This project is not in any current capital funding program. Continued operations and maintenance of the parcels will be supported through the Anoka County Parks and Recreation Annual Operating Budget.

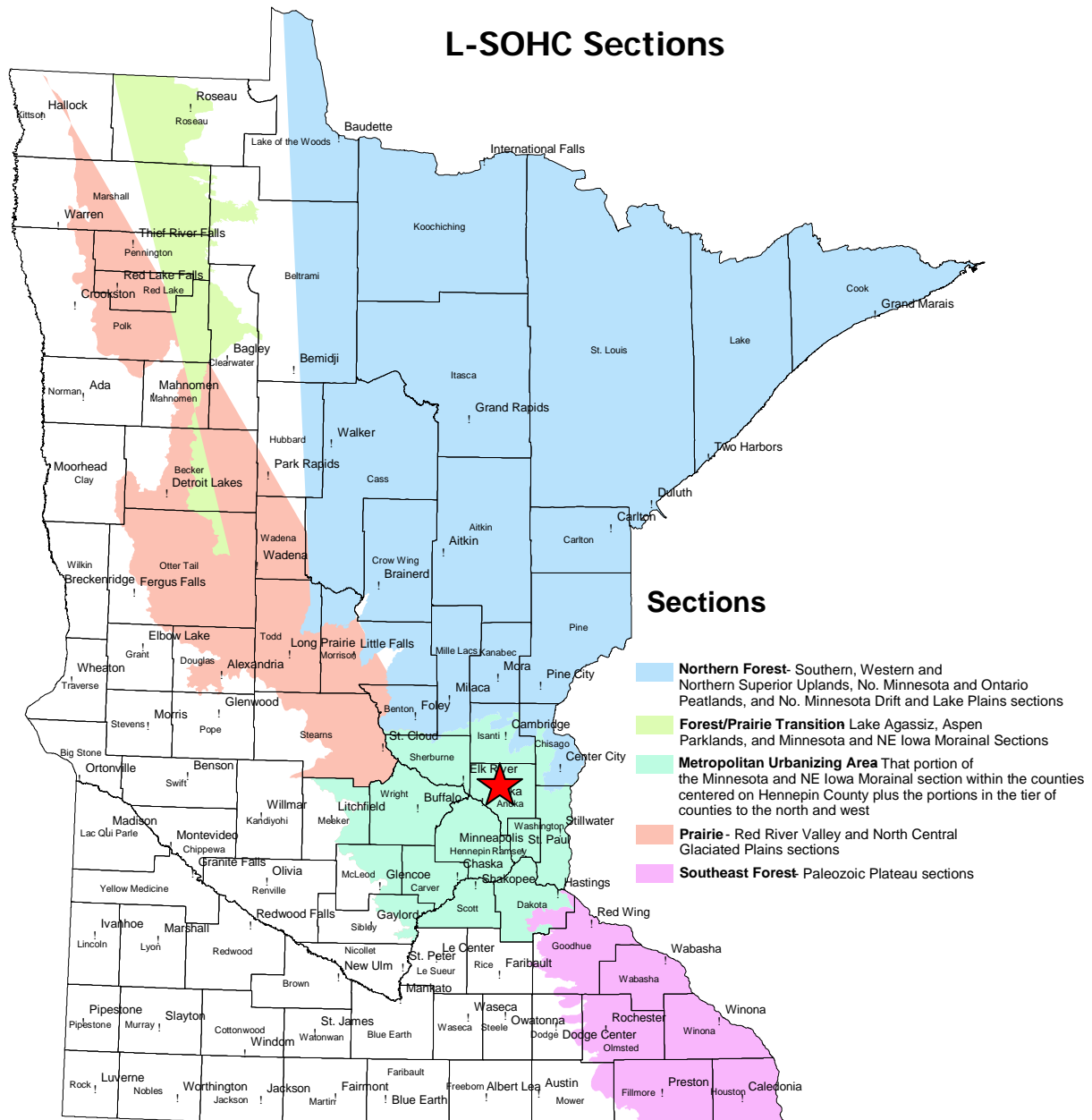
J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

On-going operations and maintenance of the land and restoration will be sustained following the Anoka County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Natural Resource Management Plan and will be supported through the annual Operations and Maintenance Budget for the Parks and Recreation Department.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Anoka County – acquire and protect 550 acres

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**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: Little Nokasippi River Wildlife Management Area

Date: 30 October 2009

Manager's Name: Mr. Dan Steward

Title: Board Conservationist

Mailing Address: 1601 MN Drive, Brainerd, MN 56401

Telephone: (218) 828-2598

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E-Mail: Dan.Steward@state.mn.us

Web Site: www.bwsr.state.mn.us

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs <i>For programs that may want to request OHF funds in future recommendation rounds, complete the columns below. One time requests enter zeros in all 3 fiscal years</i>		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$1,225	0	0	0

A. Summary

This proposal will not only expand an existing WMA by 252 acres for public outdoor recreation (e.g. hunting, fishing, etc.) but it will also protect the viability of the WMA into perpetuity through 1253 acres of permanent conservation easements. This proposal focuses on the Little Nokassippi River Wildlife Management Area (WMA) which was established in 2006 complements to the ACUB program and the support from Crow Wing County and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The WMA is situated within a very critical area of the Camp Ripley ACUB (see Figure No. 2). Similar to military installations, WMAs are impacted by the pressures of development on their boundaries..

The affects of population encroachment have been felt by military installations across the country. Each installation has had to find creative ways to deal with these issues. The most common solution has been restrictions placed on units training, which degrades training realism. Since encroachment has not yet become a serious issue on the periphery of Camp Ripley, Soldiers have not been limited in the field in terms of meeting their training objectives. In other words...Soldiers are able to train as

they will be expected to fight on the battlefield. However, this could change quickly. Acquiring the interest in lands around Camp Ripley will ensure unrestricted training to its users far into the future. It's the unrestricted, quality training and facilities at Camp Ripley that ensures Soldier readiness.

In the interest of protecting the mission of Camp Ripley, the Minnesota National Guard adopted an Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program for Camp Ripley which was approved by National Guard Bureau (NGB) in 2004. Camp Ripley's ACUB was only the second in the Nation to be approved. The ACUB program has received tremendous endorsement and support from numerous local units of government, governmental agencies, local citizenry, and non-governmental organizations. This support resonates from the importance of Camp Ripley's mission and the benefits that the ACUB program provides in terms of protecting the rural character recreational opportunities throughout central Minnesota.

The purpose of the Camp Ripley ACUB program, known locally as "*Central Minnesota Prairie to Pines Partnership...preserving our heritage*", is to create and enhance a three mile natural buffer (110,000 acres) around Camp Ripley by taking advantage of available opportunities to prevent encroachment, enhance conservation and promote outdoor recreational opportunities such as the Little Nokasippi River Wildlife Management Area (WMA). By securing a buffer, Camp Ripley can continue to offer and provide critically important, high quality military training and operations to ensure combat readiness, as well as mitigate community development encroachment around the training site. Through implementation of Camp Ripley's proposal, Camp Ripley will also be contributing to preserving the local heritage and enhancing an extremely diverse regional conservation corridor within the Mississippi Headwaters Corridor.

Camp Ripley comprises 53,000 acres and is capable of accommodating a full complement of heavy and light field maneuvers and weapon systems that are fielded by the US Army. In addition to serving as a military training site for all branches of the Department of Defense, Camp Ripley is also Minnesota's largest state game refuge bordered by 19 miles of the Mississippi River to the east and 8 miles of the Crow Wing River to the north (See Figure No. 1).

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Funds will provide outdoor recreational opportunities for hunting, fishing and general recreation outdoor enthusiasts. In addition the project is integral to protecting the military mission of neighboring Camp Ripley through its Army Compatible Use Buffer program.

2. What action will be taken?

The action will result in acquiring approximately 252 acres of land from 4 landowners. The land will be acquired fee title and will be incorporated into the existing Little Nokasippi River WMA. The total estimated cost for the acquisition is \$900,000 of which \$225,000 will be

secured through the Outdoor Heritage Fund and the balance through National Guard Bureau (NGB). In addition the project will result in permanent conservation easements encompassing 1,253 acres. The easements are intended to protect the investment in the Little Nokasippi River WMA by creating a permanent buffer that will not be developed and subsequently resulting in land use that is incompatible with the WMA and the neighboring military mission. The total estimated cost for this element of the project is \$3,175,000 of which \$1 million will be secured through the Outdoor Heritage Fund and the balance through NGB (\$1,000,000), landowner contributions (\$925,000), Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources In-Kind (\$75,000), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources In-Kind (\$75,000), and the Minnesota National Guard In-Kind (\$100,000).

3. Who will take action and when?

The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) will be responsible for implementing the program funds through the Outdoor Heritage Fund. In addition, the Minnesota National Guard (MNARNG) is responsible for securing matching funds through National Guard Bureau (NGB) similar to that which they have done successfully since 2004 in the total amount of \$12,981,500. The request for funds as it relates to this project has already been submitted to NGB and will be available in federal Fiscal Year 2010 (1 October 2009 through 30 September 2010). In turn, the funds are allocated through cooperative agreements between BWSR and DNR and NGB. Staffs from the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) implement the program on behalf of BWSR. DNR staff will implement the program on their behalf. MNARNG staff also provides technical support and oversight of the program.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

The total estimated cost for this outdoor Heritage Fund proposal is \$4,075,000 of which \$1,225,000 will be secured through the Outdoor Heritage Fund and the balance through NGB (\$1,675,000), landowner contributions (\$925,000), BWSR In-Kind (\$75,000), DNR In-Kind (\$75,000), and MNARNG In-Kind (\$100,000). The coordination of funds will be accomplished through existing cooperative agreements between NGB and BWSR and DNR. These agreements serve to track the expenditure of all funds relative to the Camp Ripley ACUB program.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

The ACUB program has proven to protect both riparian and non-riparian wildlife habitat landscapes. Action taken within the Little Nokasippi River WMA to date has included habitat restoration with the removal of structures/buildings associated with past land use. This pending Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal will not only further restoration efforts but also expand outdoor recreation opportunities including hunting, fishing, and hiking. The program will be a

success if 252 acres of property, offered by willing sellers, is purchased including both riparian and non riparian properties. The conservation easements will further protect the 609 acre investment in the WMA by limiting future development on the periphery forever.

6. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

X YES

7. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will continue to assume responsibility for managing and maintaining the Little Nokasippi River Wildlife Management Area and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources is responsible for monitoring the conservation easements. The landowner is responsible for maintenance of the easement.

8. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

The project will directly protect and enhance habitat for fish, game and wildlife. In addition, the lands purchased through the fee title element of this proposal will be opened to public hunting, fishing and recreation through their designation as a Wildlife Management Area,

9. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

X YES The land to be acquired will be permanently protected and maintained by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources as a Wildlife Management Area in accordance with Minnesota Statute 97A.133.

10. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

NGB requires a comprehensive annual report of all accomplishments within the Camp Ripley ACUB program. This report will also capture all accomplishments within the Outdoor Heritage Fund since the Outdoor Heritage Funds will serve as match to the federal funds. The annual report is public information that is transparent to all partners and the general public.

11. When do you expect to see these changes?

The annual reporting requirement has already been instituted including the relationship with the Outdoor Heritage Funds whether or not successful as was the case with the DNR's initial request in the first round of Outdoor Heritage Funding also on behalf of ACUB and the Little Nokasippi River WMA.

12. Why will this strategy work?

Since 2004, the Minnesota National Guard has invested about \$13 million in the Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program for Camp Ripley and has leverage approximately \$45 million in other funds. This has been accomplished in partnership with BWSR, DNR, TNC, MNARNG, and Cass and Crow Wing Counties. BWSR and DNR are the primary partnering agencies since they have executed formal cooperative agreements with National Guard Bureau (NGB) to receive and expend funds on behalf of the Camp Ripley ACUB. This strategy has resulted in the initial development of the Little Nokasippi River WMA and has proven to be the most successful ACUB program in the nation complements to these partnerships.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

Based on the tremendous support that the Crow Wing County Board, Fort Ripley Township, Minnesota National Guard, The Nature Conservancy, and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources have offered in the development of the Little Nokasippi River WMA, the project will succeed unconditionally. The overwhelming success of the ACUB program throughout the area will complement the Outdoor Heritage Funding decision.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

X YES

Crow Wing Co. and Fort Ripley Township have officially approved (by resolution) the Little Nokasippi River WMA as it exists today and they are very supportive of the plans to expand the WMA and to protect the WMA with permanent conservation easements.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

X YES

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? If so what kind of use?

The easements are intended to protect the investment in fee simple acquisition that has been made in developing and enhancing the Little Nokasippi River WMA where integrated public use will prevail on approximately 2,400 acres of public land including the Little Nokasippi River WMA (609 acres) and the Crow wing County Memorial Forest (1,785

acres). As such the conservation easements surrounding the public land will not be open to public use but the easements will protect the public investment and use of the WMA..

- 17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easements as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?**

 X YES

- 18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?**

Although funding is being requested for one year, the results of this investment will ensure that this investment will last forever since the terms of acquisition and the conservation easements calls for “perpetuity”.

- 19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.**

 X Northern Forest

 Forest/Prairie Transition

 Southeast Forest

 Prairie

 Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

- 20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?**

 X YES

 NO

If yes, please explain.

The availability of land and willingness of land owners to participate is a necessary reality to ensure immediate success. In addition, the majority of funding available as match to implement the project will be secured through the federal government as part the of the ACUB program. It is imperative that proponents capitalize on these opportunities. Furthermore, the project has essential momentum and support form local governmental officials attributable to the success of ACUB since 2004 including the establishment of the Little Nokasippi River WMA. Since the Highway 371 transportation corridor is a principal artery for growth (Brainerd/Baxter to St. Cloud) within the Mississippi River Corridor, it is imperative that the project be implemented before the available land is lost.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

 X YES

 NO

If Yes, list the names of the WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

The proposal will expand, restore, and enhance the Little Nokasippi River Wildlife Management Area.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

 X YES

 NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

The Little Nokasippi River WMA and the surround landscape that encompasses the Camp Ripley ACUB is part of an "Important Birding Area" that was approved in 2005. The IBA designation is a reflection of the extreme biological diversity that characterizes the project area.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

It is a well documented fact that military installations and wildlife management areas throughout the country are experiencing the adverse affects of encroachment through subdivision and development. Protection of land through acquisition or easements are proven techniques for protecting high quality habitats and their associated public use.

24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

The Cooperative Agreements between the DNR, BWSR and NGB states that parcels acquired under the agreement must be located within the three-mile buffer area surround Camp Ripley. Furthermore, the parcels will be pursued in accordance with the prioritization process presented in the Camp Ripley Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) proposal including, but not limited to, proximity to Camp Ripley, size of parcel(s), potential for development, land owner willingness, availability, and cost.

The primary purpose of the Camp Ripley ACUB is to create and enhance a natural buffer around Camp Ripley to ensure that the military training mission of Camp Ripley is not impeded by the impacts of encroachment. Secondly, the ACUB will greatly benefit the natural resources of central Minnesota by minimizing the fragmentation of surrounding lands and subsequent loss of valuable habitat for sensitive species. Lastly, ACUB will contribute to preserving the local heritage by maintaining the rural character of the area that residents cherish.

A comprehensive database has been created to evaluate all land parcels lying within the 110,000 acre ACUB area which includes the Little Nokasippi River WMA. The data base is linked to criteria

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that are used to rank or score all candidate land parcels. In turn, each candidate land parcel must meet one or more of the following seven military funding criteria which cumulatively are weighted 75%.

1. Adjacent to Highway 371
2. Adjacent to the Camp Ripley Boundary
3. Greater than or equal to 80 acres in size
4. Borders a primary lake, river, or stream
5. Impacted by blast noise zone 2 or 3
6. Impacted by airfield noise
7. Located within airfield potential crash zone

Other land characteristic criteria are used to rank or score land parcels have a cumulative weighting of 25% including:

1. County biological survey findings
2. Cultural resources
3. Proximity to lakes, streams, and wetlands
4. Rare or endangered species
5. Vegetative cover/habitat
6. Proximity to public land

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan – This proposal is supported by the following recommendations:

Habitat Recommendation 1: Protect Priority Land Habitats – This proposal is supported by the comprehensive mapping product (Figure H7, p. 44), showing the Camp Ripley area as scoring a medium high with regard to Integrated Terrestrial Value Score. This sets the area around Camp Ripley well ahead of many other areas of the state. The text in the plan that states that, “The State must further strengthen its leadership to coordinate and stimulate efforts for the protection of these critical land areas among current and potential partners. This activity would include identification of relevant landowners, identification of the most cost-effective measures for protection, restoration, and education on the importance of the area...”. The ACUB program is designed to help the State achieve this goal.

Habitat Recommendation 2: Protect critical shorelands of streams and lakes

Habitat Recommendation 2A: Acquire high-priority shorelands

- This proposal is supported by the Integrated Aquatic Habitat Quality Index map (figure H8, page 45) showing the Crow Wing, Mississippi and the Gull River flowages, among others, as higher scoring aquatic habitats.

Habitat Recommendation 3: Improve connectivity and access to outdoor recreation

Habitat Recommendation 7: Keep water on the landscape – This proposal protects the functions of rainwater infiltration by preventing conversion to impervious surface.

The plan also identifies strong correlations between “protecting priority land habitats” and the following benefits: Water Quality / Quantity, Terrestrial Habitat Quality, Soil / Land Quality, Biodiversity, Aquatic Community Health, Economic Health, Recreational / Cultural / Spiritual / Aesthetic Value and Climate Change Mitigation / Adaptation (Final Plan p.28).

FY 2008-2009 DNR ACUB Acquisition Plan - The fee acquisition of property within the three-mile ACUB boundary also called out in the FY 2008-2009 DNR ACUB Acquisition Plan throughout the document.

MN DNR, “Tomorrow’s Habitat for the Wild and Rare: An Action Plan for Minnesota Wildlife”, 2006 – Camp Ripley has been identified as an area important for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (page 172). In addition, this proposal is supported by the identification of habitat loss and habitat degradation in Minnesota as the problem most identified in the ecological subsections where the ACUB exists, which are the Hardwood Hills, Mille Lacs Uplands, Anoka Sand Plains, Pine Moraines & Outwash Plains. Statewide, the Species in Greatest Conservation Need are impacted greatly by the loss of habitat (76%) and degradation of habitat in Minnesota (83%) (page 38). Of all 25 Ecological Classification System ‘Subsections’ in the state, the four that touch Camp Ripley and the buffer have significant numbers of species in greatest conservation need. They rank #3, #6, #9, and #11 (page 31). The protection and restoration of habitat in the ACUB will protect and manage existing habitat and help restore other important habitats.

The Nature Conservancy, “Prairie – Forest Border Ecoregion: A Conservation Plan”, 2001 - This proposal is supported by the identification of the Mississippi and Crow Wing River corridors as “Ecologically Significant Areas of the Prairie Forest Border” (map 7A). “Land development for residential or commercial uses, incompatible agricultural practices, exotic species and fire exclusion were identified as the primary threats facing conservation targets throughout the ecoregion” (page 2). The region is also considered an ‘active landscape’ in separate documents showing much of the ACUB buffer a focus of TNCs work.

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition	\$225,000		
Easement Acquisition	\$1,000,000		
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$1,225,000		

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

<u>Title</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Amount.</u>
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Note: No funds from the Outdoor Heritage Fund will be used for personnel including, but not limited to, personnel from BWSR, DNR, TNC, MNARNG, and SWCDs. Instead, the funds will be used for direct payment for land acquisition and conservation easements.

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
National Guard Bureau	\$1,675,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Landowners	\$925,000	\$925,000	\$925,000
Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000
Minnesota Department of Military Affairs	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
TOTAL	\$2,850,000	\$2,175,000*	\$2,175,000*

*Funding will be secured through National Guard Bureau in partnership with DNR, BWSR, and MNARNG in support of ACUB. This investment is predicated on continued funding from the Department of Defense which began in 2004.

G. Outcomes:

- 1) In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.
- 2) In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.
- 3) In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.
- 4) In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and
- 5) If you have any outcomes listed in the "protect" row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>252 acres</i>
Protect				<i>1043 acres</i>
Enhance				<i>210 acres</i>

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>17%</i>
Protect				<i>69%</i>
Enhance				<i>14%</i>

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>252 acres</i>
Protect				<i>210 acres</i>
Enhance				<i>210 acres</i>

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>750,000</i>
Protect				<i>2,157,500</i>
Enhance				<i>37,500</i>

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				<i>State WMA 609 acres</i>
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				<i>N/A</i>
Permanent Easement				<i>N/A</i>

H. Accomplishment Time Table: Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

<u>Milestone</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Measure</u>
1. Property appraisal for fee title acquisition	July 2010	4 property appraisals
2. Negotiate fee title purchase	Sept. 2010	4 properties
3. Acquire land as part of WMA	Oct. 2010	4 properties (252 acres)
4. Dedicate addition to WMA	Nov. 2010	252 acres
5. Secure landowner commitment for easements	July 2010	1253 acres
6. Execute easements	Oct. 2010	1253 acres
7. Record easements	Dec. 2010	1253 acres

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

Since 2004, the Minnesota National Guard has invested about \$13 million in the Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program for Camp Ripley and has leverage approximately \$45 million in other funds. Of this amount the initial establishment of the Little Nokasippi River WMA was accomplished in April 2006 in the amount of \$420,000 with the assistance of DNR and TNC. Subsequent investment in the WMA occurred in 2009 as the WMA was expanded at a cost of \$505,000 also with the assistance of DNR and TNC.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

The fee title acquisition for the Little Nokasippi River WMA has been assigned to a management division within the Department of Natural Resources, e.g. Fisheries, Parks, Wildlife, Forestry. Costs and staffing for sustaining these properties are born by these management divisions.

BWSR has assumed responsibility for monitoring and maintaining the permanent conservation easements. This is accomplished in conjunction with the staff from the county Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

As shown in Figures that follow, the project (Little Nokasippi River WMA) is located Crow Wing County but the impact of the project will also be realized in Morrison County with the permanent conservation easements.

Figure No. 1

Camp Ripley Perspective

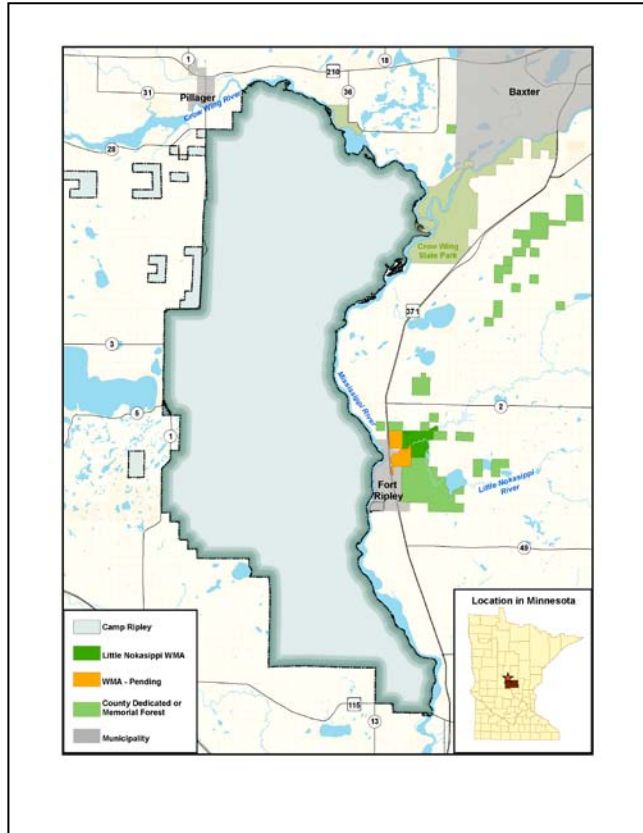


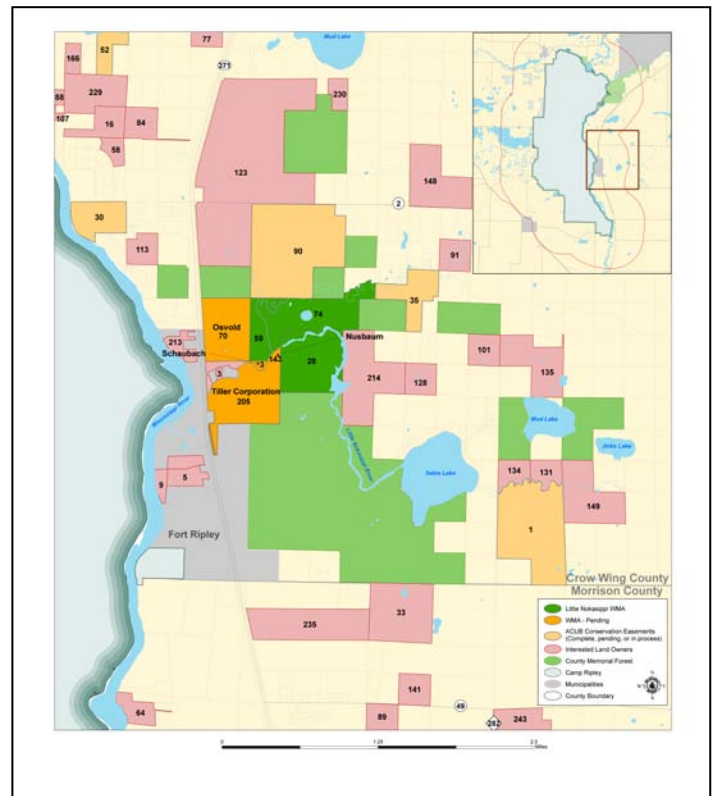
Figure No. 2

Little Nokasippi River WMA

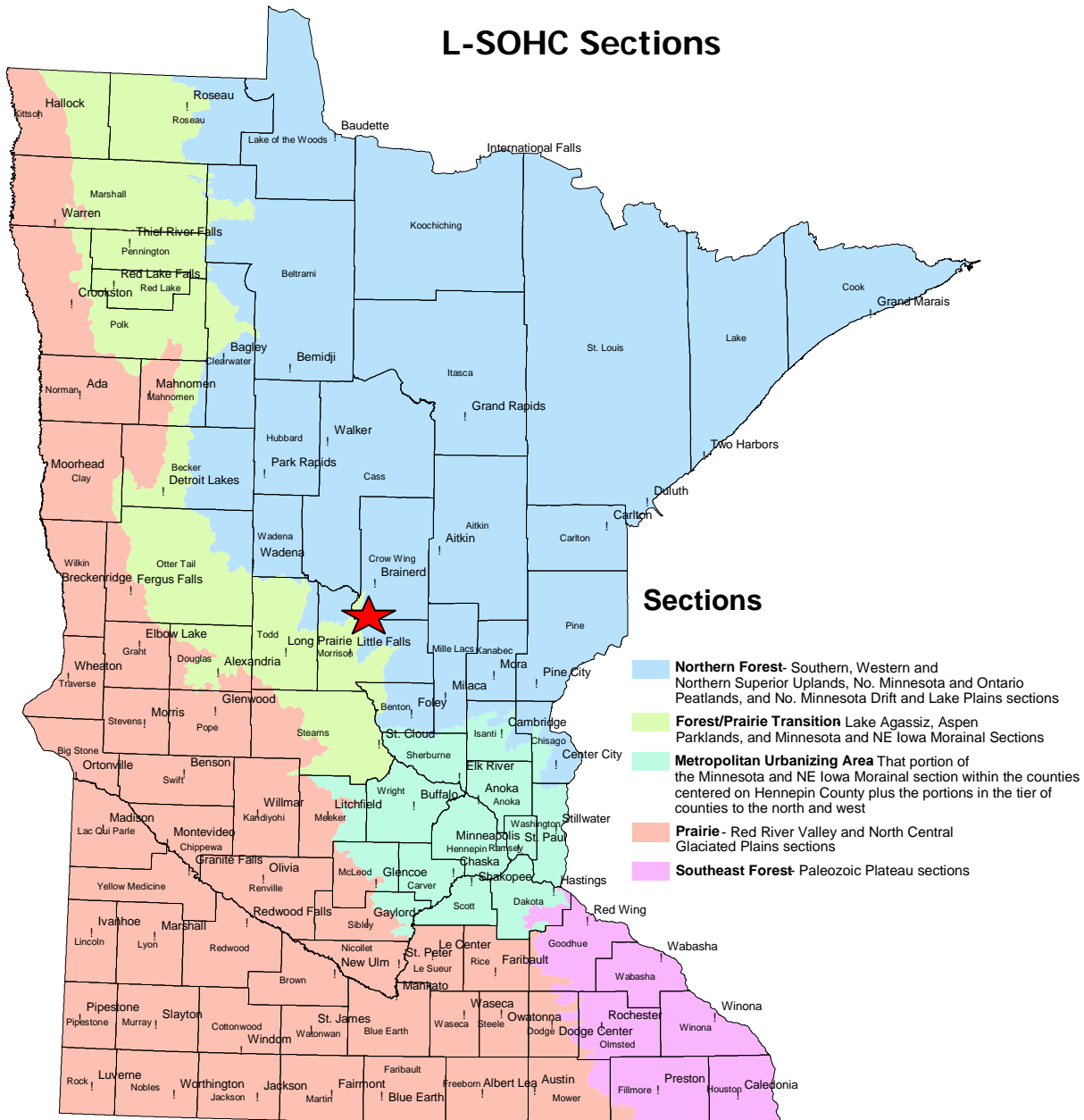
- Existing WMA 357
- WMA pending (LSOHC) 252
- Completed Easements 863
- Interest pending (LSOHC) 2,584
- County forest 1,785

TOTAL *5,841

***Acres within the greater Little Nokasippi River WMA area**



L-SOHC Sections



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area Wetland Habitat Restoration

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area Wetland Habitat Restoration

Date: October , 2009

Manager's Name: Steve Wymore

Title: Superintendent of Schools, Lake of the Woods School, ISD #390

Mailing Address: PO Box 310, Baudette, MN 56623

Telephone: 218-634-2510 ext 1506

Fax: 218-634-2750

E-Mail: swymore@blw.k12.mn.us

Web Site: lakeofthewoodsschool.org

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$173,000	0	0	0

A. Summary

This project will restore and enhance a 120-acre tract of critical wetland habitat in the Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area School Forest located in the Northern Forest section in Lake of the Woods County.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The Lake of the Woods School owns a 120-acre tract of land adjacent to the building site. This tract of land was recently accepted into the state's DNR School Forest Program as the Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area. The Lake of the

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area Wetland Habitat Restoration

Woods School Forest Committee has been actively planning to restore and enhance two degraded wetlands on site to promote suitable habitat for rare species such as Wilson's phalarope, the short-eared owl, sharp-tailed grouse and the elusive yellow rail.

2. What action will be taken?

The Lake of the Woods School Forest Committee members are working with the local Soil and Water Conservation District personnel and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff to develop a comprehensive restoration and management plan for Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area (ALELA). Actions for restoration and enhancement will be implemented under the technical guidance of these two agencies.

Restoration of the northern portion will entail grading to restore hydrology, replacing topsoil, seeding with native vegetation and creating a suitable habitat for the yellow rail and Wilson's phalarope. This habitat will include a seasonally flooded wetland adjacent to a sedge meadow. Enhancement of the southern portion, once a farmed wetland, will create suitable habitat for sharp-tailed grouse. Prescribed burning and the development of firebreaks will be used to remove woody vegetation which has encroached on the wet meadow.

3. Who will take action and when?

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff will provide topographic survey results from a recent survey of the site. Final site plans and restoration specifications will be completed by 2010.

•North restoration

Upon receiving notification of grant funding, the school will let out bids for contracted excavation work. SWCD staff will oversee excavation and construction for the wetland restoration during the summer of 2010, and site surveys will be completed to verify proper contouring. Installation of culverts for hydrological control points will be completed during construction.

Seeding will be completed during the spring of 2011. US FWS staff will assist with the contract process for seeding.

First year-establishment weed management will be conducted by SWCD staff in the spring and summer of 2012. Wetland monitoring plots will be established during the spring, and the sites will be monitored for immediate threats, such as Canada thistle or reed canary grass.

•South enhancement

The Lake of the Woods Soil and Water Conservation District staff and school personnel will flag a firebreak for brushing during the summer of 2010. At this time, all debris piles slated for removal and disposal will be marked. Contracts for debris disposal will be let out for bids.

The firebreak will be established during the fall of 2010. Two consecutive prescribed burns will be conducted during the spring of 2011 and 2012. U.S. FWS staff will provide the technical oversight for the burns. The Minnesota Conservation Corps will be hired to assist with conducting the burn.

As part of the public promotion for this restoration and enhancement project, an educational component, such as wildlife observation blinds and interpretive signage have been added to this project. The school personnel will work with U.S FWS staff to

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area Wetland Habitat Restoration

develop and install signs. Also, two public meetings will be held throughout the project time period to inform and educate local stakeholders.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

The School Forest Committee has future plans for developing environmental educational trails to provide access to ALELA. However, the wetland habitat restoration supersedes these efforts. Habitat restoration and enhancement is seen by the committee members as the most important piece.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Restoration of the northern portion will entail grading to restore hydrology, replacing topsoil, seeding with native vegetation and creating a suitable habitat for the yellow rail and Wilson's phalarope. This habitat will include a seasonally flooded wetland adjacent to a sedge meadow.

Enhancement of the southern portion, once a farmed wetland, will create suitable habitat for sharp-tailed grouse. Prescribed burning and the development of firebreaks will be used to remove woody vegetation which has encroached on the wet meadow.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

Habitat enhancements to the southern portion of the site will see more immediate benefits. Removal of woody vegetation will provide suitable sharp-tailed grouse habitat, and the fringe species will be able to utilize the sedge meadow and edges created.

Due to the highly degraded area on the north end, a successful wetland restoration will take several years to establish. The seeding will take place in 2011, but many of the plant species will take two to three years to begin to establish well.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**
If not, how will you finance completion?

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Apart from the periodic burning and brushing of the firebreak, the wetland restoration will be self-maintaining once it establishes successfully. The School Forest Committee members and other volunteer organizations have committed to long-term maintenance of this project.

Program Title: Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area Wetland Habitat Restoration

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

Restoration of the northern portion will entail grading to restore hydrology, replacing topsoil, seeding with native vegetation and creating a suitable habitat for the yellow rail and Wilson's phalarope. This habitat will include a seasonally flooded wetland adjacent to a sedge meadow.

Enhancement of the southern portion, once a farmed wetland, will create suitable habitat for sharp-tailed grouse. Prescribed burning and the development of firebreaks will be used to remove woody vegetation which has encroached on the wet meadow.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**
If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

The Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area is school-owned property and the entire restoration site is enrolled in the MN DNR School Forest Program.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

The Lake of the Woods School District is the fiscal agent for many grants. As a public school, all financial records are public knowledge. We will also hold public meetings and have periodic reviews of our grant dollars. These reviews will be held during monthly School Forest Committee meetings.

12. Why will this strategy work?

It is a public school. This project also involves other local, state and federal public agencies to help provide oversight.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

None. This project is on school-owned land and has received tremendous support from the school officials and the local community. The committee has also been in communication with the adjacent landowner throughout the planning process.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

N/A

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

Program Title: Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area Wetland Habitat Restoration

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement? N/A

N/A

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

N/A

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

N/A

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

_____ Indefinitely, ongoing _____ **Years**

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

___x___ Northern Forest

_____ Forest/Prairie Transition

_____ Southeast Forest

_____ Prairie

_____ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

___x___ **YES**

_____ **NO**

If yes, please explain.

Program Title: Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area Wetland Habitat Restoration

The degree of degradation to the wetland has made the property almost uninhabitable to sensitive native species.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

_____ YES _____x_____ NO

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

_____ YES _____x_____ NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

We want to restore and enhance the area to provide biodiversity

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

N/A

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

N/A

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

There are four goals in the MNCPP which this project will directly target:

*Rec-H5 Restoration of wetlands, specifically targeting degraded wetlands

This project will restore a site which was used as a borrow (gravel) pit. Hydrology and vegetation will be restored on this site. It also will enhance a site which was once a farmed wetland. Woody vegetation, mainly brushy species, has encroached on the site, limiting the habitat value.

*Rec-H7 Keep water on the landscape

Restoration of hydrology is included in the north wetland restoration. A large ditch which provides drainage to the school grounds will be re-diverted to outlet into the wetland restoration.

Program Title: Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area Wetland Habitat Restoration

***Rec-H13 Education of citizens**

This project will be used to educate the general public on the values of wetlands, the various types of wetlands, and the habitat benefits which can be attained through different land management techniques. Interpretive signage will be installed as part of the educational piece. In addition to on-site education, this project will be promoted through local workshops and through various publications such as the SWCD's bi-annual newsletter and the local newspapers.

***Rec-LU2 Support local conservation-based community planning**

This project will enhance and restore wetlands just outside the city limits. This project is a good fit for local efforts to maintain green space and provide natural areas near the city.

The openland habitat created is within the MN DNR's sharp-tailed grouse habitat corridor for Lake of the Woods County.

This project also fits well with goals of the USFWS. The School Forest Committee is currently working with the private lands specialist from the Rydell Refuge of the USFWS. Through this partnership, the committee will be applying for funds for a separate project component under the USFWS Partners for Wildlife Program.

Program Title: Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area Wetland Habitat Restoration

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
Contracts	\$36,500	\$3,000	\$4,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	\$46,000	\$29,000	\$1,000
Fee Acquisition	\$0	\$0	\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0	\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0	\$0
Professional Services	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0
Additional Budget Items	\$0	\$0	\$11,500
TOTAL	\$96,500	\$46,000	\$30,500

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
Buildings and Grounds Supervisor	Reed McFarlane	\$14,000
School Forest Coordinator	Jenny Moorman	\$7,000

Program Title: Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area Wetland Habitat Restoration

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Partners Grant	\$15,000		
Lake of the Woods School District 390		\$15,000	
TOTAL	\$15,000	\$15,000	

G. Outcomes:

- 1) In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.
- 2) In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.
- 3) In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.
- 4) In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and
- 5) If you have any outcomes listed in the "protect" row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5

Table 1 Accomplishments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	Restore 12 acres of highly degraded wetland			Provide habitat for Wilson's phalarope and the yellow rail
Protect				
Enhance	Enhance sedge meadow wetland approx. 40 plus acres in size.			Provide sharp-tailed grouse and the short-eared owl habitat

Program Title: Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area Wetland Habitat Restoration

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>Northern Forest (120 acres including open- water wetland, sedge meadow and forested wetland)</i>
Protect	<i>Northern Forest (12 acres)</i>			
Enhance	<i>Northern Forest (40 acres)</i>			<i>Northern Forest (120 acres including open- water wetland, sedge meadow and forested wetland)</i>

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$73,000</i>			<i>\$30,000</i>
Protect				
Enhance	<i>\$20,000</i>			<i>\$50,000</i>

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$15,000</i>			<i>\$0</i>
Protect				
Enhance	<i>\$0</i>			<i>\$15,000</i>

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Agassiz Lowlands Environmental Learning Area Wetland Habitat Restoration

Permanent Easement

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H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
North restoration		
U.S. FWS staff topographic survey	2010	12 acres
Excavation, soil replenishment for wetland restoration	2010	12 acres
Site survey for contouring	2010	12 acres
Seeding	2011	12 acres
Weed management	2012	12 acres
Observation blinds erected	2012	1 on site
Interpretive signage placed	2012	1 on site
South enhancement		
Flag firebreak for brushing	2010	40 acre perimeter
Debris pile marked and removed	2010	10 acres
Firebreak established	2010	40 acre perimeter
Prescribed burns	2011, 2012	40 acre
Observation blinds erected	2012	2 on site
Interpretive signage placed	2012	1 on site

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

N/A – this funding will provide the impetus for this project.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

School maintenance staff will periodically mow the firebreak on the south wetland enhancement. Prescribed burns will be applied as needed to suppress the growth of woody vegetation. If assistance is needed to conduct the burns, the local volunteer fire departments and DNR staff will be asked to incorporate this site into their spring training regimen. The wetland restoration will be self-maintaining once it establishes successfully. Monitoring for noxious weeds will be conducted by the high school science classes. The school maintenance staff will work with the County Weed Inspector to treat as necessary. The School Forest Committee members and other volunteer organizations have committed to long-term maintenance of this project.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: North Ottawa Impoundment Project Phase V

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: #4 North Ottawa Impoundment Project Phase V

Date: 10-01-2009

Manager's Name: Jon Roeschlein

Title: Administrator

Mailing Address: 704 Highway 75 South, Wheaton, MN 56296

Telephone: 320-563-4185

Fax: 320-563-4987

E-Mail: @frontiernet.net

Web Site:

[://mnwatershed.govoffice.com/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={752E546E-BBDF-4B05-A5F9-7D33266AC441}](http://mnwatershed.govoffice.com/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={752E546E-BBDF-4B05-A5F9-7D33266AC441})

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs <i>For programs that may want to request OHF funds in future recommendation rounds, complete the columns below. One time requests enter zeros in all 3 fiscal years</i>		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$3,000,000	0	0	0

A. Summary *Phase V of the North Ottawa Impoundment Project incorporates Natural Resource Enhancements in the impoundment to be managed during non-flood periods. These features include water quality improvement, stream flow augmentation, and feeding and resting areas for migrating shorebirds and waterfowl.*

B. Background Information

1. **What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?** *The opportunity here includes establishing an area where the shorebirds and waterfowl will have a place to feed and rest during their migration. We will manage the area to provide mudflats for the shorebird migration and shallow flooded vegetation for the waterfowl migration.*
2. **What action will be taken?** *With these funds we intend to construct an internal control system inside the impoundment, consisting of a series of low head dikes to partition the area off into nine cells and install the necessary structures to be able to move water from one cell to another by gravity when appropriate to do so.*
3. **Who will take action and when?** *The Bois de Sioux Watershed District is the owner of the project. When a flood is imminent, they will control the outlet structures and use the area to protect downstream areas from flooding. During all other times, we have established a Natural Resource Management Team consisting of MnDNR Wildlife, MPCA, USFWS, Ducks Unlimited, BdSWD and BWSR to develop the strategies for managing the water inside the impoundment. They will make decisions on how to best operate the structures inside to maximize the benefit to the migrating species.*
4. **How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?** *This is a one-time request for funds to finish the project. No other Constitutional Funding programs will be used for this project because it does not fit the criteria.*
5. **What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.** *Currently the land in this 3 square mile area is intensively farmed, like all the land around it. By installing and operating Phase V, this land will all be converted to and managed for feeding and resting habitat for the migrating species. Mudflats will be exposed at the appropriate times to attract the shorebirds and natural vegetation will be shallow flooded at the appropriate times for the migrating waterfowl. Slow releases from the impoundment will provide for stream flow augmentation on the Rabbit River, a stream that is currently intermittent. Reducing the velocities of the water that enter the impoundment allows for sediment and nutrients to precipitate out of the water, thus improving the water quality released. Many streams in the Red River Valley are listed as impaired waters due to turbidity including the Rabbit River and the Bois de Sioux River, it's outlet. This management scheme will be a step in the right direction to reduce the turbidity load to these watercourses.*

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

6. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ X YES

☐ NO

If not, how will you finance completion?

7. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments? *The Bois de Sioux Watershed collects an ad valorem tax for operations and will continue to do so to maintain this project. USFWS and MnDNR Wildlife agree to provide money annually for the first five years to help offset operating costs as well as in-kind staff to assist with bird counts, vegetation management, and structure operation. The arrangement would be re-evaluated after 5 years and re-considered at that time. In any case, the BdSWD would be able to continue with operations and maintenance.*

8. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife? *The area in question is three square miles of farmed land right now. We have the ability to hold water there during a flood event, thus reducing damages downstream. Most every spring there will be a need to store flood water. After the flood danger is over in the spring, we can release the stored water in such a fashion that the land could be farmed again. By constructing the Phase V project, we would permanently convert the entire three square miles to managed habitat lands, to be used during all times when there is no flood threat.*

9. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ X YES

☐ NO

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection. *The land is owned in fee title by the Bois de Sioux Watershed District.*

10. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars. *The Bois de Sioux Watershed District is required to be audited annually and submit that financial report to the state and others who request it. We also prepare and distribute an annual report of our physical and financial activity for the public to review as required by law.*

- 11. When do you expect to see these changes?** *We would expect to be able to complete the Phase V portion of the North Ottawa Impoundment Project in one construction season. The plans and specifications are complete and we can have a contract awarded within forty five days of receiving an OHC award and funding.*

Phase V would put approximately fifty people to work during the construction of this phase and the associated economic benefits would be realized as well. Area businesses would benefit from the increased fuel business, lodging, food, and entertainment dollars generated by the employees of the construction companies working on this project. On previous contracts, local fuel companies have serviced the site up to twice a day fueling the large and numerous pieces of construction equipment.

We would expect to see results with increased bird use, stream flow augmentation, and water quality improvement immediately upon completion of construction.

- 12. Why will this strategy work?** *This strategy has been developed with the assistance of the natural resource professionals that are members of our North Ottawa Project Team. They are the experts in wildlife habitat management. They have determined that this type of habitat is needed here and will be a positive addition to the landscape. The management capabilities of this project are so flexible, one can react very quickly to an observation and make changes in the manipulation of the structures to maximize the benefit to the wildlife using the area.*

- 13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?** *Decisions will be made collectively and agreed upon by the team. It is completely understood that when flood events occur, storage of the flood waters will take priority, as outlined in the operations plan, and all internal management would be placed on hold until the flood is over. It is anticipated that this will be frequent during the spring snowmelt and runoff period but very infrequent in the late spring, summer and fall; the time when management for Natural Resource Enhancement would be taking place. We don't foresee any conflicting decisions being made that would work against the impact of this project.*

- 14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?** *The land has already been acquired by the Bois de Sioux Watershed District. The Flood Damage Reduction portion of this project is complete and operational. This request will not be used for land acquisition, rather for construction of the internal works of Phase V.*

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

_____ YES N/A _____ NO

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? If so what kind of use? *Not an Easement Acquisition. The area is established as a wildlife refuge by the MnDNR. Landowners in the area agree that this will significantly enhance recreational opportunities in the area. This is outlined in the notes from the public hearing held to gain refuge status.*

If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easements as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

_____ YES N/A _____ NO

17. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate? *This funding request is for construction, one time appropriation.*

_____ 2 _____ Years

18. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

- _____ Northern Forest
- _____ Forest/Prairie Transition
- _____ Southeast Forest
- ___X___ Prairie
- _____ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

19. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

___X___ YES _____ NO

If yes, please explain. *Without this funding, the lands within the impoundment will continue to be operated for agricultural production.*

20. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

_____ YES _____ **X** _____ NO

If Yes, list the names of the WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

21. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model? N/A

_____ YES _____ **X** _____ NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

22. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

- *There are numerous WPA and WMA units in the vicinity of the North Ottawa Impoundment Project. Until recently, some of those were operated as refuges, in an attempt to provide a place for migrating species to feed and rest. The refuge status was discontinued due to the sun setting of the program that established it. It is noted that there are less migrating species moving through the area now due to increased hunting pressure. Phase V will restore and enhance the populations of migrating species through the area by once again providing this protected habitat. Sportsmen will benefit by having better hunting opportunities in the surrounding area.*
- *Reduced velocities of water being stored in the project will improve the water quality of the water released by allowing the sediments to precipitate out. This will help to address the turbidity issues on the downstream segment of the Rabbit River, Bois de Sioux River and ultimately the Red River of the North.*
- *We will be able to continuously release up to five cubic feet per second (cfs) to the downstream tributaries during the open water season, thus restoring some base flow to the rivers that are currently intermittent in nature.*

23. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.) *The management team intends to use adaptive management techniques to establish their priorities for managing the project. Monitoring of use by species and vegetation populations will dictate the decisions made with regard to water level management and vegetation control.*

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans.

Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan

This project fits with Habitat Recommendation 5: Restore land, wetlands, and wetland-associated watersheds. Phase V will improve water quality and the habitat needed in the prairie landscape by converting intensively farmed agricultural land to a compatible use as a feeding and resting area for migrating species. The area where the project is located is commonly referred to by the locals as the “Tintah Slough”. 100 years ago, the whole area was a wetland and thriving with wildlife. Many attempts to drain the area were implemented with limited success. This project works toward striking a balance in the area by restoring a large piece of habitat that has been lost to production agriculture.

This project also addresses Land Use Recommendation 5: Reduce stream-bank erosion through reductions in peak flows. By being able to meter the water out over a longer period of time while doing the stream flow augmentation measure, we will be reducing the peak flows on the downstream channels. The Rabbit River, Bois de Sioux River and Red River of the North are all listed as impaired with turbidity as the predominant impairment. Water will have a longer detention time in the impoundment, after being converted from agricultural production, than it currently has. This will allow for more settling of suspended solids and nutrients before it is released in a controlled fashion to the rivers listed above.

Bois de Sioux Watershed District Plan (2003)

This proposed restoration project is consistent with flood damage reduction, natural resource enhancement, and water quality goals and objectives in the Bois de Sioux Watershed District Plan.

Red River Basin Mediation Agreement (1998)

This habitat restoration project is consistent with the flood damage reduction and natural resource goals and objectives in the mediation agreement including:

- 3. Provide diversity of habitats (size, shape, connectivity) for stable populations to thrive over a long period of time.*
- 4. Provide connected, integrated habitat including compatible adjacent land uses.*
- 5. Enhance or provide seasonal flow regimes in streams for water supply, water quality, recreation, and support of biotic communities.*
- 6. Provide recreational opportunities.*
- 7. Improve water quality*

Program Title: North Ottawa Impoundment Project Phase V

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts	\$3,633,000		
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services	\$367,000		
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$4,000,000		

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
-------	------	---------

No new positions will be needed for this project

Program Title: North Ottawa Impoundment Project Phase V

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Red River Watershed Management Board	\$1,000,000		
TOTAL	\$1,000,000		

Program Title: North Ottawa Impoundment Project Phase V

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>Provide 1200 plus acres of feeding and resting areas for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>Prairie 1200 plus acres</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>\$4,000,000</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Program Title: North Ottawa Impoundment Project Phase V

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>\$1,000,000</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Construction of Phase V	10-2011	Complete

**see site plan attached at the end of this document*

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

With an award of \$3,000,000 we will be able to complete Phase V construction in 2010 and have permanent native vegetation re-introduced by October 2011. As you can see by the copy of the BdSWD CY2010 budget below, our plans for construction rely on outside funding in order to proceed. The District has already contributed an amount to the project and is limited by statute to contribute any more. Note the North Ottawa Project highlights in both the expense and receipt sides of the budget. This accounts for \$3M from the L-SOHC and \$1M from the RRWMB.

Program Title: North Ottawa Impoundment Project Phase V

BdSWD 2010 Budget

CY 2010 BUDGET	9-10-2009 Final
<i>Misc. Administration Expenses</i>	
Total Misc. Administration Expenses	\$11,000.00
<i>Personnel</i>	
Administrator Salary	\$60,472.09
Assistant Salary	\$45,024.64
Water Quality Technician	
Benefits (costs to the District)	
PERA	\$6,329.80
Social Security	\$9,141.50
Benefits	\$25,000.00
Total Benefits	\$40,471.30
<i>General Operations</i>	
<i>Office Space-Building Fund</i>	\$35,000.00
<i>Mileage - Board</i>	\$4,000.00
<i>Meeting Expenses</i>	\$9,300.00
<i>District Insurance</i>	\$11,500.00
<i>Electricity</i>	\$1,900.00
<i>Utilities</i>	\$500.00
<i>Heating Fuel</i>	\$1,000.00
<i>Telephone Expense</i>	\$3,800.00
<i>Snow Removal</i>	\$1,000.00
<i>Yard Maintenance</i>	\$800.00
<i>Office Maintenance</i>	\$1,400.00
<i>Advertising</i>	\$500.00
<i>Manager Compensation</i>	\$14,000.00

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<i>Legal Services - General</i>	\$25,000.00
<i>Engineering Services - General</i>	\$60,000.00
<i>Accountant Services</i>	\$12,000.00
<i>Postage</i>	\$2,700.00
<i>Office Supplies</i>	\$5,500.00
<i>Office Equipment - Leases</i>	\$1,700.00
<i>District Vehicle - fuel</i>	\$2,000.00
<i>District Vehicle - maintenance</i>	\$1,500.00
<i>Equipment</i>	\$5,000.00
Projects	
<i>Legal Services - Project/Ditch Related</i>	\$20,000.00
<i>Engineering Services - Project/Ditch Related</i>	\$450,000.00
<i>Advertising - Project/Ditch Related</i>	\$3,000.00
<i>North Ottawa Construction Phase V</i>	\$4,000,000.00
<i>Redpath Project</i>	\$2,000,000.00
<i>Riverwatch</i>	\$8,000.00
<i>Transfer to RRWMB</i>	\$495,783.53
<i>Stream Gauging</i>	\$20,000.00
<i>Culvert Inventory</i>	\$60,000.00
<i>Other Project Work</i>	\$281,000.00
<i>WRP/SWCD Admin Program</i>	\$60,000.00
Total	\$7,754,851.56
	\$0.00
RECEIPTS	
<i>Administration Costs to Other Funds*</i>	\$493,400.00
<i>North Ottawa Project Income</i>	\$4,000,000.00

Redpath Project Income	\$2,000,000.00
Project Team Income	\$20,000.00
Construction Fund Income	\$991,567.06
General Property Taxes 2010 Administrative Levy	\$249,884.51
Total	\$7,754,851.56

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained? *From the completion date, habitat will be managed by the resource management committee by varying water levels, seeding as necessary, cultivation of necessary cells to add organic materials to the soil and manage for preferred plant species.*

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

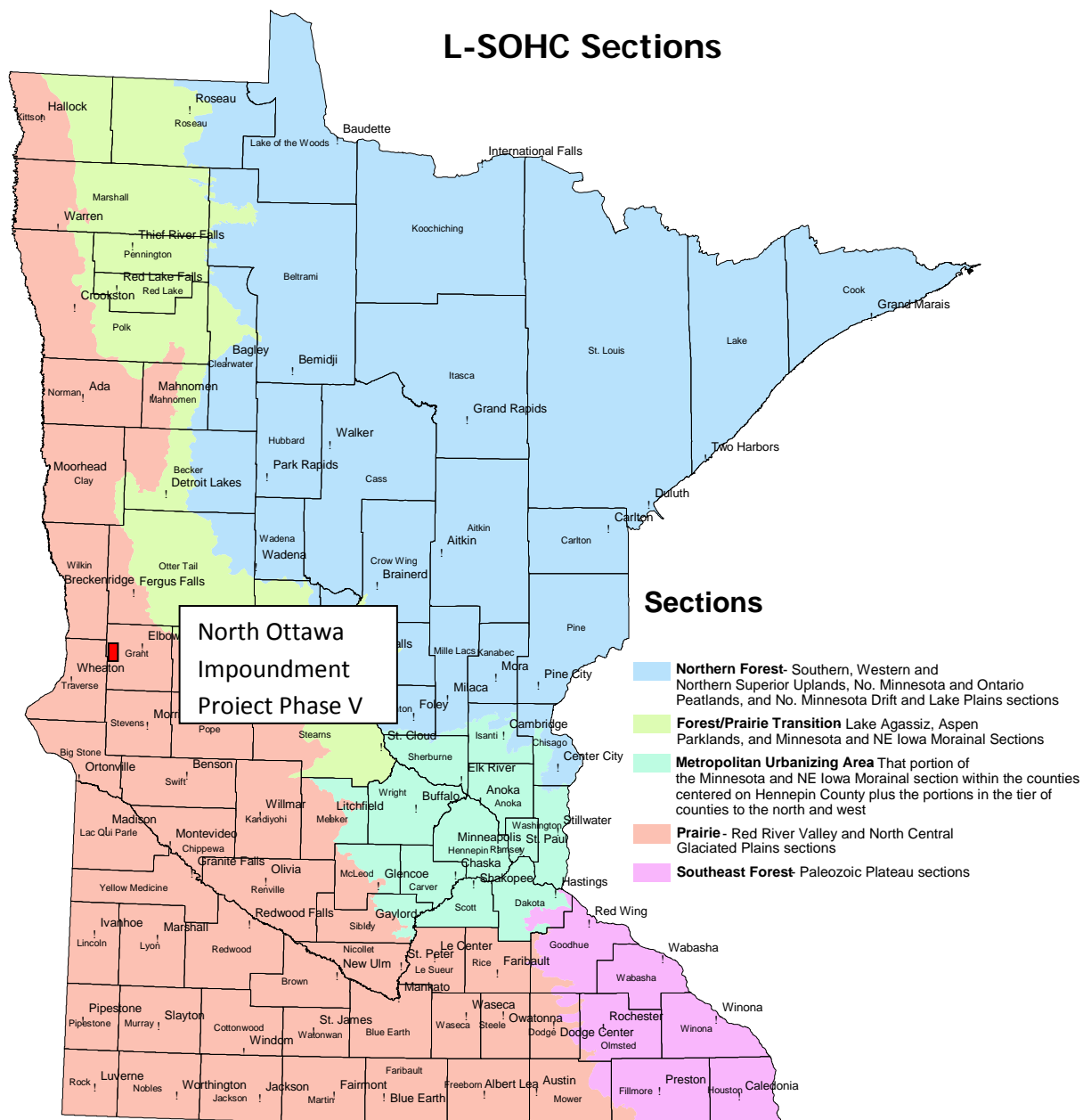
1. North Ottawa Impoundment Project – Phase V – Grant County

Double left click to bring up the map editor. Symbols should be on the left side of the pop-up banner at the top of your screen.

If you can't bring up the interactive map editor follow these instructions:

1. Make a paper copy of the map,
2. By hand place symbols on the map corresponding to the location of the projects in your proposal,
3. Scan the marked map to a pdf, and
4. Insert the marked pdf map as the last page in your submission.

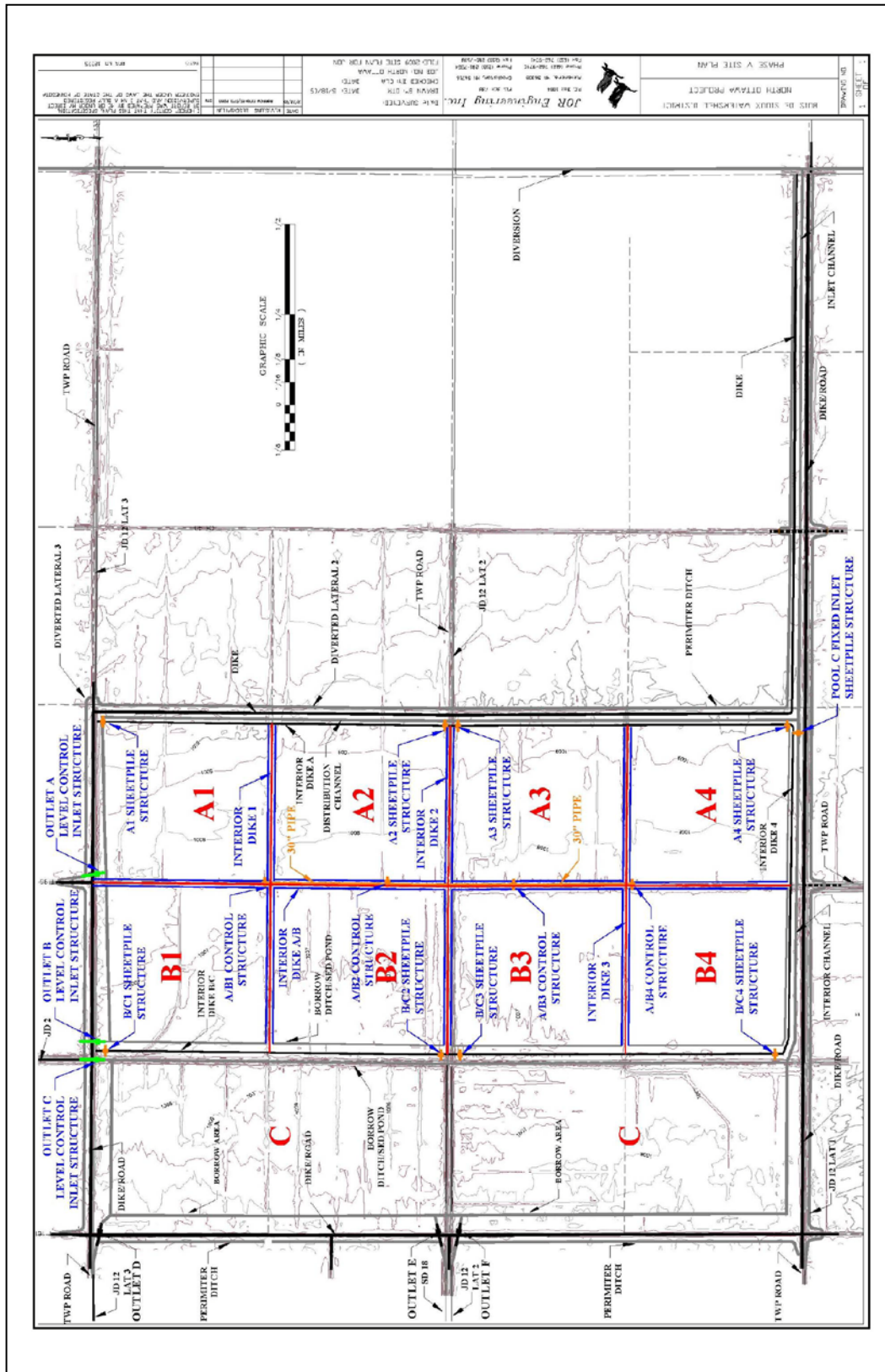
Program Title: North Ottawa Impoundment Project Phase V



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: North Ottawa Impoundment Project Phase V

North Ottawa Phase V



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

**Program Title: Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve – Wetlands Reserve
Program (WRP) Leveraging Project**

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

**Program or Project Title: Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve – Wetlands
Reserve Program (WRP) Leveraging Project**

Date: October 29, 2009

Manager's Name: Kevin J. Lines
Title: Conservation Easement Section Manager
Board of Water and Soil Resources
Mailing Address: 520 Lafayette Road, Suite 200, St. Paul MN 55155
Telephone: 651-297-1894
Fax: 651-297-5615
E-Mail: .lines@state.mn.
Web Site: .bwsr.state.mn.

Manager's Name: Tim Koehler
Title: Assistant State Conservationist
USDA NRCS
Mailing Address: 375 Jackson Street, Suite 600
St. Paul MN 55155
Telephone: 651-602-7857
Fax: 651-602-7926
E-Mail: .koehler@mn.usda.
Website: .mn.nrcs.usda.

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	18.0M	18.0M	18.0M	18.0M

Program Title: Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve – Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) Leveraging Project

A. Summary

The Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve – Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) Partnership will accelerate the restoration and protection of approximately 12,000 acres of previously drained wetlands and associated upland native grassland wildlife habitat complexes via perpetual conservation easements. The goal of the RIM-WRP Partnership is to achieve the greatest wetland functions and values, while optimizing wildlife habitat on every acre enrolled in the partnership. The RIM-WRP partnership enables Minnesota to leverage \$1.4 of federal WRP funding for every state dollar available through RIM Reserve. This appropriation request of \$18 million from the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) will leverage \$25 million of WRP funds to Minnesota. We expect to enroll approximately 120 permanent conservation easements totaling 12,000 acres of wetland grassland wildlife habitat complexes. This will enable the RIM-WRP partnership to restore approximately 600 previously drained wetland basins totaling 4,000 wetland acres, and the restoration of native grassland prairies on approximately 8,000 acres. Since WRP is an annual funded program through the 2008 Federal Farm Bill, this leveraging opportunity is available to Minnesota for at least the next four years.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Minnesota's original wetland and prairie landscapes have been lost at an alarming rate over the last century and a half of European settlement. Minnesota's prairies once comprised nearly 20 million acres, extending from the borders of Iowa and Wisconsin in the southeast to North Dakota and Manitoba in the northwest. Less than 1% of this native prairie remains. Minnesota has lost an estimated 42 percent of its original 16 million acres of wetlands to drainage or fill activities. The loss of wetlands is most severe in the prairie regions of the state. Approximately 90% of prairie wetlands have disappeared and in the southwestern area of the state losses are as high as 99%.

Prairie wetlands are depressional wetlands that fill with snow melt and rain in the spring. Some prairie wetlands are temporary, while others may be essentially permanent. Prairie wetlands are particularly important for migratory waterfowl. Although the North American pothole region contains only about 10% of the waterfowl nesting habitat on the continent (including a significant portion of Minnesota), it produces 70% of all North American waterfowl. This extensive loss of Minnesota's prairie and wetland habitat has led to the decline of many wildlife and plant species originally abundant in the state. Of the nearly 1,200 known wildlife species in Minnesota, 292 species, or approximately one-fourth, are at risk because they are rare; their populations are declining or they face serious risks of decline due to loss of habitat.

**Program Title: Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve – Wetlands Reserve
Program (WRP) Leveraging Project**

The Minnesota State Wildlife Action Plan, a statewide look at the species/habitat relationship, shows that prairies, rivers and wetlands are the three habitats used by the most species in greatest conservation need. These are the habitats that have also experienced some of the greatest loss and degradation in the state.

2. What action will be taken?

The RIM-WRP Partnership will acquire permanent conservation easements on lands with previously drained wetlands and associated upland grassland complexes. Restoration of previously drained wetlands and native prairie complexes will be accomplished on all conservation easements using designs and specifications that provide the greatest wetland functions and values optimize wildlife habitat.

In the winter of 2010, the RIM-WRP Partnership will conduct a statewide landowner application sign-up. All private landowner applications will be scored and ranked using the Minnesota Wetlands Restoration Evaluation Worksheet (see attached). The worksheet determines which projects will provide the greatest wetland functions and values and optimizes wildlife habitat on the selected and enrolled acres.

Although the RIM-WRP Partnership is a statewide program, it gives priority to that portion of Minnesota that has had the greatest loss of wetland and prairie grassland complexes and subsequently significant decline in many species of wildlife that are wetland complex dependent. The RIM-WRP Partnership is the premier private lands wetland restoration program in the nation. The RIM-WRP Partnership is a local-state-federal partnership that combines the state's RIM Reserve Conservation Easement Program with the USDA Wetlands Reserve Program.

3. Who will take action and when?

The RIM-WRP Partnership is a local-state-federal partnership that is currently developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Minnesota State Office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) and the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to ensure the RIM-WRP Partnership is a longstanding and successful program in Minnesota. In addition, this partnership is possible through collaboration among many local, state and federal partners including NRCS, BWSR, local SWCDs, Ducks Unlimited (DU), the Minnesota Waterfowl Association (MWA) and the United States Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS).

**Program Title: Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve – Wetlands Reserve
Program (WRP) Leveraging Project**

Most important in the success of the RIM-WRP Partnership are Minnesota's private landowners who voluntarily enroll in this partnership to provide critical conservation protection on their lands which benefits all Minnesotans.

Specifically, the RIM-WRP is delivered by local NRCS staff, local SWCD staff and assisted by program staff from both NRCS and BWSR. Further assistance is provided by DU contract employees and staff provided by MWA.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

The RIM-WRP Partnership closely coordinates its activities with many of Minnesota's natural resources and conservation focused agencies and organizations, including (but not limited to) the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Ducks Unlimited (DU), Minnesota Waterfowl Association (MWA), Pheasants Forever (PF), and The Nature Conservancy (TNC).

The RIM-WRP Partnership's Minnesota Wetlands Evaluation Worksheet recognizes and gives priority to easement applications that complement existing public investments such as DNR WMAs and USFWS WPAs. Acquiring permanent conservation easements in conjunction with public Wildlife Management Areas and Waterfowl Production Areas builds upon the private- public benefits of conservation. Increasing wildlife habitat production of game and non-game species on private land provides benefits to hunting and other outdoor recreational opportunities.

Specifically, the RIM-WRP Partnership and other partners in this collaborative project will coordinate with a TNC-led proposal called the *Prairie Recovery Project*. The RIM-WRP Partnership will give priority in selection and funding of lands identified in the *Prairie Recovery Project*.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

The RIM-WRP Partnership will protect and restore an estimated 600 wetland basins totaling 4,000 wetland acres and associated restored native grassland prairie on 8,000 acres in 120 permanent conservation easements totaling 12,000 acres. These restored wetlands and native grassland complexes will provide critical habitat for migratory waterfowl and other wetland dependent wildlife species in Minnesota. Wetlands provide habitat for fish and wildlife, including threatened and endangered species. They improve water quality by filtering sediments and chemicals, reduce flooding, recharge groundwater, protect

**Program Title: Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve – Wetlands Reserve
Program (WRP) Leveraging Project**

biological diversity, sequester carbon and increase recreational opportunities.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

The RIM-WRP Partnership would acquire a 30-year federal WRP easement and a permanent state RIM Reserve easement in fiscal years 2011 and 2012. The wetland and native grassland restoration would occur in 2012-2013. We would expect that the restored wetland/grassland complex could be providing full wetland function, values and benefits as well as optimum wildlife habitat in five years.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

 X YES

 NO

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Once a RIM-WRP easement is acquired, NRCS is responsible for maintenance, inspection and monitoring during the life of their 30-year WRP easement, including all associated costs for this activity. NRCS monitors the easement each year and provides detailed on-site review of compliance and ecological functions at least one of every three years.

The State of Minnesota assumes sole responsibility via its perpetual RIM Reserve easement once the 30-year WRP easement has expired.

The BWSR partners with local SWCDs to carry-out oversight monitoring and inspection of its conservation easements. Easements are inspected for the first five consecutive years beginning in the year after the easement is recorded. Thereafter, inspections are performed every three years. SWCDs report to BWSR on each site inspection conducted. A non-compliance procedure is implemented when potential violations or problems are identified.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

The RIM-WRP Partnership is focused directly on the permanent protection through acquisition of conservation easements and the restoration of previously drained wetlands and associated restored native grasslands in wetland-grassland complexes primarily in the prairie pothole region of Minnesota. The RIM-WRP partnership will acquire 120 permanent conservation easements, restore 600 wetland basins totaling approximately 4,000 acres and restore 8,000 acres of associated native grassland complexes in the prairie pothole region of Minnesota.

Program Title: Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve – Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) Leveraging Project

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

 X YES

 NO

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

The RIM-WRP Partnership requires the acquisition of permanent conservation easements through the State of Minnesota Reinvest in Minnesota Reserve Conservation Easement program as authorized in M.S. 103F.515.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

Frequent RIM-WRP Partnership updates will be provided to the L-SOHC describing easement acquisition and restoration activities. All funds will be tracked and monitored using the BWSR's administrative process. A recently upgraded database will be used to log and track easements and a website mapping program will allow the public to view the locations of RIM easements. Signage is an agency requirement.

12. Why will this strategy work?

With the appropriation we received from the FY2010 OHF in 2009, the RIM-WRP Partnership was able to enroll 70 conservation easements totaling 7,812 acres. We enrolled approximately 350 previously drained wetland basins totaling 3,800 acres and restored native grasslands on over 4,000 acres. The \$9.05 million OHF appropriation leveraged \$14 million in WRP funds for Minnesota. The RIM-WRP Partnership is a proven program with an excellent track record of delivery in Minnesota and a glowing national reputation based on recent results. (See attached funded easements table and map in Section K.)

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

The RIM-WRP Partnership is the premier private land wetland restoration program in the nation. The USDA-NRCS Washington, D.C. administration has an objective to increase enrollment in WRP nationwide by 900,000 acres over the next three years.

If Minnesota has sufficient state funding for RIM Reserve, we have the potential to leverage unprecedented amounts of WRP funds to restore wetlands and native grasslands to provide critical wildlife habitat in Minnesota. Ultimately, the private landowner determines the fate or success of the RIM-WRP Partnership. In 2008 and 2009 the RIM-WRP Partnership, during short sign-up periods, received over twice the demand from landowners than we had dollars available to acquire conservation easements. We would expect this interest from landowners to continue.

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14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

Not applicable.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

Not applicable.

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the easement land be open for public use?

 YES

 X NO

If Yes what kind of use?

The RIM-WRP Partnership is a private land conservation easement program that provides significant conservation benefit to the public. However, public access is dependent upon the landowner allowing recreational access. In a 2002 survey of RIM reserve easement landowners by the Water Resources Center of the University of Minnesota, two-thirds of the survey respondents said that they allow non-family members to recreate on their land. It is important to note that the restoration of wetland and associated native grasslands provides critical habitat for wildlife. The RIM-WRP Partnership is restoring these habitats where they provide the greatest benefits for wildlife and are done in collaboration with WMA and WPA acquisition and management.

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

 X YES

 NO

The RIM-WRP Partnership requires the landowner to enroll in a 30-year federal WRP easement and a permanent RIM Reserve conservation easement. Minnesota statutes 103F.515, subd. 5 requires a permanent easement be taken for all wetland restorations.

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

 24 Years

Since 1994, the WRP has been and will continue to be one of the USDA-NRCS' largest and most successful conservation programs. Nationwide, WRP has been responsible for the restoration and

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enhancement of over two million acres of wetland and associated upland habitat.

The 2008 Federal Farm Bill increased the maximum enrollment in the WRP to 3,041,200 acres. As of the end of fiscal year 2009, NRCS has enrolled approximately 2,175,000 acres in the program. In order to enroll the maximum allowed by the Farm Bill, NRCS will need to enroll approximately 900,000 acres by September 30, 2012. The average nationwide enrollment for WRP has been approximately 150,000 acres over the last few years. In order to accomplish this task, NRCS will need to increase their current ability to enroll easements by 200 to 300 percent, annually.

Minnesota's successful RIM-WRP Partnership makes us uniquely qualified to receive unprecedented amounts of WRP funds if state funds can be generated to leverage federal funds via the RIM Reserve program.

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

The RIM-WRP Partnership is available statewide, however, the following sections will be targeted because of their potential for high quality wetland restorations and native grasslands and their value as critical wildlife habitat.

- ☐ Northern Forest
- ☒ Forest/Prairie Transition
- ☐ Southeast Forest
- ☒ Prairie
- ☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (partial)

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ YES ☐ NO

If yes, please explain.

Minnesota's successful RIM-WRP Partnership, a combination of the Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM) Reserve program and WRP, was the key to Minnesota's success as the number one ranked state in the country in number easements funded in 2009. The partnership is possible through collaboration among many local, state and federal partners, including NRCS, the Board of Water and Soil Resources, local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Ducks Unlimited and Minnesota Waterfowl Association.

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According to NRCS, this successful effort means that the 2010 Farm Bill allocations for WRP in Minnesota will potentially double in total acres and dollars available.

NRCS estimates that \$25 million in federal funds will be allocated to Minnesota for WRP in federal fiscal year 2010 (Oct. 1, 2009 to Sept. 30, 2010). An additional \$25 million is expected for federal fiscal year 2011 (Oct. 1, 2010 to Sept. 30, 2011) and future federal fiscal years.

The RIM - WRP Partnership enables Minnesota to leverage \$1.4 of federal WRP funding for every \$1 of state money available through RIM Reserve.

A state match of \$18 million in each of the next two state fiscal years for the RIM Reserve program would enable Minnesota to leverage the estimated \$25 million per year in federal WRP dollars.

Each year, most states turn back portions of WRP dollars that are available to them. Because of Minnesota's RIM-WRP partnership, Minnesota is uniquely positioned to compete for those unused WRP dollars that were available to other states. NRCS estimates that an additional \$25 million could be available to Minnesota in federal FY2010 due to the amounts turned back from other states. That means that a state investment of \$36 Million for RIM Reserve in state fiscal year 2010 (July 1, 2010-June 30, 2011) could leverage \$50 million (a 1.4 to 1 ratio) in federal WRP dollars for conservation easement acquisition, site restoration and program implementation costs.

- **\$25 Million:** Estimated federal WRP dollars available to Minnesota in federal fiscal year 2010 (Oct. 1, 2009-Sept. 30, 2010)
- **\$18 Million:** Estimated state funds that would enable Minnesota to leverage federal WRP dollars at a ratio of \$1.4 federal to \$1 state
- **\$25 Million:** Estimated un-used WRP dollars returned by other states that could be available to Minnesota
- **\$18 Million:** Estimated state funds that would enable Minnesota to leverage federal WRP dollars at a ratio of \$1.4 federal to \$1 state

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

Not applicable.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

 X YES

 NO

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If yes explain the model briefly.

The Wildlife Habitat Potential Model for use with the Wetlands Reserve Program and ReInvest In Minnesota Reserve Program Environmental Evaluation, prepared by The USFWS HAPET Office, Fergus Falls, Minnesota, is used by the partnership and is explained by USFWS below.

One of the primary goals of the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is to benefit migratory birds. Birds choose where within their range they will breed or stop to refuel during migration based on the characteristics of all of the sites they could select and the area within several miles of each potential site. We commonly call the latter the landscape surrounding a site. Landscapes can exert powerful effect on which sites are selected. Many people have found that more bird species will occupy sites surrounded by landscapes rich in wetlands or grasslands and conversely, have found only a few birds in sites surrounded exclusively by cropland.

We often study birds that are high priority species for conservation or that represent the habitat needs of groups of other species. To understand the affects of site factors like patch size, plant communities, water depth, etc., and the affects of the landscapes around them, scientists compare areas that are used by a certain species of birds with a random sample of sites – some that are used and some that are not. By doing these comparisons, we can determine what factors birds are keying in on when they choose a site for breeding or migration. This information on species habitat selection is written out as models in either words or mathematical variables and symbols. The real key feature of useful models is that every term in the model must be measurable using the information we have on wetlands, croplands, grasslands, etc., which usually come from satellite images or aerial photographs.

All of us use models every day. A model is a simplified version of reality that helps us make decisions. For example, a pheasant hunter has a model in her head about where to find pheasants on a snowy winter day. Every snowy winter day she hunts, she is testing and refining the model. We each have models for what we think make good teachers, bad boyfriends, good politicians, etc. and we are constantly evaluating and refining these models through life experiences. Their purpose is to help us make good choices based on past life experiences.

The only difference between models used by scientists and models used in daily life is that scientists write models down so others can see and possibly challenge the criteria used for making decisions. This is called transparency. If our models are pretty close to representing reality, they will make our management more reliable and we will be more efficient. Transparency and efficiency lead to credibility. Think about a situation where you have a choice of investing in two projects: one where every variable is written down, based on past experience or research and regularly tested and updated, versus another project where you're asked to simply take everything on faith – the claims or gut feelings of the person asking you to invest? Which would you choose?

To develop the Wildlife Habitat Potential scores for WRP, the USFWS Habitat and Population Evaluation Team (HAPET) used a variety of models representing an array of migratory birds that use the Minnesota Prairie Pothole Region (PPR) for breeding or migration. We focused on the PPR because it is a National Conservation Priority area for USDA and other Federal agencies due to its importance to ducks and other birds.

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The process we used in 2008 was more sophisticated and included more species than the process we used in 2003. We expect this trend to continue.

In 2008, HAPET combined models of the density of upland breeding waterfowl, grassland birds and breeding shorebirds to determine where restoring grassland would provide the greatest benefits for these species, and models for migrant shorebirds and other wetland birds to determine where wetlands should be restored (see the list of focal species below). Each of these models is available for review. Some estimate the number of birds per acre, and some estimate habitat suitability. Each model was applied to every pixel in satellite land cover and/or National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) data covering the Prairie Pothole and Prairie Hardwood Transition regions of Minnesota. This resulted in a digital map that showed the best areas to conserve each species. Before the species maps were combined, each pixel was rescaled from 0-100 so that each map (data layer) would be weighted equally. The final WRP scores are the average of the individual species scores and were reported for legal 40-ac parcels.

HAPET is currently acquiring landscape models from our partners in the Upper Mississippi River/Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Joint Venture to run the same process for northeast and southeast Minnesota so that the entire state is covered using the same techniques, although different species may be used to represent the potential of habitat restoration from farmland. We expect this process to be completed and the data to be ready for distribution by the end of December, 2009.

Focal Species used in the 2008 WRP Prioritization Process in the PPR:

- Waterfowl – Thunderstorm map – combined score for:
 - Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, Pintail
- Migrant Shorebirds – Modeled spring migrant stopover landscapes - combined the models for:
 - Marbled Godwit, Willet, American Avocet
 - Wilson’s Phalarope, Semipalmated Sandpiper
 - Upland Sandpiper, Hudsonian Godwit, Dunlin, White-rumped Sandpiper
 - Breeding Shorebirds - landscape model for breeding Marbled Godwit
 - Grassland birds – combined score for:
 - Bobolink, Clay-colored Sparrow, Dickcissel, Grasshopper Sparrow, LeConte’s Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Sedge Wren, Western Meadowlark, Greater Prairie-chicken
 - Waterbirds
 - Black Tern

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Minnesota has a rich heritage of protecting, restoring and enhancing wetland ecosystems. This is manifested by the many state and federal programs in Minnesota dedicated to restoring and preserving wetlands on private lands, including the RIM Reserve program, WRP, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the USFWS’s Private Lands and Partnership for Wildlife Programs.

The BWSR first published the Minnesota Wetland Restoration Guide in 1992. It provided the technical guidelines for restoring and managing drained wetlands in Minnesota with an emphasis on engineering design. In 2002, BWSR published the Native Vegetation in Restored

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and Created Wetlands; Its Establishment and Management in Minnesota and the Upper Midwest (D. Shaw) and more recently developed additional vegetation guidance with Guidelines for Restoring and Managing Native Wetland and Upland Vegetation (Jacobson, 2006).

We are presently updating the Minnesota Wetland Restoration Guide, incorporating information from previously published documents along with new and updated wetland restoration and creation concepts that draw from recent research and the accumulated experience of restoration practitioners from across the state. Wetland restoration projects that are implemented using sound engineering and ecological principles have a great likelihood of success, both for the short-and long-term.

Combining the state and federal programs via the RIM-WRP Partnership is critical for success because the partnership:

1. Offers competitive payments to landowners because of the combined state and federal payment -- landowners enroll in a 30-year federal conservation easement and a perpetual state RIM easement, and
2. Effectively distributes the costs of securing the easement and restoring the wetland among the local, state and federal partners – state RIM Reserve dollars leverage the staff time provided by NRCS employees with expertise in engineering, wetland hydrology, and native vegetation establishment.

The benefits of wetland restoration include restoration of wildlife habitat, enhanced native plant communities, water quality improvement, flood damage reduction, carbon sequestration and potential bio-energy production. Wetland restoration sites average about 100 acres in size and include restoration of adjacent prairie grasslands to assure these public benefits are sustained.

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

The RIM-WRP Partnership uses the NRCS State Technical Committee's established subcommittee for WRP to provide statewide guidance for WRP in Minnesota. In addition, the RIM Reserve Management Planning Committee – a subcommittee of the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources – provides oversight and guidance on behalf of the BWSR.

The RIM-WRP Partnership holds one to two joint meetings per year to provide program oversight and guidance and to establish payment rates

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for upcoming sign-ups to be held. Specifically, the RIM-WRP Partnership has had the USFWS Habitat and Population Evaluation Team (HAPET), located in Fergus Falls, develop a Wildlife Habitat Potential Model for use with the WRP and RIM Reserve programs' environmental evaluation. In addition, the RIM-WRP Partnership has developed the *Minnesota Wetland Restoration Evaluation Worksheet* (attached) which is used to evaluate each easement application on its potential to restore wetland functions and values along with optimum wildlife habitat benefits.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

Several recent statewide Minnesota planning efforts have called attention to the dramatic loss of wetlands and native prairie grasslands over the last century and a half. Minnesota has lost over 99% of its original native prairie and over 90% of its prairie wetlands. The following is a list of strategic plans considered in development of RIM-WRP leveraging proposal that will permanently restore and protect wetland and native grassland complexes in strategically targeted areas of Minnesota.

The *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* calls for protecting priority land (habitat recommendation #1) and this proposal is working to protect and restore priority grassland and wetland habitats important to waterfowl, grassland and wetland birds as well as the myriad species that call grasslands and wetlands home. This proposal will also implement the following habitat recommendations within the plan:

- Protect priority land habitats – the RIM-WRP partnership contains priority grassland and wetland habitats important to waterfowl, grassland and wetland birds as well as the myriad species that call grasslands and wetlands home.
- Protect critical shore lands of rivers and lakes – there are RIM-WRP easements being acquired that will protect shoreline of shallow lakes contained within this proposal.
- Restore and protect shallow lakes – there are RIM-WRP easements being acquired that will include protection of shallow lakes contained within this proposal.
- Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds – the RIM-WRP partnership protects and restores wetlands and grasslands. A majority of the lands acquired will be prior-converted.
- Keep water on the landscape – by protecting and restoring wetlands and grasslands, the RIM-WRP partnership will return water to the landscape (permanent wetland restoration) and help keep water on the landscape (permanent native vegetation restoration).

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Minnesota DNR Long-range Duck Recovery Plan has priority goals for long-term protection and restoration for wetland and grassland habitat for duck production. The RIM-WRP partnership will contribute 12,000 acres to the 2,000,000 acre goal set under the plan. Specifically, it will permanently protect and/or restore 4,000 acres of wetlands towards the 600,000 acre wetland goal and permanently protect and/or restore 8,000 acres of native grasslands towards the 1,400,000 acre grassland goal.

Minnesota DNR Long-range Plan for the Ring-Necked Pheasant in Minnesota has priority goals to protect and restore nesting and winter habitat for pheasants. The RIM-WRP partnership contributes approximately 5,000 acres to the plan goal of restoring 1,560,000 acres of habitat within the pheasant range of Minnesota.

The RIM-WRP partnership contributes to the North American Waterfowl Management Plan by contributing 12,000 acres of breeding habitat (wetlands and grasslands) to the 11.8 million acre goal to restore continental waterfowl populations. Most of the work will occur within the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture, which is recognized as a national priority for wetland and grassland habitat and breeding waterfowl and grassland bird species.

Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare – An Action Plan for Minnesota's Wildlife, is Minnesota's comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy. It identifies the species-habitat relationships that show wetlands and grasslands are two of the habitats used by the most species in greatest conservation need. These are the habitats that have experienced some of the greatest loss and degradation in Minnesota.

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D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	\$ 238,650	\$ 245,810	\$ 253,184
Contracts	200,000	200,000	200,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	30,000	30,000	30,000
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition	4,320,000	8,640,000	1,440,000
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel	64,436	66,369	61,553
Additional Budget Items			
Conservation Practices	297,000	693,000	990,000
TOTAL	\$5,150,086	\$9,875,178	\$2,974,737

E. Personnel Details

Title	Name	Amount.
Civil Engineer (.5)		\$ 51,500
Civil Engineer Technician (1.5)		109,900
Plant Ecologist (.5)		41,200
Realty Specialist (.5)		36,050

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F. All Leverage

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
USDA -WRP	\$5,130,000	\$10,260,000	\$1,710,000
Easement and practice dollars	810,000	1,890,000	2,700,000
USDA-Technical Assistance	833,333	833,333	833,333
TOTAL	\$6,773,333	\$12,983,333	\$5,243,333

G. Outcomes

Table 1 Accomplishments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore and Protect	<i>Restore and protect 600 wetland basins totaling 4,000 acres</i>	<i>Restore and protect 8,000 acres of native grassland</i>		<i>Restore and protect 12,000 acres of wetland/native grassland wildlife complexes.</i>

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Table 2 Projected Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier (based on 2009 RIM-WRP Partnership sign-up interest/funded applications)	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore and Protect	<i>Restore and protect 600 acres of prairie/forest transition</i>	<i>Restore and protect 1,200 acres of prairie/forest transition</i>		<i>Restore and protect 1,800 acres of wetland/native grassland wildlife complexes.</i>
Restore and Protect	<i>Restore and protect 200 metro-urbanizing acres</i>	<i>Restore and protect 400 metro-urbanizing acres</i>		<i>Restore and protect 600 acres of wetland/native grassland wildlife complexes.</i>
Restore and Protect	<i>Restore and protect 3,200 acres of prairie</i>	<i>Restore and protect 6,400 acres of prairie</i>		<i>Restore and protect 9,600 acres of wetland/native grassland wildlife complexes.</i>

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>600,000</i>	<i>1,200,000</i>		<i>1,800,000</i>
Protect	<i>4,800,000</i>	<i>9,600,000</i>		<i>14,400,000</i>
Enhance				

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>1,800,000</i>	<i>3,600,000</i>		<i>5,400,000</i>
Protect	<i>5,700,000</i>	<i>11,400,000</i>		<i>17,100,000</i>
Enhance				

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Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement	<i>120 easements for 4,000 acres. 600 basins restored.</i>	<i>120 easements for 8,000 acres of native grassland.</i>		<i>120 easements totaling 12,000 acres of protected and restored wetland and native grassland wildlife habitat complexes.</i>

H. Accomplishment Time Table

Milestone	Date	Measure
<i>Conduct sign-up, ranking and selection for funding applications rec'd</i>	<i>Winter 2010</i>	<i>240</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landowner notification 		
<i>Easement Acquisition Stage</i>	<i>2010–2013</i>	<i>120 easements ac</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RIM-WRP Agreements for Purchase – landowner signature Field investigation/topographic survey/concept plan Legal boundary surveys Preliminary design and engineering report Title work Conservation plan development Easement closing and recording of 30-year WRP and perpetual RIM Reserve easements 		
<i>Wetland restoration and conservation plan implementation restored</i>	<i>2011 – 2013</i>	<i>12,000 acres</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final plans and construction Restore wetlands (4,000 acres) Restore native grasslands (8,000 acres) 		

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

This request does not include any reliance on or connection to the base budget of any member of the RIM-WRP Partnership. The members of the RIM-WRP partnership have and will continue to seek funds from other sources to reach the \$36M of non-federal funds needed in 2010 and in each of the

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following years to leverage the expected annual \$50 million of federal WRP funds. Below is a status list of state conservation easement appropriations. This information is dynamic, so please contact the BWSR program manager for the most current version.

BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES								
FY10 active bonding appropriations					As of:		10/29/2009	
Appropriation		Approp. Year	Amount Appropriated	Amount Expended	Encumbered but not spent	Uncommitted Balance	Less: Pre-Encumbered	Unobligated Balance
MAPS ID	Fund 500 (Bonding)							
CRP	CREP 2 Easements	2005	\$20,000,000	\$12,906,171	\$4,012,380	\$3,081,449	\$3,081,449	\$0
CBI	CREP 2 Implementation	2005	3,000,000	2,998,418	0	1,582	0	1,582
PRP	Road Replacement	2005	4,362,000	3,357,771	1,004,229	0	0	0
All	Area II MN River	2006	500,000	128,873	371,127	0	0	0
GRL	Grass Lake Easements	2006	2,200,000	167,150	63,694	1,969,156	0	1,969,156
PRP	Road Replacement (projects only)	2006	3,500,000	2,206,275	1,292,287	1,438	0	1,438
SLR	Streambank Lakeshore Control	2006	1,000,000	984,228	0	15,772	0	15,772
GRL	Con-Grass Lake Easements	2008	800,000	0	0	800,000	0	800,000
PRI	Road Replacement Implementation	2008	720,000	0	0	720,000	0	720,000
PRP	Road Replacement (projects only)	2008	3,480,000	783,929	1,321,083	1,374,988	0	1,374,988
RII	RIM Implementation	2008	2,500,000	875,897	32,304	1,591,799	0	1,591,799
RIM	RIM Easements	2008	21,250,000	1,525	1,485,230	19,763,245	19,763,245	0
RIS	RIM Stewardship	2008	1,250,000	0	0	1,250,000	0	1,250,000
RMF	RIM Easement Flood	2008	1,000,000	776,453	197,342	26,205	0	26,205
RRB	Red River Basin	2009	500,000	0	0	500,000	0	500,000
RIM	RIM Easement RRV	2009	500,000	0	0	500,000	0	500,000
Total Fund 500			\$66,562,000	\$25,186,690	\$9,779,675	\$31,595,635	\$22,844,694	\$8,750,941
MAPS ID	Fund 110: General Fund							
PRP	Road Replacement (Implementation)	2006	\$700,000	\$467,252	\$11,100	\$221,648		\$221,648
Total Fund 110			\$700,000	\$467,252	\$11,100	\$221,648	\$0	\$221,648
TOTAL ALL FUNDS			\$67,262,000	\$25,653,942	\$9,790,775	\$31,817,283	\$22,844,694	\$8,972,589

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Once a RIM-WRP easement is acquired, NRCS is responsible for maintenance, inspection and monitoring during the life of their 30-year WRP easement, including all associated costs for this activity. The State of Minnesota assumes sole responsibility via its perpetual RIM Reserve easement once the 30-year WRP easement has expired.

The BWSR partners with local SWCDs to carry-out oversight monitoring and inspection of its conservation easements. Easements are inspected for the first five consecutive years beginning in the year after the easement is recorded. Thereafter, inspections are performed every three years. SWCDs report to BWSR on each site inspection conducted. A non-compliance procedure is implemented when potential violations or problems are identified.

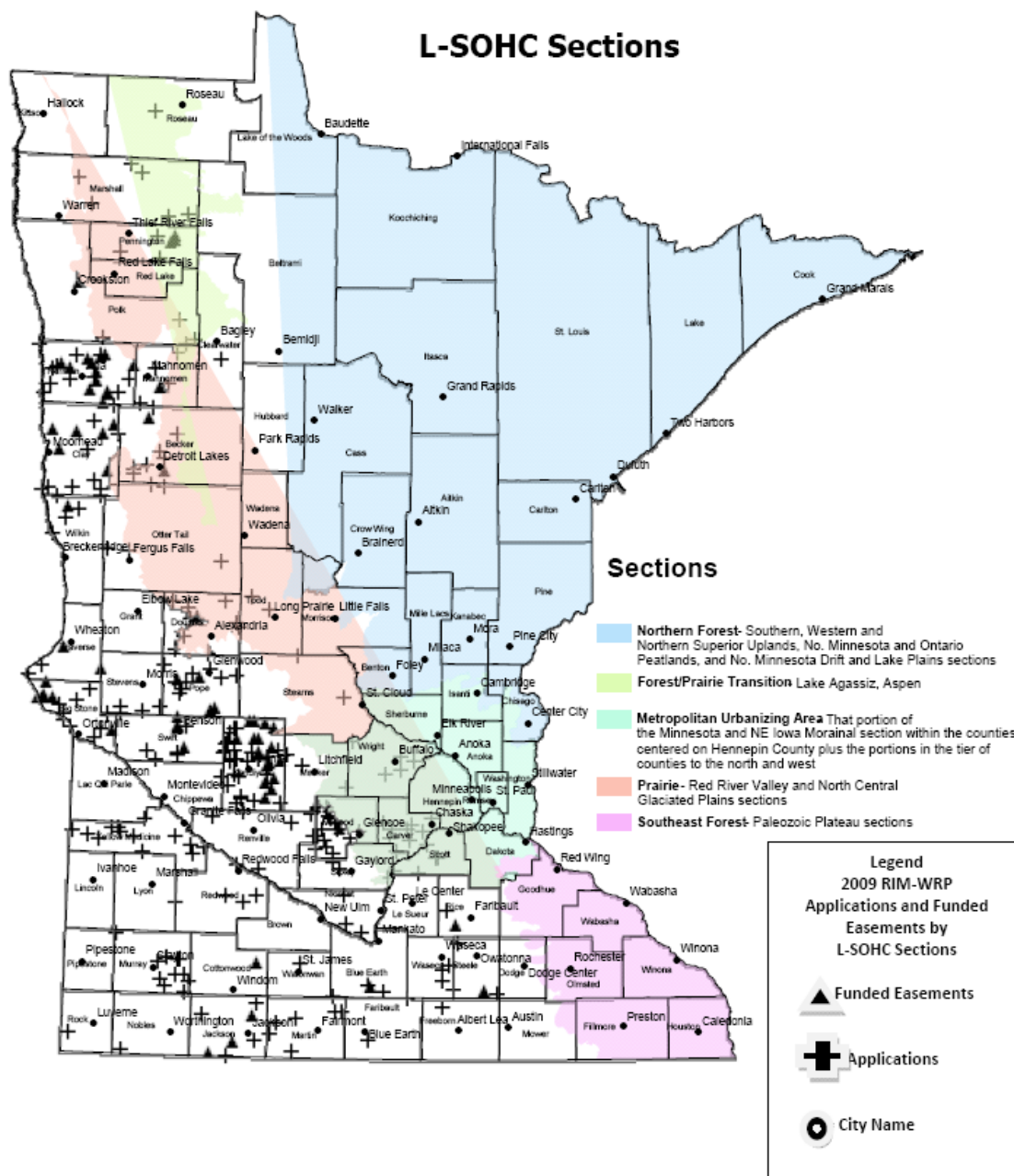
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K. 2009 RIM-WRP Outdoor Heritage Funded Easements

Funded Easements by LSOHC Planning Section and County		Total Acres	Number of Easements	Total WRP Dollars	Total RIM Dollars
Forest/Prairie Transition	Becker	90.8	1	\$89,828.16	\$70,690.50
	Douglas	96.5	1	\$123,031.44	\$92,143.80
	Pennington	758.0	3	\$364,316.72	\$284,371.33
	Polk	159.7	1	\$82,023.75	\$65,391.30
Forest/Prairie Transition Total		1,105.0	6	\$659,200.07	\$512,596.93
Prairie	Becker	155.0	1	\$156,952.08	\$124,671.89
	Big Stone	362.0	6	\$584,799.77	\$467,613.19
	Blue Earth	63.0	1	\$179,133.24	\$143,223.08
	Clay	964.3	6	\$781,602.89	\$610,109.70
	Cottonwood	71.0	1	\$175,829.66	\$139,405.22
	Jackson	113.0	3	\$252,138.43	\$200,818.46
	Kandiyohi	1,076.4	16	\$1,851,436.45	\$1,413,735.40
	Mahnomen	458.0	2	\$272,835.95	\$210,176.60
	McLeod	269.0	3	\$611,797.42	\$488,135.94
	Norman	1,599.7	12	\$1,042,163.73	\$810,888.93
	Pope	598.9	4	\$666,833.24	\$506,525.97
	Rice	50.3	1	\$255,200.66	\$202,801.65
	Steele	111.2	1	\$269,226.75	\$210,644.53
	Stevens	76.5	1	\$142,921.13	\$114,336.90
	Swift	544.6	4	\$729,122.34	\$556,482.94
	Traverse	92.6	1	\$146,561.25	\$117,249.00
	Wilkin	101.6	1	\$100,990.74	\$77,644.81
Prairie Total		6,707.1	64	\$8,219,545.73	\$6,394,464.21
RIM-WRP Restoration and Implementation Costs	RIM Restoration Funds/Acre			\$0.00	\$1,245,138.86
	RIM Implementation Cost			\$0.00	\$905,800.00
	WRP Expenses/Legal			\$560,000.00	\$0.00
	WRP Restoration Funds/Acre			\$3,515,444.98	\$0.00
RIM-WRP Restoration and Implementation Costs Total	WRP Technical Assistance			\$1,045,809.22	\$0.00
				\$4,075,444.98	\$2,150,938.86
Grand Total		7,812.1	70	\$14,000,000.00	\$9,058,000.00

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2009 RIM-WRP Outdoor Heritage Applications and Funded Easements



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4/7/2009

Minnesota Wetland Restoration Evaluation Worksheet

(for WRP and RIM-WRP)

Landowner/Project Name:	County (Field Office):	Prepared By:	Date:
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SECTION I. Environmental Considerations

A. WILDLIFE BENEFITS *(determine score from Appendix I map and check appropriate score box)*

<input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 15 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 0	Score <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> (Maximum 20)
---	---

B. LANDSCAPE SIGNIFICANCE *(only one check per wetland class/shaded region)*

PROPOSED RESTORATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND WETLAND CLASS									
Depressional					Floodplain		Non-Depressional (flats, swales, bogs)		
Number of Restorable Basins	Upland : Wetland Ratio				Total Restorable Wetland Area (acres)		Total Restorable Wetland Area (acres)		
	≥1:1	0.5:1-9:1	<0.5:1						
> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 10		≥ 120	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	≥ 120	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	
3 - 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	<input type="checkbox"/> 5		40 - 119	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	40 - 119	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	
< 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 3		< 40	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	< 40	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	

- OR -

Basin Size (Size of largest restorable wetland basin)

≥ 50 acres	<input type="checkbox"/> 20
30 - 50 acres	<input type="checkbox"/> 18
10 - 30 acres	<input type="checkbox"/> 15

Score
 (Maximum 20)

C. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY BENEFITS *(only one check per wetland type/shaded region)*

PROPOSED HYDROLOGIC RESTORATION			
Current Condition/Status of Wetlands Proposed for Restoration		Expected Extent of Hydrologic Restoration	
Wetland Class	Extent of Drainage/Alteration	Full	Partial
		Depressional	Effectively Drained
Partially Drained	<input type="checkbox"/> 20		<input type="checkbox"/> 10
Not Drained-Cropped	<input type="checkbox"/> 10		<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Floodplain	Effectively Drained	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
	Partially Drained	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
	Not Drained-Cropped	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Non-Depressional	Effectively Drained	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
	Partially Drained	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
	Not Drained-Cropped	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

Score
 (Maximum 30)

WATER QUALITY BENEFITS OF EASEMENT	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2.5	Majority of easement area is in watershed of a designated impaired waters for excessive nutrients or turbidity
<input type="checkbox"/> 2.5	Majority of runoff from easement drains to and is within 1/2 mile of DNR Protected Waters
<input type="checkbox"/> 2.5	Majority of immediate contributing watershed(s) to easement is in agricultural use
<input type="checkbox"/> 2.5	Predominant soil in easement is HEL or PHEL

Score
 (Maximum 10)

Program Title: Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve – Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) Leveraging Project

SECTION II. Cost Considerations	
A. EASEMENT VALUE	
AVERAGE PER ACRE COST FOR PURCHASING EASEMENT ¹	
< \$1,500 <input type="checkbox"/> 4	\$1,500 - \$1,999 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
\$2,000 - \$2,499 <input type="checkbox"/> 2	\$2,500 - \$2,999 <input type="checkbox"/> 1
> \$3,000 <input type="checkbox"/> 0	
<small>¹ Based on perpetual WRP payment or total partnership payment, whichever is higher</small>	
Score	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 50px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
<small>(Maximum 4)</small>	
B. RESTORATION VALUE	
<i>(only one check per shaded region)</i>	
ESTIMATED PER ACRE COST FOR RESTORING/ ESTABLISHING VEGETATION	
< \$200 <input type="checkbox"/> 3	\$200 - \$299 <input type="checkbox"/> 2
\$300 - \$399 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	> \$400 <input type="checkbox"/> 0
ESTIMATED PER ACRE CONSTRUCTION COST FOR RESTORING WETLAND AREAS	
< \$300 <input type="checkbox"/> 3	\$300 - \$699 <input type="checkbox"/> 2
\$700 - \$1,000 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	> \$1,000 <input type="checkbox"/> 0
Score	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 50px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
<small>(Maximum 6)</small>	
SECTION III. Additional Considerations <i>(check all applicable areas)</i>	
A. Easement application is beneficial to, and within 1 mile of breeding/population of Federal or State listed Endangered or Threatened species as identified by DNR Natural Heritage Database (State Special Concern species shall not be considered).	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.5
B. Application is a local high priority resource project which is specifically identified in an existing comprehensive plan (site specific projects only, not general focus areas).	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.5
C. Easement application is within a designated Habitat Conservation Partnership or Working Land Initiative target area.	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.5
D. Easement application is located within 1.0 miles of an existing permanent conservation area (public land, conservation easement etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.5
E. Easement application contains CRP contract or limited duration easement expiring within 5 years.	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.5
F. Easement application is located within the Ecological Classification System (ECS) subsections (see Appendix 1) and did not receive points for wildlife benefits under Section I, Part A on page 1 of this form.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5.0
Score	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 50px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
<small>(Maximum 10)</small>	
APPLICATION TOTAL SCORE	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 30px; background-color: #add8e6; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	

Program Title: Habitat Enhancement and Restoration in the Minnesota River Watershed

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: Habitat Enhancement and Restoration in the Minnesota River Watershed

Date: 10/22/09

Manager's Name: Dave Neu

Title: Senior Regional Wildlife Biologist

Mailing Address: 265 Lorrie Way, De Pere, WI 54115

Telephone: (920) 347-0312

Fax:

E-Mail: dneu@nwtf.net

Web Site: www.nwtf.org

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs <i>For programs that may want to request OHF funds in future recommendation rounds, complete the columns below. One time requests enter zeros in all 3 fiscal years</i>		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	1,914,500	1,914,500	0	0

A. Summary

Through this project, we will acquire (via BWSR) conservation easements on approximately 500 acres of critical riparian corridors in the western Minnesota River watershed and restore those 500 acres through on-the-ground efforts. The project will provide funds to plant native trees and shrubs along riparian corridors for wildlife habitat and clean water benefits.

B. Background Information

What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The Minnesota Forest Resources Council defined a riparian area as the area of land and water forming the transition from aquatic to terrestrial ecosystems and denoted the riparian management zones (RMZs) along streams, lakes and open water wetlands as of special concerns. These RMZs are intended to retain relatively continuous forest cover for protection and maintenance of aquatic and wildlife habitat, aesthetics, recreation, and forest products. In the *Riparian Forests in Minnesota: A Report to the State Legislature*, DNR concluded that new

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Habitat Enhancement and Restoration in the Minnesota River Watershed

projects related to riparian areas were needed; and that educational efforts should continue in order to teach landowners about the function and value of riparian areas, and about the use of applied forest management guidelines.

What action will be taken?

NWTF will hire a project-specific staff to identify riparian areas in the Upper Minnesota River Watershed (Big Stone, LacQui Parle, Chippewa and Swift Counties) for habitat enhancement and restoration activities in an effort to restore and connect blocks of riparian corridors.

Who will take action and when?

Project activities are as follows:

- Hold at least one training session for agency and private partners to increase awareness of wild turkey habitat needs within riparian areas.
- Identify potential participants (landowners).
- Secure conservation easements on selected properties via Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).
- Provide trees, shrubs, mats and tubes (oak, other hardwoods and mast producing shrubs).
- Landowners or contractors (on large sites) will plant the seedlings in spring of 2011.
- Hold at least one Wild Turkey Woodlands Field Day within project area to educate landowners about riparian management and wild turkey biology.
- Provide participating landowners with an interactive land management CD

How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

N/A

What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Native trees and shrubs planted in selected riparian areas within the Minnesota River Watershed will provide much needed connectivity of habitat, travel lanes, food and shelter for wild turkeys, game birds, migratory songbirds, small, medium-sized and large mammals. Existing woodlots will be connected, linking habitat areas.

Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ YES ☐ NO

If not, how will you finance completion?

There is the potential to extend the project with additional funding in subsequent years, if available.

Program Title: Habitat Enhancement and Restoration in the Minnesota River Watershed

How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

The participating landowners will be responsible for follow-up maintenance of the riparian areas, although little is anticipated. The initial planting mortality of seedlings will be replaced by the nursery, provided the mortality was not caused by poor planting techniques.

How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

The management practices in this project (protection and planting of woody cover in riparian areas) will provide connectivity between existing woodlots, and existing patches of riparian vegetation. This is essential habitat for wild turkeys, migratory songbirds and other wildlife, as it provides safe cover for daily movement and migration. Aside from the direct benefits to wildlife, the plantings will help stabilize the soil and aid in improving water quality.

If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

 X YES NO

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Permanent conservation easements will be obtained via BWSR, using project funds.

How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars?

Project staff will conduct a baseline study, which will document the existing conditions of the project sites. Staff will document the findings using designated photo point locations and canvas the areas for signs of wildlife use. Project staff will monitor on-the-ground activities and return to the site after completion of these activities. During this time, staff will conduct a post monitoring investigation using designated photo point locations and canvas the areas for signs of wildlife use. A final report will be prepared to document all of the findings and results from the project work activities. This report will be disseminated through partner agencies and through NWTF via its 2,300 local chapter network.

When do you expect to see these changes?

Seedlings will take several years before they are large enough to provide food and cover for wildlife. Once established, the woody vegetation will self-seed and reproduce vegetatively.

Why will this strategy work?

Landowners will be made aware of the value of woody riparian cover and will be likely to maintain it into the future, especially with a conservation easement in place. Habitat corridors are important for travel lanes as well as food and shelter for wildlife and will enhance the survival and reproduction of those species.

Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Habitat Enhancement and Restoration in the Minnesota River Watershed

Targeted landowners may choose not to participate, shifting the focus of the project to secondary sites.

If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

N/A

If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

N/A

If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? If so what kind of use?

Unknown at this time. The riparian corridors will be relatively narrow and may not provide much opportunity for public use. Some parcels, however may provide key access to public lands.

If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easements as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

☒X___YES

___NO

If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

The proposed project will run for two years.

1. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

___ Northern Forest

___ Forest/Prairie Transition

___ Southeast Forest

☒X___ Prairie

___ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

2. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

___YES

☒X___NO

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If yes, please explain.

- 3. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?**

YES X NO

If Yes, list the names of the WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

- 4. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?**

X	YES		NO
---	-----	--	----

If yes explain the model briefly.

In the *Riparian Forests in Minnesota: A Report to the State Legislature*, DNR concluded that new projects related to riparian areas were needed; and that educational efforts should continue in order to teach landowners about the function and value of riparian areas, and about the use of applied forest management guidelines.

The North American Wild Turkey Management Plan also addresses the riparian areas in southern Minnesota and has named this area a Habitat Focus Area.

- 5. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.**

The Minnesota Forest Resources Council defined a riparian area as the area of land and water forming the transition from aquatic to terrestrial ecosystems and denoted the riparian management zones (RMZs) along streams, lakes and open water wetlands as of special concerns. These RMZs are intended to retain relatively continuous forest cover for protection and maintenance of aquatic and wildlife habitat, aesthetics, recreation, and forest products.

The NRCS has provided NWTF with maps that show some of the environmental value of the riparian project - Non-urban phosphorus and nitrogen runoff maps. We can provide these maps upon request.

6. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

Program Title: Habitat Enhancement and Restoration in the Minnesota River Watershed

Priority lands for this project will be determined by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). Landowners will be chosen by the riparian area's proximity to other wooded sites. Those linking woodlots will receive priority. We can provide additional information about ranking criteria if necessary.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

According to the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan, "Minnesota should greatly increase the use of economic incentives and other tools for private landowners to protect shorelines and other sensitive land along lakes, especially along shallow lakes and shallow bays of deep lakes, and streams and rivers throughout Minnesota. This is also needed for riparian buffers around sinkholes in agricultural lands in southeastern Minnesota." The proposed project provides landowners with said economic incentives.

Program Title: Habitat Enhancement and Restoration in the Minnesota River Watershed

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	205,000	205,000	
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	12,000	12,000	
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition	1,375,000	1,375,000	
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel	8,500	8,500	
Additional Budget Items (restoration activities, field and training days, etc,)	314,000	314,000	
TOTAL	1,914,500	1,914,500	

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
Senior Regional Biologist	Dave Neu	\$5,000 per year
Project Technician		\$100,000 per year
Project Technician		\$100,000 per year

Program Title: Habitat Enhancement and Restoration in the Minnesota River Watershed

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Landowner in-kind	\$152,000	\$152,000	
TOTAL	\$152,000	\$152,000	

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Program Title: Habitat Enhancement and Restoration in the Minnesota River Watershed

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>500 acres/year</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>500 acres/year</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>\$1,914,500</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>\$152,000/year</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Program Title: Habitat Enhancement and Restoration in the Minnesota River Watershed

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				<i>500 acres/year</i>

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Identify Landowners	Spring 2011/2012	<i>Contracts</i>
Secure Conservation Easements on Selected Properties	December 2011/2012	<i>Agreements</i>
Plant Seedlings	Spring 2011/2012	<i>Site Visits</i>

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

The proposed project is not part of NWTF's current operating budget. It will allow us to hire two employees.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

The participating landowners will be responsible for follow-up maintenance of the riparian areas, although little maintenance is anticipated.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Program Title: Habitat Enhancement and Restoration in the Minnesota River Watershed

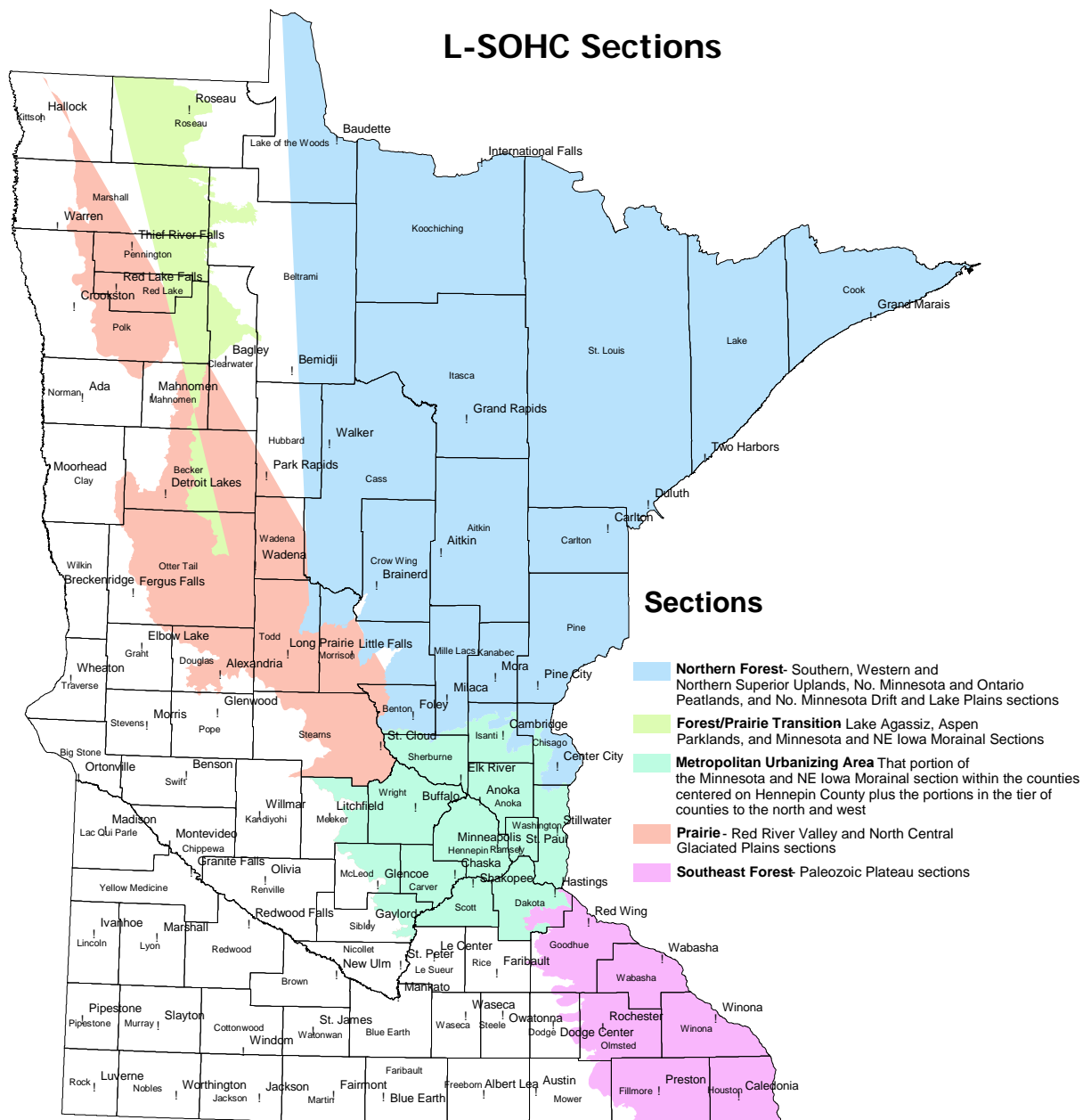
Specific locations will be determined at a later date. NWTF will identify potential participants (landowners) with the help of the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

Double left click to bring up the map editor. Symbols should be on the left side of the pop-up banner at the top of your screen.

If you can't bring up the interactive map editor follow these instructions:

1. Make a paper copy of the map,
2. By hand place symbols on the map corresponding to the location of the projects in your proposal,
3. Scan the marked map to a pdf, and
4. Insert the marked pdf map as the last page in your submission.

Program Title: Habitat Enhancement and Restoration in the Minnesota River Watershed



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Washington County St. Croix River Land Protection

Request for Funding Form Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Fiscal Year 2011

Program or Project Title: **#7** Washington County St. Croix River Land Protection

Date: October 27, 2009

Manager's Name: Jane Harper
Title: Land and Water Legacy Program Manager
Mailing Address: 14949 62nd Street North
Telephone: 651-430-6011
Fax: 651-430-6017
E-Mail: Jane.Harper@co.washington.mn.us
Web Site: www.co.washington.mn.us

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$4,000,000	0	0	0

A. Summary

Washington County seeks to preserve the ecological integrity of the St. Croix River, designated as a resource of statewide and national importance. This proposal will help the LSOHC achieve its Priority Action #2: Protect habitat corridors, with emphasis on the ... St. Croix Rivers. Washington County will complete 4-6 permanent conservation easements or fee title acquisitions to permanently protect up to 400 acres of critical habitat needed to support a variety of "Species in Greatest Conservation Need", including over one mile of St. Croix River shoreline. These projects are located in Denmark Township within the state St. Croix Scenic Riverway District and are the remaining large lots along the lowest stretch of the St. Croix River. These properties are the critical connections needed to complete a permanently-protected 3-mile continuous corridor of forested bluff lands and ravines along the Lower St. Croix River. Through related fee acquisitions they will provide for public access near the St. Croix River. The LSOHC's contribution will be used to match county property tax dollars approved through a 2006 voter referendum. Since the St. Croix River has statewide significance it is appropriate for both state and local funds to be used to protect the qualities that make the river worthy of its status as a national Scenic River. Both local and state funding will be needed to complete these acquisitions to protect land that is very expensive and in high demand for residential development. The economic recession has given us a rare opportunity to protect these properties and to accomplish outstanding habitat objectives for the State of Minnesota.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

OPPORTUNITY TO SAVE A TREASURE: The St. Croix River and its watershed is a national treasure and vital community asset. The river provides clean water, high quality natural ecosystems, striking geologic features, beautiful scenery, and abundant recreation opportunities. The watershed is considered one of the most

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Washington County St. Croix River Land Protection

biologically diverse rivers in the Upper Mississippi River basin. Its sloughs and backwaters, as well as the relatively intact vegetation along its banks, are home to a rich variety of native and endangered species and habitat. Its waters support 95 fish species and approximately 38 mussel species, many of which are on the state- and federally-endangered species lists, making it one of the premier mussel habitats in the world. Its forested lands are nesting habitat for Bald Eagles and home to several threatened and endangered species such as the peregrine falcon and the Karner blue butterfly.

A diverse number of birds, including a significant number of bird species of greatest conservation concern and special interest, depend upon the St. Croix River and adjacent riparian and upland habitats in Denmark Township. High numbers of bald eagles forage, roost and nest along this stretch of river; red-shouldered hawks are common; Louisiana water thrushes are common as they reach their northern limit a bit farther upstream; and prothonotary warblers, a species of conservation concern are frequently found breeding here in the northern limit of their range. Stewardship of the golden-winged warbler, found here in significant numbers, is a special responsibility as 40% of its entire population is within Minnesota. Other species of conservation concern found here include the whip-poor-will, tufted titmouse, blue-winged warbler, cerulean warbler, black-throated blue warbler, mourning warbler, worm-eating warbler, Kentucky warbler and hooded warbler.

This habitat is particularly critical as it provides a natural north-south migratory corridor containing stretches of upland deciduous forests for many species of interest and concern to Minnesota. The annual breeding bird survey and other observations report that many of these bird species have declined over 60 - 80% nationally in the past 40 years. Providing larger tracts of unfragmented, high-quality upland forest habitats along riparian corridors is critical to their long-term survival. The St. Croix River south of Stillwater is a candidate for the Audubon Society's designation as an Important Bird Area; the stretch of river from Stillwater to Taylor's Falls is already designated.

In 1968, Congress recognized the outstanding characteristics of the St. Croix River when it designated the river as one of the first eight rivers to be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations under the federal Wild and Scenic River Act. The Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway was designated by the State of Minnesota in 1972. The states of MN and WI, in partnership with local units of government, are the principal stewards that have been entrusted to safeguard the qualities that make the St. Croix River a national treasure.

PROBLEM OF GROWTH AND LAND USE: Despite these special designations, the St. Croix River is a threatened resource. The primary threat is future development and fragmented management. Although the St. Croix River Basin is one of the most pristine large river ecosystems in the Upper Midwest it is impacted by nutrient and sediment pollution. In 2008, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency designated Lake St. Croix, the lower 25 miles of the river, as an "impaired water" due to high levels of phosphorus. This classification mandates the creation of a comprehensive plan to ensure the reduction of all key pollutants and mandates that the federal, state and local governments create policies and take actions to ensure its recovery.

Increasing urbanization in the watershed will make it increasingly more difficult to protect the St. Croix River from additional nutrient and sediment loading that will come with growth. In 2009 American Rivers identified the Lower St. Croix River as one of America's most endangered rivers due to increased growth pressures and poorly controlled development. It is anticipated that 47,778 new households will be added to Washington County between 2007 and 2030, a 50% increase. Many of them will locate in desirable places such as the St. Croix River. As development increases and the rural nature of the river is transformed the high quality land and water habitats will be permanently altered. Land use within two miles of the proposed projects is heavily dominated by agriculture and rural residential development. The land immediately adjacent to the St. Croix River, however, is mostly wooded and is highly sought after for residential development.

THE ST. CROIX RIVER CAN BE PROTECTED. The State of Minnesota has a rare opportunity to assist Washington County in protecting the wooded habitat along the St. Croix River. For a limited time, several riparian landowners have offered to work with the county to keep their land in its natural state. These projects include some of the few remaining large parcels and sensitive natural areas along the Lower St. Croix River.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Washington County St. Croix River Land Protection

With these projects the county will preserve wildlife habitat, provide riverbank stability, and protect water quality. Maintaining mature forests along the shoreline at the project sites can help to defray pollution impacts from other parts of the watershed and also contribute to the quality of the wildlife habitat. Specifically, the proposed acquisitions will preserve and protect, in perpetuity, the following conservation values:

- Preserve a continuous three-mile ecological corridor along the Lower St. Croix River providing riparian and upland habitat for many wildlife and bird species of greatest conservation need;
- Preserve remnants of mesic oak forest, a plant community that is considered imperiled in the state due to its rarity, and one of the most important features of these sites;
- Preserve the water quality and avoid additional nutrient loading and other negative impacts to Lake St. Croix, a Minnesota Pollution Control Agency-designated impaired water body;
- Protect soil stability and improve the quality of the overland flow of water into the St. Croix River;
- Maintain recharge of water into groundwater aquifers;
- Protect drinking water supplies from contamination in an area that has a very high sensitivity to groundwater contamination; and
- Provide a natural buffer to and maintain scenic vistas from the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, the St. Croix Scenic Byway, the St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park and the future St. Croix Valley Regional Trail.

The proposed acquisitions will help meet the goals of several landscape-scale conservation plans and will address the habitat recommendations in the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan. See Section C for more detail.

2. What action will be taken?

Washington County will provide at least 50% of the cost to complete 4-6 conservation easement and fee acquisitions within the St. Croix River watershed. The projects are described in Section K. Washington County will hold the interests in the land that it acquires. The scarcity of land for development and the increasing suburban development nearby has made St. Croix Riverfront land extremely expensive. Multiple funding sources will be needed to protect this critical habitat. The county is seeking to match up to 50% of the project cost from outside sources. Some landowners have offered to donate some of the value of their project. Management plans recommending activities to restore and improve the ecological functions of the property will be prepared for each acquisition. With receipt of the state funds, the projects will be completed within 12-18 months.

3. Who will take action and when?

Washington County will carry out the majority of the proposed work. The county works with other organizations to take advantage of their expertise, strengths and unique tools. Washington Conservation District, Belwin Conservancy, and Friends of the Mississippi are under contract to develop the required management plans and are available to assist with restoration and enhancement activities. Carpenter Nature Center is involved in a long-term strategy of managing and restoring the land it owns in the corridor. The Minnesota Land Trust will provide advice on drafting high quality conservation easements.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

Washington County has not received other Constitutional Funding but would be willing to coordinate its work with any agencies that receive funds for land protection projects along the St. Croix River.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Although these acquisitions are being pursued because of the high quality of the existing habitat, some restoration will occur. Specifically, cropland will be restored to prairie and oak savannah, one of the most threatened natural communities in North America. This will create habitat for a wide array of songbirds as well as a variety of game and other wildlife species.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

The management plans will lay out a 1-5 year schedule for implementation of the recommendations.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Washington County St. Croix River Land Protection

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ YES ☐ NO

If not, how will you finance completion?

Yes, if fully funded. If partially funded, the accomplishments will be reduced until other funds can be secured.

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Washington County funds the operational costs of the Land and Water Legacy Program through general county levy dollars, including annual monitoring and enforcement of the conservation easements.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

The long-term, protection of these properties will be assured through conservation easements held by Washington County. The conservation easement will preserve and protect, in perpetuity, the conservation values of the property by confining development, management and use of the properties to activities that are consistent with preservation of conservation values (See Section B.1.).

Although these acquisitions are being pursued because of the high quality of the existing habitat, some improvements are needed to restore and improve the ecological function of the sites. Each acquisition requires the preparation of a natural resources management plan. The main goal of each plan is to protect and improve, where needed, the biological diversity and ecological quality and functions of the natural communities. Specific activities include such things as removing exotic brush, converting cropland areas to native prairie and savanna, installing additional soil erosion control measures, avoiding disturbing highly erodible soils, avoiding disturbing vegetation in areas with high abundance of native and unusual plant species, conduct breeding bird surveys, and adjust beach grading to minimize impact to nesting turtles. The county will negotiate with each landowner to implement the recommendations.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ YES ☐ NO

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

All the land purchased in fee will be owned and managed by the county. All conservation easements that are purchased will be permanent. Some restoration will be required where critical to protecting the public values for which the conservation easement was purchased.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars?

Washington County will submit quarterly reports to the LSOHC showing progress toward the stated goals. Successes will be well publicized in the local media and on the county's website.

12. Why will this strategy work?

The owners of each parcel applied to the Washington County Land and Water Legacy Program and are willing sellers. After being screened for relevance and excellence against the site evaluation criteria, their projects were chosen as having the highest priority. The type of project being proposed takes a long time to complete. Much of the 'spade' work (project scope, due diligence, appraisals, etc.) has been done to get the land ready to be acquired. The projects are ready to go and will be able to be completed quickly after matching funds are secured.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

The county has received letters of support for these acquisitions from the National Park Service, Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota, St. Croix River Association, St. Croix Scenic Byway, St. Croix Scenic Coalition, and Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center. Denmark Township is concerned about the long-term tax impacts of restricting development on a large amount of high value residential land. To mitigate the impacts of land acquisition, Washington County makes in-lieu of tax payments when there is a taxable use of the acquired land such as farming or house rental.

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14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

☒ YES

☐ NO

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

☒ YES

☐ NO

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

☒ YES

☐ NO

If Yes what kind of use?

Opportunities will be available subject to negotiation with the private landowner. For example, landowners allow hunting and fishing on the property with prior permission. As a separate, coordinated purchase, Washington County will acquire in fee the right of way needed to complete a 2.5 mile segment of the proposed St. Croix Valley Regional Trail linking parks and natural areas along the St. Croix River from Afton south to Prescott. The easement acquisitions will provide buffer to this trail. The fee acquisitions are not included in this proposal but are mentioned to document the additional public value associated with the proposed easement acquisitions.

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

☒ YES

☐ NO

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

These acquisitions are part of the Washington County Land and Water Legacy Program. Washington County has completed or participated in seven projects protecting 200 acres of land since 2000 when it began its private land protection activities. The county accelerated its efforts and established its Land and Water Legacy Program (LWLP) in 2007 after voters approved a \$20 million bond referendum to acquire interests in property for the preservation of water quality, woodlands and other natural areas. With this new funding, the county has completed two parkland purchases, committed funds to two cities for habitat purchases, and committed up to \$1 million to the State of Minnesota to help in purchasing the Brown's Creek Segment of the Willard Munger State Trail.

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ YES

☐ NO

If yes, please explain.

The economic recession has slowed the rapid pace of urbanization, thus creating a window of opportunity to accelerate land acquisition to accomplish outstanding conservation objectives. During this time, Washington County will work with willing landowners to protect the remaining large lots and sensitive natural areas along the lower St. Croix River. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity. For a limited time, the landowners are willing to partner with the county to protect their land instead of partnering with developers to build houses on their land. Forest and prairie grasses can still grow along the St. Croix River instead of houses and turf grass.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☐ YES

☒ NO

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

☐ YES

☒ NO

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If yes explain the model briefly.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

The county chose these projects as highest priority based upon solid science and strategic assessment. It used existing conservation plans and available data (e.g. State Conservation Plan, Minnesota Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, community comprehensive plans, watershed district management plans, Minnesota County Biological Survey, Natural Resources Inventory, Minnesota Land Cover Classification System, Integrating Groundwater and Surface Water Management in Washington County, wellhead protection plans, Washington County Geologic Atlas, Minnesota Department of Health information, National Wetlands Inventory) to evaluate the projects. The criteria and the selection process is described in more detail in #24.

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

Washington County chose these projects as the highest priority acquisitions after being screened for relevance and urgency, being evaluated against the site evaluation criteria by a technical review panel and being recommended for excellence by a citizen advisory committee. These projects showcase the county's priorities for this program: natural habitats for wildlife, fish and plants; shore lands of lakes, rivers, and streams; lands important to protect the quality of the county's ground water resources; lands that create critical connections and buffers; and lands that are accessible or visible to the public. The county also considers funding proposals brought forward by other entities. All projects are evaluated against the following criteria that have been adopted by the County Board:

High priority criteria (8 points, 55%)

- riparian lands
- relatively large tract of forest land
- contains one or more native plant communities
- within a wellhead protection area
- within an area highly susceptible to ground water contamination
- included in a land preservation plan
- adjacent to a county park

Medium priority criteria (5 points, 10%)

- adjacent to other land which is permanently protected from development
- erosion prone lands

Lower priority criteria (3 points, 3%)

- buffers and existing public facility

Other important criteria (3-8 points, 8%)

- parcel size

Imminence of threat (5-8 points, 24%)

- public use
- leveraging resources and conservation efforts
- project feasibility

For the first round of projects, the county chose to focus its efforts in key geographies rather than scattered over broad areas. This will allow us to make a noticeable and measureable difference in the areas we work. Improving the connectivity and functionality of priority habitats while providing public benefits is an important goal of the county's program.

Washington County St. Croix River Land Protection

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

The proposed projects address the following habitat recommendations in the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan:

- Habitat Recommendation #1: Protect priority land habitats. The plan identifies the St. Croix River valley as having high conservation priority. The proposed acquisitions are along the St. Croix River.
- Habitat Recommendation #2: Protect Critical Shore lands of Streams and Lakes. The plan suggests that high priority shore lands be protected via economic incentives and other tools such as conservation easements. The plan acknowledges conservation easements as one of the key tools necessary to achieve land conservation goals in metropolitan areas where high land values make it very difficult to acquire fee title to all priority lands. Lands along the St. Croix River are very expensive; the county can't afford to purchase all the land in fee. By acquiring conservation easements the county will be able to achieve its habitat and water quality goals by protecting more land while the land stays in private ownership and stays on the tax rolls.
- Habitat Recommendation #3: Improve Connectivity and Access to Outdoor Recreation. The proposed acquisitions will link parks and private natural areas along the Lower St. Croix River from Afton State Park south to Point Douglas County Park. As a separate, acquisition project (not part of this proposal), Washington County will acquire the right-of-way needed to complete a 2.5 mile segment of the new St. Croix Valley Regional Trail. This continuous ecological corridor will provide a natural buffer to this trail segment.
- Habitat Recommendation 7: Keep Water on the Landscape. Cropland on the protected parcels will be restored to native habitat in an attempt to reduce the volume and rate of runoff from the land. This will improve the nutrient loading and sedimentation problems in Lake St. Croix.

These properties have been identified in many published landscape-scale conservation plans as being critical natural areas and as having significant native land cover worthy of protection.

- The properties provide habitat in the St. Paul Baldwin Plains and Moraines subsection for a variety of species in greatest conservation need as established by the Department of Natural Resources plan *Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and the Rare: An Action Plan for Minnesota's Wildlife, Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, 2006*.
- The properties are located within the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway District, a unit of the National Park Service, established by Congress in 1972 to protect the scenery, water quality and other riverway values and jointly managed by the federal and state governments in accordance with a riverway management plan and zoning ordinance.
- The properties are located within the St. Croix Corridor of the Metro Conservation Corridors, a network of remaining critical habitat natural areas that are critical for the movement of native plants and wildlife across the landscape.
- The properties are located within a Regionally-Significant Ecological Area identified by the Department of Natural Resources as having the following characteristics: natural areas of sufficient size and shape to provide habitat for a spectrum of wildlife; areas that connect to other natural areas; and areas with the most intact native plant communities as identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey.
- Portions of the properties are identified in the Department of Natural Resources Minnesota County Biological Survey as having high biodiversity significance.
- Protection of the properties would retain natural shore lands along the St. Croix River, a part of the Trust for Public Land's Conservation Campaign's 50-Year Vision for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region.
- The properties will provide a natural buffer to the proposed St. Croix Valley Regional Trail that Washington County is in the process of acquiring.
- The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's new report, *The State of the Birds*, calls attention to significant bird population declines and the need for stronger conservation efforts.

Washington County St. Croix River Land Protection

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition	\$2,500,000	\$1,500,000	
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$2,500,000	\$1,500,000	

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
NA		

Washington County St. Croix River Land Protection

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Washington County			
Acquisition	\$2,500,000	\$1,500,000	
Landowner Donation	Unknown	Unknown	
TOTAL	\$2,500,000	\$1,500,000	

G. Outcomes:

- 1) In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.
- 2) In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.
- 3) In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.
- 4) In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and
- 5) If you have any outcomes listed in the "protect" row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5

Washington County St. Croix River Land Protection

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		<i>89.1ac</i>		<i>89.1ac</i>
Protect				<i>310.9ac 1 mile St. Croix River bluff and river frontage</i>
Enhance	<i>1.5ac</i>	<i>2.4ac</i>	<i>307ac</i>	

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		<i>Metro (89.1 ac)</i>		<i>Metro (89.1 ac)</i>
Protect				<i>Metro (310.9ac) 1 mile St. Croix River bluff and river frontage</i>
Enhance	<i>Metro (1.5 ac)</i>	<i>Metro (2.4 ac)</i>	<i>Metro (307 ac)</i>	

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		<i>\$891,000</i>		<i>\$891,000</i>
Protect	<i>\$15,000</i>	<i>\$24,000</i>	<i>\$3,070,000</i>	<i>\$3,109,000</i>
Enhance				

Washington County St. Croix River Land Protection

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		<i>\$891,000</i>		<i>\$891,000</i>
Protect	<i>\$15,000</i>	<i>\$24,000</i>	<i>\$3,070,000</i>	<i>\$3,109,000</i>
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
Permanent Easement	<i>1.5 ac</i>	<i>91.5 ac</i>	<i>307 ac</i>	<i>400 ac 1 mile St. Croix River bluff and shoreline</i>

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Proposed Project #1: purchase conservation easement	fall 2010	88 acres protected
Proposed Project #2: purchase conservation easement	winter 2011	75 acres protected
Proposed Project #3: purchase conservation easement	spring 2011	90 acres protected
Project #4: purchase conservation easement	fall 2011	147 acres protected

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

Washington County has budgeted \$10 million in bonding in 2010 for Phase 1 of the Land and Water Legacy Program. The bonds will be sold when a large number of acquisitions are ready. The county can purchase properties up to eighteen months in advance of the bond sale by using fund balance which will be reimbursed from the bond proceeds. This enables the county to complete acquisitions as priority tracts become available and the matching funds are secured rather than waiting until the bonds are sold. All funds requested would enhance and not supplant existing funds. The requested amount would match 40% of the Land and Water Legacy Program's Phase 1 budget. The requested funds would amplify the county's funds by 50%.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

A conservation easement written in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 84C, will preserve and protect, in perpetuity, the conservation values of the property by prohibiting land uses, management and development that

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harms or negatively affects important habitat values. The conservation easements require the landowner to prepare and follow a natural resources management plan approved by the county that identifies opportunities to restore natural communities to some of the disturbed areas and to improve the quality of other areas.

Washington County will hold the interests in the land that is acquired. The county follows the standards and practices of the National Land Trust Alliance, thus ensuring long-lasting conservation easements. The county monitors each of its conservation easements annually. The county attorney enforces the county-held conservation easements. The county is working in concert with organizations such as the watershed district and the Washington Conservation District to focus restoration activities on lands that are permanently protected.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Double left click to bring up the map editor. Symbols should be on the left side of the pop-up banner at the top of your screen or at the bottom left depending on your software.

If you can't bring up the interactive map editor follow these instructions:

1. Make a paper copy of the map,
2. By hand place symbols on the map corresponding to the location of the projects in your proposal,
3. Scan the marked map to a pdf, and
4. Insert the marked pdf map as the last page in your submission.

Proposed Project #1:

Size: 88 acres

Current Land Cover: 82 acres mesic oak forest; 2.4 acres medium tall grassland; 2.1 acres cropland recommended to be converted to southern mesic prairie after acquisition of the conservation easement; and 1.5 acres of sand beach. Parcel is classified by the DNR as having high biodiversity significance.

Adjoining Property: St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park abuts the property on the south; ¼ mile of St. Croix River frontage lies to the east; large wooded residential lot lies to the north; and cropland abuts the property on the west.

Proposed Project #2:

Size: 75 acres

Current Land Cover: 30 acres oak, red cedar forest; 45 acres cropland to some of which will be restored to native cover after acquisition of the conservation easement.

Adjoining Property: Carpenter Nature Center owns property to the south; ¼ mile of St. Croix River frontage abuts the property on the east; large lot residential properties lie to the north; and farmland abuts the property on the west.

Proposed Project #3:

Size: 90 acres

Current Land Cover: 45 acres oak, maple basswood forest and 45 acres orchard and corn field to be restored to native cover after acquisition of the conservation easement.

Adjoining Property: Carpenter Nature Center owns property to the north and the west; ½ mile of St. Croix River frontage abuts the property on the east; and the county is currently negotiating to purchase the parcel to the south.

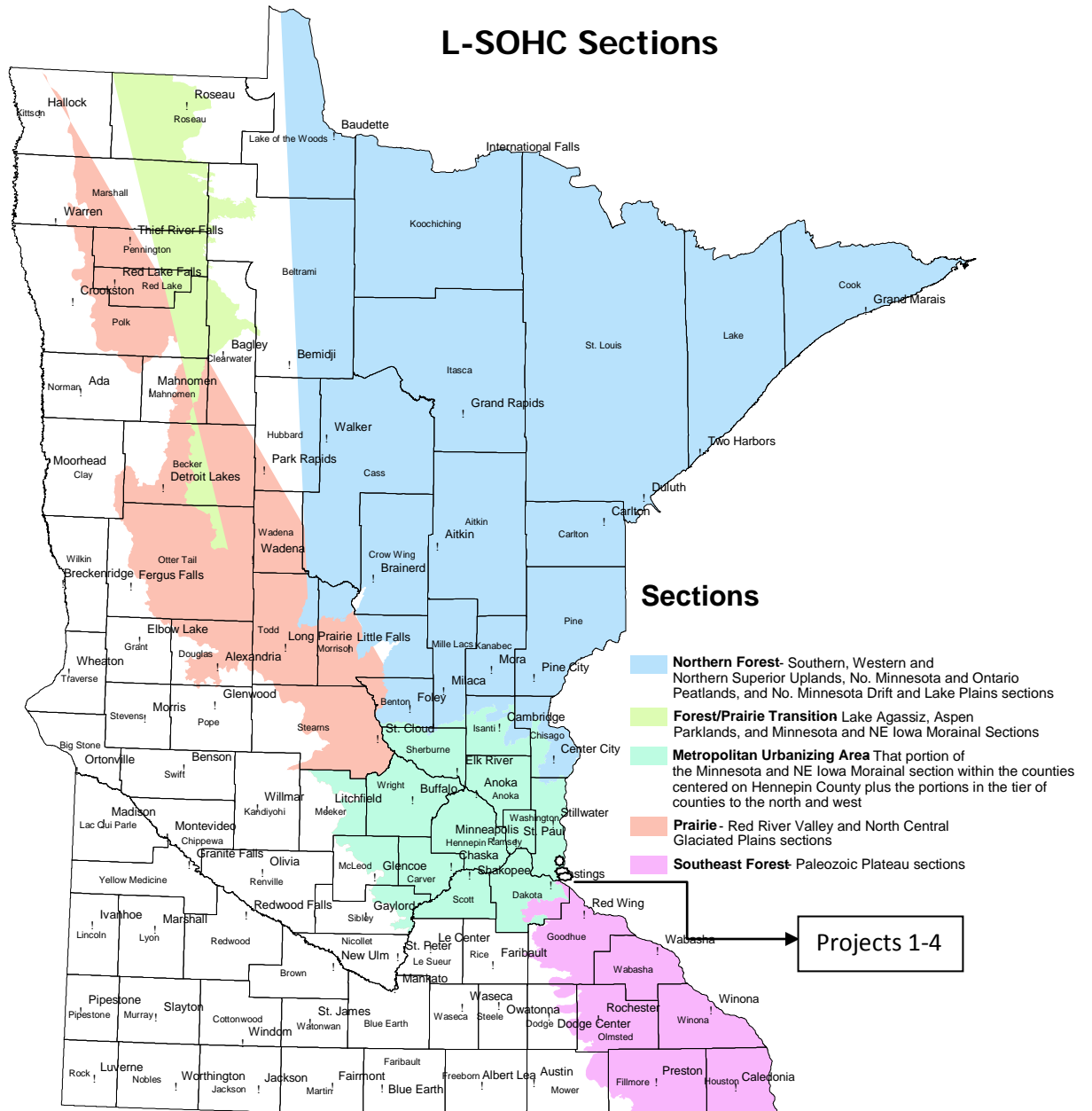
Project #4:

Size: 147 acres

Acquisition of a conservation easement on yet to be determined parcels near or along the St. Croix River.

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L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition

Request for Funding Form Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Fiscal Year 2011

Program or Project Title: Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition

Date: October 30, 2009

Manager's Name: Alice M. Hanley
Title: Refuge Manager
Mailing Address: 44843 County Road 19 Odessa, MN 56276
Telephone: 320-273-2191 ext. 100
Fax: 320-273-2231
E-Mail: Alice_Hanley@fws.gov
Web Site: www.midwest.fws.gov/northerntallgrassprairie/

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$3,500,000	0	0	0

A. Summary

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) will permanently protect remnant native prairie and associated wetland complexes in western Minnesota by purchasing fee title properties and habitat easements. Lands purchased through this program will become units of the Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge. The majority of the lands protected will consist of native prairie, however, restoration of wetlands and grasslands will also be completed where needed.

B. Background Information

What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The purpose of the Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR is to preserve, restore, and manage a portion of the remaining critical northern tallgrass prairie habitat and associated habitats at widespread locations throughout the western Minnesota and northwestern Iowa historic range. Only 5 percent of the original tallgrass prairie remains for preservation consideration throughout the entire historic tallgrass prairie range. Native prairie declines of 99.9% and 99.6% have occurred in Iowa and Minnesota, respectively. Grassland dependent bird species have shown steeper, more consistent, and geographically more widespread declines than any other group of North American birds.

The Service has specific trustee responsibilities for migratory birds, endangered species, interjurisdictional fish, certain marine mammals, and lands administered by the Service.

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Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition

This refuge is a new way for the Service to cooperatively meet its trustee responsibilities within the tallgrass prairie landscape. The Service works with individuals, groups, and governmental entities to preserve tracts of northern tallgrass prairie.

What action will be taken?

Our program will protect, in perpetuity, native prairie tracts in western Minnesota. Fee title tracts will be the top priority for the funding. Funding will be used for the purchase of habitat easements if the funding cannot be used entirely on fee title tracts. The funding will purchase approximately 1200 acres of native prairie in fee title, 2300 acres of habitat easements, or a combination of the two. Lands protected will be within the Northern Tallgrass Prairie Habitat Preservation Area (HPA) in western Minnesota and will become units of the Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR.

Who will take action and when?

The Service will be responsible for all land acquisition activities associated with this program. However, partners, including the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and The Nature Conservancy, will be consulted when selecting potential properties.

How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

Other Constitutional funding will not be involved in this program.

What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

If this project is funded, the Service will protect approximately 1200 acres of native prairie through fee title acquisition or 2300 acres through the purchase of habitat easements or a combination of both fee title and easement acquisition. Lands protected will be within the 48-county Northern Tallgrass Prairie HPA in western Minnesota as described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for this refuge.

When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

Habitat changes will occur one to two years after the acquisitions are finalized.

Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

YES x **NO**

If not, how will you finance completion?

The Outdoor Heritage funding will be used for the acquisition of fee title properties and habitat easements. Needed restoration of these properties will be funded through annual Service operations funding, as well as grants from numerous partners.

How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Long term costs for restoration, management, and wildlife and habitat monitoring will be funded through federally appropriated refuge operations funding.

How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

This project will fund the permanent protection of approximately 1,200-2,300 acres of native prairie and the associated wetland complexes through land acquisition.

Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition

If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

All lands acquired through this program will become part of the National Wildlife Refuge System and administered by the Service.

How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

All information requests will be addressed immediately. All actions associated with this program will be open for public review.

Why will this strategy work?

The Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR was established in September 2000 to address the loss of America's grasslands and mounting evidence indicating that many grassland species populations had precipitously declined as the prairies had vanished. One of the primary ways to reverse this decline is to permanently protect, restore and manage the native prairie tracts that remain. The Service utilizes landscape level planning tools produced by our HAPET office in Fergus Falls, MN and the MN County Biological Survey to strategically identify properties for acquisition.

Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

When reviewing potential properties, Service employees will work with MN Department of Natural Resources staff to determine the biological integrity of the property. All fee title and easement lands will be purchased from willing sellers. This project also went through a public review process during the development of the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

Local MN DNR and USDA offices will be contacted regarding potential fee title/easement purchases to determine if any ongoing programs will affect acquisition. Acquisition goals have also gone through a public review process which occurred during the development of the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

In the majority of the cases, yes, however, in some situations, proposed fee title tracts may have small areas that are encumbered by some sort of existing conservation easement.

If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

☐ **YES** ☒ **NO**

If Yes what kind of use?

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Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition

The fee title properties will be open to hunting and other public uses including wildlife observation, interpretation, photography, and environmental education. The properties where habitat easements are purchased will stay in private ownership and therefore will not be open for public use unless that landowner authorizes those uses.

If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

☒ **in perpetuity** ☐ **Years**

1. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

- ☐ Northern Forest
- ☐ Forest/Prairie Transition
- ☐ Southeast Forest
- ☒ Prairie
- ☐ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

2. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**
If yes, please explain.

The decline of native prairie communities continues throughout Minnesota. The Service has been limited on the number of acres purchased annually due to funding limitations since the establishment of this refuge. Our current land acquisition budget cannot keep up with the landowner interest in this program.

3. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☐ **YES** ☒ **NO**
If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

4. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

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Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

If yes explain the model briefly.

The lands that will be purchased will be evaluated and prioritized utilizing the Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model and other tools described below.

5. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

The basic goals of the Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation are: 1) accomplish landscape level planning based on quantifiable objectives, 2) implement planned actions, then, 3) evaluate your actions to see if they are addressing your objectives. This is what our HAPET office in Fergus Falls does for the Service and our partners in the prairies of Minnesota. The Service's HAPET office does landscape level planning to meet specific wildlife objectives and conducts evaluation activities (i.e. 4sq.mi. surveys), to see if we/partners activities are meeting our objectives. The planned actions to be implemented through this grant application are the acquisition and restoration of converted wetland and grassland habitats. Based on HAPET evaluation strategies, modeling predictions can be made on the numbers of nesting waterfowl, grassland nesting birds, and pheasants the acres affected by this grant application will produce. Besides the obvious wildlife benefits, once restored, the lands acquired through this grant will provide additional water quality, groundwater recharge, and flood abatement benefits.

6. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

Potential acquisition properties are evaluated and weighted using the factors found on the **Evaluation Factors Matrix** from the Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Interim Comprehensive Conservation Plan and seen on Page 6. The evaluation factors were developed to help determine if and how a particular site meets the project goals that advance Service trustee responsibilities. The Northern Tallgrass Prairie Habitat Preservation Area project goals are:

- 1.) **Site Quality** - Preserve remaining remnants of native tallgrass prairie to ensure protection of unique plant communities, native fish and wildlife, and historic and cultural sites.
- 2.) **Management & Restoration Suitability** - Restore native fish and wildlife and their habitats, including:
 - Enhancement of some of the best remaining degraded remnants of tallgrass prairie through management practices (burning, grazing, etc.) and inter-planting or seeding of native plant species. Associated natural wetland habitats including prairie wetlands (potholes), fens, wet prairie, and riverine areas could be enhanced as well.
 - Restoration (reconstruction) of areas of tallgrass prairie using native plant species to buffer or interconnect remnant native prairie tracts.
- 3.) **Community Type Distribution** - Conserve, manage, and restore the biodiversity and abundance of native fish and wildlife populations.
- 4.) **Public Use, Recreation, Education** - Provide public areas for compatible fish and wildlife oriented recreation and educational opportunities to increase public understanding of the tallgrass prairie.

Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition

Evaluation Factors Matrix - In order for a site to be selected it must obtain a minimum rank greater than 0 in goals numbered 1 or 2.

Goals	Excellent (4 points)	Good (3 points)	Fair (2 points)	Poor (1 points)	(0 points)	# pts	Wt.	Rank
1.) Site Quality	likely to have a full complement of species and appears to have structure and composition relatively free of disturbance by modern humans	has full complement of species, but experienced light to moderate levels of disturbance & relative abundance of some species may be altered	moderate to low diversity of native prairie species, significant population of exotic and/or weedy species resulting from moderate disturbance	heavily disturbed site with little remaining of the original community structure and composition, low native species diversity, exotics and weeds dominant	native prairie species not found on site		3	
2.) Management and Restoration Suitability	easy to manage, or restore as a remnant/ buffer/corridor	relatively easy to manage, or restore as a remnant/ buffer/corridor	difficult to manage, or restore as a remnant/ buffer/corridor	very difficult to manage, or restore as a remnant/ buffer/corridor	not suitable for management, or restoration as a buffer/corridor		1	
3.) Community Type Distribution	community type under represented & poorly distributed throughout project area or Federal Endangered/ Threatened Species is present	community type moderately represented and moderately distributed throughout project area	community type fairly represented and fairly distributed throughout project area and may not be an endemic community	community type well represented and fully distributed throughout project area and may not be an endemic community	does not contain native prairie community type		2	
4.) Public Use, Recreation, Education	strong community interest and easily accessible site		moderate community interest and moderately accessible site		lacking community interest & poor site accessibility		1	

Total _____

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

The Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan recommends protecting priority land habitats. This proposal will protect and restore priority native grasslands and their associated wetlands important to grassland dependent wildlife, especially grassland and wetland birds. This proposal will also implement the following habitat recommendations within the plan:

1. Improve connectivity and access to outdoor recreation - All fee title lands acquired and restored will be open to the public for hunting and other activities allowed under the National Wildlife Refuge System.
2. Keep water on the landscape – by protecting and restoring grasslands, this proposal will help keep water on the landscape (permanent vegetation restoration).

The need for this project is outlined in the ***Northern Tallgrass Prairie Habitat Preservation Area Final Environmental Impact Statement***, US Fish and Wildlife Service 1998. The primary purpose of the Northern Tallgrass Prairie HPA is to preserve and enhance the remaining remnant tracts of northern tallgrass prairie and aspen parklands habitats within Iowa and Minnesota.

A secondary purpose is to link existing prairie tracts together (Federal, state, tribal, private organization, and private landowner ownerships) into larger blocks plus buffer remnant prairie. This will establish larger, more viable units of managed prairie and allow travel corridors for wildlife. Prairie restoration used to link existing prairies together would utilize the same techniques used in managing existing prairies.

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition	\$3,500,000 *		
Easement Acquisition	\$3,500,000 *		
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$3,500,000		

* Funding will be used to purchase lands in fee title (top priority), purchase habitat easements, or a combination of the two acquisition authorities.

Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
-------	------	---------

Not applicable

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$500,000		
Service Realty/Refuge Personnel Costs	\$47,000		
Service Appraisal, Survey, and Title Costs	\$45,000		
Service restoration and management costs	\$75,000		
TOTAL	\$667,000		

G. Outcomes:

- 1) In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.
- 2) In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.
- 3) In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.
- 4) In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.
and
- 5) If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5

Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect		<i>Protect 1200 acres of prairie in fee title or 2300 acres in easement, or a combination of the two acquisition authorities.</i>		
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect		<i>1,200-2,300 acres</i>		
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect		<i>\$3,500,000</i>		
Enhance				

Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		<i>\$75,000</i>		
Protect		<i>\$592,000</i>		
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability		<i>Approximately 1200 acres of prairie for \$3,500,000 or a combination of the two acquisition authorities.</i>		
Permanent Easement		<i>Approximately 2,300 acres of prairie for \$3,500,000 or a combination of both fee and easement.</i>		

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Identify priority acquisitions (fee and easement) properties	October 30, 2009	14 potential
Appraisals ordered	July 31, 2010	5 appraisals
Easement Options finalized	December 31, 2010	8 options
Purchase agreements (fee title) finalized	June 30, 2011	3 options
Grassland restoration completed	December 31, 2013	5 sites

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

Since 2000, the Service has received annual appropriations of approximately \$500,000 in Land and Water Conservation Funds to acquire lands for the Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR. This annual funding has allowed the Service to purchase smaller sized tracts of prairie during the last 9 years. The addition of Outdoor Heritage Funds will greatly increase our ability to protect larger tracts of native prairie throughout the 48 Minnesota Counties in the HPA.

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Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Outdoor Heritage Funds will be used to purchase the land in fee title or purchase perpetual habitat easements. The land purchased will become units of the Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR. Long term costs for restoration, management, and wildlife and habitat monitoring will be funded through annual refuge operations funding. Service habitat easements are perpetual and managers will work with landowners to maintain and, where needed, restore the native prairie on each tract of land.

Revenue sharing payments (in lieu of taxes) will be made for all fee title lands in accordance with federal law. Habitat easement purchases do not impact property taxes as they remain the responsibility of the landowner.

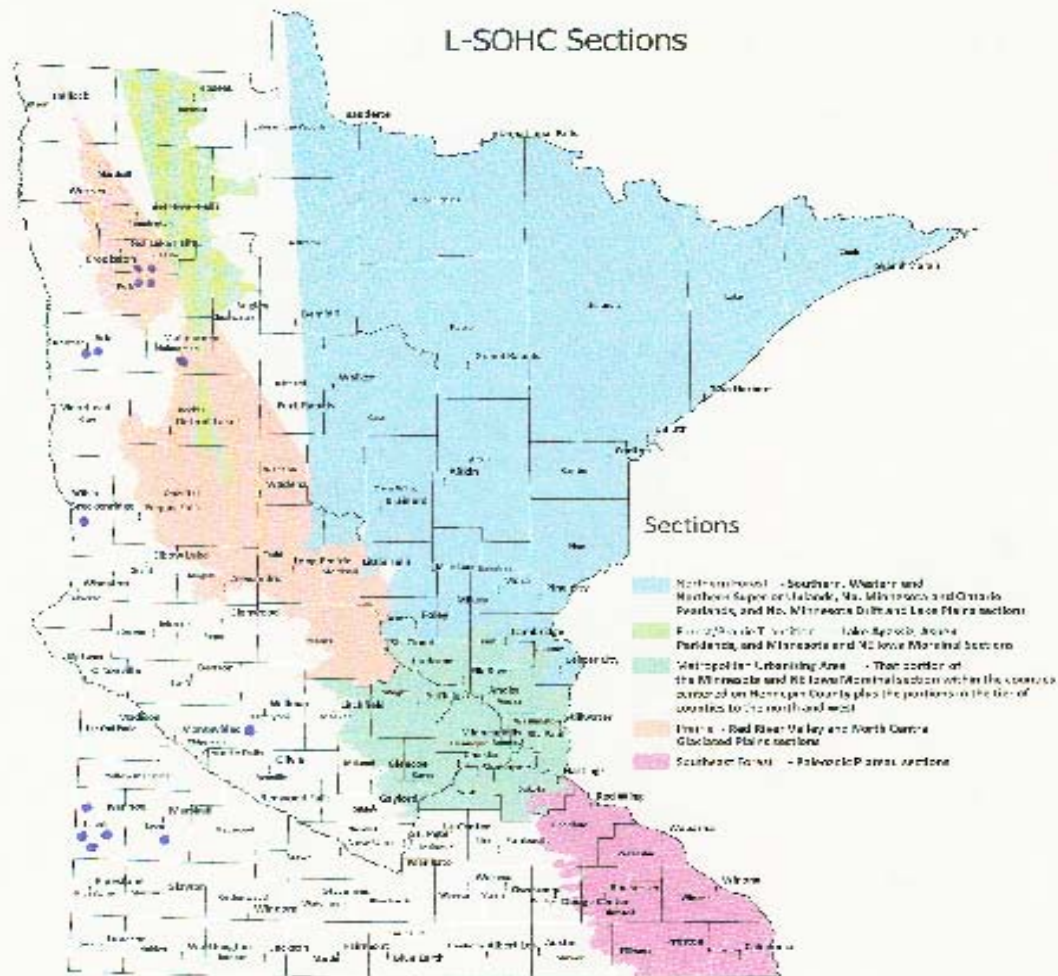
K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Pending Land Acquisition Properties for the Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition Project:

1. 790 acre fee title tract in Wilkin County
2. 360 acre fee title tract in Red Lake County
3. 320 acre fee title tract in Red Lake County
4. 110 acre fee title tract in Polk County
5. 400 acre fee title tract in Polk County
6. 145 acre easement tract in Norman County
7. 160 acre easement tract in Norman County
8. 160 acre easement tract in Mahnomen County
9. 118 acre easement tract in Lincoln County
10. 97 acre easement tract in Lyon County
11. 70 acre easement tract in Lincoln County
12. 70 acres easement tract in Lincoln County
13. 40 acre easement tract in Lincoln County
14. 240 acre easement tract in Kandiyohi County

Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition

Program Title: Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program – Phase II: Creating a Legacy of Habitat Connectivity, Viability, and Public Access within the Mid- Minnesota River Watershed

Date: November 2, 2009

Requesting Organization: Redwood Area Communities Foundation dba Green Corridor Inc.

Manager's Name: Bradley H. Cobb

Title: Program Manager – Green Corridor Inc

Mailing Address: 200 S. Mill St., Redwood Falls MN 56283

Telephone: 320- 493- 4695

Fax: 507- 637- 4082

E-Mail: 1231tlc@charter.net

Web Site: [.radc.](http://www.radc.org)

Fiscal Manager: Redwood Area Communities Foundation dba Green Corridor Inc.

Contact: Patricia Dingels

Title: Redwood Area Communities Foundation – Executive Director

Mailing Address: 200 S. Mill St., Redwood Falls MN 56283

Telephone: 507- 637- 4004

Fax: 507- 637- 4082

E-Mail: [@redwoodfalls.](mailto:@redwoodfalls)

Web Site: www.radc.org

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$4,165,835	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000

A. Summary The Green Corridor Legacy Program – Phase II would be a continuation of the Phase I FY2010 appropriations by LSOHC. The Green Corridor Legacy Program fiscal agent is the Redwood Area Communities Foundation (RACF) dba Green Corridor Inc with oversight/management responsibilities by the Green Corridor Inc. Board of Directors. RACF incorporates over 20 non-profit foundations/organizations. Financial Audit reports are available

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program

upon request. The Green Corridor Legacy Program Phase II has **two (2) primary objectives or accomplishments**;

Accomplishment #1) The Green Corridor Legacy Program will be to protect and restore/enhance high quality fish, game, and wildlife habitats by developing new and/or expansions of MN DNR Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and/or Aquatic Management Areas (AMA) in the Program area. The proposed fee title acquisitions will be considered from a priority list of properties based on several key factors of which show the most urgent need. All properties will be acquired from willing and supportive landowners. All projects have the support of the local DNR office for acceptance into the WMA/AMA inventory system.

Accomplishment #2) The Green Corridor Legacy Program will develop propagation of regionally adapted prairie plant seeds for use in future habitat restoration and/or enhancement projects on state owned WMA , AMA, and/or SNA properties. The development of this program objective is in partnership/contract with the University of Minnesota Southwest Research and Outreach Center (SWROC) and the DNR.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed? This program incorporates the basic concepts of sustainability and ecosystem management. Minnesota has lost 99% of the original prairie and has seen dramatic declines in grassland dependent wildlife. Examples of the species showing the greatest conservation need in the Program area; the American Badger, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Bobolink to name just a few. Traditional game species are also affected by the decline in habitat such as pheasants, deer, wild turkey, and a variety of dabbling ducks which are associated to prairie wetland complexes.

Publicly owned natural resource infrastructure (WMA, AMA, SNA, parks/trails, waterways) invigorates local and regional economies by providing outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities supported by hunting, fishing, wildlife observation areas, and other forms of outdoor recreation. New business concepts are likely to arise as a direct result of the recreational and tourism opportunities that will be advanced by this Green Corridor Legacy Program.

The Glacial River Warren created the Minnesota River Valley as it drained Lake Agassiz 10,000+ years ago. The bluff to bluff wall of water carved out one of Minnesota's most scenic landscapes, creating unique geological features, and unique plant communities along the valley and its primary tributaries.

Efforts to restore, protect, and enhance our wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife are timely as escalating development pressures threaten remaining natural lands and water resources on both public and private lands. The Green Corridor Legacy Program approach will be based on sound science concepts of plan development, setting conservation priorities, developing short and long term strategies to achieve conservation priorities, implement the strategies, and then continue monitoring the outcomes. All of these concepts and practices will follow existing state wildlife and conservation plans and natural resource management practices in conjunction with agency partners.

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program

The primary work area of the Green Corridor Legacy Program will be Redwood, Renville, Yellow Medicine, Chippewa, Brown, Nicollet, Murray, Lyon, and Cottonwood Counties along the Minnesota River and its tributaries. Creating new and connecting existing fragments of habitat along and near the Minnesota River and tributaries in the Program area will generate an ecological synergism that will allow game, wildlife, and aquatic species to flourish, while creating multiple recreational opportunities and improving public access through a series (phases) of funded activities within the nine (9) county Program area. This appropriation request will be spent in four (4) of the nine (9) counties in the Program Area – Brown, Cottonwood, Redwood, and Renville. Future Program Phases and/or appropriations will include projects in the other counties within the Program area.

This Program is directly consistent with the uses of the Outdoor Heritage Fund, as specified in Article XI of the Minnesota Constitution and Minnesota Statute 97A.056: to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife. Furthermore, it will produce multiple conservation benefits across a large targeted and planned geographic area.

2. What action will be taken? Phase II of this Program will protect 840 acres of land by acquiring fee title to these properties. Of these 840 acres of fee titled properties 400 acres will be restored by planting native prairie plants. The Program will also propagate regional adapted native prairie plants in partnership with the U of M Southwest Research and Outreach Center and the MN DNR to be used on future restoration and/or enhancement projects on public lands like WMA/AMA/SNA.

3. Who will take action and when? Accomplishment 1) The protection through fee title acquisition of 840 acres of land will be accomplished by the Green Corridor Inc., and facilitated by the Program Manager following established protocol and practices of the State of MN and DNR. Properties will be transferred to the DNR and developed as WMA/AMA with the intention of this activity to be completed by June 30, 2011. We then anticipate the completion of the restoration of 400 acres by the following growing season in 2012. **Accomplishment 2)** The propagation of regional adapted prairie seeds will be accomplished under partnership/contract agreements between Green Corridor Inc and the U of M SWROC with initial plot development completed by June 30, 2012.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

The Green Corridor Legacy Program focuses on preserving and restoring natural resources infrastructures while emphasizing habitat connectivity (corridors), viability, and public access to these habitats. Several SWCD's in the Green Corridor Program area are planning future Clean Water Legacy Fund program proposals and Green Corridor Inc will be participating in those planning discussions. Green Corridor Inc. is also helping to coordinate Program area submissions to the Outdoor Heritage Fund – Conservation Legacy Program (small grants) with our conservation group partners like the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, Minnesota Waterfowl Association, National Wild Turkey

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program

Federation, and Pheasants Forever. Many other regional initiatives are currently being planned that are in line with Parks & Trails and Arts & Cultural Legacy Funds.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

The Granite Prairie WMA project has been ranked as our highest priority. This 180 acre acquisition will protect approximately 12 acres of remnant – high quality native prairie. These prairie remnants are remaining because of the surface exposed granite layers. Also present in this tract are; hardwood forest, a shallow lake, over one (1) mile (5,700 ft) of MN River shore land, excellent game and wildlife populations, and has one of the most productive fishing locations along this stretch of the Minnesota River. Also located directly south of this tract on the south side of the Minnesota River in Redwood County is the Mann's Lake WMA.

Of the proposed tracts for consideration, Portions of the Badger Track, Granite Prairie, Whispering Ridge, Cold Spring, and Charlestown properties will be restored into 400 acres of prairie with diverse plant species – for some of these tracts there already exists some high quality habitat that does not need restoration or enhancement practices.. Currently these tracts would be considered marginal farmlands which are currently in row crops, non cropland, and/or the federal CRP program and would eventually create excellent habitat corridor complexes and provide future expansion opportunities once restoration is completed.

The Whispering Ridge AMA addition will be an expansion of the newly developed 182 acre AMA which was funded by the Green Corridor LCCMR appropriation. The Sanborn WMA is a large unit at 160 acres that we be protected and is current established in a high quality native prairie under the federal CRP program. This tract also has the potential to expand future WMA corridor complex expansions. There is a very high likelihood that this landowner would convert this tract back into croplands once the CRP contract expires. And finally, the Cold Spring WMA addition would protect and provide public access to significant Minnesota River bluff land which has very good concentrations of several game species – deer and wild turkey. This tract also expands the Cold Spring WMA corridor complex.

6. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

 X YES NO
If not, how will you finance completion?

7. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Initial restoration and development costs for these new WMA/AMA are included in this appropriation. Also because these tracts are in proximity to other DNR properties will help keep maintenance costs less than average due to shared resources. The DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife will manage these properties by their area staff and they will perform routine inspections and maintenance activities funded through their traditional sources

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program

like the Game & Fish Fund. Periodic enhancements or improvements by the DNR will be funded by special funding requests.

8. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

Accomplishment 1) Protection of 840 acres will be accomplished by fee title acquisition of lands from willing and supportive landowners and developed as WMA's and AMA's which are open to public use for the proposes of hunting, fishing, trapping, and other compatible uses. The restoration of 400 acres of these acquired lands will be accomplished by planting native prairie plant species to restore the vegetative cover to these newly acquired properties that were previously converted into marginal farmlands.

Accomplishment 2) The propagation of regional adapted prairie plant seeds will be used to restore and/or enhance future habitat projects on state owned properties like WMA and/or AMA which will result in multiple natural resource and wildlife benefits.

9. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection. Both Accomplishments will be on state owned WMA and/or AMA.

10. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

Transparency, shared information, and uses of OHF dollars will be accomplished by following the approved Accomplishment Plans and established LSOHC Guidelines and reporting requirements. Press releases and web-based products (e.g, commitment to the LCC Accomplishment Website) will be used to provide public and/or stakeholder notification of Program goals, objectives, and, accomplishments. The Green Corridor Team will continue our past successes by engaging our partners, local units of governments, government agencies, and regional state and federal legislators of Program developments and accomplishments.

11. When do you expect to see these habitat changes? June 30, 2012.

12. Why will this strategy work? Green Corridor Legacy Program has received letters of support from the DNR Regional office and Redwood County Board of Commissioners. Similar letters of support are being requested from other local units of government across the Program area. We feel by engaging local and regional decision makers in all aspects of Program development provides open and transparent dialog with all stakeholders. These stakeholders then become part of the Program development process. This strategy in many ways sets the Green Corridor Legacy Program apart because we see the value in these cooperative agreements and embrace these opportunities for regional/community involvement with all stakeholders.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program

The Green Corridor Legacy Program will conform to county land use recreational plans. Decision or policy makers in local, regional, or state government and/or government agencies as well as special interest groups could have **positive or negative** effects on Program development. The negative effects can be mitigated and the positive effects can be enhanced with proper, timely, and transparent engagement with these entities and special interest groups.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

_____ **YES**

_____ **X** _____ **NO**

Once appropriations have been approved and signed purchase agreements obtained is normally when local governments are notified of the pending acquisition. Past history by the Green Corridor Legacy Program has demonstrated to local county governments our commitment to following county recreational land use plans. The conversion of marginal farmland into conservation and/or outdoor recreational acres within riparian areas along the river corridors is consistent with the respective comprehensive plans by many counties in the Green Corridor Legacy Program area. Several county boards have been proactive with their support of similar acquisitions by the Green Corridor Legacy Program and we will be working with other counties in the Program area to secure similar support.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

_____ **X** _____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? N/A

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever? N/A

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program

15 Years

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

- ☐ Northern Forest
- ☐ Forest/Prairie Transition
- ☐ Southeast Forest
- ☒ Prairie
- ☐ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

If yes, please explain. All of the current landowners are willing and supportive of the goals and mission of the Green Corridor Legacy Program but have expressed concern that if the Green Corridor Legacy Program goes unfunded that they will need to then sell these properties on the open market for commercial or private development purposes. Also, several of the tracts have significant remnant prairie, granite outcroppings, gravel/sand mining potential, shallow lakes and associated wetlands, river shore land, and timber that could be lost to commercial operations or private development if not protected now.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced. Accomplishment #2 – Propagation of regional native prairie seeds once plot has been established and harvested these seeds will be used on both new and existing state-owned WMA/AMA/SNA restoration and enhancement projects.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

If yes explain the model briefly. The USFWS – SHC model outlines several key elements; Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation which the Green Corridor Legacy Program has been using as a basis for program development. The Green

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Corridor Legacy Program will continue to use existing state-wide wildlife conservation and strategic plans in partnership with our local and regional natural resource managers and conservation professionals to best achieve desired outcomes. These plans were developed through the most currently available science and the professional expertise of a broad range of wildlife professionals. These plans, along with use of GIS technology, will be used to identify potential projects based on existing and potential habitat resources in the program area. This will allow for selection of acquisition tracts that maximize population responses for both game and nongame wildlife.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Habitat fragmentation and loss has been linked to population declines in most species of greatest conservation need and many game species. This program will create continuous corridors of habitat through which wildlife populations can disperse while also creating block habitats (e.g. 4-9 square mile grassland/wetland complexes and Type 1 Grassland Bird Conservation Areas as defined by the USFWS office in Fergus Falls) within these corridors to maximize recruitment of game and nongame wildlife species. As scientific research continues to improve our understanding of the habitat needs of wildlife species we will continue to adjust our strategy as necessary. The Green Corridor Legacy Program will continue to use the scientific framework and analysis as the model for our Program development.

24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

Green Corridor Inc. received a LCCMR grant in FY2008 to develop a Conservation Plan to use as a tool for evaluating Program priorities. This plan will be completed by June 2010. It is our intention to use this plan when appropriate for future project evaluations. Until this plan is finalized we will continue to use the following scoring/priority methods in cooperation with area DNR managers:

Wildlife/Fisheries Related Recreation

1. Does the property offer at least fair opportunity for:

Deer hunting	5 points
Wild Turkey hunting	5 points
Pheasant hunting	5 points
Waterfowl hunting	5 points
Trapping and/or small game hunting	5 points
Shore Fishing	5 points

2. Does the property offer viewing opportunities for:

Raptors (e.g. bald eagles)	2 points
Wetland birds	2 points
Grassland Birds	2 points
Forest Birds	2 points

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Water Resource Protection

1. Does the property contain frontage on the Minnesota River? 10 points
2. Does the property have frontage on a tributary of the MN River? 10 points
3. Does the property contain wetlands/shallow lakes? 10 points
4. Does the property contain springs or seeps? 5 points

Biological Diversity Protection

1. Does the property contain or offer habitat to Federal or State listed species of conservation concern (e.g. endangered, threatened, special concern)? 15 points
2. Does the property contain habitat listed by the Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS)? 15 points
3. Does the property contain natural habitat not listed by MCBS? 5 points
4. Does the property buffer other protected conservation land (e.g. RIM, WMA) 5 points
5. Does the property have good potential for restoration/enhancement of wetland, prairie, riparian forest, or oak savanna? 5 points

Major or Primary Considerations

1. Urgency and one time opportunities if not acted upon: 15 points
2. Conforms to strategies/outcomes in various conservation plans: 15 points

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans:

The Green Corridor Legacy Program in consultation with area DNR managers will ensure program activities conform to the various state conservation and resources plan objectives and outcomes.

Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan identifies habitat loss and degradation as the number one driver of change for wildlife in Minnesota and further states that the prairie regions have experienced the greatest amount of habitat loss of any region.

Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for species in greatest conservation need has identified significant loss and degradation of habitat as the number one management challenge and one of the primary strategies is to provide protection through selective acquisition of key habitats in the prairie regions.

Minnesota's Long Range Duck Recovery Plan lists the objective of restoring a breeding population of one (1) million ducks by 2056. The primary strategy to reach this objective is the protection and restoration of two (2) million acres of habitat of which 70% will be grassland habitat in the prairie eco-region.

Minnesota's Long Range Plan for the Ring-neck Pheasant lists the objective of increasing pheasant populations to 1.8 million birds. To accomplish this objective the plan calls for an additional 21,000 acres of grasslands to be protected through acquisitions of WMA's.

Citizens report Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition – The Next 50 Years recommends acquisition goals of an additional 494,000 in the prairie and transitional region over the next 50 years.

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	\$48,750	\$16,250	
Contracts	\$39,342	\$40,815	
U of M Field Staff			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	\$8,889	\$6,789	
Native Seed Propagation by the U of M.			
Fee Acquisition	\$3,793,500	\$0	
Easement Acquisition	N/A		
Easement Stewardship	N/A		
Professional Services – Fiscal Agent Oversight	\$15,000	\$5,000	
DNR Services –Title Transfer Documentation	\$9,000	\$0	
Travel	\$1,650	\$850	
Additional Budget Items			
Habitat Restoration on New WMA/AMA	\$0	\$162,000	
Initial WMA/AMA Development Costs to the DNR (signs, parking, misc)	\$0	\$18,000	
TOTAL	\$3,916,131	\$249,704	

Budget Summary: The Personal section is for Program Manager expenses directly related to the accomplishments of this Program appropriation. Contract and Equipment section is the U of M budget items for Accomplishment #2 - the regional native prairie seed propagation project. The Professional Services is for the Executive Director and Fiscal Agent expenses – staff,

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Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program

insurance, auditing services, and legal support – to facilitate this entire appropriation and DNR Professional Services directly related to the fee title acquisitions for title review, transfer, and preparation of closing documents. Travel Budget is associated to Program Manager activities to carry out accomplishments. The Additional Budget Item is for the restoration (preferably by private contractors approved by the DNR) of the new acres being acquired with this appropriation and initial WMA/AMA development costs (e.g signage, parking lot, and fencing) to the DNR.

E. Personnel Details

Title	Name	Amount.
Program Manager	Bradley H. Cobb	\$65,000
RACF Exec. Director	Patricia Dingels	\$20,000
U of M Research/Oversight Fellow		\$33,476
U of M Senior Plot Tech		\$36,220
Summer Tech (Student)		\$10,443

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Renville Cty PF	\$10,000		
TOTAL	\$10,000		

Leverage Comments: The Green Corridor Legacy Program will continue to seek regional financial support of this program once appropriations have been recommended by the LSOHC. Several other local wildlife conservation groups have pending commitments for these Program activity/accomplishments.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		400 acres of marginal cropland to native prairie		
Protect		840 acres in fee title acquisitions		
Enhance		200-300 acres planted w/regional propagated prairie seeds starting 2013		

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		400 acres		
Protect		840 acres		
Enhance		200-300 acres		

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		\$162,000		
Protect		\$3,793,500		
Enhance		\$95,817		

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect		\$10,000		
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability		840 acres		
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table The Green Corridor Legacy Program recognizes that there are variables not under our control that may delay or impact Milestone Accomplishments such as; acquisition (sellers, processes, title issues, etc) and restoration (e.g. weather and timing of acquisitions) projects.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Accomplishment #1 Acquisition/Restoration		
Complete final landowner/DNR documentations	July 2010	6 projects – 840 acres
Contract appraisals ordered	August 2010	6 projects – 840 acres
Purchase Agreements	Nov. 2010	6 projects – 840 acres
Closing/Title Transfer to State/DNR	Mar/Apr 2011	6 projects – 840 acres
Complete restoration (contract and/or DNR)	June 2012	5 projects – 400 acres

Milestone	Date	Measure
Accomplishment #2 Local Native Prairie Seed Propagation		
Collection of regional native seeds 24 varieties/types	Summer/Fall 2010	14 oz.
Propagate/grown in U of M greenhouse	Nov. 2010	20,250 pods
Transplant pods -Mono cultural planting	Spring 2011	20,250 pods
Harvest established transplanted seeds	On-going 2012	3,885 oz
Restoration/enhancement projects using seeds on public lands	On-going 2013	200-300 acres

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

Current Fiscal Year Budget: \$2,617,000

Source of Funding	Amount	Percentage to Budget
LCCMR FY2008-2010	\$1,000,000	38%
LSOHC FY2010	\$1,617,000	62%

Un-spent/un-programmed State Dollars

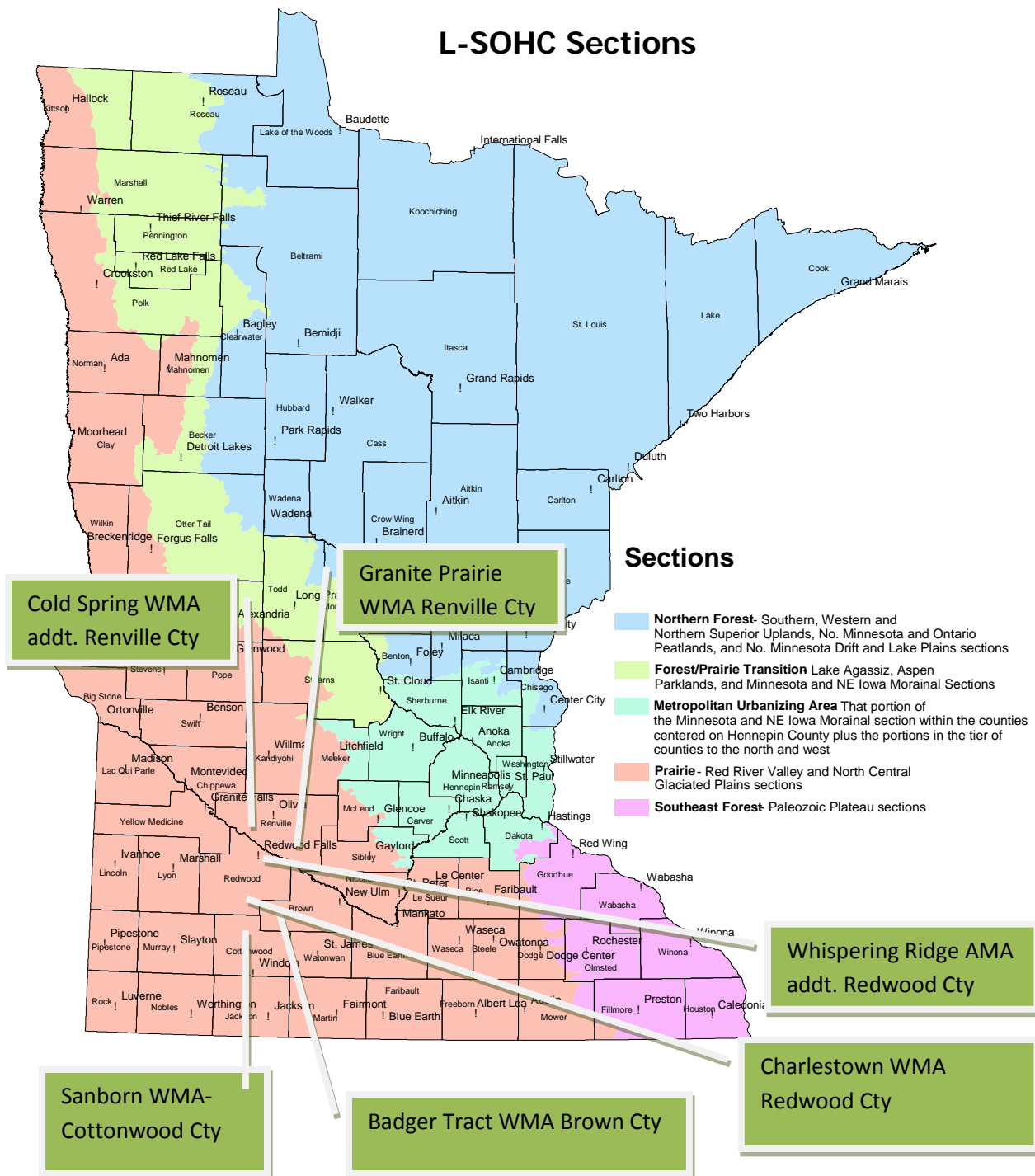
LCCMR FY2008-2010	\$190,000 (approx.)
LSOHC FY2010	\$1,617,000 (final accomplishment June 2011)

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained? First, initial site restoration and development (signage, parking lots, fencing) will be accomplished by this appropriation. The DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife will then permanently manage these properties. As mentioned in Section B #7 routine maintenance will be managed by area DNR staff funded by their traditional sources like the Game & Fish Fund. Periodic enhancements or improvements will be funded by special funding requests. The DNR requires management plans for each project which identify periodic inspections and continuing management of the property site. These management practices include such things as; prescribed fire, weed control, and invasive tree removal. Regional partners will also support these management activities/practices by applying for state funding/grants for maintenance as needed.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

<u>Proposed Project Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Granite Prairie WMA	Renville	180
Badger Tract WMA	Brown	220
Whispering Ridge AMA addt.	Redwood	40
Cold Spring WMA addt.	Renville	80
Sanborn WMA	Cottonwood	160
Charlestown WMA	Redwood	160

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2010**

Program or Project Title: Accelerating the Waterfowl Production Area Program in Minnesota: Protecting Our Investment.

Date: 10/29/2009

Manager's Name: Jim Leach, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Title: Refuge Supervisor
Mailing Address: One Federal Drive, Ft. Snelling, MN 55118
Telephone: 612-713-5406
Fax: 612-713-5286
E-Mail: jim_leach@fws.gov
Web Site: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/>

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$6,865,000	0	0	0

A. Summary: Pheasants Forever (PF) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) will cooperate to permanently restore and protect approximately 1,000 acres of grassland and 400 acres of wetland as Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs) in western and southern Minnesota. All lands acquired through this grant proposal will be owned and managed by the Service as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

B. Background Information: WPAs are acquired with funds derived from the sale of Federal Duck Stamps and managed for wildlife and conservation benefits as part of the National Wildlife System. Land acquisition and restoration have not kept pace with habitat restoration needs or the backlog of willing sellers.

If funded, this proposal will accelerate the protection and restoration of Minnesota's valuable wetland and grassland habitats. Upon notification of project approval PF will review tracts identified and prioritized through the Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model and complete landowner contacts, appraisals, and purchase agreements. At closing, all tracts will be deeded to the Service as WPAs. Wetlands will be restored, cropped uplands and seeded pastures will be planted to native prairie seed mixes, and existing habitats will be managed with prescribed fire and other management tools to increase diversity and reduce non-native and invasive species.

USFWS: Accelerating the WPA Program in MN

Approximately 1,000 acres of grassland and 400 acres of wetland will be restored, permanently protected and actively managed for wildlife and wildlife habitat. Acquisition will occur within 18 months of project approval and habitat restorations will normally be completed within two years of title transfer depending somewhat on the complexity of required restorations and the condition of the seedbed.

Acquired lands will be managed as WPAs and open for public recreational uses including hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education, and interpretation in accordance with the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act. This project will become part of the Waterfowl Production Area program that has successfully protected similar habitats in Minnesota for over 50 years.

What is the problem or opportunity being addressed? Tremendous economic, agricultural, recreational, and developmental pressures including gravel mining, widely fluctuating commodity prices, withdrawal of CRP contracts, wind energy, ethanol and bio-mass production are squeezing Minnesota's habitat resources and the plants and animals that depend on them.

What action will be taken? Approximately 1,000 acres of grassland and 400 acres of wetland will be acquired, restored, permanently protected and made available for appropriate public recreational uses including hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education, and interpretation.

Who will take action and when? PF and the Service will work together to acquire these lands within 18 months after funding is made available.

How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding? We are not aware of any other Constitutional Funding received by PF or the Service that is related to the acquisitions or restorations described in this request.

What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist. If funded, this proposal will add approximately 1,400 acres of publically accessible wildlife lands that will be specifically managed for waterfowl production and other natural resource protection and conservation purposes. Croplands will be seeded to native seed mixes and drained wetlands will be restored. Unbroken uplands tracts will be managed (primarily through prescribed burns) to increase diversity and reduce non-native invasive species.

When do you expect to see these habitat changes? The majority of habitat restoration actions will be completed by the Service and its partners no later than two years after title transfer.

Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

_____ YES

 X NO

If not, how will you finance completion? LSOHC grant money will be directly utilized for the purchase of land and the restoration of wetlands and grasslands. Additional funds originating from the sale of Federal Duck Stamps, Service budgets, local sportsman's clubs, PF and concerned individuals will also be used to achieve the goals outlined in this proposal.

How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments? Funds originating from annual Service budgets will finance 100% of all future expenses needed to additionally restore, maintain, manage, and make Refuge Revenue sharing payments for these lands.

How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife? Approximately 1,000 acres of grassland and 400 acres of wetland will be acquired, restored, permanently protected and actively managed for wildlife and wildlife habitat.

If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

 X YES

 NO

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection. All lands acquired with LSOHC funding will be managed and permanently protected as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars. Informational requests made by the Lessard-Sams OHC will be dealt with immediately. All actions accomplished by the partnership associated with this grant are open for public review.

Why will this strategy work? The loss of grassland and wetland habitats in Minnesota is well documented. One of the primary ways to reverse this downward trend is to permanently acquire, then restore wetland and grassland habitats on those properties. The Service and our partners have been utilizing this strategy for over 50-years with the Small Wetlands Acquisition Program (SWAP). Utilizing the landscape level planning tools produced by our Habitat and Population Evaluation Team (HAPET) office in Fergus Falls, MN, the Service and our partners have strategically identified properties for acquisition. These strategies are well tested and are supported by the greater conservation community here in Minnesota.

Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program? All lands acquired with grant funds will be purchased from willing sellers. Local conservation organizations will assist in the restoration of wetland and grassland habitat on these properties. Once acquired, the Service will make a one-time Trust Fund payment to the County where the property is located. In addition, the Service will make annual Refuge Revenue Sharing payments for all fee lands within the respective Counties.

If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

_____ YES

 X NO

Because of the uncertainties inherent in funding and willing seller decisions, none of the potential purchases described in this application have been formally brought to the attention of local government officials. County Boards will however, be notified of all pending acquisitions prior to closing.

If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

_____ YES

 X NO

Occasionally properties identified as priorities for acquisition contain easements within fee acquisition delineation boundaries. In these cases LSOHC dollars will be used per guidance provided by the LSOHC and the contract agreement.

If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

_____ YES _____ NO X NA

If Yes what kind of use?

Easement acquisition is not part of this grant request.

If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

_____ YES _____ NO X NA

Easement acquisition is not part of this grant request.

If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

_____ Years

Lands that are part of the National Wildlife Refuge System will be managed primarily for the benefit of wildlife in perpetuity.

USFWS: Accelerating the WPA Program in MN

- 1. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.**

☐ Northern Forest

☒ Forest/Prairie Transition

☐ Southeast Forest

☒ Prairie

☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

- 2. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?**

☒ YES

☐ NO

If yes, please explain.

The Service currently has a backlog of private landowners interested in selling their land to the federal government for wildlife purposes. Our current land acquisition budget cannot keep up with this demand. As such, there is an urgency to make offers to these willing landowners.

- 3. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?**

☐ YES

☒ NO

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

- 4. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?**

☒ YES

☐ NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

The lands to be acquired and restored through this grant request were delineated and prioritized by the PF and the Service utilizing the Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model and other tools described below.

5. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

The essence of the Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation is that you: 1) accomplish landscape level planning based on quantifiable objectives, 2) implement planned actions, then, 3) evaluate your actions to see if they are addressing your objectives. This is what our HAPET office in Fergus Falls does for the Service and our partners in the prairies of Minnesota. The Service's HAPET office does landscape level planning to meet specific wildlife objectives and conducts evaluation activities (i.e. 4sq.mi. surveys), to see if we/partners activities are meeting our objectives. The planned actions to be implemented through this grant application are the acquisition and restoration of converted wetland and grassland habitats. Based on HAPET evaluation strategies, modeling predictions can be made on the numbers of nesting waterfowl, grassland nesting birds, and pheasants the acres affected by this grant application will produce. Besides the obvious wildlife benefits, once restored, the lands acquired through this grant will provide additional water quality, groundwater recharge, and flood abatement benefits.

6. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

Using landscape level planning tools produced by the Service's HAPET office in Fergus Falls, geographic areas of the state are prioritized base on the presence/absence of existing/restorable wetland and grassland habitat. Once geographic areas are identified, land managers within those areas evaluate what habitats (and where), are needed to enhance specific wildlife populations. A suite of habitat restoration/land acquisition (i.e. private lands habitat restoration, easements, fee acquisition, other government private lands programs), tools are evaluated to identify what specifically is needed in a geographic area. If fee title land acquisition is needed, tracts offered by willing sellers are evaluated and ranked based on their ability to provide the resources needed in specific geographic areas. Many properties are eliminated at this time and others are forwarded for fee acquisition

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans:

The Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan, the U.S. Prairie Pothole Joint Venture Implementation Plan, MN State Waterfowl and Pheasant Plans, the Partners In Flight-Grassland Bird Plans, the US Shorebird Conservation Plan for the Northern Plains/Prairie Potholes Region, the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan and many other plans, papers, and studies have directly and indirectly noted that the current pace of conservation actions is not likely to reverse previous wetland and grassland losses in Minnesota or the Prairie Pothole Region of North America. Many authors and organizations have recommended that accelerating protection and restoring lost and degraded habitats are essential strategies in reversing the distressing decline in watershed protection, conservation habitats and wildlife populations.

USFWS: Accelerating the WPA Program in MN

This proposal will protect and restore over 1,400 acres on tracts adjacent to or in close proximity to other previously purchased and restored State and Federal wildlife management areas.

Accomplishments specifically addressing habitat recommendation in the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* include:

1. *Protect priority land habitats.* This proposal contains priority grassland and wetland habitats important to waterfowl, grassland, and wetland birds as well as the myriad species that call grasslands and wetlands home.
2. *Protect critical shorelines of rivers and lakes.* Several of the potential acquisitions will protect and enhance the shorelines and associated uplands of shallow lakes and wetlands.
3. *Improve connectivity and access to outdoor recreation.* All tracts acquired will be restored to productive wildlife habitat and will be open for hunting and other compatible conservation oriented activities.
4. *Restore and protect shallow lakes.* Dependent on the decisions of current property owners (land will only be purchased from willing sellers) several tracts offer the potential to acquire key in-holdings or locations adjacent to other wildlife areas that will finally permit long delayed large scale restoration projects.
5. *Keep water on the landscape.* By protecting and restoring wetlands and grasslands this proposal will return water to the landscape via permanent wetland restorations and help keep water on the landscape through permanent vegetation restoration.

USFWS: Accelerating the WPA Program in MN

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 10	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12
Personnel		\$65,000	
Contracts		\$400,	
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition		\$5,200,000	
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
Restoration : Upland		\$1,000,000	
Restoration: Wetland		\$ 200,000	
TOTAL		\$6,865,000	

for appraisals and land surveys

E. Personnel Details:

Title	Name	Amount.
PF Sr. Field Coordinator		\$20,000
PF Regional Staff (2)		\$30,000
PF Director of Public Finance		\$15,000

USFWS: Accelerating the WPA Program in MN

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Federal Duck Stamp Funds (USFWS)	\$5,000,000		
Pheasants Forever	\$150,	\$50,	
USFWS	\$100,	\$100,	
USFWS			\$400,
Sub-totals	\$5,250,00	\$150,000	\$400,000
TOTAL All Years	\$5,800,000		

contribution for grassland restoration and land acquisition. The source of these funds may include PF chapter funds, other non-state partner funds, documented donations of land value, leveraged federal funds (e.g. North American Wetland Conservation Act funding), and any other sources of non-state funding that become available to achieve the habitat outcomes outlined in this proposal.

in-kind contribution of Realty staff support to acquire new WPAs.

in-kind contribution of funds and staff to post, provide public parking, manage, and improve habitat on newly acquired WPAs.

G. Outcomes:

- 1) In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.
- 2) In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.
- 3) In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.
- 4) In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and
- 5) If you have any outcomes listed in the "protect" row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5

USFWS: Accelerating the WPA Program in MN

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Total Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>400 Acres</i>	<i>1,000 Acres</i>		<i>1,400 Acres</i>
Protect	<i>400 Acres</i>	<i>1,000 Acres</i>		<i>1,400 Acres</i>
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Fore sts	Total Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>300 Prairie Acres</i>	<i>800 Prairie Acres</i>		<i>1,100 Acres</i>
Protect	<i>300 Prairie Acres</i>	<i>800 Prairie Acres</i>		<i>1,100 Acres</i>
Enhance				
Restore	<i>80 F/P Transition Acres</i>	<i>160 F/P Transition Acres</i>		<i>240 Acres</i>
Protect	<i>80 F/P Transition Acres</i>	<i>160 F/P Transition Acres</i>		<i>240 Acres</i>
Enhance				
Restore	<i>20 Metro Urban. Area Acres</i>	<i>40 Metro Urban. Area Acres</i>		<i>60 Acres</i>
Protect	<i>20 Metro Urban. Area Acres</i>	<i>40 Metro Urban. Area Acres</i>		<i>60 Acres</i>
TOTAL	<i>400 ACRES</i>	<i>1,000 ACRES</i>		<i>1,400 Acres</i>

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$220,000</i>	<i>\$1,045,000</i>		
Purchase/Protect	<i>\$1,600,000</i>	<i>\$4,000,000</i>		
Enhance				
TOTAL	<i>\$1,820,000</i>	<i>\$5,045,000</i>		

USFWS: Accelerating the WPA Program in MN

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$100,000</i>	<i>\$700,000</i>		
Protect	<i>\$1,500,000</i>	<i>\$3,500,000</i>		
Enhance				
TOTAL	<i>\$1,600,000</i>	<i>\$4,200,000</i>		

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Total Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
	<i>400 Acres</i>	<i>1,000 Acres</i>		<i>1,400 Acres</i>
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table. Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Completion Date	Measure
Identify priority acquisitions.	10/01/2009.	25 willing sellers identified & tracts ranked.
Contract appraisals ordered.	10/01/2010.	15 appraisals ordered
Purchase agreements.	02/01/2011.	10 options signed
Re-evaluate tract priority.	02/15/2011	10 tracts selected & ranked
Contract appraisals ordered.	03/01/2011.	5 appraisals ordered
Purchase agreements.	06/01/2011.	3 options signed
Restoration actions initiated.	06/01/2011.	Restored wetlands and uplands
Close on optioned tracts.	09/01/2011	1,400 purchased
Wetland restorations completed.	09/01/2012	400 acres restored
Upland restorations completed.	09/01/2013	1,000 acres restored

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget:

Outdoor Heritage Funds will be used to augment the limited land acquisition funds received by the Service.

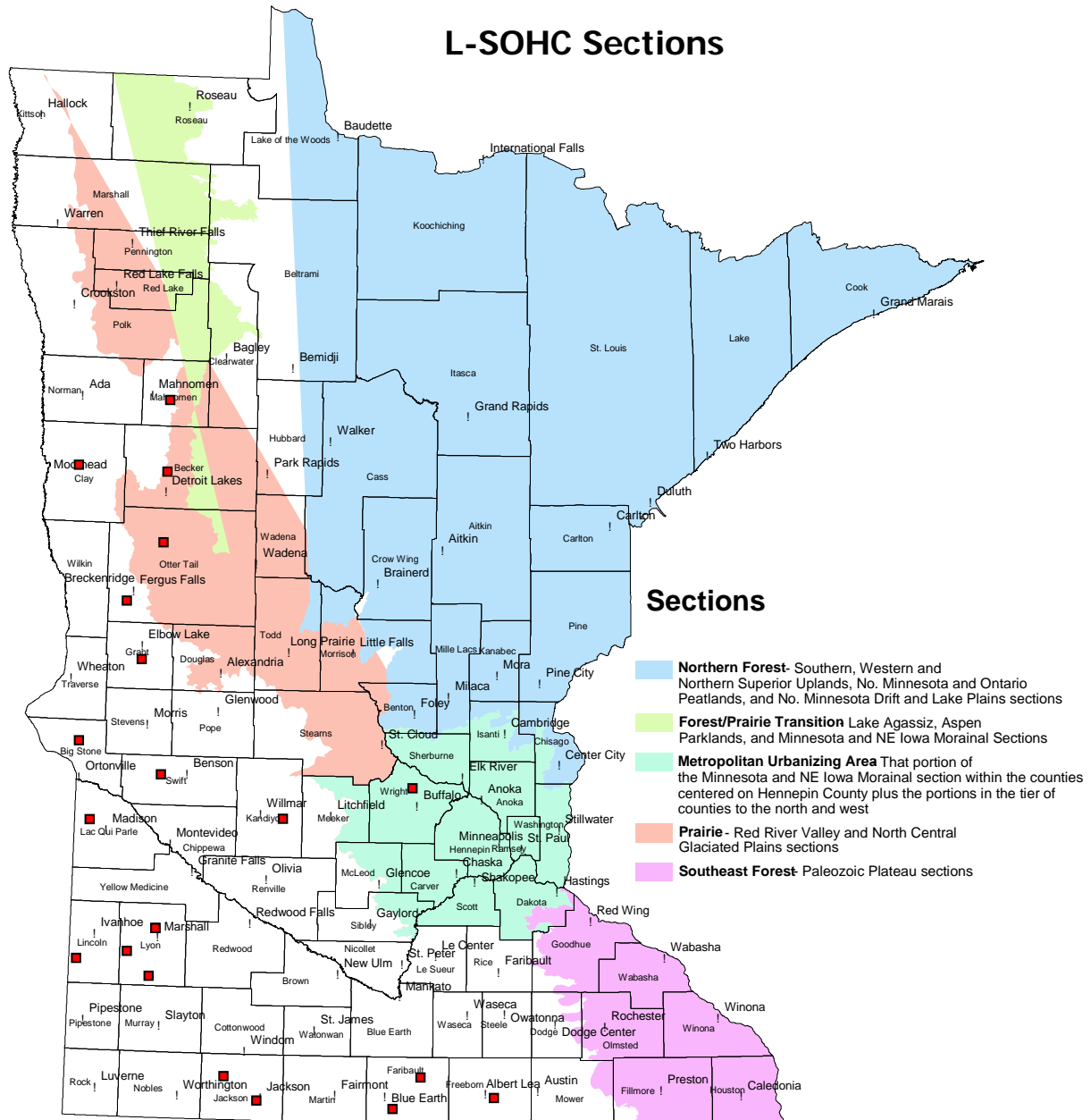
J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

All grant monies received for this project will result in fee title transfers of additional land into the National Wildlife Refuge System. The long-term protection and management of these habitats will be the responsibility of the Service, an agency that employs professional managers, biologists, field staffs, and enforcement officers and has an annual operating budget designated specifically for the management of Refuge resources. Wetlands and their contributing watersheds will be protected and prairie habitats monitored and managed. The Service has an active, professional prescribed burning program and utilizes fire to reduce woody invasion of prairies, enhance diversity, and rejuvenate uplands. Biological, mechanical, and sometimes chemical treatments are used as needed in an integrated management approach to provide high quality migration and breeding habitats. Acquisitions in the project will be targeted to complete the restoration of large wetland complexes surrounded by native or planted tall grass prairie uplands.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map* of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

The majority of the privately owned lands identified below as targeted for acquisition are marginally or poorly productive row cropped uplands interspersed with partially drained wetlands. These tracts were selected because they offer excellent potential for upland and wetland restoration or connect or augment existing State or Federal fee areas. A few tracts represent unbroken, undrained areas or represent key locations that will allow restoration of large or complex restorations.

**Please note that software errors have distorted the delineation and shading of L-SOHC Sections on the map below.*



Locations of priority acquisition areas. Because all properties are being purchased from willing sellers, some variation from these delineated targets will occur.

Program Title: Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program Title: Lake Redwood Reclamation and Rehabilitation Project

Date: October 26, 2009

Requesting Organization: Redwood Cottonwood Rivers Control Area and the City of Redwood Falls

Manager's Name: Douglas Goodrich

Title: Executive Director

Mailing Address: 1241 E. Bridge St., Redwood Falls MN 56283

Telephone: 507-637-2142 xt 124.

Fax: 507- 637- 2134

E-Mail: douglas.goodrich@RACgroup.net

Web Site: www.rcrca.com

Fiscal Manager: City of Redwood Falls

Contact: James Doering

Title: Public Works Project Coordinator

Mailing Address: PO Box 526, Redwood Falls MN 56283

Telephone: 507- 637- 5755

Fax: 507- 637- 2417

E-Mail: Jdoering@ci.redwood-falls.mn.us

Web Site: www.ci.redwood-falls.mn.us

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$4,612.50			

A. Summary The Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project will restore one of the two lakes in Redwood County (both man made) that will result in these two objectives;

1) The Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project will be to restore and enhance the lake by removing up to 655,000 cubic yards of sediment which will be land applied in an approved and preselected dewatering basin. It will take the current depth of the lake from an average of 2.8 feet to the 20' constructed depth in 1902.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project

2) The Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project will reverse 107 years of sediment deposition and reverse the 1979 DNR Ecological Services report that “Much of the lake basin has filled in with silt and the Reservoir has degraded and is no longer capable of sustaining a diverse gamefish community.” - Since that report the DNR Fisheries has ceased stocking fish in the lake.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed? The Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area (RCRCA), a multi-county joint powers organization in conjunction with the City of Redwood Falls, proposes to reclaim Lake Redwood by dredging accumulated sediments. Lake Redwood is a man-made impoundment located at the downstream end of 629-square mile drainage area with predominantly agriculture land uses. Lake Redwood was originally formed in 1902 when the Redwood River was impounded by A.C. Burmiester who was quoted in the May 9, 1900 edition of the Redwood Gazette: *“The idea is to dam the river at a point 100 feet south of the bridge... It is to be built high enough to flood all of the land that is to be purchased, and hence will form a beautiful lake, which is to be stocked with fish, and which can be used for boating, bathing and other purposes...”* The current dam, which is over thirty feet high, was refurbished after the flood of record in 1957. Abundant recreational opportunities were provided by this reservoir and local citizens actively used the lake. The dam also provides a source of electricity to the city of Redwood Falls. The current hydropower facility has a capacity of 0.6 megawatts which is used to provide summertime peak demand reduction. Currently the City of Redwood Falls has obtained preliminary cost estimates to upgrade the hydroelectric turbines to increase the green energy the dam provides with estimates coming in at \$1.5 million.

RCRCA was established in 1983 to reduce the amount of sediment from reaching Lake Redwood by implementing conservation practices up stream. RCRCA is made up of an eight county joint powers organization that includes the County Boards and County Soil and Water Conservation Districts. At the time, Lake Redwood's sedimentation rate was about 1.5 feet a year being deposited and not conducive or cost effective for dredging. Since that time numerous conservation projects have been implemented and those projects have reduced the sedimentation rate to .13 feet per year. With conservation practices actively being adopted in the watershed this can go even lower resulting in a project with well over a 70 year life expectancy. Recent sediment coring data presented by the MN Geological Survey have shown results that more than 70 percent of the current loading is coming from in stream streambank erosion caused by increased hydraulic loading. Increased wetland restoration efforts that are underway with BWSR, SWCDs and funding from the L-SOHC will further reduce the excessive hydraulic loading and subsequently reduce the effects of stream bank and bed-load erosion further extending the life of this project.

The MNDNR conducted a resurvey on the Redwood Reservoir in 2006 to monitor the physical, chemical and biological characteristics of the basin. The deepest water found

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project

was 7.3 feet, but most of the reservoir was 4.5 feet or less with a 2.8 foot average. Several shallow areas made boating difficult during the early August time period. The reservoir's watershed was dominated by row crop agriculture and the most abundant shallow water substrate was silt. Submergent vegetation was extremely rare and the water was highly turbid. The Redwood reservoir has suffered from partial winterkills in the past but none have been documented in recent years.

A variety of species were available to anglers fishing the Redwood Reservoir in 2006. High numbers of channel catfish were trap netted. Channel catfish were 7.3-23.5 inches long averaging 13.8 inches. The 2006 catch rate for channel catfish was 14 times greater than any previous catch rate. Low numbers of northern pike, walleye, and black crappie were trap netted in 2006. Pike were 21.9-25.0 inches long averaging 23.4 inches. Walleye were large, ranging in length from 23.3-24.3 inches. Black crappie were also keeper sized, ranging in length from 8.2-11.5 inches. Carp, golden red horse, silver red horse, bigmouth buffalo and white sucker should also provide plenty of action for reservoir anglers.

Along with restoring the fishery in Lake Redwood, this project has an additional water quality benefit. It is a proven fact that the residence time of the lake brings the fecal coliform level downstream under the 200 colony forming units per 100 ml threshold. This project by reclaiming the reservoir capacity will increase residence time and add further UV and deposition treatment prior to discharging to the Minnesota River. Currently, a Turbidity TMDL is underway for the Redwood River. Again, the Lake will have a 70 year plus life expectancy. By removing 650,000 cubic yards of sediment, the reservoir will eventually trap that volume again and keep the stored sediment from degrading the MN River basin and complement the efforts in Lake Pepin. The sediment delivery to the lake has gone from 1.5 feet per year to .13 feet reflecting the enormous amount of conservation projects that have gone in upstream. With added attention to non-point runoff and streambank stabilization as reflected in the sediment coring data by Carrie Jennings of the MN Geological Survey, we will be able to extend the life well beyond 70 years.

The current status of the project is pending securing additional project dollars. The project has 1.4 million in Bonding that expires on December 31, 2010 with the ability of an extension if other funding sources are committed. This project has been designed, completed an EAW and currently has all of the permits required to start this fall. The project went out for bids and they came in at 5.2 million. The project could commence as early as October of 2010 for sediment basin construction with the actual hydraulic dredging to begin spring of 2011.

The primary work area of the Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project will be in the Redwood Falls City Limits and the dewatering pond will be in Delhi Township of Redwood County.

This Project is directly consistent with the uses of the Outdoor Heritage Fund, as specified in Article XI of the Minnesota Constitution and Minnesota Statute 97A.056: to

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Program Title: Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project

restore, protect, and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife. Furthermore, it will produce multiple conservation benefits across a large targeted and planned geographic area.

2. What action will be taken? The Lake Redwood Reclamation Project is engineered and is construction ready. A full EAW has been performed and all of the permits necessary for construction have been obtained. With an L-SOHC funding award, it will be used in conjunction with the remaining \$1.4 million in Bonding dollars (\$200,000.00 was used to complete the EAW and provide engineering and design) to go out and rebid the project. Also, a concurrent effort will be made with Senator Frederickson to obtain an extension for the bonding dollars that sunset December 31, 2010 and governed by the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority (PFA). A lease agreement for the dewatering pond has been developed and the current Landowner is in support of this project. A fee title acquisition may be negotiated to leave the dewatering basin intact for future maintenance dredging determined by a scheduled 35 year maintenance inspection.

3. Who will take action and when? Immediately for the Legislative Session starting February 4, 2010, RCRCA - the project manager and City of Redwood Falls will work to extend the bonding dollars with Sen. Fredrickson's office. RCRCA- Project manager, will then immediately rebid the project assisted by Houston Engineering and re-engage the permitting agencies-July 1, 2010. The Lease Agreement and or fee title acquisition will be completed by Sept. 1, 2010. RCRCA/City of Redwood Falls will issue the notice to proceed for the sediment dewatering pond construction can be executed and construction can start-October 1, 2010-FY 2011. RCRCA/City of Redwood Falls will issue the notice to proceed for the lake reclamation to begin at ice out in April 2011 and last through the summer. Approximately 65 working days will be needed at minimum depending on the size of the dredge.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

Currently, this is the only Constitutional funding source being sought. The Lake Redwood Reclamation Project does have a strong "Green" and "Water Quality" components that may make it eligible for multi-source funding. Cooperative funding would be welcomed and the project goals and objectives would not change.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

The specific habitat changes from the reclamation of Lake Redwood will be increasing the depth of the lake from a 2.8 foot average to a maximum depth of 20 feet. By DNR permit, sediment cannot be removed within 25 feet of the shore to maintain any existing submergent and emergent vegetation and also provide shallow structure where this vegetation may colonize. The sediment removal will follow the contiguous bottom contours providing additional topographical structure. By increasing the depth of the reservoir it will eliminate fish winter kills, increasing species diversity.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

6. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**
If not, how will you finance completion?

7. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

The continued use of established conservation programs above Lake Redwood will help to maintain the accomplishments well beyond the 70 year life expectancy of the lake. This is a conservative life expectancy. With current siltation rate of .13 feet per year, it would take 140 years to reach the level we are today. It is anticipated the current rate of adoption of conservation initiatives in the watershed above the lake which will push the action stage of 50% siltation further into the future. Periodic depth contours with sonar will be made to determine when action will be needed. Installed conservation practices in the watershed above the lake continue to be most cost effective approach for maintaining the project. These practices are: stream bank restoration, wetland restoration, buffer/filter strip initiatives and marginal working land retirement. These are currently the goals and focus of conservation programs RCRC and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts are implementing with conservation cost share programs which have proven effectiveness by reducing the sedimentation rate from 1.5 feet per year to the current .13 feet per year.

8. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

This action will restore the 65 acre reservoir back to its original depth contours which will enhance fish habitat, survivability and diversity. The current approved design does have variable depths built in to the dredging plan to provide diverse habitat for fish. As indicated in the background information the reservoir has degraded to a point where it can no longer support diverse gamefish populations. But with the recent 2006 population study, the lake still has the potential to provide a remarkable fishery once restored. The 2006 study shows good channel catfish populations and remarkably a good size structure of walleye and crappie. This project will undoubtedly increase those numbers and add statistically significant populations of other species.

9. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**
If yes briefly describe the kind of protection. Lake Redwood is under ownership of the City of Redwood Falls and has a DNR Lake designation.

10. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

Transparency, shared information, and uses of OHF dollars will be accomplished by following the engineering plans and specs already developed for the project and established LSOHC Guidelines and reporting requirements. Press releases and web-based products will be used to provide public and/or stakeholder notification of project goals, objectives, and, accomplishments. RCRC and the City of Redwood Falls will

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Program Title: Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project

continue to engage our partners, local units of governments, government agencies, and regional state and federal Legislators of project developments and accomplishments.

11. When do you expect to see these habitat changes? June 30, 2012.

12. Why will this strategy work? RCRCA Joint Powers Organization formed by statute in 1983 undertook the goal of reducing the sedimentation rates to Lake Redwood in order to make this project feasible. The RCRCA Joint Powers organization consists of eight Counties and the associated eight Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Six of those Counties: Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood and Yellow Medicine have been actively engaged through the Joint Powers Organization in establishing targeted conservation practices in the Redwood River Watershed. Of course this has all been made possible by the tremendous support and adoption of these conservation practices by local landowners. These efforts will continue concurrently with the project and beyond to increase its sustainability. This project also has the benefit of being shovel ready with the engineering, EAW and permits have already been completed.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

The RCRCA Board of Directors, Redwood Falls City Council and Redwood County Board of Commissioners have consistently pledged their support of the project and hope to see it come to fruition. The State Legislature has pledged their support by dedicating bonding dollars to implement the project. The Green Corridor project recently held a forum of Redwood Area business men and women and asked, "What is the most important accomplishment they would like to see?" and the overwhelming response was to restore Lake Redwood. With that said, decision or policy makers in local, regional, or state government and/or government agencies could always have **positive or negative** effects on the project but with proper and timely engagement with these government agency decision or policy makers – the negative effects can be mitigated and the positive effects can be enhanced.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

_____ **YES**

_____ **X** _____ **NO**

No acquisition is needed to carry out the project. A lease agreement has been developed with the landowner for deposition of the dredge material that will have to be finalized according to funding timelines. Acquisition of the dewatering site is a possible outcome. Currently the landowner is in support and has stated his desire to continue with the lease agreement.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

Program Title: Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project

☒ **X** **YES**

☐ **NO**

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? N/A

☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever? N/A

☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

The dewatering site will remain active for six years after the reclamation has been completed to dry out the material, remove and grade out the retention berms to facilitate the continuance of row crop farming to harvest and remove nitrogen and phosphorus contained in the sediment.

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

☐ Northern Forest

☐ Forest/Prairie Transition

☐ Southeast Forest

☒ **X** **Prairie**

☐ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ **X** **YES**

☐ **NO**

If yes, please explain. Currently RCRCA was awarded \$1.6 million in bonding which sunsets December 31, 2010. An extension can be awarded during the next Legislative session if sufficient funding to complete the project is obtained. A funding award from L-SOHC would meet the requirement securing the awarded bond dollars.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

 YES **X** NO

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

 X YES **NO**

If yes explain the model briefly. The USFWS – SHC model outlines several key elements; Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation which RCRCA has built into the project. This project has been in the planning and development stages since 1983 and has all of the engineering completed along with public and local government support. As stated earlier, the project is shovel ready and has been in a holding pattern since bids were opened April of 2007 where high fuel costs pushed the bid price to \$5.2 million over the projected cost estimation of surrounding projects that were completed in 2002. RCRCA has held strategic planning sessions led by the University of Minnesota Extension where the Lake Redwood Reclamation Project was the highest priority set for the organization. RCRCA and the City of Redwood Falls will continue to engage the public and local/state government through the duration of this project and continues to do so annually.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

RCRCA has been monitoring the Redwood River through the MNPCA Clean Water Partnership Program since 1989. Of which, 20 years of water quality data has been collected and pollutant loading has been calculated using the US Army Corp. of Engineers FLUX modeling program. Lake sediment depth has been manually measured in 1991, 2002 and sediment coring with radioactive isotope dating has been performed in 2007 by the MN Geological Survey. All water quality data has been submitted and is stored on the EPA STORET database for public use and has been certified. The data has been used to calculate loading characteristics coming in and going out of Lake Redwood and is the foundation for trend analysis for all statistics that have been quoted. RCRCA and its SWCD JPO members have implemented as of 2007: 298 BMPs under 173 contracts that reduce soil loss by 25 tons per year resulting in 18 tons per year reduction in sedimentation and 20 thousand pounds per year of phosphorus. RCRCA partners have implemented 7,336.36 acres of CREP/RIM and NRCS have treated 4,132 acres in the Redwood River watershed resulting in 16.5 tons of sediment reduction annually and 23,000 pounds of phosphorus from annually reaching the Redwood River and subsequently Lake Redwood. These activities are what have lead to the reduction in sedimentation rates from 1.5 feet per year to the current .13 feet annually. On-going conservation efforts will undoubtedly reduce the rate even further. All modeling, sediment

Program Title: Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project

coring and conservation implementation results are available upon request in MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint formats. Engineering for the project is also available electronically.

24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

RCRCA has set the priority of reducing the sedimentation load to Lake Redwood to make this project feasible since 1983. This goal was the foundation that caused the forming of the Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area JPO by statute so the six Counties and Soil and Water Conservation Districts could work cohesively to prioritize and target projects in the Redwood River watershed that would accomplish the goal on a watershed basis and make this project feasible. Through numerous public meetings, annual presentations and strategic planning sessions this has remained the goal of RCRCA to make this project feasible and 26 years later the goal is a reality and is being presented to L-SOHC for funding consideration.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans: The Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project will ensure program activities conform to the various state conservation and resources plan objectives and outcomes:

Division of Fish and Wildlife Long Range Plan for Fisheries Management Covering Fiscal Years 2004-2010

Division of Fish and Wildlife Mission Statement for Fisheries Management:

To conserve and manage Minnesota's aquatic resources and associated fish communities for their intrinsic values and long-term ecological, economic, and recreational benefits to the people of Minnesota.

Broad Goals:

1. To make recreational fishing as good as it can be in the state of Minnesota for the present and future.
2. To conserve, maintain, enhance, or rehabilitate Minnesota's aquatic resources to serve environmental, social, and commercial purposes.
3. To foster an ethic of natural resource stewardship among all Minnesotans.

Continued watershed conservation implementation will also address the following plans:

Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan identifies habitat loss and degradation as the number one driver of change for wildlife in Minnesota and further states that the prairie regions have experienced the greatest amount of habitat loss of any region.

Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for species in greatest conservation need has identified significant loss and degradation of habitat as the number one management challenge and one of the primary strategies is to provide protection through selective acquisition of key habitats in the prairie regions.

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D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	\$40,000	\$40,000	
Contracts	\$4,500,000		
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	\$10,000.00 Dewatering Pond Discharge -water quality sampling		
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition	N/A		
Easement Stewardship	N/A		
Professional Services	\$20,000 City of Redwood/Fiscal Host		
Travel	\$2,500		
Additional Budget Items			
Restoration			
TOTAL	\$4,572,500	\$40,000	

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
RCRCA Exec. Director	Douglas Goodrich, RCRCA	\$40,000
RCRCA, Water Quality Tech.	Shawn Wohnoutka	\$40,000
City of Redwood Finance Director	Missi Meyers	\$20,000

Program Title: Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project

F. All Leverage. In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Remaining State Bonding Dollars-PFA to RCRCA	\$1,400,000.00		
TOTAL	\$1,400,000.00		

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*

Program Title: Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project

5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				Restore 65 acre Lake Redwood to its original contours of up-to 20 feet.
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				65 acres of Lake
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				\$4,612,500.00
Protect				
Enhance				

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Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>\$1,400,000.00 Left in Construction Bonding Dollars- \$200,000 used for Engineering</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Seek Bonding extension	Feb.2010	Extension Granted
Rebid the project.	July 1, 2010	40 Day bid award
Re-engage permitting agencies	July 1, 2010	Reset project time frame
Finalize Dewatering site lease agreement	Sept. 2010	Signed lease agreement
Issue notice to proceed to successful bidder	Sept. 2010	Issuance of notice
Construct Dewatering pond	Oct. 2010	In place for Ice out start
Mobilize hydraulic dredge and piping	Fall 2010/Spring 2011	– April start
Complete reclamation	Spring to Fall 2011	By Current Design
Discharge monitoring of dewatering pond	Spring to Fall 2011	Concurrent
Demobilize hydraulic dredge and piping/clean-up	Fall 2011	Equipment removed
Begin 6 year Dam inspections and site maintenance	Spring 2011 to July 2017	Required
Deconstruction of Dewatering Pond/site reclamation	July 1, 2017	Cover crop planted

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

City of Redwood Current Fiscal Year 2010 Budget: \$50,756,000

Source of Funding	Amount	Percentage to Budget
LSOHC FY2010	\$4,612,500	9%

Un-spent/un-programmed State Dollars

None

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained? See item 7.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

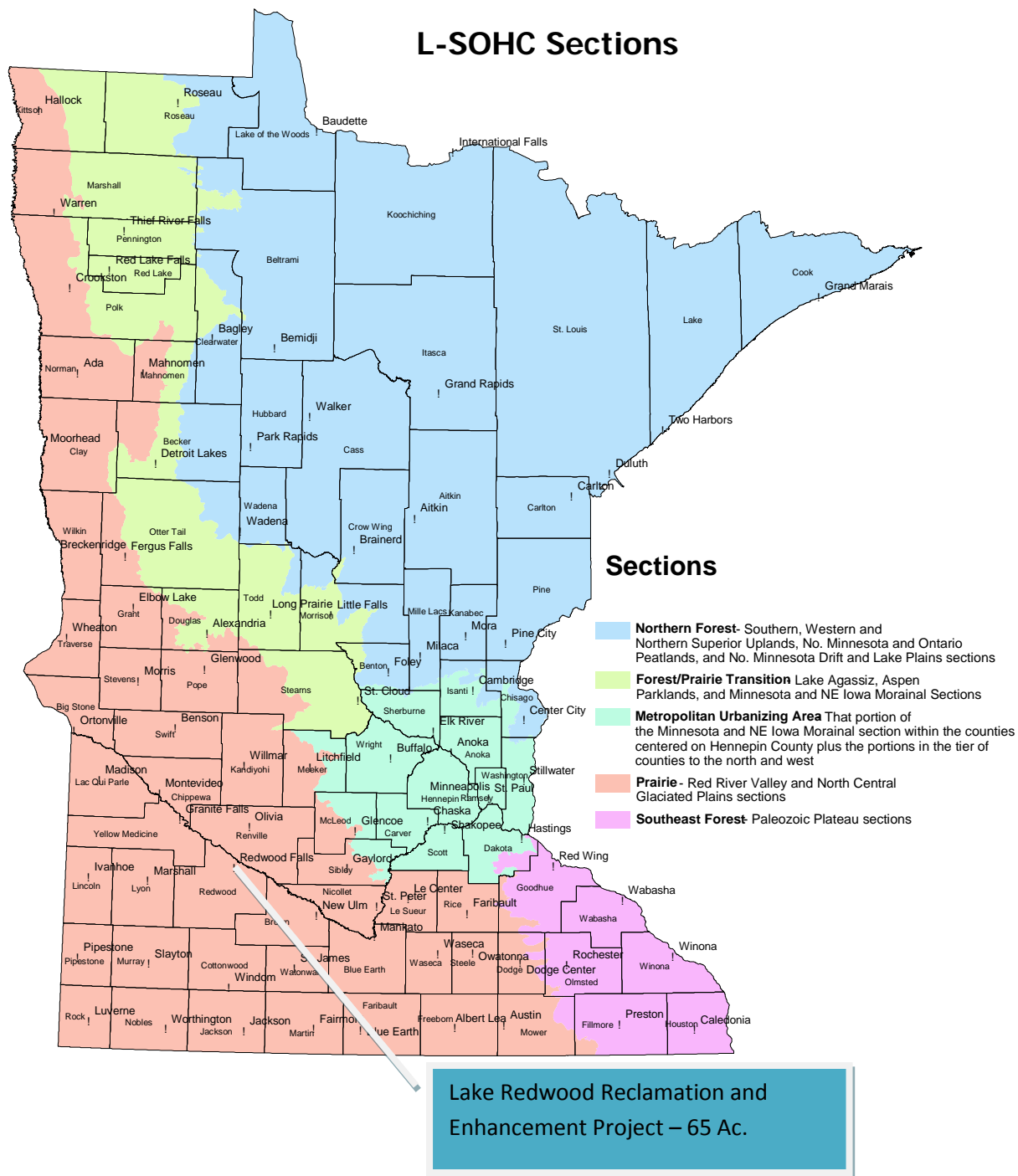
<u>Proposed Project Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Lake Redwood Reclamation	Redwood	65

Double left click to bring up the map editor. Symbols should be on the left side of the pop-up banner at the top of your screen or at the bottom left depending on your software.

If you can't bring up the interactive map editor follow these instructions:

1. Make a paper copy of the map,
2. By hand place symbols on the map corresponding to the location of the projects in your proposal,
3. Scan the marked map to a pdf, and
4. Insert the marked pdf map as the last page in your submission.

Program Title: Lake Redwood Reclamation and Enhancement Project



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: Kay Clark
Title: Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance [GBERBA] Coordinator
Mailing Address: 339 Street, Windom, MN 56101
Telephone: 507.831.1153 x 3
Fax: 507.831.2928
E-Mail: .clark@windomnet
Web Site: .gberba [available starting January 1, 2010]

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000

A. Summary

Our program will establish approximately 200 acres of native grasses or woody plants [where appropriate] on high priority lands for wildlife, currently in annual tillage, in the Greater Blue Earth River Watershed in south central Minnesota that protect, restore and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game and wildlife while allowing periodic harvest.

B. Background Information

What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

South central Minnesota contains some of the most productive soils in the world which has led to having some of the most intense row cropping within the state. The result is minimal remaining quality habitat for a variety of prairie plant and animal species. Today, there are several 'drivers' coming together that can help accomplish our goals to protect, restore and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests and habitat for fish, game and wildlife especially in the Greater Blue Earth River Basin area in southern Minnesota. These drivers include:

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

- Interest and growth in perennial based renewable energy
- TMDL [Total Maximum Daily Loads] water quality improvement criteria, especially phosphorous, nitrogen, sediment, flow and pathogen reductions
- Hypoxia [low oxygen] in the Gulf of Mexico significantly impacted by high nitrogen loading and lack of water storage throughout the corn belt
- Climate change, reduction of greenhouse gases and carbon sequestration
- Over 20,000 acres of expiring CRP [Conservation Reserve Program] in the region
- Landowner interest in restoring native prairie, wetland and riparian landscapes

This funding request has four main goals:

- 1) Convert targeted lands from annual tillage to native perennials;
- 2) Establish buffer areas favorable to wildlife;
- 3) Retain expiring CRP and RIM in perennial plantings; and
- 4) Allow a periodic harvest for site management and bio-based industries.

Adding native perennials to rural landscapes could support renewable energy and bio-based industries while also providing multiple ecological services such as wildlife and pollinator habitat enhancement, carbon sequestration, sediment, nitrogen and phosphorous reductions, water storage and recharge for shallow aquifers. Planned bioenergy facilities alone will utilize at least 30,000 acres of perennial feedstocks in south central Minnesota. This proposal would only provide a small percentage of the total tonnage needed. The priority for this funding would be to restore, protect and enhance wildlife habitat and allow a periodic harvest following habitat friendly management schemes.

What action will be taken?

The GBERBA staff will coordinate with their eighteen member counties and SWCD's and other conservation partners in the watershed to develop and implement a cohesive, efficient program to establish these conservation easements with continuity across the watershed. In addition, GBERBA will handle all accounting, tracking and reporting for the project. GBERBA members will work with conservation groups, state and federal partners to identify priority sites and meet with those landowners for enrollment. SWCD staff will utilize a methodology similar to what was used with the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program [CREP] to identify targeted sites and landowner contact with wildlife habitat restoration and enhancement value.

Who will take action and when?

The project will be coordinated by GBERBA and their eighteen member counties and SWCD's. Members include the counties of Cottonwood, Jackson, Watonwan, Martin, Faribault, Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Freeborn and Waseca and the SWCD's of Cottonwood,

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

Jackson, Watonwan, Martin, Faribault, Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Freeborn and Waseca counties, all in the Greater Blue Earth watershed. GBERBA member staff are familiar with the landscape and landowners in their jurisdiction. As soon as it is known the project has been selected for funding, agreements and marketing materials will be developed and priority potential wildlife habitat restoration and enhancement sites can be identified using a variety of tools already established. Once grant agreements are complete GBERBA and their members will be ready to implement the program and get the sites established.

How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

GBERBA is willing to work with other conservation partners in the region to avoid duplication, improve implementation and increase the level and quality of conservation on the land.

What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

This proposal will establish, restore, protect or enhance approximately 200 acres of wildlife habitat in south central Minnesota. Under a management plan and following NRCS guidance for harvest described in NRCS document *“Soil Quality Enhancement Activity- SQL06- Conversion of cropped land to grass-based agriculture for biomass or forage production and wildlife habitat”*, the acres will be allowed to have limited harvest. Two enrollment options will be available:

- 1] New wildlife habitat will be established from lands currently in annual tillage and become protected by a perpetual conservation easement.
- 2] Land currently enrolled in CRP or RIM and expiring in the next five years will be protected by a perpetual conservation easement. The permanent conservation easement will begin when the CRP or RIM contract expires.

In addition, these acres will provide multiple ecological services such as pollinator habitat enhancement, carbon sequestration, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, sediment, nitrogen and phosphorous reductions, water storage and recharge for shallow aquifers.

When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

Within 3 months of the acres being established we expect to observe beneficial habitat changes.

Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**
If not, how will you finance completion?

How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

All acres enrolled will be under a conservation easement [RIM] with ownership retained by the landowner. Under the easement agreement, the landowner will be required to maintain the enrolled acres. In addition, these acres will be allowed to be periodically harvested for bio-based industry use. These annual or less harvests will help to minimize noxious weeds and invasive trees within the plantings.

How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

This proposal will restore or protect approximately 200 acres. Exact number of acres will vary slightly depending on exact location of sites and the RIM [Reinvest in Minnesota] rate for that township.

If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**
If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Through this effort a permanent conservation easement, through the BWSR RIM process, will be acquired for the parcel.

How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

GBERBA is a Joint Powers Organization of eighteen Counties and SWCD's in the Greater Blue Earth River Basin. As a local government organization, they are required to meet state requirements ensuring transparency, public openness and accountability to the public. A variety of methods have been used and are available to them including press releases, field days, reporting and posting information on the websites of the member counties and SWCD's. In addition, GBERBA is in the process of developing their own website [www.gberba.org] and anticipate that to be online by the end of 2009.

Why will this strategy work?

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Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

GBERBA and their member SWCD's have a long history of successful implementation of conservation practices. Each SWCD has an established rapport with landowners in their county and the areas where the location of these conservation easements will have the most value. They also have established rapport with other conservation partners in their area to ensure the State is getting significant value for their investment and the habitat enhancement is exceptional.

Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

We do not anticipate any one or group working against this strategy.

If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

N/A _____ **YES** _____ **NO**

If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

N/A _____ **YES** _____ **NO**

If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

MAYBE _____ **YES** _____ **NO**

If Yes what kind of use?

The enrolling landowner will be able to make a YES/NO decision if the conservation easement will be open for public use at the time they sign the agreement.

If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

_____ **YES** _____ **X** _____ **NO**

The permanent conservation easements enrolled through this proposal will follow MS2009, Chapter 103F.515, specifically the Reinvest in Minnesota Reserve Program.

If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

10 Years, dependent on funding

Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

- 1. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.**

☐ Northern Forest
☐ Forest/Prairie Transition
☐ Southeast Forest
☒ Prairie
☐ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

- 2. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?**

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

If yes, please explain.

Due to the intense row crop production in south central Minnesota, any area that can be converted or protected has value as habitat. We are targeting these acres so they adjoin an existing native area to add value for more species. In the current economy, these marginal areas are threatened by increased agricultural production pressures.

- 3. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?**

☐ **YES** ☒ **NO**

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

- 4. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?**

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

If yes explain the model briefly.

Brett Richardson, DNR – Metro Office, developed the Greater Blue Earth Ecological Analysis Map and used modeling to determine priority areas to establish wildlife corridors that connect existing patches of grasses that met a minimum size and factored in other landscape features such as proximity to surface waters and soil types. This methodology followed work Mr. Richardson had developed to do an ecological analysis of the Metro area for DNR.

Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

5. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Numerous scientific studies identify a decline in wildlife numbers and diversity from areas with a high percentage of the landscape in annual tillage. Conversations with Todd Arnold, Wildlife Biologist at the University of Minnesota, have indicated that expanding native plantings in agricultural regions can significantly enhance the biological diversity of numerous wildlife species.

6. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

Specific sites will be identified by GBERBA and local SWCD Staff in collaboration with local conservation partners. Sites will be selected with quality wildlife habitat as the number one priority outcome. We will use mapping tools identifying priority habitat restoration sites as a guide to locating sites. Each restoration site selected will adjoin an existing native area and be a conversion from annual row cropping to native species. Each protection or enhanced site, which will be sites of expiring CRP or RIM, will be prioritized by considering which would result in the highest quality habitat.

All sites will be located in one of the GBERBA member Counties/ SWCDs which are Blue Earth, Cottonwood, Faribault, Freeborn, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Waseca or Watonwan.

Maps showing priority sites include:

- **Greater Blue Earth River Ecological Analysis** developed by Bart Richardson, DNR and Lansing Shepard, Paula Westmoreland of From the Ground Up and Linda Meschke, Rural Advantage and several other collaborators within south central Minnesota.
- **MN DNR Area IV Conservation Focus Area** developed in collaboration by the various divisions of DNR in Region IV.
- **DNR Working Lands Initiative**

In addition the following factors will be followed:

- ✓ No site will be located in an area with potential for aggregate mining including those areas identified, but not limited to, DNR mapping and Blue Earth County's Aggregate Sites Map.
- ✓ Native plant species only, preference for local eco-types [diverse mixes- 20 species or more- follow state guidelines]
- ✓ Adjoin existing habitat areas
- ✓ Allows an annual harvest for bioenergy [follow NRCS, BWSR or other guidance], seed collection or haying.
- ✓ Perpetual Easements [through the BWSR RIM program process]
- ✓ Payment based on RIM Rate for the township the site is located in
- ✓ Marginal lands in annual tillage converted to perennials
- ✓ Buffer areas with wildlife favorable widths [66 to 120 feet or more]
- ✓ Minimum size will be five acres.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

The following will be used for weighing each project sight for selection:

Criteria	Weight
High wildlife quality following restoration, protection or enhancement	50%
Use of Local Eco-type Native Species	30%
Size	20%

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

This proposal is consistent with the goals and objectives outlined in the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan.

Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition	\$725,000	\$1,450,000	\$1,450,000
Easement Stewardship	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
Establishment Costs [Not to exceed \$500/acre]			
Professional Services:			
BWSR \$2,000/ easement	\$70,000	\$140,000	\$140,000
GBERBA \$750/ easement	\$26,250	\$ 52,500	\$ 52,500
SWCD \$2,250/ easement	\$78,750	\$157,500	\$157,500
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
-------	------	---------

In order to delivery this program with integrity, transparency and accountability we will be following the RIM process through BWSR, GBERBA and local SWCD's. We anticipate with these funds we will be able to protect, restore or enhance 200 acres with a minimum size of 5 acres per site. We estimate this will be approximately 35 easements. **Per easement**, we have budgeted \$2,000 for BWSR [state accounting and tracking]; \$750 for GBERBA [regional coordination, accounting, reporting and transparency]; and \$2,250 for the local SWCD where the easement is located [technical assistance, completing landowner agreements and proper documentation for each site].

Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Blue Earth SWCD	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3000
Cottonwood SWCD	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Faribault SWCD	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Freeborn SWCD	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Jackson SWCD	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Le Sueur SWCD	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Martin SWCD	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Waseca SWCD	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Watonwan SWCD	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
TOTAL	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$27,000

G. Outcomes:

- 1) In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.
- 2) In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.
- 3) In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.
- 4) In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and
- 5) If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5

Table 1 Accomplishments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				125 acres
Protect				60 acres
Enhance				15 acres

Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>125 acres</i>
Protect				<i>60 acres</i>
Enhance				<i>15 acres</i>

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>\$620,000</i>
Protect				<i>\$300,000</i>
Enhance				<i>\$80,000</i>

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>\$16,740</i>
Protect				<i>\$8,100</i>
Enhance				<i>\$2,160</i>

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				<i>RIM Permanent Easement \$1,000,000</i>

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are

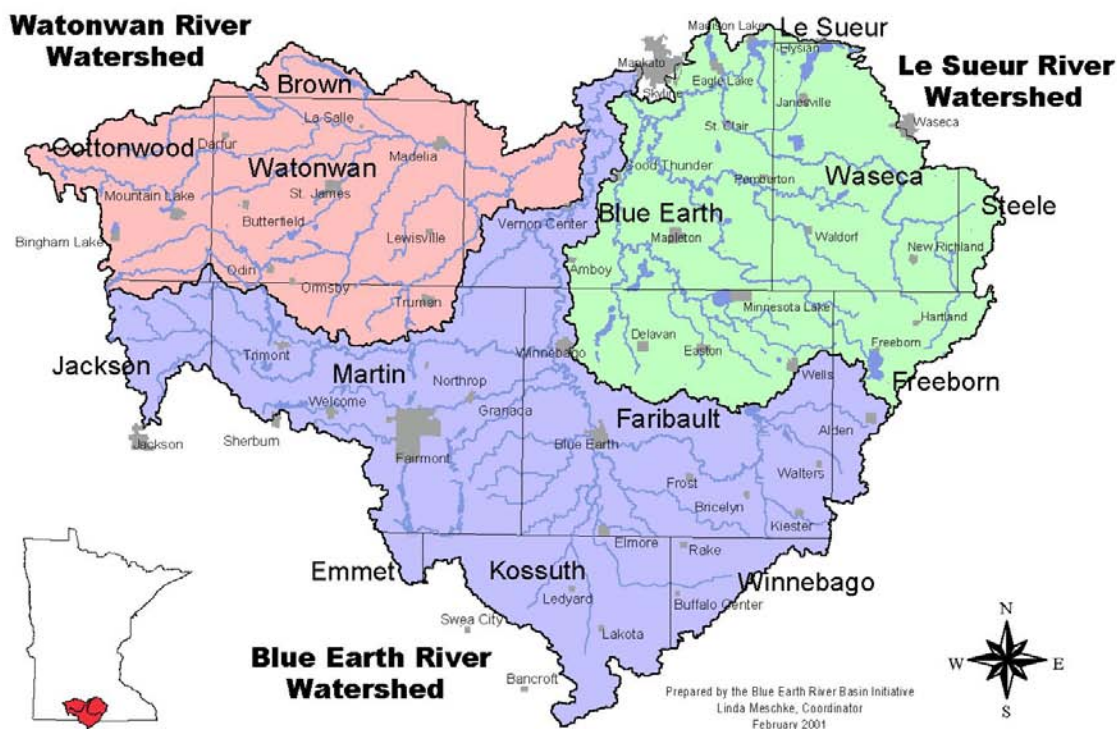
Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Protect, Restore and Enhance an estimated 200 acres within the Greater Blue Earth River Watershed area.	By 6.30.2012	# of acres

Note: These will be established under the RIM program. Rates paid will be according to the published RIM rate for permanent easements for cropped land or non cropped [for expiring CRP or RIM]. As these vary from township to township, where the specific easement is located will vary the rate paid and therefore the exact number of easement acres. We estimate we will be able to do 200 acres. These are targeted acres toward areas most beneficial to wildlife habitat.

Greater Blue Earth River Watershed



Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

If funded this project will be over and above the regular GBERBA budget. Funding this project will allow GBERBA and their members to deliver additional conservation on the land that is specific to restore, protect and enhance habitat in south central Minnesota.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

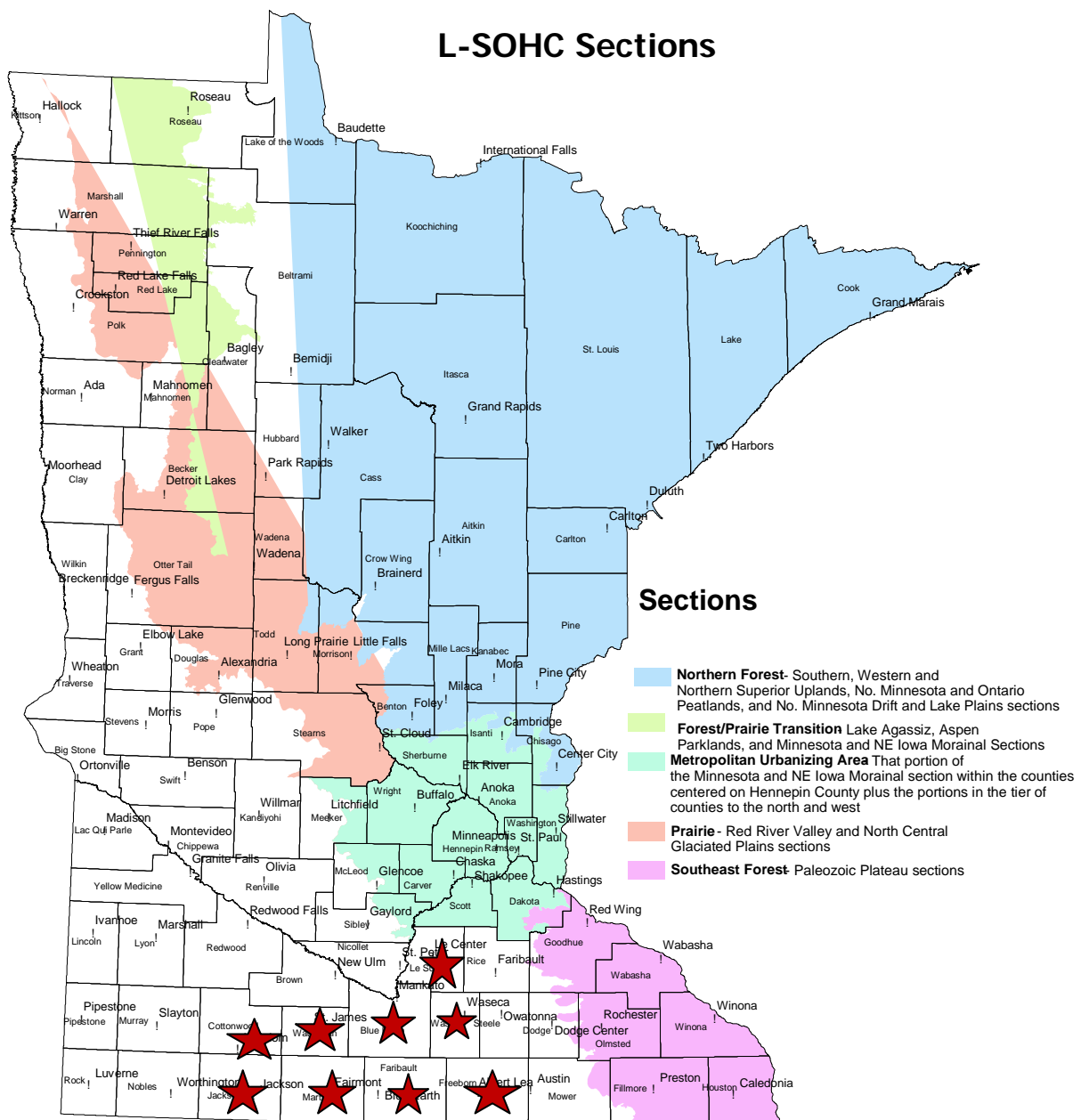
The landowner will be responsible for sustaining the habitat improvements on the parcels. Each easement will have an operation and maintenance plan for the landowner to follow. Each site will have technical assistance in the design provided by the local SWCD staff, Randy Schindle, DNR and other habitat resource professionals from DNR and USFWS in the region as is appropriate to the specific site, location and specific habitat outcomes.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Specific sites will be identified by GBERBA and local SWCD Staff in collaboration with local conservation partners. Sites will be selected with quality wildlife habitat as the priority outcome. We will use mapping tools identifying priority habitat restoration sites as a guide to locating sites. Each restoration site selected will adjoin an existing native area and be a conversion from annual row cropping to native species. Each protection or enhanced site, which will be sites of expiring CRP or RIM, will be prioritized by considering which would result in the highest quality habitat.

All sites will be located in one of the GBERBA member Counties/ SWCDs which are Blue Earth, Cottonwood, Faribault, Freeborn, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Waseca or Watonwan.

Program Title: South Central Wildlife Heritage Initiative



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Red Wing Wildlife League (RWWL) Historic Rice Lake Restoration

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard - Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

You can find Word versions of this form at LOHC.state.mn.us/funding.html .

Program or Project Title: #13 Historic Rice Lake Restoration - Red Wing Wildlife League (RWWL)

Date: 2 November 2009

Manager's Name: Joel Schmidt, President

Title: League President

Mailing Address: 7570 Borman Court, Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076

Telephone: (651) 775-8191

Fax: (651) 385-4180

E-Mail: @comcast.

Web Site:

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$1,220,000.00	180,000.00		0

A. Summary

This project will restore 30 acres of shallow open water wetland/historic Rice Lake within the floodplain of Mississippi River near its confluence with the Cannon River. This project also includes reforestation of 18 acres of lowland hardwood forest with high wildlife value trees adjacent to the restored wetland and Cannon/Mississippi Rivers.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The Cannon River has contributed substantial sediment to the DNR Public Water 13W (Rice Lake). This was a result of a beaver dam constructed in the river in the 1950's that backed up water, resulting in the river banks to be breached and forcing the re-alignment of the river so as to start flowing into historic Rice Lake . The watershed area of the Cannon River is 1,462 square miles and includes six counties: Dakota, Goodhue,

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Red Wing Wildlife League (RWWL) Historic Rice Lake Restoration

Le Sueur, Rice, Steel and Waseca. Agricultural practices in these counties contribute to accelerated sedimentation within Rice Lake. With the new source of sediment the lake was reduced to several smaller open bodies of water in 1968 and currently is completely filled with sediment and has converted to a wet meadow with a monotype of river bulrush. This proposed project involves restoration of 30 acres of historic Rice Lake. The *Environmental Pool Plans Document*, January 2004, developed by a Federal/State interagency work group identifies the Cannon River Delta (the RWWL Property) as an area to protect and maintain habitat conditions along with measures to improve aquatic connectivity and increase water depths.

2. What action will be taken?

Restore 30 acres of historic Rice Lake that was once part of a 134-acre historic shallow open water area at the site. Removal of sediment will take place to restore as near as possible the historic topography to the 30 acre area and increase topographic diversity. An area adjacent to the sediment removal area will be utilized to restore a high wildlife value lowland hardwood forest (with tree species such as bur oak, swamp white oak, hackberry, and similar), as well as create an appropriate level of separation between Rice Lake and the Cannon River via reestablishment of a natural river levee (to minimize the risk of future re-sedimentation within the restored Rice Lake).

3. Who will take action and when?

The Red Wing Wildlife League (RWWL) was formed in 1935 as an outdoor sportsmen's club and today boasts 800 members, at least 200 of which use the League's property for fishing and hunting. RWWL property is also open to the public for cross country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching and natural resources education for youth. To complete this project, the RWWL will hire an independent ecological and engineering consultant to design the project and provide project support. The League will hire a contractor through a competitive process to complete excavation/earthwork. The project planning will begin after July 1, 2010 with construction proposed to begin in late summer/fall or potentially winter of 2011 during lower water conditions. The project will be completed by the end of 2012.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

This project will provide an incremental benefit to water quality in the Mississippi River, identified in L-SOHC documents and the *Statewide Conservation & Preservation Plan* as a high priority for restoration and enhancement. This project will also improve available recreational resources for the region. We are unaware of other projects in the area that have been or will be proposed in the vicinity of this project. Should we become aware of other projects and learn their could be synergistic benefits, we are open to discussing and refining as necessary work plan steps to realize increased overall benefits to the resource.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Program Title: Red Wing Wildlife League (RWWL) Historic Rice Lake Restoration

Restoration of historic Rice Lake shallow open water areas will improve/restore habitat for a wide variety of game and nongame species including song birds, sandhill cranes, reptiles, amphibians and other animals. Habitat will be improved for game species, especially nesting and migratory waterfowl, turkey, furbearers, and white-tail deer. This restoration will also increase habitat for a wide variety of fish species that utilize the Mississippi River and its backwater/ wetland areas for spawning and nursery areas for fry.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

The habitat improvement benefits will occur upon completion of the initial restoration effort. As vegetation (including lowland hardwood trees such as swamp white oak, bur oak, hackberry and others) develops, the habitat value to game and state-listed nongame species will continue to further improve.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

 X YES NO
If not, how will you finance completion?

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

The RWWL accomplishes ongoing habitat maintenance and improvement as part of its normal functions and budgets appropriately for this work. Likewise, RWWL has a regular source of revenue which enables this ongoing work.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

This proposed project directly restores over 30 acres of previously degraded habitat through the removal of sediment that filled a historic shallow open water lake and the complementary establishment of a high wildlife value lowland hardwood forest community in an area currently dominated by the nonnative, invasive reed canary grass.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

 X YES NO
If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

RWWL land is protected by permanent Conservation Easement held by the Minnesota Land Trust

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

RWWL hires an independent accountant to audit its financial affairs. Financial records are regularly reviewed by board members and available to groups such as L-SOHC for

project-related reviews. RWWL has secured State Wildlife Grant, Heritage Enhancement, and DNR Conservation Partners Grants in the past and successfully met criteria for accounting, insurance, and other parameters. As a result of this and other projects RWWL has been involved in, we are accustomed to providing regular reports/updates on work progress and cost/expense records to grantors.

12. Why will this strategy work?

This project is part of a comprehensive *RWWL Habitat Rehabilitation & Enhancement Plan* that involved input from a wide variety of agency stakeholders that regularly work with restoration projects on the Mississippi River (See Attached Plan). In particular, Jeff Janvrin, Mississippi River Habitat Specialist for the WI DNR provided key input on restoration techniques and estimated costs based on his previous work with multiple and similar projects along the Wisconsin side of the Mississippi River in this area. RWWL included a wide variety of stakeholders in these meetings and received broad support from all natural resource professionals involved. In particular, the design of the restoration work will minimize the risk of post-restoration degradation by keeping the restored lake off-line from the Cannon River.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

The Minnesota DNR, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Goodhue County Soil and Water Conservation District, Audubon, Izaak Walton League, MN Land Trust, Cannon River Watershed Partnership, Goodhue County, City of Red Wing, MN Board of Water and Soil Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These agencies were valuable partners as part of a Technical Advisory Committee that provided input on this project and will provide further assistance to achieve the goals of the project.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

_____ YES

 X NO

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

_____ YES

 X NO

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

_____ YES

 X NO

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever? NA

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

_____ **Not Applicable** _____ **Years**

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

_____ Northern Forest

_____ Forest/Prairie Transition

_____ **X** **Southeast Forest**

_____ Prairie

_____ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

_____ **X** **YES**

_____ **NO**

If yes, please explain.

Although RWWL has a source of income, the rate of incoming financial resources prevents implementation of the Historic Rice Lake restoration project in the absence of substantial outside funding. L-SOHC funds represent the only, or one of only a few, resources that would enable this project. RWWL has saved adequate funds to serve as a cash match for this project, but would not be able to take this project on without L-SOHC assistance.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

_____ **YES**

_____ **X** **NO**

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

 X **YES**

 NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

This project is included in the report called the "Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Plan" that was funded by the Red Wing Wildlife League and finalized in 2005. The plan involved a significant amount of input from a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on projects that could be performed on the RWWL to rehabilitate and enhance habitat for a wide variety of species on the 2,700 acres of RWWL property. The TAC provided input on the approaches, discussed economical and environmentally sensitive options to achieve RWWL goals, and provided technical feedback on appropriate methods of habitat improvement. The personnel represented at the TAC meetings are shown in Table 1 below. Importantly, the Goals and Objectives of the Plan build on the framework provided in the *Environmental Pool Plans Document (EPP)*, January 2004, developed by an interagency work group.

Table 1. Agency personnel involved with TAC Meeting

Name	Representing	Name	Representing
Don McGuiness	Audubon	Dan Dieterman	MN DNR Fishery
Beau Kennedy	Goodhue SWCD	Jeff Janvrin	WI DNR, MS River Habitat Specialist
B. Kosec	Izaak Walton League	Dan Leopold	Izaak Walton League
Terry Helbig	MN DNR - Forestry	Bill Huber	MN DNR - Waters
Kevin Stouffer	MN DNR - Fisheries	Don Nelson	MN DNR - Wildlife
Mike Tenney	MN DNR - Wildlife	Clint Miller	MN Land Trust
Justin Watkins	Cannon River Watershed Ptnrshp		

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

The contiguous expanse of floodplain habitat along the Mississippi and Cannon rivers, the 2,700 acre RWWL property includes some of the largest privately owned floodplain and marshes in the state. The property also supports bald eagle nest sites, a heron rookery, two sandhill crane nesting sites, and the cerulean warbler – a bird of special concern in Minnesota. In addition, over 90% of the property is mapped by the MN DNR County Biological Survey as supporting significant natural communities and supporting numerous Species of Greatest Conservation Need, across multiple taxa, including bird and turtle species.

The DNR's 2006 document *Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy* identifies Lowland Deciduous Forests as a habitat type that once formed large areas of floodplain forest in southern Minnesota. These habitats have been fragmented and impacted by urbanization, conversion to agriculture, change in hydrologic regime due to damming, loss of canopy cover and mature trees and invasive spread of reed canary

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

grass. This plan also identifies that these habitats are key for preservation of the prothonotary warbler, Cerulean warbler, Red-shouldered hawk and eastern massasaugas.

The *Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy* also recognizes shallow lakes for their importance as breeding areas for waterfowl such as lesser scaup, northern pintail, common moorhen and many others. These habitats are also important for non-game birds such as least bitterns, American bitterns, marsh wrens and Virginia rails which require emergent habitat as breeding habitat. Foster's terns also require large deep-water marshes that contain muskrat houses or floating mats of vegetation for nesting sites. Our project will be consistent with the plan by restoring and preventing degradation of shallow lakes (historic Rice Lake), restore larger complexes of wetland and shallow lake habitat used by Species in Greatest Conservation Need, manage invasive vegetation species and restore more natural water regimes.

Bottomlands along the Mississippi River also provide crucial habitat for the Blanding's turtle to complete its life cycle (Blanding's turtles are reported from the area, including the nearby Cannon River SNA). These wetland, floodplain forest, upland habitat, open water complexes also offer nesting sites for gopher, fox and hognose snakes, map turtles, tiger beetles, jumping spiders, herons, egrets, eagles and a variety of declining songbirds such as the wood thrush. Our project will restore and enhance important contiguous habitat types along the Mississippi River corridor.

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

Restoration priorities were developed during the *RWWL Habitat Restoration & Enhancement Plan* project. Implementation of the restoration projects from the HR&E Plan and ongoing management hinges on financial resources available to RWWL. Past efforts to implement other projects called out in the HR&E plan have involved smaller projects with costs ranging from approximately \$10,000 to \$100,000. Although the larger project proposed here has been a top priority for RWWL, the lack of an outside source of funding has prevented its implementation.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

Program Title: Red Wing Wildlife League (RWWL) Historic Rice Lake Restoration

The *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* recommendations identifies restoration and protection of shallow lake, restoration of wetlands and restoration and protection of in-water habitat of lakes and streams as a priority under the strategic framework for integrated resource action.

In addition, the type and general location of restoration work proposed is consistent with the following documents:

- *Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy* (MN DNR 2006)
- *Living Lakes Initiative* (Ducks Unlimited), which seeks to protect shallow lakes and floodplain wetlands, and promotes sound restoration of lost or degraded habitat.

Program Title: Red Wing Wildlife League (RWWL) Historic Rice Lake Restoration

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts	\$ 1,150,000.00	\$110,000.00	
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$ 1,150,000.00	\$ 110,000.00	

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
-------	------	---------

N/A

Program Title: Red Wing Wildlife League (RWWL) Historic Rice Lake Restoration

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Red Wing Wildlife League	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 70,000.00	
TOTAL	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 70,000.00	

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Program Title: Red Wing Wildlife League (RWWL) Historic Rice Lake Restoration

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>Restore 30 acres of shallow open water wetlands by excavation of accumulated sediment</i>		<i>Restore 18 acres of high wildlife value lowland hardwood forest by planting</i>	<i>48 acres</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>SE Forest Mississippi River Floodplain shallow open water wetland restoration 30 acres</i>		<i>SE Forest high wildlife value lowland hardwood forest 18 acres</i>	<i>48 acres</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>1,155,794.00</i>		<i>\$ 144,000.00</i>	<i>\$ 100,206.00</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Program Title: Red Wing Wildlife League (RWWL) Historic Rice Lake Restoration

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$ 70,000.00</i>		<i>\$ 70,000.00</i>	
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife. **See Exhibit 1 – Attached.**

Milestone	Date	Measure
Field Investigation and survey of project site	Fall 2010	Site investigation and survey for design
Design Documents and permits	Winter 2010	Finalize Design and permitting for project
Construction implementation	Fall/Winter 2011	30 acres - shallow open water wetland restored. Vegetative restoration started
Vegetative Restoration Finalized & veg. maintenance	Spring 2012	18 – acres high wildlife value lowland hardwood forest restored. Vegetative restoration - 10 acres shallow fringe

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

RWWL currently has funds in its account to provide a minimum 10% match required for this L-SOHC project.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

The strategic design of the restoration, along with efforts within the watershed to reduce erosion will minimize the risks of future sedimentation of the restored shallow lake/wetland. Ongoing vegetation management of the area will be accomplished by RWWL members, or potential through hiring a restoration contractor to assist with activities that are beyond RWWL's in-house capability (e.g. prescribed burning).

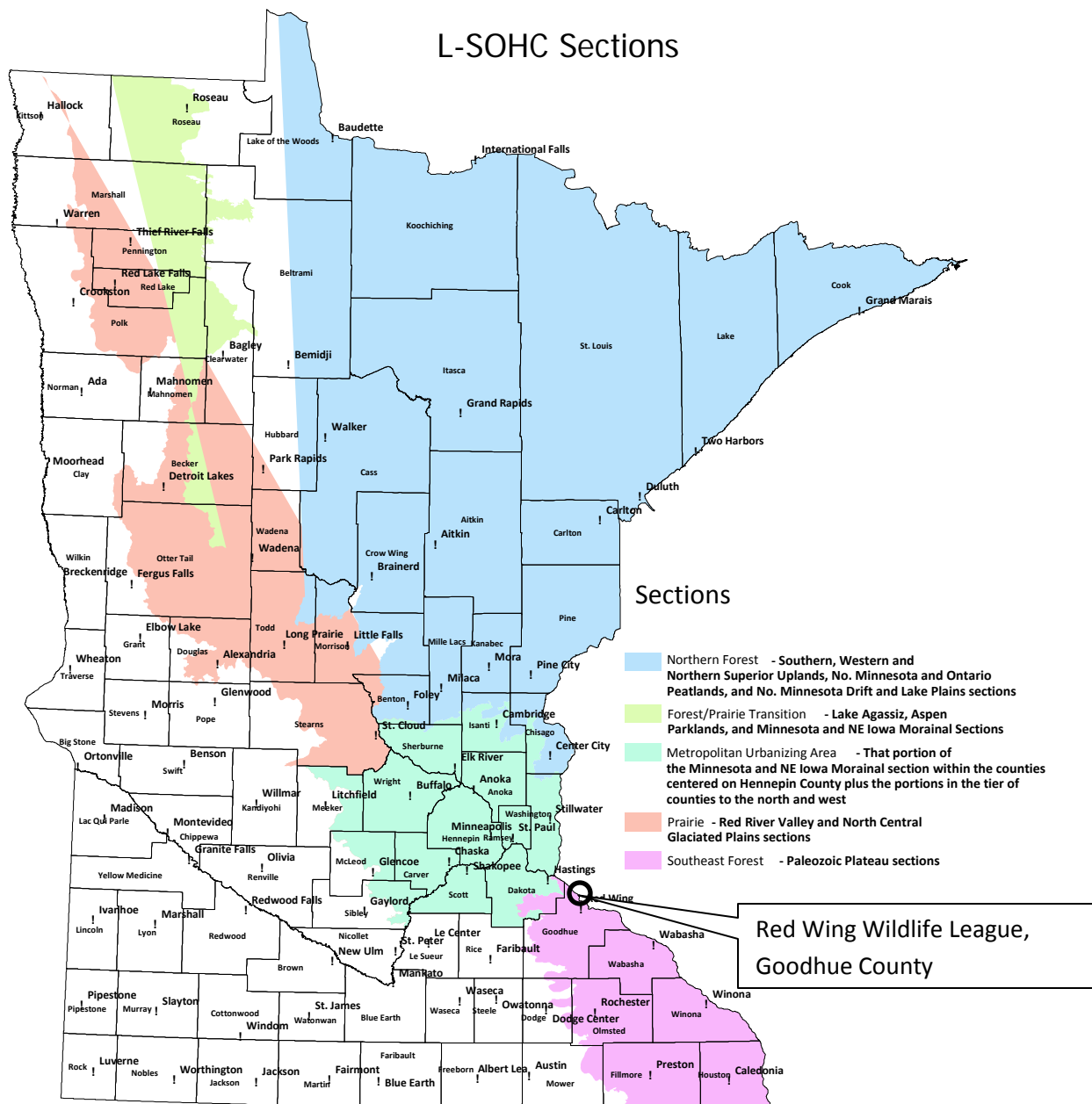
K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Double left click to bring up the map editor. Symbols should be on the left side of the pop-up banner at the top of your screen or at the bottom left depending on your software.

If you can't bring up the interactive map editor follow these instructions:

1. Make a paper copy of the map,
2. By hand place symbols on the map corresponding to the location of the projects in your proposal,
3. Scan the marked map to a pdf, and
4. Insert the marked pdf map as the last page in your submission.

Program Title: Red Wing Wildlife League (RWWL) Historic Rice Lake Restoration



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Project Title: Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Project Title: #14 Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: Ward Julien

Title: Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society, Board Member & Treasurer

Mailing Address: 644 – 107 Lane NW, Coon Rapids, MN 55448

Telephone: 763-754-8361

E-Mail: wjulien@peoplepc.com

Web Site: www.sharptails.org

Fiscal Agent: Ron Leathers

Title: Pheasants Forever, Director of Public Finance/Assistant

Mailing Address: 1783 Buerkle Circle, St. Paul, MN 55110

Telephone: 651-209-4919

Fax: 651-773-5500

E-Mail: rleathers@pheasantsforever.org

Web Site: www.pheasantsforever.org; www.minnesotapf.org

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$3,759,400	0	0	0

A. Summary – This sharp-tailed grouse habitat partnership will protect, enhance and restore up to 2,267.4 acres of open and brushland habitat and 165 acres of forest habitat in northeastern Minnesota, provide access to additional public lands for recreation, provide multiple environmental benefits, and benefit sharp-tailed grouse and other open and brushland species in greatest conservation need (several of which are state listed as endangered, threatened or special concern) by acquiring priority land parcels in Aitkin, St. Louis and Kanabec Counties for addition to the WMA system. As noted in the LSOHC's Northern Forest Section Vision, the condition of brushlands within forest lands is of special concern. The partnership, including Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society, Pheasants Forever, Minnesota Waterfowl Association, Ruffed Grouse Society, Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, Central Lakes College Natural Resource Club and Minnesota DNR, is collaborating to ensure that landscapes important to the

Project Title: Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership

sustainability of sharp-tailed grouse and other native, open and brushland wildlife, and the multiple benefits they provide, persist in the future.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Until the 1880s, most of Minnesota was inhabited by sharp-tailed grouse where suitable open and brushland habitat, such as prairies, savannas, sedge meadows and open bogs, occurred. This indigenous grouse was once one of Minnesota's most abundant game birds, with over 100,000 harvested annually in the 1940's. Loss, degradation and fragmentation of open and brushland habitat within Minnesota due to natural succession and conversion to other land uses (cropland and tree plantations) has lead to a long term decline in this unique grouse's population (estimated harvest of 14,000 in 2008), causing its listing as a species in greatest conservation need. Today its remaining range in northern Minnesota, which is less than one-third of its historic range, is in jeopardy of additional fragmentation.

In east central Minnesota, recent preliminary research results have shown that genetic diversity of the sharp-tailed grouse population may be declining due to increasing isolation of subpopulations. In nearby Wisconsin, genetic diversity (allelic diversity and heterozygosity) has declined so greatly that Wisconsin DNR will be translocating sharp-tailed grouse to create a genetic infusion to increase the likelihood that populations will persist. Increasing the amount of protected brushland habitat in northeastern Minnesota will be critical to the sustainability of the local sharp-tailed grouse population and gene exchange between Minnesota and Wisconsin populations.

Several other species that use or depend upon open and brushland habitats are also in decline, listed as species in greatest conservation need, and will benefit from this project, including bobolinks, loggerhead shrikes, short-eared owls, yellow rails, eastern meadowlarks, American bittern, northern harrier, golden-winged warblers, Henslow's sparrow, Le Conte's sparrow, Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrow, and American woodcock . Six of these species are state listed as endangered, threatened or special concern.

Game species that will benefit include white-tailed deer, waterfowl (mallards, blue-winged teal, Canada geese, and more species during migration), wild turkey, American woodcock, common snipe, ruffed grouse, cottontail rabbit, snowshoe hare, fox, raccoon, and bobcat. Many nongame species such as the Eastern bluebird, American kestrel, brown thrasher, gray catbird, common yellowthroat, sora rail, sedge wren, and spring peeper will benefit, as well as the sandhill crane which is expanding its range.

If not acquired while the opportunities exist, the chance to protect these priority tracts permanently from land practices incompatible as open and brushland

Project Title: Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership

wildlife habitat, and from fragmentation, development and parcelization may be lost.

2. What action will be taken?

The partnership will seek funding, provide matching funds, and cooperate with willing landowners in Aitkin, St. Louis and Kanabec Counties to acquire and donate priority lands to DNR for designation as WMAs. Initial management action to prepare the WMAs for public use and to enhance and restore open and brushland habitats on them will include boundary surveys and posting, access and parking areas, fence and building removal, prescribed burning, shearing or mowing, and seeding.

3. Who will take action and when?

The partnership (Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society, Pheasants Forever, Minnesota Waterfowl Association, Ruffed Grouse Society, Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, Central Lakes College Natural Resource Club and Minnesota DNR) has taken action by visiting with landowners, contacting County Board members, preparing acquisition plans, and pledging funds. DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife managers have submitted the proposed tracts for approval by their Division Management Team. Upon securing sufficient funds, action will include land appraisals and the acquisition process. DNR will oversee enhancement, restoration, and management of the WMAs. Because these tracts will be purchased from willing sellers and purchase opportunities may change, some variation from the list of proposed tracts to protect may occur.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

The partnership will coordinate with other conservation organizations receiving Constitutional Funding to ensure projects are compatible and complimentary, do not have overlapping efforts and together address the Council's priority actions.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Specific habitat changes will include the protection and addition of up to 2,267.4 acres of open and brushland habitat and 165 acres of forest habitat to the WMA system in northeastern Minnesota. Natural habitats on these priority lands include sedge meadow, shrub wetland, grassland, marsh, river and aspen forest. They will be managed with prescribed burning, mowing, shearing, timber harvest, and possibly grazing, biomass harvest and occasional haying to maintain the open and brushland landscape. Other habitats include excavated ponds, and crop, hay and pasture land that will be

Project Title: Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership

encouraged to revert back to natural open and brushland habitat either by seeding and/or allowing natural succession to occur.

Multiple benefits of the protected, enhanced and restored habitats will include increased plant and animal diversity, carbon sequestration, water retention and filtration, opportunities for biomass harvest, access to public lands for recreation and secure habitat for sharp-tailed grouse and other open and brushland species in greatest conservation need.

6. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

 X YES

 NO

7. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

These parcels will become part of the WMA system and be maintained and managed by local DNR Wildlife Area staff involved in the partnership. The partnership will pay for their maintenance through the DNR budget and funds provided by partners. Partner funds will come from conservation organization's general membership and grants, such as LSOHC and Heritage Enhancement grants.

8. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

This project directly protects, enhances and restores open and brushland habitats by acquiring them for addition to and management under the WMA system. In northeastern Minnesota, open and brushland habitats are typically imbedded within the larger forest landscape. As noted in 1. several game and nongame species in greatest conservation need, and listed as state endangered, threatened or special concern, with benefit.

9. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

 X YES

 NO

Restoration and enhancement activities would occur on priority parcels recently designated as WMA.

10. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

Regular project updates and accomplishment and financial reports will be shared with all partners and the Council.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

11. When do you expect to see these changes?

Changes will be seen after the tracts are designated as WMAs.

12. Why will this strategy work?

This strategy will work because it has a proven track record. Numerous, instances of these partners successfully collaborating on past projects to secure funding to acquire land for addition to the WMA system exist.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

All project partners will participate in decisions affecting the project.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

The Watters tract in Aitkin County has had formal County Board approval. The remaining three tracts in Aitkin County and one tract in Kanabec County have not had formal approval, but local County Commissioners have been contacted and their initial support successfully sought. Support from St. Louis County is currently being sought.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

☒ YES

☐ NO

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? If so what kind of use? Not applicable.

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easements as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever? Not applicable.

☐ YES

☐ NO

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate? Not applicable.

Years

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

- ☒ Northern Forest
- ☐ Forest/Prairie Transition
- ☐ Southeast Forest
- ☐ Prairie
- ☐ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ YES

☐ NO

If these open and brushland tracts are not acquired while the opportunities exist, the chances to protect them permanently from land practices incompatible as open and brushland wildlife habitat, development and parcelization may be lost.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☐ YES

☒ NO

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

☒ YES

☐ NO

In 2002, DNR Division of Wildlife completed "An Assessment of Open Landscapes for Management of Brushland Wildlife Habitat in Northern and Central Minnesota" to provide information on open landscape wildlife locations, pre-settlement vegetation, land use and cover and landowner/administration to resource managers for identification and prioritization of large, open landscapes. The assessment is being used in DNR's landscape planning effort, Subsection Forest Resource Management Planning, and priority open landscapes (ECS landtype associations) are being identified through the planning process. All of the open and brushland tracts proposed for acquisition lie within or at the edge of these priority open landscapes.

A sharp-tailed grouse habitat model that is nearly complete will help further refine open landscape management and acquisition decisions made within the priority open landscapes.

Also, a pilot study in Aitkin County was conducted in spring/summer 2009 as part of a planned long term study that will examine habitat selection, nest success and

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Project Title: Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership

survival of sharp-tailed grouse. Data from this study and the subsequent long term study will provide addition information that will continually improve and keep management adaptive.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

In addition to the information and benefits explained in 1. and 21., the following also provides scientific foundation for this project:

- Leks (dancing grounds) are the essential hubs of subpopulations. Nesting and brooding rearing occur in suitable habitat within approximately a two-mile radius of leks. A study in 1999 revealed 13 sharp-tailed grouse leks in northeastern Minnesota that had the greatest potential (based on longevity and number of birds using the leks) to be maintained as large active leks and serve as core populations. Two of the brushland tracts in Aitkin County proposed for acquisition have either one of these 13 leks located on it or immediately adjacent to it, and a third is within 1¼ mile. Both tracts in St. Louis County are within 1¼ miles of one of these leks.

- All of the tracts will be critical to providing suitable patches of nesting and brood rearing habitat for subpopulations of sharp-tailed grouse in northeastern Minnesota. Research by Stanley Temple in Wisconsin suggests that suitable habitat patches of 4000 ha (roughly 10,000 acres, 15½ sq. miles, or a 2.2 mile radius circle) are needed for a sharp-tailed grouse population to survive. Opportunities to protect and connect suitable patches of this size are dwindling due to development, parcelization and other landscape change pressures.

24. How do you set priorities?

To consider an open or brushland tract for purchase and designation as a WMA, it must be located within an ECS landtype association identified as a priority open landscape through DNR's landscape planning process and the local County Board must give approval. Further criteria to prioritize which tracts are most critical to acquire include:

1. Location within LSOHC Northern Forest Section –
 - Within Carlton, Aitkin, St. Louis, or Koochiching County – 5 points
 - Within Pine or Kanabec County – 10 points
2. Distance to active sharp-tailed grouse lek -
 - > 2 miles – 0 points
 - 1 mile ≤ 2 miles – 5 points
 - ½ mile ≤ 1 mile – 8 points
 - < ½ mile - 10 points

Project Title: Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership

3. Tract size -
 - < 40 acres – 2 points
 - 40 acres ≤ 160 acres – 4 points
 - 160 acres ≤ 320 acres – 6 points
 - 320 acres ≤ 640 acres – 8 points
 - >640 acres – 10 points
4. Distance to protected brushland -
 - > 5 miles – 0 points
 - 2 miles ≤ 5 miles – 2 points
 - 1 mile ≤ 2 miles – 4 points
 - ½ mile ≤ 1 mile – 6 points
 - 0 miles ≤ ½ mile - 8 points
 - Adjacent - 10 points

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

- **Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, 2008** – This partnership will address and advance the Habitat Recommendations of 1. Protect priority land habitats (p. 63), 3. Improve connectivity and access to outdoor recreation (p. 74), 5. Restore land, wetlands, and wetland-associated watershed (p. 80), and 7. Keep water on the landscape (p.84).
- **MDNR Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare, 2006** – Lists sharp-tailed grouse and other open and brushland wildlife species that are species in greatest conservation need (App. B) and key habitats which occur in brushland ecosystems (wetland-nonforest, shrub/woodland-upland, forest-lowland conifer) of the Tamarack Lowland and Mille Lacs Upland ECS Subsections (profiles on pages 184 and 154, respectively) where the proposed open and brushland tracts to acquire are located. The goal of stabilizing and increasing populations of species in greatest conservation need will be addressed.
- **MDNR A Strategic Conservation Agenda, 2009-2013**

Trend: Changes Related to Energy and Climate

Conservation-based Energy Sources (p. 19, key measure on DNR-administered lands) – Biomass harvesting has great potential to serve as a management tool in open and brushlands habitats.

Trend: Landscape Changes from Growth and Development

Integrated Public and Private Land Management (p. 29, key measure of number of protected WMAs) – This project will add WMAs to the system.

Project Title: Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership

- **Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition (2002) – The Next 50 Years – Habitat is the Key** – This partnership will help meet goals of additional WMA acres in Ecological Sections 5 (p.10, Northern Lakes) and 8 & 9 (p. 15, Superior Uplands) in which sharp-tailed grouse are noted as a focus species.

D. Budget Request

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel (PF staff, details below)	\$17,500	\$12,500	
Contracts (boundary surveys, parking lot development, fence & building removal, shearing, seeding)	\$15,000	\$120,000	
Equipment/Tools/Supplies (posts, signs, wire, fleet, seed)		\$50,000	
Fee Acquisition	\$3,502,400		
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Partnership – appraisals	\$30,000		
DNR – closing costs	\$12,000		
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$3,576,900	\$182,500	

E. Personnel Details

PF Staff (Director of Conservation Programs, Regional Wildlife Biologist, and Director of Public Finance/Assistant) - \$30,000

Only documented expenditures direct to this project would be eligible for reimbursement.

Project Title: Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership

F. All Leverage

Source	Fiscal Year 11 (Protection)	Fiscal Year 12 (Enhancement & Restoration)	Fiscal Year 13
Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society	\$1,000		
Pheasants Forever			
- State	\$5,000		
- Kanabec Co.	\$5,000		
- Other Chapters	\$5,000		
(Additional contributions are expected)			
Minnesota Waterfowl Association			
- Hill River	\$6,300		
Ruffed Grouse Society			
- State	\$1,000		
Minnesota Deer Hunters Association	TBD		
(Contributions are expected)			
Central Lakes College			
- Natural Resource Club	\$300		
Minnesota DNR			
- Division of Fish & Wildlife		\$25,000	
(staff time/salaries)			
TOTAL	\$23,600	\$25,000	

Project Title: Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership

G. Outcomes:

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands *	Prairies	Forests *	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>100 ac</i>		<i>179.7 ac brushland</i>	<i>279.7 ac</i>
Protect	<i>766.3 ac</i>		<i>1501.1 brushland, 165 ac forest</i>	<i>2,432.4 ac</i>
Enhance	<i>666.3 ac</i>		<i>1321.4 ac brushland, 165 ac forest</i>	<i>2,152.7 ac</i>

** Wetland acres are predominantly open and brushland habitats.*

** Forest acres are upland. Because brushlands in the Northern Forest are not part of prairie ecosystems, they are placed under the Forest category along with the open land habitats intermixed with them.*

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>Northern Forest</i>		<i>Northern Forest</i>	<i>Northern Forest</i>
Protect	<i>Northern Forest</i>		<i>Northern Forest</i>	<i>Northern Forest</i>
Enhance	<i>Northern Forest</i>		<i>Northern Forest</i>	<i>Northern Forest</i>

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$30,700</i>		<i>\$55,300</i>	<i>\$86,000</i>
Protect	<i>\$1,127,000</i>		<i>\$2,449,900</i>	<i>\$3,576,900</i>
Enhance	<i>\$30,000</i>		<i>\$66,500</i>	<i>\$96,500</i>

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$700</i>		<i>\$1,300</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>
Protect	<i>\$7,400</i>		<i>\$16,200</i>	<i>\$23,600</i>
Enhance	<i>\$7,100</i>		<i>\$15,900</i>	<i>\$23,000</i>

Project Title: Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability	766.3 ac		1501.1 ac brushland, 165 ac forest	2,432.4 ac
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table (see map on next page for acquisition locations)

Measure	Milestone	Date
Complete acquisition of seven open and brushland habitat tracts		June 30, 2011
Complete initial restoration and enhancement activities		June 30, 2012

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

A budget does not currently exist for this project.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Initial activities to prepare tracts for use as WMAs and enhancement and restoration of open and brushland habitats will be funded through this grant. Habitat improvements will be sustained through the DNR budget and funds provided through the partnership. Partner funds will come from their general membership and grants, such as LSOHC and Heritage Enhancement grants.

Project Title: Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership

K. List of Proposed Open and Brushland Tracts to Protect (from Highest to Lowest Priority) (see map on next page):

Kanabec County

1. Tumbler tract (T42N R22W, parts of Sec. 20, 28, 29, 31 & 32)
- 1,285 acres; \$2,700,000 estimate

Aitkin County

2. Thompson tract (T48N R25W, E1/2 Sec. 5)
- 279.7 acres; \$280,000 estimate
3. Rono tract (T50N R25W, W½ Sec. 18, W½ Sec. 19)
- 596.4 acres; \$358,000 estimate
4. Watters tract (T50N R25W, E1/2SW Sec. 11)
- 80 acres; \$56,000 estimate
5. Rezac tract (T47N R26W, Sec. 9)
- 158.5 acres; \$109,000 estimate

St. Louis County

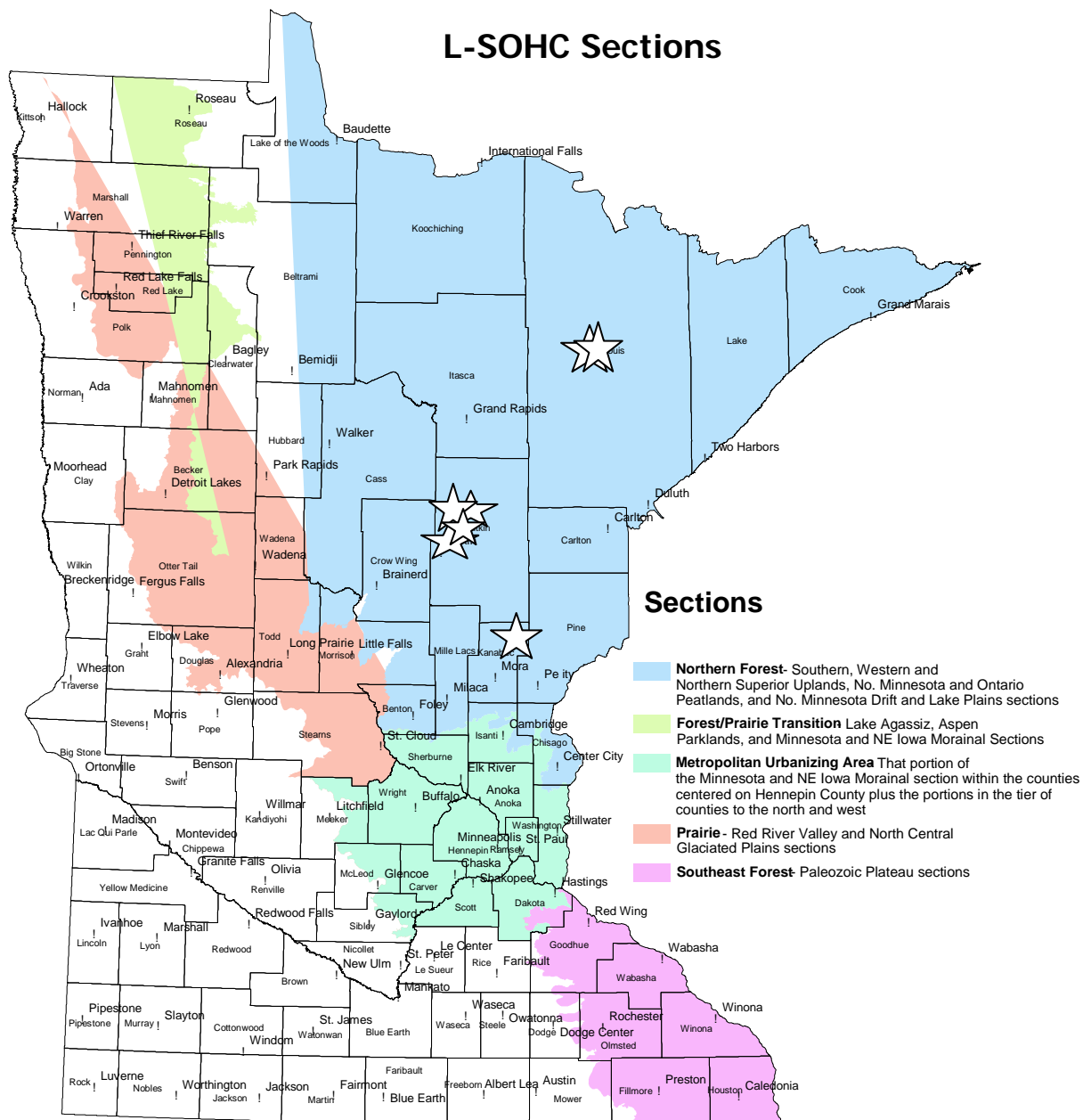
6. Thomas tract (T55N R18W, SW Sec. 27)
- 20 acres; \$14,000 estimate
7. Palusky tract (T55N R18W, NE Sec. 27)
- 12.8 acres; \$9,000 estimate

Total fee acquisition estimate = \$3,526,000

Partnership leverage toward fee acquisition = \$23,600

Total request for fee acquisition = \$3,502,400

Project Title: Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title:

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: #15 RIM for Forest Habitat

Date: October 13, 2009

Manager's Name: Steve Hughes

Title: Aitkin County SWCD District Manager

Mailing Address: 130 Southgate Drive Aitkin, MN 56431

Telephone: (218) 927-6565

Fax: (218) 927-6014

E-Mail: .aitkinswcd@gmail.

Web Site: www.aitkincountyswcd.org

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs <i>For programs that may want to request OHF funds in future recommendation rounds, complete the columns below. One time requests enter zeros in all 3 fiscal years</i>		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	3,300,000	0	0	0

A. Summary

Conservation easements on private land that restrict subdivision and development are needed to protect high priority fish and wildlife habitats in the forested zone of Minnesota. These habitats include:

RIM for Forest Habitat

1. Unique Riparian forest parcels that provide ruffed grouse and whitetail deer habitat
2. Waterfowl habitat on Wild Rice Lakes

Program Title:

3. Trout Habitat in Streams

4. Deep high quality lakes that provide game fish habitat for walleyes and northern pike.

This proposal will expand the highly effective Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) program to the forested region of the state. RIM has been successful in the agricultural areas of MN for twenty years. Expanding RIM to forested regions will provide a new opportunity to protect these high priority habitats that have not been targeted in the past.

By investing funds in easements on strategic private lands protection of large blocks of adjacent public lands can be completed.

B. Background Information

What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Wild rice lakes, trout streams, and deep water Cisco lakes and their adjacent riparian areas are sensitive habitats. Allowing property adjacent to these sensitive resources to be subdivided and developed will result in habitat degradation and loss of public recreation opportunities. An expanded RIM program targeting these habitats can provide the needed protection.

According to a US Forest Service Research Review dated Autumn 2008:

“Twenty percent of America’s family forests are owned by people who are 75 years or older. Their lands (tens of millions of acres of family forests, that is, nonindustrial private forests) will ultimately be passed on to their heirs or

RIM for Forest Habitat

sold to new owners. These lands are mostly in smaller parcels (less than 200 acres) but the sum total is astonishing...” “What the family forest landowners do with their lands in the next several decades will have a

Program Title:

substantial effect on all of us here in the Northeast and Midwest. Poor estate planning may force the sale or division of the land, which in turn can lead to subdivision and development. ”

What action will be taken?

A conservation easement program will be established for protection of high priority fish and wildlife habitats in the 15 SWCD areas. The program will follow the well-tested template of the private lands RIM program currently implemented by Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) and the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). The land remains on the tax rolls as privately owned, working forests. The easement purchases the subdivision and development rights. A payment formula based on a range of 30% to 50% of the average township land values will be used to determine the payment rate for these high value riparian lands. Public access is not a requirement of a landowner enrolling a parcel in this program. It is critical to engage the RIM tool in the protection of high quality northern Minnesota fish and wildlife habitat while the opportunity still exists.

Who will take action and when?

This proposal will provide SWCD's, in cooperation with the BWSR, with resources to offer conservation easements on the highest priority lands as identified by a local screening committee. Easements will be completed for three years with this proposal. These committees will work with available lists of wild rice lakes, trout streams, and deep water cisco lakes and their adjacent riparian areas to select the most critical habitat to be protected

RIM for Forest Habitat

from subdivision and development. Collectively, the 15 SWCDs involved in this proposal represent about 71% of the forestland in the State of

Program Title:

Minnesota. Because this proposal funds an easement program using the template of RIM, the infrastructure is largely in place to deliver the program immediately. Some training for SWCD staff in the 15 county area will be required because these SWCD's have not been involved in the current RIM program due to eligibility. Some time will also be required for marketing the program at the SWCD level as these parcels and these landowners have not been eligible in the past.

How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

The local steering committee will include state land managers to maximize easement opportunities, enhance public land holdings, and ensure programs are complimentary and not duplicative. One ranking criteria will include proximity to public lands and compatibility with planned management of these lands. Wild Rice lakes provide unique and productive shallow water habitat. Trout streams are highly susceptible to sedimentation and over-heating. Development pressures on the shorelines and land management activities within the watersheds threaten the sustainability of these high value resources. Coldwater fish species (cisco, whitefish, trout and burbot) found in these lakes serve as a high quality forage base for walleye and northern pike.

What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

RIM for Forest Habitat

This proposal seeks to expand RIM for northern Minnesota into priceless wildlife habitat and water quality resources throughout the 15 counties in

Program Title:

the northern part of the state. Without protection of these important parcels the following threats to the habitat will occur: habitat fragmentation, waterfowl disturbance, wild rice crop disturbance, trout streams will warm up, wildlife travel corridors will be segmented.

Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

X YES

Top priority easements will be completed but additional funding will be needed to continue conveying additional easements long term.

How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

The annual RIM services funds provide for ongoing easement monitoring and any necessary enforcement.

How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

Protection is accomplished by preventing the subdivision and development of high quality wildlife habitat.

For example:

Mallard Lake is one of the top ten wild rice lakes in MN and has 95 percent publicly owned shoreland. The only private land on this outstanding habitat is 60 acres surrounded by public land. Township land values average about \$2,000 per acre. Using the proposed formula the easement payment would be 50% of the township

RIM for Forest Habitat

Program Title:

value. The public land is already protected from development, the only vulnerable area on this lake is the 60 acres of privately owned land. For \$60,000 we can complete the protection and ensure permanent protection of this priceless waterfowl habitat.

Example 2:

The Midway River is a designated trout stream. The occurrence of temperature spikes exceeding optimal levels for trout is increasing to the point that trout habitat is threatened on some reaches of the river. Land in the Midway River watershed is parcelizing quickly. Completing easements for landowners with riparian corridors would help protect critical parcels from subdivision and development. Follow up with tree plantings in the riparian zones would shade the stream, reduce water temperatures, and further enhance trout habitat.

If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

YES

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

A permanent conservation easement will be taken on the parcel following the RIM program template. The easement purchases the development rights for the parcel and the land remains on the tax roles. A payment formula based on a range of 30% to 50% of the average township land values will be used to determine the payment rate for these high value riparian lands. The payment rate is set by factors including quality of habitat, easement location, and multiple benefits. These factors will be assessed and payment percentages set by the local steering committee.

RIM for Forest Habitat

Program Title:

How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

The current RIM infrastructure will insure transparency for this program expansion. The BWSR maintains program reports including county-by-county statistics, overall statistics, and financial information.

The local steering committee, the BWSR, and the Attorney General's office review the easement documents. All easements and related documents are recorded at the County Recorder's office in the respective County's courthouse.

When do you expect to see these changes?

Protection from subdivision and development will be realized as soon as easements are completed.

Because this proposal funds an easement program using the template of RIM, the infrastructure is in place to deliver the program immediately.

Why will this strategy work?

RIM easements have been extremely successful in the protection and restoration of wetlands in other parts of the state and in the Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) easements near Camp Ripley. Due to the long-standing RIM program success, this expansion into forest habitat has a high likelihood for success.

The program buys easements for development rights for an easement payment of 30 –50% of the average township land value. The land stays on

RIM for Forest Habitat

Program Title:

the tax roll of the Local Government unit. Habitat protection is provided for a low cost to the public.

The landowner is encouraged to actively manage the land in the easement along with adjacent forestland through the development of a forest stewardship plan. The land is restricted from subdivision and development.

Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

State land management and acquisition of adjacent habitats will enhance private easements acquired through this program. Opposition will be minimized through inclusion of land managers and citizens on the local steering committee.

If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

_____YES N/A _____NO

This project is not land acquisition, it is the purchase of subdivision and development rights. SWCDs in the 15 county area have been involved in this proposal's development. Local governments are in support of initiatives that encourage private land ownership and provide for long term sustainable land uses.

If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

NA

RIM for Forest Habitat

Program Title:

If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? If so what kind of use?

Public access will be encouraged but not required for these easements. Due to the reduced rate of 30-50% of average township land value rate paid for the easement a public access requirement is not conducive to enrolling the priority parcels targeted by this program. Protection of these private lands enhances adjacent public lands and their recreational values.

If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easements as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

YES

If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

As long as funding is available the RIM program can continue to establish easements on priority parcels for habitat protection.

1. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

- ☒ Northern Forest
- ☐ Forest/Prairie Transition
- ☐ Southeast Forest
- ☐ Prairie
- ☐ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

RIM for Forest Habitat

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title:

2.Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ **X** ☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If yes, please explain.

Development of these highly desirable parcels continues even in this slower economy. There is currently no program to help SWCDs address this conservation need so immediate funding is critical to beginning to protect these habitats.

In discussing the threat to large land parcels and their public values the US Forest Service Research Review dated Autumn 2008 states:

“Without a doubt, this will be the largest intergenerational transfer of forest land in our nation’s history and we are not ready for it.”

If those parcels were protected from development through a permanent conservation easement, we would be ready.

2. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☒ **X** ☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If Yes, list the names of the WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

In many cases a single private ownership threatens total protection of these high priority lakes. This private easement program will enhance existing state, federal, and local government land holdings. Specific areas will vary based on location within the 15 county area.

RIM for Forest Habitat

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title:

3. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

 X YES

 NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

4. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

When parcels of land are subdivided and developed the habitat values are diminished in numerous ways. Forest fragmentation occurs which impacts nesting success of many songbirds

5. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

Four priority habitat areas identified in this project are:

1. Unique Riparian forest parcels that provide ruffed grouse and whitetail deer habitat
2. Waterfowl habitat on Wild Rice Lakes
3. Trout Habitat in Streams
4. Deep high quality lakes that provide game fish habitat for walleys and northern pike.

By working with these priorities and fine tuning the lists with a local screening committee, easements can be offered to protect the "best of the best".

RIM for Forest Habitat

Program Title:

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

Executive Summary SCPP pg. 4 talks about focusing on land and water habitat fragmentation, degradation, and loss and conversion, all of these having the most impact on biodiversity and significant impacts on water quality/quantity. There is a need to keep water on the landscape.

There is also a table on SCPP pg. 268, an assessment of costs and environmental benefits to protecting large blocks of forest land.

This proposal complements many of the goals of the Minnesota Forest Resources Council's North Central Region.

D. Budget

The budget for this proposal includes easement acquisition. Ten percent of the easement amount will be split evenly between the BWSR and SWCD. This payment will include funds for SWCD staff to complete easements based on a priority ranking at the local level with significant input from Federal State and Local land managers. The payment includes legal fees and other technical assistance for the program.

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	100,000	100,000	100,000
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Easement Stewardship			

Program Title:

Professional Services

Travel

Additional Budget Items

TOTAL	1,100,000	1,100,000	1,100,000
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E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
--------------	-------------	----------------

No additional personnel are expected to be hired to complete this project.

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Office facilities	13,500	13,500	13,500

Travel mileage	4,125	4,125	4,125
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Committee review	10,800	10,800	10,800
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Program Title:

TOTAL	28,425	28,425	28,425
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G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect			9,000 acres	9,000 acres
Enhance			5,000 acres	18,000 acres

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Program Title:

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect			\$3,300,000	\$3,300,000
Enhance				

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement			9,000 acres	9,000 acres

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
3.000 acres of easements	Fiscal year 2011	
3.000 acres of easements	Fiscal year 2012	
3.000 acres of easements	Fiscal year 2013	

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title:

RIM for Forest Habitat

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget:

Our current budgets do not contain funding for Conservation Easements. This would be new funding for new conservation easement projects

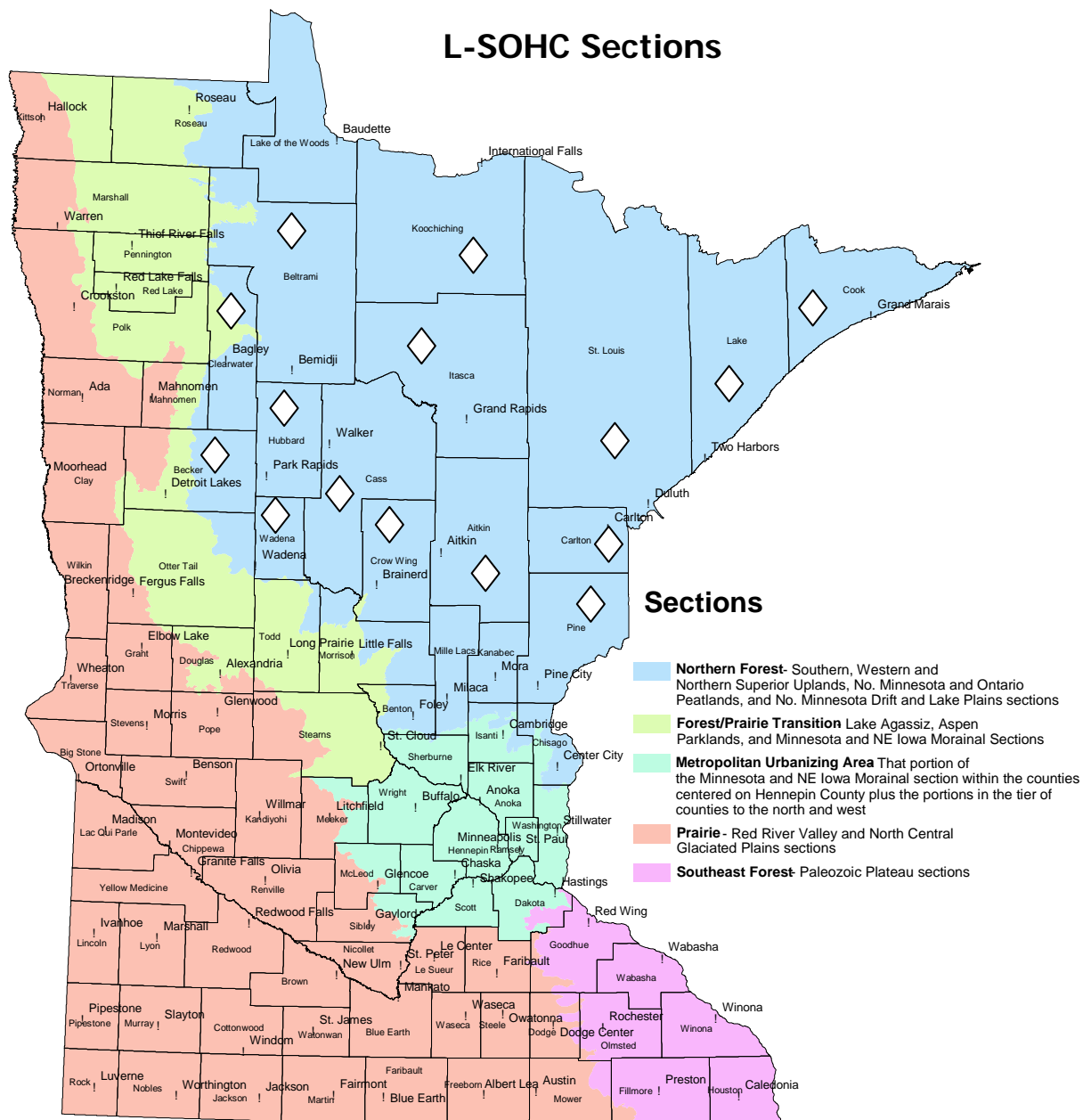
J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Perpetual easements managed through an approved forest stewardship plan will sustain the habitat improvements realized.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

The projects will be spaced throughout a 15-county region of the state. This region will be generally located in northeastern Minnesota in the Northern Forests region. The 15 counties are identified on the Minnesota map by a white diamond.

Program Title:



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: #16 The Fish Creek Corridor Acquisition Program

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: DuWayne Konewko

Title: Community Development and Parks Director

Mailing Address: 1830 County Road B East, Maplewood MN. 55109

Telephone: 651.249.2330

Fax: 651.249.2319

E-Mail: DuWayne.Konewko@ci.mmaplewood.mn.us

Web Site: [.ci.maplewood.mn](http://ci.maplewood.mn).

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	2,500,000	0	0	0

A. Summary - Our program will protect habitat corridors of the Mississippi River through the protection of Fish Creek which is a first order tributary to the Mississippi River. The Fish Creek Corridor Acquisition Program seeks to protect the waters in the Fish Creek watershed by acquiring land that will result in creating and improving habitat in this area of the Mississippi River basin.

B. Background Information

- 1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?**
Protection of the Fish Creek Corridor through the acquisition of land that will help in providing much needed habitat and protection in this Mississippi River Basin
- 2. What action will be taken? The Fish Creek Corridor Acquisition Program will purchase land that is vital to improving habitat corridors in this Mississippi River Basin.**

3. **Who will take action and when?** The Fish Creek Natural Area Greenway Corridor Ad Hoc Commission will be responsible for prioritizing land in this corridor for acquisition and forwarding these recommendations to the city council for consideration.
4. **How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?** The City of Maplewood will ensure that the funding of this program is coordinated with other Constitutional Funding.
5. **What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist. The program will acquire land that will provide much needed resources for habitat in this Mississippi River Basin.**
6. **When do you expect to see these habitat changes? Upon acquisition, staff will work directly with many other partners in developing and charting a strategy to improve and enhance habitat opportunities with these acquired lands.**
7. **Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?**

_____ YES _____ x _____ NO
If not, how will you finance completion? The city and its partners will continue to explore additional opportunities regarding funding for this unique area.
8. **How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments? The maintenance will be programmed into the city's budget.**
9. **How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife? Through the acquisition of land, the city and its many partners will begin the restoration and enhancement aimed directly at improving habitat.**
10. **If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?**

_____ x _____ YES _____ NO
If yes briefly describe the kind of protection. The acquired land will be public.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars. Through working with many other government entities as well as not for profit environmental advocacy groups.

12. Why will this strategy work? Yes, this will ensure that the program fund dollars are used appropriately and wisely.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program? Private property advocates and other groups who oppose acquisition of private property for “public use”.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

 YES x NO The Fish Creek Natural Area Greenway Corridor Ad Hoc commission will complete its prioritization of potential land for acquisition work in the next month or so.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

 YES NO The Fish Creek Natural Area Greenway Corridor Ad Hoc commission will complete its prioritization of potential land for acquisition work in the next month or so.

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

 YES NO
If Yes what kind of use? The Fish Creek Natural Area Greenway Corridor Ad Hoc commission will complete its prioritization of potential land for acquisition work in the next month or so. The use of easements is also a tool the commission is reviewing.

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO** To be determined.

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

_____ **1-10** _____ **Years**

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

_____ Northern Forest

_____ Forest/Prairie Transition

_____ Southeast Forest

_____ Prairie

☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

If yes, please explain. Undeveloped land is currently available in the Fish Creek Corridor that might not be otherwise available in the future – developed state.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

_____ **YES**

_____ ☒ **NO**

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

_____ **YES** _____ **NO**
If yes explain the model briefly. Information will be forthcoming.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce. Information will be forthcoming.

24. How do you set priorities? (*Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.*) Information to be forthcoming.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans - Information will be forthcoming

The Fish Creek Corridor Acquisition Program

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition	2,500,000		
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	2,500,000		

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
-------	------	---------

It is not anticipated at this point that any additional personnel will be required to implement the outcomes of this program.

The Fish Creek Corridor Acquisition Program

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Information will be forthcoming			
TOTAL			

G. Outcomes: Information will be forthcoming regarding these tables

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the "protect" row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

The Fish Creek Corridor Acquisition Program

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

The Fish Creek Corridor Acquisition Program

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone

Date

Measure

Information will be forthcoming

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

Information will be forthcoming

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained? Information will be forthcoming.

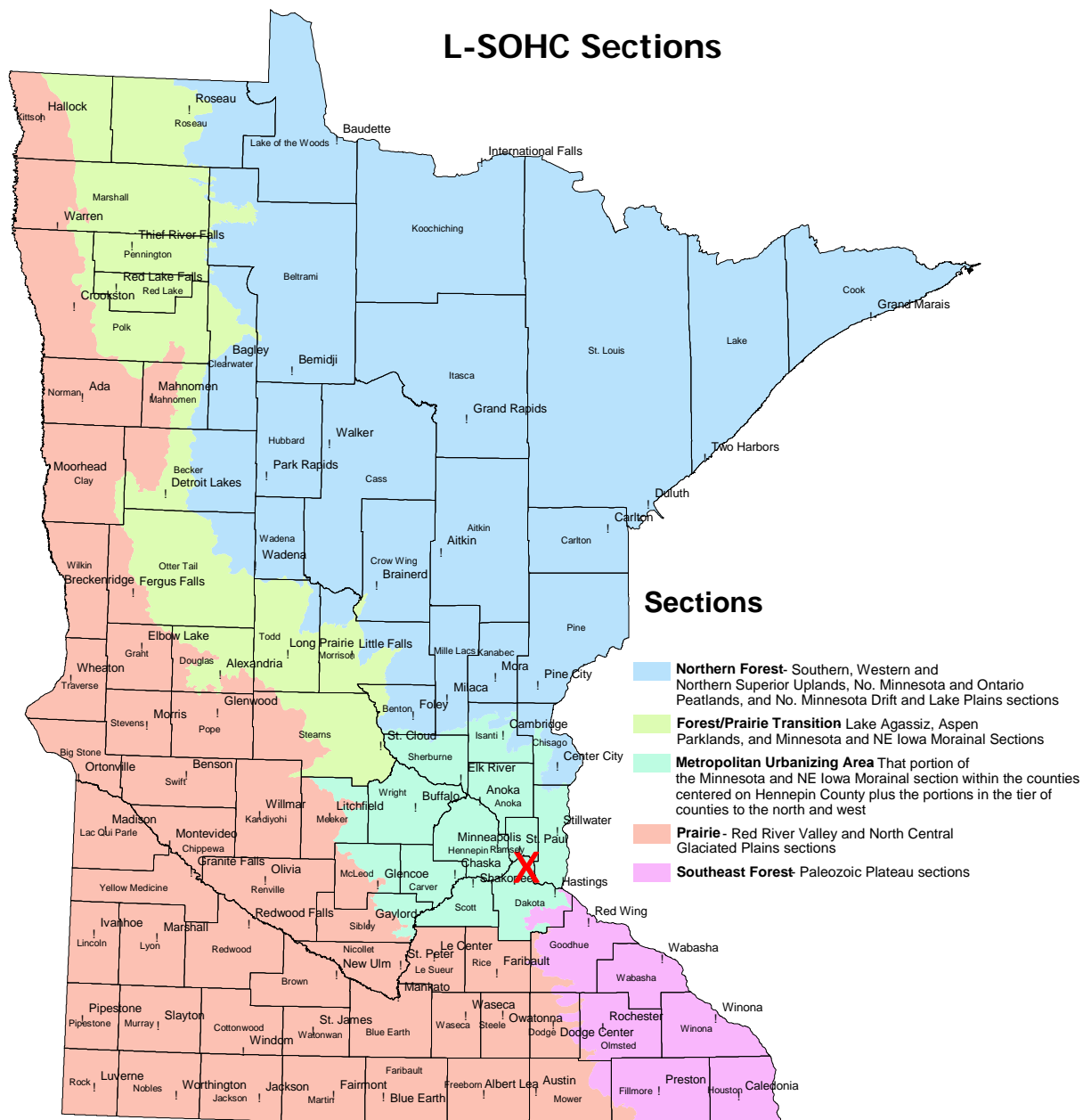
K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Double left click to bring up the map editor. Symbols should be on the left side of the pop-up banner at the top of your screen or at the bottom left depending on your software.

If you can't bring up the interactive map editor follow these instructions:

1. Make a paper copy of the map,
2. By hand place symbols on the map corresponding to the location of the projects in your proposal,
3. Scan the marked map to a pdf, and
4. Insert the marked pdf map as the last page in your submission.

The Fish Creek Corridor Acquisition Program



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Minnesota Prairie Recovery Project

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: #17 Minnesota Prairie Recovery Project

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: Tom Landwehr

Title: Assistant State Director, The Nature Conservancy

Mailing Address: 1101 W. River Parkway, Suite 200, Mpls., MN 55415

Telephone: 612-331-0705

Fax: 612-331-0770

E-Mail: tlandwehr@tnc.org

Web Site: www.nature.org/minnesota

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$6,286,298	\$12,000,000	\$15,000,000	\$15,000,000

A. Summary

Quality prairies, savannas and grasslands are Minnesota's most threatened habitat type. Less than 1% of Minnesota's original prairies remain (180,000 acres) and half of these have no protected status. Continued advances in agricultural and land management technologies present new threats to remaining grasslands, and conversion of these last tracts of native prairies and savannas threatens even the most marginal lands. Further, on the protected prairies and restored publicly-protected grasslands in Minnesota, restoration and enhancement activities are inadequate to keep these lands in optimal condition. Grasslands are being overtaken by undesirable woody vegetation and invasive species, reducing their value for grassland species like prairie chicken, prairie waterfowl, pheasants, and a myriad of non-game species.

Traditional tools for conserving and managing prairies and savannas will continue to be important, but conservationists are increasingly aware of their limitations. Loss of local tax revenues and economies, inadequate capacity to both protect and manage lands by public entities, the need to strategically focus conservation efforts and maximize collaboration, and a desire to create local conservation businesses require new models of prairie conservation.

Program Title: Minnesota Prairie Recovery Project

We propose a 15-year goal to provide protection to the remaining 90,000 acres of native prairie/savanna, a 20-year goal to restore and protect an additional 500,000 acres of diverse grasslands/savannas, and a 10-year goal to increase management capacity to annually manage 300,000 acres of grassland and savannas per year. This proposal takes the first steps to achieve these goals by initiating a comprehensive, coordinated and collaborative prairie conservation initiative. Annual investments by the LSOHC will be required to realize these ambitious outcomes.

When completed, the outcomes of this proposal will include: protection of 2000 acres of native prairie and/or savanna; restoration of 500 acres of diverse, local ecotype grassland; enhancement of 8000 acres of grassland/savanna by prescribed fire, invasive species removal, and/or conservation grazing; and development of a new conservation model in 3 parts of the state that will serve as a platform for accelerated conservation across Minnesota.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The conservation problems facing Minnesota's prairies, prairie potholes, grasslands and savannas are many, and include:

- a. Continued losses of native and restored grasslands due to economic pressures.
- b. Degradation of existing public grasslands and wetlands due to encroachment by woody vegetation and other invasive species that reduces their values to wildlife and people.
- c. Inadequate public access for hunting and fishing in agricultural parts of the state.
- d. Potential loss of local taxes and local incomes when land is acquired by public entities.
- e. Programmatic and staff limitations that reduce efficiencies in implementing diverse conservation programs across multiple partners.

The creation of the Outdoor Heritage Fund finally offers the resources needed to provide adequate conservation in Minnesota's prairie, prairie pothole and savanna landscapes. With the Council's support and the efforts of multiple partners, large and productive grassland landscapes can become a reality in Minnesota.

2. What action will be taken?

With the requested funding, and with other funds leveraged by this money and brought by other partners, the following actions and outcomes will be realized.

- a. A "Prairie Recovery Project Partnership" will be formed to include representatives of prairie conservation organizations, including: MN Department of Natural Resources (DNR), MN Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Pheasants Forever (PF), MN Prairie Chicken Society (MPCS) and The Nature Conservancy. This group will identify 3 pilot focus areas and establish other guidelines for project implementation. Local workgroups will then be established to provide on-the-ground planning and coordination of conservation

Program Title: Minnesota Prairie Recovery Project

- activities. Additional groups that will be contacted for input or representation will include: Ducks Unlimited, MN Waterfowl Association, MN Deer Hunters Association, Land Stewardship Project, MN Cattleman's Association, local livestock groups, MN Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and MN Farmer's Union.
- b. Long-term protection of an estimated 2000 acres of existing and restorable grassland, prairie pothole complex, and/or savanna to supplement existing efforts. Lands will be held by The Nature Conservancy subject to a legal interest held by the State of Minnesota. Lands will be open to public hunting and fishing as provided in the Constitution, and basic developments will be implemented (boundary signage, parking lot). Protection efforts will be coordinated with other partner protection programs (e.g., DNR Wildlife Management Area and Prairie Bank programs).
 - c. A separate and discrete internal fund will be established by The Nature Conservancy to cover ongoing land-management costs. Income generated by agricultural leases (grazing, haying and/or cropping), earned interest, public contributions and donations will be held in this account and used to pay for property taxes and ongoing management costs.
 - d. Restoration of an estimated 500 acres of diverse, local-ecotype grassland or grassland/wetland complex (part of the above protected acres) as a supplement to existing efforts. Preference will be given to local producers and contractors for provision of seed and establishment of prairies, to promote creation of local conservation-oriented businesses.
 - e. Enhancement of an estimated 8000 acres of grassland complex on public and Conservancy lands ("protected conservation lands") as a supplement to existing efforts. Management techniques will include prescribed fire, conservation grazing and/or haying, removal of woody vegetation, and control of exotic species. Much of this work will be accomplished by contract. Maximum use will be made of MN Conservation Crew (MCC) staff, otherwise, local businesses will be solicited.
 - f. On-the-ground staff provided by this grant will form and lead local coordination and implementation teams; identify protection, restoration and enhancement needs and opportunities within the focus area; work with DNR and FWS staff to delineate conservation projects on public lands; coordinate deployment of contract and staff resources to protected conservation lands; contact and work with private landowners to coordinate agricultural activities/leases on appropriate protected conservation lands (e.g., haying, grazing, cropping); educate lessees on appropriate conservation grazing/haying practices; supervise management of lands acquired above; plan and conduct prescribed burns; secure other funding for conservation practices; and other activities related to prairie conservation in the focus areas. We propose 3 "term" biologists ("prairie managers") be hired to coordinate activities in focus areas. These will be hired and employed by the Conservancy, Pheasants Forever, or another non-government partner, but are expected to be

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Minnesota Prairie Recovery Project

located in a DNR or FWS office. This is intended to foster better coordination and collaboration among partners, while ensuring enhancement needs on public lands are being specifically addressed.

- g. Contracts will be let to provide a high level of enhancement activities to new and existing protected conservation lands, greatly expanding current capacity. These activities will improve the habitat value of public lands that are not currently receiving adequate management treatment, while simultaneously providing jobs for MCC and local businesses. Activities will include removal of undesirable woody vegetation, identification and treatment of invasive species infestations, removal of abandoned fences and/or other structures, and related restoration/enhancement activities.
- h. One part-time project coordinator will oversee implementation of the above activities, and provide administrative support for budget monitoring and reporting. Significant marketing and media outreach will be provided by the Conservancy to highlight the goals and accomplishments of the project to local and statewide constituents, as well as elected officials.

3. Who will take action and when?

The Nature Conservancy will implement this project as soon as funding is approved. A projected timeline for each of the above actions is presented below.

Action	Q1Y1	Q2Y1	Q3Y1	Q4Y1	Q1Y2	Q2Y2	Q3Y2	Q4Y2
Partnership established, meeting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Coordinator appointed		X						
Prairie managers hired/working			X	X	X	X	X	X
Prairies acquired			300ac	300ac	300ac	300ac	300ac	500ac
Restoration activities						X	X	X
Enhancement activities		X		X	X	X		X
Marketing & outreach		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

It is a principal objective of this effort that programs and resources of other conservation partners be most efficiently coordinated on-the-ground. To that end, coordination will be fostered by:

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Minnesota Prairie Recovery Project

- a. Other organizations receiving Outdoor Heritage Funds (e.g., DNR, BWSR) will be part of the Prairie Recovery Project Partnership, to identify available resources, opportunities for collaboration, and best programs for particular situations (e.g., best protection tool for a particular tract of land). This coordination will occur at both the statewide and field level.
- b. The Conservancy will continue to work with elected officials and the Clean Water Council to secure Clean Water funds for non-point source pollution reduction efforts, that can provide money for Wetlands Reserve Program and similar mutually-beneficial habitat conservation programs.
- c. While timing precluded a joint proposal this year, we are hopeful that there can be a joint Prairie Recovery Project proposal representing multiple partners. This would offer the best opportunity for coordination.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Protection efforts won't immediately change habitats, but will allow public access. Once prescribed fire and management capacity is engaged, however, there will be substantial habitat improvements. Prescribed fire and conservation grazing/haying are known to improve prairies and other grasslands by reducing undesirable woody vegetation and certain non-native cool-season grasses. These practices also improve the physical structure of grasslands (height and density), and can improve diversity in grasslands that haven't been properly managed. Invasive species, like spotted knapweed, purple loosestrife and leafy spurge, can be very aggressive in establishing dominance in grasslands, essentially reducing the ability of desirable grasses and forbs to compete. Once invasive species have taken over, the habitat quality (and grazing/haying quality) of any grassland is dramatically reduced. Finally, reconstruction of diverse grasslands and grassland/wetland complexes (500 acres proposed here) will provide that increment of additional habitat but, more importantly, these will be located to maximize synergistic benefits of existing grassland complexes. By strategically locating these restorations, we will provide travel corridors for wildlife, buffer existing grasslands from off-site impacts (e.g., overspray of herbicides from adjacent croplands), and increase nesting habitat for ground-nesting waterfowl in wetland areas where uplands are lacking. Other benefits of this project include:

- Better habitat for game and nongame species.
- Enhanced natural processes due to larger grassland landscapes (e.g., better nest success with less "edge," better diversity).
- Improved ability of lands to hold precipitation, reducing runoff.
- Improved cleansing & infiltration of precipitation to groundwater.
- Improved ability of lands to clean runoff, improving surface water quality.
- Enhanced and increased ability of vegetation to sequester carbon.
- Increased access for hunting, fishing and other compatible uses.
- Maintenance of local economies through compatible use of lands; potential uses for grazing, haying, biomass and others.

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Program Title: Minnesota Prairie Recovery Project

- Retention of local tax revenues.
- Sustaining local business, providing jobs via MCC and private business.
- Ability to attract and secure additional funding from other sources.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

As per table above, habitat changes will begin in the second quarter of the first year of funding. Initially, these will be primarily enhancement activities (woody vegetation removal, invasive species control), and preparation for subsequent year prescribed fire and restoration activities. By second quarter of year 2, all restoration and enhancement activities will be in full swing. Restorations will be fully functional by end of year 3.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

 X YES

 NO

If not, how will you finance completion?

A very unique aspect of this proposal is the provision for earning income from compatible agricultural activities on acquired lands, the establishment of a management fund from these earnings, and the use of this fund to pay for taxes and certain management activities into the future. This is a model employed by the Conservancy, but is not in wide use among public agencies. We propose this as an experimental model, to investigate its feasibility in a public arena. If successful, this may help resolve several issues that the Council repeatedly faces: long-term management costs, payment in lieu of taxes, and local opposition to public land ownership when local income opportunities are lost.

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

This project proposes a new conservation model, one where income generated by the protected conservation lands acquired with Outdoor Heritage Funds (OHF) provide funding for property taxes and long-term management costs. Unlike forestlands, prairies require much more frequent periodic enhancement – annual monitoring and control of invasive species, and regular treatment with prescribed fire or haying/grazing. This proposal also provides for treatment of existing public lands, those without long-term enhancement funding strategies, and it is anticipated that future OHF funds (and other conservation funds) will be required to re-treat them in the future until a similar stand-alone funding model can be established.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

This proposal directly protects an estimated 2000 acres of prairie, prairie/wetland complex and savanna; it directly restores an estimated 500 acres of prairie and prairie/wetland complex; and it enhances an estimated 8000 acres of prairies, prairie/wetland complex and savannas. Both the restoration and enhancement activities will improve the lands for game and other wildlife by

Program Title: Minnesota Prairie Recovery Project

increasing the composition, physical structure, size, juxtaposition with other conservation lands, and diversity of the grasslands.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

 X YES

 NO

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Four types of protected conservation lands are proposed for potential enhancement under this project:

- a. Fee-title public lands including Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA), Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA) and Aquatic Management Areas (AMA).
- b. Private lands under perpetual conservation easement held by a public agency, including Prairie Bank, Wetlands Reserve Program and FWS grassland easements.
- c. Lands acquired with OHF funding and held by the Conservancy or another non-profit organization. These lands are subject to Constitutional and statutory provisions and subject to a legal state interest. This is a very strong permanent protection.
- d. Protected conservation lands owned by the Conservancy or other non-profit conservation organization. These lands are held and managed subject to state and federal laws relating to non-profits, are held for conservation purposes, and provide various types of public access. In the case of The Nature Conservancy, our internal policies require that conservation values be protected through appropriate restrictions (such as a retained conservation easement) prior to transfer to a private entity.

By far, the principal lands that will be impacted will be those lands identified in “a” and “c,” above. Since the OHF funds will supplement existing programs, traditional sources will also be used to create a larger pool of funding and management resources.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

All OHF funds will be held in separate and discrete accounts to allow for clear accounting. All Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) will be stringently followed. Following approval of a work plan and grant agreement, all funds will be requested on a reimbursement basis. Reimbursement requests will provide a clear accounting of expenses on a form satisfactory to the Council. As required by law, all accounting and accomplishment reporting will be provided in a form satisfactory for use on the Legislative Coordinating Committee website.

In addition to the above, statutorily required accounting, the Conservancy proposes the following:

Program Title: Minnesota Prairie Recovery Project

- a. At least semi-annually, at meetings of the Prairie Recovery Project Partnership, the status of funding and leverage will be discussed in detail among all project partners.
- b. At the beginning of the project, a marketing plan will be developed that will identify key audiences (e.g., landowners, local units of government, elected officials) and needed information. This will include elements like project fact sheets, media outreach and annual reports. The Conservancy will provide the technical and financial resources needed for this effort.
- c. Members of the Partnership will be requested to provide informational materials on their websites and in their organizational publications.
- d. Other suggestions for ensuring transparency and accountability are welcomed.

12. Why will this strategy work?

There are no new tactics in this proposal; all of these practices are being used by one or more organizations already at work in Minnesota. What is new here is the effort to closely coordinate activities, to bring practices that work in the private sector into the public sector, and to greatly accelerate the use of conservation practices. The conservation community has demonstrated that these protection, restoration and enhancement activities work, but to truly reach the level of conservation that is needed for a comprehensive prairie recovery project, partners must work with a plan, with an open mind for innovation, and with appropriate new tools. We believe this project sets the table for launching the required effort. Finally, by supporting local opportunities to develop grass-based businesses (grazing, biofuels, etc.), we believe there will be reduced incentives for conversion of grasslands on unprotected private lands (i.e., grasslands will be perceived as having economic value).

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

In order for this project to deliver its maximum potential, support is required of: the Council, the Governor, the Legislature and Congress, other public and private conservation organizations, landowners, agricultural trade groups, local units of government, the media, hunting and angling groups, rural fire departments and private donors. If any of these work in opposition, the challenges for implementation grow. Because we believe this initiative truly provides a “win-win” for conservation and other public interests, we believe broad support can be won. A transparent, open project, with a good outreach and marketing element, will be critical to success. Uncontrollable risks that could diminish success include strong commodity prices (or federal policies) that encourage conversion of grasslands and high land prices that have a similar effect and reduce conservation outcomes for a given dollar.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

_____ YES

___X___ NO

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Specific tracts have not yet been identified, pending identification of focus areas and creation of local coordinating groups.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

☒ **X** **YES**

☐ **NO**

Priority will be given to protecting lands that are currently unprotected.

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

N/A – no easements proposed.

☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

N/A – no easements proposed

☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

>20 **Years**

A first chore for the Partnership will be to develop a long-range plan for prairie conservation that can comprehensively address implementation of protection, restoration and enhancement. Protection efforts will be most prominent for up to 20 years; restoration and enhancement efforts will be required indefinitely. We anticipate the need for a coordinated conservation program to similarly continue indefinitely. Additional funding requests to the Council are expected for the duration of the Legacy Amendment.

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

☐ Northern Forest

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☒ Forest/Prairie Transition
☐ Southeast Forest
☒ Prairie
☐ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**
If yes, please explain.

Once plowed, prairies are never completely recovered. Acceleration of prairie protection efforts is critical before opportunities are lost.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**
If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

Specific sites will be determined once focus areas are selected and local coordinating groups are established. We estimate at least 8000 acres of protected lands will be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**
If yes explain the model briefly.

There are at least 3 prioritization tools that have been or will be used in this project. First, a 1998 ecological assessment conducted by The Nature Conservancy for the Northern Tallgrass Prairie Ecoregion identifies core opportunity areas to conserve functioning grassland landscapes in Minnesota. Second, selection of focus areas will be based upon MN County Biological Survey (CBS) data that identifies 38 core prairie areas in the state. Finally, and in conjunction with a project proposed for funding from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Habitat Assessment and Population Evaluation Team (HAPET) will be requested to develop site-specific conservation optimization models.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

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Conservation principles of this project are based upon two complementary perspectives – maintaining viability of prairie landscapes and improving populations of grassland breeding birds (e.g., mallard, prairie chicken, bobolink, pheasant).

Accepted conservation strategies to conserve viable prairies and grassland complexes are described by Samson, et al (2003; online at: www.fs.fed.us/r1/projects/wildlife-ecology/GreatPlains.pdf), and include:

- 1) identify areas large enough to sustain an ecological system with all of its biodiversity
- 2) reverse the significant losses in area of native grasslands
- 3) ensure restoration matches the grassland that existed previously at that site
- 4) refocus the profession of range management
- 5) establish a more meaningful agency design for grassland and natural resource management.

Breeding Bird Survey results indicate that grassland bird populations are declining at a faster rate than any other group of North American birds. In recognition of this fact, the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture, a conservation partnership of states, non-governmental organizations and federal agencies, has adopted a primary goal of reversing the declining trend of grassland birds.

One factor thought to be adversely impacting grassland birds on their breeding grounds is the continued fragmentation of their habitat. Grassland Bird Conservation Areas (GBCAs) are priority areas for grassland protection and enhancement that are thought to provide suitable habitat for many or all priority grassland bird species in the tall grass prairie portion of the Prairie Pothole Region. Protocols for delineating GBCAs were developed in cooperation with the HAPET office in USFWS Region 6, Bismarck, North Dakota. (from: [://www.fws.gov/midwest/HAPET/GrasslandBirdMaps](http://www.fws.gov/midwest/HAPET/GrasslandBirdMaps)).

The Bird Conservation Area concept was developed as a model for prioritizing conservation areas for declining bird species. GBCAs were designed for grassland nesting birds and based on the following assumptions: 1) larger patches are better due to an inherent preference for larger patches by some grassland birds (a.k.a., area sensitivity), 2) patches with minimal edge (round or square shapes) are better due to fewer edges that may harbor predators, 3) trees are a hostile habitat for grassland nesting birds because they provide habitat and a travel corridor for mammalian predators and perches for avian predators, 4) productivity within a patch depends on habitat (compatible, neutral, hostile) in the surrounding landscape.

GBCAs were originally defined as an 800 ha (2000 ac) grassland core surrounded by a 4,000 ha (10,000 ac) area that contained at least 20% grassland. Since most of the tallgrass prairie has already been extensively fragmented, and recovery is usually in small patches, this definition a GBCA was too restrictive to be useful throughout most of the tallgrass prairie region. Grassland bird experts of the Prairie Pothole Region agreed that using a tiered approach would be more productive. It was assumed that the needs of the most sensitive species could be met by the largest GBCAs, while birds with fewer

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restrictions could thrive in smaller grass patches. (from: [://www.fws.gov/midwest/HAPET/Documents/FactSheetGBCAs1.](http://www.fws.gov/midwest/HAPET/Documents/FactSheetGBCAs1.)).

The principles identified for conserving prairie landscapes and the principles identified for conserving grassland birds are completely complementary and widely accepted by prairie conservationists. These will guide implementation of the Prairie Recovery Project.

Multiple benefits will be derived and have already been summarized in item #5, above. Use of these principles will help create larger landscape complexes than traditionally have been constructed, emulating the Conservancy's success at the Glacial Ridge project in Polk county, MN. There, a 24,000 acre protection and restoration project has greatly increased wildlife habitat, has restored surface and groundwater supplies and quality, has reduced surface water runoff to the Red River, has created economic stimulus as a local tourist destination, and has retained the support of local units of government due to retention of tax base.

24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

Prioritization and prioritization criteria vary with the conservation tactic being employed (i.e., protection, restoration, enhancement). Because this is a collaborative effort involving multiple partners, priorities and criteria will be established at both the state and local level by respective coordinating groups. Likely criteria for each of these tactics include:

1. Protection: location/proximity to other habitats, location/proximity to other protected lands, presence of rare/endangered species, imminence of conversion, size, cost, and likelihood for leveraged funding.
2. Restoration: feasibility/likelihood of success, location, cost, availability of seed, and availability of restoration technical assistance.
3. Enhancement: urgency/time since last enhancement, feasibility of success, accessibility, availability of enhancement technical assistance, cost, proximity to other habitats and partnership benefits.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

This project implements strategies identified in at least 5 credible plans, as identified below.

1. MN Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan. The strategic framework of this plan has 5 elements in its "Habitat" section: integrated planning, critical land protection, land and water restoration and protection, (identification of) sustainable practices, and (provision of) economic incentives for sustainable practices. Further, while the plan does not go into great detail with respect to prairie conservation, it clearly states that "protection of priority land habitats" is a vital practice, and prairies clearly fall here.

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2. Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare. The primary objective identified in the MN DNR's plan is to "stabilize and increase populations of "species in greatest conservation need (SGCN)". In the prairies of Minnesota, strategies to achieve this goal include:
 - a. Support incentives that avoid conversion of grasslands into row crops where SGCN occur.
 - b. Use mowing, cutting woody vegetation, prescribed fire, or careful use of herbicides to prevent the invasion of grasslands by trees and shrubs.
 - c. Lengthen the cutting rotations for hay; avoid early-season mowing.
 - d. Use light to moderate, rotational grazing programs to benefit SGCN
 - e. Prevent fragmentation of grassland habitat.
 - f. Avoid soil compaction in areas occupied by mammal SGCN.
 - g. Increase native plant species components
 - h. Control spread of invasive species to adjacent native-dominated sites.This project proposes to address all but item "f" above.
3. The Nature Conservancy's Northern Tallgrass Prairie Ecoregional Plan (1998). This plan identifies key conservation targets, geographic emphasis areas, threats to native plant and animal communities, and key strategies to mitigate these threats. The proposal is a solid step in the implementation of this plan.
4. DNR's Pheasant Plan. This proposal is in full support of the Pheasant Plan goal to add 1.5 million acres of undisturbed grassland to the state by 2025.
5. DNR's Waterfowl Plan. This proposal is in full support of the state Long-range Duck Recovery Plan to add 2 million acres of habitat to the state by 2025. It also utilizes establishment of complexes, as per the plan, to achieve multiple conservation synergies and benefits.

Program Title: Minnesota Prairie Recovery Project**D. Budget**

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	\$276,189	\$287,236	\$0
Contracts	\$108,000	\$216,000	\$500,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	\$216,640	\$61,600	\$0
Fee Acquisition	\$1,605,000	\$2,605,000	\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0	\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0	\$0
Professional Services	\$116,700	\$192,300	\$0
Travel	\$45,310	\$46,322	\$0
Additional Budget Items	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0
TOTAL	\$2,372,839	\$3,413,459	\$500,000

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	2-Year OHF Amount	Notes
Term biologist (3FTE)	\$317,016	New positions
Protection specialist (1/2 FTE)	\$59,976	New position
Burn crew (boss, 5 crew; 10 weeks)	\$107,893	New position; could reconfigure to use existing burn bosses
Program coordinator (1/2 FTE)	\$78,540	New position

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F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
TNC	\$424,529	\$433,019	\$441,680
RIM-CHP/TNC credits	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$300,000
NRCS EQIP	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
LCCMR Prairie Project	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$0
Nat. Fish & Wildl. Fdn.	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$0
N. Am. Wetl. Cons. Act	\$0	\$100,000	\$100,000
Total	\$889,529	\$1,048,019	\$941,680

Grand total: at least \$2,879,228 anticipated additional leverage.

G. Outcomes:

- 1) In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.
- 2) In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.
- 3) In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.
- 4) In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and
- 5) If you have any outcomes listed in the "protect" row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	75	425		
Protect	300	1700		
Enhance	1200	6800		

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Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>Prairie (80%), Forest /Prairie Transition(20%)</i>	<i>Prairie (80%), Forest/Prairie Transition (20%)</i>		
Protect	<i>Prairie (50%), Forest/Prairie Transition (50%)</i>	<i>Prairie (50%), Forest/Prairie Transition (50%)</i>		
Enhance	<i>Prairie (30%), Forest/Prairie Transition (70%)</i>	<i>Prairie (30%), Forest/Prairie Transition (70%)</i>		

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$75,000</i>	<i>\$425,000</i>		
Protect	<i>\$668,846</i>	<i>\$3,790,130</i>		
Enhance	<i>\$199,098</i>	<i>\$1,128,233</i>		

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Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	0	0		
Protect	\$344,884	\$1,954,344		
Enhance	87,000	\$493,000		

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0		
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability	300	1700		
Permanent Easement	0	0		

H. Accomplishment Time Table

(Proposer's note: see timetable in Section 3 for more info)

	Milestone	Date	Measure
Protection	First 300 acres acquired	Mar., '11	Ac/protected
	Additional 300 acres acquired	Jun., '11	Ac/protected
	Additional 300 acres acquired	Sep., '11	Ac/protected
	Additional 300 acres acquired	Dec., '11	Ac/protected
	Additional 300 acres acquired	Mar., '12	Ac/protected
	Final 500 acres acquired	Jun., '12	Ac/protected
Restoration	Restoration initiated on 250 acres	Sep., '12	Ac/restored
	Restoration initiated on next 250 acres	Mar., '13	Ac/restored
	Restorations completed	Jun., '13	Ac/restored
Enhancement	100 acres woody veg. control	Dec., '10	Ac/enhanced
	2500 acres prescribed fire	Jun., '11	Ac/enhanced

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400 acres invasives control	Sep., '11	Ac/enhanced
200 acres woody veg. control	Dec., '11	Ac/enhanced
4500 acres prescribed fire	Jun., '12	Ac/enhanced
300 acres invasives control	Jun., '12	Ac/enhanced
Coordination		
Statewide partnership organized	Sep., '10	Coordination
Local areas selected & organized	Dec., '10	Coordination

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

OHF funds will be additive to the Conservancy's budget. The annual Conservancy budget for Minnesota, raised almost entirely from private sources, will help implement the activities in this proposal. Conservancy operations will be prioritized towards implementation of this project.

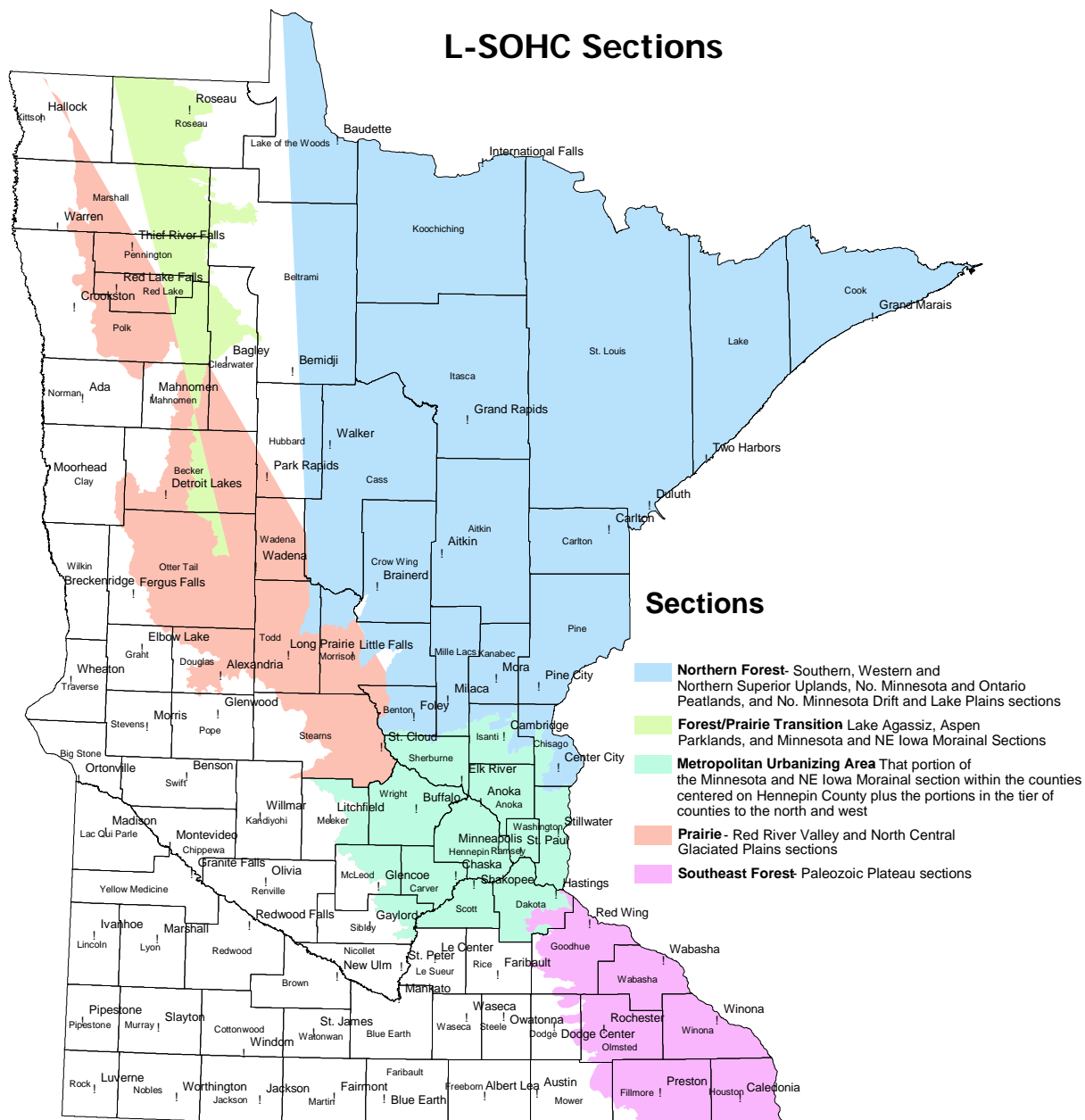
J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Restoration activities will include grassland and wetland restorations. The prairie pothole landscape is sustained through the regular application of appropriate disturbance, including fire, grazing and haying. A chronic problem for land managers is securing adequate funding to do these conservation practices as frequently as needed (e.g., every 1-4 years). A primary purpose of this proposal is to establish a collaborative and coordinated partnership that can accelerate the application of these management techniques across multiple landscapes. On existing protected conservation lands, an annual infusion of funding will be required unless or until this income/funding model can be more widely applied. For new lands acquired under this proposal, we will establish a new funding model by attempting to secure management funds by generating compatible income from acquired lands. In addition to the conservation value of planned haying and grazing, the income generated by these agricultural leases can help pay for management activities and property taxes. This model has been used on other Conservancy lands, and this project will evaluate whether it is feasible on other types of public/private protected conservation lands.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

The specific focus areas the Partnership will be working in will be identified once funding is secured. The focus areas will generally correspond to prairie concentration areas as identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey (attachment A). The Partnership will select 3 of these areas based upon partner priorities and capacity, perceived receptivity to the project by landowners and cattle groups, additional funding that may be available in the geographic area, and known protection and enhancement opportunities.

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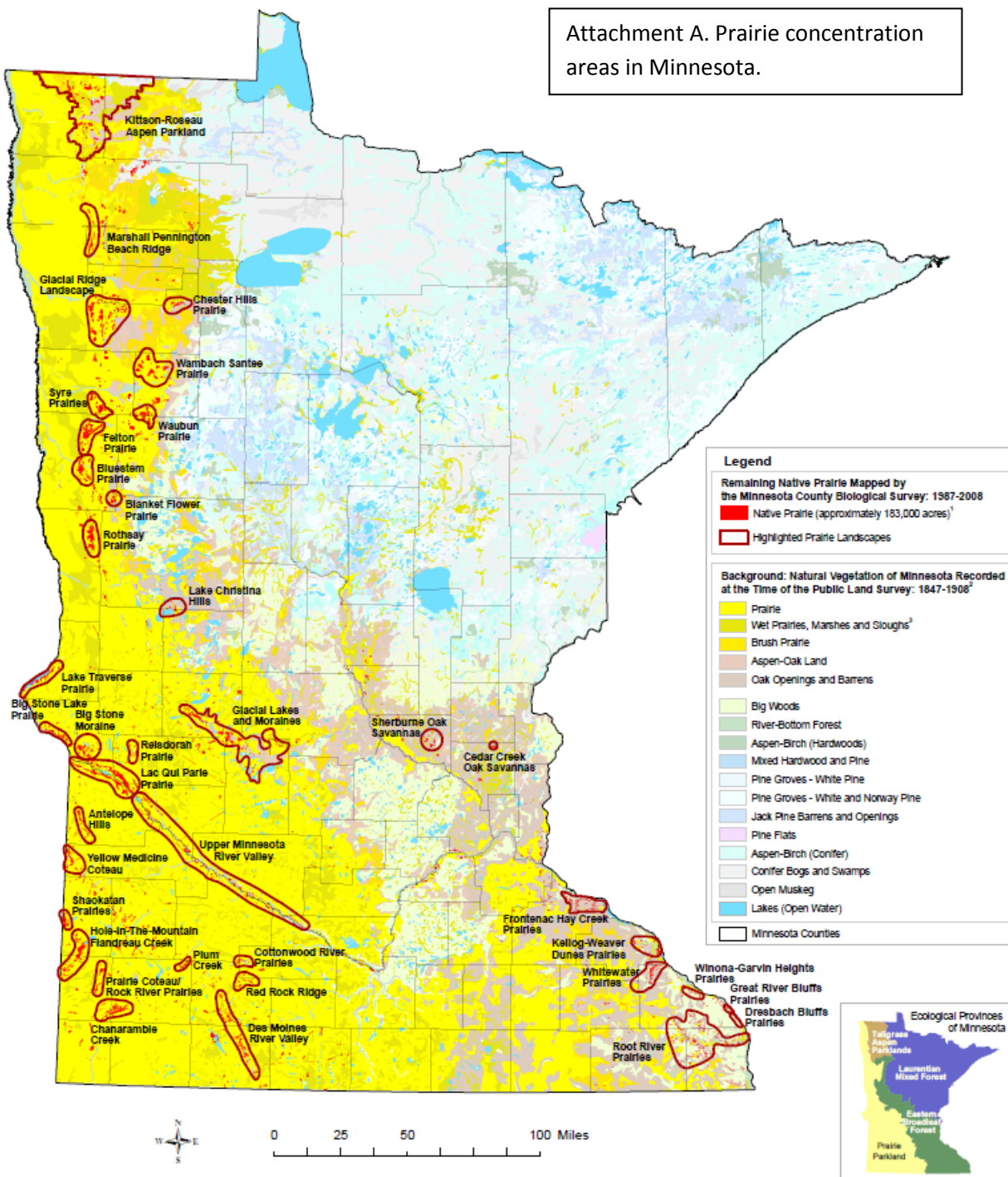


L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Minnesota's Remaining Native Prairie 100 Years After the Public Land Survey

Native Prairie Recorded 1847-1908 (Shown in Yellows and Tans)
Remaining Native Prairie Mapped 1987-2008 (Shown in Red)

Attachment A. Prairie concentration
areas in Minnesota.



Program Title: Valley Creek Protection Partnership

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: **#18** Valley Creek Protection Partnership

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: Sarah Strommen, Minnesota Land Trust

Title: Regional Conservation Director

Mailing Address: 2356 University Ave. W. Suite 240, St. Paul, MN 55114

Telephone: 651-647-9590

Fax: 651-647-9769

E-Mail: sstrommen@mnland.org

Web Site: www.mnland.org

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs*		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$2,530,000	0	0	0

*The Valley Creek protection Partnership is an ongoing program with ongoing needs but at this point in time we do not know if we will be requesting additional funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

A. Summary

The Valley Creek Protection Partnership seeks to permanently protect, restore and enhance priority lands within the watershed of Valley Creek, a coldwater fishery that flows directly into the St. Croix River. We propose to accomplish this protection by acquiring land and conservation easements and restoring the riparian woodlands, prairies, oak savannas, and in-stream areas that provide significant habitat for fish and other wildlife. The Partnership seeks to build upon the collective experience of each of the organizations, working collaboratively and strategically, to permanently protect the most important parcels on this trout stream and restore the oak savannas that were once present.

This proposal addresses the L-SOHC Priority Actions for the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area Section by:

- Protecting and restoring oak savanna;
- Protecting, restoring and enhancing a coldwater fisheries system; and
- Protecting a habitat corridor along the St. Croix River

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Valley Creek Protection Partnership

This proposal is a collaboration of five conservation entities, and therefore, if funded, we anticipate separate appropriations to each organization. We do believe, however, that the power of the Valley Creek Protection Partnership is in its comprehensive approach and that each of the elements of this proposal is essential.

B. Background Information

What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The Valley Creek watershed is located on the eastern edge of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and covers approximately 14 square miles. The watershed originally was characterized by savanna, tallgrass prairie and maple-basswood forest, but is now rapidly becoming more urban. The watershed includes portions of several growing communities such as Woodbury, West Lakeland Township, and Afton. Valley Creek itself flows approximately 10 miles through Washington County from its source near Woodbury to Afton, where it empties into the St. Croix River.

The exceptional habitat value of Valley Creek has been identified in Minnesota's State Wildlife Action Plan, which identifies Valley Creek as a "Key River Reach." Valley Creek is one of 13 trout streams within the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and is one of only a few that has a naturally reproducing population of brook trout, the only trout species native to Minnesota. In addition to brook trout, Valley Creek sustains large populations of brown and rainbow trout. While many of the trout streams in Minnesota depend on stocking to maintain their trout populations, Valley Creek's habitat remains of high enough quality that the trout populations maintain themselves through natural reproduction. Valley Creek is one of the best trout-producing streams in the state of Minnesota, and is believed to be in the top 10% of trout streams in the world in terms of trout production (based on personal communication with Tom Waters and Ray Newman).

The Valley Creek watershed is home to more than 20 endangered, threatened, and special concern species, including the American brook lamprey, the hooded warbler, and Blanding's turtle. The creek also appears to be home to a species of crane fly (genus *Phantolabis*) previously undescribed by science. Scientists from the University of Minnesota are in the process of publishing their findings.

Valley Creek flows into the Wild and Scenic St. Croix River, which provides one of the premier mussel habitats in the world; approximately 38 mussel species live in the St. Croix watershed. The uncommon richness of mussel species in the St. Croix parallels the uncommon richness of the flora and fauna of the watershed as a whole. The watershed is home to many Midwestern species such as the wolf, bald eagle, peregrine falcon, and Karner blue butterfly, all of which are on the Federal list of threatened and endangered species.

Development and siltation are major concerns to the health and quality of the Valley Creek and its watershed. Development can destroy the upland habitat, while siltation destroys trout spawning habitat. A partnership of several organizations has formed to take the needed actions to maintain and improve in-stream habitat that is threatened by degradation. This partnership maximizes the relative strengths of each organization with each serving a vital role in ensuring that the lands can be acquired, protected, restored and maintained for

Program Title: Valley Creek Protection Partnership

future generations. This cooperative project will protect the Valley Creek watershed to ensure its high water quality and habitat by protecting 100-150 acres of land, restoring 50-60 acres of upland habitat, and enhancing the trout habitat in approximately one-half mile of the stream.

In addition to protecting and improving Valley Creek and its watershed, this project will help improve the water quality of lower St. Croix River, which was recently listed as impaired. Finally, this project aims to provide angling access to a top trout stream that is close to the State's population center.

What action will be taken?

This proposal consists of multiple actions:

1. Acquisition of 2-3 perpetual conservation easements to protect 100-150 acres, including approximately 1 mile of trout stream. Potential parcels include:
 - A 60-acre parcel that is one of the few remaining unprotected parcels located at the lower end of Valley Creek. Valley Branch Watershed District recently invested approximately \$250,000 on water quality improvements on this parcel, making this property a prime target for permanent protection and additional habitat restoration. This parcel also is suitable for providing public angling access to Valley Creek.
 - A 50-acre parcel that contains ideal trout spawning habitat. The opportunity to protect this parcel could be lost if funding for a conservation easement is not secured soon.
 - A 32-acre parcel that is adjacent to land already protected or anticipated to be protected. This parcel is one of the few remaining unprotected parcels at the lower end of Valley Creek.
2. Acquisition of the underlying fee on at least one parcel to secure public angling access to Valley Creek.
3. Restoration of the stream, surrounding upland habitat, and key upstream habitat on 50-60 acres. Proposed activities include:
 - Removal of buckthorn, reed canary grass, and other invasive species.
 - Enhancement of in-stream habitat and natural stream function.

Who will take action and when?

This project is a continuation of previous success by the Valley Creek Protection Partnership. The organizations participating in this partnership include the Minnesota Land Trust, Belwin Conservancy, Valley Branch Watershed District, the Washington County Land & Water Legacy Program, and Trout Unlimited.

Program Title: Valley Creek Protection Partnership

Action 1: Acquisition of 2-3 perpetual conservation easements

Conservation easements will be acquired, held and enforced by either the Minnesota Land Trust or Washington County. Both entities currently hold conservation easements in the Valley Creek watershed and have identified and contacted additional landowners who have confirmed their desire to work with the Valley Creek Protection Partnership. It is anticipated that timing of this action will be 2010-2011.

Action 2: Acquisition of underlying fee to secure public access

The underlying fee of at least one parcel will be acquired by Belwin Conservancy in order to secure the first public access to Valley Creek. It is anticipated that timing of this action will be 2010-2011.

Action 3: Restore Valley Creek and surrounding uplands

All in-stream restoration work will be completed by Trout Unlimited. Restoration of oak savanna and other key associated uplands will be completed by Belwin Conservancy and Valley Branch Watershed District. It is anticipated that timing of this action will be 2011-2012.

How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

The Valley Creek Protection Partnership is concerned with both habitat and water quality in the Valley Creek and larger St. Croix watersheds. This particular proposal focuses on habitat goals and completion of a habitat corridor at the lower end of Valley Creek. We anticipate that the Partnership, and Valley Branch Watershed District in particular, will seek funding from the Clean Water Fund for erosion control and water quality efforts. Therefore, we view these efforts as complimentary to this L-SOHC request but not redundant.

What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded?

The conservation easements acquired will prohibit land uses or development that harm or negatively affect important habitat values and will require habitat management plans to ensure that long-term management will maximize habitat quality.

Additionally, this project will protect approximately one mile of Valley Creek, which will then enable Trout Unlimited to enhance habitat for brook trout, brown trout, and rainbow trout. Specific habitat work will include improving spawning access, providing cover from natural predators, and restoring the stream to its natural function.

This in-stream work, along with the restoration of the terrestrial habitat, including the removal of buckthorn and other invasive species and the reestablishment of the native understory, will create and improve habitat for a wide array of songbirds as well as a variety of game and non-game wildlife species.

When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

We intend to complete the acquisition work in FY 2011 and the restoration work in FY 2012.

Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

Program Title: Valley Creek Protection Partnership

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If not, how will you finance completion?

How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Both the Minnesota Land Trust and Washington County are committed to annually monitoring, and defending if necessary, the integrity of the conservation easements. Funding for easement stewardship for the Minnesota Land Trust is included in the budget outlined below. For restoration accomplishments, Belwin Conservancy has the staff resources and the geographical proximity to take the lead in long-term maintenance in partnership with Valley Branch Watershed District and Trout Unlimited.

How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

The main purpose of the proposed acquisition and restoration work is to protect and enhance a key trout stream habitat in the greater metro area. The proposed actions also will result in the restoration of oak savanna prairie, one of the most threatened natural communities in North America.

If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

The properties targeted for restoration activities all will have perpetual conservation easements in accordance with Minnesota Statute Chapter 84C.01 that will restrict use and development of those properties.

How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars?

The Minnesota Land Trust will submit regular reports to the L-SOHC showing progress toward the stated goals. Successes also will be well publicized in the local media and on the websites of our individual organizations.

Why will this strategy work?

The Valley Creek Protection Partnership is a unique public-private partnership that capitalizes on the particular strengths of each entity to work efficiently and strategically within the Valley Creek watershed. Our approach also is comprehensive, encompassing both protection and restoration work.

Already, the Partnership has enjoyed success and garnered the support of public and private entities. In the past year, the Partnership has received public funding from the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources and private funding support from

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the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation through partnership with The Conservation Fund. This funding made it possible to complete two recent land projects, one at the end of 2008 and one in 2009.

The strategy also has been successful because of the strong support and participation from Valley Creek landowners. We have entered into discussions and completed initial appraisals with two landowners who have long expressed a desire to protect the unique habitat of the stream and have invested their own time and funds in its protection and restoration. The Partnership strongly believes this deep landowner engagement is critical to the long-term success of the protection and restoration efforts at Valley Creek.

Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

This project has the support of all the Partners, which include two local governmental units, and the landowners involved.

If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

 YES

 NO

While this project anticipates acquisition of underlying fee by Belwin Conservancy, no Outdoor Heritage Funds will be expended for this purpose.

If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

 YES

 NO

We do anticipate that Belwin Conservancy will acquire underlying fee title after purchase of a conservation easement is complete. This purchase is will not use Outdoor Heritage Funds but is important because it secures public access.

If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

 X YES

 NO

If Yes what kind of use?

It is anticipated that public access will be available on at least one parcel. Other parcels covered by conservation easements will be open at the discretion of the landowner.

If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

 X YES

 NO

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If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

10 Years

We anticipate a 10-year timeline for ongoing acquisition and restoration efforts within the priority portions of the Valley Creek watershed.

1. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

- ☐ Northern Forest
- ☐ Forest/Prairie Transition
- ☐ Southeast Forest
- ☐ Prairie
- ☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

2. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ YES ☐ NO

If yes, please explain.

All of the parcels identified for protection represent urgent opportunities. Although the landowners are committed to conservation, financial realities of the current economic climate mean that two of the potential parcels likely will be sold for development in the near future if funds to purchase conservation easements cannot be secured in a timely manner. Similarly, timely restoration and enhancement of the in-stream and associated upland habitats also is critical in order to prevent degradation of this important resource.

3. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☐ YES ☒ NO

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

4. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

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 X YES

 NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

The decision to work in the Valley Creek watershed was based upon solid science and a strategic assessment. The importance of Valley Creek as a coldwater trout stream, a habitat corridor, and a component of the St. Croix watershed has been recognized in numerous biological assessments and conservation plans.

The Partnership also has identified focal species that can be monitored and will be indicators of success over time. The target species for Valley Creek has been identified as brook trout. For the adjacent terrestrial community, the focal species are:

- Tussock sedge (*Carex stricta*)
- Angelica (*Angelica atropurpurea*)
- Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*)
- Nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*)
- Black ash (*Ulmus nigra*)

The target species for the terrestrial community adjacent to the riparian corridor and upslope from the stream are:

- Bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)
- Hazelnut (*Corylus americana*)
- Little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)
- Maidenhair fern (*Adiantum pedatum*)

These plant species will serve as excellent indicators of the overall health of both the riparian corridor and associated uplands. These species are also relatively easy to monitor, and Belwin Conservancy is committed to implementing the monitoring strategy on all its lands and well as other lands protected by the Valley Creek Protection Partnership.

5. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

The Partnership uses existing conservation plans (State Conservation Plan, Minnesota Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, Washington County Biological Survey, and Valley Branch Watershed District Management Plan) to develop the priorities and targets for its work.

6. How do you set priorities?

The Partners have used the data from existing plans as the basis for selecting priority conservation areas within the watershed. Within these areas, priority tracts are selected using the following criteria in this order:

1. Quality of existing habitat
2. Probable success of any needed restoration & long-term maintenance costs
3. Proximity to existing protected land

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4. Level of understanding of ecological processes at site
5. Landowner willingness to participate

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

The conservation of Valley Creek, with its rich assemblage of rare species and its unparalleled quality of aquatic habitat, is important to achieving the goals of the Minnesota State Wildlife Action Plan and the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan as well as the goals of other conservation plans.

The Minnesota State Wildlife Action Plan, 'Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare: An Action Plan for Minnesota Wildlife,' classifies the Valley Creek project area as part of the St. Paul Baldwin Plains and Moraines subsection. The Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers traverse this subsection, which originally was characterized by savanna, tallgrass prairie and maple-basswood forest, but is now rapidly becoming more urban. This subsection contains 149 Species of Greatest Conservation Need, the second highest total number in all 25 subsections in Minnesota. Of the 149 Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Baldwin Plains and Moraines, 74 are species that are federal or state endangered, threatened, or of special concern. Examples of Species of Greatest Conservation Need in this subsection include the northern cricket frog, eastern wood pewee, paddlefish, St. Croix snaketail, and American badger.

Specifically, this proposal furthers the following recommendations of the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan:

- Protect priority land habitats
- Protect critical shorelands of streams and lakes
- Restore land, wetlands, and wetland-associated watersheds
- Improve connectivity and access to outdoor recreation

In addition, these plans recognize the use of conservation easements as one of the most established and effective means of permanently protecting the targeted habitats, as many of these areas are located on private lands.

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D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11*	Fiscal Year 12*	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel Including benefits	\$ 15,000 (MLT)	\$ 10,000 (TU)	
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies Restoration: seed, trees, chemical, erosion control materials, etc.		\$ 144,000 (BC) \$ 100,000 (TU) \$ 12,500 (VBWD)	
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition Including easement purchase price of easements, appraisals, title work, title insurance, maps, GIS, etc.	\$ 500,000 (WC) \$ 1,710,000 (MLT)		
Easement Stewardship	\$ 24,000 (MLT)		
Professional Services Restoration: install seed, prepare soil for seeding, remove exotic species, mapping, create designs, etc.		\$ 12,500 (VBWD) \$ 2,000 (TU)	
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$ 2,249,000	\$ 281,000	

*Budget amounts for each partner organization are provided given that we anticipate separate appropriations will be made if funded.

E. Personnel Details

Title	Name	Amount
Land Trust Conservation Staff		\$ 12,500
Land Trust Staff Attorney		\$ 2,500
Belwin Conservancy Restoration Staff		\$ 5,000
Twin Cities Trout Unlimited Staff		\$ 10,000

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F. All Leverage

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Belwin Conservancy	\$ 507,000		
Washington County	\$ 500,000		
Valley Branch Watershed District	\$ 50,000	\$50,000	
Estimated donated value of conservation easements	We anticipate donated value but it is difficult to estimate at this point in time.		
TOTAL	\$ 1,057,000	\$50,000	

G. Outcomes:

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Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		48 acres of oak savanna		2-12 acres
Protect		48 acres of oak savanna		Balance of 52-102 acres, including approx. 1 mile of trout stream*
Enhance				.5 miles trout stream

**The 52-102 acres will include a mix of wetlands, forest, and habitat for fish, game and wildlife, but we have chosen to allocate it to this latter category due to the emphasis on protection of the trout stream.*

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		Metro (48 acres)		Metro (2-12 acres)
Protect		Metro (48 acres)		Metro (52-102 acres, including 1 mile trout stream)
Enhance				Metro (.5 mile trout stream)

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		\$ 144,000		\$25,000
Protect				\$2,249,000
Enhance				\$112,000

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Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>\$100,000</i>
Protect				<i>\$1,007,000</i>
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				<i>100-150 acres and nearly one mile of trout stream for \$2,249,000</i>

H. Accomplishment Time Table

Milestone	Date	Measure
Complete negotiations on 2-3 easements	Dec 31, 2010	Written landowner commitments obtained
Close on 2-3 conservation easements	June 30, 2011	100-150 acres under easement
Purchase of underlying fee for public access	June 30, 2011	Deed obtained
Complete in-stream restoration	June 30, 2012	½ mile of trout stream improved
Complete restoration of adjacent uplands	June 30, 2012	48 acres of oak savanna plantings in place
Complete restoration on key upstream parcels	June 30, 2012	2-12 acres restored

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Program Title: Valley Creek Protection Partnership

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

Although the Valley Creek Protection Partnership has established its success, none of the participating organizations have dedicated or sufficient operating budget or capital to continue to meet the conservation needs at Valley Creek. The majority of financial support to the Minnesota Land Trust, Belwin Conservancy, and Trout Unlimited must be raised on an annual basis. Capital funds are expended only when a priority opportunity becomes available and project-specific funds are obtained to complete the acquisition and/or restoration.

Washington County has budgeted \$10 million for Phase I of their Land and Water Legacy Program to complete projects throughout Washington County. The County Board has expressed a desire to supplement the County's available funding with other state or public dollars to maximize the conservation work that can be completed.

Valley Branch Watershed District has \$165,000 budgeted in 2010 for watershed restoration and stabilization projects. The money requested through this proposal would supplement these funds in order to ensure that work occurs on the most strategic Valley Creek parcels.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

The land protected through conservation easements will be sustained through the best standards and practices for conservation easement stewardship. Again, funding for easement stewardship for the Minnesota Land Trust is included in the budget outlined above. Both the Minnesota Land Trust and Washington County have stewardship programs that include annual property monitoring, effective records management, addressing inquiries and interpretations, tracking changes in ownership, investigating potential violations and defending the easement in case of a true violation.

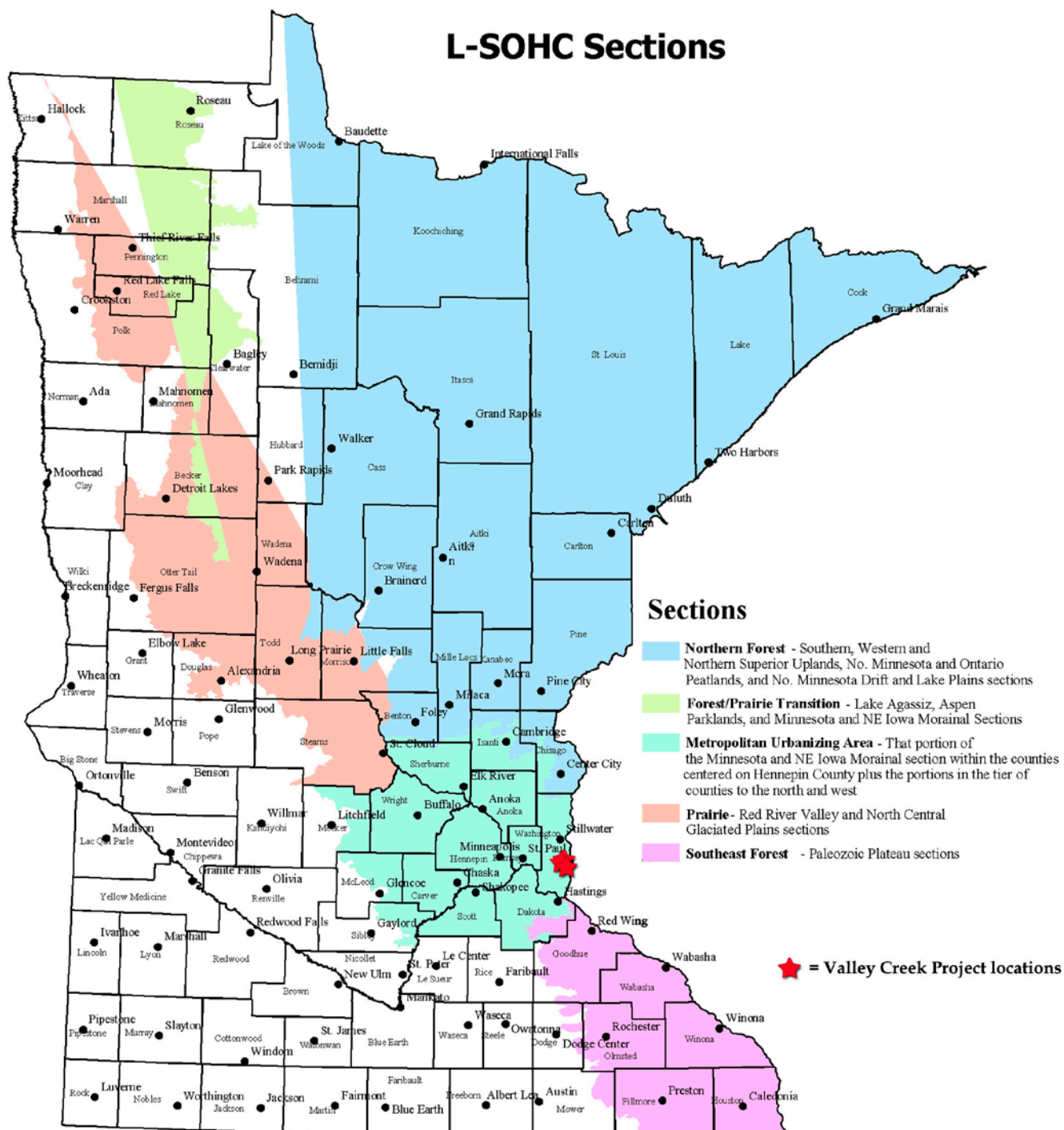
The Belwin Conservancy has the resources and 40 years of land management and restoration experience to ensure that the integrity of the habitat is maintained through its ongoing monitoring of indicator species. Additionally, Valley Branch Watershed District will continue to annually monitor the benthic invertebrates living in the creek, continuously monitor the water quality of the creek, and routinely monitor the fisheries in Valley Creek.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Potential projects are depicted on the Minnesota map on the following page and the Valley Creek Focus Area map attached to this proposal. Specifically, the priority projects for protection, restoration and enhancement are:

Parcel 1: 60 acres, Washington County
Parcel 2: 50 acres, Washington County
Parcel 3: 32 acres, Washington County

L-SOHC Sections



Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

Request for Funding Form Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Fiscal Year 2011

Program Title: **#19** Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

Date: October 30, 2009

Manager's Name: Kris William Larson

Title: Executive Director

Mailing Address: 2356 University Ave. W., St. Paul, MN 55114

Telephone: 651-647-9590

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E-Mail: klarson@mnland.org

Web Site: www.mnland.org

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	1,200	0	1,200	0

A. Summary

The natural shoreline around Minnesota's celebrated lakes and rivers comprises one of the most biologically important systems in the state for fish, game and wildlife. It is also one of its most threatened. Recent science conducted by the Minnesota DNR indicates that protecting the shoreline zone—the majority of which is on private land—is the essential strategy to maintain our fisheries, important waterfowl breeding and feeding areas and the overall health of our aquatic resources.

In order to preserve this important component of Minnesota's natural heritage, the Minnesota Land Trust proposes to implement a Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program to protect essential lakeshore and stream side habitat. The overall goal of this project is to protect over 100 miles of sensitive shoreline habitat over the next 10 years, thereby complimenting the goals of the DNR's Aquatic Management Area program, the State Conservation and Preservation Plan and many others.

In this phase of the program, the Minnesota Land Trust will strategically concentrate its activity on important aquatic resources within northeast Minnesota's Arrowhead region, including DNR-designated high priority trout streams and lakes. With the assistance of the L-SOHC, the Land Trust will protect more than 50,000 feet of threatened shoreline habitat by acquiring 10-12 conservation easements which will permanently protect naturally vegetated shoreline and forest

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

land on more than 1,000 acres. The program will target projects which will help fill the gaps in existing public ownership, contain the highest-quality habitat, and provide the highest leverage to the state. This Arrowhead region is prioritized in this phase of the program, as it has immensely important shoreline habitat and aquatic resources for fish, game and wildlife (including the highest concentration of trout streams in the state), yet has seen a relative lack of public and private investment in conservation in recent years when compared to other regions in the state.

This proposal addresses two of the L-SOHC Priority Actions for the Northern Forest Section by:

- Protecting shoreland on cold water lakes, shallow bays, streams, rivers and spawning areas; and
- Protecting forest land through conservation easements

In order to maximize the benefits of this shoreline protection activity, the Minnesota Land Trust will coordinate its work with other partners in the region, including the DNR, Trout Unlimited and others. This proposal anticipates very-high leverage of at least \$6 of match for every \$1 of state funding.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The *problem* being addressed is one identified in most state and local conservation plans, including the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan: the development and disturbance of the state's remaining sensitive shoreline habitat. Science conducted by the DNR and others indicate that the shoreline zone—from high ground through the water's edge and into the shallow submerged areas—is one of the most biologically diverse and important habitat types for a variety of wildlife species, including fish and waterfowl. Because so much shoreline habitat is on private land, it is also one of Minnesota's most threatened landscapes due to the intensity of lakeshore development.

This *opportunity* being addressed is one of having multiple landowners in the Arrowhead region who are ready and willing to grant conservation easements on exceptional shoreline habitat, thus providing high-leverage, immediately-tangible protection on these diminishing habitat types. The lull in the real-estate market has given many landowners an opportunity to reflect on the future of their lands, thus providing a narrow window of time to invest in these shoreline protection projects at a fraction of the cost of full fair market acquisition.

In addition, another benefit of this project is that while it is focused on the habitat benefits of the shoreline, more than 1,000 acres of family forest and numerous wetlands will be protected, thus providing additional conservation benefits for the state's modest investment.

2. What action will be taken?

The Minnesota Land Trust will secure and defend 10-12 conservation easements on more than 1,000 acres of private lands with essential shoreline habitats. These easements will be drafted to further prevent the destruction of existing habitat.

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Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

Furthermore, the Land Trust will seek opportunities to work with the landowners and other organizations to conduct restoration activities and secure angler access if appropriate.

To date more than 40 families have confirmed their desire to work with the Land Trust on protecting their properties and related shoreline habitat within the target areas. These 40+ potential properties represent more than 130,000 linear feet (25 miles) of shoreline habitat and more than 4,600 acres of forest land. These projects include the following targeted lakes and rivers: 1) 2 properties on DNR high-priority trout lakes, including Kemo and Moosehorn lakes; 2) 25 properties on signature Border Lakes, including Lake Vermilion, Burntside Lake and Rainy Lake; 3) 8 on North Shore trout streams such as the Knife, French, Flute Reed and Stewart Rivers; 4) 3 on Lake Superior; and 5) the remainder on other important water bodies in the region.

Under this program, the Land Trust will prioritize these existing potential projects and seek additional opportunities for the protection of high-quality shoreline habitat.

3. Who will take action and when?

The Minnesota Land Trust will negotiate and execute the easement transactions with the lakeshore or riverfront owners. It is anticipated that the projects will be completed in FY 2011 and FY 2012, with the highest priority projects moving forward as soon as possible upon funding. Finally, with the assistance of stewardship funding, the Land Trust will monitor its easements annually and enforce them as necessary into the future.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

When appropriate, the Land Trust will work with constitutional funding and other grant sources to fulfill its goals of the Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program. However, while there are water-quality benefits to shoreline habitat protection, the primary goal of this proposal is preventing the further degradation of the state's existing shoreline habitats for fish, game and wildlife. As such, the most appropriate source for funding is the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

If funded, the sensitive shoreline habitat under easement will remain ecologically viable and productive for fish, game and wildlife. The conservation easements acquired will prohibit land uses or development that negatively impacts the important habitat values and will require habitat management plans to ensure that long-term management will maximize the benefits of the shoreline and associated forested uplands.

In addition, as part of its long-term stewardship obligations, the Land Trust will work to educate the landowners to use best management practices for their shoreline and connect the landowners with other partners such as the DNR, Trout Unlimited or others who may be able to improve the habitat quality.

Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

With conservation easements guaranteeing the prevention of future degradation, the benefits of the funding are immediate in that the existing high quality habitat remains in its valuable condition. We expect the easements to be secured by the end of FY 2012.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ YES ☐ NO
If not, how will you finance completion?

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

When accepting a conservation easement, the Minnesota Land Trust is committed to annually monitoring and defending the integrity of the protected property. While the actual land management will be paid for by the landowner (thus increasing this project's leverage), the conservation easement stewardship or management will be funded through the requested stewardship funding from L-SOHC.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

This project directly protects habitat for fish, game and wildlife by protecting one of the most diverse and critically-important habitat types in the state. As described above and below, the shoreline zone is important for numerous species, including spawning and feeding areas for fish; breeding, nesting and feeding areas for waterfowl and other shorebirds, and as general habitat for a vast number of other game and non-game species. Because much of these critical shoreline zones are found on private lands, conservation easements represent the only strategic tool available to permanently protect these resources. In addition, these projects will directly protect more than 1,000 acres of high-quality northern forest habitat and numerous wetlands, thus adding to the conservation benefits for the state.

Finally, these projects are often adjacent or in close proximity to other state or federally protected properties, such as Aquatic Management Areas, Scientific and Natural Areas or others, thereby making the protection of these private lands all the more urgent so as to not diminish the prior investments made in the existing habitat complex.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☐ YES ☐ NO
If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

As with its other state funds, the Minnesota Land Trust will provide high-quality, regular reporting demonstrating progress towards the program's goals. In addition, we will

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

welcome opportunities to communicate directly with the L-SOHC on accomplishments, including tours, presentations or other methods as desired. Finally, we will celebrate the success of the program more broadly through the Land Trust's communications and web site and through publicity in media stories and publications.

12. Why will this strategy work?

This strategy will work for three primary reasons as outlined below: and

1) The conservation easement is the primary tool to protect habitat on private lands. Minnesota is fortunate to still have highly-sensitive existing shoreline habitat throughout the state—and especially in the Arrowhead region—which contributes to our state's important fish, game and wildlife habitat. However, much of it is located on private land which is threatened by development and improper management. Conservation easements are the only permanent and highly effective tool to preserve private land.

2) The tool itself has been an effective conservation strategy around the state and country. In addition, land trusts and government agencies have successfully held and defended conservation easements throughout the state and country, making them a highly regarded and effective tool for land conservation.

3) The Minnesota Land Trust has a long track record of effective and efficient conservation easement stewardship. Thanks to prior support from the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the LCCMR and private support from the more than a thousand private contributors and foundations, the Land Trust has successfully protected more than 130 miles of critical shoreline habitat throughout the state through conservation easements. In addition, the Minnesota Land Trust now holds nearly 400 conservation easements, making it one of the larger and more respected land trusts in the country.

Finally, the Land Trust will continually monitor and evaluate the progress of this program as it moves forward and make adjustments as necessary to achieve the best conservation outcomes for the State.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

The primary threat to the proposed action could be that future landowners of these protected properties conduct land uses that negatively impact the conservation features the easements aims to protect. Fortunately, with the assistance of the L-SOHC, funding for conservation easement stewardship will help prevent this by providing the Land Trust with the necessary resources to monitor and defend the easement in perpetuity.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

_____ YES

_____ NO

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

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Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

_____ YES

_____ NO

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

_____ YES

_____ x NO

If Yes what kind of use?

Although public access is not the primary goal of the project, the Land Trust will explore the potential for public access with landowners on a case-by-case basis. In addition, as these projects will be adjacent to public waters, they will be highly visible to the public, and anglers will be able to fish along the protected shoreline.

Finally, it is not uncommon that the lands under conservation easement become open to the public in the future as the ownership changes. In fact, nearly 20% of the Land Trust's conservation easements have public or semi-public access.

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

_____ x YES

_____ NO

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

_____ 10 _____ Years

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

_____ x _____ Northern Forest

_____ Forest/Prairie Transition

_____ Southeast Forest

_____ Prairie

_____ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

_____ x YES

_____ NO

If yes, please explain.

As described above, this program represents a very rare and fortunate situation where we will have: 1) very high-quality, strategic shoreline habitat, 2) which is located on parcels with landowners interested in protecting their property, and 3) where those landowners are able and willing to donate all or partial value of the easement, thus

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

making it an incredibly high-leverage project. There is no guarantee that these landowners will still remain interested in the future; the current lull in development provides a unique opportunity to secure the protection before there is more competition for the land and while this current generation still remains in ownership.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

 YES

 x NO

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

 x YES

 x NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

Although this project doesn't use the USFWS model, it is based in sound science and strategic planning and evaluation. Please see #23 and #24 below.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

The Minnesota Land Trust has used existing scientific research and plans as the basis for its targeting of shoreline habitat. The scientific foundation for the protection of critical shoreline habitat in Minnesota is well established in numerous plans and publications, including Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan, the Long Range Duck Recovery Plan, the DNR's recent studies of shoreland development, and many others. Below is a brief description of the scientific basis for the benefits of shoreline protection for fish, game and wildlife, especially in the three primary ecological subsections represented by these projects, which include the Border Lakes, the Laurentian Uplands and the North Shore Highlands.

Fish: The DNR's research on the effects of shoreline development on the quality and quantity of fish populations in Minnesota's lakes and rivers indicates that one of the most critical and simple fisheries protection strategies is to maintain the existing wooded, vegetated shorelines and minimize the harmful impacts of rip rap, weed rollers and other shoreline development. The potential threats to North Shore trout streams and the priority trout lakes of the Arrowhead region are also well-documented by DNR, the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan, and many others. Finally, Trout Unlimited, the DNR and others are currently conducting an analysis of the habitat improvement needs of North Shore trout streams. We intend to use this data when available to coordinate our efforts with other potential partners.

Game: The Duck Recovery Plan states that "over the last 20 years development has increased by over 500% in Minnesota's lake country. . . Studies have found an average of a 66% reduction in aquatic vegetation along developed shorelines" which dramatically impacts the carrying capacity of the shoreline in lake country for ducks, waterfowl and shorebirds. While the Arrowhead region does not get the attention of the prairie pothole region, its habitat for waterfowl is nonetheless extremely important, especially the

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Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

shallow bays of larger lakes, which have characteristics similar to shallow lakes. In addition, the forested shoreline in the Arrowhead region is very important to cavity nesting ducks such as wood ducks, hooded mergansers and goldeneyes.

Wildlife: The shoreline and forests of the properties targeted for protection in this project have a host of scientifically-documented benefits for non-game wildlife, including several species of greatest conservation need as found in the DNR's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. These include fish such as the coaster brook trout, reptiles such as the wood turtle, songbirds such as the black-throated blue warbler, raptors such as the peregrine falcon, and mammals such as the Canada lynx.

These fish, game and wildlife species exist because of the presence of high-quality habitat. Therefore, one of the most cost effective strategies the L-SOHC can employ to protect these scientifically-important features is to use high-leverage conservation easements which will permanently protect the important shoreline characteristics.

In addition, this project is enhancing the prior investments made in Aquatic Management Areas, Scientific and Natural Areas, State Parks or other protected properties, as several of these projects are adjacent to or in close proximity to these resources.

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

First, the Arrowhead region was prioritized by the Land Trust for the first phase of this project due to a variety of factors, the three most important of which were: 1) the high quality of existing habitat in need of protection; 2) the great number of interested landowners; and 3) the fact that this region has been underrepresented when it comes to many sources of conservation funding in the past.

Second, the Minnesota Land Trust has used (and will refine) existing data to select which geographies and watersheds (sites) are the most important for our protection strategies in the Arrowhead region—and where are the gaps in protection the Land Trust can help fill. These include such data as the Minnesota County Biological Survey Data, the DNR priority trout streams and lakes data, and others.

Third, within these priority sites, the Land Trust will select priority parcels for protection using the following criteria, in this order of importance:

1. Habitat: quality and quantity of existing habitat on site
2. Context: proximity and relationship to other protected lands
3. Opportunity: cost-benefit ratio: which landowners will participate now
4. Other Benefits: meeting multiple objectives, including visual and physical access, forestry goals, water quality, etc.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

The Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program directly addresses several recommendations outlined in the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and other published conservation

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Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

and/or management plans as described above. Most directly, Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan's Recommendation H2 (pp 64-67) is titled "Protect critical shorelands of streams and lakes". It goes on to recommend "Increase private land protection" using a variety of tools including conservation easements and "target shallow wildlife lakes, natural environment lakes, shallow bays of deep lakes, cold-water/designated trout streams, shoreline associated with critical habitat of warm-water streams". In addition, Recommendation H6 includes "work with private landowners on protection and restoration", "restore natural features of lakeshore habitats – woody habitat, emergent and floating vegetation, and "address negative effects of docks and surface water use on sensitive shoreline habitats."

In summary, there is a direct relationship between this proposal and the State of Minnesota's goals and recommendations for conservation and preservation. As stated above, several of the project are adjacent to or in close proximity to the State Aquatic Management Areas, Scientific and Natural Areas, State Parks or other protected properties, thereby advancing the goals of those resources as well.

Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel (including benefits)	60,000	60,000	
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition	600,000	200,000	
Easement Stewardship	85,000	102,000	
Professional Services (Appraisers, title work, GIS, attorney, etc.)	44,000	45,000	
Travel	2,000	2,000	
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	791,000	409,000	

E. Personnel Details

Title	Name	Amount.
Northern Region Director	Fitz Fitzgerald	\$80,000
Staff Attorney	Gena Setzer	\$24,000
Director of Conservation		\$6,000
Support Staff		\$10,000

Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

F. All Leverage

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Landowner Donation*	2,500,000	3,500,000	
Land Trust Restricted and Operation Funds	40,000	70,000	
TOTAL	2,540,000	3,570,000	

*These are estimates only as no appraisals have been completed to date.

G. Outcomes:

Table 1 Accomplishments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect	Yet to be quantified		1,000 acres	50,000 feet of shoreline on 1,000 acres
Enhance				

Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				Northern Forest: 50,000 feet of shoreline and 1,000 acres of forestland
Enhance	Northern Forest		Northern Forest	

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				\$1,200,000*
Enhance				

*although there are additional conservation benefits, we will allocate all funds towards the primary benefit of shoreline habitat protection

Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				\$6,110,000
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				More than 1,000 acres with 50,000 feet of shoreline

H. Accomplishment Time Table

Milestone	Date	Measure
Protect 10-12 Properties with Conservation Easement	June, 2012	completed transaction
Enforce Easements	Ongoing	effective stewardship

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

Without this funding, the Land Trust does not anticipate including this program in the Arrowhead region in future organizational budgets or annual plans.

The Minnesota Land Trust's current operating budget is approximately \$1,000,000 per year. This proposal anticipates an average of approximately of \$200,000 of operating expenses per year. The Land Trust's acquisition expenditures (capital) vary greatly year-to-year, but have averaged \$100,000--\$200,000 per year. This proposal anticipates an average of \$400,000 in easement acquisition expenses per year.

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Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

The conservation easements will be monitored and enforced through its established and effective conservation easement stewardship program. This proposal anticipates funding for this long-term activity.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Please see list and map below.

Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program

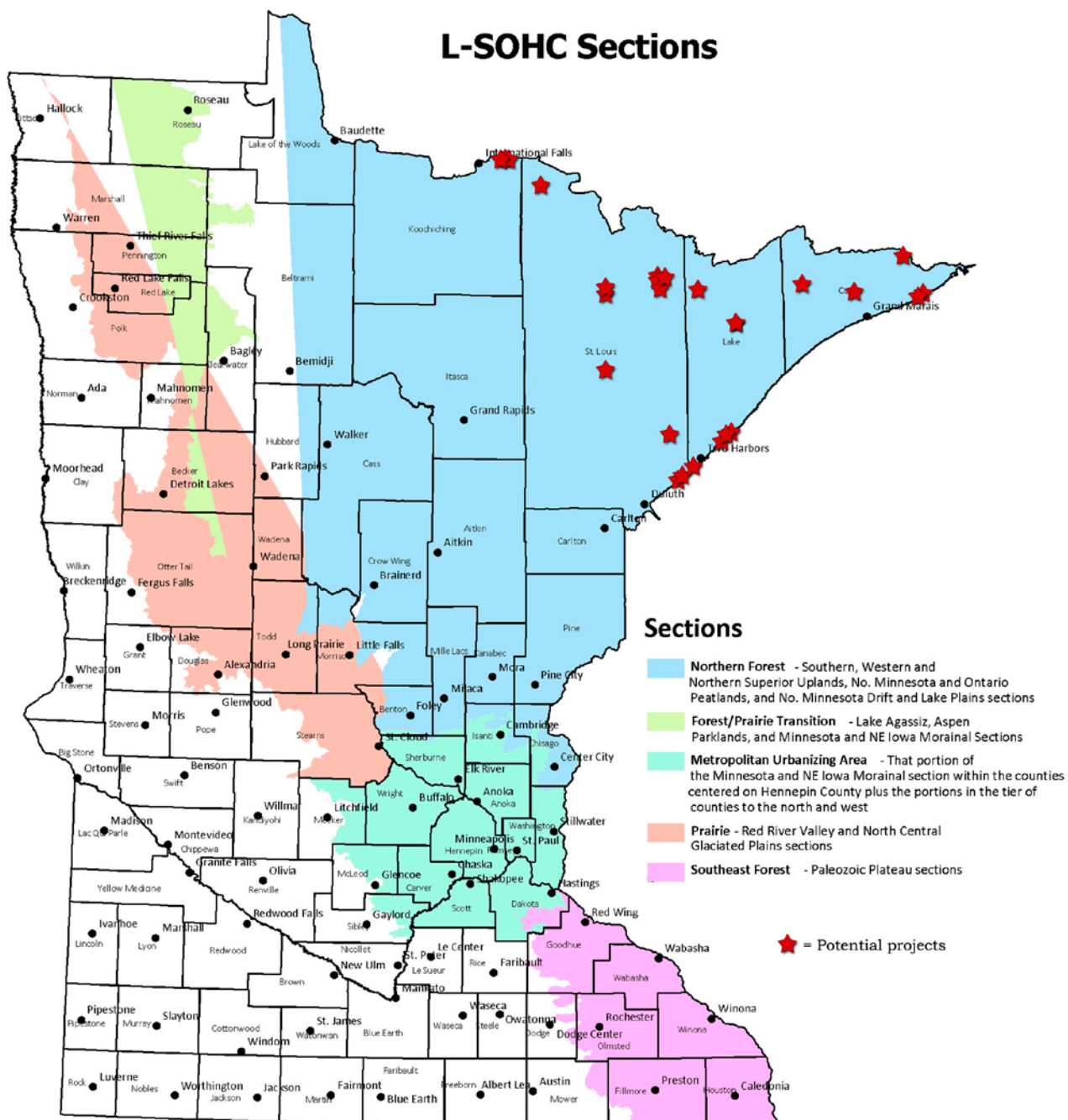
Potential Projects for the Minnesota Land Trust's Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program*

Potential Projects by Water Body	Combined Shoreline (in feet)	Combined Acreage	County
Burntside Lake/River—18 projects	20,969	324	St. Louis
Encampment River—1 project	4,000	90	Lake
Farquhar Creek—1 Project	6,165	686	Cook
French River—1 project	3,500	130	Lake
Irish Creek—1 project	3,000	200	Cook
Kemo Lake—1 project	700	16	Cook
Kiwishiwi River—1 project	4,500	140	Lake
Knife River—2 projects	4,000	147	Lake
Lake Superior—3 projects	3,000	114	Lake
Lake Vermilion—7 projects	19,226	857	St. Louis
McFarland Lake—1 project	1,100	55	Cook
Moosehorn Lake/Stevens Lake—1 project	3,650	226	Cook
Petrel Creek—1 project	2,000	40	St. Louis
Rainy Lake—3 projects	4,000	51	Koochiching
St. Louis/Embarrass River—1 project	12,900	294	St. Louis
Stewart River—1 project	1,500	35	Lake
Stony River—1 project	12,700	1,200	Lake

*Please note that these are estimates of shoreline and acreage. Also, the Land Trust will continue to evaluate other opportunities for projects throughout the project

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Critical Shoreline Habitat Protection Program



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: **Metro Big Rivers Habitat**

**Request for Funding
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program Title: **#20 Metro Big Rivers Habitat**

Date: **November 2, 2009**

Manager's Name: **Deborah Loon**
Title: **Executive Director**
Mailing Address: **Minnesota National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.
2312 Seabury Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55406**
Telephone: **612-801-1935**
Fax: **612-728-0700**
E-Mail: **@comcast.net**
Web Site: **.mnvalleytrust.org**

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$4,490,733)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$4,490,733	0	0	0

A. Summary

Along the **Minnesota, Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers and tributaries**, the Metro Big Rivers Habitat program will protect and enhance wetlands, forests, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife by acquiring conservation easements or fee title on 850 acres, and restoring at least 338 acres. A partnership of nonprofits - Friends of the Mississippi River, Great River Greening, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc., and the Trust for Public Land – will expand, buffer, and improve selected wildlife refuges, scientific and natural areas, and habitat sanctuaries. It will collaborate with private and public landowners and apply existing conservation planning and land acquisition programs.

The Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners will address two high priority actions for the LSOHC, providing multiple conservation benefits including critical habitat for hunting, fishing and other wildlife-dependent recreation:

- **Protect and restore habitat corridors**, with emphasis on the Minnesota, Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers; and
- **Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna**, particularly in areas with high biological diversity located on one of the three Big Rivers or slightly upstream on a key tributary to one of the three Big Rivers.

Program Title: **Metro Big Rivers Habitat**

With years of conservation experience, and a strong conservation record as an ongoing program, Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners will accomplish key goals in the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area, selecting sites based on science, readiness, urgency and best practices and contributing to a complex of restored and permanently protected wetlands, prairies and forests.

Habitat acquired and restored by the Metro Big Rivers partners will expand and improve public access to hunting, fishing and other wildlife-dependent recreation, while leveraging other efforts and funds. Of the land targeted for Metro Big Rivers Habitat acquisition, 59% will be open to unlimited hunting and fishing and 24% will be open to limited hunting and fishing. Hunting and fishing will not be allowed on the balance (18%) because of the sensitive habitat type and proximity to population. Of the lands restored through this project, 30% will be open to unlimited hunting and fishing, 30% will be open to limited hunting and fishing and 24% will not be open because of the sensitive habitat type and proximity to population.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The Problem:

The Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan cites habitat loss and degradation as critical problems statewide. The State Wildlife Action Plan notes these problems in the specific ecological subsections here: Big Woods, Anoka Sand Plain, Mille Lacs Uplands, St. Paul – Baldwin Plains and Moraines, and Oak Savanna.

The Metro Big Rivers Habitat program has selected priority sites to address two critical challenges:

- These subsections include three of the four highest concentrations of species of greatest conservation need statewide, and host thousands of acres designated as areas of regional ecological significance. They face intense development pressure, particularly on sites of greatest habitat sensitivity like bluffs and shorelands. Acting quickly to protect and enhance habitat corridors and patches is urgent to achieve statewide conservation goals.
- These sites provide critical public access to habitat for hunting, fishing and other wildlife-dependent outdoor recreation close-to-home for many Minnesotans, and sustain habitat vital to migrating wildlife.

The Opportunity:

Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners can act efficiently and effectively to protect and restore habitat corridors in the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area. The partners apply science-based regional analysis to identify priority habitat areas and many years of conservation experience. This partnership has succeeded in protecting and restoring habitat for years, leveraging private and state and other non-state public funding and other resources.

The projects that will be completed are time-sensitive and ready, sure to deliver habitat results of regional and statewide importance. We now have the opportunity to achieve

conservation results in these high priority habitat areas, applying priority statewide habitat recommendations that achieve regional landscape goals.

2. What action will be taken?

Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners will acquire conservation easements or fee title on at least 850 acres and restore at least 338 acres of floodplain forest, wetland, oak savanna, and prairie habitat along the Minnesota, Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers and key tributaries. Current scientific principles inform specific priorities and activities by partners applying existing land protection expertise in established programs.

Following is a description of specific high-priority projects the partners have identified as immediate opportunities. We reference the state conservation plans and priorities in parentheses. Note that, with the grant funds requested, we will not complete all of these projects, but will achieve the acreage targets from among these projects.

In the **Minnesota River Habitat Corridor**, the Metro Big Rivers Habitat program will:

- **Add 500 acres of habitat to the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge**, preventing fragmentation and degradation of high quality wildlife habitat and increasing public access for hunting, fishing and other wildlife-based recreation at one or more of the existing or new refuge areas: Blakely Unit in LeSueur, Scott and Sibley Counties; Jessenland Unit in Sibley County; San Francisco Unit in Carver County; and/or St. Lawrence Unit in Scott County. (“Key river reach” in Big Woods subsection, with high concentrations of species of greatest conservation need (SGCN), according to the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP))
- **Restore and enhance habitat quality for wildlife on the Refuge lands** by breaking drainage tile, constructing water control structures, making shallow scrapes, and planting wetland species; planting diverse, native prairie seed, mowing, and burning; and planting floodplain trees, removing invasive species and burning.
- **Protect 50 acres at Savage Fen / Teepee Hill Natural Area** on bluffland of the Minnesota River, adjacent to existing protected land and including calcareous fen and associated upland forest. (“Key habitats” identified in the Big Woods subsection of the SWAP)
- **Protect 20 acres at Pike Lake Natural Area** with lakeshore, wetland, and habitat for fish, game and wildlife. (“Key habitats” identified in the Big Woods subsection of the SWAP)
- **Remove invasive species from rare calcareous fens** on 60 acres in three Scientific and Natural Areas in Scott, Carver, and Dakota Counties. (“Key habitat” in Big Woods subsection of SWAP, with a high concentration of SGCN)

In the **Mississippi River Habitat Corridor**, the Metro Big Rivers Habitat program will:

- **Purchase a conservation easement on 150 acres** of mesic prairie, floodplain forest, floodplain lakeshore, oak woodland and wetland adjacent to the Pine Bend Bluffs Scientific and Natural Area **on the Mississippi River**, at Macalester College’s Katharine Ordway Natural History Study Area, in partnership with the Dakota

Program Title: **Metro Big Rivers Habitat**

Farmland and Natural Area Program. (“key habitat” in Oak Savanna subsection of SWAP)

- **Restore and reconstruct Mississippi River floodplain forest** and enhance existing forest by removing invasive plants on 38 acres within the Pine Bend Bluffs Scientific and Natural Area.
- **Restore native prairie and oak savanna on Mississippi bluffs** at Indian Mounds and Cherokee Bluff in St. Paul, engaging volunteers in science-based restoration and protecting bluffs from erosion and habitat degradation. (“Key habitat” in the St. Paul Baldwin Plains and Moraines subsection of SWAP)
- **Protect up to 600 acres on the Wild and Scenic Rum River** just a few miles upstream of the Mississippi River (a “key river reach” identified in the Anoka Sand Plain subsection of the SWAP)

In the **St. Croix River Habitat Corridor**, the Metro Big Rivers Habitat program will:

- **Restore and manage habitat targeted for species of greatest conservation need** in the six-mile **Franconia-Scandia St. Croix corridor and Lower St. Croix Valley**, including prescribed burning, removing invasive species, removing trees and shrubs from prairie areas (controlling woody encroachment), and seeding oak woodland. (“key habitat” in the Mille Lacs Upland and St. Paul – Baldwin Plains and Moraines subsections, with both showing very high concentrations of SGCN along the St. Croix in Washington and Chisago counties);
- **Protect up to 30 acres of forest in the Franconia/ Scandia St. Croix River corridor**, complementing existing protected lands along the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway (“key river reach” identified in the Mille Lacs Upland subsection);
- **Protect up to 1000 acres of forest and wetlands at Big Marine Lake** in the St. Croix Greenway (in the St. Paul – Baldwin Plains and Moraines);

3. Who will take action and when?

Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners will complete projects between July 1, 2010, and June 30, 2012. Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners work with the state and federal agencies that own the lands or will be the eventual owners or holders of easements to ensure that all land acquired has a restoration and maintenance plan, following conveyance to the long-term steward.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

A key strength of Metro Big Rivers Habitat is achieving statewide conservation objectives with a wide range of tools. We apply a range of conservation strategies to achieve conservation goals and multiple benefits.

While the activities mentioned here directly address the habitat goals of the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, other activities on these sites, or other sites, might be appropriate for Clean Water Legacy (erosion control and slope stabilization), and other sites might be protected with Regional Park Legacy funds to connect protected habitat. Since 2003, the Metro Big Rivers Habitat Partners have protected and

restored high quality habitat in this area with support from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, leveraging substantial non-state funding and resources. The partners will continue to coordinate activities and raise funds from many sources to achieve conservation objectives in the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Habitat changes and benefits resulting from this project include:

- **Prairies, wetlands, forests and other wildlife habitat** that are now unprotected will be put under permanent protection. Because most of these sites are adjacent to existing protected land or part of a natural area complex, these protected acres will expand habitat for wildlife in the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area and public access for hunting, fishing and other wildlife-dependent recreation.
- **Wetlands** will be restored by breaking drainage tile, constructing water control structures, making shallow scrapes, and planting wetland species. Restored wetlands would be able to support more waterfowl, protect water quality, and provide improved wildlife habitat.
- **Oak savanna** will be restored by prescribed burning, invasive species and woody encroachment control, mowing and local ecotype seeding. Oak savanna is recognized as globally endangered, and some of the best examples of dry oak savanna in the state occur in this subsection. There are 30 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) listed for Oak Savanna habitat in the Anoka Sandplain, which include 15 species of birds, e.g., loggerhead shrike and red-headed woodpeckers, 5 species of insects, 6 species of mammals, e.g., plains pocket mouse, and 4 species of reptiles, e.g., Blanding's turtle, gopher snake, and western hognose snake.
- **Deciduous forests, including floodplain forests**, will be restored by preparing the soil, planting floodplain trees, removing invasive species and burning. Targeted for restoration, the St. Croix/Mississippi Rivers forest corridor forms a major north-south migration route for many game and non-game birds. In addition, they provide habitat for a diverse assemblage of wildlife species of greatest conservation need, including Louisiana waterthrush, prothonotary warbler, red-shouldered hawk and bald eagle. Nominated an Important Bird Area by Audubon, this area contains many nesting bald eagles, osprey and red-shouldered hawks.
- **Fens** will be restored by targeting invasive species, fostering re-growth of rare native species, and working with communities to improve the groundwater recharge. This habitat restoration will improve the fens' natural functions, including groundwater recharge, and enhance the site's effectiveness as a sanctuary for native plants and wildlife, including state-listed species.
- **Prairie** will be restored by planting a diverse native seed mix, mowing for weed control, and doing prescribed burns. Today, less than one percent of Minnesota's native prairie remains. The near elimination of native prairie has had an effect on

associated wildlife species. Grassland birds as a group have suffered the most serious widespread decline of any group of birds in North America.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

The Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners expect to see habitat changes as we complete the restoration and acquisition, beginning with the first restoration work. For restoration, we expect the habitat quality to improve continually over the subsequent three years, as native species benefit. Wildlife species – both game and non-game - are likely to respond within five to ten years. As many of these projects connect existing native habitat, we expect to see enduring habitat changes.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

 X YES NO
If not, how will you finance completion?

Short-term accomplishments financed:

The funding requested in this application, combined with the leveraged resources, will complete the planned acreage targets. It will not complete all of the possible projects itemized in this proposal. This request is an integral part of a longer-term, larger metro program.

Long-term commitment essential:

The Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners have set longer-term goals for protecting and restoring habitat, to create a network of protected natural lands providing wildlife habitat, quality fisheries, prairies and forests. When the restoration and acquisition partners began working together as a partnership in 2003, they set habitat goals that required at least a twenty-year commitment of \$10 million a year. Sustained investment and expertise are essential to meet these longer term goals.

For projects that are not completed with this particular grant, both included as possible projects and others, Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners will continue to seek funding and other resources in a coordinated approach, working with L-SOHC and other public and private funding sources.

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners will work with experienced local, state and federal land programs and private landowners to maintain the acquired and restored lands. With a strong record of leveraging funds to protect, restore and enhance wildlife habitat in the metro area, the partners are committed to working with the land stewards to secure resources to maintain these lands.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

Public purchase of fee title or conservation easements prevents conversion to other uses, thereby preserving the habitat value of these lands, and makes possible science-based land stewardship and public access for hunting, fishing and other wildlife-dependent recreation.

Restoration and enhancement of target habitat types based on scientific principles benefits prairie, wetland, forest and habitat for fish, game and wildlife. Each proposed action is essential to restore or enhance the specific habitat types at each site. Please see questions 2 and 5 for more detailed descriptions of proposed activities.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

 X YES NO
If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

The sites are protected using two legal tools: legal recording, with conservation easements on private land, or title held by a public agency; and statutory authority, with agency or program authority described in state or federal law (state scientific and natural area, federal wildlife refuge, national park unit, state wildlife management area or other state ownership). These two tools are used in combination or independently.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners will ensure transparency and provide information about our work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars in the following ways:

- Timely and complete reporting to the L-SOHC and DNR, as required by the grant agreement with each partner.
- Publicity about program and specific project plans, results and outcomes through partner websites and e-newsletters.
- Signage on the protected or restored sites.
- Ongoing updates and announcements with press releases, media relations, tours and web postings.
- Partner and project communications directly to local communities, including through volunteer engagement events.

12. Why will this strategy work?

Science-based model

We use ecological criteria to select sites that serve regional habitat goals. The DNR and Metropolitan Council developed a science-based model to identify priority sites for protection, restoration and enhancement. The partners applied that model to identify habitat corridors and priority sites to achieve regional habitat goals. That 2002 model and 2003 habitat corridor mapping, updated as land cover mapping is completed and conditions change, have guided and will continue to guide project activity.

We apply the most effective practices for habitat restoration and management, informed by conservation restoration science.

Expertise protecting and restoring habitat in the region and statewide

Each partner has a long-term track record of achievement in conserving natural resources within and beyond the metro area. In land acquisition, we use the most effective practices to negotiate and complete due diligence. In restoration and enhancement, we apply restoration strategies tested at other sites and based on conservation restoration research results.

Partnership effectiveness and experience

This partnership has demonstrated on-the-ground results and leveraged resources beyond the capacity of individual partners. Since 2003, the partners have worked together through the Metropolitan Conservation Corridors to protect more than 5,200 acres of land, including 8.2 miles of shoreline, and to restore more than 4,300 acres of land, including two miles of shoreline. This partnership harnesses the varied skills of its partners to increase impact and efficiency.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

Land Acquisition

Private landowners make a personal decision to protect their land through conservation easement or sale, and can assist or work against program goals. Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners have experience successfully negotiating with private landowners, which requires patience and skill. To prevent any one landowner from obstructing our goals, the Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners have identified several potential properties for protection based on discussions already underway with landowners.

Neighbors and communities also make decisions to support the protection of land either through easement or fee. To prevent any one neighbor or community from obstructing our goals, the Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners have already identified potential properties for protection based on discussions underway with these neighbors and communities. We can already report that support is strong.

Restoration and Enhancement

From past experience, we know that some people may react negatively to the cutting of invasive trees and exotic shrubs, where they see such vegetation as green buffer. People also may regret the thinning of trees to open up the oak savanna canopy. However, the special feature of this proposal involving stakeholders and public volunteers, as well as public education, will significantly minimize this potential project impact.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

 X YES

 NO

For each of the projects listed, the Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners have secured informal support and / or will secure the formal support of the local government when and if required when land protection / restoration projects move into the contractual stage.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

 X YES

 NO

Urgency: Habitat Importance

The Big River valleys provide essential habitat for resident wildlife, and support migrating wildlife, both game and non-game species. These major corridors and connecting areas harbor the best concentration of natural communities that exist anywhere in the Metropolitan Urbanizing Section. The State Wildlife Action Plan and the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan both identify the importance and potential of these Big River valleys for habitat conservation.

Urgency: Development Pressure and Restoration Needs

The Metro Big Rivers Habitat area is under heavy development pressure, especially on natural areas with high amenity value like bluffs and lakeshore. In fact, the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area is slated to grow by another 1 million people in the next 20 years.

Urgency: Public Importance of Outdoor Experience

Providing Minnesotans with hunting, fishing and other wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities requires access to meaningful outdoor experiences close to home. People will be more aware of habitat importance in the state and the region and enjoy better access to wildlife areas with the work of Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

 X YES

 NO

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

Minnesota River Corridor: Savage Fen (20 acres), Seminary Fen (30 acres), Black Dog Nature Preserve (50 acres),

Mississippi River Corridor: Pine Bend Bluffs (38 acres), Indian Mounds Bluff, Cherokee Bluffs.

St. Croix River Corridor: Franconia (20 acres), Falls Creek (20 acres), Lost Valley (20 acres)

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

 X YES

 NO

If yes, explain the model briefly.

The Strategic Habitat Conservation model has five elements: Biological Planning, Conservation Design, Conservation Delivery, Assumption-driven Research, and Outcome-based Monitoring. The DNR and Metropolitan Council identified regionally significant ecological areas based on a suite of focal species and their habitat, as the Strategic Habitat Conservation model recommends. Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners have applied Conservation Delivery tools based on that planning. This request for protection and restoration work helps achieve conservation objectives for this region.

The Strategic Habitat Conservation model recommends sustained delivery and iterative planning, design, research and monitoring. The Metro Big Rivers Habitat partnership

contributes significantly to this model functioning efficiently in the region, in concert with academic and public agency planning, research and monitoring work. Our long-term commitment and extensive experience in the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area build substantial capacity to achieve science-based conservation goals here.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

The scientific foundation for the Metro Big River Habitat work is to apply biological planning and conservation design to target projects at three hierarchical levels: multiple focal species (extinctions avoided); sites (areas protected and enhanced); and landscapes (habitat complexes and corridors created). Our investment strategy enables us to target our limited resources to species, sites and landscapes of regional conservation concern. As our conservation delivery succeeds in protecting and enhancing habitat in priority areas, each of those levels is addressed – species, sites, and landscapes. The acres enhanced or protected provide measurable results in the larger context of biological planning and conservation design.

The Metro Big Rivers Habitat partners will protect 850 acres and restore 338 acres targeted to sites and landscapes selected for their regional biological benefit.

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

The Metro Big Rivers Habitat partnership sets its priorities by applying GIS-based natural resource assessments and regional landscape plans within the defined project areas for this proposal. We work in core habitat areas, establish habitat corridors, create buffers for existing protected land, and increase public access to nature-related recreation. This strategy complements our larger, historic Metro Conservation Corridors approach, which applies to a larger geography beyond just the three Big River Corridors in the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area.

Criteria include:

- **Threshold qualifying criterion:** Within habitat corridors mapped by DNR and partners based on analysis of regional ecological significance and within one of the three Big River Corridors.
- **Highest priority:** Regionally significant ecological areas, including presence of Minnesota County Biological Survey quality ecological system(s) and/or concentration of species of Greatest conservation need / Threatened or endangered species
- **Highest priority:** Immediacy of need/action
- **Highest priority:** Feasibility
- **High priority:** Public lands with permanent protection, or expansions and buffering of public lands
- **High priority:** Public accessibility with particular emphasis on access for hunting, fishing and other wildlife-dependent recreation.
- **High priority:** Multiple conservation benefits

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

The Metro Big Rivers Habitat partnership applies several key habitat recommendations of the Minnesota Statewide Conservation Preservation Plan (MSCPP), implementing the more specific habitat priorities illustrated in the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) and in some cases, also highlighted in species-specific plans like the Long Term Duck Recovery Plan. The activity descriptions above include references to the specific ecological subsection and priority habitats in those areas.

- The science-based identification of priority areas and projects corresponds to priorities outlined in the MSCPP, including:
 - protecting priority habitat,
 - protecting critical shorelands,
 - improving connectivity and access to outdoor recreation;
 - restoring land, wetlands, and wetland-associated watersheds;
 - protecting and restoring critical in-water habitat of lakes and streams; and
 - keeping water on the landscape.
- In particular “improving connectivity and access to outdoor recreation,” our work improves and expands new hunting, fishing and other wildlife-based recreational opportunities close to home for three million Minnesotans. These opportunities will help to build a new generation of Minnesotans who love to hunt, fish, bird-watch, or study wildlife.
- The specific projects described above achieve habitat protection and restoration objectives on a wide range of “key habitat” areas, as noted above.
- The Metro Big Rivers Habitat meets two of the L-SOHC’s priorities in this section:
 - “Protect habitat corridors, with emphasis on the Minnesota, Mississippi and St. Croix rivers);” and
 - “protect, enhance and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests and oak savanna with an emphasis on areas with high biological diversity.”

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	\$143,528	\$2,000	
Contracts	\$40,000	\$30,000	
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	\$69,205		
Fee Acquisition	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	
Easement Acquisition	\$200,000		
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel	\$5,800	\$200	
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$2,458,533	\$2,032,200	\$0

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
(FMR) Conservation Director	Tom Lewanski	\$2,000
(FMR) Restoration Ecologist		\$5,000
(GRG) Ecologist/Reporting	Varies	\$11,500
(GRG) Budget Accounting	Deb Gager	\$2,070
(GRG) Budget Management	Greg Wenz	\$3,884
(GRG) Field Technicians	Multiple	\$74,091
(GRG) Ecologist,	Varies	\$22,115
(GRG) Project Assistant, Mapping Support		\$3,870
(GRG) Volunteer Manager	Mark Turbak	\$20,999

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
MN Valley NWR Trust, Inc. (MVT)	\$525,000	\$525,000	
NFWF (GRG)	\$37,000	\$38,000	
Dakota County (FMR)	\$160,000		
Landowner (FMR)	\$50,000		
Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR)	\$10,000	\$5,000	
Local (TPL)	\$500,000	\$500,000	
Federal (TPL)		\$200,000	
Private (TPL)	\$300,000	\$200,000	
Source of State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
State Funding LCCMR, RIM and/or Bonding (TPL)	\$700,000	\$600,000	
TOTAL	\$2,282,000	\$2,068,000	

G. Outcomes:

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>60 Acres</i>	<i>140 Acres</i>		<i>138 Acres</i>
Protect	<i>56 Acres</i>	<i>42 Acres</i>	<i>72 Acres</i>	<i>680 Acres</i>
Enhance				
Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (60 acres)</i>	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (140 acres)</i>		<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (138 acres)</i>
Protect	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (56 acres)</i>	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (42 acres)</i>	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (72 acres)</i>	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (680 acres)</i>
Enhance				
Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$63,970</i>	<i>\$149,263</i>		<i>\$75,300</i>
Protect	<i>\$840,000</i>	<i>\$630,000</i>	<i>\$1,080,000</i>	<i>\$1,652,200</i>
Enhance				
Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$22,500</i>	<i>\$52,500</i>		<i>\$55,000</i>
Protect	<i>\$840,000</i>	<i>\$630,000</i>	<i>\$1,080,000</i>	<i>\$1,610,000</i>
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability			<i>50 acres</i>	
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability	<i>56 acres</i>	<i>42 acres</i>	<i>22 acres</i>	<i>530 acres</i>
Permanent Easement				<i>150 acres</i>

H. Accomplishment Time Table: Using the headings below, include a clear **statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when**. Attach a **map** showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
<u>FMR Conservation Easement:</u>		
Complete landowner neg./agreement	Aug 2010	
Due diligence	Dec 2010	
Closing	March 2011	150 acres
<u>FMR Restoration:</u>		
Develop restoration plan	Sept 2010	
Seek contractor bids	Jan 2011	
Complete exotic invasive plant removal	April 2011	
Complete followup herbicide treatment for exotics	Oct 2011	
Prepare soil for tree planting	Oct 2011	
Plant trees to disturbed site	May 2012	38 acres
<u>GRG Restoration:</u>		
Completion of first restoration	June 2011	100 acres
Completion of second restoration	June 2012	100 acres
<u>MVT Acquisition:</u>		
Complete landowner neg / signed purchase agmt(s)	Dec 2010	
Due diligence	April 2011	
Closing parcel(s)	June 2011	250 acres
Complete landowner neg / signed purchase agmt(s)	June 2011	
Due diligence	Oct 2011	

Program Title: **Metro Big Rivers Habitat**

Closing parcel(s)	Dec 2011	250 acres
<u>MVT Restoration:</u>		
Develop restoration plans	April 2011	
Seek proposals / bids from contractors	June 2011	
Complete restoration	Oct 2011	100 acres
<u>TPL Acquisition:</u>		
Complete landowner neg./agreements parcels	Oct 2010	
Complete steward planning for restoration, mgt, use	Feb 2011	
Complete due diligence	Aug 2011	
Closing parcels	Oct 2011	100 acres
Complete landowner neg./agreements parcels	April 2011	
Repeat milestones	Feb 2012	
Closing parcels	April 2012	100 acres

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

The Minnesota Valley Trust's FY10 budget:

MVT's operating budget (general, administration, office, fees) is \$314,470 for FY10. This does not include any program spending on land acquisition, habitat restoration and other activities, which will be at least \$2.5M for the fiscal year.

Trust for Public Land

TPL's operating budget is expected to be \$1.8M in FY2011 and \$1.8M in FY2012. which includes all staff and expenses for program and project work statewide and, as mentioned above, any due diligence, legal, community outreach / planning, fundraising, financing expenses, reporting, communications, administration for any project underway or completed as part of the Metro Big Rivers Habitat Program. The \$6M in land capital (proposed LSOHC and anticipated leverage) used for protection of approximately 200 acres within the three Big River Corridors is *not included* in TPL's operating budget.

Friends of the Mississippi River

FMR's budget for 2009 was \$1.5M. The operating or administrative component of our proposal, \$27,500, is roughly 2% of our 2009 budget, which are all operating expenses. The \$400,000 in land capital (LSOHC and leverage) that will be used for protection of approximately 150 acres in this project is not included in FMR's operating budget.

Great River Greening

Great River Greening's total budget for 2009 is \$1,078,000. Approximately 85% is direct project money for on-the-ground work and 15% is project development, budget accounting, fundraising, and general administration. The Great River Greening request of \$200,000 for direct project support is not part of our base budget.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

All restoration or enhancement projects are part of a long-term management plan or management brief, which is fully endorsed by the landowner or land steward.

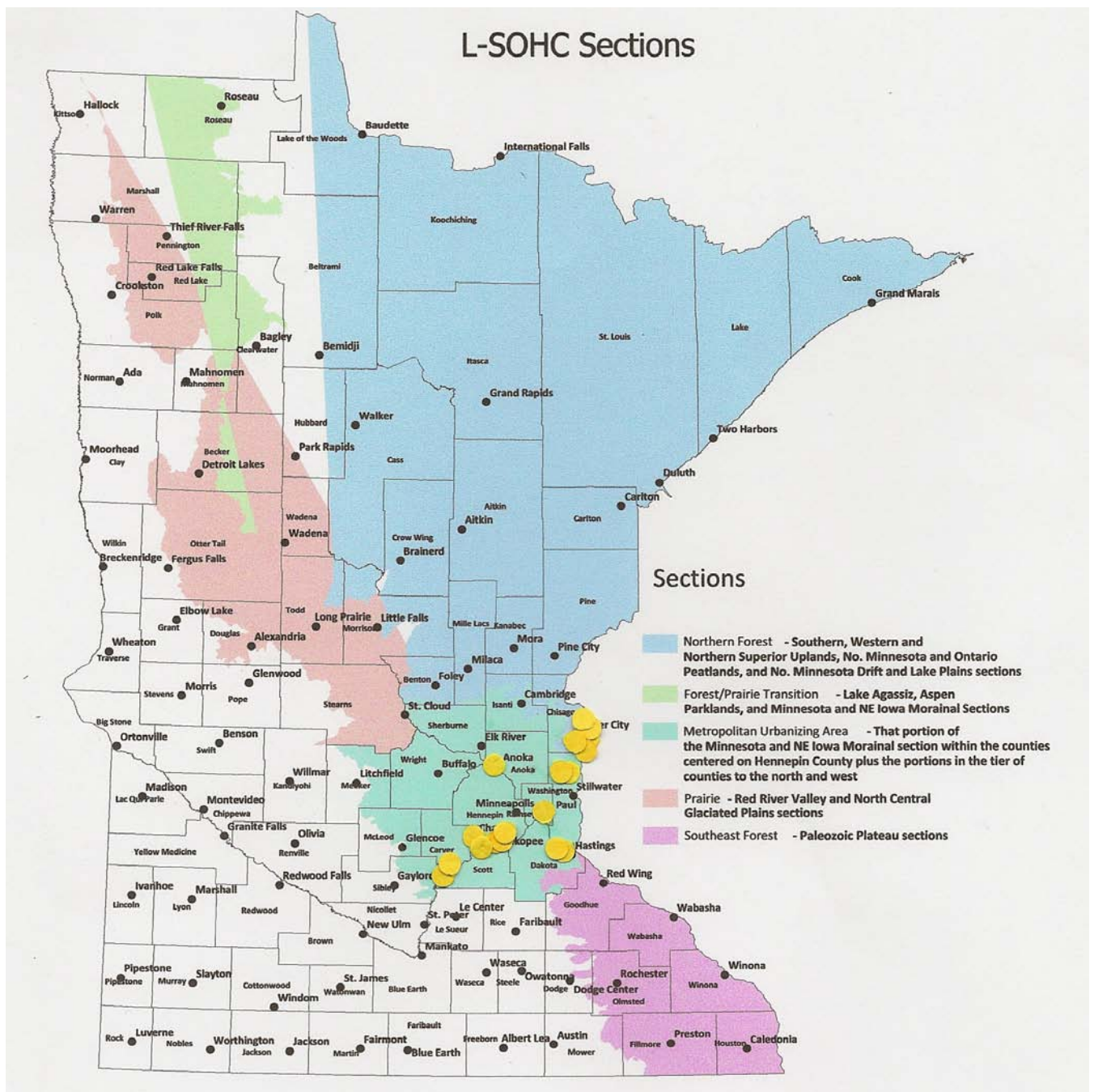
Program Title: **Metro Big Rivers Habitat**

In the St. Croix area, management agencies will coordinate and jointly implement monitoring programs and assess the effectiveness of restoration and protection, consistent with the assumption-driven research and outcome-based monitoring.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

The locations of the possible projects identified for this program are listed below. As noted previously, we will not complete all of the protection projects with this grant, but will select among the possible projects and achieve the targeted acreages.

<u>Partner Name</u>	<u>Project Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Action</u>
MVT	MN Valley NWR Expansion	LeSueur, Scott and Sibley Counties	Protect
MVT	MN Valley NWR Restoration	Sibley County	Restore
FMR	Pine Bend Bluffs Acquisition	Dakota County	Protect
FMR	Pine Bend Bluffs Restoration	Dakota County	Restore
TPL	Savage Fen	Scott County	Protect
TPL	Rum River Confluence	Anoka County	Protect
TPL	Big Marine Acquisition	Washington County	Protect
TPL	Scandia/Franconia Acquisition	Chisago County	Protect
TPL	Pike Lake Acquisition	Scott County	Protect
GRG	Seminary Fen Restoration	Carver County	Restore
GRG	Savage Fen Restoration	Scott County	Restore
GRG	Black Dog Fen Restoration	Scott County	Restore
GRG	Indian Mounds Savanna	Ramsey County	Restore
GRG	Cherokee Bluffs Savanna	Ramsey County	Restore
GRG	Franconia/Scandia Corridor	Chisago County	Restore



Program Title: Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Land Acquisition 2010

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: #21 Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Land Acquisition 2010

Date: October 29, 2009

Manager's Name: Dr. Mary Meyer

Title: Director and Professor

Mailing Address: 3675 Arboretum Drive, Chaska MN, 55318

Telephone: 952-443-1447

Fax: 952-443-2521

E-Mail: meyer023@umn.edu

Web Site: www.arboretum.umn.edu

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$2,500,000	0	0	0

A. Summary

The Arboretum proposes to purchase 78 acres of land, located adjacent to the Arboretum's Horticultural Research Center, on the north side of Highway 5 and east of Bavaria Road in Carver County. This site is 78.13 acres which includes approximately 20 acres of wetlands. The property also contains 1,300 feet of lakeshore on Lake Tamarack, the deepest lake in Carver County, and one of the most pristine lakes in the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area Section. Purchasing this property would have multiple significant enduring outcomes including:

- Protecting majestic stands of oak, maple and basswood, as well as an upland meadow and wetlands, that provide habitat for a diverse population of birds, mammals, amphibians, and native plants
- Securing the site to allow future research projects and the restoration of sections on this property (big woods, oak savanna, upland meadow, wetlands, etc.) which have been disrupted by a century of farming
- Providing a wildlife corridor linking the 1,137 acres of the Arboretum with 78 additional undeveloped acres of land north of State Highway 5
- Protecting the water quality of the lake, vigorously preventing water pollution and encouraging a healthy fishery, waterfowl habitat, and native flora and fauna

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- Enhancing the public access to the site via an existing City of Victoria paved trail from the south; additionally an existing Hennepin County Transit Authority Trail will provide access through a proposed City of Victoria Park on the north side of Lake Tamarack
- Securing land for possible future University of Minnesota research projects including restoration ecology, organic fruit crop production and perennial crops (alders and other species) for bio-energy and wildlife habitat research

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The Arboretum proposes to purchase 78 acres of adjacent land from a willing seller. This is the final remaining parcel to be purchased, as identified on the Arboretum's 1998 Master Plan. The parcel contains tillable land, wetlands, big woods and 1,300 feet of lakeshore on Lake Tamarack. It also contains majestic stands of oak, maple and basswood as well as an upland meadow and wetlands that provide habitat for a diverse population of birds, mammals, amphibians, and native plants.

The lakeshore portion of the new 78 acres, combined with the 1,597 feet already owned by the U of M, and 1,875 feet owned by the City of Victoria will completely protect the deepest lake in Carver County and one of the most pristine lakes in the Metro Area. Lake Tamarack is 24 acres in size and 82 feet deep.

The City of Victoria Master Plan for Parks also describes in detail a potential Lake Tamarack Park Preserve that would protect the entire perimeter of this highly pristine environmental lake. The Lake Tamarack Park Preserve would protect the water quality of the lake, vigorously prevent water pollution and encourage a healthy fishery, waterfowl habitat, and native flora and fauna. A low impact loop trail could be built around the lake. An existing City of Victoria paved trail provides access to the site from the south and an existing Hennepin County Transit Authority Trail provides access through a proposed City of Victoria Park on the north side of Lake Tamarack.

The Arboretum provides a unique opportunity to connect the best practices of research and restoration with the larger community. The Arboretum has seen massive visitor growth each year and now welcomes nearly 320,000 visitors annually. While enjoying the beautiful gardens, guests can also explore engaging conservation models on the site including: Harvest Your Rain, a permanent display area for homeowners which highlights a green roof, rain gardens and the use of cisterns and rain barrels; Geothermal Power which is used in the Oswald Visitor Center; commercial-scale rain gardens which provide a living example for developers and urban planners; and the Rainwater Runoff Models which includes five mini-watersheds to demonstrate how different paving materials and the amount of plant material can vastly affect the amount and the quality of runoff water.

In addition to educating the public about the value and methods available for conservation, the Arboretum has significant experience with the protection, research and restoration of ecosystems. One example is Dr. Susan Galatowitsch's innovative Spring Peeper Sedge Meadow Restoration Research and Demonstration project. This project is the most well

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documented and successful sedge meadow restoration in the United States and has since been expanded to include tall grass prairie and upland woody plant restoration on the slopes surrounding the wetland basin. Spring Peeper meadow is used as a research and demonstration site by K -12 and University Classes as well as classes and workshops for both professionals and the public.

2. What action will be taken?

With funding support from the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, the Arboretum proposes to purchase 78 acres adjacent to the Arboretum's Horticultural Research Center.

3. Who will take action and when?

The purchase of this property could potentially be completed by the Arboretum by the end of fiscal year 2011.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

Additional Constitutional Funding could be used to conduct specific research projects on restoration methods and wildlife habitats on sections of the property. In addition, any restoration models that are created or research that is generated would be available to the nearly 320,000 onsite visitors to the Arboretum each year, as well as available on the internet for other interested parties throughout the state and region.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

In addition to providing a site for future research projects, the purchase of this property would have several immediate benefits for the habitat including:

- Protecting majestic stands of oak, maple and basswood as well as an upland meadow and wetlands that provide habitat for a diverse population of birds, mammals, amphibians, and native plants
- Providing a wildlife corridor linking the 1,137 acres of the Arboretum with 78 additional undeveloped acres of land north of State Highway 5
- Protecting the water quality of Lake Tamarack, vigorously preventing water pollution and encouraging a healthy fishery, waterfowl habitat, and native flora and fauna

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

Protecting this habitat would occur when the property is secured, which could potentially occur during fiscal year 2011.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

The Arboretum will work to identify and solicit additional funders including the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR), the Trust for Public Land, the Minnehaha Watershed District, foundations, and individual private donors.

Future costs that will occur on this piece of property will be added to the Arboretum's general budget and incorporated into the maintenance and programming that is already happening at the Arboretum. Support for the Arboretum's \$9,458,094 operating budget is currently generated by a variety of sources including: the University of Minnesota (11%), Revenue from operations such as restaurant and gift shop sales, facility rentals, etc. (28%), Membership (11%), Private Philanthropy (44%), and other sources (6%).

The City of Victoria Comprehensive Plan guides this parcel's land use as Low Density Residential which would allow over 100 homes to be built. Even with a good erosion control plan, adequate wetland buffers and proper maintenance of streets and storm water management structures, the amount of new impervious surfaces that would come about as a result of development on this parcel would likely impact Lake Tamarack and reduce the amount of potential aquifer recharge on this parcel.

If protected, this land will provide a wildlife corridor linking 1,000 acres of the Arboretum with additional undeveloped land north of State Highway 5, protect the water quality of Lake Tamarack and provide land for possible U of M research projects including restoration ecology, organic fruit crop production and perennial crops (alders and other species) for bio-energy and wildlife habitat research. The Arboretum would use this property for research based education and outreach programs for professionals and the public.

The purchase of this property would ensure that it became permanently protected land.

4

Program Title: Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Land Acquisition 2010

As an institution committed to providing knowledge and outreach, and as a unit of the University of Minnesota, the Arboretum is well positioned to share clear, timely and accurate information about the purchase and development of the proposed property to funders, partnering agencies, other stakeholders and the general public.

12. Why will this strategy work?

Currently the Arboretum welcomes nearly 320,000 guests each year. In addition, the Arboretum has a strong web presence and has successfully conducted public education and engagement conferences about restoring, enhancing and protecting fragile environments, conserving precious natural resources and other mission-related topics.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

As part of the University of Minnesota, the Arboretum is able to leverage a wide variety of resources from within the University community, as well as having access to cutting-edge environmental and restoration researchers and information. The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Foundation Board of Trustees will be a critical element in raising funds to support this land purchase. In addition, by working in active collaboration with the City of Victoria, Carver County and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, the Arboretum will engage multiple stakeholders and ensure a broad base of community support for this project.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

☒ **X** **YES**

☐ **NO**

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

☒ **X** **YES**

☐ **NO**

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

☐ **N/A** **YES**

☐ **N/A** **NO**

If Yes what kind of use?

This request is not for an easement, but rather a fee simple acquisition. However, public access to this property is an important component of this purchase.

As part of the Arboretum, this property would be openly available for public use in a variety of ways. The public would be able to enjoy this area in ways that are similar to how they use the Arboretum: to connect with the natural world, to view native wildlife, to enjoy the splendid beauty of Minnesota throughout the seasons, and to participate in innovative educational programming.

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However this property also opens up new possibilities to develop a relationship between hunters and sportsmen and the Arboretum. The site at Lake Tamarack has the potential to be opened for public fishing with some protection and conservation stipulations (catch and release only, no use of live bait, etc.). In addition, the property could host some managed hunting (limited hours within season, only bow hunting or musket hunting) that would allow access, but also protect the safety of visitors to the property and within adjacent the neighborhood.

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

☐ N/A ☐ YES

☐ N/A ☐ NO

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

_____ Years

The Arboretum celebrated its 50th anniversary last year and the Horticultural Research Center marked 100 years of cold-hardy research. Purchasing this property would ensure its protection into the next century and beyond.

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

☐ Northern Forest

☐ Forest/Prairie Transition

☐ Southeast Forest

☐ Prairie

☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ YES

☐ NO

If yes, please explain.

If the Arboretum does not secure this property, it will almost certainly be sold to a developer, probably for construction of private residences. It has been determined that the highest and best use of the site is for residential development. Land immediately to the east of this property has been developed with single family detached homes. Land to the north is zoned residential and most likely will be improved with residential buildings in the near future.

Carver County has been one of the fastest growing communities in Minnesota, almost doubling in population over the past 16 years. The city of Victoria increased by 2.5 times over the same

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time period. Continued growth is expected, but at a slower pace in the next five years primarily due to the decline in the housing market.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

 YES X NO
If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

_____YES _____X_____NO
If yes explain the model briefly.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Protecting this property is not directly addressed in the Strategic Habitat Conservation model. However, securing this site will provide a platform for future research that will use the SHC model to make management decisions about conservation and achieving specific biological outcomes while at the same time constantly reassessing and improving our methods and actions.

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

In 1998 the Arboretum completed a Master Plan which outlined several neighboring properties that were strategically important to protect the Arboretum's watershed and limit neighboring development that would have a negative impact on the Arboretum. The parcels were then prioritized according to cost, strategic value and the willingness of the seller. Eight tracts of land were identified. Over time, seven have been secured, most recently with a 90 acre inholding that was purchased in August, 2008. The only piece that remains is the 78 acre parcel adjacent to the Horticultural Research Center. Recently, conversations have occurred with the property owner about their willingness to sell the land to the Arboretum and the likelihood of selling to a property developer if the Arboretum is unable to acquire the parcel.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

This project fits within several areas of the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan*. It most strongly aligns with Habitat Recommendation 2: Protect critical shorelands of streams and lakes, and also Habitat Recommendation 6: Protect and restore critical in-water habitat of lakes

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and streams. Within Habitat Recommendation 2A: Acquire high-priority shorelands, it specifically states that "The highest priority shorelands...should be permanently protected through acquisition. This is one essential component of a multistrategy approach to preserving the clean water legacy that Minnesota's citizens and visitors are used to experiencing." The Arboretum's purchase of this property would permanently protect the shoreline of Lake Tamarack, the deepest lake in Carver County, and one of the most pristine lakes in the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area Section.

In addition to the relationship this project has to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan*, it is also a critical component within the city of Victoria Master Plan for Parks which describes in detail a potential Lake Tamarack Park Preserve that would allow public access and use and also protect the entire perimeter of Lake Tamarack. The creation of this preserve would protect the water quality of the lake, vigorously prevent water pollution and encourage a healthy fishery, waterfowl habitat, and native flora and fauna.

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition	\$7,000,000		
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$7,000,000		

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
N/A		

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F. All Leverage *In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.*

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council	\$2,500,000		
Legislative-Citizen Commission on MN Resources (LCCMR)	\$1,750,000		
Trust for Public Land	\$ 250,000		
Minnehaha Watershed District	\$ 750,000		
Foundations and Individual Donors	\$1,750,000		
TOTAL	\$7,000,000		

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the "protect" row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Program Title: Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Land Acquisition 2010

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect	<i>Protect 20 acres of wetland, including 1,300 feet of lakeshore</i>	<i>Protect an Upland Meadow</i>	<i>Protect stands of oak, maple and basswood</i>	<i>Protect 78 acres which will preserve habitats and plant communities</i>
Enhance				<i>Providing a wildlife corridor linking the 1,137 acres of the Arboretum with 78 additional acres</i>

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (20 acres)</i>	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (+/- 10 acres)</i>	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (+/- 10 acres)</i>	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (78 acres)</i>
Enhance				<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (78 acres)</i>

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife

Program Title: Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Land Acquisition 2010

Restore				
Protect	\$ 750,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$1,250,000
Enhance				N/A

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect	\$ 1,500,000	\$ \$ 375,000	\$ 375,000	\$2,250,000
Enhance				N/A

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability	<i>Acquire 78 acres which includes 20 acres of wetland, an upland meadow, and stands of oak, maple and basswood which will provide a wildlife corridor with the Arboretum for an estimated \$7,000,000.</i>			
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Land Acquisition 2010

Milestone	Date	Measure
Property Purchased	6/30/2011	

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

The Arboretum's current budget for fiscal year 2010 is \$9,458,094.

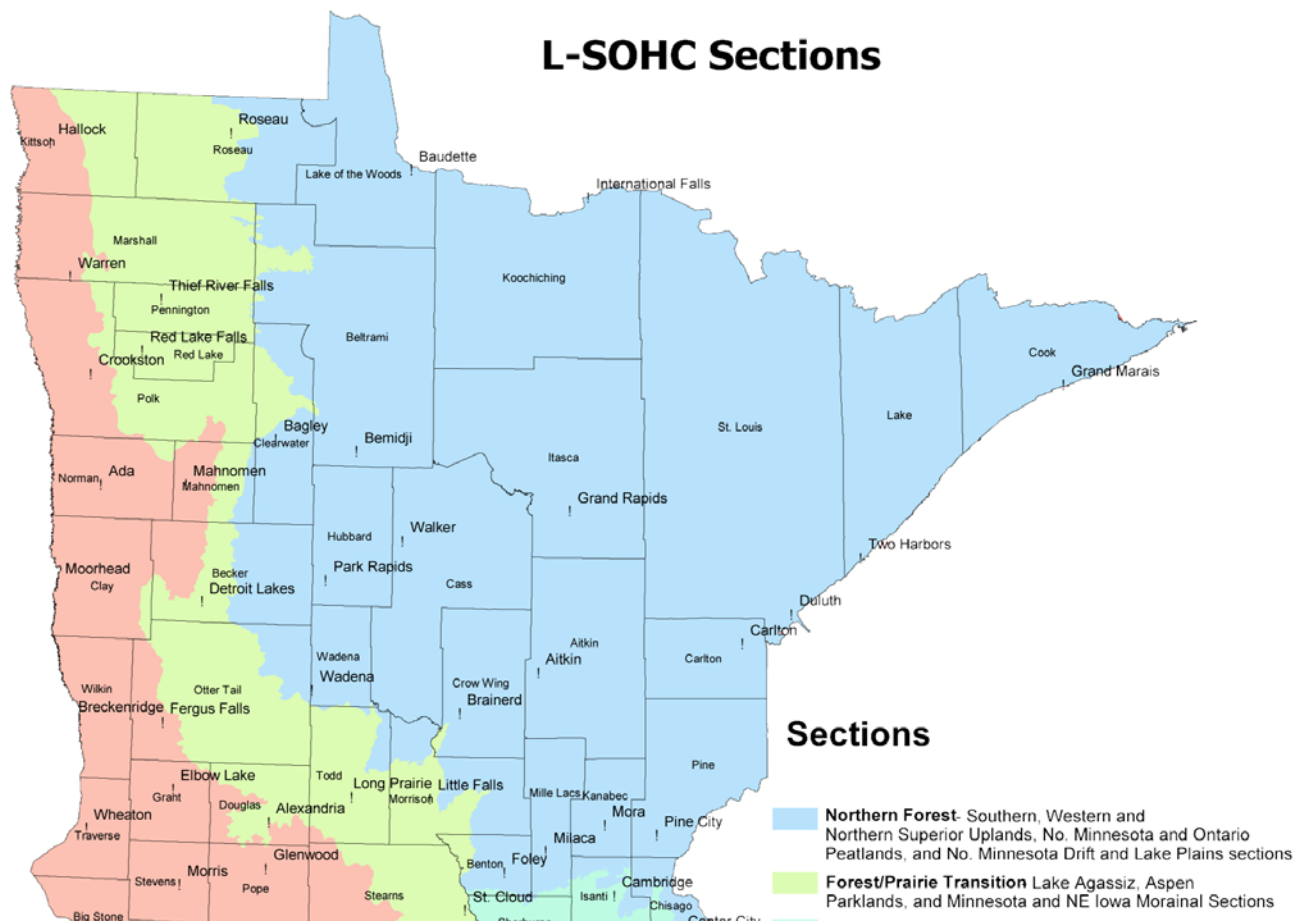
J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

After it is secured, this property will become part of the Arboretum and its monitoring, improvements and maintenance will be incorporated into the operations and master plan of the Arboretum.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Project Name: Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Land Acquisition 2010
County Location: Carver

L-SOHC Sections



Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

Request for Funding Form Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Fiscal Year 2011

Program or Project Title: #22 Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

Date: October 31, 2009

Manager's Name: Joshua Stevenson

Title: Cass County Land Commissioner

Mailing Address: 218 East Washburn Avenue, Backus MN 56435

Telephone: 218-947-7501

Fax: 218-947-3230

E-Mail: josh.stevenson@co.cass.mn.us

Web Site: co.cass.mn.us

Funds Requested (\$000s)	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000

A. Summary:

Project will protect and restore 500+- acres of forest and wetland wildlife habitats in central Minnesota (Cass County) through fee title acquisition of key industrial forest tracts. Title of lands acquired will be held by Cass County for a majority of the tracts listed. However, land asset (e.g. exchange) and management partnerships (e.g. cooperative lease) will be worked out with the Minnesota DNR for those tracts identified in Table 6 that are best suited for management within the State recreational unit listed.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Problem: Central Minnesota, especially the area in Cass County from Brainerd/Baxter to Walker, has and will continue to see some of the fastest human population growth in Minnesota. This growth will also lead to increased recreational demands/use of this area, it's natural resources and related public land base that needs to support this growth.

Opportunity: Key industrial forest tracts (i.e. in-holdings in large public land tracts, public access issues, etc.) are being considered or currently being offered for sale by a large industrial forest owner (Potlatch Corporation) in this area. Market conditions

Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

and a willingness by this industrial forest owner to sell at this time is an opportunity that should be addressed now since it is narrow and may close (properties sold) at any time.

2. What action will be taken?

Fee title acquisition, incorporate tracts into existing Cass County land base. Where appropriate, consider land asset (i.e. exchange) and/or management partnerships (i.e. cooperative lease) with the Minnesota DNR for those tract identified in Table 6 that are best suited for management within the State recreational units listed.

3. Who will take action and when?

Cass County (Land Department), within time frames of the project.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

No other Constitutional funding is being considered, project is specific to funds authorized through L-SOHC.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

With protection: Tracts are primarily forested, some wetland attributes (Dry Sand WMA impoundment frontage; Pine River and Daggett Brook stream frontage). Current forest habitats are primarily cutover pine types that have been replanted to Norway Pine and/or Jack Pine, some Aspen and other hardwoods exist on transition edge to wetlands. Forest habitats will not change much in the first few years of protection since they are currently young forest. However, they will change in later years due to the fact County management will have a longer rotation age and a more diverse age/structural composition goal. These changes will greatly increase the structural and compositional diversity of these forest habitats and related wildlife that use them.

Without protection: Tracts will end up in private ownership where private desires, intent and zoning regulations will drive how they are developed. This change/development will have collateral impact (i.e. edge effect, noxious weeds/invasive species, etc.) on adjacent public lands that will probably be negative. Private development will also increase short and long-term County management costs for boundary surveys, postings, access roads, etc.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

As stated above, changes should start in 5-10 years, increase as time progresses after that.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

 X YES

 NO

If not, how will you finance completion?

Yes for this project period. Additional projects in futures years may be submitted as other key industrial forest tracts become available within Cass or adjacent counties.

Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Ongoing maintenance of tracts acquired will be the responsibility Cass County and/or the Minnesota DNR recreational unit they are added to (i.e. State WMA or State Forest). Cass County currently manages over 250,000 acres of land. This land will be added to the existing land base.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

Project protects long-term forest and wetlands habitats, and related fish, game and wildlife species by consolidating management of these in-holdings with surrounding public lands. Enhancements will be reflected both on a landscape scale (i.e. integrated forest composition goals, age structure, patch size dynamics, etc.) and a site scale (i.e. efficiency in managing individual timber sales and related wildlife habitat/recreational needs).

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Fee title acquisition of these tracts permanently protects and allows for the long-term management of habitats on these tracts.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

Numerous news releases; outreach efforts with local, regional and statewide stakeholders groups that will benefit by this project; posting on County's web site, etc.

12. Why will this strategy work?

A public information strategy that combines broad (news release) and targeted (stakeholder groups) efforts should reach a wide variety of Minnesota citizens. In house capabilities to produce this effort exist within the County, assistance expected from the Minnesota DNR.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

Most all of the tracts being considered under this project have been discussed with local government officials and stakeholder groups over the last few years, expect strong support if funded. Objections may come from local neighbors (wanted to buy tracts themselves, concerned about boundary/trespass issues).

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

Cass County Board supports the acquisition of this land. This type of Land Asset Management activity is identified in both the County Comprehensive Plan and the Forest Resource Management plan. Formal approval will be sought on each

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

parcel acquired. The County's process requires township approval before the County Board takes action. The County expects a positive response and feels our current policy will ensure transparency and provide information about our work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

Not applicable. All Cass County Administered Land is open to the public.

☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

Not applicable.

☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

2-3 **Years**

Note: Depending on the funding level and success of this project, additional annual projects may be submitted in future years to help consolidate other County and/or State lands in this area.

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

- ☒ Northern Forest
- ☐ Forest/Prairie Transition
- ☐ Southeast Forest
- ☐ Prairie
- ☐ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If yes, please explain.

A large number of these tracts are currently up for sale or been considered for sale by the industrial forest landowner. Several of these tracts have been already

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

been listed For Sale, but have been removed from the owners sale list at the request of Cass County and/or the Minnesota DNR so as to allow pursuit of possible funding.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

YES **X** **NO**

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

Note: Request does however fill in/round out land parcels within existing Cass County lands and creates the potential for land exchanges and/or cooperative lease agreements that enhance existing State Wildlife Management Areas or State Forests lands (see Table 6).

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

YES X NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

While not a specific science based assessment process, tracts are all within or adjacent to existing public (Cass County) lands.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Project and tracts are based on long-term management concerns for management costs (i.e. boundary survey, posting, access road development) that will be incurred to state citizens (Cass County) in the event these tracts go private, and related collateral impacts (i.e. trespass, noxious weeds/invasive species, ownership/forest fragmentation, etc.) of private development on adjacent public lands.

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

Long-term costs to state citizens, protection needs (boundary, recreational trail, and access issues), and, and collateral impacts if these in-holdings go private.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan: This project best fits under the Critical Land Protection strategy and related Action recommendations: *Protect large blocks of forest lands, Protect critical shorelands of streams and lakes, Protect priority habitats, Improve connectivity and access to recreation.*

The Cass County land asset management program retains and consolidates the tax forfeited land base to improve efficiency and effectiveness in achieving management objectives, and, reduce future public costs to service remote and isolated private land.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

This is to be accomplished in a manner that does not reduce the private property tax base or decrease the amount of acres of County Administered Land within the county.

L-SOHC Strategic Planning and Recommendation Development Process – Northern

Forest section summary: This project provides the following forest protection features: *Aquatic components; Protection of riparian forests; Parcels that put together existing lands to create unfragmented landscapes; Open access; Parcels that provide access to landlocked parcels; Eliminate incompatible in-holdings; Complements other public lands to create corridors and protect larger blocks of land; Complete existing WMAs.*

DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda, 2009-2013: This project primarily fits the Landscape Changes from Growth and Development trend and related strategy for Integrated Public and Private Land Management, Forest Ownership Change: *Development and fragmentation of lands adjacent to public lands can impede management, restrict public recreational access, and reduce habitat value of adjacent public lands.*

Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy: This project serves the goal to Stabilize and increase SGCN populations for the Pine Moraines and Outwash Plains Subsection through actions that will permanently protect and manage: Upland coniferous red-white pine forest habitats, Jack pine woodland habitats, nonforested wetlands, and Stream habitats.

Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Contracts	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fee Acquisition	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00
Easement Acquisition	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Easement Stewardship	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Professional Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Additional Budget Items	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
-------	------	---------

No personnel costs are being requested. Funds will be used for acquisition only. Funds acquired will not be used for overhead.

Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Cass County	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00
Staff Match			
Cass County			
Professional Services	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
(Title Work)			
Cass County	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Travel			
TOTAL	\$37,000.00	\$37,000.00	\$37,000.00

G. Outcomes:

Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect			<i>500+- acres, primarily forested, 2+ miles of lake or stream frontage</i>	
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect			<i>Northern Forest</i>	
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect	<i>\$300,000</i>		<i>\$700,000</i>	
Enhance				

Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect			\$0	
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability			500+- acres	
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table

Milestone	Date	Measure
Purchase lands	June 30, 2011	500+- acres
Exchange potential WMA or Forest Lands with DNR	June 30, 2012	250+- acres

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget:

This funding will be used to supplement current Cass County acquisitions in the proposed project area. The County currently budgets staff time and fees associated with land acquisition and exchange. We plan to use these funds as match. The funds secured from this program will be used for the fee acquisition exclusively.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Lands acquired under this project will be designated as Cass County Fee Owned Lands. Lands that stay Cass County Fee owned lands will be sustained through revenue generated from timber management activity. Those lands that are exchanged to the State of MN will be sustained through the following options: State Wildlife Management Areas or State Forestry administered lands under authority of the Outdoor Recreation Act of 1978 and managed in perpetuity with DNR Wildlife (Game and Fish Funds) or DNR Forestry funds. Payment of in-lieu

Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

of tax payments are made to counties from biennial appropriations by the Legislature from the general fund.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

See Table 6 for a list of recreational units and proposed acquisitions.

Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

Table 6. List of Tracts to be Acquired

The following notes a list (ascending sort by legal description) of tracts being considered for acquisition with this project, actual tracts acquired will depend on final agreements by project partners. Additional/substitute tracts may be considered, but would only be acquired if they fit within the projects budget and are approved as an addendum to this project by L-SOHC.

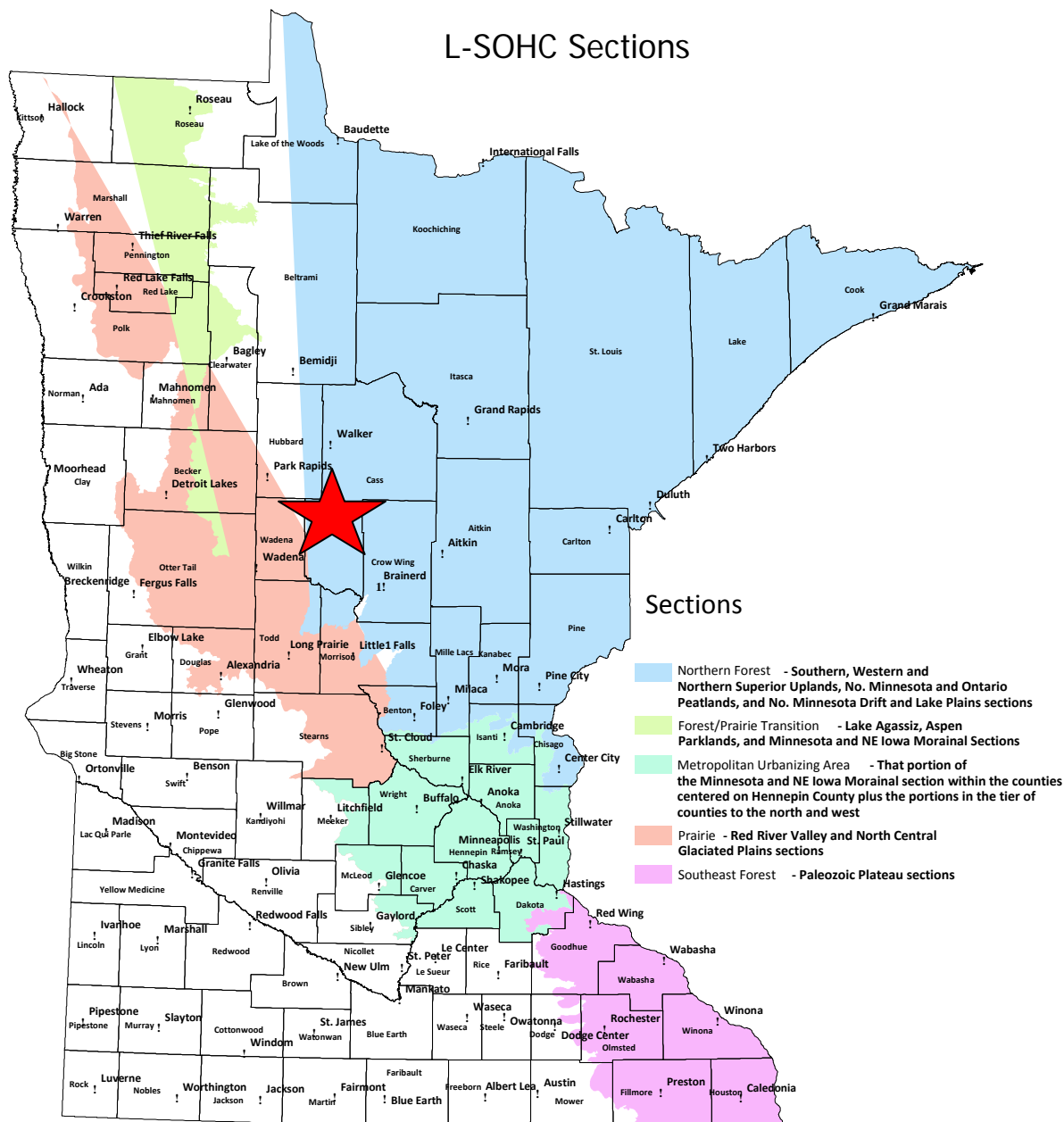
<u>Location (legal description)</u>	<u>Acres</u>
T. 134 N., R. 32 W., S. 21 (S1/2 of the NE quarter) .5 mile of common boundary with Cass County land, .25 common boundary with State Forestry land. Critical public access to several hundred acres of other Cass County and State lands.	80
T. 135 N., R. 32 W., S. 6 (NE of the NE quarter) Totally surrounded by public lands (.75 miles of common boundary with Cass County land, .25 of common boundary with Dry Sand Lake State Wildlife Management Area). Includes connecting access trail to adjacent public lands.	40
T. 135 N. R. 32 W., S. 6 (SW of the NE quarter) Totally surrounded by public lands (.5 miles of common boundary with Cass County land, .5 miles of common boundary with the Dry Sand Lake WMA). Part of tract is under the Turtle Shell impoundment for this WMA, 1,000+ feet of shoreline on impoundment. Cooperative lease will be pursued with the Minnesota DNR for management of this tract as part of the Dry Sand Lake WMA.	40
T. 135 N., R. 32 W., S. 16 (SE of the NW quarter) Totally surrounded by State Forestry lands (i.e.tract sets in the middle of 600 acres of State Trust Fund land. Over .5 miles of road access easement will have to be granted if this tract goes private. Land exchange will be pursued with DNR Forestry to consolidate this State ownership and assist County land asset management needs somewhere else.	40
T. 135 N., R. 32 W., S. 18 (E1/2 of the NW, NE of the SW) .75 miles of common boundary with Cass County land. Tract protects 3,000 feet of shoreline on Farnham Lake within the newly created Farnham Lake State Wildlife Management Area. Cooperative lease will be pursued with the Minnesota DNR for management of this tract as part of the Farnham Lake WMA.	120
T. 136 N., R. 29 W., S. 29 (E12/ of the NE quarter) .25 miles of boundary with Cass County land. Provides a route for a Grant in Aid snowmobile trail and summer access for timber management activity on adjacent public land.	80
T. 140 N., R. 27 W., S. 34 (NE quarter) Totally surrounded by Cass County land, 2.0 miles of common boundary, 1,500 feet of stream frontage on Daggett Brook, ¼ mile downstream of the Daggett Brook State WMA.	160
T. 140 N., R. 31 W., S. 27 (NE of the NW quarter) Totally surrounded by Cass County land, 1.0 miles of common boundary, Provides a route for a Grant in Aid snowmobile trail.	40
T. 140 N., R. 31 W., S. 34 (SW of the NW quarter) Totally surrounded by Cass County land, 1.0 miles of common boundary, allows the County to avoid ¾ miles of private easement for public access.	40
T. 140 N., R. 31 W., S. 35 (S1/2 of the SE quarter) Totally surrounded by public lands (County and State), 1.5 miles of common boundary, Avoid 1.5 miles of private easement on an existing Grant in Aid Snowmobile Trail.	80
T. 140 N., R. 31 W., S. 36 (NW of the SW quarter)	40

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Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota

Totally surrounded by public lands (State and County, 1.0 miles of common boundary, 1,300 feet of stream frontage on the Pine River. Avoid 2 miles of private easement on an Existing Grant in Aid Snowmobile trail within the Foothills State Forest Boundary.

Protect (Acquire) Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Riparian and Lakeshore Protection, Restoration and Access in Dakota County

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: #23 Riparian and Lakeshore Protection, Restoration and Access in Dakota County

Date: October 30, 2009

Manager's Name: Alan Singer
Title: Dakota County Land Conservation Manager
Mailing Address: 14955 Galaxie Avenue, Apple Valley, MN 55124
Telephone: 952-891-7001
Fax: 952-891-7031
E-Mail: al.singer@co.dakota.mn.us
Web Site: www.co.dakota.mn.us

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs <i>For programs that may want to request OHF funds in future recommendation rounds, complete the columns below. One time requests enter zeros in all 3 fiscal years</i>		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	6,500,000	0	0	6,500,000

A. Summary

The goal of this project is to work with willing landowners to establish permanent conservation easements totaling 2,400 acres along the Vermillion River and including North, Middle and South Creeks, South Branch and their tributaries; the Cannon River and its primary tributaries within Dakota County (Dutch, Mud, Chub, Darden and Pine Creeks, and Trout Brook); acquire permanent easements on 112 acres along Marcott Lake in Inver Grove Heights, Lake Marion in Lakeville, and Chub Lake in Eureka Township; and provide shoreline habitat and public access improvements on Thompson Lake in West St. Paul, Spring Lake in Nininger Township, and Lake Byllesby in Randolph Township. For project locations, see Attachment B.

B. Background Information

What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Program Title: Riparian and Lakeshore Protection, Restoration and Access in Dakota County

The long history of settlement and long-accepted agricultural land use practices have resulted in the loss, degradation and fragmentation of our natural resource systems. In Dakota County, only three percent of the pre-settlement plant communities remain. Despite increased public awareness of water quality issues and improvement methods, as well as multi-agency efforts to assist landowners in protecting the environment, nearly every river, stream and lake in the County that has been monitored is officially impaired in some fashion. According to Metropolitan Council data, between 1970 and 2005, Dakota County lost more than 7,500 acres of non-urbanized land (undeveloped, agricultural, steeply sloped or wetland); added 3,592 acres for major four-lane highways and nearly tripled its residential acreage from 20,150 to 58,455. Not coincidentally, this new development is attracted to the remaining natural features - especially lakes and rivers. Yet, most of this land is privately owned and does not provide close-to-home public access for most residents to hunt, fish or enjoy other outdoor recreational activities. The county has a wealth of high quality soils and a vibrant agricultural economy, and with recently high commodity prices, the pressure to plant corn and soybeans fence row to fence row has never been greater. Under even conservative scenarios, the potential changes that could be wrought by climate change need to be considered. This combination of large-scale impacts and trends must be approached comprehensively, long-term and collaboratively if we are to maintain and improve our natural resource heritage and its many associated benefits.

At the same time, there are tremendous opportunities to proactively and successfully address these challenges. The downturn in the economy has halted residential development for now and significantly lowered land prices. Sound plans have been developed and adopted which collectively focus on protecting and improving our natural infrastructure. The county has an excellent track record of working effectively with a wide variety of agencies, jurisdictions and organizations and has assembled information and practices to acquire and administer conservation easements and implement short- and long-term natural resource management and restoration. There will likely be legislation and business practices associated with providing more sustainable biomass production and carbon sequestering which could provide non-traditional resources to these conservation efforts.

The scale and scope of this project is both doable and significant. It encompasses some of the best natural resource features found in the metropolitan region across a combination of urban, suburban and rural landscapes. It takes a sound fiscal and ecological systems approach to conservation, while attempting to balance the interests, rights and responsibilities of private landowners with the public's concerns about water and habitat quality, outdoor recreation and climate change.

What action will be taken?

A tremendous amount of related data identifying high-value resources has already been assembled and reviewed. Current information about all riparian parcels will be refined, analyzed and aggregated. Parcel/project evaluation criteria and easement compensation formulas will be finalized. Landowner outreach will be initiated with the

Program Title: Riparian and Lakeshore Protection, Restoration and Access in Dakota County

focus on the highest priority parcels. Additional real estate/natural resource staff will be hired/contracted. Negotiations with willing landowners will be completed. Permanent riparian and lakeshore conservation easements will be acquired. Development of natural resource management plans and work plans for each parcel will be completed. Plan implementation will be dependent upon when the easement acquisition is completed and site characteristics. For example, easements acquired during year three of this three-year project phase will not allow sufficient time to initiate management/restoration activities. Management plans and easement compliance will be monitored on an annual basis.

Who will take action and when?

Dakota County, in partnership with the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization, Cannon River Partnership, Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Friends of the Mississippi River, Trout Unlimited, and others will continue to work together in a coordinated fashion to implement this project at multiple locations throughout the county. If the project is recommended for funding by the LSOHC, specific program processes will be developed during the first half of 2010 to ensure that the implementation infrastructure is in place to contact landowners in July 2010.

How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

Significant efforts have already been made internally within the County Water Resources Department, Parks and Open Space Department, and Historical Society to review all Constitutional funding programs and develop a set of strategic, appropriate and prioritized project proposals. The County has also communicated with state agencies, other local government jurisdictions, and non-profit organizations to ensure a coordinated approach to project proposals and implementation from the other Constitutional Funding sources, including the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources. For example, the county is working with the Board of Water and Soil Resources to identify lands that may currently be in CRP to utilize Clean Water Funds to ensure permanent protection of these lands. Finally, as a result of a solid history of leading and assisting with land conservation efforts with multiple partners and funding sources, the County has the administrative and financial process in place to assure effective and accountable use of these public funds.

What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Habitat quantity and quality will increase. All landowners with properties in the project area will be contacted and provided an opportunity to discuss their land, natural resource and management practices. Even if the landowner chooses not to initially participate, positive habitat changes can occur. For the landowners that do participate, the easement will require the development of an individual natural resource management plan that will guide the enhancement of existing vegetation or restoration

Program Title: Riparian and Lakeshore Protection, Restoration and Access in Dakota County

of cultivated lands or vegetation of marginal habitat value. More specifically, these habitat corridors will expand and restore native vegetation communities that are appropriate throughout the project area. Major native plant communities include floodplain forest, prairie, oak savanna, wetlands, shrub carr and wet prairie. For example, portions of the Vermillion River are state-designated trout streams, but only scattered sections maintain temperatures cool enough for the naturally reproducing young-of-the-year to survive. Strategic restoration of tall grass prairie and shoreline trees will stabilize the streambank, shade the stream, and provide habitat for a variety of game and non-game wildlife such as pheasants and loggerhead shrikes. In some instances, this is as much about maintaining the current high quality conditions so the natural resources found on or adjacent to the property are not degraded or fragmented. Parcel by parcel, the cumulative effect of this project will produce the following benefits:

- Permanent protection and better management of existing wildlife habitat
- Creation of additional wildlife habitat by restoring cultivated land to native vegetation
- Ecological connectivity/reduced fragmentation
- Water quality improvements due to buffering
- Streambank stabilization
- Shading to reduce increases in trout stream water temperature
- More Best Management Practices on land outside of easements through new landowner relationships
- Increased public access for fishing and other recreational activities
- Environmental clean-up of waste sites
- Potential biomass production sites
- Carbon sequestering

Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

_____ **YES**

_____ **X** **NO**

If not, how will you finance completion?

This project is a phased approach based on the use of other non-LSOHC funds, landowner donation, and in-kind support. We estimate that that this first phase will include approximately 25 percent of the total corridor area proposed for protection and management.

How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

All acquisition will be in the form of permanent conservation easements on private land. Each of the easements will require the development of individual Natural Resource Management Plans that will assess current conditions and recommend prioritized restoration activities. Work Plans between the landowners and the County will also be developed as part of the negotiations and described in the easement deed. The County will provide initial restoration assistance with long-term management of the respective easements being the responsibility of the landowners.

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How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

All proposed easements include a Natural Resource Management Plan. For some riparian easements, it will mean restoring currently cultivated areas using a variety of native species depending upon site conditions, habitat potential, strategic corridor interconnectivity, and opportunities to increase ecological resiliency. For other easements, it will be a combination of protecting and managing the current vegetation and restoring cultivated portions of the site with native species. In still other sites, the project will permanently protect and enhance the shoreline, riparian zone and associated uplands and wetlands. This project has direct benefits to fish, game and wildlife beyond the increased and interconnected terrestrial habitat. Working with landowners to increase and improve buffers and better manage drain tiles will reduce runoff containing excess nutrients, chemicals and warm water. The resulting water quality improvements will enhance the entire aquatic ecosystem.

The lakeshore easements will prevent residential development, improve shoreland and upland natural resource management and prevent point- and non-point pollution.

If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

 X YES NO

If yes, briefly describe the kind of protection.

Permanent conservation easements will be placed on private lands prior to restoration/enhancement activities. In a few strategic locations, restoration may also take place on a variety of public lands such as transportation right-of-way or city parkland.

How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

Dakota County has a long history of land protection and management of conservation lands since the 1960's with the development of the regional park system. More recently, the County initiated the Farmland and Natural Areas Program (FNAP) in 2003 to protect and manage land outside of the regional park system. Since the program's inception, fee title or permanent easements have been acquired from willing sellers of over 6,000 acres. The County has utilized an outreach and open application process and the involvement of an appointed citizen Advisory Committee (AC) to evaluate projects based upon an established criteria system. The AC then forwards its recommendations to the County Board of Commissioners for preliminary and final approval. All AC and County Board meetings are open to the public. The County, through its Communications Department, has also included updated information about these land conservation efforts on its website. There has been consistent and significant proactive and reactive media attention paid to FNAP since its inception.

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These internal and external communications have served to heighten people's awareness and provide transparency to the process and decisions.

When do you expect to see these changes?

Within one year of this project, there will be a significant number of acquired easements with individual management plans in varying stages of implementation. Initial easement restoration will be dependent upon the time of year the easement was acquired, and whether corn or soy beans were planted within the cultivated areas. (Note: It is far more effective to begin restoration after a year of soybeans rather than corn so restoration is sometimes postponed for one growing season.) This project is designed to address less than 25% of the overall corridor during this phase. As a result, completing the habitat corridor and bringing positive changes to the overall stream health will take many years.

Why will this strategy work?

The voluntary nature of this project strikes the balance between public benefits (wildlife habitat, water quality, compatible outdoor recreation, climate change) and individual landowner interests, rights and concerns. High quality planning, sound science, and community involvement has prepared an excellent foundation with which to proceed. The past five years of success through the Farmland and Natural Areas Program has created an atmosphere of credibility and trust with landowners, effective administrative capability, and the tools and techniques to increase the amount of shoreline protection from zero to 36 miles. The Vermillion River Joint Powers Organization has identified the establishment of buffers as a high priority through its Watershed Planning efforts. This approach has been identified as a key means of protecting the water resource locally, regionally and nationally and is especially important where the water of concern is sensitive to surrounding land use/ management practices. The VRWJPO is fully in support of this effort.

Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

The groundwork for these conservation efforts was initiated in 1998 with the development of the Farmland and Natural Areas Protection Plan. This planning effort was a collaborative effort between agencies and non-profit organizations that included 70+ meetings with landowners and other interested parties to share information and seek input. With the adoption of the plan in 2002, passage of the \$20 million bond referendum and subsequent inception of the Farmland and Natural Areas Program (FNAP) in 2003, land conservation efforts have occurred throughout the County. There were initial concerns expressed by the Twin Cities Realtors Association that these land protection efforts would conflict with their efforts, but direct meetings and actual results fully reduced those concerns. All local governments have been supportive. Even initially skeptical, non-supportive landowners have subsequently applied to the program. More recently, the public processes involving the development of a new

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County park system plan, local comprehensive plan updates, and adoption of watershed standards have been completed and this project aligns very closely with those approved plans. There has been a small group of local private property rights advocates who voiced strong concerns that providing required buffers and easements without receiving compensation constituted a non-constitutional taking. However, this project very directly and satisfactorily addresses those concerns. Although it is difficult to anticipate all situations, we do not anticipate any concerted efforts working against this project.

If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

☐ YES

☒ NO

The Dakota County Board of Commissioners approved the submission of this proposal by Resolution No. 09-549 on October 20, 2010. The proposed acquisitions will take place in as many as eight cities and twelve townships. While these local jurisdictions have been very supportive of previous County easement acquisitions from willing landowners and for projects that match approved local plans, they have not formally approved any specific acquisition at this point. Our intention is to discuss this project at the Dakota Township Officers meeting in March 2010 to elicit comments and concerns. This proposal will also be discussed during an early 2010 meeting with all city managers within the county. Any project involving current or future city land will be approved by the respective city staff or council prior to any expenditure within those jurisdictions.

If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

☒ YES

☐ NO

If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

☒ YES

☒ NO

If so, what kind of use?

We are anticipating the completion of hundreds of easements during this phase. With this large number of projects, there will be a mix of easements with and without public access. One of the key components of this initiative is to use the DNR's angler easement program as a component of the tiered approach to the riparian easements. We also anticipate that many landowners will voluntarily allow hunting. Finally, the easement language will not preclude the future construction of a recreational trail as surrounding land use changes in the future.

If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

☒ YES

☐ NO

If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate? 12 Years

If we are successful in achieving nearly all of the goals of this first, three-year phase, and if we maintain the same staffing capacity, and target similar goals in future three-year funding cycles, we anticipate that this riparian and lakeshore easement and restoration project can be completed over four funding cycles.

1. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

☐ Northern Forest

☐ Forest/Prairie Transition

☒ Southeast Forest

☐ Prairie

☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

2. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ YES

☐ NO

If yes, please explain.

Although not every proposed easement acquisition could be classified as urgent, it is critical to begin comprehensive implementation of this habitat protection and restoration initiative. Significant portions of the Vermillion and Cannon Rivers and their tributaries have already been designated as being impaired. Extensive research and planning has been undertaken to determine the causes and recommended solutions. It is important to begin implementing one of the most effective actions to protect and improve the integrity and diversity of these important freshwater streams – continuous, multi-purpose buffers. During this time when a significant amount of habitat is being removed from CRP, real estate development has stalled and land prices are declining, accelerating inter-generational land transfer is anticipated to take place in the next few years, local water plans have been approved, and program capability

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and credibility has been well documented, there may not be this type of convergence of need and opportunity for quite some time.

With regard to the lakes, there is a window of opportunity to work with aging, private landowners who are interested in conservation. If the projects wait, it is likely to become more complicated and divisive with multiple family members having different motivations. In the case of Lake Marion, the economic situation has motivated a developer to be more cooperative and reduce the cost of the property.

3. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

 YES

 X NO

If yes, list the names of the WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

4. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

 X YES

 NO

If yes, explain the model

This proposal is based on a number of scientifically-based assessments. On a higher level, there is wide agreement that taking a watershed, point/non-point pollution approach to management is the only way to truly protect and improve stream health, and that well designed vegetated buffers can effectively provide a variety of benefits. There is also a wealth of documentation on the importance of contiguous ecological corridors to ensure the ecological viability of plant and animal communities. More specifically, Dakota County was the first entity to complete the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System which became the basis for the development of the County's Farmland and Natural Areas Protection Plan and later, the Metro Conservation Corridor framework. The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization has conducted in-depth, cutting edge scientific studies along the river to help focus the type and location of projects. The County has very sophisticated GIS technology that allows us to focus on individual parcels in both the Vermillion and Cannon River Watersheds.

5. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

There are several summaries of research performed on buffer characteristics and the benefits provided by those buffers. However, recommended designs are highly variable and criteria are not well established often deferring to

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economic, legal, and political considerations over the needs for ecological function. Fischer and Fisichenich of the United States Army Corps of Engineers published a summary of recommended widths of buffer zones and corridors based on water quality, aquatic vegetation and wildlife habitat needs. Their guidelines identify ranges of widths from 5 to 30 meters (15 to 100 feet) for water quality, 10 to 20 meters (33 to 66 feet) for streambank stabilization, 20 to 150 meters (66 to 500 feet) for flood attenuation, and 30 to 500 meters (100 to 1600 feet) for habitat. Mayer, Reynolds, McCutchen and Canfield performed a review of buffers in regard to nitrogen removal in which they concluded that: "Based on current studies, riparian buffers of various types are effective at reducing nitrogen in riparian zones, especially nitrogen flowing in the subsurface. Buffers generally are more effective where soil type, hydrology, and biogeochemistry are conducive to microbial denitrification and plant uptake. While some narrow buffers (1 to 15 meters) removed nitrogen, wider buffers (>50 meters) more consistently removed significant portions of nitrogen probably by providing more area for root uptake of nitrogen or more sites for denitrification."

The benefits include:

- Permanent protection and better management of existing wildlife habitat
- Creation of additional wildlife habitat by restoring cultivated land to native vegetation
- Ecological connectivity/Reduced fragmentation
- Water quality improvements due to buffering
- Streambank stabilization
- Shading to reduce increases to trout stream water temperature
- More Best Management Practices on land outside of easements through new landowner relationships
- Increased public access for fishing and other recreational activities
- Environmental clean-up of waste sites
- Potential biomass production sites
- Carbon sequestering

6. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

The following criteria have been used for evaluating natural area projects by the Farmland and Natural Areas Program:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| A. City/Township Support | 0 – 5 points |
| B. Size of Area | 0 – 10 points |
| C. Ecological Quality
(type and condition of plant communities, shape, proximity to other natural areas, and presence of special species) | 0 – 15 points |
| D. Water Quality Benefits | 0 – 5 points |
| E. Leveraged, non- County Resources | 0 – 10 points |

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F. Project Partners/Readiness	0 – 5 points
G. Landowner Donation	0 – 15 points
H. Proximity to Protected Areas	0 – 10 points
I. Level of Threat	0 – 5 points
J. Restoration/Stewardship Potential	0 – 5 points
K. Public Access Allowed	0 – 10 points
L. Unique Characteristics	0 – 5 points

It is likely that these criteria will be modified to reflect the riparian corridor focus of the projects. The emphasis will likely be on B., C., D., E., G., H., J., and K.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

The Dakota County Riparian and Lakeshore Protection Project is based upon the strategic framework outlined in the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan. The County has worked very effectively with federal, state, regional and local agencies and jurisdictions, as well as a host of organizations to develop and adopt integrated plans that advance conservation goals. From a regional perspective, the Metro Greenprint and the Metropolitan Conservation Corridors acknowledged the existence and importance of the same rivers, lakes and streams targeted in this project. The County's Comprehensive Plan and the award-winning Farmland and Natural Areas Protection Plan are very good examples of local conservation-based community planning. The Farmland and Natural Areas Program and the nearly completed Vermillion River Corridor Plan have used available data and incorporated many perspectives in developing acquisition priorities and creative approaches. Instead of acquiring fee title of entire parcels, this project utilizes easements on strategically important areas. This project focuses on the nexus of land and water protection and restoration, critical riparian areas and shoreland of rivers, lakes and streams some of which have been minimally degraded such as Trout Brook with naturally reproducing brook trout and Marcott Lakes with sechi disk readings of 20 feet.

While working with willing private landowners, the project is also incorporating a goal of improving short- and long-term public connectivity and access to outdoor recreation. Although much of this area is currently rural, it is likely that development will occur along the habitat and water corridors. By protecting these corridors now, options for recreational use within the corridors will be protected. These proposed corridors are already significantly impacted by agriculture, residential land use and other forms of economic development. By working cooperatively with landowners, this project has the ability to increase the use of best management practices across this diverse landscape and thereby providing multiple benefits for a more sustainable quality of life.

D. Budget

Program Title: Riparian and Lakeshore Protection, Restoration and Access in Dakota County

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000
Contracts	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Fee Acquisition	\$0	\$0	\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$800,000	\$1,800,000	\$2,650,000
Easement Stewardship	\$100,000	\$260,000	\$380,000
Professional Services	\$20,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0
Additional Budget Items	\$10,000	\$50,000	\$0
TOTAL	\$1,070,000	\$2,255,000	\$3,175,000

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title		Amount.
Real Estate Specialist	1.0 FTE for three years	\$80,000/year or \$240,000
Natural Resource Specialist	.6 FTE for three years	\$40,000/year or \$120,000

F. All Leverage *In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.*

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Landowner Donation	\$100,000	\$720,000	\$450,000
Dakota County			
FNAP:	\$300,000	\$250,000	

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In-kind:	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000
Other:	\$30,000		

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization	\$153,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
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City of Lakeville	\$800,000		
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TOTAL	\$1,608,000	\$1,395,000	\$875,000
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G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table, list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				400 acres
Protect				2,496 acres
Enhance				200 acres

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Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				400 acres
Protect				2,496 acres
Enhance				200 acres

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				\$460,000
Protect				\$5,250,000
Enhance				\$340,000

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				\$480,000
Protect				\$3,295,000
Enhance				\$153,000

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0
Permanent Easement	0*	0*	0*	2,496 acres* This protected area will be a combination of wetlands, prairie and forest.

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are

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anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
• Develop Evaluation Criteria and Program Guidelines	6/30/2010	Adopted Guidelines
• Begin landowner outreach	6/30/2010	Communication Plan
• Hire/contract for new staff	6/30/2010	Employed staff
• Begin Landowner meetings	7/15/2010	Meetings
• Individual project submission	7/30/2010	Project submission
• Preliminary approval by Advisory Committee	9/30/2010	Project list
• Easement valuation and negotiations	11/30/2010	Tentative agreements
• Final project reviewed and recommended by Advisory Committee	1/15/2011	AC recommendations
• Projects approval by County Board	2/15/2011	Board resolution
• Complete Title Work, Environmental Assessment, Survey, Property Report, and Natural Resource Management Plan	5/15/2011	Approved documents
• Acquire Easement	5/30/2011	Closings
• Begin NRMP implementation	ongoing	On the ground work
• Monitor easement and NRMP	annually	Reports

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget?

The County, through FNAP, is currently working on 31 land protection projects outside of the regional park system with an estimated land value of \$21.2 million. The County's direct financial contribution to these projects is \$5 million which will entirely deplete the fund balance of the \$20 million bond referendum approved in 2002. An additional \$1 million resulting from a 2009 LSOHC recommendation and \$3.7 million of federal Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program funds have also been allocated to the County for land protection and restoration purposes. The County also received \$509,965 of Environment and Natural Resource Trust Funds, as recommended by the LCCMR in 2007, for acquisition and restoration of strategic properties within the Vermillion River Corridor. The annual \$360,000 operating budget includes three County staff and contractual assistance from the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District but does not include an additional 2.0 FTE for County personnel assisting with environmental assessments, survey, mapping, legal advice, support services, etc. The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers organization is including a total of \$553,000 of its annual Capital Improvements Program budget (nearly 40% of estimated total annual CIP) in support of this project.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

All acquisition will be in the form of permanent conservation easements on private land. Each of the easements will require the development of individual Natural Resource Management Plans (NRMP) that will assess current conditions and recommend prioritized restoration activities. Associated Work Plans between the landowners and the County will also be developed as part of the negotiations and cited in the easement deed. The County will provide initial restoration assistance with long-term management of the respective easements being the responsibility of the landowners. As with all

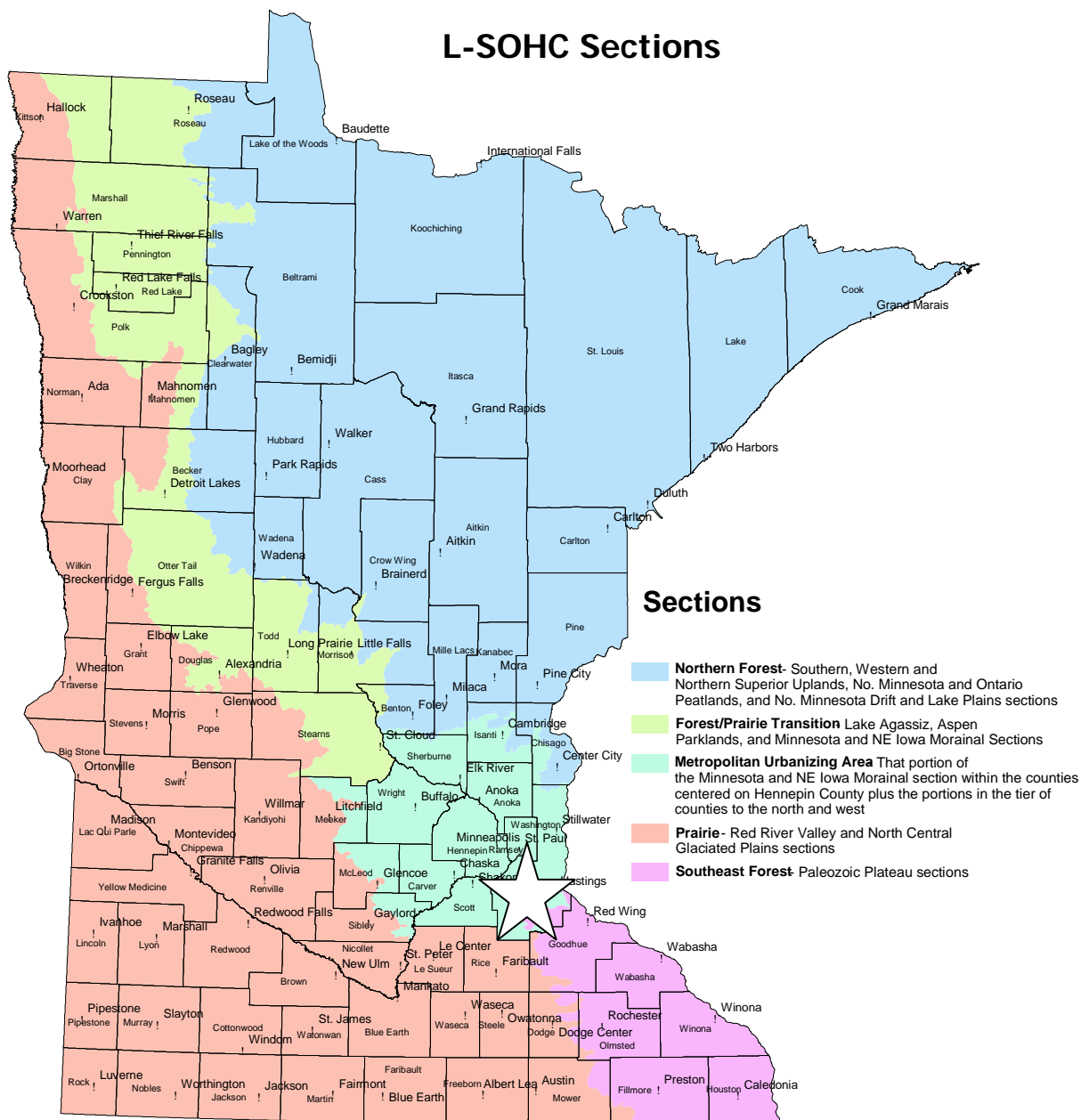
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private lands, it will be up to the current and future landowners to uphold their responsibilities. However, we believe this initial relationship-building, the NRMP, strategic assistance, and subsequent monitoring will provide opportunities to share updated natural resource information and best management practices with landowners and a higher likelihood of stewardship. This comprehensive watershed and corridor approach will provide the best opportunity to effectively protect this community asset and public investment.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

The LSOHC Section map has been edited to show the general location of the projects. Since the proposal includes multiple individual projects throughout Dakota County, a second map is attached to show the locations of all rivers, streams and lakes where the proposed projects will occur.



Program Title: Riparian and Lakeshore Protection, Restoration and Access in Dakota County

Program Title: Lake Zumbro Restoration Project

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: #24 Lake Zumbro Restoration Project – Dredging with Nature

Date: 11/2/09

Manager's Name: Terry Lee

Title: Olmsted County Water Coordinator

Mailing Address: 2116 Campus Drive SE, Rochester, MN 55904

Telephone: (507) 328-6723

Fax: (507) 328-6728

E-Mail: lee.terry@co.olmsted.mn.us

Web Site: <http://www.co.olmsted.mn.us>

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
		FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011			
Outdoor Heritage Fund	5,000,000	0	0	0

A. Summary

The Olmsted-Wabasha Counties Lake Zumbro Joint Powers Board is requesting \$5 million in funding to dredge 120 acres of Lake Zumbro to restore aquatic habitat, improve water quality, increase public access, expand recreational opportunities for boating, fishing, and swimming, and enhance hydropower production. Improved water clarity would promote the growth of submergent vegetation which would result in improved fish habitat on approximately 500 additional acres of lake.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Lake Zumbro provides critical aquatic habitat, unique recreational opportunities, and is a source of renewable hydroelectric power in Southeastern Minnesota. The lake is used by a wide range of bird species including migratory waterfowl. The sport

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Lake Zumbro Restoration Project

fishery includes sunfish, crappies, bass, channel catfish, northern pike, and muskellunge. The lake corridor has been identified in the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources County Biological Survey as containing some of the most biologically diverse tracts of land in Olmsted County.

The problem is that sediment deposition in the lake is reducing the quality of the aquatic habitat, reducing the area of the lake available for recreational use, and reducing the electric generation capability of the hydropower facility.

Lake Zumbro was formed in 1919 when the City of Rochester installed a 3 MW hydropower dam on the Zumbro River in Wabasha County. A bathymetric study completed in 2005 found that the lake has lost approximately half of its volume to sedimentation. That study also found that most of the damage occurred prior to 1957 when the first lake depth map was completed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Follow up mapping completed in 1978 showed that sedimentation rates had decreased substantially and a detailed map completed in 2005 found that current rates are now only 10% of those pre-1957. The Zumbro Watershed Partnership, a 501C3 organization is working to further reduce sedimentation rates in the watershed by an additional 30%. The current sediment loading rate creates an opportunity to restore lost lake areas and to improve water quality in the remainder of the lake by reducing areas where sediment resuspension occurs.

2. What action will be taken?

Dredging would be undertaken to restore 120 acres of the lake for recreational use. Preliminary engineering and design work for the dredging and dredge spoil management is being completed by Barr Engineering, Inc. Proposed dredge prisms are being developed in consultation with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Project objectives include: restoring aquatic habitat, improving water quality, increasing public access, expanding recreational opportunities for boating, fishing, and swimming, and enhancing hydropower production.

3. Who will take action and when?

In June of 2009, Olmsted and Wabasha Counties expanded the authorities of the Lake Zumbro Joint Powers Board to include 1)administering grants and loans for funding lake dredging, 2)purchasing engineering and construction services for dredging, and 3)purchasing land and easements for construction access and dredge materials management. The Joint Powers Board has accepted funding from the State of Minnesota and the City of Rochester, as well as in-kind contributions from Lake Zumbro Forever, Inc. to complete preliminary engineering for a dredging project. Barr Engineering Inc. is currently doing the preliminary engineering and is expected to complete that work in early 2010.

In October of 2009, lakeshore owners in Olmsted and Wabasha Counties submitted petitions requesting that the County Boards create a Lake Improvement District

Program Title: Lake Zumbro Restoration Project

pursuant to MS 103B.521 as a means of providing \$2 million in funding for the restoration project. County Board action is expected.

Assuming adequate funding is arranged, final plans, specifications and permits will be developed in 2010 and construction completed in 2011.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

Many of the reaches of the Zumbro River upstream are impaired for turbidity and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is developing a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plan for those reaches. Preliminary discussions with the MPCA staff suggest that the Implementation Plan will include work to reduce upland erosion as well as stabilizing stream banks. Additionally, the Zumbro Watershed Partnership has developed a Watershed Management Plan that includes multiple action items focused on establishing stream buffers and encouraging upland erosion control. The Partnership has in the past utilized state grant funds for these purposes and is expected to actively pursue Clean Water Legacy funding for that purpose. The Lake Zumbro Improvement Association has requested Legislative and Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) funding for parkland development and native area restorations that would be completed in conjunction with the dredging project. Similar requests will be submitted in the next grant cycles.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Unconsolidated silts will be removed through dredging to reduce sediment resuspension which results in turbidity levels which limits the growth of emergent vegetation. Improved water clarity and the attendant emergent vegetation that is developed will enhance fish habitat in much of the lake area.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

The aquatic habitat improvements would be seen as soon as dredging is completed. Based on the current schedule, that would be in late-2011. Prairie and wetland habitat restoration would be completed at dredge spoil sites when sediment dewatering is completed. That likely would occur no later than 2014.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

 YES X NO
If not, how will you finance completion?

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

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Program Title: Lake Zumbro Restoration Project

The primary organization that will be responsible for funding maintenance of the lake restoration is the 501c3 organization, Lake Zumbro Forever, Inc. However, the Joint Powers Board and the Lake Improvement District may also participate in funding future maintenance.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

The Dredging with Nature project would directly restore 120 acres of aquatic habitat, enhance an additional 500 acres of aquatic habitat and restore approximately 100 acres of wetlands and prairie at dredge spoil sites.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

 X YES NO
If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Lake Zumbro is public waters and the lakebed is owned by the City of Rochester.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

Because the work and funds will be managed by Olmsted County, any decisions, actions, and budget revenues and expenditures are public information and subject to review and audit.

Olmsted County maintains a web page for the Lake Zumbro Joint Powers Board and will use the site to provide information about the project including construction progress and budget revenues and expenses. Additionally, the Lake Zumbro Improvement Association maintains a website that includes information about the restoration project which is accessed through the Minnesota Waters website.

12. Why will this strategy work?

Lake dredging has been a very successful water quality and fisheries improvement program in similar lakes in Iowa.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources staff has recommended that after dredging is completed, the Olmsted-Wabasha Lake Zumbro Joint Powers Board should

Program Title: Lake Zumbro Restoration Project

designate several bays as “no-wake zones” to maximize fisheries benefit and reduce potential shoreline erosion. If the Joint Powers Board fails to implement that recommendation, much of the water quality and fisheries benefits in those areas may be lost.

14.If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

 X YES

 NO

The Olmsted- Wabasha Counties Lake Zumbro Joint Powers Board has been given authority to purchase land and easements for construction access and dredge materials management.

15.If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

 X YES

 NO

Barr Engineering Inc. and the Lake Zumbro Forever, Inc. are currently assessing properties for potential use as dredge spoil sites. That work is scheduled to be completed in 2010. If L-SOHC funding is received for the purchase of these sites, they would receive permanent protection.

16.If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

 X YES

 NO

If Yes what kind of use?

If land or easements are purchased using L-SOHC funds, the land would be open for public use such as hiking and hunting. All areas where aquatic habitat restoration and enhancement is proposed are public waters and available for public use.

17.If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

 X YES

 NO

Program Title: Lake Zumbro Restoration Project

If land or easements are purchased with L-SOHC funds, the natural resource values of the land would be protected forever through permanent easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01.

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

_____ Years

No ongoing funding is being requested.

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

_____ Northern Forest

_____ Forest/Prairie Transition

___X___ Southeast Forest

_____ Prairie

_____ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

___X___ YES

_____ NO

If yes, please explain.

During the period 2007 and 2008, the Minnesota Pollution Agency conducted 19 water quality samplings at four sites on the lake. That testing found marked improvements in water quality in the deeper downstream reaches of the lake. Water clarity as measured by average Secchi depth increased from 0.5 to 1.5 meters between the upper shallow end of the lake and the much deeper northern end. Dredging unconsolidated sediment from the southern area of the lake will widen the channel thus decreasing velocities which allows sediment to settle out of the water in the uppermost reaches of the lake to improve water clarity in the remaining area of the lake. If dredging isn't done in these areas, overall turbidity levels in the lake will decline and habitat will be lost. If L-SOHC funding is not received for the purchase of dredge spoil sites, financial constraints may dictate that those sites would be returned to other uses such as farming or mining.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

YES **X** **NO**

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

YES **X** **NO**

If yes explain the model briefly.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

The planning and evaluation model being used for the Lake Zumbro Dredging with Nature Project is one used by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Lake Zumbro is similar to many of the lakes and reservoirs that are being restored in Iowa where they increase lake depths to improve water clarity, expand areas of submergent vegetation, and improve fisheries production.

The area and depth of Lake Zumbro at the time of its creation in 1919 was established using 5-ft topographic maps completed for the City of Rochester. In 2005 lake depth maps completed in 1957, 1978, and 2005 were used by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to complete a bathymetric study that calculated sediment deposition depths and rates. The current rate of filling was found to be just 10% of the pre-1957 rate. In 2006, Barr Engineering collected five representative lake sediment cores and had them analyzed for 13 metals, 32 pesticides, 8 PCBs, and 20 other chemicals. The testing did not identify any pollutant levels that would constrain reuse of the dredge material.

In August 2007, the Department of Natural Resources completed a Standard Lake Survey Report noting that “water level and clarity are subject to rapid change due to the river’s influence. It is likely that these fluctuations have a dramatic impact on fish populations.” That is consistent with the Iowa DNR’s experience in lake restoration as well.

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

Program Title: Lake Zumbro Restoration Project

Priorities for dredge sites were based on the following criteria listed in the order of priority (no weighting has yet been assigned to the criteria):

- 1) restore aquatic habitat,
- 2) improve water quality,
- 3) increase public access,
- 4) expand recreational opportunities for boating, fishing, and swimming, and
- 5) enhance hydropower production.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

The Lake Zumbro Restoration Project is supported by the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan's* "Broad Policy and Action Recommendation H4: Restore and protect shallow lakes", and the "Targeted Policy and Action Recommendation H3: Improve connectivity and access to recreation".

Improving access to recreation is an important element of the Project. Lake Zumbro is centrally located in the southeast region and is a major recreational water body for residents of Wabasha, Olmsted, Dodge, and Goodhue Counties. The Lake has the highest population relative to lake area in all of greater Minnesota. Communities within 15 miles of the Lake Zumbro that rely on it for recreation include Oronoco, Pine Island, Byron, Rochester, Mantorville, Kasson, Plainview, Hammond, Mazeppa, Zumbro Falls, Goodhue, and Zumbrota.

Minnesota DNR and Olmsted County both maintain boat launches on the Lake. Other public facilities on the Lake include two campgrounds, three restaurants, a marina, and a handicapped accessible public fishing access.

The Project is also supported by *Minnesota's Aquatic Management Area Acquisition Plan* which recognizes the importance of public access for angling and the value of partner involvement.

Program Title: Lake Zumbro Restoration Project

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts	\$7,000,000		
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition	\$1,200,000		
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services	\$800,000		
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$9,000,000		

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
-------	------	---------

The project would be done with consulting engineers, contract dredging, and existing staff

Program Title: Lake Zumbro Restoration Project

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
LOHC	\$5,000,000		
Lake Improvement District	\$2,000,000		
Rochester Public Utilities	\$1,000,000		
Local Units of Government	\$1,000,000		
TOTAL	\$9,000,000		

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Program Title: Lake Zumbro Restoration Project

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>Restore 50 acres of wetland at dredge spoil sites</i>	<i>Restore 50 acres of prairie at dredge spoil sites</i>		<i>Restore 120 acres of aquatic habitat through dredging</i>
Protect				
Enhance				<i>Enhance 500 acres of aquatic habitat through improved water clarity</i>

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>Southeast Forest 50 acres of wetland at dredge spoil sites</i>	<i>Southeast Forest 50 acres of prairie at dredge spoil sites</i>		<i>Southeast Forest 120 acres of fish habitat</i>
Protect				
Enhance				<i>Southeast Forest 500 acres of fish habitat</i>

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$400,000</i>	<i>\$400,000</i>		<i>\$2,800,000</i>
Protect				
Enhance				<i>\$1,200,000</i>

Program Title: Lake Zumbro Restoration Project

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$200,000</i>	<i>\$200,000</i>		<i>\$2,000,000</i>
Protect				
Enhance				<i>\$1,800,000</i>

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Dredge Lake Zumbro	November 30, 2011	120 acres of lake restored
Restore dredge spoil areas	October 15, 2013	100 acres of prairie and wetland

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

To date, \$365,000 has been budgeted or spent for the Lake Zumbro Restoration Project. Previous work includes lake depth mapping at 2-ft contours and lake sediment characterization. There is currently a \$275,000 contract with Barr Engineering for preliminary engineering work for the dredging and dredge spoil sites.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Program Title: Lake Zumbro Restoration Project

The primary organization that will be responsible for funding maintenance of the lake restoration is the 501c3 organization, Lake Zumbro Forever, Inc. Additionally, Olmsted and Wabasha Counties have a Lake Zumbro Joint Powers Board with authority to maintain the habitat improvements and the counties likely will establish a Lake Improvement District that also would have authority to do that work.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Olmsted and Wabasha Counties have not undertaken similar projects but both local units of government routinely construct and maintain public works projects in all areas of their respective counties.

Program Title: Lake Waconia Shoreline Preservation and Public Water Access

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: # 25 Lake Waconia Shoreline Preservation and Public Water Access

Date: November , 2009

Manager's Name: Marty Walsh

Title: Parks Director

Mailing Address: 11360 Hwy 212, Suite 2, Cologne, MN 55322

Telephone: 952-466-5250

Fax: 952-466-5223

E-Mail: @co.carver.mn.

Web Site: co.carver.mn.us/

Funds Requested (\$000s)	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$1,260,000	0	0	0

A. Summary

Our program will protect 19 acres and 915 feet of shoreline on the second largest lake in the metropolitan area, Lake Waconia. The project will restore eight acres to big woods and oak savanna. Approximately 1.5 acres, including 800 feet of shoreline, would be planted with native shoreland vegetation. Protection is accomplished through partnering local, regional and L-SOHC funds to acquire the site. Impacts are achieved by following an existing ecological stewardship and water resources management plan created as a part of a master plan for the site.

In the future, but not requested as a part of this grant, seven acres of the site and 100 feet of the shoreline would be developed for public fishing and watercraft access with 40 vehicle trailer stalls. Development of public access is achieved through partnering regional and state funding.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Lakeshore along Lake Waconia continues to be lost to urbanization. Carver County has been notified that 19 acres of land it intends to protect and restore as part of a larger

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Program Title: Lake Waconia Shoreline Preservation and Public Water Access

conservation and recreation space is for sale. An opportunity exists to acquire this land including 915 feet of shoreline.

Additionally, public access to Lake Waconia's 3080 acres of public water is limited. The County has a locally and regionally approved master plan to provide conservation space and recreational land for a boat access on the lake. This master plan has gone through an extensive public review and approval process. Planning for a regional park on Lake Waconia has been ongoing since the 1970's. An opportunity exists to implement past planning work which includes the 1995 acquisition master plan for Lake Waconia Regional Park and the 2001 development master plan. These plans have received approval by Carver County and the Metropolitan Council. Acquisition of the 19 acre site completes acquisition of the 126 acre conservation and recreational area. Public support for the project has been demonstrated by Anglers for Habitat, resolution of support by the City of Waconia and by letter of support by representatives of DNR.

2. What action will be taken?

In conjunction with L-SOHC Funding, Carver County will assemble funding resources from Carver County and the Metropolitan Council for the acquisition of the site. The County will negotiate with the landowner the sale of property. Additional public meetings will be held informing the public of the project and consistency with existing approved plans. Work to restore the site can begin by removing 19,400 square feet, approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ acre, of a county road at the site. The road is no longer needed to access the proposed acquisition site from adjoining property. After the removal of roadway, implementation of ecological stewardship and water resources management plan for the site can begin. Eight acres of agricultural field is to be restored to a combination of big woods and oak savanna, and approximately 800 feet of shoreline (almost 1.5 acres) is to be restored along the lake. Native plant species will be planted as part of the restoration where practical. Lake Waconia is a high priority lake for a public water access. Work will also begin with the DNR to plan the development of a boat access.

To ensure efficient and effective restoration work, Carver County would contract with a qualified service provider for the project. To be included with the restoration work is a two year maintenance program. After which, the County would take over maintenance of restored areas as a part of the County's ongoing commitment to the site.

3. Who will take action and when?

Upon approval, this program by the L-SOHC and ultimately the Legislature, Carver County will take the following action:

- Negotiate the purchase and acquisition of the land from the current owner and work to complete negotiations by May of 2011 or upon closing.
- Utilize \$1,700,000 of available acquisition opportunity funds from the Metropolitan Council by May of 2011 or upon closing.
- Utilize \$567,000 in County funds by May of 2011 or upon closing.
- Include the site into the park operations and maintenance budget, prepare to manage site, budget funds in July 2010.
- Coordinate with the City of Waconia the removal of an existing road surface along the lake. Remove road surface by November 2011.

Program Title: Lake Waconia Shoreline Preservation and Public Water Access

- Coordinate with the City of Waconia an interim pedestrian/bike trail connecting the park with the existing city trail system on a portion of the existing roadway surface.
- Request funding for the development of plans to create public boat access as a part of the County CIP by July 2010.
- Contract with restoration service provider to complete restorative work by June 2012.
- Apply for development funds from the DNR for the development of the public access spring of 2011.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

Carver County has notified Metropolitan Council staff to inform them of this application to the L-SOHC grant.

The Metropolitan Council receives Parks and Trails funding from the constitutional amendment. These funds are matched with Metropolitan Council Bonds for land acquisition and put into a fund identified as the Land Acquisition Opportunity Fund. Additionally, funding from the Metropolitan Council Acquisition Opportunity Funds, a combination of constitutional funding and Council bonds, requires a 25% local match by Carver County for acquisition of the proposed site. The proposed project leverages both regional and local funding as a match to L-SOHC funds.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Land will be preserved as part of Lake Waconia Regional Park, preventing it from being urbanized.

Over 19,000 square feet, or almost ½ acre of paved road along Lake Waconia, will be removed. Eleven thousand square feet of pavement on site, plus an additional 8,000 square feet, would be removed by agreement on adjoining property. Twenty eight thousand square feet (over ½ acre) of shoreline will be restored to a more native plant community which will create wildlife habitat, improve water quality, reduce storm water runoff and create additional natural buffer around the lake from urbanization.

Eight acres of agricultural field will be restored to native woodlands and savanna which will create shoreline and upland habitat for wildlife on this 3080 acre lake. This site, in conjunction with 107 acres of adjacent public land, will provide habitat for wildlife including migratory birds, large and small upland species in the region.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

In the fall of 2011, acquired fields will no longer be farmed and work could begin to replant the non native areas to woodlands and savanna. After the land is acquired, over 19,400 square feet of paved road can be removed from along the lake and 800 feet of shoreline would be restored with native plants.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

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Program Title: Lake Waconia Shoreline Preservation and Public Water Access

☐ YES ☒ NO

If not, how will you finance completion?

Additional funding for the land acquisition is proposed through the Metropolitan Council's Acquisition Opportunity Fund. It is proposed that \$1,700,000.00 come from the Acquisition Opportunity Fund of the Metropolitan Council. As a match to Acquisition Opportunity Funds, Carver County would contribute \$567,000.00 towards the acquisition of the site.

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Included in this request, Carver County is asking for 2 years of annual maintenance for the restoration work to make sure it is successfully established, after which Carver County will budget ongoing operations and maintenance to maintain the investment.

After the initial acquisition of the site, operations and maintenance funding would be provided by Carver County and the Metropolitan Council as a part of ongoing relationship to administer its public conservation and recreational areas. Carver County is staffed to administer and maintain the site. Carver County currently administers large conservation and recreational features at 3 regional parks and trail areas comprising of over 822 acres within the county.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

This program protects 19 acres of land and 915 feet of lakeshore from being urbanized. In addition to the preservation of this site for public use, eight acres of it will be planted with native woodlands and savanna plants that will provide additional habitat for wildlife. Additionally, 800 feet of shoreline will be planted, creating habitat for wildlife, reducing storm water runoff, enhancing water quality and helping to reduce shoreline erosion. Buffering the lakeshore with upland and shoreline vegetation will improved water quality and will provide better fish habitat for the lake. Acquiring this parcel will allow for the removal of a section of road surface to be restored to a plant community and will eliminate a significant non permeable surface along the lakeshore.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ YES ☐ NO

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

By agreement with the Metropolitan Council, Carver County will place a restrictive covenant on the site on the property ensuring that the land and restoration improvements are held publicly into perpetuity.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

Carver County regularly manages grants for land acquisition and has demonstrated it is capable of providing documented reports and other information needed to ensure the funds were properly utilized. Carver County, as a governmental entity, is accountable for public dollars spent through a number of public processes which include public hearings, a citizen park commission, elected county board, and the Metropolitan Council.

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Information is available on the Carver County website, including meeting agendas and minutes of the county board and park commission, Metropolitan Council along with planning documents of comprehensive plans and park and trail master plans. Grant files are maintained and are available for public review.

12. Why will this strategy work?

The acquisition of this land will protect the lakeshore from urbanization and improve the habitat for wildlife and fish. A restrictive covenant will be placed on the land ensuring the public that the land will remain available and protected into perpetuity. By removing the paved road and restoring the shoreline to native plantings, it will meet the goals of the Carver County Water Management plan to have impervious surfaces at least 50' away from lakes and streams. The restoration of the shoreline will also reduce storm water runoff into Lake Waconia by creating a vegetative buffer which will improve the aquatic habitat for fish and also provide habitat for wildlife. Protecting the land ensures that plans for public access will be realized.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

Many different decision makers have input into the success of this project including Carver County Park Commission, Carver County Board, Metropolitan Park and Open Space Commission, Metropolitan Council, City of Waconia and Anglers for Habitat.

The Carver County Board, County Park Commission and City of Waconia continue to be supportive in the acquisition of land needed for shoreline preservation and boat access. Their decisions to support the land acquisition include planning documents such as the Carver County 2020 Comprehensive Plan, 1995 Lake Waconia Regional Park Acquisition Master Plan, 2001 Lake Waconia Regional Park Development Master Plan and recently submitted Carver County 2030 Comprehensive Plan. All of the fore-mentioned plans went through extensive public processes and were approved at a local and regional level. Additionally, the City of Waconia has also shown its support and desire for land needed for conservation and recreation on Lake Waconia by including the land needed for the boat access and conservation space in their land use plan. The city also provided Resolution No. 2008-34, a resolution of support for additional conservation space and public boat access.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

☒ **X** **YES**

☐ **NO**

The site is located within an approved acquisition master plan boundary approved by both the Carver County Board and Metropolitan Council. County staff has received additional direction from County Administration and County Board in the form of authorizing/obtaining appraisals and submitting grant funding requests. An actual purchase agreement has not been authorized.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

 X YES

 NO

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

N/A

 YES

 NO

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

N/A

 YES

 NO

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

N/A

 Years

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

 Northern Forest

 Forest/Prairie Transition

 Southeast Forest

 Prairie

 X Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

 X YES

 NO

If yes, please explain.

Program Title: Lake Waconia Shoreline Preservation and Public Water Access

Carver County has been notified by a commissioned realtor that the 19 acres site is currently for sale.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

 YES

 X NO

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

 X YES

 NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

The Carver County Water management Plan was adopted in June 2001. A TMDL study has been conducted for watershed at Lake Waconia. Additionally, a ecological stewardship plan exists as a part of the master plan for the site.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

This program will restore 800 feet of shoreline. Research indicates that natural vegetation along lakes will protect water quality by trapping, filtering, and impeding runoff laden with nutrients, sediments, and other pollutants. Shoreline buffers also stabilize banks, screen shoreland development, reduce erosion, and provide important habitat for shoreline species.

In conjunction with the shoreline restoration, this project and planned work on adjacent land will remove of over 19,000 square feet of paved road surface from the edge of Lake Waconia. The removal of this paved surface will reduce storm water runoff which ends up in the lake.

The Woodland restoration on the site will eliminate eight acres of agricultural field in which chemicals and manure are applied. Storm water washes nutrients such as phosphorus into the lake. Restoring the site to a big woods and savanna would eliminate fertilizer applications, increase habitat for wildlife, and complement existing wooded and wetland areas of an existing 107 acre conservation and recreation space.

24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

Program Title: Lake Waconia Shoreline Preservation and Public Water Access

- 1) Acquisition is the top priority. Without acquisition, we don't have the property rights to take away the road surface and do restoration work needed for water quality and wildlife habitat. (60%)
- 2) Second would be the removal of impervious road surface and restoration of 800 feet of shoreline. Removal of the impervious surface next to the lake is consistent with the County Water Management Plan. This reduces the amount of storm water flowing to the lake. (20%)
- 3) Re-vegetation of the roadway area comes next to stabilize soils and provide a filtering medium before water enters the lake. (15%)
- 4) Restoration of 8 acres of agricultural field to big woods and oak savanna is next. Although the site is currently vegetated with non native plants, restoration of the site with native plants is proposed for wildlife habitat purposes. (15%)

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

This program relates directly to the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan most significantly to several sections within the Habitat Recommendations part of the plan as noted below:

- Habitat Recommendation 2 – Protect critical shorelands of streams and lake

“A natural shoreline is more than an aesthetic buffer for the water; it is a complex ecosystem that provides habitat for fish and wildlife and protects water quality for the entire lake. Often, shoreline development results in the loss of these essential shoreline buffers.” (Page 69)

“...shorelands within each of Minnesota’s 22 ecological subsections should be permanently protected through acquisition.” (Page 69)

“Acquisition may protect critical shoreland habitats from degradation; assure public access for fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and natural resource management, which is especially important given the continuing loss of access to natural shores..” (Page 69)

“The AMA statewide goal for protection of Minnesota’s 64,000-plus miles of lake and warm-water stream and river shorelands through public ownership should increase from the current 34% to 39% by 2032. These public lands include federal, state, county, and municipal ownership. These goals are based on the assumption that there will be no loss of shoreland that is currently under public protection. To achieve this goal, the vision is to acquire 1,100 miles of lake and warm-water stream habitat in the next 25 years from willing sellers to provide sustainable populations of fish and other aquatic species and greater opportunities for angling recreation for future generations.” (Page 69-70)
- Habitat Recommendation 3 – Improve connectivity and access to outdoor recreation

“Lakeshore development is increasing, urban areas are expanding, and forests are being divided into small, privately owned parcels. These changes and others are affecting outdoor recreation. Land needs to be acquired, protected, and restored to provide Minnesotans and visitors an outdoor system where they can recreate.” (page 74)

“A higher priority should be placed on actions that are needed within the next three to five years to ensure adequate outdoor recreation opportunities in future

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years. This may mean greatly accelerating acquisition of larger intact natural areas, key connection lands, most imperiled habitats, undeveloped shorelands, areas experiencing and anticipated to continue experiencing growth population growth, and areas underserved by recreational systems. The needs for outdoor recreation are a strong complement to many of the habitat recommendations.” (Page 76)

- **Habitat Recommendation 7: Keep water on the landscape**

“Retaining water on the landscape over broader areas and for longer periods is critical for improving water quality, reducing flooding, maintaining habitat for wildlife and game species, and enhancing biological diversity.” (Page 84)

“Buffers made up of natural vegetation along shorelines of rivers, lakes, and sinkholes protect water quality by trapping and filtering pollutants and impeding runoff. Buffers stabilize banks, screen shoreland development, reduce erosion, control sedimentation, and provide important habitat for shoreline species...” (Page 85)

- **Habitat Recommendation 13: Habitat and landscape conservation and training programs for all citizens**

“The state should invest in education to improve public understanding of the need for better conservation, protection, and restoration of Minnesota’s habitats and landscapes.” (Page 94)

Carver County is one of 11 implementing agencies of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space System. The regional parks system is made up of natural resource based parks which provide not only the public with recreational opportunities but also preserve, enhance and protect wildlife habitat, open space and high quality natural resources within the ever growing metropolitan area. Lake Waconia Regional Park and the Carver County Regional Park System are supported by regional planning documents of the Metropolitan Council including the 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan which was approved in 2005.

Additionally the proposed project is consistent with the following plans: The Campaign for Conservation Fifty Year Vision, The LCCMR Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, and from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources –The state wildlife action plan tomorrows Habitat for the Wild and Rare. All three of these documents emphasize the need for shore land preservation and restoration. Additionally local documents support the preservation of land, shoreline restoration and habitat improvement including:

- 2001 Carver County Water Management Plan
- Carver County 2020 and Draft 2030 Comprehensive Plans
- 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan

Lastly, A TMDL study has been conducted for watershed at Lake Waconia and the majority of water comes from land around Lake Waconia. It has been determined that the establishment of buffer strips along ditches, streams and wetlands/lakes will reduce nutrient runoff to the watershed. It is the goal of the external reduction strategies to reduce phosphorus at Waconia Lake subwatershed by 15 percent. As a means of reducing storm water runoff and phosphorus

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entering into the lakes within the watershed, it is recommended to restore shoreline to native vegetation.

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts	\$7,000		
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition	\$ 3,400,000		
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services		\$110,000	
Travel			
Additional Budget Items		\$10,000	
TOTAL	\$ 3,407,000	\$120,000	

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
-------	------	---------

This proposed project does not request additional ongoing staffing.

Program Title: Lake Waconia Shoreline Preservation and Public Water Access

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Metropolitan Council – acquisition opportunity funds	\$1,700,000		
Carver County – Match to Met. Council Funds	\$567,000		
TOTAL	\$2,267,000		

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Program Title: Lake Waconia Shoreline Preservation and Public Water Access

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore			<i>Plant 1.5 acres (800 LF) with shore land forest. Restore 8 acres of agricultural field into native big woods and oak savanna.</i>	<i>Restore 800 feet of shoreline on the largest lake in the metropolitan area improving shoreline habitat and also creating 8 acres of woodland/savanna habitat for wildlife.</i>
Protect				<i>Protect 19 acres and 915 feet of lakeshore for habitat and public use.</i>
Enhance				

Program Title: Lake Waconia Shoreline Preservation and Public Water Access

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore			<i>Metropolitan Urbanized Area Plant 1.5 acres (800 LF) with shore land forest. and restore 8 acres of agricultural field to big woods and oak savanna</i>	<i>Metropolitan Urbanized Area – remove 19,400 sq. ft. of paved road and restore 800 feet of shoreline</i>
Protect				<i>Metropolitan Urbanized Area - Protect 800 feet of shoreline and 19 acres from urbanization</i>
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore			<i>\$45,000 for 8 acres of woodlands and savanna restoration</i>	<i>\$75,000 for shoreline restoration including cost of road removal and two years of maintenance on restored area</i>
Protect				<i>\$1,140,000 for acquisition of 19 acres and 915 feet of shoreline.</i>
Enhance				

Program Title: Lake Waconia Shoreline Preservation and Public Water Access

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				\$2,267,000.00
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				19. acres with 915 feet of shoreline for \$3,400,000
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Purchase Agreement for 19 Acres	4-30-2011	Signed Agreement
Restore 8 acres of woodlands and savanna	5-30-2012	Sight planted
Restore 800 feet of shoreline (1.5 acres)	5-30-2012	Road removed and shoreline planted

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

The 2009 County park operations and CIP budget is \$1,142,594. This request of \$1,260,000 is more than the entire annual budget. The proposed request does not supplant existing funding sources for County Park operations and CIP. The proposed project leverages \$567,000 in additional County resources, and \$1,700,000 in Metropolitan Council Resources. The funding request supplements funding from these sources to accomplish the project.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Lake Waconia Shoreline Preservation and Public Water Access

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Funding for initial habitat establishment and maintenance is included in the grant request for a 2 year period. Thereafter, Carver County will budget for the ongoing maintenance needed to maintain restoration work for the site as well as provide operations funding. Carver County has experience in habitat restoration projects and collaborates with the others, including the Carver County Soil and Water Conservation District, MN DNR and other specialized contractors to provide assistance, expertise and equipment when needed to help manage and maintain the habitat within the Carver County Regional Park System.

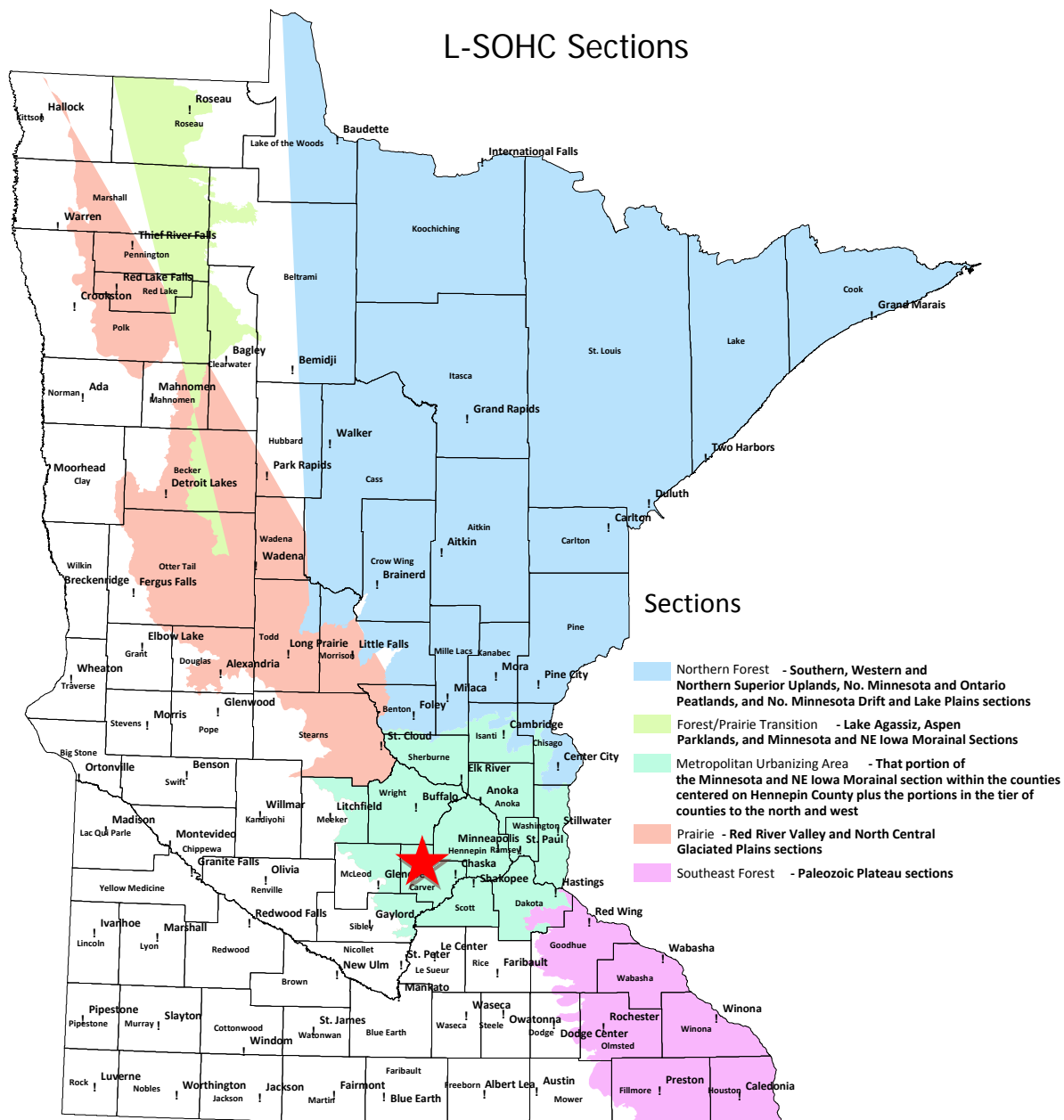
Additionally, staff has the experience and knowledge needed to maintain a natural resource based park system. Currently, Carver County owns and manages 822 acres of parks and trails.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

2009 Project(s)

The 19.25 acre project site is located in the southwest 7 county metropolitan area. The site borders the southern shore of Lake Waconia and TH 5.

Program Title: Lake Waconia Shoreline Preservation and Public Water Access



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: #26 Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

Date: October 30, 2009

Manager's Name: Myron Jesme

Title: Administrator, Red Lake Watershed District

**Mailing Address: 1000 Pennington Avenue South
Thief River Falls, MN 56701**

Telephone: 218-681-5800

Fax: 218-681-5839

E-Mail: @wiktel.com

Web Site: [.redlakewatershed](http://redlakewatershed)

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$4,740,000	0	0	0

A. Summary

Many rivers and streams in the Red River Basin were straightened or cutoff and rerouted in the past 100 years to improve drainage. Watershed districts in collaboration with conservation interests, landowners, and local, state, and federal agencies are interested in restoring some straightened channels and their corridors to provide quality fish and wildlife habitat, increase connectivity, reduce erosion, and reduce flood damages. This habitat restoration project will complete the restoration and reconnection of about six miles of the Grand Marais Creek channel and 470 acres of river corridor habitat to the Red River of the North and will stabilize the existing cutoff channel. With SLOHC funding, this habitat restoration project will be completed in 2011.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Six miles of natural sinuous channel of Grand Marais Creek were bypassed with a ditch in the early 1900s. This action resulted in the loss of the six miles of aquatic habitat and diminished

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

opportunities for fish passage to and from the Red River and Grand Marais creek. The watershed district, landowners, and local, state, and federal agencies are ready to restore water flow to these six miles of disconnected aquatic habitat. Preliminary engineering is complete, environmental review is complete, and all land acquisition is complete. Aside from the Mustinka River channel project (8.8 miles), this six mile restoration is the greatest opportunity to directly restore stream habitat in the Red River basin.

2. What action will be taken?

- Restore the original Grand Marais creek channel and corridor. A water control structure will be built to divert flows to the six miles of the Grand Marais Creek channel bypassed in the early 1900s. The water control structure will be designed to allow flows down the reconnected channel and flood flows down the existing diversion channel.
- Stabilize the existing diversion channel to reduce erosion and improve aquatic habitat conditions in the Red River.
- The watershed district will maintain 470 acres of stream corridor habitats already acquired through RIM that will be seeded into native perennial vegetation.

3. Who will take action and when?

The Red Lake Watershed District will continue to lead a collaborative effort with members of a “project team” including the Polk County Soil and Water Conservation District, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, MN DNR, MPCA, and landowners to complete this project. Construction could be complete in 2011 if full funding is secured.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

Similar to wetland and prairie restorations, this stream restoration project is primarily a habitat restoration project with incidental clean water benefits. Grand Marais Creek is listed as an impaired water (303d list). BWSR and MPCA have been members of the watershed based project team that helped develop this project. The watershed district will consider preparation of grant applications for BWSR clean water assistance and BWSR shoreland improvement grants that are due December 1, 2009. RIM has already been used to acquire the land needed for this habitat restoration project.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

1. Six miles of river channel and 470 acres of riverine corridor habitat which was abandoned and mostly farmed for the past 50+ years will be returned to a functional riverine habitat. This will create permanent and seasonal habitats for a variety of fish species and will provide a more functional connection to more than 30 miles of upstream riverine and wetland habitats in the Grand Marais Creek.
2. The existing diversion channel will be stabilized to reduce sediment loading to the Red River.
3. This project is part of a much larger effort in the entire Grand Marais watershed to reduce flood damages, enhance natural resources, and improve water quality. These other efforts have been completed upstream of this project.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

The project's substantive habitat changes will be evident immediately after construction of the project. The newly created habitats will improve over time as the stream corridor vegetation matures and the stream channel stabilizes.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

Yes, assuming that Clean Water related grant funds are also awarded this funding will complete the project.

 X YES NO
If not, how will you finance completion?

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

The Red Lake watershed district in cooperation with landowners will be responsible for long term maintenance of this project. The district has led the land acquisition, project development, and engineering of this project with full cooperation of a "project team" composed of landowners and representatives of local, state, and federal agencies. The district initiated this project by action of their board under watershed district law (Minnesota Statutes 103D). Long term project maintenance is thus authorized through established watershed district construction and maintenance funds. Maintenance of vegetation along the newly created stream corridor is required under the rules in Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) easement contracts.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

This project will directly restore six miles of riverine habitat and 470 acres of river corridor habitat. These habitats do not function today. Once water flow is returned to the channel, these habitats will be protected and maintained to benefit a variety of fish and wildlife communities.

The project will also stabilize an existing diversion channel that has significant erosion problems and is detrimental to riverine habitat in the Red River of the North.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

The river channel and 470 acre corridor were acquired with RIM funding and are now in a permanent easement. The existing diversion channel which will be stabilized as part of this project was constructed in the early 1900's and is presently maintained by the Polk County ditch authority district under provisions of drainage law (Minnesota Statutes 103D and 103E).

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

The Red Lake River Watershed district has acquired land, developed, and engineered this project through a public "project team" process. Over the past 2 years, more than 10 project team meetings have been held to move this project forward. The watershed board initiated and is pursuing this project as an official watershed district project that must follow administrative procedures outlined in Minnesota Statute 103D. Under provisions of the law, a public hearing is required to finalize the project. The completed and approved Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for this project is available on the watershed district website ([://www.redlakewatershed.org/PDF_Files/Grand%20Marais%20Creek%20EAW](http://www.redlakewatershed.org/PDF_Files/Grand%20Marais%20Creek%20EAW).) and the development of this project is fully described in the Red Lake Watershed District 2008 annual report ([://www.redlakewatershed.org/Annual%20Reports/2008%20Annual%20Report](http://www.redlakewatershed.org/Annual%20Reports/2008%20Annual%20Report).)

The watershed district will provide information about this project and it's completion through its watershed newsletter and website, through the Red River Water Management Board newsletter and website ([.rrwmb](http://www.rwmb.org)), and through engagement in a variety of public venues including the Minnesota association of watershed districts, the red river basin commission, the international water institute, and regional newspapers.

The watershed district is experienced in administering, accounting for, and implementing complex land and water projects with a variety of funding sources including state grant funds from BWSR, MN PCA, and MN DNR.

12. Why will this strategy work?

This strategy will work because this project is the result of careful planning and engineering by an interdisciplinary project team of resource professionals and landowners dedicated to reducing flood damages and enhancing natural resources in the Grand Marais Creek subwatershed of the Red Lake watershed. Under the leadership of the watershed district the advice of the project team has resulted in building numerous successful projects in this subwatershed including two multipurpose impoundments, rehabilitation of ditches into natural sinuous channels, and almost 1,000 acres of lands enrolled in various conservation programs (CREP, CRP, WRP, CCRP). The restoration of the Grand Marais outlet will complete this comprehensive project. Lands have been acquired. Environmental review is complete. Preliminary engineering is complete. Landowner and agency support is secure and the project is consistent with the Red Lake Watershed District plan.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

This project is in the final stages of implementation. Landowner support is secure. Polk County Board of Managers have approved a resolution in support of the project. Land has been acquired through RIM. Environmental review is complete (approved EAW). All necessary permits (e.g., DNR protected waters, PCA 404, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) are in the process of application and no significant issues have been identified in direct discussions with permitting agency representatives during project team meetings. The project has been approved by the Red River Water Management Board for funding. A project readiness form has been completed by the project team and approved by the flood damage reduction work group.

A lack of funding is the only known obstacle that would delay completion of this project.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

Land acquisition is complete with RIM easements.

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

_____ YES X NO
NOTE: The land was acquired through RIM easement.

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

 X YES _____ NO

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

 NA Years

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

_____ Northern Forest
_____ Forest/Prairie Transition
_____ Southeast Forest
 X Prairie
_____ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

 X YES _____ NO
If yes, please explain.

The watershed district has lead efforts to reduce flood damages and enhance natural resources in the Grand Marais Creek subwatershed for more than five years. This work has resulted in numerous projects and land use changes. Substantial time, money, and resources have been invested in this habitat restoration project. If the channel restoration is not complete within the next year or two the project will be at risk of never being completed. Current landowners support the project and it is important to finish

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Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

the project at this time. Failure to complete the project at this time could stall completion for many years.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

_____ YES

___X___ NO

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

_____ YES

___X___ NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

This project is based on the principles of natural channel design, hydrology, and fluvial geomorphology. Use of these scientific principles will restore a range of water flows to six miles of river channel habitat and 470 acres of corridor habitat. The river channel habitats will provide seasonal spawning and juvenile habitat to northern pike and a variety of other species. The restored channel will also provide a better connection from the Red River to more than 20 miles of upstream habitat.

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

The watershed district initiates projects based on priority problems identified in the watershed district plan ([://www.redlakewatershed.org/planupdate](http://www.redlakewatershed.org/planupdate)). The restoration of the Grand Marais Creek channel is a final component of a larger project known as Project 60. Project 60 was Governor's Clean Water Cabinet pilot project which included upstream land use changes, targeted buffering of watercourses, creation of multipurpose impoundments, and ditched channel restoration. These other components have already been completed.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan

Proposed projects are consistent with "*Habitat recommendation 6: protect and restore critical in-water habitats of lakes and streams*".

In particular, it is consistent with the recommendations on page 82: "*A priority for former prairie zones of Minnesota is to reverse the negative effects of stream channelization on in-stream habitats for fish and other aquatic organisms.....*"

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

Lessard – Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Preliminary Goals and Objectives 25-Year Targets, Prairie Section, August 27, 2009

This planning document includes a table on page 11 that identifies stream habitat restoration and protection goals and objectives. This proposed project is consistent with this plan and will help achieve year one goals for channel restoration and riparian restoration.

Red Lake Watershed District Plan (2006)

This proposed restoration project is consistent with flood damage reduction, natural resource enhancement, and water quality goals and objectives in the Red Lake Watershed District Plan.

Red River Basin Mediation Agreement (1998)

This habitat restoration project is consistent with the flood damage reduction and natural resource goals and objectives in the mediation agreement including:

1. *Manage streams for natural characteristics.*
2. *Enhance riparian and in-stream habitats.*
4. *Provide connected, integrated habitat including compatible adjacent land uses.*
6. *Provide recreational opportunities.*

Campaign for Conservation – Fifty Year Vision

This habitat restoration project is consistent with the recommended actions in the fifty year vision for the Red River Valley planning region as follows:

C. Lakes, Rivers, Wetlands and Groundwater

2. *Return watercourses to semi-natural hydrology and morphology.*

D. Fish and Wildlife

1. *Develop incentives and regulations for enhanced protection of shoreline and stream restoration in both Minnesota and North Dakota.*
4. *Ensure that suitable habitat for species of concern is primary focus of land and water conservation efforts.*
5. *Expand private landowner stewardship incentive programs. Provide ongoing funding to entice landowners to idle (plant grass or trees) acres in sensitive wetland, riparian, and prairie areas.*
6. *Create habitat corridor connections for prairie chickens and other grassland species across the Red River Valley from the Agassiz Beach Ridges prairies in the east to the Sheyenne National Grasslands in the west. Corridors are needed to provide dispersal routes and prevent genetic isolation.*

State AMA Acquisition Plan

This project is consistent with the following recommendations from the Red River Prairie Ecoregions needs section of the plan:

“The recreational demand on this area of the state will likely outpace the projected population change and additional public access to fishing lakes and streams is a priority. Permanent angling and management easements on streams, while maintaining private ownership, draw anglers to the area, bring additional dollars into the local economy, and provide the inroad to create permanent protection to shoreline habitat, which insures

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

clean water for future generations. Additional lake and warmwater shoreline should still be acquired when extraordinary opportunities arise and County approval is obtained. There may be opportunities for Non-Government Organizations to acquire critical shoreline parcels in this area, to either be managed by them or turned over to the DNR as AMAs or other Outdoor Recreation Units."

Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare- Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy

This project is consistent with the following goals and strategies.

Goal 1: Stabilize and increase SGCN populations

3. Nonforested wetlands and floodplain forests

c. manage habitats adjacent to wetlands and floodplain forests to enhance SGCN values

4. Stream habitats

a. maintain good water quality, hydrology, geomorphology, and connectivity in priority stream reaches

b. Maintain and enhance riparian areas along priority stream reaches

National Fish Habitat Action Plan

These projects in this proposed *program* are consistent with the goals and objectives of this plan.

- *Reverse declines in the quality and quantity of aquatic habitats to improve the overall health of fish and other aquatic organisms.*
- *Increase the quality and quantity of fish habitats that support a broad natural diversity of fish and other aquatic species.*

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	40,000		
Contracts	4,000,000		
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition	Already Acquired		
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services	700,000		
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	4,740,000		

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
Contractor	Construction	\$4,000,000
Engineer	Professional Services	\$700,000
Project Coordination	Red Lake Watershed District	\$40,000

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
To date, RIM Easements valued at \$529,537 have been used to acquire 470 acres of land associated with this project.			
To date, the Red Lake watershed district has earmarked or spent \$346,759 to oversee project development, land acquisition, environmental review, and preliminary engineering of this project.			
To date, local, state, and federal agency staff have contributed more than 500 hours of in-kind support for development of this project.			
TOTAL			

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>Restore 6 miles of stream habitat, 470 acres of river corridor habitat</i>
Protect				
Enhance				<i>20 miles of habitat through increased upstream connectivity</i>

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>Prairie</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>4,740,000</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				876,400
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				\$529, 537 Already completed 470 acre with RIM easements.

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Conduct Public Meetings	2008-2009	Complete
Prepare Preliminary Engineering Report	April 2008	Complete
Formation of Joint Board Managers for the Project	February 2009	Complete
Complete Environmental Assessment Proceedings	June 2009	Complete
Land Acquisition (RIM)	July 2009	80% Complete
Conduct Detailed Engineering/Design	Fall 2010	
Conduct Final Hearing	March 2011	
Acquire Environmental Permits	March 2011	
Prepare Final Plans and Specifications	April 2011	
Conduct Bidding Process	June 2011	
Begin Construction	July 2011	
Grand Marais Channel Restoration	Fall 2011/Summer 2012	
Diversion Structure Construction	Fall 2011	
Cutoff Ditch Grade Stabilization	Fall 2011	
Finalize Construction	Summer 2012	

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

The Red Lake Watershed District is a unit of local government, a political subdivision of the State. The Red Lake Watershed's 2009 General Fund budget is \$177,300 and our 2009 Capital Project Budget is projected to be \$1,172,569 which is approximately 25% of the funding request of the OHF. This grant will not affect the current budget and will not replace our customary or established patterns of funding as we budget for these types of projects on a yearly basis. In the last four years, the District has executed upwards of 6 millions dollars of matching grants from various state agencies to administer and construct various flood damage reduction and natural resource enhancement projects throughout the Red Lake Watershed District.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

The Red Lake watershed district in cooperation with landowners will be responsible for long term maintenance of this project. The watershed district has led the land acquisition, project development, and engineering of this project with full cooperation of a "project team" composed of landowners and representatives of local, state, and federal agencies. The Red Lake Watershed district initiated this project by action of their board under watershed district law (Minnesota Statutes 103D). Long term project maintenance is thus authorized through established watershed district construction and maintenance funds. Maintenance of vegetation along the newly created stream corridor is provided as part of Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) permanent easement contracts.

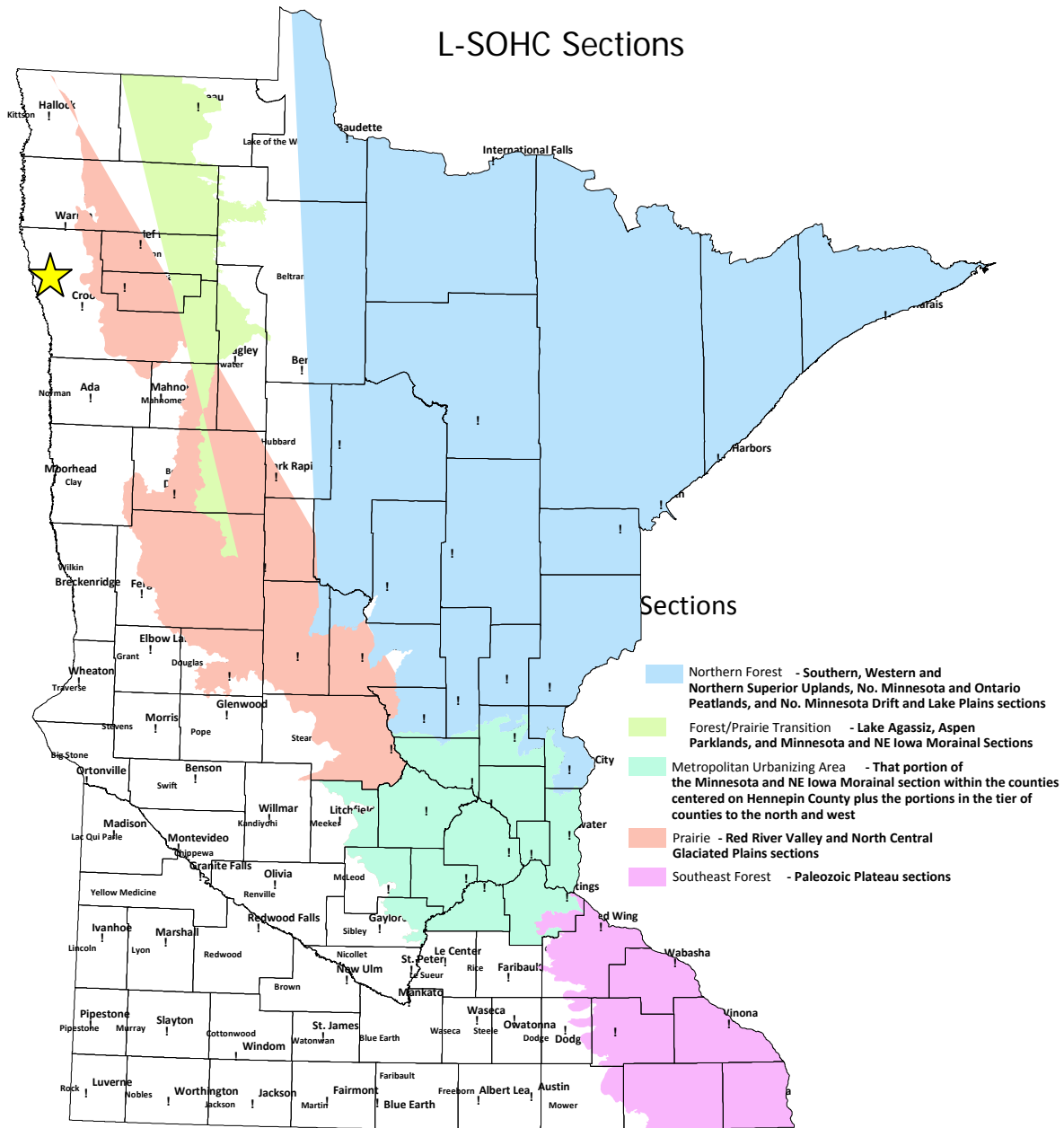
K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Double left click to bring up the map editor. Symbols should be on the left side of the pop-up banner at the top of your screen or at the bottom left depending on your software.

If you can't bring up the interactive map editor follow these instructions:

1. Make a paper copy of the map,
2. By hand place symbols on the map corresponding to the location of the projects in your proposal,
3. Scan the marked map to a pdf, and
4. Insert the marked pdf map as the last page in your submission.

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: #27 Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

Date: October 30, 2009

Manager's Name: Jon Roeschlein

Title: Administrator, Bois de Sioux Watershed District

Mailing Address: 704 South Hwy 75, Wheaton, MN 56296

Telephone: 320-563-4185

Fax: 320-563-4987

E-Mail: [@frontiernet.net](mailto:jon@frontiernet.net)

Web Site:

[://mnwatershed.govoffice.com/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={752E546E-BBDF-4B05-A5F9-7D33266AC441}](http://mnwatershed.govoffice.com/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={752E546E-BBDF-4B05-A5F9-7D33266AC441})

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	2,650,000	250,000	5,000,000	1,300,000

A. Summary

Many rivers and streams in the Red River Basin were straightened or cutoff and rerouted in the past 100 years to improve drainage. Watershed districts in collaboration with conservation interests, and local, state, and federal agencies are interested in restoring some straightened channels and their corridors to provide quality fish and wildlife habitat, increase connectivity, and reduce erosion. This project habitat restoration project will convert about 5.3 miles of ditch into eight miles of functional natural channel with 250 acres of stream corridor habitat, convert two miles of ditch to a two-stage channel with 80 acres of habitat, and will reconnect 8.8 miles of the Mustinka River which were bypassed when the natural channel was ditched. This habitat restoration project can likely be completed by the end of 2015.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

The Mustinka River was first channelized as a state ditch in 1896 and again as a project in the early 1950's. This channelization resulted in a direct conversion of about 43 miles of natural sinuous channel to about 25 miles of straightened channel without a functional corridor. The channelization not only cut through the meandering natural channel it also bypassed an entire 8.8 mile reach of natural channel. The current Mustinka River (Judicial Ditch 14) provides little functional aquatic or riparian corridor habitat.

The Bois de Sioux watershed district, landowners, conservation organizations, and local, state, and federal agencies have worked through a "project team" process to put this project together to restore a more natural channel and corridor area along the upstream reaches of the channelized river (5.3 miles of straightened channel to 8 miles of sinuous channel), to convert two miles of ditch to a two-stage channel with a 350 foot corridor, and to reconnect the 8.8 mile loop of river. This project presents the greatest opportunities that we are aware of in Minnesota at this time to convert a ditch back to a functional natural channel and to reconnect a long reach of river disconnected by channelization. The 8.8 mile channel is the longest reach of disconnected channel that we are aware of in the Red River basin.

Preliminary engineering is complete, environmental review is in process, and land acquisition is in process.

2. What action will be taken?

- About 5.3 miles of the Mustinka River (JD 14) will be replaced with 8 miles of sinuous natural channel with a 350 foot wide habitat corridor.
- About two miles of ditch will be reconstructed as a two-stage channel that will allow a natural meandering channel pattern to develop with a 350 foot wide habitat corridor (80 acres).
- About 8.8 miles of the Mustinka River that was cut off from when the ditch was built will be reconnected.
- A 160 acre northern pike spawning area will be created adjacent to the restored channel as part of a 320 acre multipurpose water storage pool.

Note: This stream habitat restoration project is part of a comprehensive flood damage reduction and natural resource enhancement project known as the Redpath Project. This application describes the aquatic habitat project components of this project.

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

3. Who will take action and when?

The Bois de Sioux Watershed District will continue to lead a collaborative effort with members of the project team including the Traverse County Soil and Water Conservation District, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, MN DNR, MPCA, USFWS, conservation groups, and landowners to complete this project. Construction could be complete in 2015 if full funding is secured.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

Similar to wetland and prairie restorations, this stream restoration project is primarily a habitat restoration project with incidental clean water benefits. The Mustinka River is impaired for turbidity and a TMDL is under review by EPA. Representatives of BWSR and PCA have been members of the watershed based project team that helped develop this project. The watershed district will consider preparation of grant applications for BWSR clean water assistance and BWSR shoreland improvement grants that are due December 1, 2009.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

- About 5.3 miles of straight ditch will be restored to about 8 miles of sinuous channel designed using principles of natural channel design. In addition to doubling the amount of aquatic habitat in this area, this project will create high quality channel and corridor habitats that provide more natural functions than the existing straightened ditch. The sinuous channel will provide seasonal aquatic habitat for a variety of fish species and other aquatic organisms. The 350 foot wide stream corridor will provide more than five miles of contiguous flood plain grassland habitat.
- About two miles of ditch will be reconstructed as a two-stage channel with a 350 foot wide habitat corridor (80 acres).
- About 8.8 miles of disconnected loop of river channel and its corridor will be reconnected to the Mustinka River.
- A 160 acre off-channel northern pike spawning area will be created. Fisheries biologists believe that northern pike spawning area is limited in the Mustinka River which is a tributary to Lake Traverse.

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

The substantive habitat changes will be evident immediately after construction of the project. The newly created habitats will improve over time as the stream corridor vegetation matures and the stream channel stabilizes.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

Yes, with S-LOHC funding over the next 4 years project funding will be complete.

 X YES

 NO

If not, how will you finance completion?

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

The Bois de Sioux watershed district in cooperation with landowners will be responsible for long term maintenance of this project. The watershed district is leading the land acquisition, project development, and engineering of this project with full cooperation of a “project team” composed of landowners and representatives of local, state, and federal agencies. The Bois de Sioux Watershed district initiated this project by action of their board under watershed district law (Minnesota Statutes 103D). Long term project maintenance is thus authorized through established watershed district construction and maintenance funds. Maintenance of vegetation along the newly created stream corridor and in the northern pike spawning area will be part of project maintenance.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

This project will directly rehabilitate eight miles of riverine habitat and 250 acres of functional river corridor habitat in what is now a ditch. This project will reconnect 8.8 miles of river channel and corridor habitats along reach of river cutoff by a ditch. This project will convert two miles of ditch into a two-stage channel with 80 acres of associated floodplain habitat. The project will also create a 160 acres northern pike spawning area with an associated 160 acres of upland grassland habitat. These habitats do not exist today. Once established, these habitats will be protected and maintained to benefit a variety of fish and wildlife communities.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

 X YES

 NO

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

We expect to own the property by fee title. Part of this application is for acquisition

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

- The Bois de Sioux Watershed District is required to be audited annually and submit that financial report to the state and others who request it. We also prepare and distribute an annual report of our physical and financial activity for the public to review as required by law.
- The Bois de Sioux Watershed district has led this project including land acquisition, project development, and engineering. The watershed district used a public “project team” process to help develop the project. Over the past 2 years, more than 8 project team meetings have been held to move this project forward. The watershed board initiated and is pursuing this project as an official watershed district project that must follow administrative procedures outlined in Minnesota Statute 103D. Under provisions of the law, a public hearing is required to finalize the project. An Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) will be completed for this project and will be available upon request. The development of this project is fully described in the Bois de Sioux Watershed District 2008 annual report. The project is described completely in the preliminary engineer’s report. Please contact the watershed district for a copy of this report.
- The watershed will provide information about this project and it’s completion through its watershed newsletter and website, through the Red River Water Management Board newsletter and website (.rrwmb), and through engagement in a variety of public venues including the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts, the Red River Basin Commission, the International Water Institute, and regional newspapers.
- The watershed district is experienced in administering, accounting for, and implementing complex land and water projects with a variety of funding sources including state grant funds from BWSR, MN PCA, and MN DNR.

12. Why will this strategy work?

This strategy will work because this project is the result of careful planning and engineering by an interdisciplinary project team of resource professionals and landowners dedicated to reducing flood damages and enhancing natural resources in the Bois de Sioux Watershed District. This watershed district has led the development and completion of several large multipurpose projects that reduce flood damages and enhance natural resources. This project is the next project in development. Preliminary engineering is complete. Land acquisition is in progress. Environmental review is in progress. Landowner and agency support is secure and the project is consistent with the Bois de Sioux Watershed District plan

([://mnwatershed.govoffice.com/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={752E546E-BBDF-4B05-A5F9-7D33266AC441}&DE={217808F7-872B-4DF5-A4C9-4D985436AA1D}](http://mnwatershed.govoffice.com/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={752E546E-BBDF-4B05-A5F9-7D33266AC441}&DE={217808F7-872B-4DF5-A4C9-4D985436AA1D})).

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

This project is nearing the final stages of implementation. Preliminary engineering is complete. Land acquisition is in progress. Environmental review is in progress. Landowner and agency support is secure and the project is consistent with the Bois de Sioux Watershed District plan. Necessary permits (e.g., DNR protected waters, PCA 404, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) are in the process of application and no significant issues have been identified in direct discussions with permitting agency representatives during project team meetings. The project has been approved by the Red River Water Management Board. A project readiness form has been completed by the project team and approved by the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group.

A lack of funding is the only known obstacle that would delay completion of this project.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

 X YES

 NO

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

 X YES

 NO

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

 YES

 NO

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

 YES

 NO

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

NA Years

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

☐ Northern Forest

☐ Forest/Prairie Transition

☐ Southeast Forest

☒ Prairie

☐ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

If the habitat restoration components of this project are not funded the watershed district will move forward with flood control impoundments adjacent to the ditch channel and will not restore a meandering natural channels, the habitat corridor, or reconnection of the cutoff channel. It is unlikely that this opportunity would ever present itself again if funding for this habitat project is not secured now.

☒ YES ☐ NO
If yes, please explain.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☐ YES ☒ NO
If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

☐ YES ☒ NO
If yes explain the model briefly.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

This project is based on the principles of natural channel design, hydrology, and fluvial geomorphology. Use of these scientific principles will create 8 miles of functional natural channel, 250 acres of corridor habit, a two-stage channel with 80 acres of habitat, and a 120 acre northern pike spawning area. The river channel habitats will provide seasonal spawning and juvenile habitat to northern pike and a variety of other species.

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

The watershed district initiates projects based on priority problems identified in the watershed district plan. This project is part of a larger comprehensive flood damage reduction project that will store water adjacent to this river channel. The watershed district sets priorities in its watershed plan and initiates projects to meet those priorities as opportunities for land acquisition become available and when there is landowner interest in a project.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan

Proposed projects are consistent with *"Habitat recommendation 6: protect and restore critical in-water habitats of lakes and streams"*.

In particular, it is consistent with the recommendations on page 82: *"A priority for former prairie zones of Minnesota is to reverse the negative effects of stream channelization on in-stream habitats for fish and other aquatic organisms....."*

Lessard – Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Preliminary Goals and Objectives 25-Year Targets, Prairie Section, August 27, 2009

This planning document includes a table on page 11 that identifies stream habitat restoration and protection goals and objectives. This proposed project is consistent with this plan and will help achieve year one goals for channel restoration and riparian restoration.

Bois de Sioux Watershed District Plan (2003)

This proposed restoration project is consistent with flood damage reduction, natural resource enhancement, and water quality goals and objectives in the Bois de Sioux Watershed District Plan.

Red River Basin Mediation Agreement (1998)

This habitat restoration project is consistent with the flood damage reduction and natural resource goals and objectives in the mediation agreement including:

1. *Manage streams for natural characteristics.*
2. *Enhance riparian and in-stream habitats.*
4. *Provide connected, integrated habitat including compatible adjacent land uses.*
6. *Provide recreational opportunities.*

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

Campaign for Conservation – Fifty Year Vision

This habitat restoration project is consistent with the recommended actions in the fifty year vision for the Red River Valley planning region as follows:

C. Lakes, Rivers, Wetlands and Groundwater

- 2. Return watercourses to semi-natural hydrology and morphology.*

D. Fish and Wildlife

- 1. Develop incentives and regulations for enhanced protection of shoreline and stream restoration in both Minnesota and North Dakota.*

- 4. Ensure that suitable habitat for species of concern is primary focus of land and water conservation efforts.*

- 5. Expand private landowner stewardship incentive programs. Provide ongoing funding to entice landowners to idle (plant grass or trees) acres in sensitive wetland, riparian, and prairie areas.*

- 6. Create habitat corridor connections for prairie chickens and other grassland species across the Red River Valley from the Agassiz Beach Ridges prairies in the east to the Sheyenne National Grasslands in the west. Corridors are needed to provide dispersal routes and prevent genetic isolation.*

State AMA Acquisition Plan

This project is consistent with the following recommendations from the Red River Prairie Ecoregions needs section of the plan:

“The recreational demand on this area of the state will likely outpace the projected population change and additional public access to fishing lakes and streams is a priority. Permanent angling and management easements on streams, while maintaining private ownership, draw anglers to the area, bring additional dollars into the local economy, and provide the inroad to create permanent protection to shoreline habitat, which insures clean water for future generations. Additional lake and warmwater shoreline should still be acquired when extraordinary opportunities arise and County approval is obtained. There may be opportunities for Non-Government Organizations to acquire critical shoreline parcels in this area, to either be managed by them or turned over to the DNR as AMAs or other Outdoor Recreation Units.”

Tomorrow’s Habitat for the Wild and Rare- Minnesota’s Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy

This project is consistent with the following goals and strategies.

Goal 1: Stabilize and increase SGCN populations

- 3. Nonforested wetlands and floodplain forests*

- c. manage habitats adjacent to wetlands and floodplain forests to enhance SGCN values*

- 4. Stream habitats*

- a. maintain good water quality, hydrology, geomorphology, and connectivity in priority stream reaches*

- b. Maintain and enhance riparian areas along priority stream reaches*

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

National Fish Habitat Action Plan

These projects in this proposed program are consistent with the goals and objectives of this plan.

- *Reverse declines in the quality and quantity of aquatic habitats to improve the overall health of fish and other aquatic organisms.*
- *Increase the quality and quantity of fish habitats that support a broad natural diversity of fish and other aquatic species.*

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts			5,700,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition	2,400,000		
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services	250,000	250,000	600,000
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	2,650,000	250,000	6,300,000 (this would likely extend into FY14)

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
-------	------	---------

The watershed district plans to use existing personnel as part of an in kind match to project.

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
To date, the Bois de Sioux watershed district has spent \$257,000 to oversee project development, land acquisition, environmental review, and preliminary engineering of this project.			
To date, local, state, and federal agency staff have contributed more than 150 hours of in-kind support for development of this project.			
To date, the Red River Water Management Board has contributed \$2.5 million to development of the Redpath Project. This project is a component of this larger flood damage reduction and natural resource enhancement project.			
Bois de Sioux Watershed District (cash and in-kind project support)	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
TOTAL	250,000	250,000	250,000

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>8 miles of stream habitat, 8.8 miles of reconnected stream habitat, 250 acres of riverine corridor habitat, and 160 acres of northern pike spawning habitat</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>Prairie</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>9,200,000</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>1,000,000+</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				<i>2,400,000</i>
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Land Acquisition	Fall 2012	
Conduct Detailed Engineering/Design	Fall 2012	
Conduct Final Hearing	December 2012	
Permits	January 2013	
Finalize Plans and Specifications	March 2013	
Conduct Bidding Process	April 2013	
Begin Construction	May 2013	
Finalize Construction	Fall 2015	

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

In the budget below the Redpath project is budgeted for \$2M in expenses and \$2M in income. This is all outside money and not generated by our established pattern of funding.

CY 2010 BUDGET		9-10-2009 Final
<i>Misc. Administration Expenses</i>		
Audit	\$6,500.00	
Dues	\$3,500.00	
Misc. Expenses	\$1,000.00	
	-	
Total Misc. Administration Expenses		\$11,000.00
<i>Personnel</i>		
Administrator Salary		\$60,472.09
Assistant Salary		\$45,024.64
Water Quality Technician		
Benefits (costs to the District)		
PERA	\$6,329.80	
Social Security	\$9,141.50	
Benefits	\$25,000.00	
Total Benefits		\$40,471.30
<i>General Operations</i>		
Office Space-Building Fund		\$35,000.00
Mileage - Board		\$4,000.00
Meeting Expenses		\$9,300.00
District Insurance		\$11,500.00
Electricity		\$1,900.00
Utilities		\$500.00
Heating Fuel		\$1,000.00
Telephone Expense		\$3,800.00

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

<i>Snow Removal</i>	\$1,000.00
<i>Yard Maintenance</i>	\$800.00
<i>Office Maintenance</i>	\$1,400.00
<i>Advertising</i>	\$500.00
<i>Manager Compensation</i>	\$14,000.00
<i>Legal Services - General</i>	\$25,000.00
<i>Engineering Services - General</i>	\$60,000.00
<i>Accountant Services</i>	\$12,000.00
<i>Postage</i>	\$2,700.00
<i>Office Supplies</i>	\$5,500.00
<i>Office Equipment - Leases</i>	\$1,700.00
<i>District Vehicle - fuel</i>	\$2,000.00
<i>District Vehicle - maintenance</i>	\$1,500.00
<i>Equipment</i>	\$5,000.00
Projects	
<i>Legal Services - Project/Ditch Related</i>	\$20,000.00
<i>Engineering Services - Project/Ditch Related</i>	\$450,000.00
<i>Advertising - Project/Ditch Related</i>	\$3,000.00
<i>North Ottawa Construction</i>	\$4,000,000.00
<i>Redpath Project</i>	\$2,000,000.00
<i>Riverwatch</i>	\$8,000.00
<i>Transfer to RRWMB</i>	\$495,783.53
<i>Stream Gauging</i>	\$20,000.00
<i>Culvert Inventory</i>	\$60,000.00
<i>Other Project Work</i>	\$281,000.00
<i>WRP/SWCD Admin Program</i>	\$60,000.00
Total	\$7,754,851.56
	\$0.00

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area

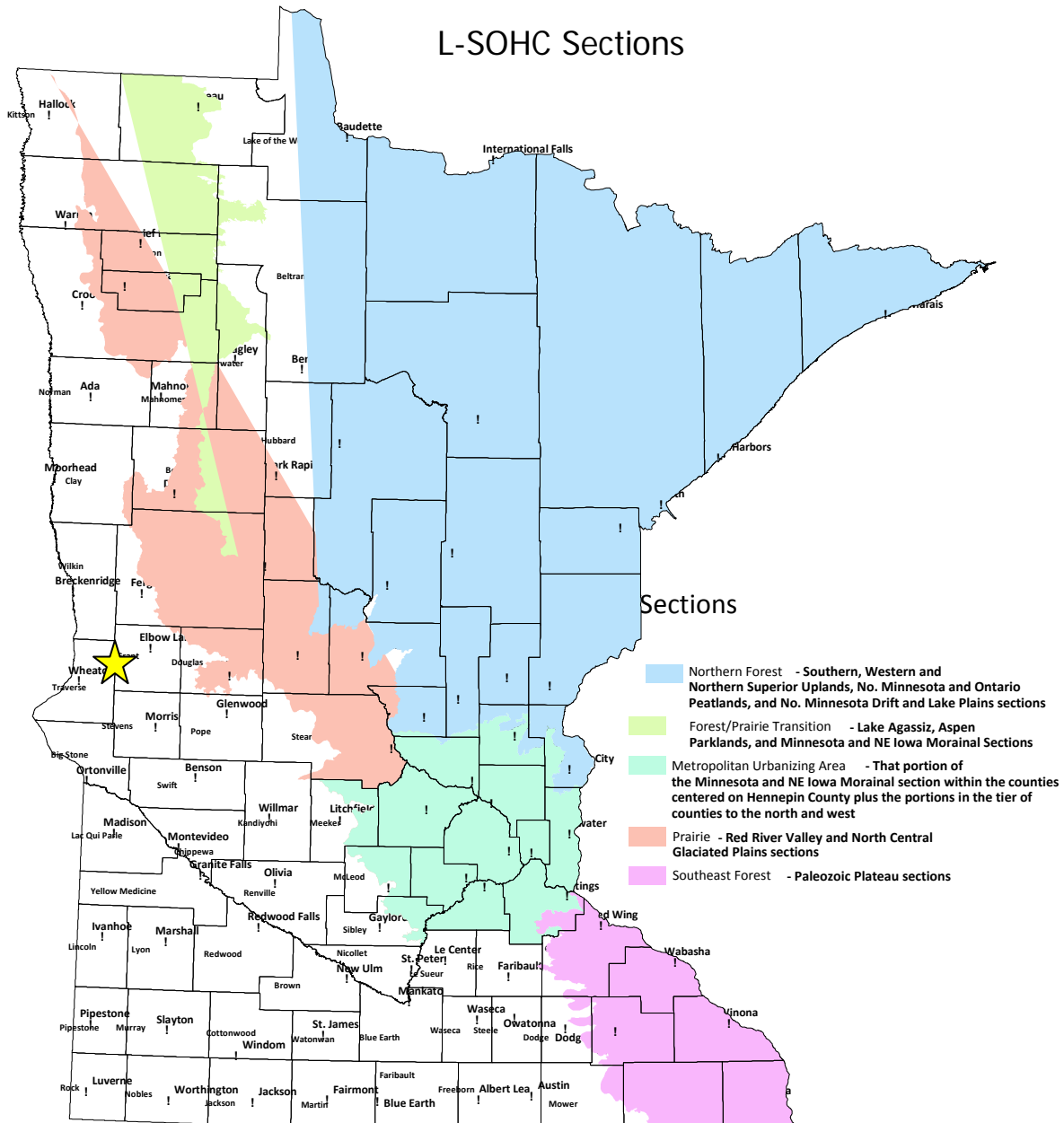
RECEIPTS	
<i>Administration Costs to Other Funds*</i>	\$493,400.00
<i>North Ottawa Project Income</i>	\$4,000,000.00
<i>Redpath Project Income</i>	\$2,000,000.00
<i>Project Team Income</i>	\$20,000.00
<i>Construction Fund Income</i>	\$991,567.06
<i>General Property Taxes 2010 Administrative Levy</i>	\$249,884.51
Total	\$7,754,851.56

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

The Bois de Sioux watershed district will be responsible for long term maintenance of this project. The watershed district is leading the land acquisition, project development, and engineering of this project with full cooperation of a “project team” composed of landowners and representatives of local, state, and federal agencies. The Bois de Sioux Watershed district initiated this project by action of their board under watershed district law (Minnesota Statutes 103D). Long term project maintenance is thus authorized through established watershed district construction and maintenance funds.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Program Title: Mustinka River Channel Rehabilitation, Reconnection, and Northern Pike Spawning Area



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Sand Hill River Dams Modification For Fish Passage and Habitat Connectivity

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: #28 Sand Hill River Dams Modifications for Fish Passage and Habitat Connectivity

Date: 10/12/09

Manager's Name: Dan Wilkens

Title: Sand Hill River Watershed District Administrator

Mailing Address: 219 North Mill Street, Fertile, MN

Telephone: 218-945-3204

Fax: 218-945-3213

E-Mail: shrwd@gvtel.com

Web Site: www.sandhillwatershed.o

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$1,937,000	0	0	0

A. Summary

Our project will reconnect Red River of the North and 22 miles of stream habitat in lower Sand Hill River with 50 miles of upstream habitat in Sand Hill River, which includes rare lake sturgeon and walleye spawning habitat found in the beach ridges formed by glacial Lake Agassiz. The project will also stabilize one mile of channel within the degraded stream segment where the passage barriers are located. This will be done by modifying four dams (locally referred to as "drop-structures") identified as fish passage barriers into rock-arch rapids and installing several vortex weirs.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Four dams on Sand Hill River have been identified by DNR fisheries biologists as barriers to fish passage. Several species, including channel catfish, smallmouth bass, walleye and sauger have been shown to be present downstream of the dams but not upstream of them. In addition, a number of these species have been shown to make large, yearly spawning migrations from the Red River up tributary streams, such as Sand Hill River, to access the rare habitat found in the stream segments that flow through glacial Lake Agassiz beach ridge areas. The structures targeted in this project prevent fish from making this seasonal spawning run and from repopulating resident habitats located upstream from the structures. Also, the stream channel below the downstream-most dam is unstable resulting in degraded habitat conditions.

Initially, there were six fish passage barriers located on this stream segment. The Sand Hill River Watershed District (SHRWD), in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), developed the SHRWD Fish Passage Master Plan to restore upstream fish migration in the Sand Hill River by modifying these six structures. To date, two of the six structures have been modified but the project was put on hold due to lack of funding. This is an opportunity to complete the restoration project.

2. What action will be taken?

- The four dams will be converted into rock-arch-rapids using rock of various sizes, similar to what has been done to numerous dams throughout Minnesota.
- Nine rock weirs will be placed downstream from the lowest dam to stabilize the stream channel.

3. Who will take action and when?

The Sand Hill River Watershed District is prepared to initiate the project upon notification of funding. Final design specifications will be completed in cooperation with the MN DNR. Necessary permits will be obtained, which is anticipated to take a minimum of time because the MN DNR, US Army Corp of Engineers and other agencies have cooperated on the project since its inception. Construction can begin the summer of 2010 once the permits are received.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

Other Constitutional funding is not necessary for this project.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

- Fish habitat will be restored through reconnection of fragmented habitats that cannot currently be used and stream channel restoration. This project will restore fish migration pathways between 50 miles of important instream fish habitat found upstream from the fish passage barriers in Sand Hill River to the downstream segment of Sand Hill River, and to the mainstem of Red River of the North.
- Approximately 1.75 mile of stream channel will be stabilized.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

Based on similar projects conducted throughout Minnesota, including several located in the Red River basin, habitat connectivity will occur as soon as construction is complete and fish populations are expected to respond immediately.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

If not, how will you finance completion?

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

The Sand Hill River Watershed District will be responsible for maintenance. The District has led this project through the collaborative effort of its project team, which consists of private landowners and representatives of various state, federal and local agencies. The Watershed District is authorized by law to complete long term maintenance of this project (Minnesota Statutes 103D).

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

This project directly restores fish habitat through connecting fragmented habitats. Important spawning habitat found in the beach ridge area and other fish habitat upstream of the dams are currently not accessible but will be immediately after passage has been restored through the four dams. It will also restore instream habitat by stabilizing a mile segment of stream channel.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Restoration will occur entirely within public waters. This stream segment is a part of a flood control and major drainage project implemented by the US Army Corps of Engineers in 1955 and there is permanent easement ranging from 200 to 400 feet along each side of the stream.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

This project was developed by the Sand Hill River Watershed District's Project Team, which consists of private landowners and representatives of various state, federal and local agencies. The project is listed on the District's website ([.sandhillwatershed.org](http://sandhillwatershed.org)) and project progress will be reported in the Red River Watershed Management Board's monthly newsletter and website (www.rwmb.org).

12. Why will this strategy work?

This strategy will work because stream surveys by the MN DNR have shown the four dams are responsible for preventing fish movement upstream. Also, dam modification to allow fish passage has been proven successful on similar projects throughout Minnesota, including several in the Red River basin.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

Local landowners and various local, state and federal agencies have been involved in the project's development since the start and the project has been partially completed. No individual or agency resistance is expected.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

NA, this is not a land acquisition.

_____ YES

_____ NO

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

NA

_____ YES

_____ NO

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

NA, this is not an easement acquisition.

_____ YES

_____ NO

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

NA

_____ YES

_____ NO

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

NA, this is a single, specific project

_____ Years

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

- _____ Northern Forest
- _____ Forest/Prairie Transition
- _____ Southeast Forest
- X Prairie
- _____ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

_____ YES X NO
If yes, please explain.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

_____ YES X NO
If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

_____ YES X NO
If yes explain the model briefly.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Fish sampling conducted in 1995, 2003 and 2005 by MN DNR Fisheries personnel definitively demonstrated that the four dams are acting as barriers to fish passage. The fish community composition upstream from the dams is substantially different than below the dams. In particular, larger game fish species such as walleye, sauger, channel

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catfish and smallmouth bass are present downstream from the dams but are not found upstream. Modifying dams into rock-arch- rapids has been shown to be an effective strategy to restore fish passage through a dam site and rock weirs have been proven to be an effective stream channel stabilization tool.

24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

The Watershed District initiates projects based on priority water management and natural resource problems identified in the District's 10 year comprehensive plan, which can be found on our website. The District has nearly completed the plan's current revision and this project is identified in it as a priority.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

This project is consistent with a number of resource management plans.

- The Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan specifically recommends removing or altering dams to reconnect habitats and allow for fish passage.
- Dam removal and channel restoration in the Red River basin is mentioned specifically within the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council's Prairie Section: Preliminary Goals and Objectives, 25 Year Targets.
- The four dams targeted by this project have been specifically identified as barriers to fish passage and the MN DNR's 2002, Restoration of Extirpated Lake Sturgeon in the Red River of the North Watershed identifies dams positioned on rivers and streams as major contributors to the extirpation of lake sturgeon in the Red River of the North watershed.
- The Red River of the North Fisheries Management Plan, 2008, a cooperative management agreement between the MN DNR, North Dakota Game and Fish Department, Province of Manitoba, CA, and South Dakota Game Fish and Parks Department highlights dam removal/modification as desirable to reconnect stream habitats between Red River of the North and tributary streams.
- The Environmental Assessment for Fish passage in the Red River of the North Basin, Minnesota, 2005, prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, lists the actions outlined in this project proposal (installation of rock-arch riffles below the Sand Hill River drop structures) as the preferred action alternative for these fish passage barriers.

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D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts	1,822,800		
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services	109,300		
Travel			
Additional Budget Items	5,000		
TOTAL	1,937,100		

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
Sand Hill River Watershed District Administrator.	Dan Wilkens	\$5,000
Contract Engineering		\$109,300

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F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
To date, the Minnesota DNR has contributed \$500,000 to the completed portion of this project along with numerous hours of personnel time to project design.			
The Sand Hill River Watershed District, acting as project lead, has contributed numerous hours toward the completed portion of this project and funds for project design and preliminary engineering.			
To date, local, state, and federal agency staff have contributed many hours of in-kind support toward the development and implementation of this project.			
TOTAL			

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

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Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>Restore fish passage to 50 miles of spawning, nursery, and resident fish habitat that is currently inaccessible.</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>Prairie</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				\$1,937,000
Protect				
Enhance				

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Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Fish passage and habitat connectivity restored through modified dams	August 1, 2010	4 dams
Stream channel restoration vortex weirs installed	October 1, 2010	9 weirs

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

Use this section to put the OHF request into financial context. What percent of your current fiscal year base budget is this request? Provide the current fiscal year base budget and the percent this request from the OHF represents. You need to show how this funding will supplement your current base budget and not replace your customary or established patterns of funding

The Sand Hill River Watershed District is a unit of local government, a political subdivision of the State. The Watershed District's FY2009 base budget is \$154,000. This funding request represents approximately 10 times our FY2009 base budget. This grant will not affect the

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current budget and will not replace our customary or established patterns of funding as we budget for these types of projects on a yearly basis. The District has experience managing large construction projects including securing necessary funding and project administration.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Dams modified to rock-arch-rapids and vortex weirs have been shown to be very stable over time. The Sand Hill River Watershed District is the project sponsor and long term project maintenance is authorized through established District construction and maintenance funds.

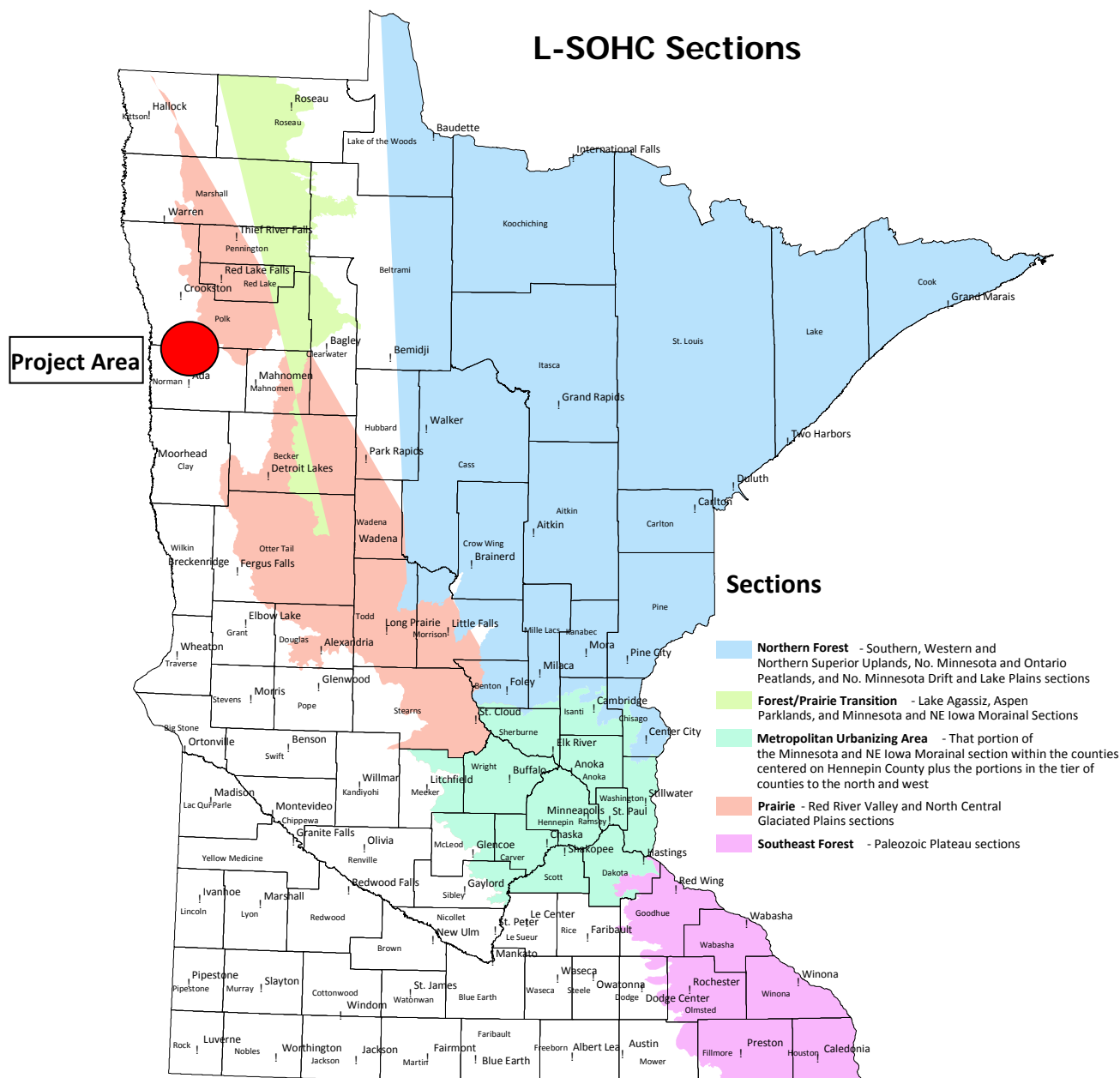
K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Double left click to bring up the map editor. Symbols should be on the left side of the pop-up banner at the top of your screen or at the bottom left depending on your software.

If you can't bring up the interactive map editor follow these instructions:

1. Make a paper copy of the map,
2. By hand place symbols on the map corresponding to the location of the projects in your proposal,
3. Scan the marked map to a pdf, and
4. Insert the marked pdf map as the last page in your submission.

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Program Title: Restoring and Enhancing Wildlife Habitat on Key Public Lands Across the Anoka Sand Plain through Collaborative Partnerships

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: # 29 Restoring and Enhancing Wildlife Habitat on Key Public Lands Across the Anoka Sand Plain through Collaborative Partnerships

Date: November 1, 2009

Manager's Name: Wayne Ostlie

Title: Director of Conservation Programs

Mailing Address: Great River Greening

Telephone: 651-665-9500 x19

Fax: 651-651-9409

E-Mail: wostlie@greatrivergreening.org

Web Site: www.greatrivergreening.org

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$1,425,563	0	0	0

A. Summary

The Anoka Sand Plain Habitat Partnership works to 1) elevate and capitalize on resources available for protection, restoration, and enhancement of natural resources in the ASP, 2) share and disseminate management and restoration expertise to public and private landowners, 3) tackle emerging research issues and use findings to guide management actions across public and private lands and waters, and 4) build strong connections to local communities through education, outreach and opportunities for volunteerism.

Our program will harness the expertise, resources, and connections of a broad partnership of committed conservation stakeholders to significantly elevate restoration and enhancement of oak savannas (Minnesota most critically imperiled habitat), woodlands and forests on public lands across the Anoka Sand Plain (ASP). Through funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund, we will restore and enhance over 3900 acres of prairie and forest habitat across 17 priority sites, including state WMAs (8), state SNAs (5), USFWS National Wildlife Refuges (1), county parks (2), and a ecological science reserve operated by the University of Minnesota (1).

B. Background Information

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1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The ASP ecological region is home to some of Minnesota's crowning conservation achievements over the past century:

- **Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area** (Anoka & Chisago counties – 25,000 acres) is the largest WMA in the Twin Cities Metro Area and is composed of wetlands and oak woodland and savanna.
- **Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge** (Sherburne County – 30,700 acres) was in 1965 to protect and restore the habitats associated with the St. Francis River Valley for migratory birds and other wildlife, the focus of the Refuge is on the restoration of oak savanna, wetland and Big Woods habitat.
- **Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge** (Morrison County – 13,500 acres – only 2,000 acquired) was established in 1992 to preserve a large, natural wetland complex. The refuge is located in central Minnesota and serves as an important stop for many species of migrating birds and harbors one of the largest nesting populations of greater sandhill cranes in Minnesota. Habitats include native tallgrass prairie, oak savanna, and wetlands with stands of wild rice.
- **Rum River Wild & Scenic River** (Mille Lacs, Sherburne, Isanti and Anoka counties) was added to Minnesota's Wild & Scenic Rivers Program in 1978.
- **Sand Dunes State Forest/Uncas Dunes SNA** (Sherburne County). The Sand Dunes State Forest consists of oak savanna forest and prairie and 2,700 acres of pine plantation of rolling terrain and few hills. The 745 acres of Uncas Dunes contains a relict dunefield associated with Glacial Lake Grantsburg.
- **Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve** (Anoka & Isanti counties – 5,400 acres) is a Registered Natural Landmark, recognized as 'possessing exceptional value in illustrating our nation's natural heritage'. Superb examples of oak savanna, tamarack-black spruce forest and white cedar swamp occur throughout the Reserve.

Despite these storied successes, the future of wildlife in the ASP is far from assured. Much remains to be accomplished in order to ensure the long-term success of wildlife in this ecological region of the state:

- Oak savanna habitat that once characterized the ASP has been reduced to less than 1% of its historic extent (<12 square miles across the region), making it the single most imperiled ecological system in Minnesota. The demise of oak savanna in the ASP mirrors regional trends and is classified as a globally rare ecosystem.
- Prairie habitat in this subsection has declined from 10% coverage historically to less than .05% coverage today.
- Habitat loss and degradation has had profound impacts on the wildlife of the ASP; some 97 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) in the state of Minnesota are known or predicted to occur within the ASP (*Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare*, pp. 70-71). These include 15 bird species, 9 of which have exhibited persistent rangewide declines over the past 40 years (USFWS Breeding Bird Survey 2008) – lark sparrow (-1.65% decline per year), eastern towhee (-1.61%), loggerhead shrike (-3.68%), red-headed woodpecker (-2.66%), field sparrow (-2.78%), eastern meadowlark (-2.86%), brown thrasher (-1.13%), whip-poor-will (-2.19%) and grasshopper sparrow (-3.55%).
- To date, there have existed inadequate resources to pursue protection of what is remaining in private hands, and to adequately manage/restore what occurs in public/NGO conservation ownership. *Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare: Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy*, identifies maintenance,

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enhancement and protection of oak savannas as its first priority for this ecological subsection.

- The ASP is among the fastest growing areas in the state. Urban sprawl, coupled with invasive exotic species and woody encroachment, are placing immense pressure on remaining natural resources and threatening existing protected areas.

While there has been a tremendous loss of native habitat in the ASP, there is a lot of existing public land that needs significant restoration and enhancement work. Public land managers over the past decades have made good investments of time and resources, but all are facing serious funding shortages. None of our partners have reached their restoration and enhancement goals despite the range of efforts over many years. As the **Anoka Sand Plain Habitat Partnership** (ASP Habitat Partnership or Partnership), we acknowledge this habitat work has to be an ongoing effort, one that is far more integrated and collaborative than what has been done in the past.

This Partnership aims, through a coordinated approach, to 1) elevate and capitalize on resources available for protection, restoration, and enhancement of natural resources in the ASP, 2) share and disseminate management and restoration expertise to public and private landowners, 3) tackle emerging research issues and use findings to guide management actions across public and private lands and waters, and 4) build strong connections to local communities through education, outreach and opportunities for volunteerism.

This Partnership, at present, includes the following stakeholders:

Anoka County Parks	Morrison SWCD
Audubon Minnesota	Mid-Minnesota Mississippi River RC&D
Benton SWCD	National Wild Turkey Federation
BWSR	Onanegozie RC&D
Chisago SWCD	Stearns SWCD
Friends of the Rum River	The Nature Conservancy
Great River Greening	US Fish & Wildlife Service
Isanti County Parks	University of Minnesota
Minnesota DNR	Wright SWCD
Minnesota Forest Resources Council	

This grant will help advance the effort even more significantly. We will collaborate on projects, share resources and expertise, broaden the existing funding base for this work, and outreach to public/private partners and the local community – all supported foundationally by a world class ecological research center.

Funding through the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) will be used to leverage further funding and in-kind support on all sites where we work. We will increase involvement by the public through the combining and integrating of the volunteer programs led by Great River Greening, SWCDs, municipalities and school districts, National Wild Turkey Federation, The Nature Conservancy, USFWS, MFRC, Isanti County Parks and others. These groups have wide recognition for volunteer development, yet to date there has not been a connecting and sharing of these programs to the degree needed. This project will embark on that next generation of collaboration.

In addition, this project will create new jobs. Our partners will bring in MCC crews as an integral part of the restoration/enhancement work being performed. We will grow a better landscape

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through work completed by local businesses and contractors. Our partners are committed to connecting with local vendors to help implement these projects.

This grant is essential to showing the general public and landowners adjacent to the sites included in this proposal that we are actively pursuing and committed to this critical work. And we will work hard to get them to join in too – not only adjacent landowners, but students and teachers, hunters, bird watchers, and more. We will get them all involved so that we can ultimately work more effectively on private lands too.

Our proposal focuses on restoration and enhancement activities on 17 priority sites occurring on public lands in the ASP, a mix of sites that include state WMAs (8), state SNAs (5), USFWS National Wildlife Refuge (1), county parks (2), and the University of Minnesota (1). Leverage for this work on public land will occur through the ASP Habitat Partnership and the East Central Regional Committee of the Minnesota Forest Resources Council.

The concept behind the ASP Habitat Partnership - integrated public and private land management – is a strategic direction of the Minnesota DNR (as stated in A Strategic Conservation Agenda 2009-2013). The ability of the DNR to administer state forests, parks, wildlife management areas, aquatic management areas, and scientific and natural areas is strongly influenced by the management of surrounding lands and waters. Through engagement in partnerships like the ASP Habitat Partnership, the DNR is pursuing integrated management for extensive interspersed public and private lands in order to build its capacity to work across ownership boundaries.

Through this proposal, the ASP Habitat Partnership is requesting \$1,425,563 as an initial foundational request to make major strides in the restoration and enhancement of priority wildlife habitat across state and county lands in the program area. Backed by a slate of seasoned resource professionals (wildlife managers, ecologists, restoration experts, scientists) within an array of established conservation agencies and organizations, the Partnership is poised to begin making immediate impacts across 3904 acres of habitat.

2. What action will be taken?

Beginning in 2010 and occurring over the next 3 years, restoration and enhancement activities will take place on the following state and county managed lands, producing a combined outcome of 3658 acres of restored oak savanna, oak woodland and other important natural habitats, and enhancement of 246 acres of prairie and forest wildlife habitat:

State Scientific and Natural Areas

- A. *Uncas Dunes SNA (Sherburne County)* – Uncas Dunes contains a relict dunefield and includes oak savanna, oak forest, and wetland habitats. The rare Uncas skipper gives this site its name; this is one of only two sites in the state where this species has been found. Actions: Restoration of 70 acres of oak savanna habitat through removal of invasive trees/shrubs and regenerating pine, planting of old fields and disturbed areas with native seed collected onsite (followed by post-seeding management over two years), and prescribed fire.**
- B. *Rice Lake SNA (Sherburne County)* – Glacial meltwaters deposited their outwash sands across this large plain, providing the basis for an open, grassy landscape dotted with bur and pin oak--a classic savanna. Rice Lake Savanna SNA contains examples of**

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oak savanna and oak woodland communities. Actions: Restoration of 80 acres of oak savanna habitat through removal of invasive trees/shrubs, planting of old fields and disturbed areas with native seed collected onsite, and prescribed fire.

- C. Mississippi River Islands SNA (Sherburne County)** – This SNA includes five islands formed of outwash and alluvium deposited by the Mississippi River, rising as high as 30 feet above river level. Flooding, erosion, and sedimentation have resulted in various stages of succession, creating a mosaic of wet floodplain forest, drier floodplain forest, and sandbar plant communities. Actions: Restoration of 5 acres of hardwood forest through invasive species removal.
- D. Clear Lake SNA (Sherburne County)** – Clear Lake SNA has the distinction of being the first land parcel acquired under the State Wild and Scenic Rivers Program. It contains a mosaic of oak forest, floodplain forest, and old field sumac thicket, along with a small population of the very rare Hill's thistle. Actions: A first phase of oak savanna restoration on 50 acres through woody invasive species control and prescribed fire (to be followed upon by seeding and restoration management in a future proposal).
- E. Harry W. Cater Homestead SNA (Sherburne County)** – This SNA covers a sandy river terrace deposited by glacial meltwaters and is dominated by dry, upland oak savanna, mesic and wet-mesic prairie openings in aspen groves, floodplain forest along the Elk River, wet meadow and marsh on peat. Actions: Restoration of 15 acres of oak savanna habitat through removal of invasive trees/shrubs and use of prescribed fire.

State Wildlife Management Areas

- F. Lamprey Pass WMA (Anoka and Washington counties)** – Lamprey Pass is the largest WMA outside of Carlos Avery in the North Metro area. Originally owned by Uri Lamprey, it was managed as a hunt club from 1881 until the 1970s. The acquisition of Lamprey pass marked the first time money was used from the Nongame Wildlife Tax Check-off revenue. The unit is identified as a DNR Regionally Significant Ecological Area. Actions: Restoration of 16 acres of old field to oak woodland through direct seeding and follow-up management.
- G. Carlos Avery WMA (Anoka and Chisago counties)** – This 25,000-acre WMA is the largest in the Twin Cities Metro Area and is one of the iconic WMAs in the state of Minnesota. The site is composed principally of wetlands and oak woodland and savanna. Actions: Enhancement of 22 acres of grassland through removal of invasive trees and shrubs, followed by prescribed fire.
- H. Sand Prairie WMA (Sherburne County)** – This 700-acre WMA is situated in the glacial flood plain of the Mississippi River, with mesic to wet remnant prairie, dry prairie, and aspen occurring at the site. In addition to its status as a WMA, Sand Prairie is the first WMA also designated as an Environmental Education Area, providing a strong connection to local school and college students. Actions: Restoration of 159 acres of partially restored oak savanna through the planting of oak trees. The site has one of the most diverse prairie species assemblages in a Minnesota restored prairie.
- I. Becklin Homestead WMA & County Park (Isanti County)** – This WMA is located along the Rum River and consists of partially restored oak savanna and other habitats. The WMA is also jointly managed as an Isanti County Park and is dedicated to hunting

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use by Physically Challenged hunters only. Actions: Restoration of 25 acres of oak savanna through direct seeding and planting of trees.

- J. Sartell WMA (Benton County)** – This 368-acre WMA is featured by Little Rock Creek (which flows through the site), along with significant oak savanna, oak woodland and prairie in various stages of restoration. Actions: Restoration of 91 acres of oak savanna/woodland habitat, and enhancement of 21 acres of grassland and woodland through exotic and native woody species control.
- K. Rice Area Sportsman Club WMA (Morrison County)** – This WMA (580 acres) consists of extensive oak savanna/woodland along its east border, merging with restored native grass fields and wetlands. Actions: Restoration of 163 acres of deciduous woodland, dry oak woodland and dry oak savanna; enhancement of 29 acres of grassland.
- L. Michaelson Farm WMA (Benton County)** – This 276-acre WMA occurs on the Mississippi River floodplain forest, lowland grass and brush, and oak woodland on higher grounds. Management of the unit focuses on maintaining and improving habitat for a diversity of native plants and wildlife. Actions: Enhancement of 120 acres of oak woodland, woodland and grassland through control of exotic and native woody invasive plants.
- M. McDougall WMA (Morrison County)** – This 228-acre WMA occurs along the Mississippi River and is characterized by floodplain forest, oak woodland and deciduous woodland, with some crop field. The WMA borders a preserve of The Nature Conservancy along its south edge. Actions: Enhancement of 54 acres of oak woodland, deciduous woodland and grassland through control of exotic and native woody invasive species.

National Wildlife Refuge

- N. Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge (Sherburne County)** – This 30,700-acre refuge was in 1965 to protect and restore the habitats associated with the St. Francis River Valley for migratory birds and other wildlife, the focus of the Refuge is on the restoration of oak savanna, wetland and Big Woods habitat. Actions: Restoration of 1000 acres through prescribed fire and oak seeding of prairie habitats.

County Parks

- O. Anderson County Park (Isanti County)** – The 174-acre park lies within the Typo Chain of Lakes watershed, and consists of open fields (in the process of prairie and oak savanna restoration), woods, and wetlands adjacent to both Horseshoe and Horse Leg Lakes. Actions: Restoration of 20 acres of oak savanna through direct seeding of acorns and planting of oak trees into restored understory of tallgrass prairie.
- P. Springvale County Park (Isanti County)** – This 211-acre park is situated on Johnny's Lake and lies on eskers and wetlands left by the last glaciers. The park includes rolling prairies, oak savanna, northern hardwood forest and wetlands. Actions: Restoration of 20 acres of oak savanna through direct seeding of acorns and planting of oak trees into restored ground layer of tallgrass prairie.

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Q. Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve (Anoka & Isanti counties) – Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve is a large ecological research site in central Minnesota with natural habitats that represent the entire state. Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve is within the meeting point of the three largest ecosystems of North America. Here the western prairies, the northern evergreen forests, and the leafy forests of the east all converge in a remarkable combination of plants and animals over a nine-square-mile area. The Minnesota County Biological Survey ranks Cedar Creek a site of Outstanding Biodiversity Significance, its highest rating, and the Nature Conservancy has named Cedar Creek an Ecologically Significant Area. Actions: Restoration of 1000 acres of oak savanna and 800 acres of oak woodland habitat through prescribed fire and invasive exotic species control.

3. Who will take action and when?

All proposed sites will begin restoration and enhancement work in 2010, with work progressing at a majority of sites over the following 3 years (into 2013). Specific actions and those taking action will vary by site, but will include each respective agency/organization responsible for management of the site. In most instances, conservation partners (including Great River Greening, National Wild Turkey Federation, MCC and others) will play significant roles. Volunteers from local communities will also be engaged at a number of project sites. It should be noted that activities at some sites will be contracted out to for-profit companies as the need exists.

State Wildlife Management Areas

- A. Lamprey Pass WMA (Anoka and Washington counties)** – DNR Wildlife will lead and implement all phases of this enhancement project. The project will commence in FY2011 and continue into FY2012.
- B. Carlos Avery WMA (Anoka and Chisago counties)** – The restoration project will be led by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR Wildlife. Great River Greening will oversee removal of red cedar and other woody invasive trees by a contractor; DNR Wildlife will follow with a prescribed burn. Enhancement will begin in FY2011 and continue through FY2013.
- C. Sand Prairie WMA (Sherburne County)** – This restoration project will be led by DNR Wildlife in collaboration with Great River Greening. Volunteers will be used in the planting of trees as a way to connect the local community to this important site. The project will begin in FY2011 and conclude in FY2012.
- D. Becklin Homestead WMA & County Park (Isanti County)** – Isanti County Parks and DNR Wildlife will collaborate on this restoration project. The project will begin in FY2012 and conclude in FY2013.
- E. Sartell WMA (Benton County)** – Oversight of this project will be provided by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR Wildlife. Aside from project oversight, much of the proposed work will be subcontracted through MCC and/or private vendor. The project will begin in FY2011 and will conclude in FY2013.
- F. Rice Area Sportsman Club WMA (Morrison County)** – Oversight of this project will be provided by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR Wildlife. Aside from project oversight, much of the proposed work will be subcontracted through MCC and/or private vendor. The project will begin in FY2011 and will conclude in FY2013.

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- G. Michaelson Farm WMA (Benton County)** – Oversight of this project will be provided by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR Wildlife. Aside from project oversight, much of the proposed work will be subcontracted through MCC and/or private vendor. The project will begin in FY2011 and will conclude in FY2013.
- H. McDougall WMA (Morrison County)** – Oversight of this project will be provided by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR Wildlife. Aside from project oversight, much of the proposed work will be subcontracted through MCC and/or private vendor. The project will begin in FY2011 and will conclude in FY2013.

State Scientific and Natural Areas

- I. Uncas Dunes SNA (Sherburne County)** – The restoration project will be led by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR SNA Program and DNR Forestry. Portions of the work (harvesting of pine plantation, etc.) will be subcontracted to a private consultant specializing in that area of work. Portions of the project will be performed by volunteers as a way to connect the local community to this important land. Restoration will begin in FY 2011 and continue through 2013.
- J. Rice Lake SNA (Sherburne County)** – The restoration project will be led by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR SNA Program. Portions of the work may be subcontracted to a private contractor. Portions of the project will be performed by volunteers as a way to connect the local community to this important land. Restoration will begin in FY2011 and continue into 2013.
- K. Mississippi River Islands SNA (Sherburne County)** – The restoration project will be led by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR SNA Program. Restoration will begin in FY2011 and conclude with mop-up work in FY2012.
- L. Clear Lake SNA (Sherburne County)** – The restoration project will be led by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR SNA Program. Portions of the work may be subcontracted to MCC or a private contractor. Portions of the project will be performed by volunteers as a way to connect the local community to this important land. Restoration will begin in FY2011 and continue through FY2013.
- M. Harry W. Cater Homestead SNA (Sherburne County)** – The restoration project will be led by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR SNA Program. Portions of the work may be subcontracted to MCC or a private contractor. Portions of the project will be performed by volunteers as a way to connect the local community to this important land. Restoration will begin in 2010 and continue into 2013.

National Wildlife Refuge

- N. Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge (Sherburne County)** – The USFWS will hire a forester to complement existing staff engaged in the large-scale oak savanna restoration efforts underway at Sherburne NWR. The forester will flag trees for thinning in line with savanna restoration plans.

County Parks

- O. Anderson County Park (Isanti County)** – Isanti County Parks will implement all phases of this restoration project with assistance from volunteers. Restoration will commence in FY2012 and conclude in FY2013.
- P. Springvale County Park (Isanti County)** – Isanti County Parks will implement all phases of this restoration project with assistance from volunteers. Restoration will commence in FY2012 and continue into FY2013.

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Q. Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve (Anoka & Isanti counties) – CCESR staff will perform most activities related to this restoration, but components (prescribed fire, invasive species control, etc.) may include staff from Great River Greening, MCC and/or the DNR. Restoration will commence in FY2011 and continue through FY2013.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

Coordination of this program with other Constitutional funding will occur largely through the ASP Habitat Partnership. The Partnership includes the majority of conservation organizations and agencies working in the region; two of these (MN DNR and BWSR) administer significant portions of these funds. Also, many of the county Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in the project area, through which the Clean Water Funds will be distributed, are also partners.

Since the desired goal of the Partnership is focused both on terrestrial and aquatic habitats, it is imperative that a good working knowledge of a diverse suite of funding sources is achieved among its partners, and the we collectively find effective ways to strategically tap them to their most effective and efficient uses. To this end, the Partnership is establishing a necessary communication protocol to ensure that coordination among partners is well orchestrated.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

We expect to see major improvements to oak savanna, oak woodland and associated habitats through restoration and enhancement actions as identified under question #2 above. These actions will result in:

- elimination of invasive plants (trees, shrubs and forbs) over 2254 acres of oak savanna, oak woodland, and deciduous forest habitats
- seeding/planting of 1269 acres of oak savanna habitat
- seeding of 16 acres of oak woodland habitat
- prescribed fire over 2140 acres of oak savanna habitat

Beyond these direct impacts, restoration and enhancement activities will greatly impact a large suite of species using these habitats by reducing negative impacts from edge effects. These actions will provide for needed habitat improvements to the benefit of many of the 97 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCNs) as well as numerous other game and non-game species with populations occurring in the ASP.

Beyond the direct benefits to species using these habitats, these actions will result in:

- A. Significantly improved recreational assets and richer experiences for hunters, bird watchers, hikers, and for education and other activities.
- B. Enhancement of an existing and irreplaceable investment. The state of Minnesota and local units of government have used millions of dollars of taxpayer money to acquire these important tracts of land, yet the resources for their appropriate management have not been available to the level required to sustain them. Many of these include the best examples of the most imperiled habitats in the state, and cannot be replaced.

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- C. Major opportunities for building strong connections to local communities through volunteerism as a means of enhancing public awareness, appreciation and a constituency for these important lands.
- D. Restoration actions focused on Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve serves to not only improve upon the current condition of high quality habitats at the site, but continues to position it as the State's premier ecosystem research facility whose science serves to both underpin oak savanna restoration efforts, but the science behind conservation at the global scale.
- E. Water quality improvements will be realized in watersheds where restoration activities take place.
- F. Jobs. We will grow a better landscape through work completed by local businesses and contractors. Our partners are committed to connecting with MCC crews and local vendors to help implement these projects.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

In areas where native habitats exist, but actions are necessary to restore ecological function through prescribed fire and treatment of invasive species, we expect to see immediate changes to habitat beginning the first year of effort (2010), with continual improvement occurring over the following 3 years and beyond. We expect to see significant positive responses to these habitat improvements by game and non-game species alike within the 5-10 year timeframe.

In areas where reconstruction of habitat is necessary (generally seeding into old fields), changes will slower to realize. Hardwood seeding will take decades to produce mature forest conditions, although impacts on wildlife will begin occurring within the first decade. In oak savanna settings, the ground layer will take shape and support grassland species in approximately 3 years. However, oak trees are notoriously slow growing and the full savanna structure may not develop for at least 2-3 decades.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

_____ **YES** **__X__ NO**

If not, how will you finance completion?

Proposed restoration and enhancement actions will, in large part, complete the planned accomplishments for sites or portions of sites featured in this proposal. In some instances (e.g., Clear Lake SNA), however, actions likely may be required beyond the duration of this funding cycle. Depending on need, the completion of restoration activities may be proposed as a second phase through a following funding proposal to LS-OHC.

It should also be noted that this OHF proposal touches on but a few of the priority conservation areas located in the ASP. Many other protection, restoration and enhancement priorities exist across the ASP, and those needs will be targeted in funding proposals over the coming years. In some instances, restoration and enhancement activities in different portions of a site featured in this proposal also will be featured.

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Meeting these needs will require a strong, coordinated approach of the ASP Habitat Partnership, that will serve to build in efficiencies by sharing resources and expertise between organizations/agencies, and jointly fundraise to elevate the funding base through the OHF and an array of other funding sources to address major resource and capacity constraints.

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

All partners participating in this proposal have committed to the long-term maintenance of these habitat improvements once they are made. Often, the expense of restoration/enhancement on the front end is a major hurdle that first must be overcome. The cost of ongoing management to maintain these improvements is relatively low and can be accommodated in the existing program funds of participating agencies/organizations.

Also, a principle goal of the ASP Habitat Partnership is to elevate and broaden the resource base for use in protecting, restoring and enhancing wildlife habitat throughout the program area. We are committed to raising funds/resources through an array of channels that will ensure any deficits in funding for the long-term maintenance of these improvements are covered.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

Each specific proposed action is a necessary element in the restoration or enhancement of targeted habitats at each site. These actions include prescribed fire, woody encroachment removal, invasive species control, and establishment of native plants/habitats through seeding/planting. These restoration and enhancement activities will restore ecological function to these habitats and provide optimal habitat for game (e.g., turkey, deer, pheasant and waterfowl) and non-game species alike. Improved habitat will subsequently lead to healthier populations of these species.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **X** **YES** ☐ **NO**
If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

All proposed activities within this proposal will be conducted on public lands formally protected in fee title by the State of Minnesota or other government entities. The proposal encompasses 8 state Wildlife Management Areas, 5 state Scientific and Natural Areas, 2 County Parks, and 1 site maintained by the University of Minnesota.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

Great River Greening, the grant manager for these funds, has financial tracking systems in place to ensure transparency in how OHF dollars are allocated and used, and for documenting

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matching funds and in-kind contributions allocated to associated projects by respective partners over the duration of the project. These financial “books” are open and available for review. Great River Greening and each partner through which funding will flow have solid fiscal records.

Greening has a long history of managing grants of this scale. At one time, the organization was the largest recipient of LCCMR funds among nonprofits. It has successfully administered several LCCMR grants over the last decade.

The Partnership and its associated partners will publish results/outcomes of this program annually on their respective web sites. Furthermore, the Partnership is committed to establishing its own web presence and will deliver this information through that web site once it becomes live.

Finally, the Partnership and its associates will actively publicize its collective works and achievements through the web, media outlets and directly to local communities through myriad public presentations, volunteer events, educational venues and other means.

12. Why will this strategy work?

The strength of the proposal lies with the ASP Habitat Partnership and the diverse skill sets, expertise and resources of its committed partners. Each partner has a long-term demonstrable track record of achievement in conserving the natural resources of the ASP. Collectively, this expertise is deeper and the resources and skill sets each brings to the table can be used more efficiently, effectively, and with greater impact than each acting alone.

Across the Partnership there exists a broad cross-section of expertise, skill sets, and missions that reach to all corners of the conservation arena:

- Deep expertise in areas of protection, restoration and enhancement
- Strong science – both pure and applied
- Public and private partners
- Outreach to private landowners
- Sophisticated educational programs woven throughout partner curricula
- Strong volunteer programs
- Solid grant-writing and fundraising capabilities

As a Partnership, we acknowledge this habitat work has to be an ongoing effort, one that is far more integrated and collaborative than what has been done in the past. We will collaborate on projects, share resources and expertise, broaden the existing funding base for this work, and outreach to public/private partners and the local community in efficient and effective ways – all supported foundationally by a world class ecological research center. The ASP Habitat Partnership has already produced over 2000 hours of in kind time to form as a coalition and develop these projects. This same kind of energy will be the foundation to our new broad collaborative approach to managing public sites throughout the ASP. By supporting this proposal, the LSOHC will gain far more than the basic investment of wildlife habitat improvements on public lands; it will produce major lasting commitments on the part of local conservation managers to ensure the on-going collaborative nature of this Partnership.

Funding through the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) will be used to leverage further funding and in-kind support on all sites where we work. The Partnership will increase involvement by the

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public through the combining and integrating of the volunteer programs led by Great River Greening, SWCDs, municipalities and school districts, National Wild Turkey Federation, The Nature Conservancy, USFWS, MFRC, Isanti County Parks and others. These groups have wide recognition for volunteer development, yet to date there has not been a connecting and sharing of these programs to the degree needed. This project will embark on that next generation of collaboration.

All restoration and enhancement actions will be rooted in sound science and adaptive management. Already a hallmark of its partners, the Partnership is committed to using the most effective practices and restoration/management techniques and monitoring/evaluate results for the benefit of the broader conservation community. In collaboration with the University of Minnesota's Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve, we can ensure that our proposed actions are rooted in the best science.

Finally, through the ASP Habitat Partnership, this funding will spearhead the future investment for wildlife habitat on private lands through a systematic and ongoing public awareness process created and implemented by the Partnership.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

This proposal focuses squarely on the restoration and enhancement components of the conservation equation. As such, many of the potential obstacles commonly encountered during acquisition efforts are not an issue here. Rather, there is broad support for enhancing the management and restoration of existing public lands among neighbors, hunters and the outdoor recreation enthusiasts, and local communities.

The principle constraint affecting habitat management and restoration resources on existing public lands is availability of resources. State legislature in large part determines funding levels to state management agencies; DNR management determines in large part the priorities for expenditure of these limited resources. The solution to this obstacle is to both focus on the need for enhanced restoration and management actions (i.e., elevate its awareness) in the eyes of legislature and wildlife management agencies and to effectively grow those resources through other channels to maintain the public investment in these important lands. The ASP Habitat Partnership will work avidly to achieve both outcomes by: 1) building strong public awareness, participation, and support for restoration and management of our public wildlife lands, 2) creating a voice for public land managers through the Partnership and the public for restoration and management of our public wildlife lands, and 3) raising and efficiently using resources to elevate the management and restoration of our public wildlife lands.

As the Partnership moves into the protection arena next year and other challenges will arise, a slate of strategies will be developed to position those proposals for success. Each of those strategies above (among others) will be core to that effort.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition? NA

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

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15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement? NA

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? NA

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever? NA

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

_____ **100** _____ **Years**

This is all subjective. The need for this Partnership is immense and it will continue to operate as long as the need and value of the Partnership persists. At present, we do not see a short-term horizon for this Partnership.

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

_____ Northern Forest

___X___ Forest/Prairie Transition

_____ Southeast Forest

_____ Prairie

___X___ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

___X___ **YES**

_____ **NO**

If yes, please explain.

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Oak savanna systems are the single most imperiled habitat type in Minnesota. Although the ASP still maintains the best examples in the state of these habitats, remaining examples are severely threatened due to inadequate management, neglect, and conversion to other uses. The proximity of the ASP to the Twin Cities metro area places an additional level of urgency for action. Opportunities to undertake effective management (prescribed fire, etc.) and to broaden their current extent through restoration are increasingly limiting due to the rapidly expanding urban population.

Years of insufficient funding for restoration and management activities at local, state, and federal levels have often degraded habitats occurring on public lands, sometimes to the point of loss. With this degradation has come a corresponding decline in their value for wildlife and an increase in the resources required to bring these habitats back to their optimal state. These costs rise every year that management is delayed. The impact of this habitat degradation is a root cause in the decline of the majority of the 97 species occurring in the ASP now considered among Minnesota's Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

The ASP Habitat Partnership recognizes that a multi-pronged conservation approach of protection (fee simple and easement), restoration/enhancement of public and private lands, and education/outreach is required to significantly advance and build support for conservation of these imperiled habitats. In this proposal, we focus on the restoration and enhancement of public lands; as our Partnership matures, we will be adding a protection element to our proposals.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

 X YES

 NO

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

In total, 1064 acres will be restored and enhanced across 8 WMAs and 5 SNAs:

- Lamprey Pass WMA – 16 acres
- Carlos Avery WMA – 22 acres
- Becklin Homestead WMA – 25 acres
- Sand Prairie WMA – 159 acres
- Sartell WMA – 112 acres
- McDougal WMA – 54 acres
- Michaelson Farm WMA – 120 acres
- Rice Area Sportsman Club WMA – 192 acres
- Mississippi Islands SNA – 149 acres
- Uncas Dunes SNA – 70 acres
- Rice Lake SNA – 80 acres
- Harry W. Cater Homestead SNA – 15 acres
- Clear Lake SNA – 50 acres

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22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

 X YES

 NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

The ASP Habitat Partnership is well versed in these science-based strategic planning processes, with these being core to the Minnesota DNR, US Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy and Great River Greening, among others.

1. Biological Planning and Conservation Design – The Partnership has used existing priority-setting efforts and data sets to identify focal conservation targets and corresponding priorities for conservation efforts. Our focus on habitats identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey, Regional Ecologically-Significant Areas (RESA, as identified by the MN DNR, Central Region), and habitat corridors (as identified by the MN DNR RESA and Green Corridors) serves to define our conservation priorities. Additional information about prioritization and weightings can be found in Section C of this proposal.

2. Strategy Development and Conservation Delivery – To move conservation efforts forward in an effective and strategic way, the ASP Habitat Partnership will develop a broad and effective suite of conservation strategies that address protection, restoration and enhancement needs. At present, strategies are focused purely on the restoration and enhancement portions of the conservation equation, and are based on a full understanding of focal targets and threats to those targets as identified in through the planning and design phases.

3. Research, Evaluation and Monitoring – Evaluation of assumptions and assessment of the effectiveness of strategies to abate threats to focal conservation targets are at the heart of adaptive management. The Partnership is committed to understanding the effectiveness of its restoration and enhancement approaches by tapping the best restoration science available, sharing lessons and experiences throughout the Partnership (and broadly with others), and evaluating the success of these efforts through on-going monitoring. Our relationship with the University of Minnesota's Cedar Creek Ecosystem Sciences Reserve provides a unique opportunity to tap into and inform world-class research related to oak savanna systems.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Restoration and enhancement techniques used during the course of the program are based on the best science and will be tailored to the specific conditions of each site. The Partnership includes organizations/agencies with an array of seasoned professionals that collectively have over two centuries of expertise in the restoration and enhancement arena, with well developed connections to a rich array of additional expertise in the field. The ASP Habitat Partnership provides a forum for information sharing, vetting of proposed restoration/enhancement strategies, and implementing an effective, coordinated monitoring program to inform adaptive management and advance restoration science. Land managers are committed to monitor the results of these efforts over time.

Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve is a cornerstone of our restoration and enhancement efforts. The site is important both ecologically and as a long-term ecological research site,

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where research can tackle critical conservation issues of the ASP. The Partnership, which includes CCESR, will both benefit from the research occurring on CCESR (effects of prescribed fire, climate change, biomass energy) but also inform research that occurs at the site.

Cedar Creek ESR has been practicing prescribed burning since the 1960s, making it one of the longest ongoing scientific fire experiments in the world. Researchers at Cedar Creek study the effects of fire at individual, community, and ecosystem levels with the goal of maintaining the prairies and developing effective restoration methods for its oak savanna. The controlled settings available to researchers at CCESR are indispensable and not found elsewhere in the region, and it is therefore critical that this site receive the appropriate levels of restoration and management funding to maintain its integrity, both for its inherent wildlife and as a research site of importance.

24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

The Partnership uses existing priority-setting efforts that, in line with its goals, serve to highlight areas of greatest need for conservation action.

We have used MCBS Sites of Biodiversity Significance, Regionally Ecological Significant Areas, and Habitat Corridors (all developed by the MN DNR) to define priorities at the regional scale. Inherent within this priority-setting process are the following assumptions:

- Presence of MCBS quality ecological system(s) and/or concentration of SGCN/T&E species (weighted heavily) – indicators of the long-term viability of species/systems (habitat condition, size and landscape context) and conservation efficiency. Weighting = High;
- Size of habitat block or managed area – one indicator of long-term viability. Weighting = High;
- Occurrence within DNR mapped habitat corridors – an indicator of potential for restoring/conserving important habitat connectivity between protected areas. Weighting = Moderate;
- Public lands or private lands with long-term easements or other long-term commitments – a predictor of conservation success and security of investment. Weighting = Moderate;
- Multiple conservation benefits to both game and non-game species and other natural resources – an indicator of conservation efficiency. Weighting = Moderate;
- Immediacy of need/action as determined by Minnesota County Biological Survey and other sources – an indicator of conservation urgency. Weighting = High.;
- Ability to effectively manage lands over the long term through established groups – an indicator of conservation capability of potential partner. Weighting = Moderate.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

The actions highlighted by this proposal are prominently featured in the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan and an array of other published resource management plan, as detailed below:

Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan

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Oak savanna habitat is specifically detailed as a protection priority (as is prairie) in the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan (Habitat Recommendation 1). Habitat Recommendation 5 identifies restoration of land, water and wetland-associated watersheds as priorities for restoration. Since oak savanna was identified as a statewide protection priority, it naturally follows that it is a restoration priority as well, as is prairie. Habitat recommendation 9 identifies overall research on land and aquatic habitat as a priority need, emphasizing our relationship to Cedar Creek ESR as a critical element to that end.

Minnesota Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy

Oak savanna systems within the ASP were identified as a statewide conservation priority in *Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare: Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy* (An Action Plan for Minnesota Wildlife). Some 30 SGCN species are associated with oak savanna habitat in the ASP. The Action Plan identifies maintenance, enhancement and protection of oak savannas as the state's highest priority for the ASP ecological subsection.

Minnesota Forest Resources Council

The Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC), a state agency responsible for implementing the Minnesota Sustainable Forest Resources Act (SFRA) of 1995, serves as the chief advisors to the Governor and Legislature on sustainable forestry matters. In 2005, the MFRC approved the East Central Forest Resource Management Plan as developed by its East Central regional landscape committee. The plan envisions healthy and sustained forests across the region in an ecologically appropriate manner, and provides a framework of goal and strategies for four ECS subsections including the ASP. The Anoka Sand Plain Habitat Partnership project is supported by the East Central Committee as one of its pilot projects to promote sustainable forestry in the region.

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Priority actions identified by the LS-OHC for the Metropolitan Urbanizing Section to the 2010 Legislative session included prairie and oak savanna protection, enhancement and restoration as priorities, with emphasis on areas of high biological diversity. Emphasis was also placed on habitat corridors as priorities for protection.

In the Forest/Prairie Transition Section, recommendations included wetland/grassland complexes as critical habitat for game and non-game wildlife, along with protection, enhancement and restoration or rare native remnant prairies.

All of these are priorities for the ASP Habitat Partnership.

Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda

Restoration and enhancement of imperiled resources through conservation partnerships is captured as explicit goals of the Minnesota DNR in its Strategic Conservation Agenda (2009-2013):

Goals:

- A. Minnesota's natural lands and habitats will be conserved and enhanced
 - a. *Remaining natural ecosystems are conserved* - Healthy habitats are connected by natural corridors. Native prairies are protected, and grasslands and riparian forest are restored. We are responsible stewards of DNR-administered lands and good neighbors to adjacent landowners. Uncommon and rare habitats are protected.
 - b. *Degraded habitats are restored* - Grasslands and forests have been restored.

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- c. Natural resources thrive in the context of human influences. Urban and developing areas support a diversity of plant and animal communities and offer diverse recreational opportunities - Local decisions are supported by public-private partnerships, with DNR providing technical assistance and coordination.*
- B. Minnesota's fish and wildlife populations will be healthy and provide great recreation opportunities**
 - a. Fish and wildlife populations and the habitats that support them are healthy - Habitat types in jeopardy, such as prairies, wetlands, and shallow lakes, are restored. Endangered and threatened species are protected.*
 - b. Conservation partnerships and stewardship ethics are strong - Public- and private-sector partners work together to support Minnesota's resources and promote conservation.*

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	\$165,000	\$165,000	\$104,928
Contracts	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$82,170
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$12,287
Fee Acquisition	0	0	0
Easement Acquisition	0	0	0
Easement Stewardship	0	0	0
Professional Services	0	0	0
Travel	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$1,125
Project Admin & Reporting	\$11,780	\$11,780	\$11,780
TOTAL	\$612,780	\$612,780	\$200,003

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid (in whole or in part) by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
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Great River Greening

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<i>Project Manager - Ecologist</i>	<i>Various</i>	<i>\$82,838</i>
<i>Crew Manager</i>	<i>Michael Varian</i>	<i>\$34,403</i>
<i>Crew Technician (2 positions)</i>		<i>\$41,403</i>
<i>Dir. Conservation Prog</i>	<i>Wayne Ostlie</i>	<i>\$18,347</i>
<i>Volunteer Coordinator</i>	<i>Mark Turbak</i>	<i>\$ 1,903</i>
<i>Director of Finance</i>	<i>Greg Wenz</i>	<i>\$13,089</i>
<i>Budget Management</i>	<i>Deborah Gagner</i>	<i>\$ 6,545</i>

Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve

<i>Technicians (24 positions)</i>	<i>\$95,000</i>
<i>Field Restoration Specialist</i>	<i>\$60,000</i>

USFWS

<i>Forester</i>	<i>\$105,000</i>
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F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

<u>Source of Non-State Leverage</u>	<u>Fiscal Year 11</u>	<u>Fiscal Year 12</u>	<u>Fiscal Year 13</u>
Great River Greening	\$75,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
NWTF	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$ 5,000
USFWS	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000
Isanti County	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 8,000
Cedar Creek ESR	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$16,000
 <u>Source of State Leverage</u>			
MN DNR	\$ 18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000
Cedar Creek ESR	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
TOTAL	\$252,000	\$252,000	\$175,000

G. Outcomes:

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Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>0 acres</i>	<i>2628 acres</i>	<i>1030 acres</i>	<i>0 acres</i>
Protect	<i>0 acres</i>	<i>0 acres</i>	<i>0 acres</i>	<i>0 acres</i>
Enhance	<i>0 acres</i>	<i>117 acres</i>	<i>129 acres</i>	<i>0 acres</i>

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		<i>Metro Urbanizing Section (2419 acres); Prairie/Forest Transition (209 acres)</i>	<i>Metro Urbanizing Section (985 acres); Prairie/Forest Transition (45 acres)</i>	
Protect	<i>0 acres</i>	<i>0 acres</i>	<i>0 acres</i>	<i>0 acres</i>
Enhance	<i>0 acres</i>	<i>Metro Urbanizing Section (22 acres); Prairie/Forest Transition (95 acres)</i>	<i>Prairie/Forest Transition (129 acres)</i>	<i>0 acres</i>

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>0</i>	<i>\$1,016,385</i>	<i>\$ 146,921</i>	<i>0</i>
Protect	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
Enhance	<i>0</i>	<i>\$ 115,887</i>	<i>\$ 108,254</i>	<i>0</i>

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>0</i>	<i>\$583,000</i>	<i>\$ 33,000</i>	<i>0</i>
Protect	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
Enhance	<i>0</i>	<i>\$ 41,000</i>	<i>\$ 22,000</i>	<i>0</i>

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>

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Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
	0	0	0	0
Permanent Easement				
	0	0	0	0

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Restoration/enhancement actions fully completed	2010	3 sites (197 acres)
Restoration/enhancement actions fully completed	2011	3 sites (323 acres)
Restoration/enhancement actions fully completed	2012	11 sites (3384 acres)

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

Great River Greening

Operating budget = \$195,000 for general, administration, office, fees.
Program budget = \$784,500 for restoration and other program activities

Isanti County Parks

Operating Costs = \$95,000 for general, administration
Program Costs = \$112,000 for capital, management, maintenance

University of Minnesota, Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve

Comprehensive Operations & research/Education Program = \$1,000,000
Operations budget (only) = \$400,000 for admin, building & grounds, general overhead
Research/Education budget (only) = \$600,000 for plot upkeep, data collection, programs

Minnesota DNR - Lidell

Operating Budget (Local Office) = \$40,000-\$750,000 annually (not including acquisition). Our local budget for habitat work is quite variable.
Operating Budget = \$300,000-\$400,000 annually for salaries and operating budget for our office (which is involved in the habitat work directly)

MN DNR – Lueth

Operating budget = \$32,000

MN DNR (SNA Program)

General fund = \$536,000 (annual statewide allotment)
Invasive Management Fund = \$100,000 (annual statewide allotment)
Heritage Enhancement Fund = \$136,800 (annual statewide allotment)

Program Title: Restoring and Enhancing Wildlife Habitat on Key Public Lands across the Anoka Sand Plain through Collaborative Partnerships

Also:

Federal Funds = \$400,000 (allocated statewide over 3 years)

LCCMR funds = \$2,994,000 (allocated statewide over 3 years)

Bonding = \$5,484,000 (allocated statewide over 3 years)

USFWS

Operating budget = \$2,000,000 annually for all associated activities

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Management plans or briefs (if not already in place) will be developed for each site to guide and ensure effective long-term management. Land managers associated with sites included in this proposal have committed to the long-term maintenance of these habitat improvements in line with prescribed actions. Improvements will be maintained by specific land managers, contractors like MCC, and volunteers.

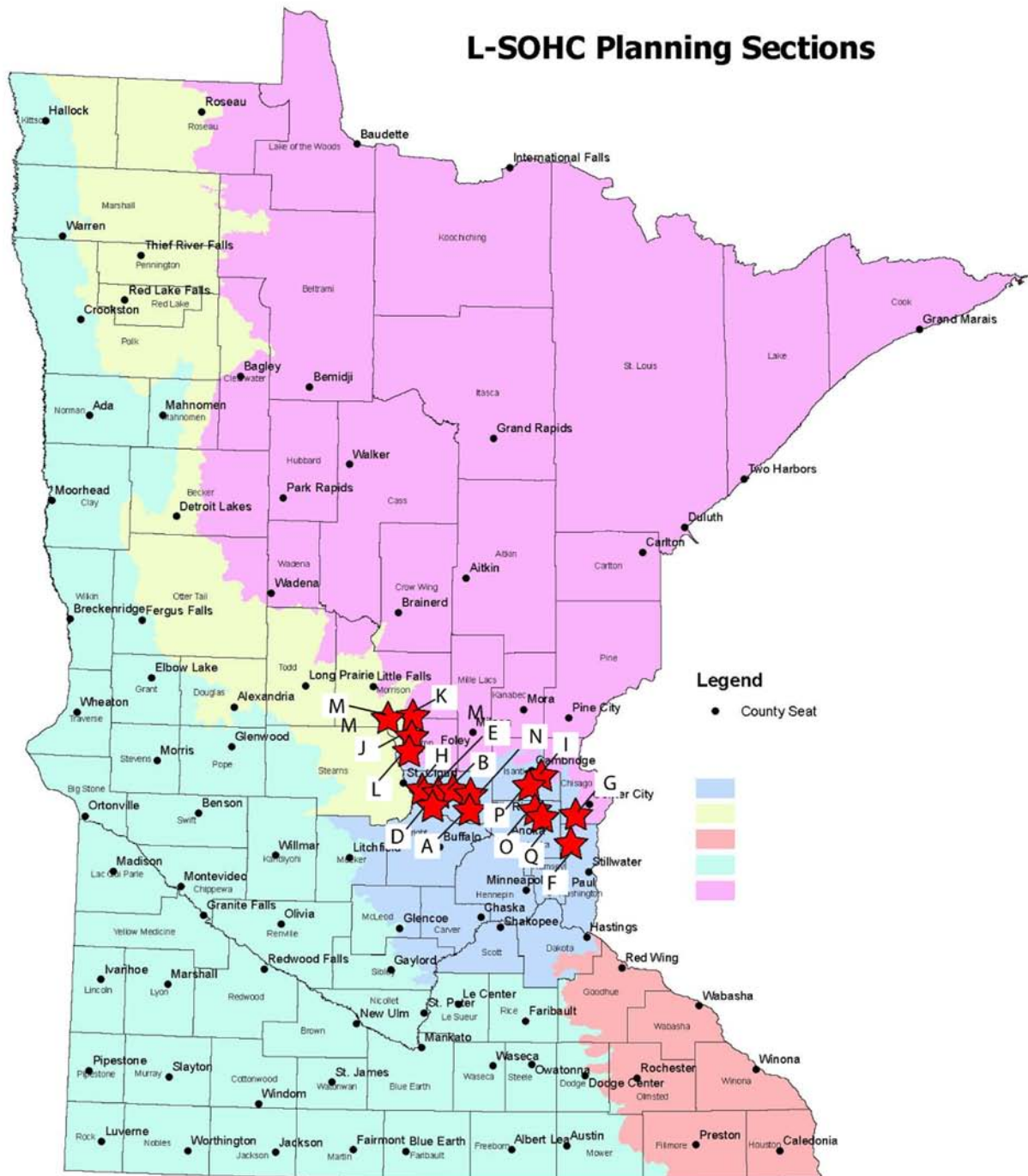
The ASP Habitat Partnership will work with land managers to identify and procure financial resources for maintaining these improvements, bring volunteers to bear, and otherwise assist in reducing the financial and capacity burden in the face of fiscal constraints.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Proposed Project Sites

- A.** Uncas Dunes SNA (Sherburne County)
- B.** Rice Lake SNA (Sherburne County)
- C.** Mississippi River Islands SNA (Sherburne County)
- D.** Clear Lake SNA (Sherburne County)
- E.** Harry W. Cater Homestead SNA (Sherburne County)
- F.** Lamprey Pass WMA (Anoka and Washington counties)
- G.** Carlos Avery WMA (Anoka and Chisago counties)
- H.** Sand Prairie WMA (Sherburne County)
- I.** Becklin Homestead WMA & County Park (Isanti County)
- J.** Sartell WMA (Benton County)
- K.** Rice Area Sportsman Club WMA (Morrison County)
- L.** Michaelson Farm WMA (Benton County)
- M.** McDougall WMA (Morrison County)
- N.** Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge (Sherburne County)
- O.** Anderson County Park (Isanti County)
- P.** Springvale County Park (Isanti County)
- Q.** Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve (Anoka & Isanti counties)

Program Title: Restoring and Enhancing Wildlife Habitat on Key Public Lands across the Anoka Sand Plain through Collaborative Partnerships



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: #30 Accelerated Forest Wildlife Habitat Program

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: Cynthia Osmundson
Title: Forest Wildlife Program Consultant
Division of Fish and Wildlife, DNR
Mailing Address: 500 Lafayette Rd, St. Paul, MN. 55155
Telephone: (651) 259-5190
Fax: (651) 297-4961
E-Mail: Cynthia.osmundson@state.mn.us
Web Site: dnr.state.mn.us

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Forest Habitat Enhancement and Restoration	7,180			
Div. of Forestry Lands	4,161			
Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs)	1,719			
Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs)	1,300			
Forest Habitat Acquisition	10,343	4,960	8,000	8,000
Outdoor Heritage Fund Totals	17,523			

A. Summary

Our program will increase populations of a variety of game and non-game wildlife species by protecting, restoring, and enhancing forest vegetation (habitats) on which wildlife depends. This program of on-the-ground forest conservation projects will amplify the wildlife value of forest communities on Department of Natural Resources (DNR) administered forestlands.

Our forest restoration and enhancement management will treat 27,060 ac during this funding cycle. These activities are not conducted as part of the DNR's commercial timber operations. Additionally, our program will acquire 2,219 ac of forestland that contributes to habitat complexes and other high priorities. Acquisitions focus on forestland for public hunting, and compatible outdoor uses consistent with the Outdoor

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Recreation Act (M.S. 86A.05). Projects included in this program are beyond what we are currently able to accomplish.

Our program will enhance oak and create a mix of young hardwood forest with more open meadow/brush lands to benefit grouse, elk, and deer. Enhancement of conifer stands and mixed hardwood/conifer forests will provide habitat for fisher and marten, and thermal cover for deer and moose. Forest opening creation/enhancement will increase nut and berry production, provide roosting/display areas, and create feeding areas for moose, deer, ruffed grouse, woodcock, and bear. Shearing of trees and brush in large open landscape priority areas will benefit sharp-tailed grouse. Shearing and mowing of hardwoods and brush in smaller patches will benefit woodcock and deer.

Our program will benefit a number of nongame species, including yellow rails, sandhill cranes, northern harriers, bobolinks, and upland sandpipers. Activities that create/enhance forest openings will provide habitat for nongame species, including least chipmunks, northern flickers, cooper's hawks, and song sparrows. The less intensive timber management in our program will help protect rare native plant communities and a number of nongame species through retention and enhancement of plant species diversity and structure.

To facilitate broad learning and adaptive management, we will conduct a science-based assessment of outcomes and share the results with other forestland managers.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Forests face a formidable array of challenges: fragmentation, invasive species, climate change, disease, and changes in forest-based economics and recreation. While Minnesota's 16.2 million ac of forest are diverse, the acreage and composition of forests have changed significantly. The forest acreage is about half of what it was (31.5 million ac) in the mid 1800s.

Just over half of the forestland in Minnesota is publicly owned; the State of Minnesota administers about 24%. Minnesota's forests help maintain the state's environmental and economic health. They are habitat for fish and wildlife, and a source of biodiversity, clean water, watershed protection, carbon sequestration, recreational opportunities, and many other benefits.

Habitat loss and degradation are identified as the primary challenge facing wildlife. Almost one-third of the state's 292 Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) inhabit forests. The management objectives in this program parallel the forest management options outlined in *Minnesota's State Wildlife Action Plan, Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare (Tomorrow's Habitat Plan)*. Implementation of these objectives in key habitats identified in the *Plan* will maintain and enhance native forest communities supporting game and non-

game wildlife populations. *Tomorrow's Habitat Plan* also calls for the purchase and protection of key habitats as another tool to address the conservation needs of these species.

Protecting forests threatened by fragmentation or development provide important opportunities for collaborative conservation of larger scale areas of habitat. Restoration of newly acquired state forestlands is essential to assure that sites in state ownership are improved to increase or retain their value as wildlife habitat.

The availability of public hunting lands does not meet the expectations of a growing Minnesota population. Due to the current recession, land prices have stabilized or declined and a short-term opportunity exists to purchase more value for our expenditures.

2. What action will be taken?

Restoration and enhancement activities on 27,060 ac of state forestland will include: prescribed burning; mowing or shearing of woody vegetation; planting, seeding or encouraging natural regeneration; selective cutting and thinning; seedling protection measures; herbicide treatments; and others.

These activities are not conducted as part of the Department's commercial timber operations, and are in addition to what is already being undertaken.

To acquire 2,219 ac of forestland, the DNR will follow established land acquisition procedures and if successful in acquiring will then develop an "Initial Development Plan" (IDP) to be funded with this program to make the new parcel fully functional within the first two years of acquisition. The IDP will include boundary surveys and signage, user access and parking facilities, well and septic closure, building and dump disposal, restoration of shallow temporary and seasonal wetlands, and cover bare ground with native vegetation.

3. Who will take action and when?

DNR staff will administer the program, engage contractors to conduct field work, and supervise activities in the field to assure effectiveness. Implementation and assessment will use a combination of DNR staff and contracted services.

By far, most of the enhancement and restoration projects in our program will be accomplished through contracts with private vendors. A new unclassified and temporary position is needed to administer contracts, outline work projects, monitor activities, and assist in the field.

A small percentage of the more specialized forest enhancement work (such as hand release to promote a desirable forest stand conversion) will be done by a DNR roving labor crew (6 people with a crew leader), with approximately 25% of

the crews time spent on forest enhancement activities. The remainder of this crew's time will be spent on other Outdoor Heritage funded programs with DNR (primarily grassland prescribed burning and other grassland management).

Safely conducting prescribed burns in forests requires training, expertise, and experience that is not available in the private sector. Personnel funds under "Burn Crew" will be used to pay for available DNR staff, trained for wildfire duty, to assist with prescribed forest burns.

Staff funding for the SNA program is for classified and unclassified SNA program & other DNR staff paid almost exclusively with special project funds. It includes portions of the following types of staff: contract and project management coordinator (new position being created in relation to special project funding being received); acquisition specialist (who works with landowners, management staff, and Lands and Minerals staff to facilitate each acquisition project); and Region-based crews and field staff (specialists, technicians, laborers, and seasonal burn crews) responsible for implementing projects.

The acquisition projects and associated transactions will be completed by DNR staff and in some cases third party negotiators (e.g. the Trust for Public Land). The DNR is currently in an ongoing process to identify potential willing sellers for acquisitions.

Accelerating forestland acquisition will require additional temporary staff.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

DNR will consult and coordinate with partners to ensure appropriate allocation of other available funding sources to accomplish forest wildlife habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Restoration and enhancement activities will perpetuate native forest communities, increase their value as habitat for game and non-game wildlife, and ensure the role of forest communities in providing ecological services. Planned treatments will change habitat in one or more of the following manners:

1. increase the abundance of desirable tree species (red oak, burr oak, white pine, jack pine, white spruce, white cedar, birch);
2. diversify forest stand age structure;
3. ensure that snags, ephemeral ponds, downed woody debris, and other key habitat features are retained;
4. maintain or increase the size of large forest patches;
5. maintain a brush/open component within forested landscapes;

6. provide for the specific habitat needs of rare species (goshawk, wood turtle, etc.);
7. control invasive species; and
8. perpetuate under represented native forest communities to increase diversity across the forest landscape.

The protection of 2,219 ac ensures that lands will not be fragmented or developed, and lost as wildlife habitat. A primary emphasis will be on completing and expanding existing Units and other habitat complexes. Large blocks of wildlife lands provide a wider range of management options, habitat diversity, and wildlife use. Each parcel will be developed to enhance the native habitat characteristics appropriate for the location, and provide for hunting and fishing recreation.

6. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

 X YES

 NO

7. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

DNR managers will monitor project sites and take any necessary actions to sustain the habitat improvements as part of their public land management responsibilities. Periodic enhancements (beyond routine management) will be accomplished through annual funding requests from a variety of funding sources, including Game and Fish Fund, Bonding, Gifts, Federal Sources, Environmental Trust, and Outdoor Heritage Fund.

8. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

Forestlands will be protected, restored and enhanced: 27,060 ac restored and enhanced, and 2,219 ac protected by fee title acquisition. These forestlands function as core of habitat complexes that represent the wide range of unique habitat types will form the nucleus of landscape level habitat management focused in the most productive areas for wildlife. Our program will enhance oak and create a mix of young hardwood forest with more open meadow/brush lands to benefit grouse, elk, and deer. Enhancement of conifer stands and mixed hardwood/conifer forests will provide habitat for fisher and marten, and thermal cover for deer and moose. Forest opening creation/enhancement will increase nut and berry production, provide roosting/display areas, and create feeding areas for moose, deer, ruffed grouse, woodcock, and bear. Shearing of trees and brush in large open landscape priority areas will benefit sharp-tailed grouse. Shearing and mowing of hardwoods and brush in smaller patches will benefit woodcock and deer.

Our program will benefit a number of nongame species, including yellow rails, sandhill cranes, northern harriers, bobolinks, and upland sandpipers. Activities that create/enhance forest openings will provide habitat for nongame species, including least chipmunks, northern flickers, cooper's hawks, and song sparrows. The less intensive timber management in our program will help protect rare native plant communities and a number of nongame species through retention and enhancement of plant species diversity and structure.

9. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

 X YES

 NO

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Enhancement activities are planned for state lands. Restoration is necessary on some newly acquired forestlands.

10. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

DNR, as a state agency, is subject to intense scrutiny and operates under well established fiscal laws, rules and policies subject to regular fiscal audits. DNR is also subject to data practices policies that make appropriate information available upon request. DNR will provide all reports, updates and progress reports as requested by the L-SOHC and the Legislature. In addition, we will take every opportunity to facilitate broad learning and adaptive management by assessing the effectiveness of our activities and disseminating the results.

11. When do you expect to see these changes?

Many habitat management activities (such as invasive species control and prescribed burning) will result in immediate improvements. Restoration work (plant community reconstruction) will take 1-3 years for new plantings to be established and improvements to habitat to be realized. Acquisition of land typically takes up to one year to complete. Upon approval of funding through the Legislature, the DNR will begin appraisals to acquire approximately half of the project acquisition goal in year one and half in year two. Delays in acquisition and management due to unforeseen difficulties (e.g. weather) may require completion of work in future fiscal years.

12. Why will this strategy work?

This program builds on the best available science from the fields of wildlife management, ecological silviculture, and systems restoration. Success has been

demonstrated through decades of sound wildlife and land management by DNR. All acquisition is for permanent protection held and managed by the state.

Protection, development and enhancement of public lands as core elements in a diverse network of habitat complexes will provide permanent population banks from which wildlife and plant communities can expand into the surrounding landscape during optimum environmental conditions. These networks will provide migration corridors for movement of both animal and plant communities in response to changing conditions. Strategically located, these complexes will provide many tangential benefits including water quality improvements, seed sources, and local economic diversity. This strategy will focus on completing and expanding complexes with some existing public ownership, identifying new target complexes, and focusing on unique priority lands.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

As appropriate, management will be coordinated across multiple ownerships to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Partners in this coordination may include the Minnesota Forest Resources Council and other public and private forest landowners.

All fee title purchased lands must be approved by resolution of the County Boards of Commissioners.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

 X YES NO

Minnesota law requires county board approval before we can acquire a parcel of land in fee. These regulations control the timing of our request for approval.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

 X YES NO

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? If so what kind of use?

Not an easement

17.If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easements as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

Not an easement

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

18.If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

Indefinite **Years**

This program is ongoing as opportunity and needs arise.

19.Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

___ X ___ Northern Forest

___ X ___ Forest/Prairie Transition

___ X ___ Southeast Forest

___ X ___ Prairie

___ X ___ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20.Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

___ X ___ **YES**

_____ **NO**

If yes, please explain.

As habitat is lost, we also lose the opportunity to maintain wildlife populations. Without active management, the capacity of forest stands to provide wildlife habitat and other ecological services is diminished. On-going enhancement activities like those proposed here are much more effective and less expensive than restoring or rebuilding ecological communities.

Dedicated funding for the next 24 years provides a unique opportunity for the current generation to build a foundation of publicly owned wildlife habitat and hunting lands that will provide unparalleled opportunity and access for future generations of hunters and outdoor users. In the short-term, land markets are depressed along with the general economy and speculative development pressures have temporarily eased. This will provide a short-term opportunity to extend the state's acquisition buying power. In the long-term, steadily rising land

costs, increasing urban development from population expansion, and conversion of existing native habitats to other land uses such as agriculture make protection and restoration of remaining native habitats urgent.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

 X YES

 NO

If Yes, list the names of the WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

Protection, restoration, and enhancement on state lands, including WMAs, SNAs, State Forests, and Division of Forestry managed state lands. See the attached map.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

 YES

 X NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

Our program is one of several that implements the DNR's Subsection Forest Resource Management Plans (SFRMPs). These are long-term (50 plus years) plans with short-term (10 years) vegetation management directions. SFRMPs are based on scientific principles inherent in the Ecological Classification System. The Plans articulate the mix of ecological and social values and economic products that will be sustained through forest management. A small percentage of projects in our program are geographically outside the range of an SFRMP. In these instances, management is consistent with the sustainability principles evident in the SFRMPs.

Many of the project locations in this request have been identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS) and evaluated on their native plant quality and biological significance. The DNR does not use a single planning and evaluation model in our acquisition priority setting process but rather assesses each parcel individually and in context to other existing and proposed public land. We also rely on direction provided by the Citizens Advisory Committee report to identify existing levels of wildlife land protection and established goals for additional protection in both the short-term and long-term.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Our program will protect, restore, and enhance forest communities that are habitat for forest wildlife and help stem the habitat loss and degradation that is

the predominant challenge facing the state's SCGN. DNR's ecologically-based silviculture approach to forest management uses native plant community information to prescribe and support stand-level management. As a result, stand-level treatments take into account natural disturbance regimes, dynamics, growth stages, tree behaviors, and seasonal operability.

Acquisition and sound ecological management of lands focused within habitat complexes has proven to provide optimum wildlife habitat benefits by targeting these efforts in areas that can build on remnant or existing wildlife populations and habitats. Large blocks of habitat provide diversity within the complex and begin to function as an integrated sustainable community.

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

We set forest management objectives and priorities through the SFRMP process, a multidisciplinary goal-setting exercise that incorporates public input. While many SFRMP objectives can be achieved at little additional cost through commercial timber harvest, others require funding (examples – prescribed burning, release of oak, etc.). Where SFRMPs are not geographically applicable, priorities are set by Department guidance.

Some acquisitions targets native forest sites of outstanding and high biodiversity significance identified by the MCBS program. Sites are identified by MCBS as priorities for protection because they contain rare and endangered plant and animal species, undisturbed plant communities, and key habitats for SCGN identified in *Tomorrow's Habitat Plan*.

Building habitat complexes will be an overarching priority of acquisitions of forestland. Individual parcels will be evaluated according to criteria consistent with the Citizens Advisory Committee on WMA acquisitions (2002 Report *Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition – The Next 50 Years*, ([://files.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/reports/strategic-documents/wmaacquisition50year.pdf](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/reports/strategic-documents/wmaacquisition50year.pdf))).

These activities are not conducted as part of the Department's commercial timber operations, and are in addition to what is already being undertaken.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

The *Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan* identifies habitat loss and degradation as the number one driver of change for wildlife in Minnesota. The *Plan* addresses key issues of land and habitat fragmentation, degradation, loss and conversion, and land use practices. Recommended key strategies to positively impact habitat include: integrated planning, land and water restoration and protection, and

sustainable practices. Our program addresses these key issues and incorporates many of the key strategies.

The *State Wildlife Actions Plan, Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild & Rare*, calls for focused efforts to address the conservation needs of rare game and nongame wildlife species. Habitat loss and degradation are identified as the primary challenge facing wildlife. Almost one-third of the state's 292 Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) inhabit forests. The management objectives in our program parallel the forest management options outlined in *Tomorrow's Habitat Plan*. Implementation of these objective in key habitats identified in the *Plan* will maintain and enhance native forest communities supporting game and non-game wildlife populations. *Tomorrow's Habitat Plan* also calls for the purchase and protection of key habitats as another tool to address the conservation needs of these species.

Citizens report Minnesota's *Wildlife Management Area Acquisition – The Next 50 Years* recommends acquisition goals of an additional 702,200 ac of WMAs s over the next 50 years. Our program helps meet these goals.

Our program helps meet the *DNR Scientific and Natural Area Long Range Plan*.

Our program makes significant progress towards accomplishing goals of the multiple DNR landscape level forest management plans (*Subsection Forest Resources Management Plans*) ([://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/subsection/index](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/subsection/index).)

Our program directly achieves the DNR's *Strategic Conservation Agenda 2009-2013* indicators and targets under Integrated Public & Private Land Management.

Appendix J (Sensitive Native Plant Communities) of The *MN Forest Resources Council's Voluntary Site-Level Forest Management Guidelines for Landowners, Loggers, and Resource Managers* lists Sensitive Native Plant Communities. Our program works in at least 12 of the 40 listed communities.

Our program implements the goals of the *DNR A Vision for Wildlife and Its Use - Goals and Outcomes, 2006-2012* (FAW core functions, MN Statute 84.941): wildlife resource goals, population and habitat strategies, brushlands and prescribed burning, Ecological Subsection regional challenges.

Our program meets the goals of several MN Forest Resources Council landscape plans ([://www.frc.state.mn.us/Landscp/Landscape](http://www.frc.state.mn.us/Landscp/Landscape).)

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	402,065	402,065	116,665
Contracts	2,157,653	3,243,977	
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	275,750	280,750	120,000
Fee Acquisition	5,346,250	4,246,250	293,760
Easement Acquisition	0	0	
Easement Stewardship	0	0	
Professional Services*	276,439	232,439	85,259
Travel	18,400	20,800	4,800
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$8,476,557	\$8,426,281	\$620,484

*Professional services includes contracted costs for shared services activities including DNR Office of Management and Budget Services, Human Resources, Management Resources and Information & Education base level services.

Works (and spending) for FY11 & 12 enhancement and restoration activities may continue into a third year (FY13) in order to complete projects. Project completion is dependent on weather and availability of plant material. Some acquisitions will take three years to complete. Restoration and enhancement of lands acquired later in the funding cycle will be completed in the third year.

E. Personnel Details

Title	Amount
<u>WMA Acquisition & Non-SNA Restoration & Enhancement</u>	
Contract & Project Management, 1 FTE (3 years)	\$165,000
Land Acquisition Specialist, 0.25 FTE (3 years)	41,250
Burn Crew, 1.5 FTE (2 years)	56,800
(6 people part-time for a total of 1.5 FTE)	
Crew Leader, 0.25 FTE (3 years)	32,499
Crew – Laborers, 1.125 FTE (3 years)	111,246
(6 people part-time for a total of 1.125 FTE)	

By far, most of the enhancement and restoration projects in our program will be accomplished through contracts with private vendors. A new unclassified and temporary position is needed to administer contracts, outline work projects, monitor activities, and assist in the field. A quarter-time acquisition specialist is needed to guide fee purchases through the acquisition process.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

A small percentage of the more specialized forest enhancement work (such as hand release to promote a desirable forest stand conversion) will be done by a DNR roving labor crew (6 people with a crew leader), with approximately 25% of the crews time spent on forest enhancement activities. The remainder of this crew's time will be spent on other Outdoor Heritage funded programs with DNR (primarily grassland prescribed burning and other grassland management).

Safely conducting prescribed burns in forests requires training, expertise, and experience that is not available in the private sector. Personnel funds under "Burn Crew" will be used to pay for available DNR staff, trained for wildfire duty, to assist with prescribed forest burns.

Title	Amount
<u>SNA Acquisition, Restoration & Enhancement</u>	
Contract & Project Management, 0.25 FTE (2 years)	\$ 45,000
Specialists & Technicians, 2.75 FTE (2 years)	385,000
Laborers & Seasonal Crews, 1.4 FTE (2 years)	84,000

Staff funding for the SNA program is for classified and unclassified SNA program & other DNR staff paid almost exclusively with special project funds. It includes portions of the following types of staff: contract and project management coordinator (new position being created in relation to special project funding being received); acquisition specialist (who works with landowners, management staff, and Lands and Minerals staff to facilitate each acquisition project); and Region-based crews and field staff (specialists, technicians, laborers, and seasonal burn crews) responsible for implementing projects.

F. All Leverage

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Wildlife Management Institute	30,000		
Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (P-R)	631,086	631,086	
Federal Grant for State Wildlife	25,000	25,000	
DNR in-kind Staff Time	150,000	150,000	
TOTAL	836,086	806,086	

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

G. Outcomes:

Table 1 Accomplish -ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore			1109 ac	
Protect			2219 ac	
Enhance			27,060 ac	

Table 2	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Northern Forests				
Restore			432 ac	
Protect			865 ac	
Enhance			20,980 ac	
Transition				
Restore			305 ac	
Protect			610 ac	
Enhance			4490 ac	
Southeast Forests				
Restore			122 ac	
Protect			144 ac	
Enhance			781 ac	
Prairie				
Restore			50 ac	
Protect			100 ac	
Enhance			70 ac	
Metro				
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance			159 ac	

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Table 3				
Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore			\$388,000	
Protect			10,343,000	
Enhance			6,792,000	

Table 4				
Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore			\$200,000	
Protect				
Enhance			1,172,172	

Table 5				
Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability			2,057	
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability			100	
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table

Milestone	Date	Measure
Forest acquired in fee	6/30/11	890 ac
Restoration & enhancement assessment	6/30/11	890 ac
Forest restoration &enhancement projects completed	6/30/11	10,824 ac
Forest acquired in fee	6/30/12	1,329 ac
Restoration & enhancement assessment	6/30/12	1,329 ac
Forest restoration & enhancement project completed	6/30/12	15,306 ac
Forest restoration & enhancement project completed	6/30/13	930 ac

Works (and spending) for FY11 & 12 enhancement and restoration activities may continue into a third year (FY13) in order to complete projects. Project completion is dependent on weather and availability of plant material. Some acquisitions will take three years to complete. Restoration and enhancement of lands acquired later in the funding cycle will be completed in the third year.

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

FY2009 expenditures:

DNR	\$350 mil
Division of Fish & Wildlife	\$92.6 mil
Division of Forestry	\$65.7 mil
Division of Ecological Resources	\$25.8 mil

Our program \$17.5 mil

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

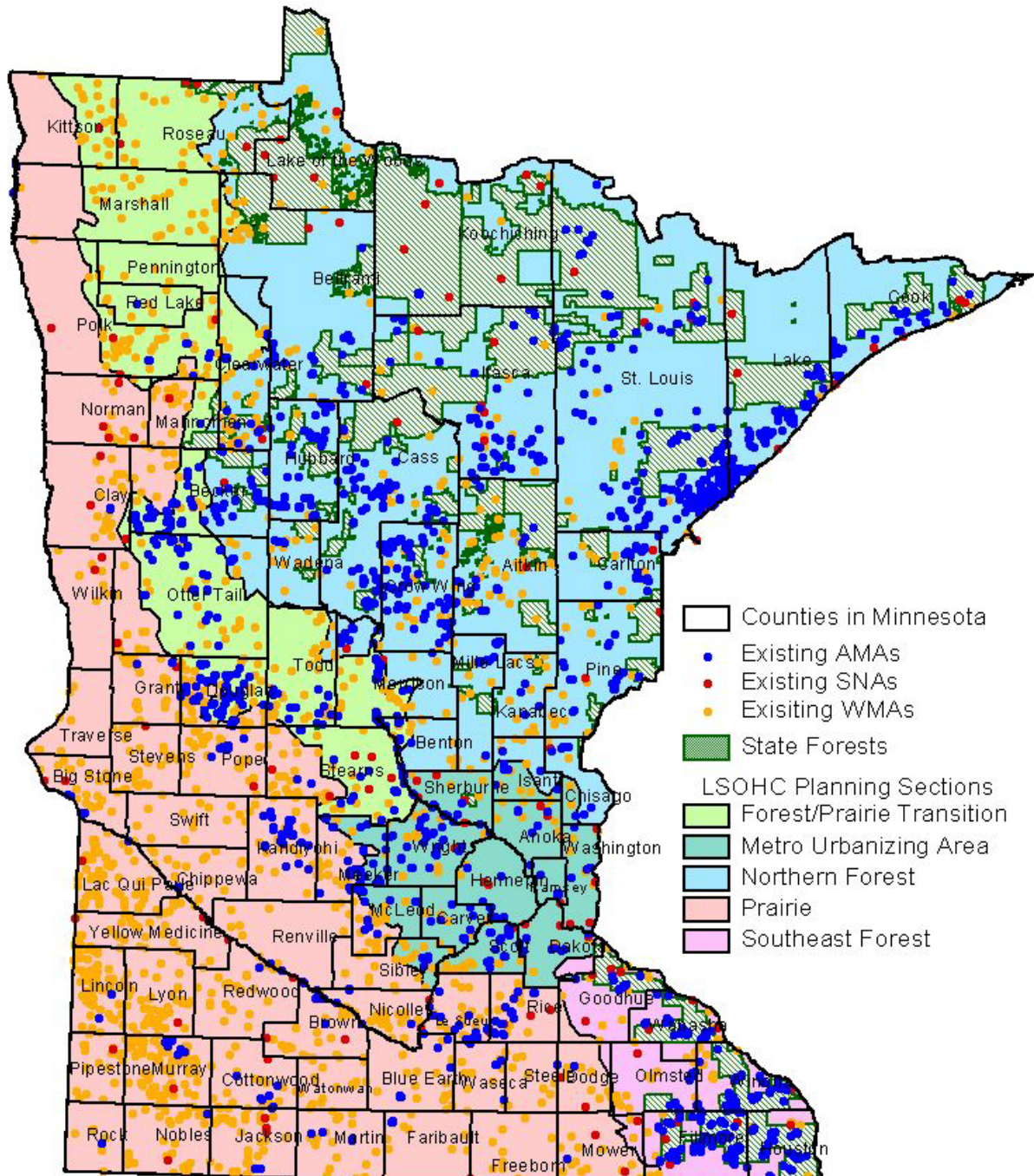
All sites funded through this proposal are or will be state lands, and are part of the state outdoor recreation system. Ongoing maintenance will be accomplished through routine management activities accomplished by our network of DNR offices. Periodic enhancements will be accomplished by existing staff, MCC crews, temporary project staffing or through vendor contract using traditional habitat project funding, bonding, and future requests for funding from dedicated funding sources.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Enhancement projects are on existing state lands (map attached). Our current list of acquisition sites is a "moment in time" list of potential acquisitions that cannot represent all possible opportunities that will arise during this program period. Restoration is on newly acquired lands. Projects, by county, are attached.

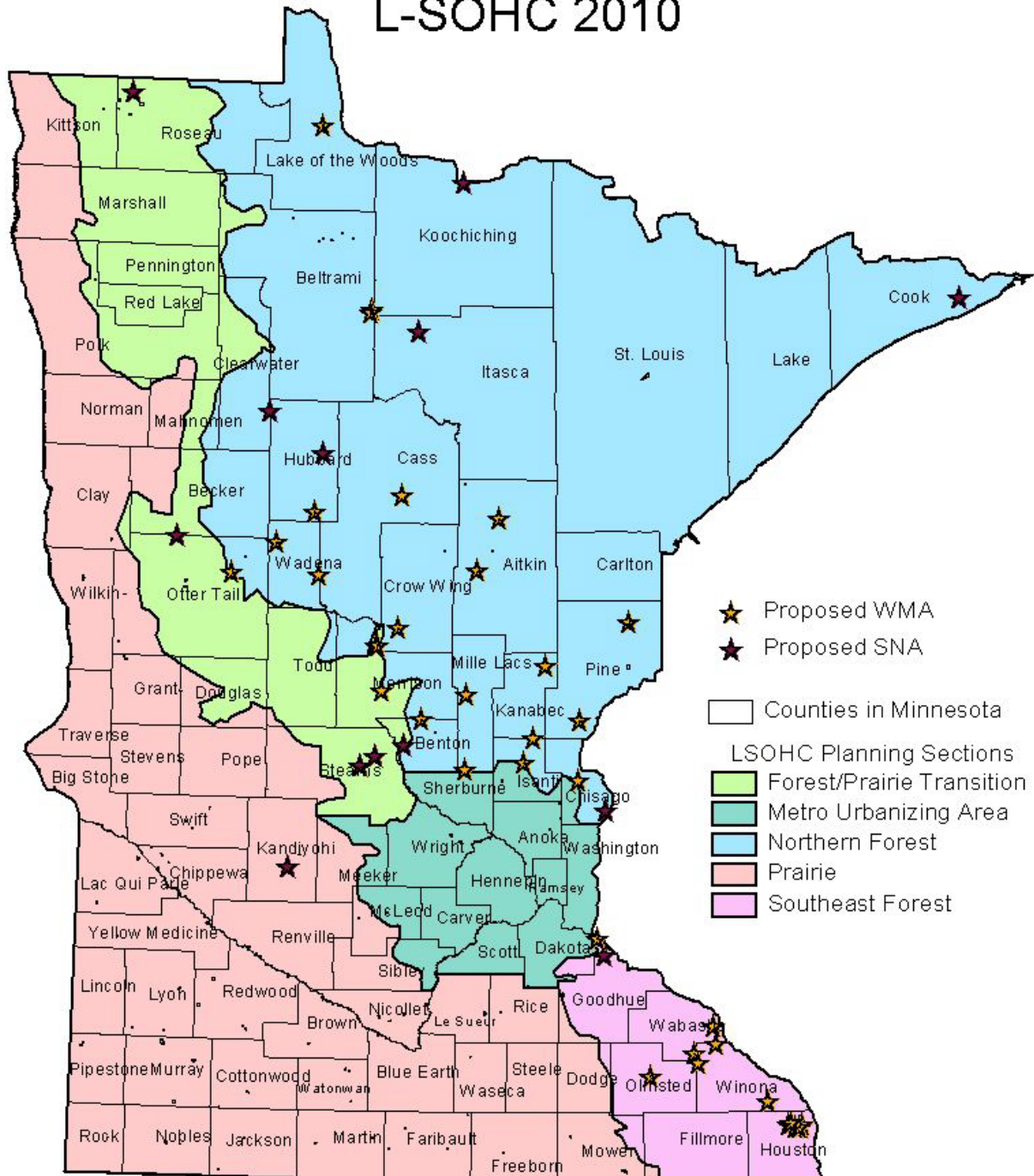
L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Existing Acquisition



10/29/09

Accelerated Forest Wildlife Habitat Program Proposed Forestland Acquisitions L-SOHC 2010



10/29/09

Administrative Unit	County	Acres
Pine Bend Bluffs SNA	Dakota	35
Wood-Rill SNA	Hennepin	80
Manitou Collaborative - AFMP		90
Sandstone Forestry - St. Croix State Forest	Pine	42
Sandstone Forestry - Chengwatana State Forest	Pine	60
Sandstone Forestry - Chengwatana & General Andrews State Forest	Pine	150
Sandstone Forestry - Nemadji State Forest	Pine	100
Sandstone Forestry - Nemadji State Forest	Pine	100
Sandstone Forestry - St. Croix State Forest	Pine	14
Sandstone Forestry - St. Croix State Forest	Pine	35
Sandstone Forestry - State Forest Land	Kanabec	150
Aitkin Forestry Area	Aitkin	60
Badoura State Forest Hubbard County tax forfeiture land: DNR Wildlife Park Rapids	Hubbard	160
Baudette Wildlife Work Area		533
Baudette Wildlife Work Area		200
Beltrami Island State Forest	Beltrami	300
Beltrami Island State Forest	Beltrami	400
Bemidji, Park Rapids, and Brainerd forestry areas		100
Blackduck Forestry Area	St. Louis	30
Brainerd Forestry Area		177
Cloquet Area Forestry	St. Louis	90
Deer River Area Forestry	Cass	8
Deer River Area Forestry	Itasca	14
Deer River Area Forestry	Itasca	5
Deer River Area Forestry	Itasca	15
Deer River Area Forestry	Itasca	23
Deer River Area Forestry	Itasca	30
Deer River Area Forestry	Itasca	60
Deer River Area Forestry (Adaptive Forest Management Area)	Itasca	60
Four Brooks WMA	Mille Lacs	25
Four Brooks WMA	Mille Lacs	25
Four Brooks WMA	Mille Lacs	250
Franconia Bluffs SNA	Chisago	15
Henry O. Bjoring WMA	Beltrami	18

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Hill River, Savanna, Waukenabo SF	Aitkin	3660
Hill River, Savanna, Waukenabo, Solana, Wealthwood SF	Aitkin	260
Hill River, Waukenabo SF	Aitkin	100
Leech Lake Open Lands: DNR Wildlife Park Rapids	Cass	200
Littlefork Forestry Area	Koochiching	50
Littlefork Forestry Area	Koochiching	46
Littlefork Forestry Area	Koochiching	142
Lost Forty SNA	Itasca	12
Mallard Lake WMA	Aitkin	130
Menahga WMA (FIM Stand 100): DNR Wildlife Park Rapids	Wadena	10
Mille Lacs WMA	Mille Lacs	30
Mille Lacs WMA	Mille Lacs	100
Mille Lacs WMA	Mille Lacs	100
Moose Mountain SNA	St. Louis	160
Moose Willow WMA	Aitkin	50
Newstrom Lake WMA	Aitkin	65
Orr Forestry Area	Aitkin	60
Orr Forestry Area	St. Louis	130
Sax-Zim WMA	Aitkin	300
Solana SF	Aitkin	50
Solana, Wealthwood SF	Aitkin	2690
State forest- patch		150
State Forest/Moose	NE Counties	500
TH Area - Moose/State Forest	Cook	70
TH Area - StTrFnd		100
TH Area - StTrFnd	St. Louis	75
TH Area - StTrFnd	St. Louis	50
TH Area - StTrFnd & CoTxFor	Lake	20
TH Area - StTrFnd & CoTxFor	Lake	20
Tower Forestry Area	Lake	15
Tower Forestry Area	St. Louis	10
Tower Forestry Area	St. Louis	15
Tower Forestry Area	St. Louis	30
Tower Forestry Area	St. Louis	46
Tower Forestry Area	St. Louis	25
Tower Forestry Area	St. Louis	52
Two Harbors Forestry Area	Lake	60

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Yaeger Lake WMA (FIM Stand 79): DNR Wildlife Park Rapids	Wadena	25
Ramsey Mill Pond WMA	Mower	50
Vorce WMA	Dodge	20
Cannon R Turtle Preserve SNA	Goodhue	45
Cherry Grove Blind Valley SNA	Fillmore	30
Prairie Creek Woods SNA	Rice	20
Root River WMA	Houston	47
Whitewater WMA	Winona	209
Whitewater WMA	Winona	350
Hubbel Pond WMA	Becker	5
Hubbel Pond WMA	Becker	25
Lake Alexander Woods SNA	Morrison	10
Pickrel WMA	Becker	25
Roseau River and Roseau Lake WMA's	Roseau	1200
Roseau River WMA	Roseau	2000
Thief Lake Wildlife Work Area		1200
Hill River State Forest	Aitkin	258
Savanna State Forest	Aitkin	410
Solana State Forest	Aitkin	229
Wealthwood State Forest	Aitkin	88
Smoky Hills State Forest	Becker	222
Buena Vista State Forest	Beltrami	88
Red Lake State Forest	Beltrami	11
Fond Du Lac State Forest	Carlton	153
Nemadji State Forest	Carlton	285
Battleground State Forest	Cass	112
Bowstring State Forest	Cass	90
Foot Hills State Forest	Cass	54
Land O'Lakes State Forest	Cass	64
Pillsbury State Forest	Cass	100
Mississippi Headwaters State Forest	Clearwater	29
White Earth State Forest	Clearwater	685
Grand Portage State Forest	Cook	38
Pat Bayle State Forest	Cook	24
Crow Wing State Forest	Crow Wing	20
R J D Memorial Hardwood State Forest	Fillmore	122
R J D Memorial Hardwood State Forest	Goodhue	322
R J D Memorial Hardwood State Forest	Houston	391
Paul Bunyan State Forest	Hubbard	139

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Blackduck State Forest	Itasca	23
Bowstring State Forest	Itasca	91
George Washington State Forest	Itasca	139
Rum River State Forest	Kanabec	18
Snake River State Forest	Kanabec	25
Koochiching State Forest	Koochiching	65
Pine Island State Forest	Koochiching	9
Bear Island State Forest	Lake	40
Finland State Forest	Lake	620
White Earth State Forest	Mahnomen	363
Rum River State Forest	Mille Lacs	228
General C.C. Andrews State Forest	Pine	7
Nemadji State Forest	Pine	311
St. Croix State Forest	Pine	185
Bear Island State Forest	St. Louis	154
Cloquet Valley State Forest	St. Louis	61
Kabetogama State Forest	St. Louis	909
Sturgeon River State Forest	St. Louis	9
R J D Memorial Hardwood State Forest	Wabasha	478
R J D Memorial Hardwood State Forest	Winona	335
Sandstone Forestry - State Forest Land	Kanabec	15
Aitkin Tr15	Aitkin	162
Becklin Homestead Tr4	Isanti	147
Crow Wing - Frey	Hubbard	65
Dry Sand	Wadena	40
East Rush Lake	Chisago	168
Four Brooks WMA	Mille Lacs	800
Graceton WMA	Lake of the Woods	627
Graham Tr2	Benton	46
Kroschel (Holy Cow)	Kanabec	1252
Kunkel WMA	Mille Lacs	157
Lake George	Cass	34
Little Nokasippi WMA P2	Crow Wing	160
Little Nokasippi WMA P6	Crow Wing	5
Mills WMA	Otter Tail	159
Popple Lake WMA	Morrison	8
Rath WMA	Pine	1090
Ray Cook Tr5	Crow Wing	120

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Red Eye Tr7	Wadena	272
Rice Creek Access	Isanti	1
Shooks Sharptail Tr1	Beltrami	404
Shooks Sharptail Tr2	Beltrami	236
Stephan Pine	Pine	216
Willossippi WMA Tr6	Aitkin	81
Gordon Yeager WMA	Olmstead	205
McCarthy Lake WMA	Wabasha	40
Mound Prairie WMA	Houston	65
Root River WMA T12A	Houston	72
Root River WMA T3	Houston	136
Root River WMA Tr 20	Houston	342
Root River WMA Tr 31	Houston	96
Root River WMA Tr1A	Houston	22
Root T5 - Walcker	Houston	17
Rushford WMA	Winona	192
Whitewater WMA Tr117	Winona	4
Whitewater WMA Tr41	Winona	39
Whitewater WMA Tr70	Winona	100
Boot Lake SNA	Anoka	30
Wood-Rill SNA	Hennepin	14
Franconia Bluffs SNA	Chisago	20
Cannon R Turtle Preserve SNA	Goodhue	13
Cherry Grove Blind Valley SNA		20
Prairie Creek Woods SNA	Rice	18
Townsend Woods SNA	Rice	13
Zumbro Falls Woods SNA	Wabasha	16
Avon Hills Forest SNA	Stearns	25
Hovland Woods SNA addition	Cook	
LaSalle Lake - proposed SNA	Hubbard	300
Lester Lake - proposed SNA	Hubbard	
Lost Forty SNA addition	Itasca	14
Watrous Island - proposed SNA	Koochiching	70
Two Rivers Aspen Parkland SNA - addition	Roseau	610
Little Kandiyohi-Wakanda Lakes - proposed SNA	Kandiyohi	100
Goodhue Bluffs - proposed SNA	Goodhue	500

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

**Program or Project Title: #31 Accelerated Shallow Lakes and Wetlands
Enhancement, Restoration, and Protection Partnership**

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name:

**Ray Norrgard, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Title: Wetland Wildlife Program Leader, Division of Fisheries & Wildlife
Mailing Address: 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155
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Fax: 651 297-4961
E-Mail: Ray.Norrgard@state.mn.us
Web Site: [.dnr.state.mn.us](http://dnr.state.mn.us)**

Co- Manager's Name:

**Jon Schneider, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Title: Manager– Minnesota Conservation Programs
Mailing Address: 311 East Lake Geneva Road, Alexandria, MN 56308
Telephone: 320-762-9916
Fax: 320-759-1567
E-Mail: jschneider@ducks.org
Web Site: [.ducks.org](http://ducks.org)**

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs <i>For programs that may want to request OHF funds in future recommendation rounds, complete the columns below. One time requests enter zeros in all 3 fiscal years</i>		
Funds Requested (\$000s)*	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Pre-design Component	1,573,000			
Design Component	836,000			
Construction Component	1,993,000			
Protection Component	3,439,000			
DU subtotal	5,933,000			
DNR Subtotal	1,908,000			
Total Outdoor Heritage Fund Request	7,841,000	5,000,000	10,000,000	6,500,000

*Rounded to nearest thousand

A. Summary

Funding approved for this grant request will support a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Ducks Unlimited (DU) partnership to accelerate efforts to restore, protect and enhance shallow lakes and associated wetlands. Every statewide conservation plan recognizes the need for improving and protecting Minnesota's shallow lakes and associated wetlands for wildlife habitat. The MN DNR *Duck Recovery Plan* is the most specific, calling for the active management of 1,800 shallow lakes and adding 64,000 wetlands to Minnesota's landscape. DU's *Living Lakes* conservation initiative supports this plan through its goal of improving 300 shallow lakes in 10 years in Minnesota.

Improving and properly managing shallow lakes often requires the engineering design and construction of water level control structures and fish barriers. The process of employing these structures requires three steps: lake assessment and feasibility analysis (Pre-design), engineering survey, design, review, and easements (Design), and actual installation of the designed structure (Construction). To protect the state's investment in management and infrastructure on these lakes, it is also important to work with private shoreline landowners to permanently protect undisturbed adjacent grassland and wetland

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

habitats from future development (Protection). There are also opportunities to purchase and protect drained lake basins as a precursor to lake restoration.

This proposal requests funding for all four components (Pre-design, Design, Construction, and Protection) of this process to accelerate our progress towards meeting both the Duck Recovery Plan objectives and Living Lakes initiative goals.

B. Background Information

High quality shallow lakes and wetlands have clear water and abundant rooted aquatic vegetation. They provide critical habitat for wetland wildlife production and migration, especially waterfowl. Emergent aquatic plants such as rushes and wild rice provide protective cover from weather and predators and habitat for aquatic invertebrates. Submergent plants provide food in the form of seeds and tubers and critical habitat for invertebrates. Aquatic invertebrates such as insects, amphipods and snails are critical for breeding ducks and duckling growth and survival.

Migrating wetland birds are driven by their need for food and rest during spring and fall. Seasonally flooded wetlands often fill these needs for shorebirds and dabbling ducks, particularly during spring. However, it is typically the larger, more permanent wetlands and shallow lakes that are important to diving ducks in spring and provide the most important fall habitat for all waterfowl.

The quality of shallow lakes and wetlands providing wildlife habitat has declined markedly due to shoreline development, drainage, increased runoff carrying sediment and nutrients, and invasive plant and fish species. Invasive fish, such as bullheads, carp, and fathead minnows reduce the invertebrates and aquatic plants necessary for quality habitat.

The worst damage has occurred within the prairie and transition portions of the state where conversion of habitat to other uses has degraded the watersheds of shallow lakes and associated wetlands. Restoration of wetland and grassland complexes helps reduce excessive runoff and improve water quality. While improvements in the watershed benefit shallow lakes and wetlands it is with active water level management and the removal of invasive fish that the quality of this important habitat can be rejuvenated and sustained.

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has reported that nearly two-thirds of Minnesota's shallow prairie lakes are impaired. In addition, almost a third of the shallow lakes in the transition area between prairie and forest are impaired. This impairment is primarily the result of the conversion of wetlands and grasslands to other uses and the impact of invasive fish and plant species. The resulting

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

increase in suspended phosphorus and dominance by phytoplankton dramatically reduces water clarity. This loss of water quality directly affects aquatic life by reducing the ability of rooted aquatic plants to survive, eliminating habitat for invertebrates, ducks, muskrats and other wetland wildlife. Shoreline development contributes to this loss of quality by increasing disturbance of near shore vegetation, increasing runoff, and contributing to wave action from recreational boating.

2. What action will be taken?

This proposal will restore, protect and enhance identified shallow lakes and wetlands by accelerating the restoration of previously drained wetlands and shallow lakes, placing or upgrading needed water level control structures and fish barriers on existing basins, and protecting wetlands and shorelines through acquisition in fee title or perpetual easements. These actions will reduce runoff, block access by undesirable fish, and improve water level control. Temporarily reducing water levels will consolidate bottom sediments, eliminate or greatly reduce invasive fish, and stimulate the growth of rooted aquatic plants. This, in turn, will provide desirable habitat for wetland wildlife, including waterfowl. Permanent conservation easements or fee title purchase will be offered to willing sellers on selected shallow lakes to allow restoration, protection, and enhancement of shallow lakes and associated wetlands.

3. Who will take action and when?

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Ducks Unlimited will conduct pre-design activities including surveys of current habitat conditions, identification of specific problems requiring resolution, and completing a pre-engineering feasibility analysis. This crucial first step in the process will be accomplished with temporary DU and DNR shallow lake specialists working with experienced DNR staff from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2012. These temporary specialists will be supported by seasonal interns assisting in the on-site collection of data during the 2011 field season. The shallow lakes and associated wetlands targeted for this work are those with existing state or federal ownership. Approximately 300 basins have been identified for pre-design assessment.

The Department of Natural Resources and Ducks Unlimited will complete design activities on identified basins throughout the state. Initial design activities include detailed surveys and engineering plans. DNR and DU will each assume the lead in completing engineering on identified basins. The design component also includes post-engineering activities led by DNR including review by the State Historical Preservation Officer, environmental review, and formal wildlife lake designation proceedings when appropriate. DNR and DU will pursue acquisition of land control and riparian flowage rights from willing sellers through easements

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

or fee title as necessary to construct and manage water control structures and fish barriers. More than 50 shallow lakes and wetlands have been identified for design work. The work will be conducted between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2012.

Construction will be completed by DNR on 10 sites and by DU on 12 sites that already have the design work completed or are expected to be completed by June 30, 2011. Completion of structure construction will allow active water level management and the recovery of aquatic vegetation necessary to provide high quality wildlife habitat. Construction will be completed by June 30, 2012.

DU will pursue additional protection of shorelines of identified shallow lakes through easements and fee acquisition including opportunities to restore drained lake basins. Efforts will take place July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2013.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

This proposal targets the enhancement of wetland wildlife habitat on shallow lakes and associated wetlands that contribute to wetland habitat complexes. These are basins are managed by wildlife agencies explicitly for high quality wildlife habitat. DU and the DNR will consult and coordinate with partners to ensure that strategic conservation actions are prioritized within L-SOHC planning sections and that the allocation of available resources is optimized with all available funding sources. Although this work will compliment the goals of other Constitutional Funding, the selection of specific projects is prioritized based on the potential benefits to wildlife rather than consideration of other goals.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

The intent of this proposal is to accelerate the restoration, protection and enhancement of shallow lake and wetland habitat for wetland wildlife. The growth of rooted aquatic plants will improve through water level management and the reduction of invasive fish. These plants in turn provide habitat for aquatic invertebrates that form the backbone of healthy aquatic systems by providing the necessary food resources for amphibians, ducks, songbirds, and rails. Some species such as herons, mink, and otter depend on those species for food. Others, such as swans, muskrats, geese, and some ducks feed directly on the aquatic plants. Protection of shorelines and wetlands through easements and fee acquisition will add to the diversity and size of wetland habitat complexes that benefit a wide range of wildlife. Overall, over 9,000 acres will be directly affected. The Design phase will be completed on another 32,000 acres for future construction projects.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

Actual restoration or manipulation of water levels generally occurs in the year following completion of construction. Although many basins respond within a year with improved conditions, others may take longer but typically no longer than five years unless there are extenuating circumstances.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

 X YES NO
If not, how will you finance completion?

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

The pre-design and design components of this proposal will prepare sites for future construction or treatment proposals. The management and maintenance of basins with completed construction or protected by fee acquisition will fall on existing staff of the Department of Natural Resources or United States Fish and Wildlife Service depending on location of the specific project. These staff are funded through license fees and legislative or congressional appropriations. Periodic enhancements such as invasive species removal, supplemental vegetation planting or water control structure installation and replacements will be accomplished through annual funding requests to a variety of funding sources including, but not limited to, the Game and Fish Fund, bonding, gifts, the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, the Outdoor Heritage Fund, and federal sources such as North American Wetland Conservation Act grants.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

This proposal accelerates the process to restore, protect, and enhance the historical shallow lake and wetland habitat quality that supported abundant populations of waterfowl, shorebirds and other species of wetland wildlife. The quality and quantity of rooted aquatic vegetation will increase from completed construction projects and protection activities. Every species of wildlife associated with Minnesota's shallow lakes and wetlands depend on rooted aquatic plants for cover and either feed directly on the plants, on invertebrates that require the plants for habitat, or on other wildlife species that feed directly on invertebrates or the plants themselves. By selecting specific projects that

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

contribute to wetland habitat complexes the benefits to wildlife are increased by improved landscape and on-site habitat diversity.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

 X YES NO

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Restorations will occur on lands acquired in fee title or perpetual easements. All of the shallow lakes and wetlands identified in this proposal for enhancement are protected from drainage or filling by public water law (Chapter 103). The highest priority lakes have publicly owned shoreline. Where it occurs, public ownership protects the basins from adjacent development or conversion to undesirable agricultural uses. The remaining shoreline is regulated by local zoning.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

Each basin that is assessed, the subject of design work, or has construction completed, will be individually identified. The costs associated with construction will be identified for each specific project. Assessment and design work will be cost coded within the Department of Natural Resources accounting system. Each parcel acquired or placed under easement will be similarly identified. The DNR, as a state agency, is subject to intense scrutiny and operates under well established fiscal laws, rules and policies subject to regular fiscal audits. DNR is also subject to data practices policies that make appropriate information available upon request. The DNR will provide all proposals, plans, updates and progress reports to the Legislative Coordinating Commission for publication on their Web site. DU will track individual expenditures by project and functional activity through its detailed accounting system, and provide clear, concise reporting of expenditures by project.

12. Will this strategy work?

This proposal is based on the best available shallow lake and wetland management science coupled with over four decades of experience by DNR and over two decades of wetland engineering expertise by DU.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

In those situations where the shallow lake or wetland outlet is privately owned the landowner can either assist the project by granting an easement or stall the

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

project by refusing. All easement acquisitions are based on a willing seller condition. Water level manipulations are guided by public water law permits that are open to public review and comment.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

_____ YES X NO

Those projects listed for construction already have the necessary easements completed or nearly so. LGU approval should not be a factor in these projects moving forward.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

 X YES _____ NO

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? If so what kind of use?

Structure and flowage easements to allow enhancement of shallow lakes will be purchased from willing sellers for the purpose of access for construction and future management of the basin and to gain the right to manipulate water levels that adjoin private land. These easements generally do not provide for use by the general public. However, all of the proposed projects are on lakes with either formal public access or have publicly owned shoreline that allows access. Similarly, DU purchase of conservation easements will be proposed to private landowners on shallow lakes managed by DNR, and although private landowners will retain the right to permit trespass, the shallow lakes themselves are open to the public.

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easements as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

 X YES _____ NO

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

___ Perpetuity ___ Years

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below. [to be completed when the attachments are done]

- ___ X ___ Northern Forest
___ X ___ Forest/Prairie Transition
___ X ___ Southeast Forest
___ X ___ Prairie
___ X ___ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

___ X ___ YES ___ NO
If yes, please explain.

Many of these shallow lakes and wetlands are faced with development pressures and potential conversion to uses that are incompatible with wildlife and wildlife oriented recreation. While shoreline and associated land prices will fluctuate over time the long-term trend will be steadily rising costs, increasing urban development from population expansion, and continued conversion of existing native habitats to other land uses. Dedicated funding for the next 24 years provides a unique opportunity for the current generation to build a foundation of publicly accessible wildlife habitat that will provide unparalleled opportunity for future generations of hunters and outdoor users.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

___ X ___ YES ___ NO
If Yes, list the names of the WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

Those shallow lakes that do not have at least some of the shoreline publicly owned will have formal public access.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

 X YES NO
If yes explain the model briefly.

This proposal is largely based on the Department of Natural Resources 2006 Duck Recovery Plan. This plan is similar to the Strategic Habitat Conservation model in that it establishes a statewide duck population goal, identifies the challenges to be met in achieving that goal, proposes specific strategies and objectives for habitat restoration and protection, and selects specific metrics for evaluating progress.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Restoration and protection of wetland habitat complexes has long been recognized as a critical foundation for the recovery of wetland wildlife species. While life history requirements differ between species and season of the year, it has been clearly documented that temporary, seasonal, semi-permanent, and permanent wetlands such as shallow lakes all play an important role. The critical need for developing a comprehensive approach of restoration, protection and enhancement to achieve at least four square mile habitat complexes is explained in more detail in the 2006 Duck Recovery Plan.

The scientific foundation for proposed enhancement of shallow lakes is described in the book The Ecology of Shallow Lakes by Martin Scheffer and research conducted in Minnesota by Dr. Mark Hanson PhD (MNDNR), Dr. Kyle Zimmer PhD (University of St. Thomas), Dr. Malcolm Butler PhD (North Dakota State University) and others. Shallow lakes and wetlands typically exist in one of two stable states. Either they have poor water clarity, few rooted aquatic plants but abundant phytoplankton or they have clear water, abundant rooted aquatic plants and limited phytoplankton. The primary drivers of these two conditions are available phosphorus, wave action, and certain species of undesirable fish. Conversion of the phytoplankton dominated state to the clear water state usually requires a temporary drawing down of water levels or the nearly complete removal of fish or both.

24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

Those shallow lakes and wetlands identified for enhancement are prioritized on the amount of publicly owned shoreline managed for wildlife habitat. The highest priority is those basins completely within wildlife management areas, waterfowl production areas or similar public ownership categories. The next highest priority is

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

those basins partially within public ownership. The only exceptions to these criteria are shallow lakes specifically designated for wildlife management or those with high historical use by waterfowl and formal public access.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

Several recent statewide Minnesota planning efforts have called attention to the dramatic loss in both quantity and quality of wetland and shallow lake habitat over the last century and a half. *Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, A Fifty-Year Vision – Minnesota Campaign for Conservation, Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare*, and *MN DNR Duck Recovery Plan* all emphasize the importance of shallow lakes and associated wetlands in creating viable wetland habitat complexes that are necessary for improvements in wetland wildlife populations.

The *Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan* identifies habitat loss and degradation as the number one driver of change for wildlife in Minnesota. The specifically recommends fee acquisition for WMAs, protection of shallow lake shoreline, and restoring shallow lakes, wetlands, and wetland associated watersheds as important strategies.

Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare - Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for species in greatest conservation need has identified significant loss and degradation of habitat as the number one management challenge and one of the principle strategies is to provide protection through selective acquisition of key habitats in each Ecological Section. Over 20 species that rely on shallow lakes are listed as species of special concern.

Minnesota's *Long Range Duck Recovery Plan* lists the objective of restoring a breeding population of 1 million ducks by 2056. The primary strategy is the protection and restoration of 2 million additional acres of habitat including the restoration of 64,000 wetlands and actively managing 1,800 shallow lakes.

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

D. Budget [revisit 3rd year, role fleet into travel]

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel Total	933,000	1,120,000	30,000
DU	618,000	670,000	30,000
DNR	315,000	450,000	
Contracts Total	876,000	904,000	20,000
DU	636,000	644,000	20,000
DNR	240,000	261,000	
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	95,000	55,000	
DU			
DNR	95,000	55,000	
Fee Acquisition Total	2,517,000		
DU	2,517,000		
DNR			
Easement Acquisition	250,000	235,000	100,000
DU	200,000	200,000	100,000
DNR	50,000	35,000	
Easement Stewardship	30,000	30,000	30,000
DU	20,000	30,000	40,000
DNR			
Professional Services	202,000	203,000	2,000
DU			
DNR	202,000*	203,000*	2,000

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

Travel Total	109,000	115,000	2,000
DU	100,000	106,000	2,000
DNR	9,000	9,000	
Additional Budget Items			
DU Subtotal	4,101,000	1,650,000	182,000
DNR Subtotal	893,000	1,013,000	2,000
TOTAL	4,994,000	2,663,000	184,000

* Professional services includes contracted costs for shared services activities including DNR Office of Management and Budget Services, Human Resources, Management Resources, and Information and Education base level services.

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
DU Shallow Lake Biologists	3.0 ftes	520,000
DU Land Protection Biologist	0.5 fte	160,000
DU Regional Engineers	1.0 ftes	320,000
DU Engineering Tech	0.5 fte	79,000
DU Construction Mgr.	0.5 fte	160,000
DU Conservation Program Mgr	0.25 fte	79,000
DNR Wildlife Lake Specialists	5.0 fte	500,000
DNR Seasonal Interns	4.0 fte	265,000

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
DU NAWCA Grant	75,000		
DNR Federal Aid Reimbursement	670,000	760,000	
DNR in-kind Staff Time	25,000	25,000	
TOTAL	770,000	785,000	

G. Outcomes:

Table 1 Accomplishments	Wetlands*	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	10 sites 18 ac			
Protect	1800 ac shoreline			
Enhance	22 sites 7,272 ac			

*Sites and acreages are estimates based on current list of priority basins.

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Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands*	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>Prairie 100%</i>			
Protect	<i>Prairie 90%</i> <i>Transition 10%</i>			
Enhance	<i><u>Pre-design</u></i> <i>Prairie 16%</i> <i>Transition 16%</i> <i>Urban 11%</i> <i>N. Forest 56%</i> <i>SE Forest <1%</i> <i><u>Design</u></i> <i>Prairie 81%</i> <i>Transition 6%</i> <i>Urban 3%</i> <i>N Forest 10%</i> <i><u>Construction</u></i> <i>Prairie 47%</i> <i>Transition 37%</i> <i>Urban 11%</i> <i>N Forest 5%</i>			

*Distributions are estimates based on current list of priority basins.

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	18,000			
Protect	6,885,000			
Enhance	5,638,000			

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>Federal Aid Reimbursement 30,000</i>			
Protect	<i>NAWCA 75,000</i>			
Enhance	<i>Federal Aid Reimbursement 1,430,000</i>			

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Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability	1500 acres			
Permanent Easement	350 acres			

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Pre-design	Sept. 2011	300 habitat surveys
Design	July, 2012	55 engineering plans
Construction	July, 2012	20 completed projects
Protection	July, 2013	1850 acres eased or acquired

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

The funding that may come from this request to Ducks Unlimited is all new additive funding to allow DU to accelerate habitat activities. Current DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife expenditures for wetland and shallow lake work for wildlife habitat total approximately \$2,360,000 out of a total Division budget of \$92,600,000. The total DNR annual budget approximates \$350,000,000.

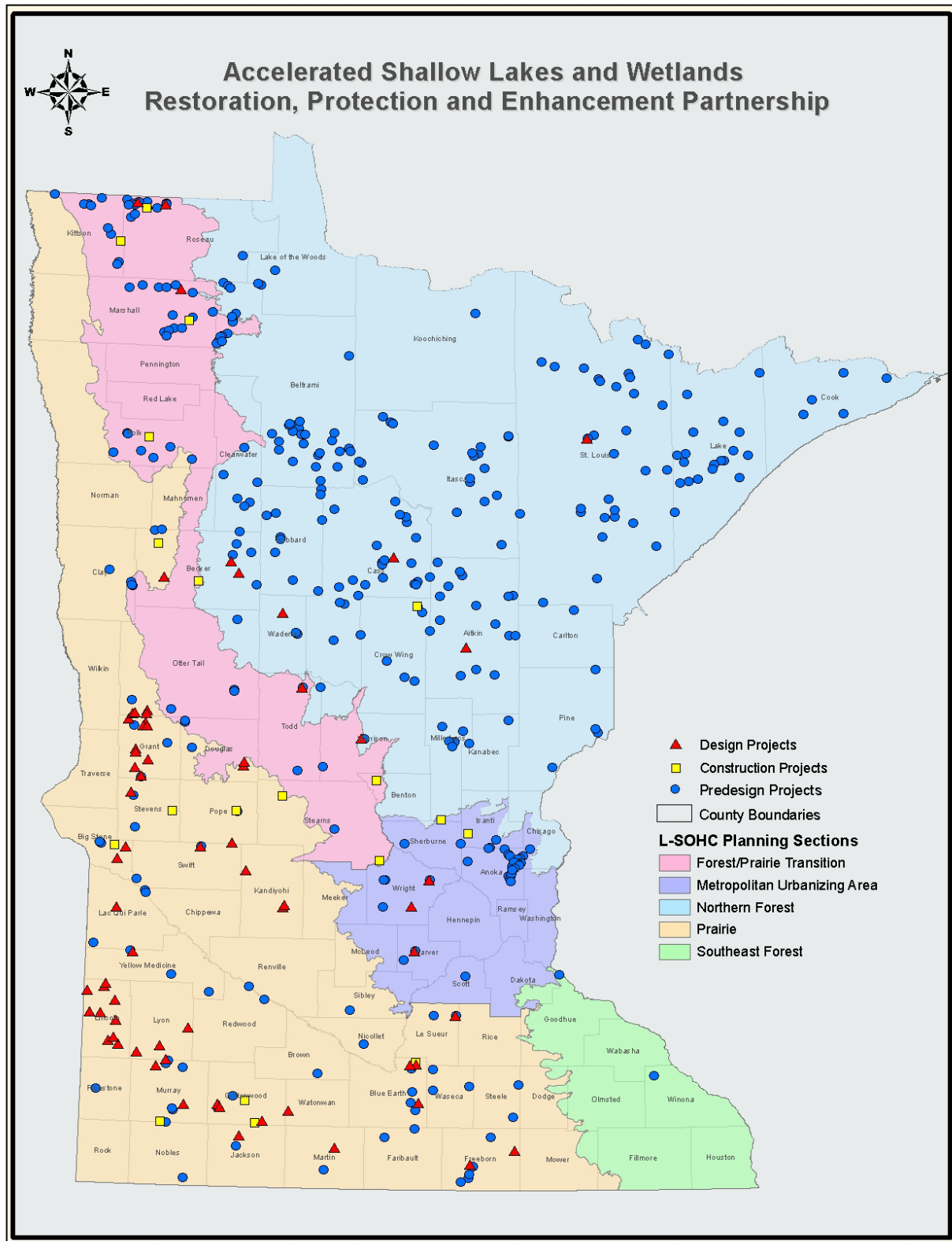
Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

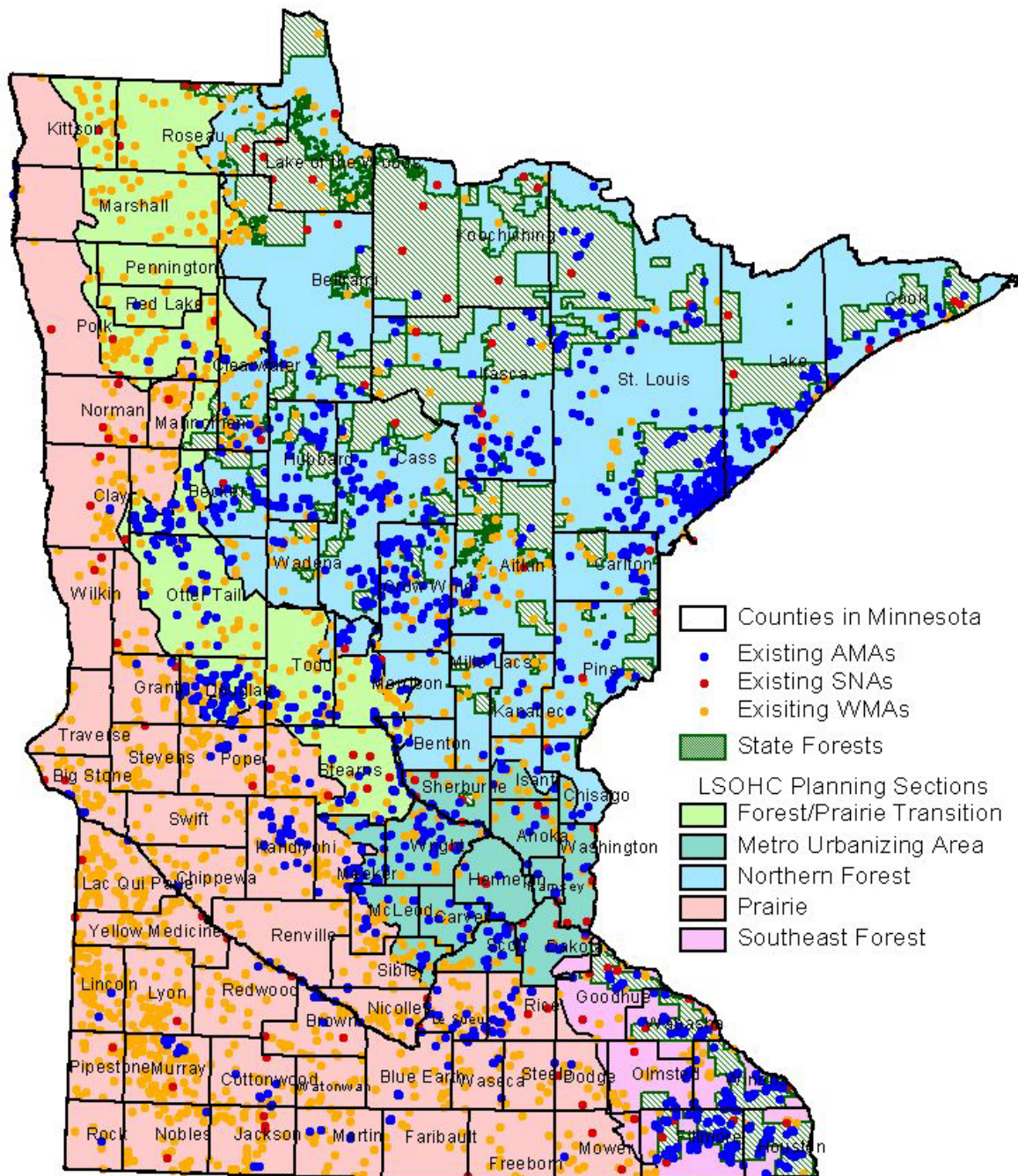
The pre-design and design components of this proposal will prepare sites for future construction or treatment proposals. The management and maintenance of basins with completed construction or protected by fee acquisition will fall on existing staff of the Department of Natural Resources or United States Fish and Wildlife Service depending on location of the specific project. These staff are funded through license fees and legislative or congressional appropriations. Periodic enhancements such as invasive species removal, supplemental vegetation planting or water control structure installation and replacements will be accomplished through annual funding requests to a variety of funding sources including, but not limited to, the Game and Fish Fund, bonding, gifts, the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, the Outdoor Heritage Fund, and federal sources such as North American Wetland Conservation Act grants.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

See Pages 18-31.



Existing WMAs, AMAs, SNAs, and State Forests



10/29/09

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

Project List

Version 9 on 11/2/2009

Pre-design:

<u>Pre-design Project Request: Assessment and pre-engineering feasibility</u>	<u>Lead Partner</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Ecoregion</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Unnamed (04047600)	DNR	Beltrami	Transition	1,165
Unnamed(04061100)	DNR	Beltrami	Transition	174
Unnamed (04061200)	DNR	Beltrami	Transition	147
Unnamed (14005500)	DNR	Clay	Transition	20
Jergenson	DNR	Clay	Transition	66
Unnamed (14012700)	DNR	Clay	Transition	16
Anka	DNR	Douglas	Transition	241
Christina	DNR	Douglas	Transition	4,028
Upper Twin	DNR	Kittson	Transition	208
Lower Twin	DNR	Kittson	Transition	265
Beaches	DNR	Kittson	Transition	306
Unnamed (35001200)	DNR	Kittson	Transition	75
Skull Lake Impoundment	DNR	Kittson	Transition	734
Masloski Burnouts	DNR	Kittson	Transition	131
Unnamed (35003100)	DNR	Kittson	Transition	640
Unnamed (35003500)	DNR	Kittson	Transition	114
Mud	DNR	Marshall	Transition	38,389
Little Moose Marsh	DNR	Marshall	Transition	61
East Park WMA	DNR	Marshall	Transition	1,489
Elm Lake WMA	DNR	Marshall	Transition	2,048
Elm Lake WMA	DNR	Marshall	Transition	161
Elm Lake WMA	DNR	Marshall	Transition	335
Elm Lake WMA	DNR	Marshall	Transition	643
Unnamed (45005900)	DNR	Marshall	Transition	237
Unnamed (45011700)	DNR	Marshall	Transition	469
Eckvoll WMA	DNR	Marshall	Transition	256
Unnamed (45013300)	DNR	Marshall	Transition	64
Unnamed (45013800)	DNR	Marshall	Transition	93
Unnamed (45014500)	DNR	Marshall	Transition	214
Coon	DNR	Morrison	Transition	53
Unnamed (56003900)	DNR	Otter Tail	Transition	58

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Unnamed (56004200)	DNR	Otter Tail	Transition	60
Thompson	DNR	Otter Tail	Transition	72
Unnamed (60017600)	DNR	Polk	Transition	58
Unnamed (60022600)	DNR	Polk	Transition	78
Unnamed (60075700)	DNR	Polk	Transition	123
Unnamed (60075800)	DNR	Polk	Transition	52
Unnamed (60077200)	DNR	Polk	Transition	137
Pool I	DNR	Roseau	Transition	2,770
Pool II	DNR	Roseau	Transition	4,049
Pool III	DNR	Roseau	Transition	4,932
Unnamed (68001000)	DNR	Roseau	Transition	114
Unnamed (68001100)	DNR	Roseau	Transition	278
Unnamed (68001200)	DNR	Roseau	Transition	1,186
Unnamed (68001400)	DNR	Roseau	Transition	85
Unnamed (68002500)	DNR	Roseau	Transition	955
Unnamed (68002800)	DNR	Roseau	Transition	72
Unnamed (68011700)	DNR	Roseau	Transition	142
Unnamed (68011900)	DNR	Roseau	Transition	577
School	DNR	Stearns	Transition	114
Rice	DNR	Todd	Transition	457
East Twin	DNR	Anoka	Urban	201
Unnamed (02002900)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	1,037
Unnamed (02003000)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	220
Unnamed (02003100)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	615
Little Coon	DNR	Anoka	Urban	564
Fish	DNR	Anoka	Urban	541
Unnamed (02010100)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	148
Bass	DNR	Anoka	Urban	84
Unnamed (02044600)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	171
Unnamed (02044800)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	141
Unnamed (02049300)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	1,041
Unnamed (02049600)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	183
Unnamed (02049700)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	160
Unnamed (02050200)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	364
Unnamed (02050400)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	426
Unnamed (02050500)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	1,453
Unnamed (02051000)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	138
Unnamed (02051500)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	230
Unnamed (02052000)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	2,128
Unnamed (02052900)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	1,977
Unnamed (02053000)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	83

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Unnamed (02073800)	DNR	Anoka	Urban	182
Patterson	DNR	Carver	Urban	593
Tiger	DNR	Carver	Urban	606
Mud	DNR	Chisago	Urban	431
Unnamed (70005900)	DNR	Scott	Urban	113
West Hunter	DNR	Sherburne	Urban	60
Masford	DNR	Sherburne	Urban	81
Pelican	DNR	Wright	Urban	3,426
Willima	DNR	Wright	Urban	259
Henry	DNR	Wright	Urban	44
Smith	DNR	Wright	Urban	310
Rice	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	78
Little Prairie	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	104
Stony	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	56
Twenty-one	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	53
Mud	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	589
Sanders	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	55
Twenty	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	174
Moose	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	171
White Elk	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	741
Krilwitz	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	30
Moose River Pool	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	838
Jewett WMA Impoundment	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	173
Salo WMA Impoundment	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	317
Unnamed	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	256
Little Hill Impound.	DNR	Aitkin	Northern Forest	135
Knutson	DNR	Becker	Northern Forest	52
Mud	DNR	Becker	Northern Forest	87
Sockeye	DNR	Becker	Northern Forest	65
Gardner	DNR	Becker	Northern Forest	54
Unnamed	DNR	Becker	Northern Forest	62
Chinaman	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	61
Gimmer	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	69
Holland	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	57
Norman	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	61
Big Rice	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	1,220
Hanson	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	94
Crandall	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	74
Ose	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	68
Unnamed (04010800)	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	66
Unnamed (04011200)	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	57

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Peterson	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	78
Alice	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	91
Little Rice	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	75
Anderson	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	60
George	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	88
Swamp	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	57
Peterson	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	66
Nebish	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	71
Erick	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	64
Wolf	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	92
Grenn	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	79
Fahul	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	92
Perch	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	65
Unnamed (04034500)	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	91
Mulligan	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	248
Unnamed (04047300)	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	367
Unnamed (04048500)	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	208
Unnamed (04049100)	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	125
Unnamed (04049600)	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	203
Unnamed (04061500)	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	377
Unnamed (04061600)	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	115
Unnamed (04062100)	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	164
Unnamed (04062300)	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	114
Unnamed (04062900)	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	219
Unnamed (04063600)	DNR	Beltrami	Northern Forest	70
Cedar	DNR	Carlton	Northern Forest	76
North Fork	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	59
Oxbow	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	69
Wren	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	54
Dirty Nose	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	59
Big Rice	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	2,872
Goose	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	1,421
Mud	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	4,926
Rice	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	58
Bracket	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	52
Gijik	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	90
Tamarack	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	72
Iverson	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	75
Round	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	66
Harriet	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	122
Boot	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	60

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Cow	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	81
Island	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	109
Little Boy	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	71
Kelly	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	61
Little Moss	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	85
Chub	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	208
Cedar	DNR	Cass	Northern Forest	55
Robinson	DNR	Clearwater	Northern Forest	97
Unnamed	DNR	Clearwater	Northern Forest	58
Mud	DNR	Clearwater	Northern Forest	59
Moon	DNR	Clearwater	Northern Forest	57
Mud	DNR	Clearwater	Northern Forest	82
Otter	DNR	Cook	Northern Forest	73
Monker	DNR	Cook	Northern Forest	96
Trap	DNR	Cook	Northern Forest	61
Tomash	DNR	Cook	Northern Forest	94
Wills	DNR	Cook	Northern Forest	67
Rice	DNR	Crow Wing	Northern Forest	159
Dog	DNR	Crow Wing	Northern Forest	65
Terry	DNR	Crow Wing	Northern Forest	99
Birchdale	DNR	Crow Wing	Northern Forest	587
Duck	DNR	Crow Wing	Northern Forest	310
Pickrel	DNR	Crow Wing	Northern Forest	60
Spring	DNR	Hubbard	Northern Forest	70
Mud	DNR	Hubbard	Northern Forest	93
Bowman	DNR	Hubbard	Northern Forest	74
Little Stony	DNR	Hubbard	Northern Forest	66
Birch	DNR	Hubbard	Northern Forest	61
Sawyer	DNR	Hubbard	Northern Forest	54
Unnamed	DNR	Hubbard	Northern Forest	62
Beauty	DNR	Hubbard	Northern Forest	65
Lost	DNR	Hubbard	Northern Forest	113
Badoura Bog	DNR	Hubbard	Northern Forest	4,236
Culp	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	69
Little Sucker	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	66
Dunning	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	67
Moose	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	70
Gunny Sack	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	82
Buck	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	80
May	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	62
Spruce	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	57

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Nagel	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	88
Arrowhead	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	55
McAlpine	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	95
Elbow	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	75
Welch	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	65
Morph	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	1,568
Unnamed (31120900)	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	110
Unnamed (31121000)	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	120
Unnamed (31122300)	DNR	Itasca	Northern Forest	74
Unnamed (33007900)	DNR	Kanabec	Northern Forest	73
Moose	DNR	Koochiching	Northern Forest	52
Image	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	50
Lookout	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	55
Cabin	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	64
Plum	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	73
Round Island	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	66
Crown	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	68
Osier	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	71
Brush	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	57
Rota	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	95
Spruce	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	85
Phantom	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	75
Shamrock	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	60
Kempton	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	72
Woodcock	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	66
Upland	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	95
Hjalmer	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	115
Bonga	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	116
Culkin	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	56
Cougar	DNR	Lake	Northern Forest	67
Brown's Flowage	DNR	Lake of the Woods	Northern Forest	54
Unnamed (45000800)	DNR	Marshall	Northern Forest	99
Cranberry	DNR	Mille Lacs	Northern Forest	102
Onamia	DNR	Mille Lacs	Northern Forest	1,564
Dewitt Marsh	DNR	Mille Lacs	Northern Forest	95
Korsness Pool	DNR	Mille Lacs	Northern Forest	80
Ernst Pool	DNR	Mille Lacs	Northern Forest	83
Unnamed (48004400)	DNR	Mille Lacs	Northern Forest	1,197
Unnamed (49021400)	DNR	Morrison	Northern Forest	75
Unnamed (56006200)	DNR	Otter Tail	Northern Forest	90
Rock	DNR	Pine	Northern Forest	77

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Grace	DNR	Pine	Northern Forest	65
Pickereel	DNR	Pine	Northern Forest	59
Unnamed	DNR	Pine	Northern Forest	59
Mud	DNR	Roseau	Northern Forest	80
Swamp	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	71
Mud	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	53
Ritual	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	53
Esswhtar	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	76
Cranberry	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	75
Batista	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	83
Dent	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	85
Little Birch	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	63
Hassel	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	70
Jonathan	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	56
Bezhik	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	76
Shaman	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	49
Wabuse	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	61
Hay	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	75
Hay	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	51
Dugout	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	57
Beaver	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	63
Whitchel	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	71
Little Paleface	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	58
Little Mud Hen	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	69
Lon	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	51
Alf	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	70
Little Rice	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	201
West Stone	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	59
Round	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	50
Big Rice	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	1,962
Olive	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	77
Bell	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	111
Hockey	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	92
Swan	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	85
Coon	DNR	St. Louis	Northern Forest	113
West Nelson	DNR	Todd	Northern Forest	79
Granning	DNR	Wadena	Northern Forest	50
Strike	DNR	Wadena	Northern Forest	71
Apple	DNR	Becker	Prairie	94
Unnamed	DNR	Becker	Prairie	924
Benston	DNR	Big Stone	Prairie	427

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Munnyweg	DNR	Big Stone	Prairie	138
Cottonwood	DNR	Blue Earth	Prairie	200
Perch	DNR	Blue Earth	Prairie	311
Rice	DNR	Blue Earth	Prairie	503
Eagle	DNR	Blue Earth	Prairie	403
Hanska	DNR	Brown	Prairie	2,085
Unnamed	DNR	Clay	Prairie	15
Augusta	DNR	Cottonwood	Prairie	473
Jennie	DNR	Douglas	Prairie	314
Minnesota	DNR	Faribault	Prairie	1,906
Rice	DNR	Faribault	Prairie	1,118
Geneva	DNR	Freeborn	Prairie	2,077
Pickeral	DNR	Freeborn	Prairie	617
Lower Twin	DNR	Freeborn	Prairie	573
Bear	DNR	Freeborn	Prairie	1,501
Upper Twin	DNR	Freeborn	Prairie	694
Towner	DNR	Grant	Prairie	171
Ash	DNR	Grant	Prairie	265
Heron	DNR	Jackson	Prairie	3,079
Sanborn	DNR	Le Sueur	Prairie	361
Sheas	DNR	Le Sueur	Prairie	74
Pierce	DNR	Martin	Prairie	506
Round	DNR	Murray	Prairie	171
Willow	DNR	Murray	Prairie	85
South Badger	DNR	Murray	Prairie	307
North Badger	DNR	Murray	Prairie	218
Maria	DNR	Murray	Prairie	442
Swan	DNR	Nicollet	Prairie	9,604
Peterson Slough	DNR	Nicollet	Prairie	68
Orwell WMA	DNR	Otter Tail	Prairie	69
Unnamed	DNR	Polk	Prairie	58
Tiger	DNR	Redwood	Prairie	86
Sand	DNR	Sibley	Prairie	132
Rice	DNR	Steele	Prairie	715
Fish	DNR	Stevens	Prairie	257
Hassel	DNR	Swift	Prairie	823
Goose	DNR	Waseca	Prairie	434
Buffalo	DNR	Waseca	Prairie	1,047
Willis	DNR	Waseca	Prairie	104
Curtis	DNR	Yellow Medicine	Prairie	502
Spellman	DNR	Yellow Medicine	Prairie	205

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Mud Hen	DNR	Dakota	Southeast Forest	581
DU SL Biologists (3)	DU			
DNR Temp Specialists (5)	DNR			
DNR Interns (20)	DNR			
DU Exp Subtotal (excludes in-kind)	578,000			
DNR Exp Subtotal	994,500			
Predesign Subtotal	1,572,500			161,375

Design (& Designation/Easement) Projects:

<u>Design Project Request:</u> <u>Engineering, pre-construction</u> <u>review process, construction</u> <u>related acquisition</u>	<u>Lead</u> <u>Engineering</u> <u>Partner</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Ecoregion</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Lake Hassel	DU	Swift	Prairie	706
Klages WMA - Lake 14	DU	Big Stone	Prairie	48
Simon Lake	DU	Pope	Prairie	569
Lightning Lake WPA	DU	Big Stone	Prairie	148
Demaree WPA	DU	Grant	Prairie	80
Erlandson WMA Wetland Restoration	DU	Otter Tail	Prairie	30
Spink WPA Hibrooten Lake	DU	Grant	Prairie	40
Anderson WPA	DU	Becker	Prairie	100
Denton Slough, Kube Swift WMA	DU	Grant	Prairie	90
Eagle Lake	DU	Blue Earth	Prairie	1,090
Yaeger Lake	DU	Wadena	Northern Forest	384
Henjum WPA	DU (FWS)	Kandiyohi	Prairie	20
Upper Lightning, Kube Swift WMA	DU	Otter Tail	Prairie	509
Mud Lake, Erlandson WMA	DU	Otter Tail	Prairie	437
Sandborn Lake	DU	LeSueur	Prairie	448
Big Lake	DU (BDSWD)	Grant	Prairie	262
Niemackl Chain of Lakes	DU	Grant	Prairie	449
Malardi WMA	DU	Wright	Prairie	149
Hobza WMA	DU	Blue Earth	Prairie	142
Gilfillin WMA	DU	Blue Earth	Prairie	190
Everglade WMA Mud/Fish Lakes	DU	Stevens	Prairie	633

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Long Lake	DU	Murray	Prairie	192
Iron Lake	DU	Murray	Prairie	253
Teal Lake WMA	DU	Jackson	Prairie	88
Banks WMA Bulstad Slough	DU	Cottonwood	Prairie	66
Big Rice Lake	DU	St Louis	Northern Forest	2,072
East & West Twin Lakes	DU (FS)	Cass	Northern Forest	507
Camp Lake	DU (FS)	Aitkin	Northern Forest	127
Kasota Lake	DU	Kandiyohi	Prairie	469
Little Kandiyohi Lake	DU	Kandiyohi	Prairie	932
Moonshine Lake	DU	Big Stone	Prairie	600
Pelican Lake	DU	Wright	Urban	2,793
Tyrone Flats (T121,R31,S23)	DU	Meeker	Urban	160
Victor WPA (T118,R27,S7)	DU	Wright	Urban	53
Roseau River WMA Pool #3 Dike Riprap	DNR R1-1	Roseau	Transition	4,932
Indian Ck Imp WCS	DNR R1-2	Becker	Northern Forest	136
Thief Lake MSUs-elevations	DNR R1-3	Marshall	Transition	7,011
Gyles Lk WCS	DNR R1-4	Becker	Northern Forest	67
Roseau River WMA Pool #3 Moist Soils	DNR R1-5	Roseau	Transition	2,770
Staple WMA WCS	DNR R3-1	Todd	Transition	702
Ereaux WMA WCS	DNR R3-2	Morrison	Transition	160
Patterson Lk WCS/FB	DNR R3-3	Carver	Urban	276
Nyroca Flats WMA WCS	DNR R4/MWA	Lyon	Prairie	30
Clare Johnson WMA WCS	DNR R4-1	Lincoln	Prairie	52
Killen Refuge WCS	DNR R4-2	LQP	Prairie	110
Carex Slough WMA WCS	DNR R4-3	Freeborn	Prairie	22
Tyler WMA WCS	DNR R4-4	Lincoln	Prairie	320
Anderson Lake	DNR R4-5	Lincoln	Prairie	15
Dundee Marsh	DNR R4-6	Cottonwood	Prairie	35
Magaksica WMA	DNR R4-7	Freeborn	Prairie	5
Thostenson WMA WCS	DNR R4-8	Lincoln	Prairie	14
Ivanhoe WMA WCS	DNR R4-9	Lincoln	Prairie	77
Miller Richter WMA WCS	DNR R4-10	Yellow Medicine	Prairie	228
DU Exp Subtotal (excludes in-kind)	505,500			14,836
DNR Exp Subtotal	324,500			16,962
Design Subtotal	830,000			31,798

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

Construction Projects:

<u>Construction Projects: Bid process, contracts, and construction oversight. Includes wild rice planting.</u>	<u>Lead Engineering Partner</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Ecoregion</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Gilfillin WMA	DU	Blue Earth	Prairie	210
Duck Lake	DU	Crow Wing	Forest	310
Harder WPA	DU	Cottonwood	Prairie	40
Wolf Lake	DU	Cottonwood	Prairie	124
Fenmont WMA	DU	Nobles	Prairie	45
Wiley WPA	DU	Big Stone	Prairie	96
Long Lake WPA	DU	Stevens	Prairie	15
Lindsey Lake WPA	DU	Becker	Prairie	18
Rydell NWR (4 lakes)	DU	Polk	Transition	100
Sedan Pond WMA WCS	DNR R1-1	Pope	Prairie	60
Cotton Lk Diversion, Hubbel Pond WMA	DNR R1-2	Becker	Transition	561
Eckvoll WMA WCS	DNR R1-3	Marshall	Transition	300
Beaches WMA WCS	DNR R1-4	Kittson	Transition	520
Roseau River WMA Dike Rd Repair	DNR R1-5	Roseau	Transition	4,600
Sartell WMA WCS	DNR R3-1	Benton	Transition	90
Crooked Rd. WMA-Wild Rice	DNR R3-2	Isanti	Urban	25
Sauk Rapids Area WMAs-Wild Rice	DNR R3-3	Stearns, Sherburne/Benton	Transition	40
Kunkel/Dalbo/Lidstrom WMA	DNR R3-4	Mille Lacs/Isanti/Kanabec	Northern Forest	10
Sauk Rapids Area WMAs	DNR R3-5	Stearns, Sherburne/Benton	Transition	8

DU Exp Subtotal (excludes in-kind)	1,430,000	958
DNR Exp Subtotal	562,500	6,214
Construction Subtotal	1,992,500	7,172

Program Title: Shallow Lakes and Wetlands

Protection:				
<u>Shore land Protection:</u> <u>Conservation easements on</u> <u>managed shallow lakes</u>	<u>Lead Partner</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Ecoregion</u>	<u>Acres</u>
DU Easements	DU	Various	Prairie & Transition	300
DU Fee Acquisition	DU	Various	Prairie & Transition	1,500
DU Exp Subtotal (excludes in-kind)	3,436,500			1,800
DNR Exp Subtotal:	2,000			
Protection Subtotal	3,438,500			
TOTAL	7,833,500			202,145

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program Title: **#32 Restoring Fish & Wildlife Populations in the Lower St. Louis River (Implementing the Remedial Action Plan)**
Project Title: **Knowlton Creek Fishery Restoration and Enhancement Project.**

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: John Lindgren
Title: St. Louis River AOC and Estuary Program Manager, MN Department of Natural Resources
Mailing Address: DNR Duluth Area Fisheries Office, 5351 North Shore Drive, Duluth, MN. 55804
Telephone: (218) 525-0853
Fax: (218) 525-0855
E-Mail: john.lindgren@dnr.state.mn.us
Web Site:

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	2971	2500	2500	2500

A. Summary

The Knowlton Creek Fishery Restoration and Enhancement Project is the next priority action in implementing fish and wildlife related portions of the St. Louis River Remedial Action Plan (RAP). Implementing the RAP is a broadly supported (MDNR, WDNR, MPCA, USFWS, USEPA) program to improve conditions in the St. Louis River estuary to reverse Beneficial Use Impairments and ultimately delist the St. Louis River as a Great Lakes Area of Concern. Completion of the proposed project will restore cold-water fishery habitat, establish a critical fish and wildlife corridor, and ensure perpetual angler access to an urban fishery. The proposed project is also immediately upstream to a Superfund habitat mitigation project scheduled for 2010 and will reduce

sedimentation from Knowlton Creek to the Tallus Island Restoration project in the Estuary.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The MDNR Duluth Area Fisheries Office (DAFO) requests funding to assist the St. Louis River Alliance, a Duluth based non-profit conservation organization, in continuing implementation of habitat restoration projects outlined in the Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan, a conservation plan developed in support of the St. Louis River Remedial Action Plan (RAP). The RAP is the implementation plan to de-list the Beneficial Use Impairments (BUI) and remove the Lower St. Louis River from the State's Impaired Waters (303d) List. Currently, 45 large scale restoration projects have been identified, with 4 being implemented. The Knowlton Creek Fishery Restoration and Enhancement Project is **the next priority project** because of its ecological value and recreational potential.

The St. Louis River is northeastern Minnesota's second largest river and the largest U.S. tributary to Lake Superior. The lower 21 miles of the river constitute the St. Louis River estuary which has more than 12,000 acres of wetland and aquatic habitats. This region is the most significant source of biological productivity for western Lake Superior and provides critical habitat for fish and wildlife communities. The River is listed as a Key River in Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy "Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare. Eighty four species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) are included in the Northshore Highlands and 55 SGCN are listed for the Glacial Lake Superior Plain subsection. Many of these SGCN use the lower St. Louis River habitats during all, or part, of their life cycle.

The sport-angling fishery of the St. Louis River estuary draws several large tournaments and sees more than 180,000 hours of fishing recreation annually. The estuary is located at the western-most tip of Lake Superior and the Great Lakes, resulting in a unique funneling of an extraordinary number of migrating birds, including waterfowl, shorebirds and song birds. The estuary is an international destination for hunters and birding enthusiasts alike.

The lower St. Louis River and surrounding watershed was designated an EPA "Area of Concern" (AOC) in 1989 because of the presence of chemical contaminants, poor water quality and reduced fish and wildlife populations. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) also listed the lower St. Louis River as an impaired waterway in 1989 and identified 9 BUI's including Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Degraded Fish and Wildlife Populations. ***In 2002, a "Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan" was completed to identify critical habitat areas for preservation, restoration and enhancement. This Plan was the result of a collaboration of more than 20 Federal,***

State, Municipal, private and non-government organizations and agencies and presents the combined vision for restoring fish and wildlife populations, biological health and ecological diversity within the AOC.

Duluth is renowned for its outdoor recreation and scenic beauty. Approximately 250,000 people live within 20 miles of the lower St. Louis River and it is estimated that more than 3.5 million tourists visit Duluth each year. Restoring the lower St. Louis River will add significantly to the area's economic and ecological health by recovering fish and wildlife populations and habitat, providing safe drinking water, removing fish consumption advisories, and improving fishing, boating and swimming recreation.

2. What action will be taken?

A series of habitat improvement actions will be implemented along Knowlton Creek, a designated trout stream within the City of Duluth. These actions will result in the ability of Knowlton Creek to once again function as a cold-water trout fishery. These actions include the following items:

1. Restore instream fish habitat. Portions of the Knowlton Creek channel are highly degraded due to historic land use and excessive runoff. An estimated 3200 linear feet of channel will be reconstructed to a natural, stable form providing increased habitat for brook trout and other wildlife.
2. Enhance fish and wildlife movement corridor between St. Louis Bay and Magney Snively Natural Area. Although road and trail crossings can provide recreational access they also constrict the river environment and can impede or block movement of fish and wildlife when inadequately designed. There are eighteen crossings (culverts, bridges and low water crossings) of Knowlton Creek and its tributaries that will be assessed for upgrades, or decommissioning, as well as improving angler access.
3. Revegetate riparian and streambank areas. Human activities and the invasion of woody non-native plant species has reduced the overall extent and quality of the riparian corridor along Knowlton Creek. An estimated 30 acres of floodplain restoration will enhance the wildlife corridor and improve allochthonous input into the creek.

The direct habitat improvement actions are coupled with necessary run-off and water quality improvement actions. The water related improvements include placing run-off diversions and water control structures to restore the natural flow regime of the creek. Funding for these actions is being sought through other sources for clean water, private, and other non-state (federal) funds and are not included in this L-SOHC request.

1. Restore flow regime to more closely reflect Knowlton Creek's historic flows. Urban and recreational development has increased the spring runoff volume discharged to Knowlton Creek to more than 120% of the stream's natural discharge causing increased erosion and channel degradation. A water runoff and diversion system will be constructed to reduce peak stream flow.

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2. Reduce instream water temperature and sedimentation. The decrease of forest cover and increase in impervious surface resulting from development within the Knowlton Creek watershed causes an increase in the temperature and sediment load delivered to the stream channel during rain and snowmelt events. A water retention and infiltration structure will be constructed to improve stream temperatures and capture sediment before reaching the stream.

3. Who will take action and when?

The DAFO will be the project sponsor and provide coordination and oversight for implementation of the project. The DAFO plans to grant the day to day operations and implementation to the SLRA. The existing Executive Director of the SLRA will be responsible for contract oversight and management as well as management of public information and education associated with the application of L-SOHC towards completion of this habitat restoration project within an urban area. This commitment of time is represented under “personnel” in the Budget section. Additionally, a project manager will be contracted by the SLRA to coordinate with MDNR and manage the implementation of the project. This element of the project is represented as a sub-heading of “contracts” in the Budget section.

The SLRA will begin implementation immediately, focusing first on the assessment and upgrading of road-stream crossings, and beginning planning and coordination of channel restoration and revegetation actions with the runoff and water quality control measures. It is necessary to complete the flow restoration actions before initiating any in-channel, or floodplain revegetation work. Construction will be sub-contracted to qualified contractors. It is anticipated that the entire project will take 3 years. Aquatic Management Area (AMA) easements will be sought to permanently protect the project and ensure public access.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

This L-SOHC request supports only direct restoration and rehabilitation of fish and wildlife habitat. Funding to complete the flow restoration and water quality portion of the project is being sought from the clean water portion of the Constitutional Funding.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

1) Implementation of the St. Louis River Recovery program will see the protection, restoration, or enhancement of over 7,000 acres of key fish and wildlife habitat in the Northshore Highlands and Glacial Lake Superior Plain ecological subsections of Minnesota. These connected actions will benefit game species including walleye, muskie, and waterfowl as well as SGCN species including lake sturgeon, piping plover, black throated blue warbler, and wood turtle.

Program Title: Restoring Fish & Wildlife Populations in the Lower St. Louis River

- 2) The entire length of the Knowlton Creek channel and its tributaries will be suitable habitat for a healthy brook trout population and provide new fishing opportunities for anglers in the Duluth Area.
- 3) Securing AMA easements along the stream corridor ensures right of access for anglers and wildlife watchers forever.
- 4) Fish and wildlife populations will have an unimpeded movement corridor between the St. Louis River Estuary and the Magney Snively Natural Area. Tributary spawning fish that reside in Lake Superior and the Estuary will have access to additional high quality spawning grounds adding redundancy for this critical habitat component.
- 5) Natural aquatic connectivity will be restored to the entire stream network of Knowlton Creek facilitating the free movement of aquatic organisms, with an expected improvement in overall biological productivity and resilience of populations within the system.
- 6) Shallow Sheltered Bay Habitat Restoration Project at Tallus Island in the St. Louis River Estuary will not be subjected to habitat degradation due to excessive sedimentation from Knowlton Creek.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

Habitat changes resulting from activities identified within this proposal will be realized within one year of completion of the specific activity. Program level accomplishments will be cumulative and will be seen over the entire life of the Program.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If not, how will you finance completion?

It is anticipated that completion of Knowlton Creek Fishery Restoration and Enhancement Project will be completed by using L-SOHC funding to leverage matching funds through other State and Federal sources. Implementation of the Proposed Project will be phased over three years (FY2011, FY2012, FY2013).

Tasks accomplished in FY2011 include:

- 1) replacement, or removal, of stream crossings causing impairment in the upper and lower watershed and
- 2) design and initiate environmental review for stream channel restoration and the two largest stream crossings and
- 3) completion of AMA easements

Tasks accomplished in FY2012 will include:

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- 1) completion of environmental review,
- 2) implementation of stream channel restorations,
- 3) riparian revegetation and
- 4) completion of the first large stream crossing replacements.

2013 will see:

- 1) the completion of the final stream crossing,
- 2) completion of riparian revegetation and
- 3) completion of project monitoring, evaluation and planning for the next project.

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

The habitat restoration actions are designed to be enduring with no expected future maintenance costs. Maintenance of culverts will be the responsibility of the existing road authority.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

The actions outlined in the St. Louis River Recovery program's implementation strategies combine remediation (soil clean-up, removal of marine debris, re-engineering land improvements) with habitat restoration (geomorphic, vegetative) to reverse current impairments to the river's beneficial uses. Once complete, the river's recovery will include: 1) edible game fish populations with no special consumption advisories, 2) native fish and wildlife populations not limited by past harvest practices, or historic pollution sources 3) abundant and optimally productive fish and wildlife habitat intermixed with the river's commercial uses and 4) clean water for swimming, drinking and recreation.

The Knowlton Creek Fishery Restoration and Enhancement Project directly improves, enhances and protects cold-water fisheries habitat through stream channel restoration, including establishment of pool/riffle sequences, overhanging riparian vegetation and establishment of easements along riparian corridors. The project also re-establishes connectivity for movement of fish and wildlife populations within the stream channel and riparian corridor.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Project actions will occur on lands owned and managed by the City of Duluth, however, this area does not have special use zoning to protect the stream corridor. Special use

zoning or a permanent easement AMA will be secured prior to project work to protect the riparian zone and ensure public access.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

The SLRA regularly conducts workshops and educational tours for local citizens, agency personnel, and local and state leaders. A specific task highlighting the L-SOHC role in specific projects will be developed for tours and publications relating to the recovery of the St. Louis River AOC.

12. Why will this strategy work?

The DAFO seeks to build the capacity of the SLRA to implement habitat remediation and restoration projects outlined in the Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan. By utilizing a re-granting process DNR retains strong financial and performance oversight, while building local capacity to manage and implement a large scale habitat restoration program. A strong local NGO partner will alleviate workforce concerns within the agency while creating local jobs and business for area contractors.

The St. Louis River Citizens Action Committee, now doing business as the SLRA, has a long history contributing to the restoration and recovery of fish and wildlife habitat of the lower St. Louis River. Since 1996, the SLRA has been an active partner with local, tribal, state and federal agencies planning and implementing projects related to the recovery of the St. Louis River AOC. The SLRA has managed and coordinated many joint projects that focus on protecting, restoring and enhancing the St. Louis River environment. Its role has included securing the funding, handling the fiscal responsibilities and managing the implementation for many joint projects. Projects have included developing the Habitat Plan for the Lower St. Louis River, documenting the historical land use on the lower St. Louis River, and assessing contaminated sediments in the estuary. The SLRA has also secured funding for habitat restoration projects for piping plover and sturgeon spawning as well as removing buckthorn from along the river. The SLRA has also played a major role in promoting education and advocating the St. Louis River to the public. This includes working with the WDNR, MDNR and MPCA to involve the public and stakeholders in developing the delisting targets for the St. Louis River AOC.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

Completion of the Knowlton Creek Fishery Restoration and Enhancement Project will be greatly assisted by collaborations that have been established as part of the SLRA. All

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pertinent agencies and groups with interest in management of natural resources within the estuary are represented on the SLRA. The proposed project, which is described as part of the Implementation Strategies of the SLRA's Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan, has support from the agencies and groups within the SLRA. It is not anticipated that any agency or group would work against completion of the proposed project.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

_____ YES _____ NO
Not Applicable

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

_____ YES _____ NO
Not Applicable

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

___X___ YES _____ NO

If Yes what kind of use?

An Aquatic Management Area Easement will be sought and held by DNR Fisheries as part of this project. Easement provisions will ensure public access, grant DNR access for habitat stewardship and restoration, and restrict motorized vehicle use in the riparian zone.

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

___X___ YES _____ NO

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

___20___ Years

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

___X___ Northern Forest

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- ☐ Forest/Prairie Transition
- ☐ Southeast Forest
- ☐ Prairie
- ☐ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☐ YES ☒ NO
If yes, please explain.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☒ YES ☐ NO
If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

The Knowlton Creek Fishery Restoration and Enhancement Project will protect the proposed Tallus Island AMA from degradation from sedimentation. A shallow sheltered bay behind Tallus Island, which is located immediately below the proposed project, has been severely degraded from excess sediment transported down Knowlton Creek. A mitigation project associated with a Superfund Site, which will remove approximately 100,000 cubic yards of sediment from the bay, is scheduled for completion in 2010. The process to designate the area as an AMA is expected to be completed by the end of 2010. Implementation of the proposed project will ensure that excessive sedimentation does not negatively impact the newly restored sheltered bay habitat behind Tallus Island.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

☒ YES ☐ NO
If yes explain the model briefly.

The Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan was developed using The Nature Conservancy's Conservation by Design methodology (CbD). CbD is a structured approach that utilizes best available scientific information along with local expert knowledge to develop

conservation actions that address the threats and sources of threats to identified conservation targets. The Habitat Plan was developed with input from over 20 resource experts representing 7 State, Federal and Tribal resource management agencies and Universities. Agencies currently active in the implementation phase of the Habitat Plan include MDNR, WDNR, MPCA, Fond du Lac Resource Management, USFWS, USEPA, Natural Resources Research Institute, Minnesota Sea Grant, BWSR, SWCD.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

The targets, threats, sources of threat and objectives outlined in the Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan are based on empirical evidence. The historic and current quality, extent and location of target habitat and species targets is based on extensive field research and monitoring over the past decades by resource management agencies and researchers. The threats, and sources of threats, have been documented extensively through field testing and are summarized in the St. Louis River Remedial Action Plan.

The benefits this program will realize are St. Louis River ecosystems that are diverse, productive and healthy with natural processes (hydrologic regimes, biological productivity and nutrient cycling) operating within the range of natural variation. The diversity and abundance of plants and animals present at the time of European settlement are reflected in sustainable ecosystems today.

The Knowlton Creek Fishery Restoration and Enhancement Project is a watershed scale rehabilitation/restoration based on modern concepts of fluvial geomorphology, hydrology and hydraulics, and habitat suitability models. Empirical survey data is used to determine stream parameters and habitat conditions. This information is then used to calculate restoration objectives and design blueprints.

24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

Projects identified in the St. Louis River Habitat Plan are prioritized by biological relevance, expected recovery (or restoration potential), number of habitat and clean water objectives met, and project readiness (including landowner participation). For example, our highest priority projects are those that: 1) restore or protect known high value habitat targets, 2) improve both habitat and water quality conditions in the AOC, 3) are well known to achieve the habitat objectives and 4) all jurisdictional interests including the landowner support implementation of the project.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

Program Title: Restoring Fish & Wildlife Populations in the Lower St. Louis River

This program, Restoring Fish and Wildlife Populations in the Lower St. Louis River, is based upon implementation of the Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan. The Habitat Plan is fully consistent with the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan. The projects outlined in the Habitat Plan address the inherent and intrinsic direct benefits of habitat restoration and protection, but also emphasize the benefit of such strategies for strengthening biodiversity and enhancing resilience to climate change. And they reinforce and strengthen Minnesota cultural values, ethics, appreciation of outdoor recreation and economic health. The St. Louis River Remedial Action Plan and Habitat Plan are continuously integrated across all agencies and across the multijurisdictional scale.

Specifically, the Knowlton Creek Fishery Restoration and Enhancement Project implements the following priorities for the Land and Water Restoration and Protection Strategic Framework Area: H6 -Protect and restore critical in-water habitat in lakes and streams, LU5 -Reduce stream bank erosion through reduction of peak flows and H3 - Improve connectivity and improve access to recreation.

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	20,000	20,000	20,000
Contracts			
1) Project Contracts	686,000	655,000	1,190,000
2) Project Manager	60,000	60,000	60,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	25,000	25,000	25,000
Fee Acquisition	0	0	0
Easement Acquisition	61,000	0	0
Easement Stewardship	0	0	0
Professional Services	14,000	10,000	10,000
Travel	10,000	10,000	10,000
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	876,000	780,000	1,315,000

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

It is anticipated that the SLRA through active partnership with local resources management agencies will be capable of completing the proposed project. The SLRA has established the necessary fiscal capabilities. Accounting and legal assistance for the SLRA are listed under the "professional services" section of the proposed budget.

Title	Name	Amount.
SLRA Executive Director	Julene Boe	\$60,000

Program Title: Restoring Fish & Wildlife Populations in the Lower St. Louis River

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F. All Leverage *In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.*

Funding of this project will assist in the leveraging of funds from the Clean Water Program. MDNR and MPCA are currently coordinating efforts towards securing funding for elements of the project that are not suitable for L-SOHC funding. Timely completion of both aspects of the project is considered a priority by local resource managers and partners in the SLRA. Elements of this proposal are also being submitted by MDNR and MPCA to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative as a suite of projects within the AOC. The project is consistent with sorting criteria being established for the GLRI. It is anticipated that monies obtained through the GLRI would be used to match State funding sources and therefore reduce State obligations by approximately 50% for completion of both L-SOHC and Clean Water elements of the project. State and Federal partners on the SLRA are actively coordinating the process by which Federal and State funding sources can be affectively applied to complete AOC projects.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Constitutional Funding: Clean Water Program (Clean Water funds are required to complete project funding)	2,500,000		
Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (An application has been submitted to reduce Constitutional Funding request by 50%)	2,700,000		
MDNR Fisheries In-kind services	7,000	7,000	7,000
TOTAL	5,207,000	7,000	7,000

G. Outcomes:

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>4.1 miles stream corridor</i>
Protect				<i>7000 feet stream corridor</i>
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>Northern Forest</i>
Protect				<i>Northern Forest</i>
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>\$2,453,000</i>
Protect				<i>\$61,000</i>
Enhance				

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				\$5,200,000
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				32 acres (7,000 feet of stream channel + 100 feet either side of channel)

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Upper watershed connectivity restored	2011	8 culvert upgrades
Lower watershed connectivity restored	2013	10 culvert upgrades
Upper reach instream habitat restored	2012	1500 ft channel reconstruction
Lower reach instream habitat restored	2012	1700 ft channel reconstruction
Riparian revegetation complete	2013	30 acres revegetation
Stream corridor and access protected	2011	Easement AMA

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

All costs included in this project proposal are supplemental to currently budgeted projects. MDNR anticipates providing approximately \$7,000/ year in-kind services and program oversight services. Total MDNR FY09 budget expenditures were \$350 million and total Division of Fish and Wildlife FY09 budget expenditures were \$92.6 million.

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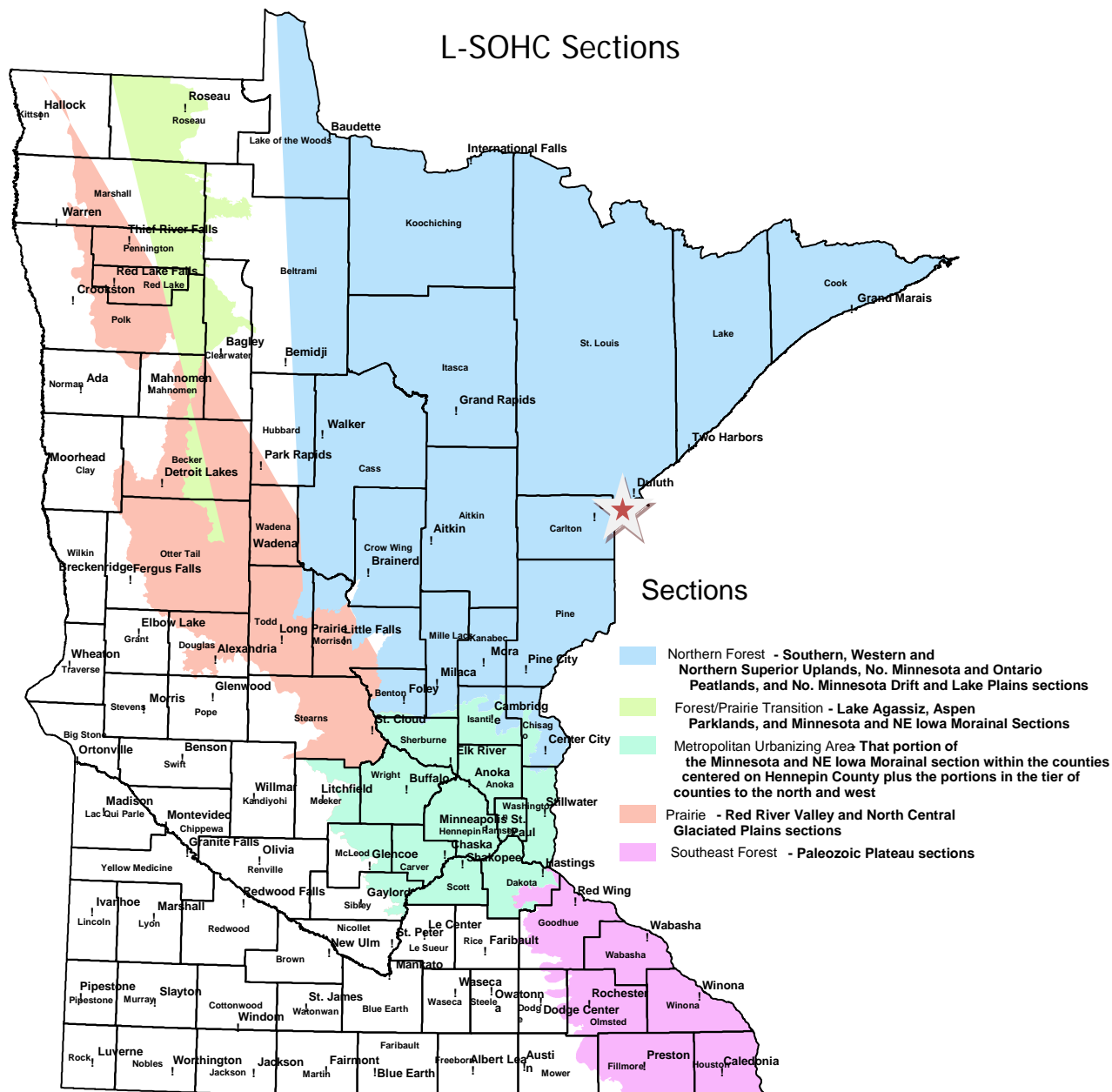
J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Channel restoration and other habitat improvements are designed to be maintained by natural processes and will be self sustaining. Fisheries easements to protect access and riparian zones are managed by DNR through the existing Aquatic Management Area easement program.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Partial list of implementation projects for the St. Louis River Recovery Program (not in priority order).

1. Minnesota Point Barrier Beach and Dune Community Restoration
2. Spirit Island Estuary Flats Restoration
3. Spirit Lake Sheltered Bay / Shallow Wetlands Restoration
4. Mud Lake Sheltered Bay / Shallow Wetlands Restoration
5. Stora Enso Bay-Coffee Ground Flats (40th Ave West Complex) Restoration
6. Radio Tower Bay Sheltered Bay / Shallow Wetlands Restoration
7. Perch Lake Sheltered Bay / Shallow Wetlands Restoration
8. Erie Pier Complex Restoration
9. Interstate Island Nesting Bird Habitat Enhancement
10. Keene Creek Tributary Restoration



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: DNR AQUATIC HABITAT PROGRAM

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: **#33 DNR Aquatic Habitat Program**

Date: **November 2, 2009**

Manager's Name: **Michael Duval**
Title: **Lakes Management Coordinator**
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	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Aquatic Management Area Acquisition	10,206	10,206	10,206	11,750
Stream Habitat Restoration and Enhancement	5,893	5,200	5,700	6,500
Lake Habitat Enhancement	1,059	600	1000	1125
Outdoor Heritage Fund (Totals)	\$17,158	\$16,006	\$16,906	\$19,375

A. Summary

DNR requests \$17.2 million from the Outdoor Heritage Fund to deliver accelerated aquatic habitat management projects within a comprehensive statewide framework of existing DNR habitat programs. This proposal uses a multi-programmatic approach to achieve prioritized aquatic habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement for lakes, trout streams, and rivers across Minnesota. We propose to: i) protect 42.8 miles of shoreline on lakes, rivers and trout streams; ii) effect structural repairs to 4 lake outlet control structures that will integrate fish passage; iii) restore and enhance river and stream functions that will benefit over 600 river miles; and iv) enhance 3.6 miles of shoreline habitat on publicly-owned lakeshore. The strategic approach and priority resources targeted in this proposal are supported by a number of internal and external conservation planning documents. The DNR will implement the objectives of this proposal through established and highly successful programs each having strong stakeholder support including: Aquatic Management Area Program, Shoreland Habitat Restoration Program, Stream Habitat Program, and Coldwater Streams

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Program. Program outcomes proposed with this funding will align with Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Planning Section priorities.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Minnesota's aquatic habitats have been degraded or threatened by a century or more of land, hydrology, and human settlement related alterations. The consequences to aquatic species have been reduced habitats for essential life history stages, lack of access to traditional spawning areas, and fragmentation of formerly continuous habitat that served as corridors to facilitate seasonal movements.

Geographically, aquatic habitats are in various states of quality and experiencing differing levels of environmental stress with a general pattern of healthy habitats under low stress in the northeast and less healthy habitats under high stress in the southern and western portions of the state (see Figure H-15 in the State Conservation and Preservation Plan). But even within this generalized pattern there are many notable exceptions – aquatic habitats exhibiting declining quality under high environmental stress in the northeast, and moderate to high quality habitats within high environmental stress landscapes to the west and south. This provides a meaningful framework for providing habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement through DNR's diverse habitat programs infrastructure.

2. What action will be taken?

DNR will acquire 42.8 miles of critical shoreland habitat in fee title or permanent easement along lakes, rivers, and trout streams; develop preliminary designs and implement construction activities to enhance fish passage across barriers and reconnecting access to over 600 miles of trout streams and major rivers; effect structural repairs to four lake outlet control structures that will integrate fish passage; develop preliminary designs and implement construction activities to restore channel stability along one mile of trout stream and 3 miles of major rivers; offer incentive matching grants to up to five local governments that incur increased capital costs to upgrade project designs above minimum allowable standards to achieve fish passage at stream crossings scheduled for repair or replacement; provide technical assistance to local governments and provide matching funds for activities to enhance 3.6 miles of public shoreline habitat along AMAs and other state, county, township, and municipal lands; and provide trout stream corridor enhancement benefiting over 100 miles of stream by excluding livestock, removing invasive plant species, and reestablishing native cover on public-owned lands and easements.

3. Who will take action and when?

DNR will begin immediately, upon approval by L-SOHC, to implement this Program. DNR will initiate contracts for grants, appraisals, and certain construction activities within three months of the first fiscal year of the appropriation for a number of projects; conduct feasibility and preliminary design studies to select preferred options throughout the grant period for some construction projects; and develop engineering

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designs throughout the three fiscal years for additional construction projects that DNR will seek to fund with future capital bonding and L-SOHC requests.

Proposed activities will be conducted by DNR staff and by contract for services (e.g., MCC work crews, construction contractors, and independent real estate appraisers). DNR proposes temporary field staff and program coordinator positions during the term of this grant request to implement these accelerated habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement objectives where the proposed activities stretch beyond the Department's current capacity.

Temporary field staff will perform the following activities:

- ½ FTE Land Acquisition Specialist: Position will be shared with Section of Wildlife to process acquisition fact sheets and coordinate AMA projects. This shared position will add capacity to efficiently process accelerated acquisition of AMA fee title and permanent easement lands.
- 2 FTE Field Acquisition Specialists: Positions will be stationed in SE Minnesota and the North Shore to identify strategic stream parcels to acquire, work with landowners, and develop permanent easement acquisition projects. The AMA Acquisition Plan establishes aggressive permanent easement acquisition targets for these two landscapes, but existing staff capacity does not exist to cultivate accelerated projects. These positions specifically will work toward achieving those targets.
- 1 FTE Stream Restoration Coordinator: Position will provide project coordination and technical review for stream restoration and dam modification projects. Position will prepare environmental review documents necessary for project implementation.
- 2 FTE River Ecologists: Positions will be located in field offices and will provide local expertise for project designs, contact affected landowners, work with local governments, prepare environmental review documents, conduct on-site inspections of construction activities, and assess future candidate project sites.
- ½ FTE Shoreland Restoration Specialist: Position will provide public lakeshore enhancement project design and review, technical assistance to local units of government, project site inspections, and block grant contract coordination.
- 1 FTE Fish Passage Specialist: Position will provide technical review of design plans for enhancing fish passage across HW61 at three significant fish spawning tributaries of Lake Superior. Position will also conduct field assessments of other key Lake Superior spawning tributaries to identify additional candidate fish passage projects and initiate pre-design work.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

The proposed habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement activities are most appropriately suited to the Outdoor Heritage Fund, although some activities will have additional secondary benefits to water quality (e.g., reduced nutrient and sediment loading). DNR will ensure that L-SOHC funds are applied to qualifying projects and will complement overall Program budgets resulting in comprehensive delivery that benefits Minnesota's aquatic resources.

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5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

DNR will protect 42.8 shoreline miles (2,095 acres) of new Aquatic Management Areas (AMA) on lakes, warmwater streams, and trout streams for habitat protection and compatible public outdoor uses consistent with the Outdoor Recreation Act (M.S. 86A.05, Subd.14) and Minnesota Rules Chapter 6270.

Fish passage over in-stream barriers on coldwater streams and warmwater rivers will reconnect fish and other aquatic species to hundreds of miles of upstream habitats essential for spawning, juvenile life stages, overall population abundance and genetic diversity. Dam modifications will be completed to enhance fish passage and reconnect 147.5 river miles. Channel modifications will be completed to restore stability to 3 river miles. This proposal will also provide engineering designs necessary to queue up successive years' construction projects to a stage of readiness for dirt-moving. These design projects ultimately will benefit an additional 400 miles of river upon completion of construction activities. Preliminary design and feasibility work will be completed for 6 projects, and final engineering to enable construction activities under a future proposal will be completed for 3 projects. Fish passage will be enhanced following structural repairs to 4 lake outlet controls, benefiting not only native fish species directly but also native mussel species that are dependent on fish for upstream transport.

At the end of the L-SOHC grant period, 3.6 miles of public shoreline including AMAs and other state, county, township, and municipal lands will be enhanced to provide erosion protection, habitat diversity for multiple species of fish and wildlife (including game species and SGCNs), and enhanced aesthetics. Project habitat benefits will continue to accrue beyond the term of this grant as project sites mature and the shoreline assumes a more natural character.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

Protection benefits will be realized immediately upon transfer of fee title or permanent easement interest to the DNR.

Within three years following restoration or enhancement, projects should be providing the desired habitat functions. Some changes will immediately follow the proposed activity (e.g., fish movement following barrier modification) while other changes will accrue incrementally over a few years following the proposed action (e.g., native grasses and woody plants following shoreline enhancement).

For pre-design and engineering accomplished under this proposal, habitat changes are expected to result following future appropriations that will be requested from various sources including capital bonding and L-SOHC to fund the construction work called for in the engineering design solution.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If not, how will you finance completion?

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The DNR will accomplish the scope of work proposed in this grant request. Note that this proposal queues up construction-ready projects for future funding rounds of the L-SOHC. The nature of large-scale habitat restoration and enhancement projects of the magnitude called for in the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan requires a longer timeline to develop and complete (typically 4-5 years) than the three fiscal year funding cycle of the Outdoor Heritage Fund grants. DNR's approach is to break major construction-related activities into elements of Planning, Design, and Construction that can individually be accomplished within the funding cycle, but a given project may not proceed through all of these elements within the funding cycle.

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Routine maintenance of AMA parcels will be accomplished by Area Fisheries Managers as part of their public land management responsibilities. Periodic enhancements such as invasive species removal, prescribed burning, supplemental vegetation planting, shoreline stabilization and restoration, or water control structure installation and replacement will be accomplished through annual funding requests from a variety of funding sources including, but not limited to, Game and Fish Fund, Bonding, Gifts, Federal Sources, Environmental Trust Fund, and Outdoor Heritage Fund.

For shoreline restoration grants, routine maintenance will be accomplished by the local unit of government as part of an overall block grant agreement. Supplemental vegetation planting, watering of the restoration site, and removal of invasive plant species are typical maintenance requirements during the early stages of restoration projects.

Restoring natural channel function or mimicking natural riffles/rapids results in the desired habitat benefit but also provides self-maintenance.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

Acquisition of priority habitats provides permanent protection backed by state and federal laws.

Providing fish passage over in-stream barriers such as low-head dams and culverts by backfilling with rock or recessing in the streambed, respectively, reconnects fish and other aquatic species to upstream habitats essential for spawning, juvenile life stages, and overall abundance and genetic diversity of aquatic species. Stream restoration projects reconstruct the stream's natural pattern, profile, and dimension. Natural stream design favors hydrologic conditions that do not degrade the stream bank and bed and provides a diversity of microhabitats that are more favorable to fish and other aquatic species.

At the end of the L-SOHC grant period, 3.6 miles of public shoreline including AMAs and other state, county, township, and municipal lands will be enhanced to provide erosion protection, habitat diversity for multiple species of fish and wildlife (including game species and SGCNs), and enhanced aesthetics. Native plants and natural materials will be utilized to increase habitat complexity, provide protective cover,

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stabilize shorelines, and firmly anchor soils. Project habitat benefits will continue to accrue beyond the term of this grant as project sites mature and the shoreline assumes a more natural character.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **X** **YES**

☐ **NO**

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Funds from this grant will be used to enhance lakeshore habitats on publicly-owned lands (e.g., State, County, Township, and municipal lands). Stream restoration work will occur on existing DNR perpetual easements or lands acquired in fee title.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

DNR, as a state agency, is subject to intense scrutiny and operates under well established fiscal laws, rules and policies subject to regular fiscal audits. DNR is also subject to data practices policies that make appropriate information available upon request. DNR will provide all reports, updates and progress reports as requested by the L-SOHC and the Legislature.

12. Why will this strategy work?

The AMA designation unit within the Outdoor Recreation System was established by the Legislature in 1992 and has strong support from conservation groups and anglers. The AMA Program currently has an inventory of 830 miles of shoreline in over 330 AMAs, which provide permanent protection of critical riparian habitats, perpetuate fish and wildlife populations, safeguard water quality, and offer public recreational opportunities as an important additional benefit.

Channel restoration, dam modification, and shoreline enhancement work is based on proven methods and DNR experience with multiple projects. As examples of these successful strategies, DNR has conducted large-scale projects to restore the Whitewater River to its original channel; reconnected nearly the entire Minnesota portions of the Red River by direct dam removal or modification leaving only a few dams presently remaining that impede fish movements (primarily lake sturgeon); and enhanced 21 miles of shoreline on lakes across the state including many challenging high erosion sites. These are significant and durable accomplishments benefiting aquatic habitat.

The DNR has worked on large-scale river and stream restoration projects since 1998 and has completed or assisted in design elements of over 100 stream projects addressing restoration, fish passage, dam removal and dam modification to rapids. DNR successfully reverses these effects by using natural channel design. This promotes stable stream channels that are designed with the appropriate dimension, pattern, and profile with beds that neither aggrade nor degrade over time. Also projects address other key components of a stream: wildlife and fish habitat, water quality, connectivity to the floodplain and upstream reaches, and hydrology. By drawing on the accumulated scientific knowledge on all components of the stream

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DNR strives to deliver the best possible restoration projects using the best science available.

The DNR has conducted shoreline enhancement projects for over 10 years and during that time the program has grown in scope and popularity. The annual number of shoreland restoration projects completed has increased from 23 in 2002 to 60 in 2009.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

Landowners, local units of government, soil and water conservation districts, watershed management organizations, lake associations, partners, other state and federal agencies, permitting authorities.

DNR experience has shown that substantial road blocks to project success can fall quickly by subtle shifts in circumstances or in an individual's opinion. The opposite can be true as well. It is difficult to predict these shifts but DNR's strategy is to maintain open dialog with all affected parties to ensure project success. Recognizing such external barriers to success exist, DNR considers factors such as willing landowners, local support, and energized partners in addition to project benefits to the resource when establishing project priorities.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

_____ **YES**

☒ **NO**

Township and County support are usually obtained as part of the acquisition process. County Boards are typically notified after AMA parcels have been optioned and consistent with DNR policy.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

☒ **YES**

_____ **NO**

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

☒ **YES**

_____ **NO**

If Yes what kind of use?

Whenever possible, AMA easement lands will be opened for angling, hunting, and other non-motorized light use activities consistent with M.R. 6270.0200.

Easements for stream channel restoration will provide for DNR management access as the primary easement interest acquired. Public use is a secondary interest that DNR will seek whenever possible.

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- 17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?**

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

- 18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?**

☐ Indefinite ☐ Years

The AMA program is ongoing as opportunity and need arises. In 2007, the AMA Acquisition Planning Committee developed an acquisition plan that recommended purchasing an additional 2,595 miles of riparian lands over 25 years to meet the habitat protection needs of a rapidly changing Minnesota.

Restoration and enhancement aspects of this proposal will be accomplished by other established programs within DNR.

- 19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.**

☒ Northern Forest

☒ Forest/Prairie Transition

☒ Southeast Forest

☒ Prairie

☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

- 20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?**

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If yes, please explain.

In the short-term, land markets are depressed along with the general economy, which has temporarily eased speculative development influence on land sale prices. This will provide a short-term opportunity to extend the state's acquisition buying power. In the long-term, steadily rising land costs, increasing urban development from population expansion, declining water quality, and conversion of existing shoreline habitats to residential lots make protection and restoration of remaining shoreline habitats urgent.

Identified shoreland areas in need of enhancement are no longer providing habitat benefits or are eroding and compromising in-lake habitat. The DNR has a number of willing local government partners ready to initiate shoreline enhancement work with assistance through agency matching grant funds.

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Many stream restoration projects are based on timing. Considerable effort has been expended by the DNR on developing projects that are at the top of the priority list. Obtaining funds in a timely manner is crucial to project success and completion.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☒ **X** **YES**

☐ **NO**

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

Some of the proposed restoration and enhancement activities will occur on AMA lands. See attached map showing the distribution of AMAs in the state.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

☒ **X** **YES**

☐ **NO**

If yes explain the model briefly.

Our model is similar in that it is composed of planning, implementation and evaluation phases in the traditional adaptive management framework.

DNR develops management plans based on assessment data for actively managed lakes and streams in the state. Management plans guide fish population management and identify opportunities for habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement. Additional strategic planning documents guide habitat management activities, and these are referenced under Section C of the proposal.

Proposed projects are ranked using specific criteria. Considerable quantitative measurements go into the criteria development for stream restoration projects such as fish survey data, watershed evaluation, and presence of state or federally listed species. Acquisition scoring criteria follow the recommendations of the AMA Acquisition Planning Committee. Ranked projects are approved for implementation through an internal review process.

Evaluation is an integral step and, for stream restorations, involves project monitoring of fish passage, water chemistry, and continued geomorphology surveys to evaluate projects. Similar evaluations are conducted for lakeshore enhancement projects to ensure projects are functioning as designed.

From these evaluations research is driven to improve designs and continue development of future projects. We also use the research to inform professionals working on stream restoration from state, federal and private firms through a series of courses taught by the Stream Habitat Program to further stream restoration efforts.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Clearly, fish need more than water to support abundant and diverse populations.

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As residential development increases around lakes, human behaviors and activities in the immediate riparian area lead to physical alteration of aquatic habitats. The attendant loss of near shore habitat, primarily reductions in native vegetation, coarse woody habitat from fallen trees, and physical reshaping of the shoreline and shallow areas, is well documented in the scientific literature as is the correlation between these human-caused changes and reductions in fish species diversity, densities and growth rates. These changes also create new, compromised habitats that in turn aid in the establishment of nonnative species, further disturbing and competing for native game fish habitat. Studies have also documented the negative effects of lakeshore alteration caused by housing development on the composition of breeding birds, reptile and amphibian abundance. As homes become denser, tree-falls dwindle due to thinning and removal of trees along the lakeshore—sometime to better the lake view—and the removal of downed trees from the water. Construction and placement of shoreline erosion control structures, usually needed to compensate for the stability lost from native vegetation removal, reduces complex natural habitat elements. A university study in Maine has quantified significant reductions in habitat complexity along developed shoreline as compared to undeveloped shoreline, and between developed lakes and undeveloped lakes at a system scale. A similar study in Vermont has identified significant negative correlations in habitat quality and shoreline development. DNR is working to identify and protect sensitive shoreland areas through a collaborative pilot project with a local government unit in central Minnesota.

The landscape and rivers of Minnesota have been altered by population growth and associated activities (e.g., timber and food production). This has left many of our river systems in poor ecological condition due to straightening projects, increased erosion and deposition, increased nutrient inputs, and fragmentation by in-stream barriers and structures limiting access to floodplains. The science of stream channel restoration and natural fluvial process is relatively recent (past 30+ years) and guided by the pioneering stream geomorphology work of Luna Leopold and, more recently, David Rosgen. Though the scientific foundation is more recent, the success of the approach is well documented. Traditional “hard” engineering techniques that do not consider the overall hydrology of the stream system have proven to be less durable over time or shifted problems downstream as opposed to “natural” stream design that factors the overall hydrology of the system into the engineering solution.

24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

DNR natural resource plans (listed in Section C below) provide much of the criteria for prioritizing habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement activities. For example, AMA acquisition and large-scale stream restoration and enhancement projects are scored based on a suite of criteria ranging from scope of project and quality of resource benefited to project readiness and feasibility. The sum of these scores creates a ranking value from which to prioritize among the many available project opportunities. See pp. 40-41 of AMA Plan for example of scoring criteria.

Other projects are more opportunity driven such as lakeshore habitat or fish passage enhancement where the needs are ubiquitous. Priorities are then based upon willing landowners, capable partners and the magnitude of the project or benefit to resource. Projects that enhance a sizeable length of shoreline, reconnect access to many miles of

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formerly severed stream, or build upon previous projects within a habitat complex are examples of prioritization considerations.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

MNDNR Strategic Conservation Agenda Update:

Meets the criteria of conservation in the Mission Statement, ‘work with citizens to conserve and manage the state’s natural resources;’ and Strategic Conservation Agenda goals to conserve, restore, and enhance Minnesota’s natural lands and habitats, water resources, and watersheds.

Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan

This proposal addresses a number of recommendations contained in the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan including:

- Habitat Recommendation 2, Protect critical shorelands of streams and lakes (p. 67). Fee acquisition and conservation easements among tools needed for protection of critical shorelines of streams and lakes. Acquiring the highest-priority shorelines “is one essential component of a multi-strategy approach to preserving the clean water legacy that Minnesota’s citizens and visitors are used to experiencing. (p.69)” Benefits include protection of critical shoreline habitats from degradation, public angler access, and providing areas for education and research.
- Habitat Recommendation 6A, Restore habitat structure within lakes (p. 76). This recommendation seeks “... to restore the natural features of lakeshore habitats (area comprising the shoreland, shoreline, and near-shore).”
- Habitat Recommendation 6B, Protect and restore in-stream habitats (p. 82). Several approaches can be implemented to protect and restore in-stream habitats. Removal or modification of dams and installing culverts with increased capacity would improve connectivity of aquatic systems. Riparian vegetation can be restored to stabilize stream banks. Channelized streams can be reconstructed to provide a flood plain to dissipate stream energy and allow the channel to remeander, which will provide more diverse habitat for aquatic organisms.

Tomorrow’s Habitat for the Wild and Rare

The State’s Wildlife Action Plan is a rare species condition assessment and habitat conservation guidance document for Minnesota’s species of greatest conservation need. Several aquatic species of biota are included in this plan including plants, insects, mussels, fish, and water-dependent and seasonal migrant bird species.

Minnesota’s AMA Acquisition Plan 2008-2033

The DNR’s AMA Acquisition Plan calls for shoreline acquisition to ensure shoreline habitat protection, water quality maintenance, and angler access for present and future generations. This plan envisions acquisition of 3,428 miles of lake and stream habitat during the next 25 years. This proposal would fund progress toward that goal.

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Strategic Plan for Coldwater Resources Management in Southeast Minnesota 2004-2015

This plan establishes targets to protect, improve, and restore coldwater aquatic habitat and fish communities. The plan identifies important issues and strategies that will enable DNR to maintain and improve the short and long-term values of the unique trout stream resource of the Southeast and provide angling clientele with diverse angling opportunities.

Red River of the North Fisheries Management Plan

The overall approach to habitat management in the Red River is to maintain, restore, enhance, and protect riverine and upland habitats and their functions. The plan includes the following recommended actions:

- Establish and maintain stable stream channels.
- Improve and protect high quality fish spawning and rearing habitats within Red River and tributaries.
- Provide uninterrupted fish passage/river connectivity.
- Provide appropriate heterogeneous and complex physical habitat components.
- Provide water of sufficient water quality to sustain healthy aquatic systems.
- Re-establish a more natural flow regime.

Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership: Strategic Plan for Fish Habitat Conservation in Midwest Glacial Lakes

The Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership (MGLP) is a formal Fish Habitat Partnership under the National Fish Habitat Action Plan ([.fishhabitat.org](http://fishhabitat.org)). The mission of the Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership is to work together to protect, rehabilitate, and enhance sustainable fish habitats in glacial lakes of the Midwest for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations. MGLP has developed a strategic plan ([.MidwestGlacialLakes.org/resources/](http://MidwestGlacialLakes.org/resources/)) to protect and restore aquatic habitats in naturally-formed glacial lakes across the upper Midwest states. The MGLP strategic plan identifies a number of objectives (p. 26-29) designed to conserve (protect, restore, and enhance) the habitats of Midwestern glacial lake fish populations, to support a broad natural diversity of aquatic species, to promote self-sustaining fish populations, and to provide successful fishing opportunities.

National Fish Habitat Action Plan

The National Fish Habitat Action Plan is a national partnership-based framework for achieving protection and restoration of priority aquatic habitats that support a broad natural diversity of fish and other aquatic species. The plan uses a science-based approach to target priority areas and implement needed projects that address causative factors and use best management practices. The Action Plan is implemented through regional Fish Habitat Partnerships (functionally analogous to Waterfowl Joint Ventures under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan which is supported by the North American Wetlands Conservation Act). Fish Habitat Partnerships leverage national and state resources to achieve local priorities for habitat protection and restoration.

([.fishhabitat.org/documents/plan/National_Fish_Habitat_Action_Plan.pdf](http://fishhabitat.org/documents/plan/National_Fish_Habitat_Action_Plan.pdf))

Individual Lake and Stream Management Plans

The Section of Fisheries produces individual fisheries management plans for every actively managed lake and stream resource in the state. In addition to fish population goals and

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objectives, these plans identify habitat actions unique to each waterbody that are needed or beneficial to sustain quality fisheries.

D. Budget (\$000s)

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	468	528	463
Contracts			
Design/Construction	1,160	1,115	1,446
MCC Crews	150	100	
Grants	300	300	50
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	140	50	10
Fee Acquisition	3,652	1,826	609
Easement Acquisition	1,765	908	310
Easement Stewardship	50	125	200
Professional Services*	672	392	305
Travel	25	20	20
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$8,382	\$5,364	\$3,413

* Professional services include Division of Lands & Minerals land acquisition negotiations, appraisals, AGO, and related services; Management Resources engineering design services; and contracted costs for shared services activities including DNR Office of Management and Budget Services, Human Resources, Management Resources and Information & Education base level services.

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E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
Land Acq. Specialist (0.5 FTE)		\$40,000/year = \$120,000
Field Acq. Spec, NE MN (NR Spec Int 8L-06)		\$60,000/year = \$180,000
Field Acq. Spec, SE MN (NR Spec Int 8L-06)		\$60,000/year = \$120,000
Restoration Coordinator		\$95,000/year = \$285,000
River Ecologist		\$85,000/year = \$255,000
River Ecologist		\$85,000/year = \$255,000
Shoreland Restoration Specialist (0.5 FTE)		\$37,500/year = \$112,500
Fish Passage Specialist		\$65,000/year = \$130,000

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F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

All Sources of Leverage (\$000)	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
DNR In-Kind Staff Time	150	150	150
LCCMR			
RIM-CHMP	500	1,250	
Donations of cash and land value	1,500	1,250	
Initiative Foundation		100	100
Minnesota Waters		10	
USFWS Fish Passage Grant	10	75	
Dingell-Johnson federal aid			
Local grant match	100	300	250
TOTAL	\$2,260	\$3,135	\$ 500

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

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Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>Restore 3 miles of stream; and 1 mile of trout stream</i>
Protect				<i>Acquire 17.1 miles of lakeshore and warmwater stream; 25.7 miles of coldwater stream</i>
Enhance				<i>Enhance 147.5 miles of stream due to removal of fish passage barriers. Enhance 3.6 miles of public lakeshore. Enhance trout stream corridors at multiple sites. Enhance fish passage over 4 outlet control structures. Enhance fish passage through culverts in on up to 5 sites. Complete design work to enhance fish passage under HW61 on 3 Lake Superior tributary streams. Complete pre-design work on 6 large-scale river and stream projects.</i>

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			<i>Complete design work on 3 large-scale river and stream projects.</i>
--	--	--	---

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Northern Forest				
Restore				
Protect				<i>Acquire 8.3 miles of lakeshore and warmwater stream; 15.5 miles of trout stream</i>
Enhance				<i>10 miles of stream enhanced due to removal of fish passage barriers</i>
Forest/Prairie Transition				
Restore				<i>3 miles of stream</i>
Protect				<i>Acquire 5.0 miles of lakeshore and warmwater stream; 0.6 miles of trout stream</i>
Enhance				<i>106.5 miles of stream enhanced due to removal of barriers</i>
Southeast Forest				
Restore				<i>1 mile of trout stream</i>
Protect				<i>Acquire 1.1</i>

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				<i>miles of warmwater stream; 6.6 miles of trout stream</i>
Enhance				<i>100 miles of trout stream</i>
Prairie				
Restore				
Protect				<i>Acquire 2.2 miles of lakeshore; 1.2 miles of warmwater and trout stream</i>
Enhance				<i>31 miles of stream enhanced due to removal of fish passage barriers</i>
Metropolitan Urbanizing Area				
Restore				
Protect				<i>Acquire 0.5 miles of lakeshore and warmwater stream; 1.8 miles of trout stream</i>
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation (\$000)	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>2,190</i>
Protect				<i>10,160</i>
Enhance				<i>4,808</i>

Program Title: DNR AQUATIC HABITAT PROGRAM

Table 4 Leverage \$000	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>385</i>
Protect				<i>4,500</i>
Enhance				<i>1010</i>

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				<i>17.1 miles of lakeshore and warmwater stream</i>
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				<i>25.7 miles of trout stream</i>

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone

Date

Measure

AMA Acquisition

1. Acquire priority fee title and easements	June,30, 2011	25.7 miles
2. Acquire priority fee title and easements	June,30, 2012	12.8 miles
3. Acquire priority fee title and easements	June,30, 2013	<u>4.3 miles</u>
Total		42.8 miles

Lake Habitat Enhancement

1. Solicit grant requests from LGUs	Fall 2010	No. of grants received
2. Review grant proposals and make funding determination	Sept – Dec, 2010	No. of grants awarded
3. Award grants	Spring 2011	
4. Oversee restoration plans, project installation, and technical advice	Spring 2011 – 2013	Projects completed; linear feet of shoreline restored or enhanced

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: DNR AQUATIC HABITAT PROGRAM

- | | | |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| 5. Complete final inspections to assure projects are completed satisfactorily and are providing benefits described | Spring 2012 – 2013 | No. of projects maintained |
| 6. Reconstruct lake outlet control structures | Fall 2011-2013 | 4 dams integrate fish passage |

Stream Habitat Restoration and Enhancement

- | | | |
|---|--------------------|--|
| 1. Pre-design project plans with conceptual designs completed | June 30, 2011-2013 | 2 projects per year (6 total) |
| 2. Completed designs ready for construction | June 30, 2011-2013 | 1 project per year (3 total) |
| 3. Completed major construction projects | June 30, 2013 | 2 projects completed, restoring 3 mi stream & enhancing 147.5 mi streams |
| 4. Provide matching grant funds to local road authorities | Fall 2011-2013 | Up to 5 culvert & bridge crossings provide functional fish passage |
| 5. Complete trout stream restoration | June 30, 2012 | 1 mile of trout stream is restored |
| 6. Complete trout stream corridor enhancement | Fall 2012 | Livestock are excluded from stream; invasive species are removed; native vegetation cover is planted |

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

DNR FY 09 Expenditures (all sources, \$000)	\$350,000
Division of Fish and Wildlife FY09 Expenditures by Program	
Overall (all sources)	\$92,600
AMA Acquisition	\$2,152
Lake Habitat Enhancement	\$731
Trout Stream Restoration/Enhancement	\$574
Fish Passage	\$36

Division of Ecological Resources FY09 Expenditures by Program	
Overall (all sources)	\$25,800
River & Stream Restoration/Enhancement	\$118

Division of Waters FY09 Expenditures by Program	
Overall (all sources)	\$11,624
Dam modification	\$699

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

AMA acquisitions will be sustained through fee title ownership and perpetual easements held by the DNR. This is a long-term protection strategy.

River and stream restoration activities are designed to work with natural hydrology of systems so as to be durable and self-maintaining over time.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: DNR AQUATIC HABITAT PROGRAM

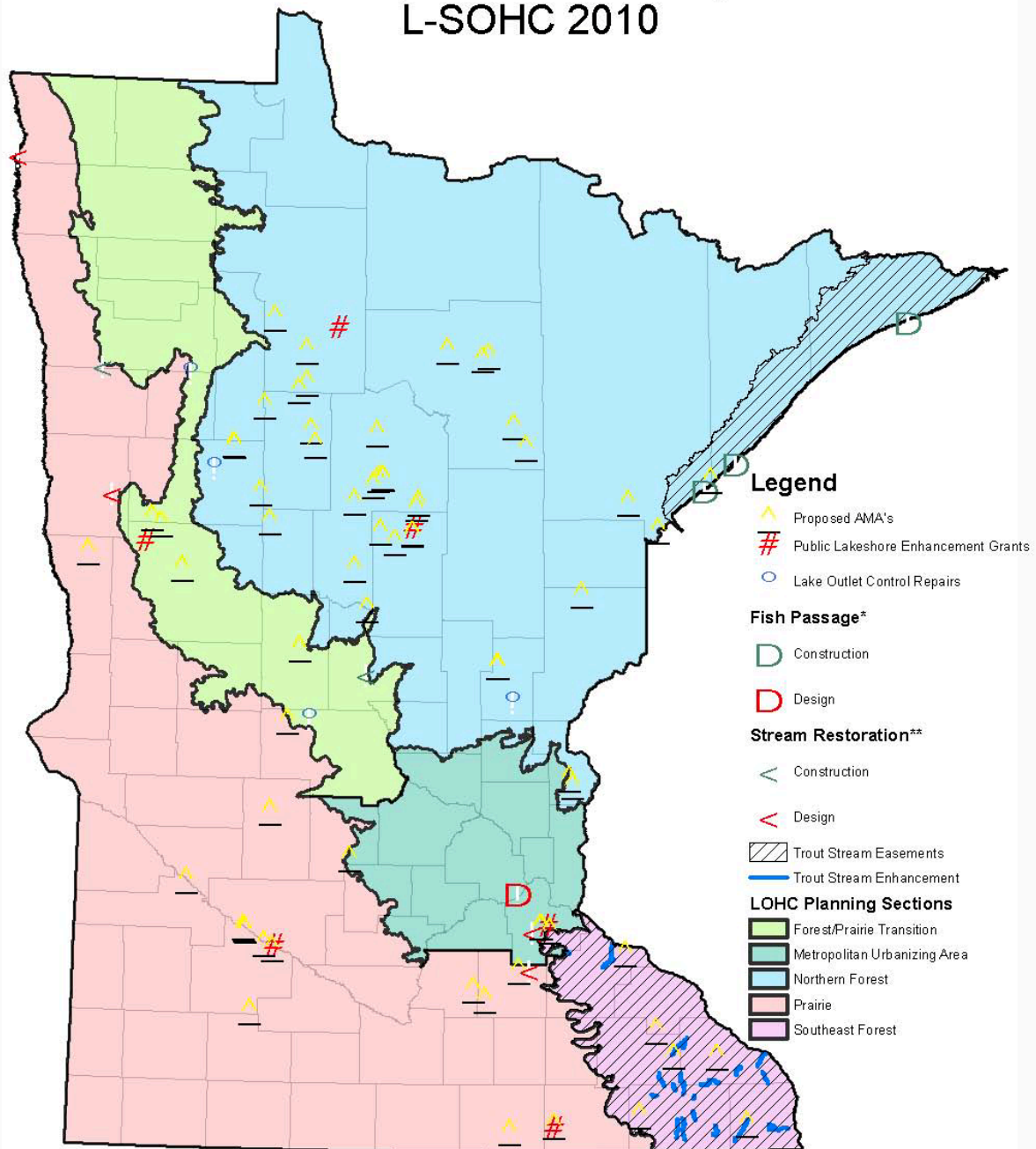
Lakeshore enhancement activities will be sustained by the local units of government receiving grant funds. A maintenance plan is required prior to project implementation as well as a 10-year maintenance agreement on all funded projects. Typically if a project is implemented and maintained for a 10-year period, the critical maintenance has been completed and long term project success is likely.

Culvert passage grants issued under this proposal will be sustained through the lifespan of the structure.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

See attachments for map and list of projects. NOTE: List of projects is tentative and based upon a point-in-time assessment of opportunities and priorities. Actual project locations may differ although alternate projects will be selected within a strategic decision framework as described previously in this proposal.

DNR Aquatic Habitat Program L-SOHC 2010



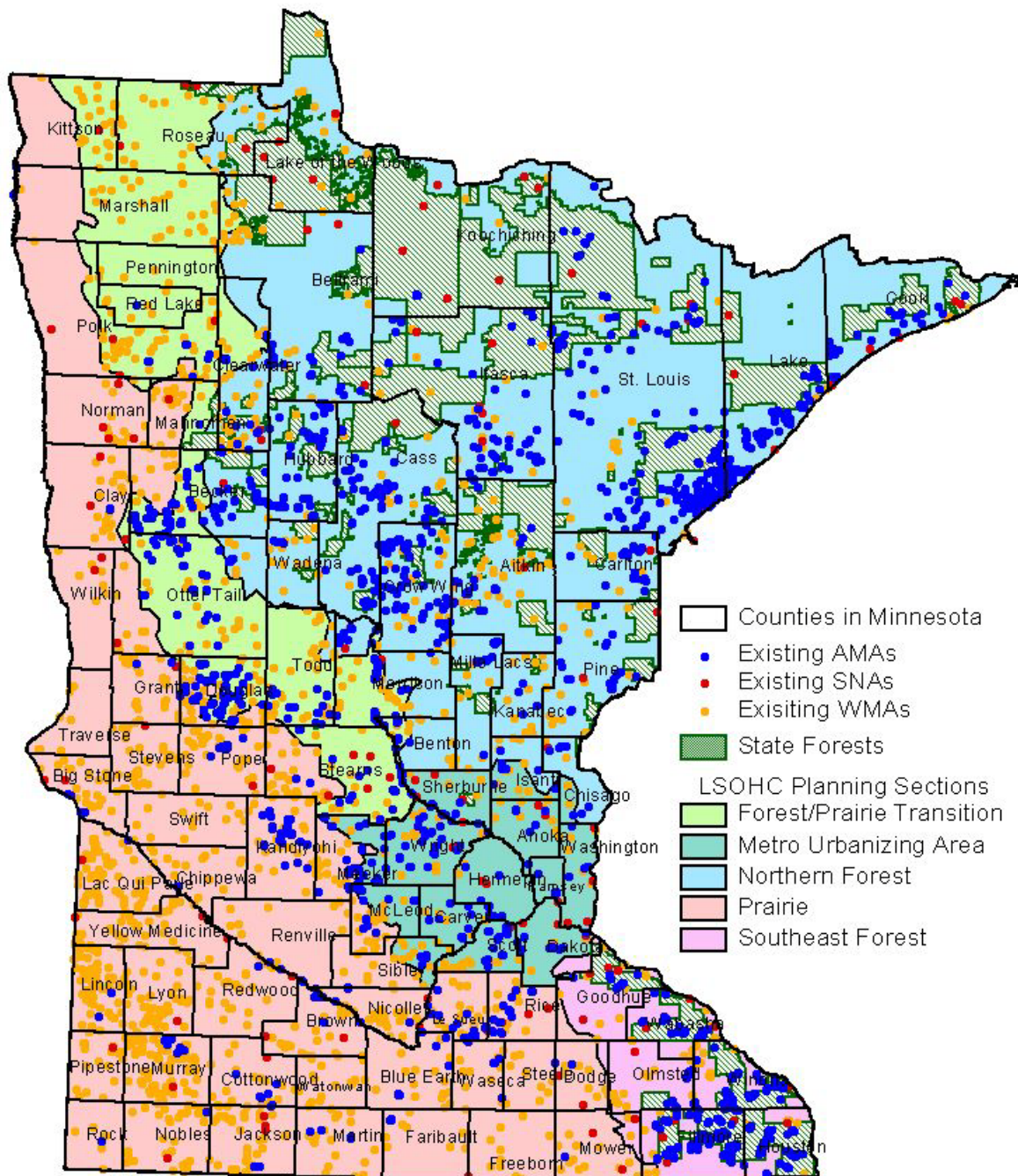
* Fish passage grants to LGU's for streams, statewide

** All six stream restoration projects will need pre-design before completion

11/1/09

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Existing WMAs, AMAs, SNAs, and State Forests



10/29/09

Program Title: DNR AQUATIC HABITAT PROGRAM**DNR AQUATIC HABITAT TENTATIVE PROJECT LIST
L-SOHC 2010**

Lake/Stream	County/City	Activity
Dead Lake	Otter Tail	AMA
Little Knife	Kanabec	AMA
Big Too Much Lake, P1	Itasca	AMA
Minnesota River	Redwood	AMA
Bruce Creek	Itasca	AMA
Goodrich Lake	Crow Wing	AMA
Sturgeon Lake	Pine	AMA
Cedar River	Mower	AMA
Eagle Lake	Itasca	AMA
Horseshoe Lake	Itasca	AMA
Cottonwood R	Redwood	AMA
Star Lake	Crow Wing	AMA
St. Louis River	St. Louis	AMA
North Branch Whitewater R.	Wabasha	AMA
Woman Lake	Cass	AMA
Woman Lake	Cass	AMA
Bull Lake	Chisago	AMA
Goodrich Lake	Crow Wing	AMA
Little Knife	Kanabec	AMA
Minnesota River	Chippewa	AMA
Woman Lake	Cass	AMA
Balm Lake	Beltrami	AMA
Lake Bemidji	Beltrami	AMA
Buck	Becker	AMA
Caron Lake	Rice	AMA
Florida Lake	Kandiyohi	AMA
Greenleaf	Meeker	AMA
Lawndale Cr	Wilkin	AMA
Lawndale Cr	Wilkin	AMA
Lester Lake	Hubbard	AMA
Little Grand	St. Louis	AMA
Woman Lake	Cass	AMA
Maud Lake	Becker	AMA
Middle Br Whitewater R.	Olmsted	AMA
S. Br. Vermillion	Dakota	AMA

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Program Title: DNR AQUATIC HABITAT PROGRAM

Spring Brook	Rice	AMA
Strait River	Becker	AMA
Turtle Lake	Beltrami	AMA
Upper Whitefish	Crow Wing	AMA
Washburn Lake	Cass	AMA
Minnesota River	Redwood	AMA
Minnesota River	Redwood	AMA
Bad Medicine Lake	Becker	AMA
Kabekona River	Hubbard	AMA
Knife River	Lake	AMA
Little Sand	Itasca	AMA
Marquette Lake	Beltrami	AMA
Minnesota River	Redwood	AMA
Spring Valley Creek	Fillmore	AMA
Sunrise Lake	Chisago	AMA
Long Prairie River	Todd	AMA
Minnesota River	Redwood	AMA
Bad Medicine Lake	Becker	AMA
Bullard Creek	Goodhue	AMA
Bullard Creek	Goodhue	AMA
Statewide	Winona	AMA
North Branch Whitewater R.	Winona	AMA
Shell Rock R Albert Lea Lake	Freeborn	AMA
Snowshoe Lake	Cass	AMA
Vermillion River	Dakota	AMA
Vermillion River	Dakota	AMA
West Beaver Creek	Houston	AMA
White Earth	Becker	AMA
La Salle	Hubbard	AMA
Sauk River	Stearns	AMA
Spirit	Wadena	AMA
Mississippi River	Crow Wing	AMA
Statewide	Primarily SE	AMA
Round Lake	Becker	Dam repair
Fish Lake	Kanabec	Dam repair
Sylvia Lake	Stearns	Dam repair
Sand Hill Lake	Polk	Dam repair
Vermillion River	Dakota	Channel modification
Mississippi River	Little Falls	Dam modification

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Program Title: DNR AQUATIC HABITAT PROGRAM

Drayton Dam	Kittson	Dam modification
Sand Hill River	Polk	Dam modification
Cannon River	Rice	Dam modification
Buffalo River	Clay	Channel modification
West Beaver Creek	Houston	Trout stream improvement
Sauk River Watershed	Stearns	Public lakeshore enhancement
Lake Phalen	Ramsey- Washington	Public lakeshore enhancement
Cuyuna AMA	Crow Wing	Public lakeshore enhancement
Seven Mile Lake	Murray	Public lakeshore enhancement
Lake Bemidji State Park	Bemidji	Public lakeshore enhancement
Lake Sallie	Douglas	Public lakeshore enhancement
Crow Wing State Forest	Crow Wing	Public lakeshore enhancement
Keller Lake	Ramsey- Washington	Public lakeshore enhancement
Sucker Creek	Cook	Fish passage
Silver River	Cook	Fish passage
Devils Track River	Cook	Fish passage
Multiple locations	SE Minn	Trout stream corridor enhancement
Multiple locations	Statewide	Culvert fish passage enhancement

Program Title: Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration and Enhancement Program on DNR lands and Roadsides

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: **#34 Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration and Enhancement Program on DNR lands and Roadsides**

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name:	Bill Penning
Title:	Farmland Wildlife Program Leader, MN DNR
Mailing Address:	500 Lafayette Road
Telephone:	(651) 259-5230
Fax:	(651) 297-4961
E-Mail:	bill.penning@state.mn.us
Web Site:	www.dnr.state.mn.us

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
WMA Acquisitions & Dev	6,047,000	5,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000
SNA Prairie Bank Acquisitions	2,041,000	3,000,000	4,000,000	5,000,000
Existing WMA/AMA Habitat Work	2,171,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
Roadsides	229,000	225,000	225,000	225,000
Eco Resources Habitat	1,230,000	1,500,000	2,000,000	2,500,000
WMA Roving Crew	885,000			1,000,000
Total	12,603,000			

A. Summary

This program will acquire and develop approximately 1,622 acres of new Wildlife Management Area (WMA) lands for public hunting, trapping and compatible outdoor uses consistent with the Outdoor Recreation Act (M.S. 86A.05, Subd.8). Permanent protection and development of wildlife lands as part of a strategic habitat conservation program will focus efforts on existing and developing high value habitat complexes. Parcels offered for sale will be assessed for their contribution to the habitat complex and the highest priority parcels will be perused. New WMA acquisition acre targets by L-SOHC Sections will be consistent with the recommendations of The Citizens Advisory Committee report of 2002 "Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition – The Next 50 Years". Parcels will be chosen based on selection ranking criteria tailored to priority actions within each L-SOHC Section. Lands will be acquired from willing sellers

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration and Enhancement Program on DNR lands and Roadsides

through established Department of Natural Resources (DNR) acquisition processes governed by statute, rule and policy. Initial site development of new WMAs is included in our program. Additionally, this program will protect 550 acres of native prairie as state Scientific & Natural Areas (SNAs) and perpetual Native Prairie Bank (NPB) easements. This will provide habitat for rare species, Species in Greatest Conservation Need as identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) and provide habitat for other game and wildlife species. All public SNA's acquired through this project will be open to all forms of hunting and fishing.

This program will also accelerate the restoration and enhancement of approximately 28,000 acres of native prairie vegetation on Wildlife Management Areas, Aquatic Management Areas, Scientific and Natural Areas, State Forests and Roadsides in FY11/12/13, primarily in the Prairie and Prairie Transition Sections but also including Southeast Forest and Metropolitan Urbanizing Area Sections. This will provide much needed wildlife habitat for a host of grassland and farmland species. Prairie restoration efforts will center on site preparation, seeding of local ecotype seed, post-seed management to assure success, and seed harvest of local ecotype seed for prairie restoration at other public land sites. Prairie enhancement efforts will center on prescribed burning, managing woody cover encroachment, and interseeding. Goat prairie enhancements are a distinct target in the Southeast Forests.

There is a very significant unmet need for burning on public lands. Existing DNR staff already burns to the maximum extent possible, yet the needs are greater than the resources. It is not possible to contract burning on a scale that will meet the present and future needs. Burning is highly technical and requires extensive training and experience. Therefore, we propose to hire a roving burn crew located in northwestern MN for 3 years. The crew will be fully equipped and self sufficient and will therefore be capable of burning an additional 7,000 acres per year. Fifty-percent of their time will be spent on burning (this is the entire spring and fall burn season). During the non-burn season the crew will complete 1,000 acres woody encroachment management annually (25%) on WMAs. The remaining 25% will be spent on forest management activities for which costs and accomplishments are accounted for in the DNRs forest management proposal. This work is all supplemental to the existing DNR burning and woody cover management programs. During the initial year existing staff may need to be integrated into the crew due to the lack of suitable burn bosses. DNR Wildlife may look to other Divisions (e.g. Forestry) with Burn Bosses during the first year and sub-contract with them for this work.

All of the efforts described above are supplemental to grassland work already taking place. A significant portion of this work will be improvement of existing grasslands. Total accomplishments for all programs and all activities will be approximately 30,000 acres of habitat enhancement, protection and restoration.

B. Background Information

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration and Enhancement Program on DNR lands and Roadsides

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The availability of public hunting lands does not meet the expectations of a growing Minnesota population. Due to the current recession, land prices have stabilized or declined and a short-term opportunity exists to purchase more value for our expenditures. The Citizens Advisory Committee on WMA acquisitions recommended that due to long-term rising land costs and continued habitat loss, acquisition efforts should be accelerated to 21,000 acres per year for 10 years completing 30% of the 50 year goal of 702,200 acres. This objective has not been met due to inadequate funding. Supplementing our existing program with accelerated WMA acquisition will require additional temporary staff to acquire and develop new lands.

([://files.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/reports/strategic-documents/wma-acquisition50year.](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/reports/strategic-documents/wma-acquisition50year.))

Temperate grasslands are considered to be one of the most altered ecosystems on the earth. Native prairie and associated species have been targeted as critical habitats by the Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS). Since 1987, MCBS has evaluated and mapped about 200,000 acres of remaining prairie in the state as compared to the nearly 18 million acres identified about 100 years ago based on the public land surveys. Only half of this remaining prairie habitat is currently under some form of permanent protection.

Although Minnesota DNR has the training and know-how to restore high quality prairie vegetation current funding has been insufficient to meet all needs. Many sites on state lands are currently not being actively managed to realize full potential as a plant community or wildlife habitat. Re-establishing prairie on public lands requires periodic burning, inter-seeding grasslands with native species, and up to five years post-seeding management. Some state-owned grasslands are “problem” sites consisting of monotypic fields of brome that has low habitat values. Furthermore exotic and/or invasive plants are encroaching into them. Woody cover encroachment is an especially troublesome problem that must be addressed. Existing grasslands are impaired by the encroachment of woody vegetation. Newly acquired areas and state-owned marginal croplands also need to be seeded and treated. Using high quality seed from established prairie sites to plant at other locations has proven to be highly cost-effective.

The Roadsides for Wildlife Program has been improving grassland habitat along Minnesota roadsides since 1984. Still, most of Minnesota’s roadsides are presently dominated by smooth brome (a non-native grass) and are vectors of invasive species. Native grasses and wildflowers are more beneficial to pollinators and wildlife. DNR will cooperate with Mn/DOT to plant native prairie along selected roadsides for the next three years. Although roads and bridges are the priority of Mn/DOT, two-thirds of the state owned right-of-ways are actually vegetation. These narrow green ribbons can provide habitat for wildlife, improve water quality, prevent snow drifting, and beautify the state if they are well managed.

2. What action will be taken?

Program Title: Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration and Enhancement Program on DNR lands and Roadsides

Acquisitions

The DNR will identify potential lands for sale from willing sellers statewide and determine appropriateness for acquisition as a WMA. Approved potential acquisitions will be identified within each L-SOHC Section to meet acreage targets established by The Citizens Report. Parcels will be prioritized according to criteria tailored for each L-SOHC Section. The DNR will follow established land acquisition procedures and if successful in acquiring will then develop an “Initial Development Plan” (IDP) to be funded with this program to make the new parcel fully functional as a WMA within the first two years of acquisition. The IDP will include boundary surveys and signage, user access and parking facilities, well and septic closure, building and dump disposal, restoration of shallow temporary and seasonal wetlands and cover bare ground with native vegetation. The SNA program will acquire 200 acres of native prairie in fee and another 350 acres with perpetual easements. DNR acquisition staff will target projects that fall into the one of the “Focal Landscapes” identified by the Division of Ecological Resources. A small amount of additional non-prairie acreage (e.g. crop fields) may also be acquired and reconstructed to provide additional habitat and buffer the native prairie.

WMA/AMA Habitat Work

Grassland restoration work will be primarily through seeding either bare ground (e.g. newly acquired agricultural fields) or old-field habitat (e.g. smooth brome). Techniques for this work include site preparation such as mowing, spraying or burning when necessary; direct seeding and aerial seeding (along some roadsides). Seed will be obtained via harvesting of local native or restored prairie when possible and purchase of seed from vendors when necessary.

Grassland enhancement work uses a number of methods to reinvigorate or increase diversity of existing prairie type grasslands. Techniques that will be employed include brush and tree removal, chemical treatment, mowing, inter-seeding and burning.

This proposal contains 2 FTEs that will manage habitat enhancement and restoration projects on both existing and newly acquired WMAs. These positions will assist Area staff in developing contracts, working with contractors, ensuring that seed sources meet specifications, doing field inspections to ensure that work was completed properly, etc. MCC and contract vendors will be used to the greatest extent possible although DNR staff may perform some work when suitable contractors are not available.

Roadsides

The Roadsides prairie habitat connectivity project, in Martin County, will begin at Krahmer Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and go west 7-miles to the Fox Lake State Wildlife Refuge. Fox Lake State Wildlife Refuge is a core block of wildlife habitat where we are currently acquiring additional state hunting land. This prairie reconstruction project will provide a key linkage to the Kramer WMA which is a popular hunting area along Swan Slough and Eagle Lake. One hundred and fifty acres of prairie habitat reconstruction will take place along both sides of the interstate and the median. In addition to the interstate corridor, this area also connects to the north-south railroad right of way which has fair to very good quality remnant native prairie. This project will

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Program Title: Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration and Enhancement Program on DNR lands and Roadsides

provide tangible connectivity for nesting grassland birds such as pheasants and will benefit plant and insect populations as well.

Ecological Resources Habitat Work

Restoration of prairie will occur on 50 acres of severely altered lands by reconstructing the native prairie plant community. These restorations will be either in-holdings within a native prairie, or lands surrounding native prairies. Restoration activities include seedbed preparation, seed harvest, and seed installation. Prairie enhancement activities will be implemented on 1,725 acres of existing and newly acquired prairies throughout the prairie regions of the State. Enhancement activities include invasive species treatments (herbaceous and woody species) and prescribed burning. Assessments of the restoration and enhancement activity outcomes will be conducted so future activities can be adjusted to maximize the ecological benefits (i.e. adaptive management).

WMA Roving Crew

A DNR WMA roving crew will be assembled with 5.25 FTEs consisting ultimately of new limited-term employees. This crew will be capable of burning 7,000 acres per year (at full capacity – less the first year) assuming normal weather conditions and manage an additional 1,000 acres of woody encroachment for a total of 24,000 acres treated over the three year life of this proposal. The crew will work 75% time on grassland projects and 25% time on forest projects (covered in another proposal). It should be noted that there is a severe shortage of private sector personnel who meet the State of MN burning certification requirements. One recent estimate (SNA Program) is that only 6 people statewide that are non-agency staff meet Burn Boss certification requirements. Furthermore, insurance and other hurdles prevent some contractors from being able to bid on state contracts. Over time we are interested in building private sector capacity as burning is a useful and long-term management strategy.

3. Who will take action and when?

Acquisition

The DNR is currently in an ongoing process to identify potential willing sellers for WMA acquisitions. Upon approval of funding through the Legislature, the DNR will begin appraisals to acquire approximately 50% of the project acquisition goal in year one and 50% in year two. Initial Development Plans will be implemented within the first two years following acquisition. The SNA acquisition projects and associated transactions will be completed by DNR staff. In FY11 funds will be used to acquire sites where landowner interest has already been identified and to initiate new landowner negotiations. The new landowner negotiations initiated in FY11 will lead to additional acquisitions to be completed in FY12 and FY13. Initial Development Plans will be developed by DNR staff. Implementation of IDPAs will be primarily through contracts with MCC and private sector vendors and managed by DNR staff.

WMA/AMA Habitat Work

MN/DNR will contract as much WMA/AMA work as possible throughout the allocation period. Two FTEs will be hired for three years to manage implementation of projects on

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Program Title: Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration and Enhancement Program on DNR lands and Roadsides

both existing WMAs and newly acquired tracts. Their responsibilities will include working with contracts and contractors, completing on-site inspections, quality assurance (especially seed source) and other tasks to ensure that contracted work is successfully completed and meets DNR standards and L-SOHC expectations. Due to a severe shortage of qualified burn personnel, 5.25 new DNR FTEs will be hired to address burning and woody cover encroachment management needs on WMAs. SNA projects will be implemented using a combination of DNR staff and contract services.

Roadsides

The Roadsides project will be managed by MN/DOT staff with technical support from MN/DNR.

Ecological Services Habitat Work

Restoration and enhancement practices will be designed and administered by DNR staff, while implementation and assessment will use a combination of DNR staff and contracted services. There is a backlog of management needs on DNR administered lands and implementation of restoration and enhancement can begin immediately upon receipt of funds. Restoration, enhancement and preliminary assessment projects would be completed by the end of FY12.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

We believe that the work being proposed is most appropriate for Outdoor Heritage funding rather than other Constitutional funding. However, DNR will consult and coordinate with other partners that receive constitutional funding to ensure all funding sources complement each other and provide the greatest natural resource outcomes.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Acquisitions

Acquisition of wildlife lands will focus on identifying the best remaining wildlife habitat in existing or restorable complexes and protecting critical sites for wildlife and native plants. Each L-SOHC planning section will have individual habitat protection priorities such as wetland/grassland complexes, shallow lake and large wetland complexes, bluff prairie communities or oak savannas. A primary emphasis will be on completing and expanding existing WMAs and other protected lands within habitat complexes. Large blocks of wildlife lands provide a wider range of management options, habitat diversity and wildlife use. Each parcel will be developed to enhance the native habitat characteristics appropriate for the location and provide for hunting and fishing recreation. The protection of 550 acres of native prairie through SNA programs ensures that these prairie lands will not be converted to other land uses and lose their habitat values. Having these lands under administration also ensures they will be managed to preserve and enhance their ecological values.

Program Title: Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration and Enhancement Program on DNR lands and Roadsides

WMA/AMAs

Five thousand acres of existing native and planted prairies will be enhanced to increase wildlife value for grassland nesting birds. This will be accomplished primarily through the removal of inappropriately located (volunteer, old farmstead, etc) woody cover. Woody cover can act as a negative influence on grassland nesting species as it provides perches for raptors and cover for mammalian predators. Additionally, 1000 acres of non-native grasslands/cropland will be converted to planted prairie to provide additional grassland habitat.

Roadsides

This prairie habitat connectivity project, in Martin County, will begin at Krahmer Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and go west 7-miles to the Fox Lake State Wildlife Refuge. Fox Lake State Wildlife Refuge is a core block of wildlife habitat where we are currently acquiring additional state hunting land. This prairie reconstruction project will provide a key linkage to the Kramer WMA which is a popular hunting area along Swan Slough and Eagle Lake. Prairie habitat reconstruction will take place along both sides of the interstate and the median. In addition to the interstate corridor, this area also connects to the north-south railroad right of way which has fair to very good quality remnant native prairie. This project will provide tangible connectivity for plant and insect biodiversity between the two sites, and will benefit small game as well.

Ecological Services Habitat Work

Restoration of 50 additional acres will provide new wildlife habitat and will buffer native prairie tracts from potentially damaging adjacent land uses. Applying enhancement practices to 1,725 acres of native prairie land increases the capacity of those lands to provide high quality and more diverse habitat and improved ecological functions such as soil and water erosion control, carbon sequestration, and pollination services. Removal of red cedar and other invasive trees on goat prairies is a special focus in the Southeastern Forest Goat planning section.

WMA Roving Crews

Approximately 7,000 acres of wildlife habitat will be improved through burning per year assuming normal weather conditions and an additional 1,000 acres of prairie grasslands will be enhanced through the direct removal of woody encroachment. Fire is an important natural process that has been largely eliminated from prairie ecosystems. Fire re-invigorates plant growth and increases diversity and productivity resulting in increased game and non-game populations. Grassland SCGNs will benefit from burning. Woody cover can act as a negative influence on grassland nesting species as it provides perches for raptors and cover for mammalian predators. Direct removal and treatment is necessary when trees become too large, the site is too wet, or burning is not feasible.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

Most of the habitat work being proposed can be completed within one to two years. Long term enhancement efforts will begin immediately and progress over time.

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Acquisition of land typically takes up to two years to complete. The initial Development Plan will be implemented within two years of acquisition. Delays in acquisition and/or unforeseen difficulties in development implementation (e.g. weather) may require additional funding cycles to complete.

Hiring burning staff and completing training will take six months. Existing DNR Burn Bosses may be used for the first year as new Burn Bosses are hired and trained. By the second year both crews should be self sufficient.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ YES ☒ NO
If not, how will you finance completion?

This proposal includes numerous projects, many of short duration that will be completed during this funding cycle. Other projects will require multiple funding cycles to complete. Phased projects have been identified and total cost estimates along with cost for this funding cycle will be included in the accomplishment plan. It is our intention to re-apply to L-SOHC for funding for future phases of these projects as other sources of financing are currently unavailable.

The acquisitions in this proposal will be completed with funds from this request.

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

WMA/AMA

Routine maintenance will be accomplished by Area Wildlife staff as part of their public land management responsibilities within future operating budgets. Priority will be given to acquiring additions to existing WMAs or purchasing large parcels that will increase efficiency of routine maintenance through economy of scale. Periodic enhancements such as invasive species removal, prescribed burning, supplemental vegetation planting or wetland and water level management will be accomplished through annual funding requests from a variety of funding sources including but not limited to Game and Fish Fund, Bonding, Gifts, Federal Sources, Environmental Trust Fund, and Outdoor Heritage Fund.

Roadsides

Long-term management will be incorporated into MN/DOTs normal maintenance activities.

SNAs

The Division of Ecological Resources and its protection, restoration, and enhancement activities are supported largely by special project funds. The ongoing maintenance of SNA administered lands requires the program to continually seek additional funds to perform its mission. In the future the SNA program will continue to seek Outdoor

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Heritage Funds as well as other project appropriations to protect, restore, and enhance natural areas.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

Acquisition of priority habitats provide permanent protection backed by state and federal laws. Implementation of the Initial Development Plans and subsequent enhancement projects will restore converted lands to functioning communities and develop a core of habitat complexes that represent the wide range of unique habitat types for each planning section. A broad network of restored habitat complexes composed of a mix of ownership and protection programs will form the nucleus of landscape level habitat management focused in the most productive areas for wildlife within each planning section.

Habitat improvement actions enhance existing degraded habitat to directly increase the productivity of nesting habitat for pheasants, waterfowl and a variety of non-game grassland species such as meadowlarks, longspurs, and other Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Additionally, some lands are converted from a non-wildlife friendly (such as row crops) use to wildlife habitat as newly acquired lands are incorporated into the system. Wetland, river and lake systems are improved as water quality improvements are implemented through grassland management and result in better habitat for waterfowl and fish.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ YES ☐ NO

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Activities will occur on Wildlife Management Areas, Aquatic Management Areas, Scientific and Natural Areas, State Forest land, and roadsides owned in fee title by the state of Minnesota.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

The DNR, as a state agency, is subject to intense scrutiny and operates under well established fiscal laws, rules and policies subject to regular fiscal audits. DNR is also subject to data practices policies that make appropriate information available upon request. The DNR will provide all proposals, plans, updates and progress reports to the Legislative Coordinating Commission for publication on their Web site.

12. Why will this strategy work?

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The WMA system, started in 1951, has 58 years of support from conservationists, hunters, and legislators. Over 1.3 million acres of habitat in over 1,400 WMAs are protected by the DNR. Protection, development and enhancement of public lands as core elements in a diverse network of habitat complexes will provide permanent population banks from which wildlife and plant communities can expand into the surrounding landscape during optimum environmental conditions. These networks will provide migration corridors for movement of both animal and plant communities in response to changing conditions. Strategically located, these complexes will provide many tangential benefits including water quality improvements, seed sources and local economic diversity. This strategy will focus on completing and expanding complexes with some existing public ownership and identifying new target complexes where there are gaps in the network. The SNA program, created by the 1969 Minnesota Legislature, currently administers over 140 natural areas and 95 Native Prairie Bank easements. Lands designated as Scientific and Natural Areas have the highest level of protection the state of Minnesota can afford to land.

Most restoration and enhancement practices being applied with this proposal have been proven to provide desired outcomes on existing state-managed lands. This project will also assess these practices for effectiveness and inform future habitat improvement strategies. Through this funding, the state will be able to accelerate improvements on state land thereby providing for improved function of critical wildlife habitat and a more functional prairie landscape.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

The DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife Division Management Team will approve acquisition proposals within the bounds of the Departments Biennial WMA Acquisition Plan. All fee title purchased lands acquired by the State as WMAs and SNAs must be approved by resolution of the County Boards of Commissioners.

These restorations and enhancements will occur on public lands (primarily Wildlife Management Areas, Aquatic Management Areas, Scientific and Natural Areas, State Forests and roadsides which are owned in fee title by the state and have already been identified as priorities for accelerated work. It is expected that there will be support for these programs.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

☒X ☐ YES

☐ NO

Minnesota law requires county board approval before we can acquire a parcel of land in fee for a WMA or SNA. These regulations control the timing of our request for approval.

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15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

☒X___YES

___NO

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? If so what kind of use?

☒X___YES

___NO

If Yes what kind of use?

Native Prairie Bank easements are open to scientific and natural observation, education, and research.

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easements as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

☒X___YES

___NO

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

In 2002, the Citizens Advisory Committee recommended 50 years of accelerated WMA acquisition to acquire an additional 702,200 acres needed to meet conservation goals. This program is ongoing as opportunity and needs arise. Periodic reviews of land assets may identify lands that no longer meet their original purpose and that could be sold or exchanged and replacement lands acquired. DNR expects to be enhancing and restoring wildlife habitat on state lands indefinitely.

By statute, the SNA program is perpetual.

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

___ Northern Forest

☒x_ Forest/Prairie Transition

☒x_ Southeast Forest

☒x_ Prairie

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☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20 Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ YES ☐ NO

If yes, please explain.

Dedicated funding for the next 24 years provides a unique opportunity for the current generation to build a foundation of publicly owned wildlife habitat and hunting lands that will provide unparalleled opportunity and access for future generations of hunters and outdoor users. In the short-term, land markets are depressed along with the general economy and speculative development pressures have temporarily eased. This will provide a short-term opportunity to extend the state's acquisition buying power. In the long-term, steadily rising land costs, increasing urban development from population expansion, and conversion of existing native habitats to other land uses such as agriculture make protection and restoration of remaining native habitats urgent.

Much of the proposed work either enhances or restores degraded habitat. Long time-lags between conservation activities make the job much harder and more expensive. It also lowers the probability of initial success and may require additional follow-up work. Prairies are one of the states rarest and most rapidly diminishing habitats with ongoing threats that diminish the restoration and acquisition potential with each passing year. Goat prairies in the Southeastern Forests will receive special attention for restoration actions.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☒ YES ☐ NO

If Yes, list the names of the WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

See attached map

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

☒ YES ☐ NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife does not use a single planning and evaluation model in our acquisition priority setting process but rather assesses each parcel individually and in context to other existing and proposed public land. This process is not a sophisticated Geographic Information System model but rather a review and approval process that includes the priority criteria outlined in item number 24 below. We also rely on direction

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provided by the Citizens Advisory Committee report which used 10 Ecological Classification Sections to identify existing levels of wildlife land protection and established goals for additional protection in both the short-term and long-term within each Ecological Section.

Project areas proposed for inclusion in the SNA program have been identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey program that evaluated native prairie extent and quality, documented locations of rare species and Species of Greatest Conservation Need using survey methods developed in conjunction with universities, museums and with the international organization NatureServe (see also below).

The long range pheasant plan, MN County Biological Survey and State Wildlife Action Plan all use science based strategic planning. The programs within this proposal are designed to meet the goals of these plans.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Acquisition and sound ecological management of lands focused within habitat complexes has proven to provide optimum wildlife habitat benefits by targeting these efforts in areas that can build on remnant or existing wildlife populations and habitats. Large blocks of habitat provide diversity within the complex and begin to function as an integrated sustainable community. Ongoing staff assessment of habitat quality, acquisition opportunity and enhancement planning will be essential to success.

Minnesota's State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) includes a problem assessment (chapter 4, page 38 SWAP) that identifies habitat loss and degradation as the predominant challenges facing prairie Species in Great Conservation Need (SGCNs). SWAP identifies 139 SGCNs alone in the Prairie Parkland Province. SWAP also identifies prairie as a key habitat in 11 different ecological subsections within the State. Prairie, as a habitat type, contains more SGCNs than any other habitat in Minnesota. Goal I of SWAP is to stabilize and increase SGCN populations statewide (SWAP pg. 36). Key to the conservation of species dependant on native prairie is to protect and enhance remaining prairies and to reconstruct additional habitat.

24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

Acquisitions – WMAs

<u>Forest/Prairie Transition – 6% of Acquisitions</u>	<u>Weight</u>
1. Inholdings/additions to existing WMAs	7
2. Shallow lakes, wild rice lakes	6
3. Wetland/Grassland complexes	5
4. Brushlands threatened with development or other uses	4
5. County Biological Site – native plant community	3
6. Collaborative partnerships	2

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- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 7. Habitat Corridor | 1 |
|---------------------|---|

<u>Southeast Forest – 9% of Acquisitions</u>	<u>Weight</u>
1. Inholdings/additions to existing WMAs	7
2. Bluff (goat) prairies	6
3. Forest/oak savanna threatened with development or other uses	5
4. Wetland/Grassland complexes	4
5. County Biological Site/Rare Natural Element	3
6. Collaborative partnerships	2
7. Habitat Corridor	1

<u>Prairie – 60% of Acquisitions</u>	<u>Weight</u>
1. Inholdings/additions to existing WMAs	7
2. Wetland/Grassland complexes	6
3. Shallow Lakes/large wetlands	5
4. County Biological Site – native prairie community	4
5. Oak savanna/big woods threatened with development	3
6. Collaborative partnerships	2
7. Habitat Corridor	1

<u>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area – 14% of Acquisitions</u>	<u>Weight</u>
1. Inholdings/additions to existing WMAs	7
2. Shallow Lakes/large wetlands	6
3. Wetland/Grassland complexes	5
4. County Biological Site – native prairie community	4
5. Oak savanna/big woods threatened with development	3
6. Collaborative partnerships	2
Habitat Corridor	1

Acquisitions – SNAs

Native prairie sites of outstanding and high biodiversity significance as identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS) were prioritized for protection. Sites are identified by MCBS as priorities for protection because they contain rare and endangered plant and animal species, relatively high quality native plant communities, and key habitats for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). About 35,000 acres of high quality native prairie have been identified across the state that would qualify for protection as SNAs or NPBs. Acquisition efforts will target the highest quality remaining prairies the fall into one of the “Focal Landscapes”. These landscapes are areas within Minnesota that have the high percentage of remaining prairie, and offer the greatest opportunity to provide connectivity and functional landscapes.

WMA/AMA Habitat Work

Work on public lands is our highest priority. Individual projects are prioritized by Area Wildlife Managers using best professional judgment and reviewed by Regional Wildlife

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Managers and are tailored to individual needs of specific units. Work load is used to temper priorities within each Area. There is no specific weighting system.

Roadsides

Highly visible demonstration projects that link existing WMAs were identified.

Ecological Resources Habitat Work

Native prairie sites of outstanding and high biodiversity significance as identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS) were prioritized for protection. Sites are identified by MCBS as priorities for protection because they contain rare and endangered plant and animal species, high quality native plant communities, and key habitats for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). About 35,000 acres of high quality native prairie have been identified across the state that would qualify for protection as SNAs or NPBs. Information from the scientific assessment (described in 23. above), used in an adaptive management context, will be used to determine subsequent management priorities.

WMA Roving Crew

Burning will be prioritized based upon standard burn plans that indicate frequency of burns. Wood encroachment management work will be secondary to burning. All other activities are tertiary.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

The Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan identifies habitat loss and degradation as the number one driver of change for wildlife in Minnesota. The plan further states that the prairie regions have experienced the greatest amount of habitat loss of any region. This project addresses the following priorities in the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan*:

- “Critical Land Protection” recommendations H1 “Protect priority land habitats” (which specifically targets native prairie and savanna as well as landscape-scale complexes centered on concentrations of existing remnant habitat – pp. 63 & 66 of Habitat Recommendations)
- “Land and Water Restoration and Protection” recommendations H5 “Restore land, wetlands, and wetland-associated watersheds” (with emphasis on prairie – p. 80)

Tomorrow’s Habitat for the Wild and Rare - Minnesota’s Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for species in greatest conservation need (SGCNs) has identified (p. 38) significant loss and degradation of habitat as the number one management challenge and one of the principle strategies is to provide protection through selective acquisition of key habitats in each Ecological Section. This proposal directly addresses many of the State Wildlife Action Plan’s Strategies and Priority Conservation Actions to “stabilize and increase SGCN [species of greatest conservation need] populations” for the subsections with prairie ecosystems (pp. 86, 92, 98, 104, 110, 206, 212, 218, 224,

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234) and the prairie, savanna, and surrogate grassland habitats (pp. 255, 263, and 265).

Minnesota's Long Range Duck Recovery Plan lists the objective of restoring a breeding population of 1 million ducks by 2056. The primary strategy is the protection and restoration of 2 million additional acres of habitat.

Minnesota's Long Range Plan for the Ring-necked Pheasant lists the objective of increasing pheasant population to 1.8 million birds. To accomplish this objective the plan calls for an additional 21,000 acres of grassland to be protected through acquisition of WMAs.

Citizens report Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition – The Next 50 Years recommends acquisition goals of an additional 702,200 acres of WMAs s over the next 50 years.

The national Grassland Conservation Plan for Prairie Grouse identifies habitat needs for prairie chickens and sharp-tailed grouse in Minnesota.

Minnesota's Roadsides for Wildlife Management Plan describes the need for roadside brome grass conversions to link habitat blocks and provide highly visible demonstration projects.

Mn/DOT's Best Practices Handbook for Roadside Vegetation Management is devoted to improving vegetation along roadsides. Chapter 4 describes in detail the many benefits of using native prairie plants in roadsides.

The national Grassland Conservation Plan for Prairie Grouse identifies habitat needs for prairie chickens and sharp-tailed grouse in Minnesota.

Additionally, this project also helps meet goals outlined in the following plans:

- *Scientific & Natural Areas Long Range Plan*
- *Minnesota's Timber Rattle Snake Recovery Plan*
- *Minnesota DNR's Nongame Strategic Plan*

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	614,000	614,000	357,000
Contracts	1,547,000	1,134,000	10,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	174,000	197,000	218,000
Fee Acquisition	3,350,000	1,800,000	979,000
Easement Acquisition	200,000	300,00	400,000
Easement Stewardship	0	0	0
Professional Services*	245,000	190,000	143,000

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Travel	43,000	47,000	34,000
Additional Budget Items			
(Training)	3,000	4,000	0
Total	6,176,000	4,286,000	2,141,000

** Professional services include contracted costs for shared services activities including DNR Office of Management and Budget Services, Human Resources, Management Resources and Information & Education base level services.*

E. Personnel Details In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.

Title	Name	Amount.
<u>WMA Acquisitions</u>		
Land Acq. Specialist	0.25 FTE	\$60,000 over 3 years
<u>SNA Acquisitions</u>		
Natural Resources Specialist	0.5FTE	\$105,000 over 3 years
<u>Eco Resources Habitat Work</u>		
Natural Resources Specialist	3.5 FTE	\$404,000 over 2 years
NR Tech and Laborers	1.25 FTE	\$110,000 over 2 years
<u>WMA/AMA Habitat Work</u>		
Habitat Dev. Specialists	2 FTE	\$300,000 over 3 years
<u>WMA Roving Crews</u>		
NR Spec Sr	.75 FTE	\$130,000 over 3 years
Laborer	4.5 FTE	\$445,400 over 3 years
	12.75 FTE total	

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Federal Aid	1,117,000	759,000	311,000
State Wildlife Grants	100,000	25,000	
NWTF	63,000		
DNR Nongame	5,000		
DNR in-kind Staff Time	100,000	100,000	
MCC Dedicated	6,000		
TOTAL	1,391,000	884,000	311,000

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G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		1,389 acres		
Protect	324 acres	1848 acres		
Enhance		27,472 acres		

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		Prairie/Prairie Transition		
Protect	Prairie/Prairie Transition	Prairie/Prairie Transition		
Enhance		Prairie/ Prairie Transition/ Southeast Forests/Metropolitan Urbanizing Area		

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		\$965,000		
Protect	\$1,200,000	\$6,875,698		
Enhance		\$3,555,000		

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Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance		\$2,585,000		

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability	324 acres	1498 acres		
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement		350 acres (SNA)		

H. Accomplishment Time Table

Milestone	Date	Measure
<u>WMA Acquisition</u>		
Protect through fee acquisition	6/31/2011	1,400 ac
Implement Initial Development Plan	6/31/2012	1,400 ac
Protect through fee acquisition	6/31/2012	931 ac
Implement Initial Development Plan	6/31/2013	931 ac
<u>SNA Prairie Bank acquisition</u>		
Protect through fee acquisition (SNA/prairie bank)	6/30/2013	200 ac
Protect through easement (SNA/prairie bank)	6/30/2013	350 ac
<u>Roadsides</u>		
Initial site prep by DOT	12/ 30/2010	150 ac
Site prep by contractor	Spring 2011	150 ac

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Seed roadside with diverse native seed mix	6/30/2011	150 ac
First season maintenance by experienced contractor	10/30/ 2011	150 ac

Ecological Resources Habitat Work

Restoration projects completed	6/30/2012	50 ac
Enhancement/assessment projects completed	6/30/2012	1725 ac

WMA/AMA Habitat Work

Initial site treatment	6/31/2011	6,091 ac
Final site treatment	6/31/2012	6,091 ac

WMA Roving Crew

Burn	6/30/2012	7,000 ac
Woody encroachment removal	6/30/2012	1,000 ac
Burn	6/30/2013	7,000 ac
Woody encroachment removal	6/30/2013	1,000 ac
Burn	6/30/2014	7,000 ac
Woody encroachment removal	6/30/2014	1,000 ac

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

DNR Expenditures for FY 09

DNR - \$350M
FAW - \$92.6M
ECO - \$25.8M

Wildlife Section expenditures for FY 09

Grassland expenditures	\$2,770,000
Total acquisition expenditures (excluding bonding)	\$6,840,000

Eco Resources expenditures for FY09 including bonding

SNA/ Prairie Bank (site specific) & Assessment <u>related to prairie</u>	\$1,771,000
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J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Priority acquisitions will be lands associated with existing complexes of protected lands or in large blocks that will foster economies of scale and location. Restorations of converted lands is more costly than enhancements to existing lands and will provide job opportunities for MCC crews, contract ecological service vendors and a variety of seed and material vendors. Ongoing maintenance will be accomplished through routine management activities accomplished by our network of Area Wildlife offices throughout the state and supported by the Game and Fish Fund. Periodic enhancements will be accomplished by existing staff, MCC crews, temporary project staffing or through

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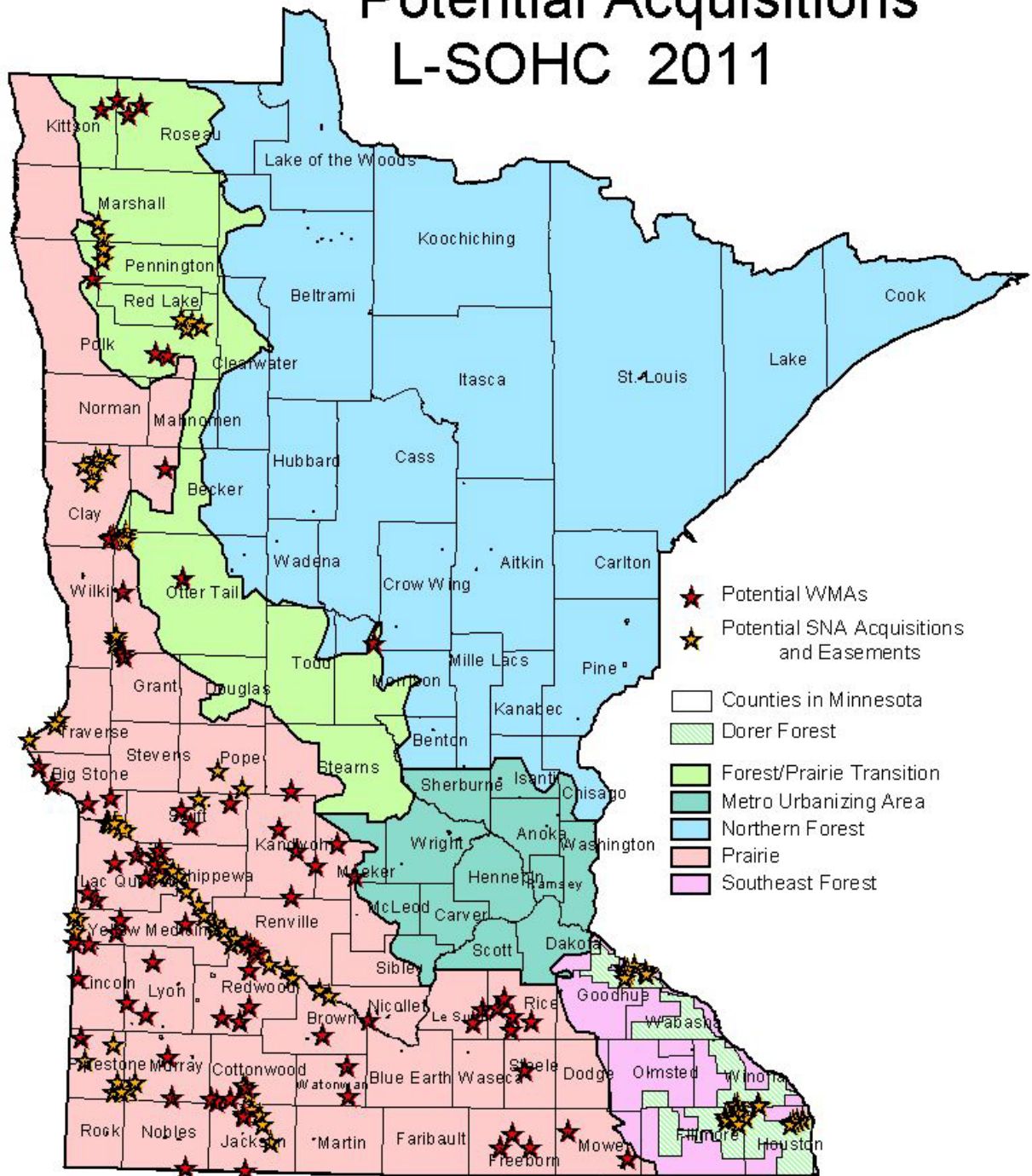
vendor contract using traditional habitat project funding, bonding, and future requests for funding from dedicated funding sources.

The ongoing maintenance of SNA administered lands requires the program to continually seek additional funds to perform its mission. In the future the SNA program will continue to seek Outdoor Heritage Funds as well as other project appropriations to protect, restore, and enhance natural areas.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

See Pages 22-32. NOTE: List of projects is tentative and based upon a point-in-time assessment of opportunities and priorities. Actual project locations may differ although alternate projects will be selected within a strategic decision framework as described previously in this proposal.

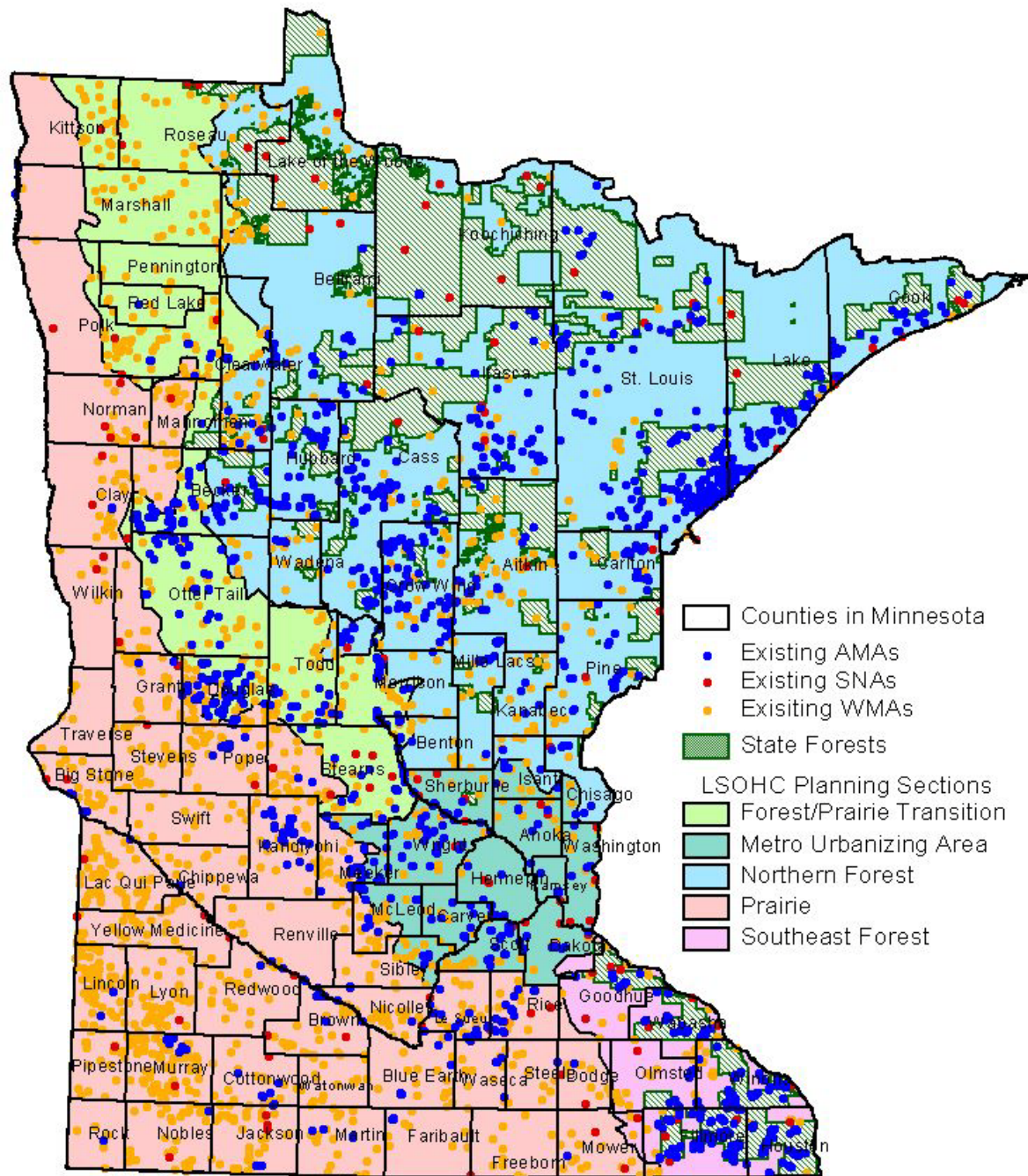
Prairie and Prairie Transition Potential Acquisitions L-SOHC 2011



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Existing WMAs, AMAs, SNAs, and State Forests



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Potential WMA Acquisitions - Prairie and Prairie Transition

			LSOHC Planning Section		
County	Prairie	Acres	County	Prairie Transition	Acres
Murray	Thompson Prairie WMA	639.67		Roseau Exchange - out	
Meeker	Sioux Lake WMA	75.93	Kittson	Beaches WMA, P16	160
Yellow					
Medicine	Middle Antelope 4	155.02		Roseau Exchange - in	
Chippewa	Benderberg 19	72		Roseau River - Lindenfel	
Watonwan	Younger Bros	160	Polk	Pembina WMA	120
Renville	Cold Springs	80		Wren's Nest	
			Otter		
Watonwan	Seig WMA	64.92	Tail	Dead Lake WMA	188
Redwood	Lamberton - MDHA	110.02		Little Nokasippi, P4	
Chippewa	Lac Que Parle - Boraas	487.84	Polk	Crooked Lake	40
Nicollet	Swan Lake - Courtland	79.53			508
Nicollet	Cannon - Bohn	520			
Grant	Kube Swift Symonds	203.28			
Redwood	Whispering Ridge	280.56			
Chippewa	Lac Qui Parle - Ellingso	154.4			
Freeborn	Magaksica	112.94			
Cottonwood	Talcot Lake - Porth	23.43			
Big Stone	Hornstein Sch Trust	64.85			
Jackson	Timber Lake	98.06			
Cottonwood	Great Bend	207			
Rice	Boyd Sartell. Tr3	73.65			
Kandiyohi	Yohi Tr3B	104.39			
Big Stone	Foster	42.73			
LQP	Florida Creek	319.98			
Swift	Jossart	118.91			
Redwood	Cedar Rock - Hayes	97.22			
Jackson	Teal Lake Tr2	50.93			
Cottonwood	Talcot Lake Tr13	111.69			
Pipestone	Winter - Geis	157.11			
Grant	Kube-Swift - Biss	182.64			
Clay	Barnesville Tr23	158.59			
Clay	Barnesville Tr23A	79.92			
Otter Tail	Haldorsen Lake	108.87			
Nobles	Lake Bella	74.7			
Kandiyohi	Lake Lillian	162.8			
Cottonwood	Pat's Pasture	178.91			

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Becker	Omega Springs	514.16
Big Stone	Prairie WMA	22
Swift	Danvers WMA	100
Swift	Camp Kerk WMA	40
LQP	Baxter WMA	80
LQP	Sweetwater WMA	64
Yellow		
Medicine	Oshkosh WMA	17
Lincoln	Archerville WMA	99
Lincoln	Minn-Kota WMA	221
Lincoln	Shaokatan WMA	6
Lyon	Coon Creek WMA	77
Lyon	Lyrock WMA	226
Redwood	Two Rivers WMA	274
Jackson	Minneota WMA	40
Meeker	Wieker WMA	18
LeSeuer	Murphy WMA	12
Steele	Somerset WMA	47
Mower	Ramsey Mill Pond WMA	22
Mower	Cartney WMA	60
Stearns	Middlefork/Boie WMA	229
Freeborn	Juglans Woods WMA	270
Brown	Badger Track WMA	220
Yellow		
Medicine	Nothem WMA	151
	Hendrickson Estate	
Meeker	WMA	240
Redwood	Charlestown WMA	160
Murray	Hovno WMA	170
Kandiyohi	Hawick State WMA	90
Rice	Caron Lake WMA	368
Big Stone	Gibson WMA	190
Rice	Hands Marsh WMA	240
Lyon	New WMA	222
Rice	Roberds Lake WMA	202
LQP	Schueller WMA	33
Redwood	Cyto WMA	480
Rice	Le Tamaraque WMA	202
Freeborn	Goetz WMA	549
	11567.65 Total	

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WMA/AMA Habitat Projects

WMA	County	Treated Acres	WMA	County	Treated Acres
Rolling Hills WMA	Lyon	16	Clay County WMA	Clay	440
Salix WMA	Lincoln	80	Vangsness WMA	Norman	39
Gabriel Anderson WMA	Lyon	18	Teiken-dalve WMA	Becker	14
Shaokatan WMA	Lyon	40	Ranum WMA	Norman	40
Prairie WMA	Big Stone	186	Ranum WMA	Norman	25
Victory WMA	Big Stone	137	North Germany, Burgen Lake, Menahga, and Yaeger Lake WMAs	Wadena	150
Walter WMA	Lac Qui Parle	131	Hoffman WMA	Goodhue	54
Byrne Lake WMA	Swift	100	Whitewater WMA	Winona	400
Lac qui Parle WMA	Lac Qui Parle	40	Belgium	Polk	18
Lac qui Parle WMA	Lac Qui Parle	40	Burnham	Polk	200
Walnut Lake WMA	Faribault	60.2	Chicog	Polk	12
Gilfillan Lake WMA	Blue Earth	48	Enerson	Polk	38
Pebbles WMA	McLeod	38	Maple Meadows	Polk	25
Bob Gehlen WMA	Sibley	25	Maple Meadows	Polk	6
Alfsborg WMA	Sibley	6.6	Mentor Prairie	Polk	7
Earl Swain WMA	Le Sueur	10.5	Mentor Prairie	Polk	11
Cartney WMA	Mower	100	Mentor Prairie	Polk	60
Quade WMA	Waseca	53	Moran	Red Lake	5
Klabunde WMA	Redwood	17	Onstad	Polk	10
Delhi WMA	Redwood	40	Pembina	Polk	50
Beaver Falls WMA	Renville	40	Polk	Polk	6
Faxvog WMA	Redwood	25	Polk	Polk	11
Lamberton WMA	Redwood	130	Stipa	Polk	40
Terri WMA	Brown	60	Iona WMA	Todd	3
William A. Groebner WMA	Brown	60	Ras-Lynn	McLeod	30
Helget-Braulick WMA	Brown	17	Whitewater WMA	Winona	30
Rosenau-Lambrecht WMA	Brown	60	Erskine	Polk	20
Poplar Creek WMA	Pipestone	27.4	Marcoux	Red Lake	45
Burbank WMA	Kandiyohi	16	Pembina	Polk	65
Kandi WMA	Kandiyohi	25	Lac qui Parle WMA (Nygard Tract)	Swift	12
Mamre WMA	Kandiyohi	75	David B. Vesall WMA	Lac Qui Parle	46
Sunburg WMA	Kandiyohi	11	Daub's Lake	Redwood	18
Butternut WMA	Meeker	17.5	Robina WMA	Hennepin	10
Twin Lakes WMA	Kittson	100	Talcot Lake WMA	Cottonwood	22
Caribou WMA	Kittson	360	Ann Lake WMA	Kanabec	72

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration and Enhancement Program
on DNR lands and Roadsides

Beaches Lake WMA	Kittson	80	Quistorff WMA	Todd	6.7
			Rice Area Sportsmens		
Beaches Lake WMA	Kittson	560	Club WMA	Morrison	19
Barnesville WMA	Clay	115	Richard J. Dorer WMA	Lincoln	57.1
Flowing WMA	Clay	85	Beaver Creek WMA	Fillmore	40
			Aquatic Management Areas		
Doran WMA	Otter Tail	300			
Hi-View WMA	Otter Tail	40	Minniebelle Lake AMA	Meeker	3.78
Highland Grove WMA	Clay	60	Thompson Lake AMA	Meeker	23.5
Ulen WMA	Clay	80	Horseshoe Lake AMA	Le Sueur	50
Manston Marsh WMA	Wilkin	285	Blue Earth River AMA	Faribault	22
			Buttermilk Run AMA	Murray	15
			Stay Lake AMA	Lincoln	5
				Total acres	6,091
			Roadsides	Martin	150

Program Title: Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration and Enhancement Program
on DNR lands and Roadsides

**Potential SNA and NPB easement Acquisitions – Prairie, Prairie Transition, and
SE Forest**

LSOHC Planning Section

County	Forest/Prairie Transition Complexes	Acres
Marshall and Pennington	Marshall-Pennington Beach Ridge Prairies	760
Polk	Chester Hills Prairies	1100
Clay	Blanket Flower Prairies	100
County	Prairie Complexes	Acres
Pope	Glacial Lakes and Moraines	300
Clay	Tansem Prairies	400
Clay	Felton Prairies	600
Ottertail	Ottertail Prairies	200
Murray and Pipestone	Chanarambie Creek Prairies	400
Big Stone	Corell Area Prairies	600
Brown, Renville, Redwood, Yellow Medicine,	Minnesota River Prairies	300
Jackson, Cottonwood	Des Moines River Prairies	280
Yellow Medicine	Yellow Medicine Coteau Prairies	300
Traverse	Lake Traverse Prairies	100
Swift	Mikkelson Prairies	240
Pipestone	Prairie Coteau Prairies	150
Pipestone	Pipestone Quartzite Outcrops	315
Redwood	Swedes Forest Prairies	360
County	SE Forest Complexes	Acres
Goodhue	Frontenac - Hay Creek Prairies	400
Houston, Fillmore, Winona	Root River Prairies	600
Fillmore	Root River Valley	150

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Program Title: Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration and Enhancement Program
on DNR lands and Roadsides

SNA targeted sites for prairie restoration and enhancement

Scientific & Natural Area	County
Agassiz Dunes SNA	Norman
Black Dog Preserve SNA	Dakota
Blanket Flower Prairie SNA	Clay
Blue Devil Valley SNA	Yellow Medicine
Bluestem Prairie SNA	Clay
Bonanza Prairie SNA	Big Stone
Cedar Mountain SNA	Redwood
Clear Lake SNA	Sherburne
Clinton Prairie SNA	Big Stone
Compass Prairie SNA	Nobles
Cottonwood River Prairie SNA	Brown
Des Moines River SNA	Jackson
Falls Creek SNA	Washington
Felton Prairie SNA	Clay
Frenchman's Bluff SNA	Norman
Glynn Prairie SNA	Lyon
Gneiss Outcrops SNA	Chippewa
Grey Cloud Dunes SNA	Washington
Gully Fen SNA	Polk
Harry W. Cater Homestead Prairie SNA	Sherburne
Hastings SNA	Dakota
Helen Allison Savanna SNA	Anoka
Holthe Prairie SNA	Jackson
Hythecker Prairie SNA	Dodge
Iron Horse Prairie SNA	Dodge
Joseph A. Tauer Prairie SNA	Brown
Kasota Prairie SNA	LeSueur
Kellogg-Weaver Dunes SNA	Wabasha
King's and Queen's Bluff SNA	Winona
Lake Bronson Parkland SNA	Kittson
Lost Valley Prairie SNA	Washington
Lundblad Prairie SNA	Murray
Malmberg Prairie SNA	Polk
Mound Prairie SNA	Houston
Mound Spring Prairie SNA	Yellow Medicine
Oronoco Prairie SNA	Olmstead
Osmundson Prairie SNA	Faribault
Ottertail Prairie SNA	Otter Tail
Pembina Trail Preserve SNA	Polk
Pin Oak Prairie SNA	Fillmore

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Pine Bend Bluffs SNA	Dakota
Prairie Bush Clover SNA	Jackson
Prairie Coteau SNA	Pipestone
Prairie Creek Woods SNA	Rice
Prairie Smoke Dunes SNA	Norman
Racine Prairie SNA	Mower
Rice Lake Savanna SNA	Sherburne
Richard M. & Mathilda Rice Elliot SNA	Wilkin
River Terrace Prairie SNA	Goodhue
Rock Ridge Prairie SNA	Cottonwood
Roscoe Prairie SNA	Stearns
Rushford Sand Barrens SNA	Fillmore
Sandpiper Prairie SNA	Norman
Santee Prairie SNA	Mahnomen
Savage Fen SNA	Scott
Sedan Brook Prairie SNA	Stearns
Shooting Star Prairie SNA	Mower
Spring Creek Prairie SNA	Goodhue
St. Croix Savanna SNA	Washington
Swede's Forest SNA	Yellow Medicine
Twin Valley Prairie SNA	Norman
Two Rivers Aspen Prairie Parkland SNA	Roseau
Uncas Dunes SNA	Sherburne
Verlyn Marth Memorial Prairie SNA	Stevens
Western Prairie South SNA	Wilkin
Wild Indigo Prairie SNA	Mower
Yellow Bank Hills SNA	Lac Qui Parle

Native Prairie Bank Easements	County
Schellberg Prairie Bank	Big Stone
Berner Prairie Bank	Blue Earth
Johnson Prairie Bank	Big Stone
Peterson Prairie Bank	Brown
Strand Prairie Bank	Clay
Carney Prairie Bank	Murray
Pilegard Prairie Bank	Murray
Meine Prairie Bank	Brown
Odden Prairie Bank	Lac Qui Parle
B-B Ranch Prairie Bank	Clay
Vegoe Prairie Bank	Pope
Wallace Prairie Bank	Ottertail
Rogers Prairie Bank	Clay
Fibranz Prairie Bank	Traverse

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

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on DNR lands and Roadsides

Woodke Prairie Bank	Grant
Selix Prairie Bank	Pope
Keister 20 Prairie Bank	Faribault
Olsen Prairie Bank	Grant
Mickelson Prairie Bank	Cottonwood
Storden 28 Prairie Bank	Cottonwood
Ulen 29 Prairie Bank	Clay
Tanberg 20 Prairie Bank	Wilkin
Carson 5 Prairie Bank	Cottonwood
Storden 21 Prairie Bank	Cottonwood
Otre 26 Prairie Bank	Big Stone
Camp Release North 30 Prairie Bank	Lac Qui Parle
Lake Pleasant 22 Prairie Bank	Red Lake
Lund 21 Prairie Bank	Douglas
Marsh Grove 36 Prairie Bank	Marshall
Petersburg 26 Prairie Bank	Jackson
North Star 32 Prairie Bank	Brown
Walls 7 Prairie Bank	Traverse
Island Lake 22 Prairie Bank	Lyon
Swedes Forest 20 Prairie Bank	Redwood
Holly 17 Prairie Bank	Murray
Lynd 36 & Lyons 1 Prairie Bank	Lyon
Johnsonville 30 Prairie Bank	Redwood
Minnesota Falls 10 Prairie Bank	Yellow Medicine
Petersburg 27 Prairie Bank	Jackson
Ann 25 Prairie Bank	Cottonwood
Petersburg 33 Prairie Bank	Jackson
Belmont 6 Prairie Bank	Jackson
Stony Run 11 Prairie Bank	Yellow Medicine
Belmont 5 Prairie Bank	Jackson
Christiana 31-1 Prairie Bank	Jackson
Walls 7, Parcel 2	Traverse
Moulton 5 Prairie Bank	Murray
Christiana 31, Parcel 2	Jackson
Bigstone 6	Big Stone
Norway Lake 5	Kandiyohi
Fortier 24	Yellow Medicine
Storden 4-1	Cottonwood
Custer 15	Lyon
Camp Release 32	Lac qui Parle
Storden 4-2	Cottonwood
Lamberton 15	Redwood
Stony Run 10	Yellow Med.
Lamberton 13	Redwood

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Great Bend 29	Cottonwood
Hantho 17	Lac Qui Parle
Holly 2	Murray
Linden 6	Brown
Plum Creek	Murray
Lund 2-1	Douglas
Warsaw 7-1	Goodhue
Nidaros 21	Ottertail
Ransom 4-1	Nobles
Dovray 7-1	Murray
Swedes Forest 20-2	Redwood
Lakeside 30-1	Cottonwood
Walls 18-1	Traverse
Home Lake 28-1	Norman
Swedes Forest 21-1	Redwood
Hantho 25-1	Lac qui Parle
Judson 3-1	Blue Earth
Wergeland 5-1	Yellow Med
Moulton 11-1	Murray
Moulton 19-1	Murray
Foster 34-1	Big Stone
Minnesota Falls 3-1	Yellow Medicine
Brownsville 26-1	Houston
Moulton 10-1	Murray
Fairfield 31-1	Swift
Agassiz 23-1	Lac qui Parle
Altona 31-1	Pipestone
Altona 31-2	Pipestone
Judson 4-1	Blue Earth
Judson 3-1	Blue Earth

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: **#35 Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership**

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: **Tim Schlagenhaft**
Title: **Mississippi River Coordinator, MN Dept. of Natural Resources**
Mailing Address: **1801 S. Oak St., Lake City, MN 55041**
Telephone: **651-345-3365, ext. 233**
Fax:
E-Mail: **Timothy.Schlagenhaft@state.mn.us**
Web Site:

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$5,528	\$12,969	\$4,569	\$12,800

A. Summary: The Mississippi River is one of our nation's greatest treasures. Originating in Minnesota, we bear a responsibility as citizens of this state to protect and keep this mighty river flowing clean and with an abundance of fish and wildlife. This partnership, with funding from the LSOHC, will restore habitat connectivity and improve water quality in critical areas along the Mississippi River corridor from the Twin Cities to the Iowa border by reconnecting tributaries to the floodplain, revitalizing backwaters and channels, and protecting and enhancing floodplain wetlands, forests, and prairies that are essential to sustaining the incredible diversity of plants, animals, and human uses that are provided by this great river.

B. Background Information

- 1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?** Once one of the nation's most diverse ecosystems, with an abundance of fish and wildlife, the Mississippi River has been degraded. Historically, this reach of the Mississippi from the Twin Cities to the Iowa border was an important travel corridor that attracted many cultures with its abundance of timber, fish and game, fertile prairies, floodplain wetlands, adjacent bluffs, and clear and numerous spring-fed streams. For centuries, native cultures traveled, camped and lived along this magnificent reach of river. In the mid 1800's, however, European settlers arrived and

forever changed the landscape by logging forests, converting prairies to farmland, channelizing and constructing levees along the tributaries, building cities and towns, and constructing wing dams and other structures for navigation.

Major tributaries, including the Root River and Zumbro River were channelized and leveed in their lower reaches near the Mississippi River in the early 1900's, isolating them from their floodplains except during high water events. Forests, wetlands, and prairies behind the levees were converted to agriculture or urban uses. Over 15,000 acres of native habitats were lost, fragmenting the natural habitat corridors that connected the Mississippi River to its tributaries and their watersheds that were essential to the many species of fish and wildlife that roamed this area. This was especially damaging to high quality wetlands that were found in these floodplains.

Construction of locks and dams in the 1930's changed the river into a series of navigation pools. Pools 1 (Minneapolis) through 9 (MN/IA border) are located in Minnesota. Initially, these pools increased marsh and wetland areas, creating numerous islands and deep backwaters. Fish and wildlife were abundant, with waterfowl hunting and fishing in the backwaters world renowned. Over time, however, the pools began filling with sediment and wind and boat waves eroded away islands. Increased drainage and turbid water runoff from southern Minnesota tributaries (especially the Minnesota River), along with urban pollution from the Twin Cities caused the reach from the mouth of the Minnesota River to Lake Pepin to become very turbid. By the 1960's, few fish were able to survive, aquatic vegetation nearly disappeared, and hunting, fishing, and other recreational opportunities in the river above Lake Pepin were almost non-existent.

The Clean Water Act in the 1970's helped reduce point source pollution, resulting in improved water quality and subsequent improvements to some fish and wildlife species. While conditions have improved from their worst levels, there remain serious problems. Sediment from non-point sources continues to be a detriment throughout this reach, currently filling Lake Pepin at a rate nearly ten times greater than occurred historically. Lake Pepin is now the sink for nearly 900,000 metric tons of sediment per year, mostly from the Minnesota River. At the current rate of filling which is equivalent to one city block covered with 100 feet of sediment each year, Lake Pepin will fill in just 300 years. The channels and backwaters along this reach (Twin Cities to Lake Pepin) remain one of the most degraded sections of the entire Upper Mississippi River System (Minneapolis to the mouth of the Ohio River).

Floodplain forests and oak savannas have also been impacted. Where the Vermillion and Cannon Rivers join the Mississippi, considerable state, federal, and private lands create one of the largest contiguous blocks of forest near a metropolitan area in the entire Mississippi River basin. These forests have been impacted by encroachment, invasive species, lack of floodwater scouring (resulting in reduced tree regeneration), and artificially high water levels from the locks and dams. Forest stand diversity (age and species of trees), along with interior forest birds that need large blocks of intact forest, have declined.

Combined these changes have resulted in the loss or degradation of approximately 700,000 acres (60%) of native prairie, wetland, and forest in the bluffslands region of southeastern MN, which includes the 170 mile reach of the Mississippi River from the Twin Cities to the Iowa border. Fish and wildlife populations have suffered, with 82 species now considered rare, threatened, or endangered. The Minnesota State Wildlife Action Plan lists more

species in greatest conservation need for the blufflands subsection than for any other subsection in Minnesota.

- 2. What action will be taken?** Acquisition of fee title or permanent conservation easements will be completed in the lower reaches of the Cannon, Zumbro, and Root Rivers adjacent to the Mississippi River (from their mouth at the Mississippi River approximately 10 miles upstream). Landowners have expressed written or verbal interest in fee title acquisition or permanent conservation easements for all parcels included in this proposal. Once acquired, these sites will be managed as State Wildlife Management Areas, State Forests, Scientific and Natural Areas, Aquatic Management Areas, Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge lands, or remain in private ownership but protected by a permanent conservation easement. Floodplain forest, prairie, and wetlands will be protected and/or restored on these sites to reestablish the large and connected habitat corridors that previously existed for fish and wildlife. Prairie restoration will include oak savanna, goat prairies on steep bluffs adjacent to river floodplains, and wet prairies.

Islands that have eroded and disappeared over time will be reconstructed in Mississippi River Pool 2 and Pool 3 (in/near the Twin Cities metropolitan area) to increase aquatic vegetation and improve fish and wildlife habitat in the severely degraded pools above Lake Pepin. Similar islands have been built in other Mississippi River Pools further down river with good success. In addition, backwater areas adjacent to the islands will be dredged to top the islands with soils suitable for establishment of prairie and/or forest. Dredging will increase depth and improve habitat for fish, especially during winter when many species require deeper water for survival.

Low summer water levels which occurred naturally prior to the locks and dams will be restored by completing water level drawdowns in Mississippi River Pools 2 and 3. Drawdowns of 1.5 feet at Lock and Dam #5 (north of Winona) and Lock and Dam #8 (near LaCrosse) were successful in increasing aquatic vegetation and improving habitat for fish and wildlife. Similar results would be anticipated from 1.5-2' drawdowns in Pools 2 and 3. Funding is needed to complete additional dredging to maintain navigation and recreational access.

Combined, these actions will help meet the life history needs of important bird and other fish and wildlife species that depend on large tracts of intact and healthy forests, wetlands, rivers, and prairies. Rare species will especially benefit from increased habitat and greater connectivity. Protection will also prevent the habitat degradation and soil erosion that would result from urban developments in this fragile region.

- 3. Who will take action and when?** The following partners have been actively involved in implementing projects and programs along the Mississippi River corridor and throughout the watersheds of the Cannon, Zumbro, and Root Rivers for many years. These partners have protected and restored forests, wetlands, and prairies through their individual acquisition and private lands assistance programs, and helped reduced turbidity and sediment in the Mississippi and its tributaries through TMDL and watershed conservation efforts. This proposal brings together these partners to better integrate programs and projects, with each partner providing unique expertise and local contacts that are necessary to implement a project on this scale. Partners will participate as follows:

- **Audubon**

Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership

- Public outreach – project promotion and public education
 - Project planning and coordination
 - Volunteer recruitment
 - Resource inventory and monitoring
- **Basin Alliance for the Lower Mississippi in Minnesota (BALMM)**
 - Coordination with local governments and watershed districts/organizations
- **Cannon River Watershed Partnership**
 - Outreach and volunteer coordination for Cannon River watershed
- **Conservation Fund**
 - Acquisition of high priority tracts for transfer to state or federal agency
 - Provide gap financing as necessary
- **Friends of the Mississippi River**
 - Landowner outreach and negotiation
- **Lake Pepin Legacy Alliance**
 - Advocacy for Lake Pepin TMDL implementation
 - Public outreach and stakeholder involvement
- **MN Board of Water and Soil Resources**
 - Administer and coordinate acquisition of RIM easements on private lands through SWCD's
- **Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources**
 - Lead agency – will provide overall partnership coordination
 - Coordinate acquisition process with party vendors
 - Administer funding and coordinate restoration activities
 - Own and manage acquired properties
- **Minnesota Forest Resources Council**
 - Technical assistance for forest restoration
- **Minnesota Land Trust**
 - party vendor for acquisition and/or donations of permanent private conservation easements
 - Landowner contacts
 - On-going stewardship of permanent private easements held by Minnesota Land Trust
 - Annual monitoring of permanent private easements held by Minnesota Land Trust
- **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency**
 - Coordinate TMDL planning and implementation efforts with local governments and watershed groups
- **National Park Service**
 - Education, outreach and communication
 - Coordination with local stakeholders
- **Soil and Water Conservation Districts** – Dakota, Goodhue, Wabasha, Houston Counties

- Coordination and project implementation for the Mississippi Makeover Project (island and drawdown projects) – Dakota County
- Continued collaboration with local governments and watershed management organizations to implement watershed standards, install best management practices, and carry out educational programs
- Work with landowners to implement permanent easements
- Assist landowners with private lands technical assistance
- **Southeast Minnesota Water Resources Board**
 - Coordination with local governments
- **The Nature Conservancy**
 - party vendor for land acquisition
 - Landowner contacts
 - Project promotion and education
- **The Trust for Public Land**
 - Negotiate acquisition agreements and obtain site control from landowners
 - Perform due diligence such as appraisals, environmental assessments, title investigation, etc.
 - Develop public support for projects
 - Help raise additional funding and financing for acquisitions
 - Coordinate final disposition and restoration activities
- **US Fish and Wildlife Service**
 - Provide personnel and equipment to assist with restorations, management, and maintenance
 - Own and manage properties that are acquired as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System
 - Utilize the USFWS acquisition process if needed
 - Landowner contacts
 - Private lands funding for restoration efforts on non-fee title lands
 - Offer currently protected lands for restoration and management
 - Provide support for island building and water level management projects
- **Zumbro Watershed Partnership**
 - Education/outreach
 - Planning/coordination

- 4. How will you coordinate this program with other Constitutional Funding?** This partnership will benefit primarily habitat, however, there will be secondary benefits for clean water. Any related efforts will be coordinated with other funding sources, such as Clean Water Council and LCCMR.

In addition to Constitutional Funding from Minnesota, there are federal programs that could help accomplish the work outlined in this proposal. The Federal Environmental Management Program (EMP) provides funding for habitat restoration projects on the Mississippi River from the Twin Cities to St. Louis. Projects on federal lands are funded at 100% federal cost, while projects on non-federal lands require a 35% cost share. The

island construction projects identified in this proposal could potentially be completed with 35% cost share, however, these projects would need to compete for limited funding with projects in other states along the Mississippi River. The process of project selection takes several years and funding is not certain.

Also, the Navigation Environmental Sustainability Program (NESP) was authorized by Congress in 2007 and could potentially provide 100% federal funding for the island construction and drawdown projects identified in this proposal. However, funding is tied to the Inland Waterways Trust Fund and is not anticipated to be available for NESP projects until 2018. In addition, projects under NESP would undergo a competitive prioritization and ranking process and funding is not certain.

Island construction and drawdown projects on the main channel or backwaters of the Mississippi River will require permits and other documentation (i.e. environmental review) from the US Army Corps of Engineers.

- 5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded?** There will be multiple habitat benefits resulting from this proposal including an increase in the number of forested acres, wetlands, prairies, and Mississippi River backwater acres protected and restored. Specifically, there will be 268 acres of forest protected; 330 acres of forest restored; 40 acres of wetlands protected; 377 acres of wetlands restored; and 40 acres of prairie restored. In addition, design and engineering will be completed for island and drawdown projects that will lead to 1,000 acres of Mississippi River backwaters restored (including 122 acres of forested islands and 1,000 acres of restored aquatic vegetation). In addition, these projects will improve water quality and reduce sedimentation in the Mississippi River, Lower Cannon, Lower Zumbro, and Lower Root Rivers.
- 6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?** Acquisitions for funding provided in FY2011 would be completed by 2013 and restoration and enhancement projects on acquired parcels completed by 2014. Additional acquisitions and restoration activities will be completed if funding is available in subsequent years. Design and engineering for island projects and drawdowns would be completed by 2012. This work is essential to completing the island and drawdown projects if funding is provided for construction in subsequent years.
- 7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?**

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

- 8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?** Maintenance will be completed by partner agencies. For state owned lands, it will be primarily the responsibility of the MN Dept. of Natural Resources. Lands acquired that are within the authorized acquisition boundary of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge will

become part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's and managed and maintained as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System. For permanent easements held by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (working through the Soil and Water Conservation Districts) and the Minnesota Land Trust, the private landowner is responsible for compliance with the terms of the conservation easement and the Board of Water and Soil Resources and Minnesota Land Trust are responsible for annual monitoring for compliance and enforcement of easement terms.

It is important to note that additional responsibilities without additional staff will be challenging and future maintenance funding from LSOHC should be considered. However, the partners are willing to take on this additional work load if necessary.

9. **How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests, or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?** The activities of this partnership are focused directly on restoration and protection of prairies, wetlands, forests, and habitat. All activities from acquisition to restoration will result in "on the ground" projects that increase the amount and quality of habitat. Conversion of agricultural lands in flood prone areas to prairie, wetland, and forest is an important objective of this effort.

10. **If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?**

 X YES NO

All properties would be either publicly owned (state or federal wildlife management areas, state forests, or Scientific and Natural Areas) or under permanent easements, such as Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM).

11. **How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars?** Frequent updates will be provided to the partnership and Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council describing acquisition and restoration activities. Reports and news releases summarizing progress and results will be made available to the LSOHC and interested public. All funds expended will be tracked and monitored using MN Dept of Natural Resources and/or MN Board of Water and Soil Resources administrative processes. Websites of the various partners will be linked to provide consistency in information delivery.

12. **Why will this strategy work?** This proposal brings together the priorities of multiple partners that have been working for many years to protect and restore the Mississippi River corridor and adjacent bluffslands. This strategy meets the goals and objectives of a variety of regional, statewide, and basin-wide plans including: MN State Wildlife Action Plan; 50-year Conservation Vision; Richard J. Dorer Memorial Forest Acquisition Plan; The Nature Conservancy Zumbro/Weaver Dunes and Root River Conservation Action Plans; Lower Cannon River, Root River, Zumbro River, Lower Vermillion River, and Lake Pepin Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies; Metro Greenways Conservation Corridors; Mississippi

Makeover Project; Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan; Basin Alliance for the Lower Mississippi in Minnesota (BALMM) Basin Plan Scoping Document; Zumbro River Watershed Management Plan; County Local Water Plans; River Resources Forum's Mississippi River Environmental Pool Plans; Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan; Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee "A River that Works and a Working River"; US Army Corps of Engineers Habitat Needs Assessment; UMR-IWW System Navigation Feasibility Study; and Minnesota Forest Resource Council Landscape Plans for the Blufflands Subsection. As described in question #2, many of the actions recommended in these plans have been successfully used in other areas of the Mississippi River. By meeting these goals, protection and restoration of the Mississippi River corridor will ensure a healthy floodplain ecosystem and abundant populations of fish, game, and wildlife.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

In some counties there has been hesitancy by county governments to support land acquisition by state and federal agencies, in large measure due to concerns about loss of property tax base and associated revenues. Payments in lieu of taxes will continue to be made to local governments for properties acquired as part of this proposal. In addition, the state is required to obtain approval from the counties for land acquisitions. In the recent past, counties have been supportive of acquisition opportunities and there have not been any rejected proposals. Soil and Water Conservation District staff represent local governments and work closely with landowners and can help address concerns that arise. However, if sentiments within the counties change, this could affect future acquisitions.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

As presented in question 13 above, state agencies are required to obtain county approval before a land acquisition can be completed. As landowners accept acquisition offers, these parcels are presented to the county for approval. It is anticipated that counties in the project area will continue to approve these acquisitions; however, they will be completed on a case by case basis.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open to public use?

☐ **YES** ☒ **NO**

Conservation easements will be permanent; however, most parcels will remain under private ownership. This does not preclude public access and use; however, hunting and fishing will be dependent upon landowners allowing access. It is important to note that forest, wetland, and prairie restoration on these sites will permanently improve habitat in the general area and increase fish and wildlife populations. With considerable federal and state lands already located in these project areas, plus additional lands acquired as part of this

proposal, permanent easements will improve fishing and hunting opportunities overall. In addition, habitat for rare species will increase, providing greater protection for these species.

- 17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?**

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

- 18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?** This proposal brings together the ongoing efforts of multiple partners into one program. Partners recognize it will take 15 years or longer to complete all of the acquisition and restoration projects that are anticipated. Historically, acquisition opportunities in these areas have been sporadic, often related to significant flooding events or changes in ownership. Outdoor Heritage Funding offers an opportunity to take advantage of these opportunities when they arise.

- 19. Which planning sections will you work in?**

☐ Northern Forest
☐ Forest/Prairie Transition
☒ Southeast Forest
☐ Prairie
☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

- 20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?**

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

There have been lost opportunities in these areas in the past due to lack of funding, and/or the length of time it takes to complete an acquisition. In some cases, landowners approached the state about selling their property, but there was no funding available to complete the acquisition and the opportunity was lost. These same parcels later became available, and were acquired, but at a much higher cost than if they were purchased the first time they were considered. There have been other cases where landowners were interested in selling, and the funding was available, however the process for acquisitions was too protracted and the landowners sold to other private parties. Many of these lands have been developed and restoration opportunities have been lost. A consistent funding source, combined with utilizing third party vendors as proposed in this partnership to accomplish acquisitions more quickly, would resolve these issues. Finally, some landowners view the opportunity to permanently protect their lands either through DNR acquisition or through acquisition of permanent private easements as leaving behind a legacy for future generation. The demographics of the Southeast Forest region suggest that there is a limited window of opportunity to complete transactions for this particular group. As lands transfer between generations, the opportunity for permanent protection may be lost forever.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

- Mississippi River Pool 3, North and Sturgeon Lakes – adjacent to Gores Wildlife Management Area
- Mississippi River Pool 2, Spring Lake – new DNR Wildlife Management Area

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation Model?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

While the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation Model (SHC) was not used specifically, all of the projects in this proposal are based on scientific understanding and models developed for other purposes, as described in question 23 below. The plans and models used to develop this proposal include partnering and adaptive management which are fundamental to the intent and in the spirit of the SHC model.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce?

Numerous planning efforts incorporate the scientific justification for the projects identified in this proposal. The Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee's "A Working River and A River that Works", the River Resources Forum's "Environmental Pool Plans", the US Fish and Wildlife Service Comprehensive Conservation Plan; and the Navigation Environmental Sustainability Program Feasibility Study are only a few examples of reports that outline the scientific and technical basis and need for floodplain restoration, water level management, and island construction projects along the Mississippi River corridor. These activities are considered essential to restoring the health of the Mississippi River system, and will provide benefits not only to these specific locations, but also to the entire Mississippi River from the Twin Cities to the Gulf of Mexico.

In addition, a stakeholder driven effort involving citizens and technical experts from state and federal natural resource agencies developed indicators of restoration success for the Mississippi River upstream of Lake Pepin. This effort is part of the Mississippi Makeover Project, and resulted in indicators for water clarity, sedimentation, aquatic vegetation, fish, invertebrates, and waterfowl. Scientifically based targets were established for each indicator based on historical and current information, reference locations, and modeling results. The projects identified in this LSOHC proposal for Mississippi River Pool 2 and Pool 3 will help meet those targets.

24. How do you set priorities? All parcels that become available within the project areas of the Lower Cannon and Vermillion Rivers, Lower Zumbro River, and Lower Root River would be considered for acquisition and restoration/enhancement. Priority would be given to those parcels that provide the greatest acreage increases for forest, prairie, and wetland, or for parcels that provide unique habitats for fish, game, and wildlife, especially listed species. The partnership would work by consensus if funding is limited to identify priority parcels.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and other Published Resource Management Plans. This proposal helps meet the goals and objectives in the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan by focusing on the protection and restoration of conservation corridors along the Mississippi River floodplain and tributaries. This effort will restore wetlands, forests, and prairies and protect critical shorelines of major tributaries and the Mississippi River main stem. In addition, and as described in questions 12 and 23, this proposal also meets many of the objectives identified through a variety of other planning efforts.

D. Budget

Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel (2-FTE's)	\$160,000	\$160,000	
Contracts			
• Island and drawdown design, environmental review	\$100,000	\$300,000	
• Restoration costs – prairie, forest, wetland establishment - \$1000/acre	\$373,000	\$374,000	
• Acquisition costs – title, appraisal, closing costs, etc. (\$25,000 per transaction)	\$112,000	\$113,000	
• Negotiations and legal work (5% of appraised value)	\$87,000	\$88,000	
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
• Equipment, supplies, office space for FTE's housed in partner facilities	\$15,000	\$15,000	
Fee Acquisition	\$1,752,000	\$1,753,000	
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services*	\$62,000	\$64,000	
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$2,661,000	\$2,867,000	

* Professional services include contracted costs for shared services activities including DNR Office of Management and Budget Services, Human Resources, Management Resources and Information & Education base level services; and land transfer costs to state.

E. Personnel Details

Title	Name	Amount
Acquisition Development Specialist		\$80,000/fiscal year
Habitat Restoration Specialist		\$80,000/fiscal year

Acquisition Specialist will split time between landowner contacts and assisting with transactional and other administrative functions. Habitat Restoration Specialist will coordinate restoration plans and implementation with project partners. Both positions will be DNR employees that are housed in the field offices of one of the partnering agencies, either Soil and Water Conservation Districts, The Nature Conservancy, or Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources.

F. All Leverage

Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Audubon			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time for outreach, volunteer recruitment, monitoring 	\$1,000	\$1,000	
MN Board of Water and Soil Resources			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time for easement and partnership coordination 	\$1,000	\$1,000	
MN Dept. of Natural Resources			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time, fleet (in-kind at \$40/hour) 	\$9,000	\$9,000	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Island and drawdown coordination and planning (\$40/hour) 	\$10,000	\$10,000	
Minnesota Land Trust			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation easement value donation 	\$10,000	\$10,000	
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time for coordination with TMDL efforts 	\$3,000	\$3,000	
National Park Service			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time for 			

Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership

island building projects	\$5,000	\$5,000
The Trust for Public Land		
▪ Staff time and costs associated with due diligence	\$20,000	\$20,000
Soil and Water Conservation Districts		
▪ Funding for restoration projects in the Lower Vermillion River and Spring Lake	\$20,000	\$20,000
▪ Staff time for Mississippi Makeover Project Coordination	\$2,500	\$2,500
Southeast Minnesota Water Resources Board		
▪ Staff time for coordination with local governments	\$1,000	\$1,000
The Nature Conservancy		
▪ Staff time for Zumbro and Root River projects	\$5,000	\$5,000
US Fish and Wildlife Service		
▪ Staff time for site visits, administration, materials and	\$12,000	\$12,000

Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership

equipment		
▪ Private lands assistance and grants	\$13,000	\$13,000
TOTAL	\$112,500	\$112,500

Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	377 acres	40 acres	330 acres	1000 acres
Protect	40 acres		268 acres	
Enhance				

Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>Metropolitan urbanizing area – Mississippi River backwaters</i>
Protect	<i>SE Forest</i>	<i>SE Forest</i>	<i>SE Forest</i>	
Enhance	<i>SE Forest</i>		<i>SE Forest</i>	

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$1,833,000</i>	<i>\$194,000</i>	<i>\$1,604,000</i>	<i>\$400,000</i>
Protect	<i>\$194,000</i>		<i>\$1,303,000</i>	
Enhance				

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$73,000</i>	<i>\$8,000</i>	<i>\$64,000</i>	<i>\$20,000</i>
Protect	<i>\$8,000</i>		<i>\$52,000</i>	
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
	<i>*417 acres</i>	<i>40 acres</i>	<i>598 acres</i>	
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership

*Note above: Table 5 includes all lands that will be acquired, some of which will need only protection, others that will include restoration. Payment in lieu of taxes or revenue sharing (USFWS) will be made to local governments.

H. Accomplishment Time Table

Milestone	Date	Measure
Acquisition of 268 acres of forest and 40 acres of wetland.	June 30, 2013	308 acres
Acquisition and restoration of 330 acres of forest, 377 acres of wetland, and 40 acres of prairie.	June 30, 2013	747 acres
Design and permitting completed for islands and drawdowns in Mississippi River backwaters.	June 30, 2013	plans, permits

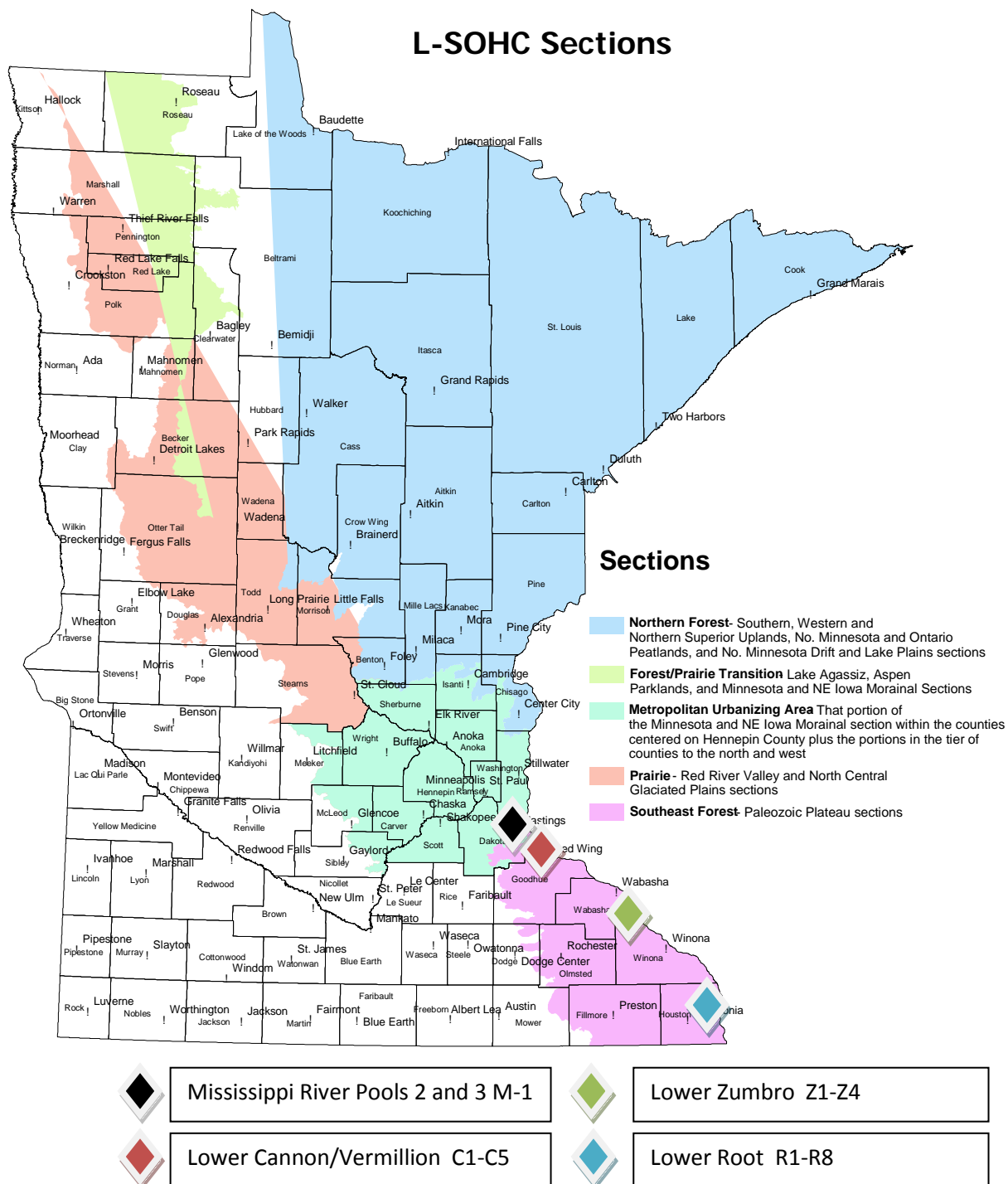
Projected Future Accomplishments (should additional funding become available in subsequent years):

Acquisition of 404 acres of forest, 45 acres of wetland, and of wetland, and 25 acres of prairie.	June 30, 2015	474 acres
Acquisition and restoration of 125 acres of forest, 20 acres of wetland, and 242 acres of prairie.	June 30, 2015	387 acres
Islands constructed in Mississippi River Pool 2 and drawdown completed in Pool 3.	June 30, 2015	1000 acres
Acquisition of 404 acres of forest, 45 acres of wetland, and 25 acres of prairie.	June 30, 2016	474 acres
Acquisition and restoration of 125 acres of forest, 20 acres of wetland, and 242 acres of prairie.	June 30, 2016	387 acres
Islands completed in Mississippi River Pool 3, and drawdown completed in Pool 2.	June 30, 2016	1000 acres

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget. This program does not supplant existing budgets. However, it will affect future budgets for program partners because it does not provide funding for future maintenance and management of acquired and restored parcels, or for payments in lieu of taxes. Those activities will be completed by program partners under their existing budgets, which are never certain long-term. This is a concern of the partners that should be addressed by the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council for future funding cycles.

J. How will the Habitat Improvements be Sustained? Program partners will manage and maintain parcels as part of their operating budgets and standard management practices for prairie, wetland, and forest habitats.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol. Attached.



Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership

Project List

Site Number	County	Total acres	Total Cost \$\$ - estimated to nearest \$1,000	Forest acres protected	Forest acres restored or enhanced	Wetland acres protected	Wetland acres restored or enhanced	Mississippi River backwater acres restored or enhanced	Prairie acres restored or enhanced
M-1	Dakota, Goodhue	1000	400,000					1,000	
C-1	Goodhue	60	332,000	60					
Z-1	Wabasha	220	1,172,000	40	120		60		
R-1	Houston	358	1,405,000	168	90	40	60		
R-2	Houston	83	376,000				83		
R-3	Houston	18	83,000				18		
R-4	Houston	70	317,000				40		30
R-5	Houston	65	295,000				65		
R-6	Houston	166	749,000		120		46		
R-7	Houston	15	70,000				5		10
Total		2055		268	330	40	377	1,000	40

Bill of Rights have been signed for all of the above parcels. Costs for M-1 are contracts for design and engineering for islands and drawdowns. Costs for acquisition for each parcel are calculated as follows. For protected acres, costs include landowner and transactional. For restored acres, costs include landowner, transactional, and restoration.

Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership

- Lower Cannon/Vermillion River
 - \$5,000/acre for landowner
 - \$25,000/transaction for title, survey, appraisal
 - 5% of fair market value for negotiation and legal work
 - \$2,000 per transaction for transfer to state
 - \$1,000/acre for restoration
- Lower Zumbro River
 - \$4,000/acre for landowner
 - \$25,000/transaction for title, survey, appraisal
 - 5% of fair market value for negotiation and legal work
 - \$2,000 per transaction for transfer to state
 - \$1,000/acre for restoration
- Lower Root River
 - \$3,000/acre for landowner
 - \$25,000/transaction for title, survey, appraisal
 - 5% of fair market value for negotiation and legal work
 - \$2,000 per transaction for transfer to state
 - \$1,000/acre for restoration
- Mississippi River Pools 2 and 3
 - \$400,000 for design, engineering and permits

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: #36 Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: Leslie Tannahill
Title: CPL Grants Program Coordinator, MN DNR
Mailing Address: 500 Lafayette Road; St. Paul, MN 55155
Telephone: 651-259-5242
Fax: 651-297-4961
E-Mail: leslie.tannahill@state.mn.us
Web Site: www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/habitat/cpl/index.html

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs <i>For programs that may want to request OHF funds in future recommendation rounds, complete the columns below. One time requests enter zeros in all 3 fiscal years</i>		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	4,580	560	125	0

A. Summary

The Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program (CPL) will be managed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to provide competitive matching grants of up to \$400,000 to local, regional, state, and national non-profit organizations, including governments. Grant activities include the enhancement, restoration, or protection of forests, wetlands, prairies, and habitat for fish, game, or wildlife in Minnesota. A 10% non-state cash or in-kind match will be required from all grantees, and must be identified at the time of application.

B. Background Information

Applicants may apply for grants under this program to perform the following activities:

Restore: action to bring a habitat back to a former state of sustaining fish, game or wildlife, with an ultimate goal of restoring habitat to a desired conservation condition.

Protect: action to maintain the ability of habitat and related natural systems to sustain fish, game or wildlife through acquisition of fee title or conservation easements.

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

Enhance: action to increase the ability of habitat and related natural systems to sustain and improve fish, game or wildlife in an ecologically sound manner.

For projects that will restore and/or enhance

1. Projects will be only on lands under permanent protection of public fee ownership, or conservation easement as defined in MS 84C.01. This includes tribal lands under federal trust arrangements.
2. A conservation easement must be placed on any private land impacted before work may begin. Funding for the easement/deed restriction and associated costs may be paid for with in-kind match or grant funds.
3. Proposed projects on public lands will be approved by and coordinated with public land managers. Projects proposed for lands under permanent conservation easement will be reviewed by the easement holder. Proof of review or approval must be submitted to grant staff before the application deadline. The private landowner must agree to the project as well.
4. Grantees will be responsible for all administrative requirements such as Historic Property Review, Wetland Conservation Act, Stormwater Permits, Natural Heritage Review, DNR Waters Permits, and others as appropriate. Costs for any reviews or permits should be included in the grant application, either as in-kind match or requested from grant dollars. As specified in the grant agreement, grantees may, by letter, assign duties and associated funds back to DNR, with DNR consent.
5. The Commissioner of Natural Resources must approve all projects.
6. Vegetation and seed used in these projects will be from native materials where possible and appropriate.

For projects that will protect

1. Lands acquired in fee title will be open to the public for hunting and fishing during open seasons unless otherwise provided by law.
2. All easements must be permanent. Easements must include stewardship provisions to perpetually monitor and enforce the conditions of the easements.
3. Projects to acquire land in fee simple title or a permanent conservation easement must be associated with established land acquisition programs that use explicit criteria for evaluating a parcel's habitat potential.
4. Grantees must agree to abide by all LSOHC requirements for long-term management of any lands acquired with Outdoor Heritage Funds (OHF).
5. For fee acquisition, the final title holder and land manager must be specified. Lands that will be conveyed to a public agency must be donated.
6. For permanent easements, the following information must be provided:
 - a. What organization will monitor the easement;
 - b. Who the easement will revert to in the event the primary easement holder ceases to exist;
 - c. What easement monitoring standards will be used;

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

- d. Amount, funding source, and holder of the stewardship endowment dedicated to the easement;
 - e. Any restrictions, allowed structures, allowed activities, and reserved rights.
7. Some State programs have specific statutory guidelines for determining the value of easements acquired under that program. If the easement will become part of that State program and the easement will be held by the State, any entity acquiring the easement may use that program's statutory method for the easement valuation.
8. All acquisition selection processes and related transactions costs for all parties involved in the acquisition must be reported to the LSOHC.
9. A Notice of Funding Restriction must be recorded for each acquisition.
10. An analysis of future operations and maintenance costs for any acquired lands must be provided to the LSOHC, commissioner of finance, and appropriate public agency.
11. The grantee must submit an annual report on the status of property acquired with grant funds to the LSOHC by December 1 of each year.
12. Grantees acquiring land that will be conveyed to DNR will be required to follow DNR's Land Acquisition Procedures for Lands to be Conveyed to DNR.
13. Grantees acquiring land that will NOT be conveyed to DNR will be required to follow DNR's Land Acquisition Procedures for Lands NOT to be Conveyed to DNR.

Program Requirements

This appropriation will be available until June 30, 2012. For acquisition projects, funds are available until June 30, 2013. If a project receives federal funds, the time period of the appropriation is extended to equal the availability of federal funding. Grantees must submit a final progress report by August 1, 2012, unless the funds have previously been extended.

All grant projects must conform to the terms set out in the *LSOHC's 2010 Call for Funding Requests*, and address the priorities in the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, and Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare. In implementing this program the DNR will comply with the Department of Administration - Office of Grants Management policies.

Match

The match requirement is 10% in nonstate cash or in-kind work, which may include verifiable equipment use, donation of materials, and donation of labor. The amount and source of the match must be identified at the time of application. Proof of all required and pledged grantee match must be provided before the final payment is made.

Grantee Payment

Grantees will be paid on a "for services rendered" basis, under MS 84.026. Partial payments will be allowed. Advances will be available for acquisition projects only, on a limited basis, and must be specified in the grantee's application and final work program.

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

Process

A Request for Proposal (RFP) will be posted on the CPL website by late summer, 2010. The RFP will contain grant program, application criteria, application and proposal requirements, state agency contacts and grant reporting requirements. The RFP and all grant agreements will incorporate appropriate principles and criteria from the *LSOHC's 2010 Call for Funding Requests* and associated legislation.

Applications will be accepted electronically year-round, with grants selected for funding twice a year--in early winter, 2010, and spring, 2011. Ungranted funds from the winter cycle will be forwarded for use in the spring cycle.

Applications must be submitted electronically using DNR's Online Grant Application System (OLGA). Maps and aerial photos showing the location of proposed projects are required, and must include the name of the public land unit or private landowner, county, legal description, acres affected, and on-site and adjacent habitat types.

Technical Guidance Committees, selected by the Commissioner of Natural Resources will review and score applications based on criteria established by the LSOHC, MN State Legislature and DNR. These committees may include representatives from DNR, BWSR, the University of MN, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and other appropriate members. A final ranking committee made up of the Chief Financial Officer, and Directors of the DNR Divisions of Fish and Wildlife, Ecological Resources/Waters, and Forestry will recommend projects and funding levels to the Commissioner of Natural Resources. The Commissioner will make the final decision on projects funded, and funding levels.

Every effort will be made to evenly distribute the selected grants by geographic location, activity, and funding level, with an objective of granting 50% of the funds to projects above and below \$125,000.

Once grant applications are selected, CPL Grant Program staff will work with grantees to ensure financial reviews, grant agreements, and any other necessary paperwork are completed. Work may not begin until the grant is executed.

Reviews and Reporting

Project reviews will be completed on an annual basis by Grant Program or other staff. Grantees will submit annual accomplishment on a CPL Annual Report Form by August 1 of each year. These reports will be based on work completed during the previous fiscal year. Reports must account for the use of grant and match funds, and outcomes in measures of wetlands, prairies, forests, and fish, game, and wildlife habitat restored, enhanced, and protected. The report must include an evaluation of these results. A map and aerial photo showing the location of the project and including the name of the public land unit or private landowner, county, legal description, and acres affected must be included. A final report will be required by all grantees by August 1 of the year that their grant agreement ends.

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

CPL Grant Program staff will compile grantee reports and submit an annual accomplishment report to the LSOHC, Legislative Coordinating Commission, and Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) on October 15 of each year. Accomplishment information will also be posted on LSOHC and DNR websites.

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program (CPL) allows nonprofit organizations and governments access to Outdoor Heritage Funds to benefit local, small-scale projects.

\$4 million in new grant funds are requested so that grantees can continue their efforts to improve habitat in Minnesota. There has been a high level of interest in the first round of grants, and that interest is expected to continue.

2. What action will be taken?

DNR will build on the current CPL program and initiate two more cycles of grants with the new funds.

3. Who will take action and when?

Upon notification of funding, CPL Grant Program Staff will begin work on the next round of grant opportunities including a new grant RFP, Program Manual, further refine the online application and database management system, and develop additional outreach programs.

Natural Resource Specialists grant staff will be engaged to assist applicants/grantees in identifying, developing, and implementing enhancement, restoration and protection projects, and meeting administrative and environmental requirements. These staff will also assist public land managers in developing projects for grantees.

These staff are needed to reduce the workload on agency field staff by helping applicants with the application process, performing Natural Heritage Database Reviews, and helping with project oversight, final project inspections, and reviewing restoration and management plans. These staff will lead workshops throughout the state to support new grant applicants and to provide support to existing grant recipients on project work, reporting and grant requirements.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

CPL Grant Program Staff will work closely with DNR staff that are administering other LSOHC-funded projects so all programs have similar guidelines, formats, reports, and other processes.

In addition, CPL Grant Program Staff will work with other programs that receive Constitutional Funds (such as Clean Water and Parks and Trails) to understand and coordinate these programs as much as possible. This includes assisting applicants in finding the right program for their project.

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

All CPL grants must meet Constitutional language to enhance, restore, or protect wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife. The grants funded by the CPL Grant Program will provide similar benefits to other LSOHC projects, just on a smaller, more local scale. As these benefits are dependent upon the applications received and grants that are funded, it is not possible to give more details at this time.

6. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☐ YES

☒ NO

If not, how will you finance completion?

Grantees will be required to furnish a 10% non-state match (either cash or in-kind) to complete their planned accomplishments.

7. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application.

8. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application.

9. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ YES

☐ NO

This is a requirement for all funded grants. Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application.

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Lands must be under permanent protection of public fee ownership, or permanent conservation easement. For this program, it will vary from project to project. Grantees will be required to describe the land they will be working on, and the kind of protection, in their application.

10. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

The CPL Grant Program will provide regular updates to the LSOHC, and annual and other reports as required. In addition, grantees will be required to provide annual and final accomplishment reports to CPL Grant Program Staff.

11. When do you expect to see these changes?

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

Grantees should be able to start work on new projects as soon as the grant agreement is in place.

12. Why will this strategy work?

Many small organizations and local governments are aware of local projects that can be started immediately and are working on proposals. Requiring grant matches enables entities to leverage additional funds, further advancing conservation work and accelerating the protection of conservation lands through land acquisition projects.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

LGU's, SWCD's, and local federal agencies all help make decisions on a local level.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

_____YES _____NO

County board approval will be required for all lands to be conveyed to DNR as WMAs or SNAs. Grantees will be required to notify the County Board of any other fee title acquisitions.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

_____YES _____NO

Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application. Lands already protected by a permanent conservation easement will not be eligible for fee acquisition with CPL funds; however, lands under an easement that doesn't meet MS 84C.01 may be acquired in fee in order to provide more permanent protection for natural resource values. These lands may be ranked lower during the application evaluation.

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? If so what kind of use?

Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application.

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easements as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

___X___YES _____NO

This is a requirement of the program. Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application.

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

_____24_____ Years

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

☒ Northern Forest

☒ Forest/Prairie Transition

☒ Southeast Forest

☒ Prairie

☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

_____YES

_____NO

If yes, please explain.

Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

_____YES

_____NO

If Yes, list the names of the WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

_____YES

_____NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application.

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

CPL grants will be scored using the criteria outlined by the LSOHC in *LSOHC's 2010 Call for Funding Requests*. Additional criteria and weights may be added based on experience in scoring the 2010 CPL grant applications.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

This program will provide additional funds to enhance, restore and protect habitat in Minnesota. All published resource management and species plans—including the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan—recognize that habitat is critical for the success of Minnesota's fish and wildlife species. Lack of funding is consistently listed in many plans as one of the largest issues limiting the amount of habitat work and protection that is completed each year.

In the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan, habitat restoration and enhancement is specified in the following priorities:

H1: Protect priority land habitats (pg 63)
H2: Protect critical shorelands of streams and lakes (pg 67)
H4: Restore and protect shallow lakes (pg 78)
H5: Restore land, wetlands, and associated wetlands (pg 80)
H7: Keep water on the landscape (pg 84)
LU 8: Protect large blocks of forested land (pg 130)
L10: Support and expand sustainable practices on working forested lands (pg 131)
Other plans that list habitat restoration, enhancement and protection as priorities include:

- Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare (Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy), which identifies habitat loss and degradation as the primary problem facing species in greatest conservation need in Minnesota.
- The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Strategies #1 and 2.
- The DNR's Division of Fish and Wildlife has several key plans identifying acquisition and habitat goals for fish and wildlife populations. Habitat goals are also addressed through more focused plans and programs that can be found on the DNR's website.
- National plans include the North American Wetland Management Plan, various Joint Venture Plans, National Fish Habitat Initiative, and all the Bird Conservation Plans.
- Non-governmental conservation agencies such as Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and Audubon Minnesota have developed their own conservation plans that list habitat restoration, enhancement and protection as a priority.

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	480	560	125
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services*	100	100	
Travel			
Grants	4,000		
TOTAL	4,580	660	125

*Professional services include contracted costs for shared services activities including DNR Office of Management and Budget Services, Human Resources, Management Resources and Information & Education base level services. It also includes funding for supplemental agreements to enhance the webpage, streamline the application and reporting database/systems and additional PR/marketing.

E. Personnel Details

Title	Name	Amount.
Grant Coordinator	Leslie Tannahill	\$60/hour
Grant Specialist	Jamie Gangaware	\$60/hour
NR Specialist (2 FTE)	TBD	\$60/hour
1 – OAS (.5 FTE)	TBD	\$60/hour

Grant staff costs will be billed using a professional services rate of \$60.00/hour. The hourly rate includes salary and fringe for grants staff, computers, communications, travel, supplies and expense.

DNR Real Estate Management Services will be billed on a professional services basis and will be a cost that is covered by the grant recipient.

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

DNR is researching the ability to extend a blanket insurance policy to grant recipients, however, cost information for this type of policy is not available at this time. Therefore, the cost for this type of policy is not included in this proposal.

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Leverage	Fiscal Year 10	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12
Grantees' match funds	10% spread out over grant period		
FAW	\$70,000	\$70,000	
Technical Guidance			
TOTAL	\$470,000	\$70,000	

This proposal does not include costs for activities necessary for DNR to receive donated land and technical guidance. These costs will be leveraged with DNR Operating funds.

G. Outcomes:

Specific accomplishments are dependent upon projects submitted by grantees.

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table

Milestone	Date	Measure
FY11 RFP issued	July, 2010	
First round FY11 grant applications due	October, 2010	
Quarterly progress report to Council	October 2010 Council Meeting	
First round FY11 grantees/projects selected	December, 2010	
Second round FY11 grant applications due	February 1, 2011	
First round FY11 grants executed	February 16, 2011	
Quarterly progress report to Council	March, 2011 Council Meeting	
Second round FY11 grantees/projects selected	April, 2011	
Quarterly progress report to Council	June 2011 Council Meeting	
Second round FY11 grants executed	June 25, 2011	

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

Annual grantee reports due	August 1, 2011
Quarterly progress report to Council	September 2011 Council Meeting
Annual program report to LSOHC due	October 15, 2011
Quarterly progress report to Council	December 2011 Council Meeting
Quarterly progress report to Council	March 2012 Council Meeting
Quarterly progress report to Council	June 2012 Council Meeting
Annual grantee reports due	August 1, 2012
Annual program report to LSOHC due	October 15, 2012
Grants end (non-acquisition)	June 30, 2012
Annual/Final grantee reports due	August 1, 2012
Quarterly progress report to Council	September 2012 Council Meeting
Annual program report submitted	October 15, 2012
Quarterly progress report to Council	December 2012 Council Meeting
Quarterly progress report to Council	March 2013 Council Meeting
All grants end	June 30, 2013
Annual grantee reports due	August 1, 2013
Quarterly progress report to Council	September 2013 Council Meeting
FINAL program report submitted	October 15, 2013

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

Last year DNR received \$4 million for grants and administration of this program. These were new funds for a new program and did not supplement existing funds. Additional funds are requested in this proposal for FY 2011 to provide additional grant opportunities and additional staff to assist applicants/grantees and field staff.

Grant applicants will be asked to document the impact of LSOHC grant funds to their current budget, and if these funds will supplement or supplant existing funds, in their grant application

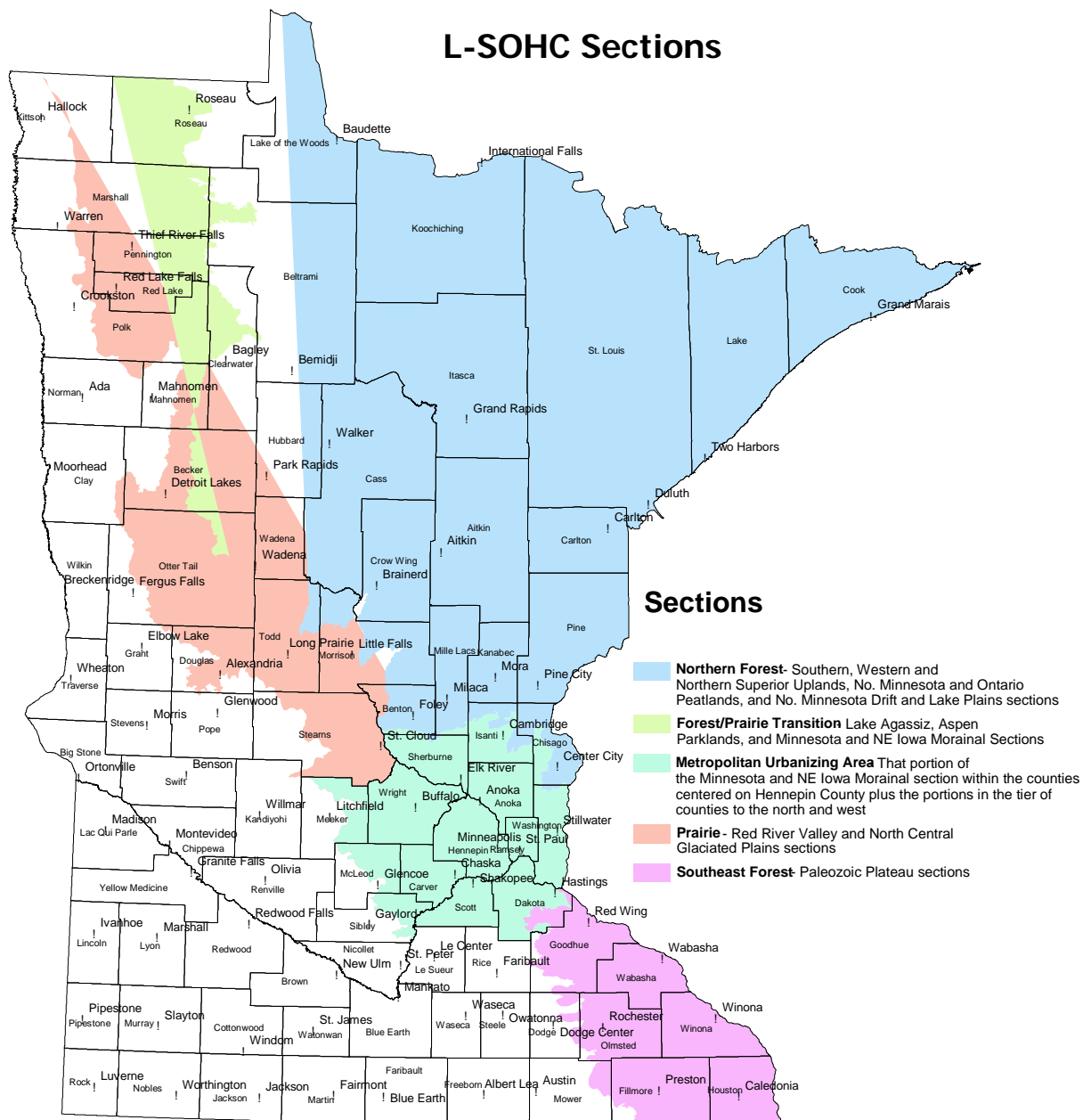
J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Grantees will be required to provide a map with their application.

Program Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program



Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

Request for Funding Form Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Fiscal Year 2011

Program or Project Title: Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration And Enhancement Program

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: John Lenczewski
Title: Chairman, Minnesota Council of Trout Unlimited
Mailing Address: 18776 Twilight Trail, Eden Prairie, MN 55346
Telephone: 612- 670-1629
Fax: NA
E-Mail: jlenczewski@comcast.net
Web Site: www.mntu.org

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$1,397,000	0	0	0

A. Summary

Our program will restore and enhance in-stream and riparian fish and wildlife habitat in six coldwater streams in the State of Minnesota. The proposed projects will improve habitat for both game and non-game fish and wildlife species uniquely associated with coldwater trout streams and provide expanded recreational opportunities for Minnesota anglers.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Seriously degraded coldwater habitat is an important statewide conservation issue requiring immediate investment through habitat restoration and enhancement projects. The Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council has declared the restoration and enhancement of coldwater fish habitat a

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

priority action in the L-SOHC Sections in which these projects are located. As part of our ongoing program of trout and salmon habitat restoration and enhancement, the Minnesota Council of Trout Unlimited ("MNTU") has identified several priority projects for Fiscal Year 2011 funding. MNTU proposes to restore or enhance in-stream and riparian fish and wildlife habitat in and along the following Minnesota waters (counties) between July 2010 and June 2012:

1. Hay Creek (Goodhue);
2. Lost Creek (Fillmore);
3. North Branch of Whitewater River (Wabasha);
4. Pine Creek (Winona);
5. Vermillion River (Dakota);
6. West Indian Creek (Wabasha).

Minnesota TU also plans to restore and enhance habitat in the Lake Superior basin and St. Croix River watershed as part of larger projects being proposed by other conservation organizations with whom we are partnering. Funding for those projects is not included in this request.

2. What action will be taken?

3. Who will take action and when?

The specific fish habitat restoration or enhancement methods used on each stream will vary depending upon the distinct natural resource characteristics of each ecological region, as well as variations in the type and magnitude of poor land uses practices within each watersheds. MNTU will tailor each project accordingly in close consultation with resource professionals within the Minnesota DNR.

The projects to be undertaken by MNTU as part of this program will be designed to accomplish a number of the following purposes: a) reduce stream bank erosion and associated sedimentation, b) reconnect streams to their flood plains to reduce negative impacts from severe flooding, c) increase natural reproduction of trout and other aquatic organisms, d) maintain or increase adult trout abundance, e) increase biodiversity for both in-stream and non-game species, f) be long lasting with minimal maintenance required, and g) improve angler access.

These brief project summaries outline the types of actions, participants and timetables for each individual project:

Hay Creek (Goodhue): To mitigate the effects of agricultural run-off and sedimentation into the watershed we will restore another 5,500 feet of degraded stream. This will include sloping degraded banks, stabilizing the banks, removing invasive plants and planting native grasses. The stream channel will be narrowed and cover structures installed to provide better fish habitat and habitat for

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

other fauna. The project will reduce sediment loads and chemicals in the creek, and provide a stable environment for the aquatic species that depend on the watershed.

Virtually, the whole length of Hay Creek has angler easements and with additional funding, The Twin Cities Chapter of Trout Unlimited will continue to rehabilitate the whole Hay Creek watershed and greatly improve the fishing opportunities on this south metro stream. Funds requested include costs for tree removal, heavy equipment leasing to slope the degraded banks. TCTU, along with MN DNR, and support from other TU chapters will begin and finish this project in the summer of 2011. Based on recommendations by MN DNR Fisheries staff, we jointly design a plan that will improve not only the fishery, but the health and function of the stream and the riparian corridor. MNTU believes this project will be the epitome of what the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund and Amendment was set out to accomplish.

Lost Creek (Fillmore)

North Branch of Whitewater River (Wabasha)

Pine Creek (Winona)

West Indian Creek (Wabasha)

Habitat will be restored on a section of each of these four Southeast Minnesota streams. Specific project sites have been selected in coordination with the MNDNR. At least 3.0 miles of in-stream habitat and stream banks will be restored or enhanced between July 2010 and June 2012. These projects will be very similar to the cooperative projects done by Hiawatha Chapter TU and the MNDNR in the past several years. They will consist of sloping and stabilizing stream banks using rip-rapping and/or vegetation, installing overhead cover for trout and installing soil erosion blankets. Mulching and seeding of exposed stream banks will be performed, with native plant species used where appropriate. Improving and maintaining stream access road(s) and stream crossing(s) will be necessary to complete these projects. Removal of undesirable woody vegetation (box elder, buckthorn, etc.) from riparian corridors of these streams will reduce competition with desirable plant and grass species and allow beneficial sunlight to reach the stream corridors.

All these projects are designed for reducing bank erosion, increasing overhead bank cover, increasing large trout and trout wintering cover, improving habitat for invertebrate species and other non-game species, reconnecting streams to their flood plain, adding native plant species whenever appropriate and possible, improving/increasing sunlight to streams by removing non-native and undesirable tree and shrub species, increasing trout angling opportunities and local economic impact by providing improved trout populations and habitat. In addition these four streams have these additional features and benefits to citizens and sportspeople:

North Branch of the Whitewater River project in Carley State Park will have the added benefits of new partnerships with a non-angling, nonprofit organization, the Plainview Lions Club. It will also provide the opportunity to work closely with another new partner, the MN State Parks, to provide greatly improved trout angling opportunities in the park. Additionally it will make public access to the stream easier and safer for children and the physically challenged by removing undesirable

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Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

trees, lowering and sloping the banks, providing more trout holding and hiding cover in the area with the best public access and use. The park will see the further benefit of having the stream reconnected to its flood plain in the main park area reducing flood repairs and park maintenance. There will be greatly increased public exposure to the benefits of a healthy trout stream, improvement trout habitats and the value to the LSOHC funds. We will demonstrate how the LSOHC funds benefit both game and nongame species..

The West Indian Creek prroject is adjacent to a popular campground in Wabasha County. In addition to all the normal fish,game, and stream health benefits it will provide and opportunity to expose many new people to the LSOHC fund benefits as well as increase trout angling opportunities in the area. The project is between two communities with large populations of outdoor enthusiasts, Wabasha and Plainview , so the economic impact of the project will be substantial. Additionally it will give us the opportunity to work with new landowner partners and since the project will be completed during the prime camping season adjacent to a campground. We expect the opportunity to educate and expose many new people to the benefits of what a healthy stream habitat means to game and nongame species.

Pine Creek, additional benefits include the opportunity to connect an additional reach of improved stream habitat to a previously completed MN DNR stream project. The project area is also located a short distance downstream from the Coolridge Creek wild Brook Trout Project so it should provide additional brown Trout habitat for the brown Trout from Coolridge that are being placed in Pine as part of the wild brook trout project. This stream section also has highly eroding banks that will be sloped and seeded greatly reducing the sediment load in the stream and it will provide a lot more angling opportunities for area sports people.

Lost Creek benefits in addition to the normal ones will include doing a project on the western side of the driftless area, increasing overwinter and spawning habitat for adult Brown Trout the reside in the Root Rive and use Lost as their spawning/wintering site and since it less than 10 miles from Chatfield and near the Chatfield sportsmen club it will provide new partnering and exposure opportunities for the LSOHC funds.

Vermillion River (Dakota):

This project will restore or enhance habitat for trout on approximately 2000 feet of this unique metropolitan area trout stream. The reach has been impacted by previous agricultural use, when the floodplain was used to graze cattle. This project will stabilize streambanks to reduce erosion while enhancing fish habitat. Vertical banks will be graded to a 3:1 slope, and will be planted with native grasses, shrubs, and trees to allow plant roots to reach all the way down to the water level and prevent bank slumping. Woody material will also be installed on the toe of some banks to provide 10-15 years of erosion protection. This will allow the roots of vegetation to become established before they are relied upon for erosion protection. In addition, the woody material will create complex overhead cover that trout and other fish and insect species prefer. During bank sloping, the stream will be narrowed in some places to address the over-wide condition. The project will result in a narrower, deeper channel that will have better cover, less silt and sand, and

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Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

more shade. All of these things should result in more trout residing in the project area, and benefit downstream areas by reducing the amount of eroded silt in the Vermillion River.

Following completion of instream habitat work, measures will be taken to replace the reed canary grass that dominates the floodplain. An herbicide labeled for application in near-stream environments will be applied to the approximately 15 acre floodplain area. A follow-up treatment of herbicide in the late spring of 2012 will help to kill off any re-sprouting prior to planting of a native prairie seed mix in the summer of 2012. Additional spot spraying of re-sprouting reed canary grass will be done in the fall of 2012 and 2013 while native species are dormant. TU volunteers or MCC will perform.

The project will be completed with assistance from the MNDNR during the summer of 2011. A contractor will be hired to provide heavy equipment work needed to slope streambanks and install woody cover. Volunteers from Twin Cities Trout Unlimited will be on hand to supervise construction, and to perform manual labor such as installing erosion blankets, seeding, planting, and mulching disturbed areas. The DNR Trout Stream Habitat Specialist will be on hand to assist with project supervision.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

For the majority of projects we do not anticipate the use of other constitutional funding. However, the upland areas on the Vermillion River project site are being planted in native prairie with assistance from Pheasants Forever, utilizing L-SOHC funds. By establishing native prairie throughout the parcel, habitat will be improved and sources of invasive plants minimized. On all projects we will continue to look for partnerships and opportunities to add components such as native prairie restoration, non-game measures and improved watershed practices.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

In-stream cover for fish and invertebrates will be installed and stream banks will be stabilized. With stream banks better stabilized, the streams will narrow and deepen, further improving fish habitat. The narrower channels will have coarser substrates preferred by aquatic invertebrates as well as spawning trout. Native riparian vegetation will stabilize stream banks, provide shading, and improve habitat for upland wildlife species such as pheasants.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

Most habitat changes will be seen upon completion of each project. Stream banks will be stabilized upon completion of the project, and installed in-stream habitat structures and woody material will provide cover for fish immediately. On the Vermillion River site where native vegetation is used in

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

place of harder structures, undercut stream banks and overhanging vegetation preferred by trout will become established within 2 to 3 years. Upland prairie plants will be established in a similar timeframe, at which time upland wildlife species will benefit from improved habitat.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

 X YES NO
If not, how will you finance completion?

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

We do not anticipate that there will be any significant maintenance required to maintain the habitat accomplishments once the projects are completed.

MNTU habitat restoration and enhancement projects are designed for long-term ecological and hydraulic stability. Maintenance, primarily until vegetation is established, is budget into the initial 2 years of the projects. Following completion of the projects, it is anticipated that long-term monitoring of the integrity of the improvements will be done in conjunction with routine inspections and biological monitoring conducted by local DNR staff, MNTU members, or landowners as appropriate. This monitoring will not require separate OHF or other constitutional funding. In the unlikely event that there are other maintenance costs, potential sources of funding and volunteer labor include Minnesota Trout Unlimited, MNDNR AMA maintenance funding, and other grant funds and organizations.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

Each project involves the installation of in-stream fish habitat structures, in addition to measures which reduce stream bank erosion and associated sedimentation, and reconnect streams to their flood plains to reduce negative impacts from severe flooding.

On the Vermillion River habitat is restored/enhanced by installing woody cover, creating undercut stream banks and overhanging vegetation, and reducing sediment erosion into the stream. The stabilized stream banks will also allow the stream to narrow and deepen over time, improving habitat for trout and their invertebrate food source by maintaining coarser bottom substrate and cooler temperatures

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

 X YES NO
If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

All of MNTU's habitat restoration and enhancement projects will be completed on land permanently protected by state ownership or permanent conservation easement. The Vermillion River project will restore or enhance habitat on land owned by the MNDNR (fee title) as the Vermillion River Aquatic Management Area. The project on the North Branch of the Whitewater River will restore or enhance habitat on state owned land in Carly State Park. The other projects will take place on land permanently protected by MNDNR fish management easements containing land use restrictions designed to conserve natural resource benefits.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

MNTU will improve and maintain its statewide website to showcase the projects funded by the Outdoor heritage Fund. We will maintain detailed descriptions of the projects, including before and after photos, status reports, project contacts and links to the websites of the L-SOHC, MNDNR and legislative coordinating commission.

12. Why will this strategy work?

Internet sites provide ready access to large amounts of material and are the search method which an ever-increasing number of citizens turn to.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

The Minnesota DNR is the primary entity with decision-making authority which could impact the expected outcomes. Because we work in close partnership with them, and rely heavily upon their professional expertise to ensure project site selection and design is based upon the best available science, we do not anticipate any impediments to successfully achieving the intended habitat outcomes.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

Not applicable

_____ YES

_____ NO

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

Not applicable

_____ YES

_____ NO

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

Not applicable

_____ YES

_____ NO

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

Not applicable

_____ YES

_____ NO

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

Minnesota Trout Unlimited is requesting funding for six specific projects which are part of our ongoing program of coldwater fish habitat restoration and enhancement. Trout Unlimited is the national leader in trout and salmon habitat restoration work, and celebrated its anniversary of coldwater conservation work this year. In Minnesota, our chapters and members have been planning, funding and executing high quality fish habitat restoration and enhancement projects for more than 30 years. Our dedicated membership and capacity to conserve, protect, restore and sustain Minnesota's trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds continue to grow. Consequently, MNTU expects its program of coldwater fish habitat restoration and enhancement to continue for several decades to come.

While Minnesota Trout Unlimited's habitat restoration and enhancement program will continue for years, the present request is for the funding of six discrete projects. Each of these projects is a stand alone project which will be fully completed with the requested funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

MNTU continues to look for opportunities, funding and partners to accelerate the restoration, protect and enhance Minnesota's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. Our volunteers will continue to raise private donations and volunteer at work sites. MNTU will continue to aggressively pursue funding from every source, private, federal and state, and look for partners to get quality habitat restoration and enhancement done. We hope that the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council and the Minnesota Legislature will make Minnesota a partner on the six projects we are proposing for funding in the L-SOHC's fiscal year 2011.

_____ **30+** _____ **Years**

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Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

- ☐ Northern Forest
- ☐ Forest/Prairie Transition
- ☒ Southeast Forest
- ☐ Prairie
- ☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ YES ☐ NO
If yes, please explain.

Yes, we risk losing conservation partnership opportunities, particularly with Carly State Park and the Plainview Lions' Clubs. We do not know yet what potential sources of matching funds could be lost if the projects are put off. All of MNTU's projects enhance or restore coldwater fisheries habitat, and their undertaking constitutes a priority action identified by the Council. Delaying long overdue habitat such as we propose will only mean lost opportunities to engage and educate local citizens, and the lost benefits of cleaner water, increased angling opportunities and local economic stimulus.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☒ YES ☐ NO
If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

Five of the six projects will restore or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Aquatic Management Areas. The sixth project, on the North Branch of the Whitewater River, will restore or enhance habitat on state-owned land within Carly State Park, in close partnership with park managers. The AMAs on which we will restore and enhance habitat include the Hay Creek Aquatic Management Area, Lost Creek Aquatic Management Area, Pine Creek Aquatic Management Area, Vermillion River Aquatic Management Area and the West Indian Creek Aquatic Management Area.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

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 X YES

 NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services' Strategic Habitat Conservation Model use the following methodology: Identify priority species; select subset of priority species; formulate population objectives; assess current state of priority species; identify limiting factors; and compile and apply models of population-habitat relationships.

All of Minnesota Trout Unlimited's projects were selected in consultation with MNDNR Fisheries personnel, who use a science based approach to determine the high priority streams and the project sites. In addition to using the criteria described under question #24 below, the MNDNR used its annual stream monitoring and assessments, which assess limiting factors and others factors bearing on macroinvertebrates/fish populations. Consequently MNTU's projects were selected based on strategic planning and evaluation models very similar to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's model.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Each project is based on science-based assessments by Trout Unlimited and the Minnesota DNR of the habitat needs of the stream and particular project site. Based on these assessments, habitat restoration or enhancement practices appropriate to the site will be selected to match management goals. Ongoing monitoring of the projects will assess our success, and can be used both in maintenance of the projects and to help MNTU and the MNDNR improve future habitat work.

24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

All of the six projects which Minnesota TU is proposing were identified by MNDNR fisheries personnel as high priority restoration or enhancement projects based upon extensive criteria developed by these resource professionals. The MNDNR ranks trout streams based upon the below criteria. They do not weight them, but higher priority streams meet more of these identified objectives. The MNDNR's criteria include:

- The project site must have public access;
- The project has the potential to increase the carrying capacity (fish numbers);
- No habitat work has been done on project site in the past;
- Proximity to cities, anglers, etc;
- The stream must have natural reproduction;
- Ability of the project to reduce significant amounts of sedimentation to the stream; and
- The influence the project site has on the rest of the trout population in the stream.

In addition to these criteria, Minnesota Trout Unlimited also strives to have each project:

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Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

- Done only where the lack of quality habitat is a limiting factor for the fishery;
- Conducted in locations where the public can access the water and in such a way that they are actually fishable by the public;
- Done in close partnership with MNDNR fisheries;
- Consistent with the long term system resource goal of ensuring that robust populations of native and wild trout and salmon thrive in Minnesota's coldwater lakes and streams, so that present and future generations can enjoy healthy fisheries near their homes;
- Seize conservation opportunities that will be lost or significantly delayed if not immediately funded;
- Capable of leveraging other significant funding; and
- Durable, especially to withstand flooding.

Finally, MNTU looks at a project's potential to increase public awareness of the value of, and threats to, coldwater resources and whether it can foster important conservation partnerships. While identifying a pool of high priority streams is science based, all things being equal we try to consider the educational and partnership potential as well. For example, the project on the North Branch of the White Water River is in highly visible Carly State Park. It provides an opportunity to work with the state park managers as well as the local Lions Club from nearby Plainview. It will provide the park an opportunity to teach visitors about the impacts of land use practices. It provides visitors and local residents the opportunity to see their tax dollars making concrete improvements to natural resources in Southeast Minnesota.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan – Land & Aquatic Preservation Plan.

Habitat 2. Protect critical shorelands of streams & lakes...pp. 67-74

- Target shallow wildlife lakes, natural environment lakes, shallow bays of deep lakes, cold-water/designated trout streams...

Habitat 3: Improve connectivity and access to outdoor recreation. pp. 74-77

- Also provide benefits to wildlife, SGCN, etc.

Habitat 6: Protect and restore critical in-water habitat of lakes and streams. pp 81-84

- Expand efforts to restore critical habitats for aquatic communities in near-shore areas of lakes, in-stream areas of rivers and streams, and deep-water lakes with exceptional water quality
- Reverse negative effects of stream channelization on in-stream habitats

Habitat 7: Keep water on the landscape – pp.84-87

- Habitat benefits include improved water quality, maintaining habitat for wildlife and game species, and enhancing biological diversity

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Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

- Increase riparian buffers along shorelines of rivers, lakes, and sinkholes
- Maintain and restore headwater wetlands, riparian areas, and floodplains
- Enhance and expand the use of perennial vegetation.

Minnesota's Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan 2008

Goal 1: Promote a Healthy Hydrological Regime for Minnesota's Streams and Rivers. – pp. 4.3 – 176

- Promote stream restoration projects that restore connectivity between rivers and their flood plains.
- Develop an interagency program to assess/control streambank erosion...

Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild & Rare – an action plan for Minnesota Wildlife.

Goal I: Stabilize and increase Species in Greatest Conservation Need; 8. Stream habitats, actions include: – pp. 80

- Maintain good water quality, hydrology, geomorphology, and connectivity in priority stream reaches.
- Maintain and enhance riparian areas along priority stream reaches.

Strategic Plan for Coldwater Resources Management in Southeast Minnesota 2004-2015

- Theme 1: Provide for the protection, improvement, and restoration of coldwater aquatic habitat and fish communities so that this unique resource is available for future generations. pp 9.
- Theme 2: Provide diverse angling opportunities so that a broad range of experiences are available to anglers. pp 12.

Minnesota's 2008-2012 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreational Plan

- Strategy 1: Acquire, protect and restore Minnesota's natural resource base on which outdoor recreation depends. pp12.
- Strategy 2: Develop and maintain a sustainable and resilient outdoor recreation infrastructure. pp 17.

DNR, Division of Fish and Wildlife Long Range Plan for Fisheries Management Covering Fiscal Years 2004-2010

- Core Function 2. Conserve, Improve, and Rehabilitate Fish Populations and Aquatic Habitat. pp8.
 - Shoreline habitat restoration program – rehabilitate riparian and aquatic vegetation to improve fish habitat, wildlife habitat and water quality;
 - Metro trout stream initiative – conserve and rehabilitate threatened trout stream resources in the Twin Cities metropolitan area;
- Core Function 4. Provide Opportunities for Partnerships, Public Information, and Aquatic Education. pp8.

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

- Increased public involvement with fisheries projects.

Trout Unlimited Driftless Area Restoration Effort – Strategic plan

Goals: Through DARE, TU is partnering with local, state and federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations and private landowners to strategically link upland conservation and stream corridor restoration to achieve the following goals: - pp 15.

- Protect and restore habitat for fish and other species of interest to increase angling and other recreational opportunities. – pp 15.

Lessard-Sams Council Funding Outcomes and Priorities, Substate Regions Targets and Priority Actions

Priority Actions for the Southeast Forest Section Recommendations to the 2010 Legislative Session:

- 2. Protect, enhance and restore habitat for fish, game and non-game wildlife in rivers, cold water streams and associated upland habitat.

Priority Actions for the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area Section Recommendations to the 2010 Legislative Session:

- 3. Enhance and restore coldwater fisheries systems.

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	\$66,000		
Contracts	\$384,000		
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	\$947,000		
Fee Acquisition	\$0		
Easement Acquisition	\$0		
Easement Stewardship	\$0		
Professional Services	\$0		
Travel	\$0		
Additional Budget Items	\$0		
TOTAL	\$1,397,000		

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
Project administrator (.425 FTE), Project manager (.125 FTE), Comptroller (.125 FTE).		\$66,000 (combined)

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Volunteers	\$58,300		
National Fish Habitat Action Plan	\$120,000		
Embrace-A-Stream	\$15,000		
TU National Funding			
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation	\$10,000		
Farm Bill Program	\$100,000		
Lions Club	\$5,000		
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	\$20,000		
TOTAL	\$328,300*		

***All leverage amounts are estimates only and identify likely sources of funding**

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the "protect" row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				Restore fish habitat in over 4.4 miles of trout stream*
Protect				
Enhance				

* Leveraging additional funding may enable us to restore additional trout habitat (more miles).

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>Southeast Forest 3.0 miles; Metropolitan Urbanizing Area 1.4 miles</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>\$1,397,000</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				<i>\$328,300</i>
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table - Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone

Date

Measure

1. Hay Creek (Goodhue):

Milestone

Date

Measure

Begin project design, permitting and preparation

July 2010

Begin in -stream habitat restoration

June 2011

Complete in-stream restoration

June 2012

5,500 feet

2. Lost Creek(Fillmore);

3. North Branch of Whitewater (Wabasha);

4. Pine Creek (Winona);

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

5. West Indian Creek (Wabasha):

Milestone	Date	Measure
Begin project design, permitting and preparation	July 2010	
Stream Bank Restoration (tree removal)	Oct. 2010 – Mar. 2011	
Begin in -stream habitat restoration	July 2011	
Complete in-stream restoration	June 2012	3.0 miles

6. Vermillion River (Dakota):

Milestone	Date	Measure
Begin project design, permitting and preparation	July 2010	
Begin in -stream habitat restoration	July 2011	
Complete in-stream restoration	June 2012	2,000 feet

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

Funds appropriated for this program will supplement the cash and in-kind resources typically raised by Minnesota TU and its chapters to support similar projects. This program represents a significant increase in the amount of local effort to be invested in similar habitat projects, but it is within the range of habitat restoration and enhancement projects managed by Trout Unlimited as an organization.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

MNTU habitat restoration and enhancement projects are designed for long-term ecological and hydraulic stability. Once the projects are completed we do not anticipate that there will be any significant maintenance required in order to sustain the habitat improvements for at least several decades. We do anticipate that long-term monitoring of the integrity of the improvements will be done in conjunction with routine inspections and biological monitoring conducted by local DNR staff, MNTU members, or landowners as appropriate. This monitoring will not require separate OHF or other constitutional funding. In the unlikely event that there are other maintenance costs, potential sources of funding and volunteer labor include Minnesota Trout Unlimited, MNDNR AMA maintenance funding, and other grant funds and organizations. While the Vermillion River project uses some additional methods on this unique prairie trout stream, because they are intended to mimic natural habitat forming processes human intervention should be minimal.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

Double left click to bring up the map editor. Symbols should be on the left side of the pop-up banner at the top of your screen or at the bottom left depending on your software.

If you can't bring up the interactive map editor follow these instructions:

1. Make a paper copy of the map,
2. By hand place symbols on the map corresponding to the location of the projects in your proposal,
3. Scan the marked map to a pdf, and
4. Insert the marked pdf map as the last page in your submission.

Minnesota Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: # 38 Prairie Heritage Fund

Date: 11/02/09

Manager's Name: Matt Holland

Title: Sr. Field Coordinator, Pheasants Forever

Mailing Address: 679 West River Drive, New London, MN 56273

Telephone: 320-354-4377

Fax: 320-354-4377

E-Mail: @pheasantsforever

Web Site: .pheasantsforever .minnesotapf

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	4,000,000	0	0	0

A. Summary: Our proposal will protect 1,200 acres of prairie grassland and wetland habitat and native remnant prairie (if available) as state wildlife management areas (WMA). In addition, this proposal will restore or enhance acquired prairie grasslands and wetlands and provide significant, quality public recreation opportunities for the citizens of Minnesota.

B. Background Information

- 1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?** Less than 1% of Minnesota's native prairie remains, and grassland habitat losses are cited as the primary reason for population declines of breeding waterfowl, grassland birds, and other wildlife species. Minnesota is also seeing significant grassland habitat loss through expirations out of USDA's Conservation Reserve Program, and pressures due to development, wind, mining and other threats. In addition, it is well-documented that grassland-associated wetland habitats have also been lost and severely degraded. This proposal seeks to build upon existing investments in permanently protected prairie grassland and wetland habitat. The goal is to improve the form and function of these habitat complexes through protection, restoration, and enhancement of grasslands and wetlands.

Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

2. **What action will be taken?** We will permanently protect 1,200 acres of prairie grasslands and wetlands.
3. **Who will take action and when?** Pheasants Forever, in cooperation with the Minnesota DNR, will acquire 1,200 acres during the project period. We will strive to achieve this work within 12-months, however due to complexities beyond our control, believe an 18-month window will be adequate to complete established outcomes.
4. **How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?** The work proposed here is distinct from any other funding sources. Committed leverage funds are non-state in origin. Any stateside funding sources should they be used, would be split out, accounted for separately and not considered part of our leverage effort.
5. **What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.**
We will add approximately 1,200 acres of prairie grassland and wetland habitats, building upon existing investments in habitat. The lands would be open to the public for hunting, and managed for grassland/wetland species, resource protection and other consistent conservation efforts. Croplands will be seeded to diverse Minnesota native seed mixes and drained wetlands will be restored. Native remnant prairies that are acquired would be managed with prescribed fire or grazing, depending upon what is most suitable for the site.
6. **When do you expect to see these habitat changes?**
Habitat restoration and enhancement on newly acquired tracts will be completed by PF in cooperation with the DNR Area Managers through the initial development plan process and per LSOHC and contract specifications. We expect that the majority of this work will be complete no later than two years after the property is acquired.
7. **Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?**

☐ YES

☒ NO

If not, how will you finance completion?

Non-state funds committed as leverage will assist with the acquisition, restoration and enhancement of acquired lands. Sources of funding would likely include PF Chapter contributions, other partner contributions, donations of land value, other non-state funding sources (e.g. North American Wetlands Conservation Act or National Fish and Wildlife Foundation).

Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

- 8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?** Lands will be enrolled into the state Wildlife Management Area System and managed in perpetuity by the Minnesota DNR. PF will work with the DNR Area Staff to create initial development plans for each parcel, and provide funding via this proposal for past and current LSOHC acquired properties to bring them into the WMA system with the initial habitat and site development needs being met. Long-term management of the properties will be completed by the Minnesota DNR and its partners.
- 9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?** Approximately 1,200 acres of prairie grassland and wetland habitat will be permanently protected. Acquisition will be followed up with the appropriate habitat restoration and enhancement work being completed directly on those acquired acres.
- 10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?**

 X YES

 NO

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection. All lands to be restored or enhanced under this proposal will be state Wildlife Management Areas.

- 11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.** We will provide an accomplishment plan for approval that will include a project list. In addition, all properties acquired will be open to the public for hunting and other activities consistent with the state WMA system. We look forward to sharing with the citizens of Minnesota our accomplishments in concert with the LSOHC.
- 12. Why will this strategy work?** We currently have a backlog of priority projects to be considered for the Wildlife Management Area System. Several projects on our list are carryover from PF's approved 2010 accomplishment plan, and have been added to this proposal due to the fact that our funds are largely obligated for our FY10 Prairie Heritage Fund grant recommended by the LSOHC. PF's network of 76 Minnesota chapters and 24,000 members have been actively involved in protecting and restoring lands in partnership with the Minnesota DNR for 27-years.

We also state that we are building upon existing investments in the WMA system and permanently protected habitats. To that end, 23 of the 25 potential projects on our list are additions to existing WMA's and all projects have been developed in consultation with the local DNR managers. Additionally, DNR Commissioner approval will be received for any funded project under this proposal.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program? DNR Commissioner approval is required, so all projects will be reviewed by the entity responsible for the long-term management of the property. Each project is done in consultation with the DNR area staff to evaluate potential projects for inclusion in the WMA system. All projects that are completed will be with willing sellers. County boards will be notified before closing of the intent to donate lands to the Minnesota DNR for enrollment into the WMA system.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition? PF will follow LSOHC and contract guidance to ensure that County Boards are appropriately notified of projects within their counties and the intent to donate lands to the DNR for enrollment into the Wildlife Management Area System.

_____ **YES**

___X___ **NO**

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement? Many properties are accepted into the WMA with permanent conservation easements already in place on a portion of the property. PF will follow LSOHC and DNR contract guidance as it relates to parcels with portions protected with perpetual conservation easements.

_____ **YES**

___X___ **NO**

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

___X___ **NA**

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

_____ **YES**

_____ **NO**

___X___ **NA**

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate? Lands protected under this proposal would be enrolled in perpetuity into the State Wildlife Management Area System. A notice of grant restrictions will be recorded on properties at the time of closing to protect the investment of the LSOHC in permanent habitat protection.

___Perpetual___ Years

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

☒ Northern Forest

☒ Forest/Prairie Transition

☒ Southeast Forest

☒ Prairie

☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ YES

___ NO

If yes, please explain. PF has a backlog of projects for inclusion into the WMA system. Opportunities to build on quality permanent prairie habitat and recreational opportunities will be lost if not funded.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☒ YES

___ NO

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced. This proposal will restore and/or enhance acres on projects acquired under this proposal or the funded FY10 Prairie Heritage Fund grant recommended by LSOHC. Project lists are available and habitat restoration and enhancement activities will be determined in consult with DNR Area staff through the Initial Development Plan process following LSOHC and DNR contract requirements.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

☒ YES

___ NO

If yes explain the model briefly. All projects proposed are approved by the DNR at the Commissioner, regional, and area level, and meet the goals and intent of the Wildlife Management Area System. We strive to build upon existing investments in habitat, thus adding form and function to prairie grassland/wetland habitat complexes already on the ground. We like the

Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

concept of developing high quality 'Grassland Bird Conservation Area' (GBCA's) on the landscape in a step by step approach to restoring functioning grassland habitats in areas of Minnesota that have been converted. More information about GBCA's can be found at [://www.fws.gov/midwest/HAPET/GrasslandBirdMaps](http://www.fws.gov/midwest/HAPET/GrasslandBirdMaps).

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce. By building upon existing investments in habitat or starting a new unit with promise for expansion, we can improve upon the function of past investments in prairie grassland bird conservation. By doing so, we help to create higher functioning habitat complexes for grassland birds and other wildlife species that call grasslands and wetlands home. We must understand that the degradation and conversion of grassland and wetland habitats across much of the agricultural portion of the state has been significant and took place over roughly 150 years. Restoring function to the landscape will take significant effort, resources, and time. Our aim is to add resources and effort in a manner that builds towards a future of habitat complexes that function for grassland and wetland birds.

24. How do you set priorities? (*Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.*) Each project is evaluated using a combination of the following criteria.

1. Does the parcel fit the objectives of the wildlife management area system?
2. Does the parcel build upon existing grassland/wetland habitats?
3. Does the parcel add value to the existing grassland/wetland habitats (e.g. does it increase function)?
4. Are there significant habitat features? (e.g. shoreline, riparian, remnant prairie, wetland restoration potential, outlet structure access, grassland enhancement/restoration potential, does it connect habitats)
5. Are there significant or unique plant or animal communities that would be protected/enhanced (e.g. County Biological Survey site)?
6. Are there other important benefits to Minnesota (e.g. water quality, access, etc)

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

The *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* calls for protecting priority lands. This proposal will protect and restore priority grassland habitats important to grassland birds as well as the myriad species that call grasslands home. The accomplishments

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

proposed under this proposal will also contribute to the follow habitat recommendations outlined in the *Plan*:

1. Protect priority land habitats – this proposal contains priority grassland habitats important to pheasants, waterfowl, grassland and wetland birds as well as the myriad species that call grasslands home. Native remnant prairie tracts will receive priority.
2. Protect critical shorelands of rivers and lakes – there are potential projects that if completed will protect shoreline of shallow lakes or contribute to better water quality of those lakes contained within this proposal.
3. Improve connectivity and access to outdoor recreation - All lands acquired and restored will be open to the public for hunting and other activities allowed under the WMA or WPA systems.
4. Restore and protect shallow lakes - there are potential projects that include protection of shallow lakes shoreline contained within this proposal as well as build upon grassland and wetland habitats near shallow lake habitats.
5. Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds – this proposal protects and restores grasslands (likely wetlands too as you cannot separate the two in much of prairie region of Minnesota). A majority of the lands purchased will be prior-converted marginal farmlands.
6. Keep water on the landscape – by protecting and restoring grasslands, the work of this proposal will help keep water on the landscape through permanent vegetation restoration and permanent wetland restoration. Several riparian, wetland, and lakeshore protection and restoration accomplishments are possible and are included in the project list.

Minnesota DNR Long-range plan for the ring-necked pheasant in Minnesota cites secure, undisturbed nesting cover as a primary limiting factor for pheasant populations. This proposal contributes 1,200 acres to the plan goal of restoring 1,560,000 acres of habitat (grassland and wetland) within the pheasant range of Minnesota.

Minnesota DNR *Long-range Duck Recovery Plan* has priority goals for long term protection and restoration of wetland and grassland habitat for duck production. This proposal will contribute 1,100-acres to the 2,000,000 acre goal set under the plan. Specifically it will permanently protect and/or restore wetlands towards the 600,000-acre wetland goal and permanently protect and/or restore grasslands towards the 1,400,000-acre grassland goal

This proposal contributes to the North American Waterfowl Management Plan by contributing 1,100 acres of breeding habitat (prairie grasslands and wetlands) to the 11.8 million acres goal to restore continental waterfowl populations. Most of the work proposed will occur within the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture which is recognized as a national priority for wetland and grassland habitat and breeding waterfowl and grassland bird species.

Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	40,000	20,000	
Contracts	500,000		
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee	2,440,000	1,000,000	
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	2,980,000	1,020,000	

¹ Fee acquisition includes all costs to acquire the property including but not limited to closing costs, title examination, survey, etc.

E. Personnel Details: Only documented, direct to project personnel costs are requested.

Title	Name	Amount.
Director of Conservation Programs		\$ 35,000
Regional Staff		\$ 15,000
Director of Public Finance (national office grant department)		\$ 10,000

Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

F. All Leverage

Source of Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
	500,000	200,000	
TOTAL	500,000	200,000	

1 – Source of PF leverage would likely include PF Chapter contributions, documented donations in land value, other local partner contributions (e.g. Sportsman's Clubs), federal funding (e.g. North American Wetlands Conservation Act, and other non-state funding sources.

G. Outcomes:

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect	200	1,000		
Enhance				

Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

Table Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect	75– Metro/Urban	80- Metro/Urban		
Enhance				
Restore				
Protect	17-Transition	300- Transition		
Enhance				
Restore				
Protect	20 – SE Forest	300 – SE Forest		
Enhance				
Restore				
Protect	5 – N Forest	35 – N Forest		
Enhance				
Restore				
Protect	97 – Prairies	1,650 - Prairies		
Enhance				

1 - This table represents the universe of potential projects. At proposal time, we are unsure of which projects will be completed and which projects will fall off, so it is difficult to input meaningful numbers here.

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	100,000	400,000		
Protect	640,000	2,800,000		
Enhance				

Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		50,000		
Protect	50,000	600,000		
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability	200	1,000		
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table:

Milestone	Date	Measure
Identify priority acquisitions.	09/01/2010	DNR approved projects with willing sellers identified
Contract appraisals ordered.	09/01/2010.	10 appraisals ordered
Purchase agreements.	11/01/2011.	Options signed
Re-evaluate tract priority.	01/15/2011	Additional tracts selected
Contract appraisals ordered.	01/15/2011.	5 appraisals ordered
Purchase agreements.	06/01/2011.	Options signed
Restoration actions initiated.	06/01/2011.	Wetland & upland restoration initiated w/ DNR IDP in cooperation with PF
Close on optioned tracts.	09/01/2011	1,200 acres acquired
Wetland restorations completed.	11/30/2011	Acquired acres restored
Upland restorations completed.	11/30/2011	Acquired acres restored

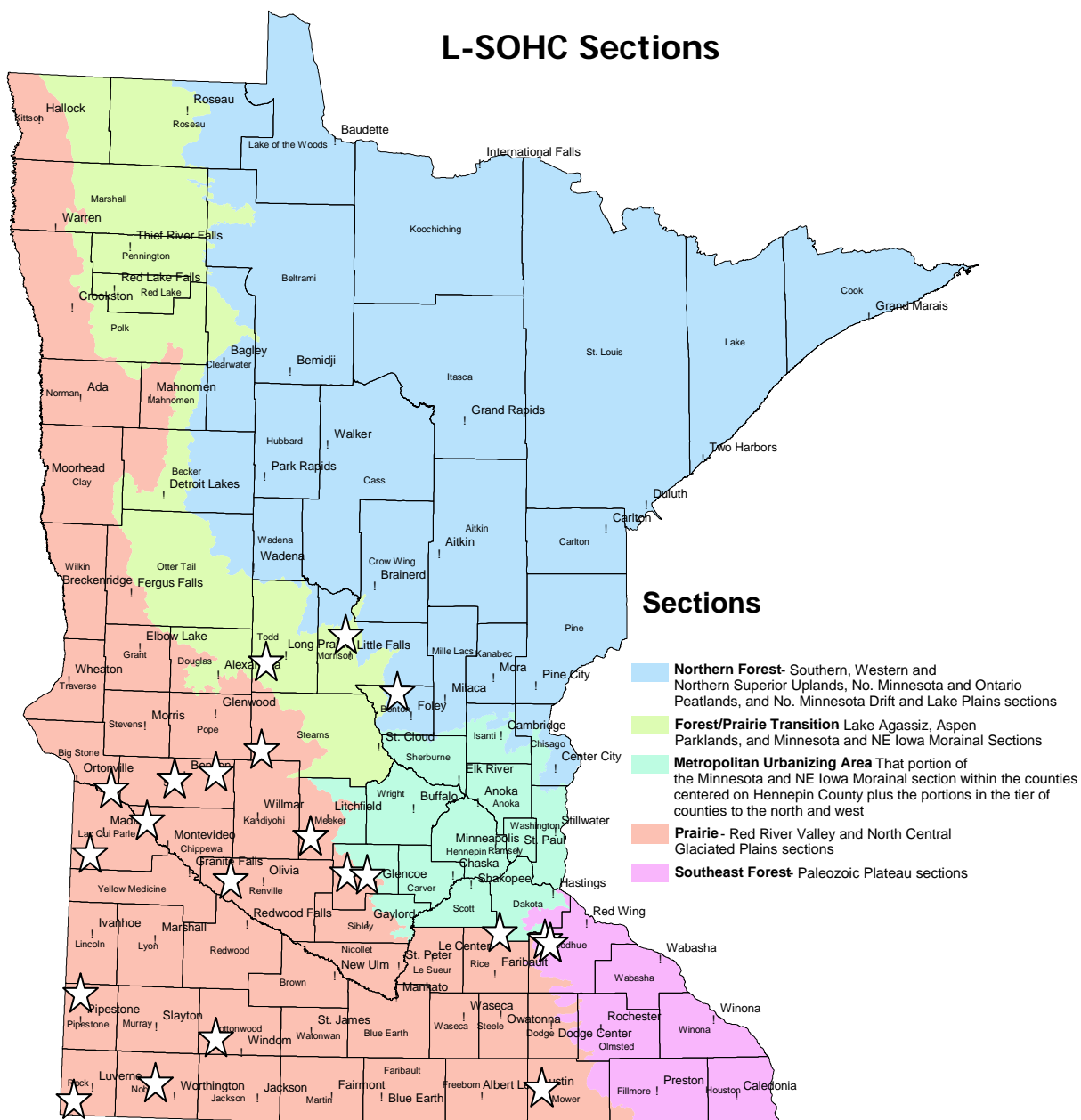
Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget: This proposal is an acceleration of WMA acquisition and restoration budget.

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained? All lands will be enrolled into the state Wildlife Management Area system and will be managed in perpetuity by the Minnesota DNR.

Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.



Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

Potential Project List – FY2011 Prairie Heritage Fund

Potential Project Name	County	Zone
Lac Qui Parle WMA Addition	Big Stone	P
Benderberg WMA Addition	Chippewa	P
Florida Creek WMA Addition	Lac Qui Parle	P
Darling WMA	Morrison	T
Dybsand WMA Addition	Renville	P
Camp Kerk WMA Addition	Swift	P
TBA WMA (Platt Lake)	Todd	T
Wieker WMA Addition	Meeker	P
Graham WMA Addition	Benton	F
Winter WMA Addition	Pipestone	P
Talcot Lake WMA Addition	Cottonwood	P
Tamarack WMA Addition	Stearns	P
Clair Rollings West WMA Addition	Swift	P
Mill Pond WMA Addition	Mower	P
BlueBird Preserve WMA Addition	Nobles	P
Ras-Lyn WMA Addition	McLeod	P
Warsaw WMA Tract 2	Goodhue	SE
Warsaw WMA Tract 3	Goodhue	SE
Phasianus WMA Addition	McLeod	P
Roscoe WMA Addition	Goodhue	SE
Chub Lake WMA Addition	Dakota	M
Rock River WMA Addition	Rock	P

Program Title: Porter Creek Conservation Area

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: **#39 Porter Creek Conservation Area**

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: Mark Themig
Title: Program Manager
Mailing Address: Scott County
GG 114, 200 Avenue West
Shakopee, MN 55379
Telephone: 952-496-8783
Fax: 952-496-8496
E-Mail: mthemig@co.scott.mn.us
Web Site: www.co.scott.mn.us

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$4,150,000	0	0	0

A. Summary

Acquire 317 acres of highly erodible tilled land, wetland, woods, and Porter Creek from willing sellers for restoration and reuse as habitat lands, lakeshore access for fishing, taking of game, and biomass production. Acquisition and subsequent restoration to prairie, oak savanna, and oak woodland will result in multiple benefits for water quality, game, non-game and documented rare wildlife species and native plant communities. The site lies within Scott County's Natural Area Corridor, and is a part of a planned 2,665 acre publicly owned (state and county) habitat hub connecting four shallow lakes (Bradshaw, Lennon, St. Catherine's, MacMahon and potentially Cynthia) and hundreds of acres of wetlands, forests and grasslands. Various biological data sets and scientific studies informed the creation of the Scott County Natural Areas Corridor and guided this project proposal.

Once acquired, Scott County is proposing to either transfer ownership to the Minnesota DNR to be incorporated into the Bradshaw Lakes Wildlife Management Area complex, or retain ownership and operate the lands as a hunting, fishing, and habitat area in partnership with the DNR. This project presents a unique opportunity to protect and restore significant

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: Porter Creek Conservation Area

amounts of contiguous natural lands for habitat, while providing additional hunting opportunities in the rural Metropolitan Area.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

This project, located in Cedar Lake Township in Scott County, would entail fee-title acquisition and restoration of approximately 317 acres of land. The lands, consisting of woodlands, wetlands, lake shore, stream, and highly erodible agricultural lands are within the county's identified natural area corridors, adjacent to Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park (900 acres), and link four shallow-water lakes. The majority of the land is bank owned with the remainder available from willing sellers. The project is "shovel ready".

2. What action will be taken?

Acquisition of 317 acres of land for conservation, habitat protection, and hunting and fishing. The current agricultural uses throughout the site would be converted to native prairie biomass production sites for KODA Energy, a biomass power plant in Shakopee that is operated in partnership between the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community and Rahr Malting.

3. Who will take action and when?

Scott County will handle the acquisition process in January-June 2010. Once acquired, Scott County will lead the effort to convey the property to the Minnesota DNR for incorporation into the Bradshaw Lakes Wildlife Management Area, or alternatively, retain ownership and operate the lands as a hunting, fishing, and habitat area in partnership with the DNR.

Scott County will also lead conversion of the land from current agriculture use to native prairie for habitat and biomass production. Scott County will work with the Scott Soil and Water Conservation District, the Scott Watershed Management Organization, and the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community on the restoration. It is expected that conversion would begin after agriculture crops are harvested in Fall 2010 and continue through 2011, with ongoing management thereafter.

It is anticipated that the lands would be open for hunting beginning in Fall 2011.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

Future Constitutional Amendment funding from the Parks and Trails fund will likely accelerate acquisition of adjacent natural resource based lands in Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

- 317 acres of privately owned lands will be converted to public ownership for conservation, habitat, and the public taking of fish and game.

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- 185 acres of agriculture use will be converted to prairie and oak savanna for habitat.
- Lands will be managed either solely by, or in partnership with, the Minnesota DNR as a Wildlife Management Area.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

- Changes would begin with the acquisition in the first half of 2010, conversion to native prairie in late 2010 through 2011, and open for hunting in the fall of 2011.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ **X** **YES** ☐ **NO**

If not, how will you finance completion?

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Ongoing maintenance of the land will be paid for by revenue generated from biomass production, and supported by general operating budgets of Scott County and potentially the Minnesota DNR.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

- Acquisition of 317 acres of privately owned lands converted to public ownership for conservation, habitat, and the public taking of fish and game.
- Conversion of 185 acres of agriculture lands to native prairie.

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **X** **YES** ☐ **NO**

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Lands acquired will be in public ownership and protected in perpetuity.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

All work on this project will be reviewed and approved by the Scott County Board of Commissioners through its regular open meeting process. Scott County will use its web site, quarterly county-wide newsletter, and local media to inform and update its residents and other interested parties on the status of the project. Scott County will account for and track funding in a specially designated account for straightforward reporting and transparency.

12. Why will this strategy work?

This strategy will work for the following reasons:

- Scott County has established a clear direction for natural resource conservation and protection in its 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

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- The site is available for acquisition from willing sellers, with a significant portion of the site bank-owned.
- The site is at the hub of significant habitat sites, including four shallow-water lakes, a 900 acre regional park, and 736 acre Bradshaw Lakes WMA.
- The project involves important partners, including the Minnesota DNR, local sportsmen, the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, the Scott County Soil and Water Conservation District, the Scott Watershed Management Organization, and KODA Energy.
- Scott County is committed to the principals and priorities action established by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council.
- Scott County has a track record of effective delivery of programs.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

Scott County has identified several partners what would provide support for this initiative, including:

- **Minnesota DNR**
The Minnesota DNR's Area Wildlife Manager, Diana Regenscheid, supports this acquisition. Ms. Regenscheid has consulted with DNR management and indicates that if this project is funded, the DNR would actively pursue supporting Scott County's efforts to convey the lands to the DNR to be incorporated into its Wildlife Management Area program.
- **New Market Sportsmen Club**
The New Market Sportsmen Club is active in southeast Scott County where this property is located. The Club has supported other conservation efforts in the area.
- **Scott Soil and Water Conservation District**
The Soil and Water Conservation District would be a partner in conversion of the lands from agriculture to native prairie, and provide funding support for other restoration activities. The Soil and Water Conservation District is also leading the study of effective biomass production.
- **Scott Watershed Management Organization**
The Scott WMO provides local funding assistance to land owners and the Soil and Water Conservation District for restoration activities.
- **Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community/KODA Energy**
The Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC) has started a significant native prairie conversion effort on Community owned lands to provide biomass for the KODA Energy production plant. Scott County would work with the SMSC and KODA Energy on the proposed conversion to native prairie.

Opposition for this initiative could come from individuals or organizations concerned about more land coming off the tax rolls. However, this project proposes to incorporate portions of the land in revenue-producing biomass production, which retains its taxable status. In addition, if the lands are conveyed to the Minnesota DNR

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for incorporation into the Wildlife Management Area program, the DNR makes payments in lieu of taxes.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

The Scott County Board approved submitting the funding request and supports the project as proposed. County Board policy requires the Board to formally approve receipt of all funding, should this proposal be selected.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

Not applicable. Proposed fee title acquisition.

☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

Not applicable. Proposed fee title acquisition.

☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

This acquisition would be a perpetual acquisition.

_____ **Years**

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

_____ Northern Forest

_____ Forest/Prairie Transition

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_____ Southeast Forest

_____ Prairie

___X___ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

___X___ YES

_____ NO

If yes, please explain.

185 acres of the total 317 acres is under control of Premier Banks as a result of a failed residential development effort. Premier Banks is actively marketing this property. The opportunity to acquire the property is immediate, and at a reasonable value. This opportunity will not likely be available again as the land has approved residential development rights.

The remaining land consists of two additional privately-owned parcels, 69 acres and 40 acres. Both private land owners have indicated a strong desire to sell. If this initiative is not funded, this land will likely be conveyed to another private property owner in the near future.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

___X___ YES

_____ NO

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

This land is approximately 0.5 miles from the Bradshaw Lakes Wildlife Management Area. Once acquired, Scott County is proposing to either transfer ownership to the Minnesota DNR to be incorporated into the Bradshaw Lakes Wildlife Management Area complex, or retain ownership and operate the lands as a hunting, fishing, and habitat area in partnership with the DNR.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

___X___ YES

_____ NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

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Protection of the Porter Creek Conservation Area is a strategic landscape-conservation decision. It is a result of a strategic conservation planning process recently undertaken by Scott County that grew out of a community interest in a comprehensive approach to preserving natural areas, improving water resources, providing habitat connectivity and protecting scenic views.

The process was science based and publicly inclusive and resulted in the identification of a Natural Areas Corridor system for Scott County. The Porter Creek Conservation Area lies within and adjacent to the Natural Areas Corridor and is contiguous with extensive publicly owned natural areas also within the Natural Areas Corridor.

The Natural Area Corridors were mapped using a model based on numerous biological datasets and biological and social criteria developed by county natural resources staff, professional ecologists and a citizen advisory team.

Scott County conservation initiatives, funding, and partnerships are targeted based on the Natural Area Corridors map and process. Land protection through acquisition is one of several tools developed to facilitate the protection of lands within the corridor for multiple conservation benefits.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

The general concept of protecting the Porter Creek Conservation Area emerged as a result of the Scott County Natural Area Corridors project (a science-based strategic planning process for conserving natural lands in Scott County). With property foreclosure providing a possible opportunity for permanent protection, the site was more closely examined and research into the benefits that would come about with its permanent protection was undertaken.

A review of biological data sets, studies and considerable consultation with area wildlife managers, the Scott Watershed Management Organization and Scott Soil and Water Conservation District formed the scientific rationale for this project.

The site contains 317 acres of cultivated lands, grassland, savanna, wetland and forested habitat and is a part of a larger habitat hub of 2,665 acres connected through corridors. The planned restoration of the site's land cover to prairie, oak savanna, wetlands and oak forest in the context of the larger habitat complex will directly benefit game species such as deer, turkey, and waterfowl by providing food, shelter and connected natural lands. Non-game wildlife as well as rare wildlife species will also benefit. Documented rare wildlife species (MnDNR Natural Heritage Database) adjacent and nearby the site include Blanding's Turtles, Sandhill Crane (inferred nesting), and Bald Eagle (two nests), each species of which will directly benefit from the protection and restoration of prairie, oak savanna, wetland and oak forest habitat.

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Significant streambank and wetland uplands are located at the Porter Creek Conservation Area; the protection and restoration of which will improve water resources. Recent geomorphology studies by the Scott Watershed Management Organization identify significant damage to stream banks caused by an over-capacity of water moving through the system. The studies prioritize the capture of water where it falls and the slowing of the water across the landscape as key implementation strategies. The protection and restoration of wetland buffers are identified as important methods to accomplish these strategies.

Biological Data Sets and Studies:

- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR) Natural Heritage Database
- MnDNR's County Biological Survey Maps
- MnDNR's Sites of Ecological Significance Maps
- MnDNR's Sites of Biological Significance
- MnDNR's Metro Conservation Corridors Maps
- National Wetlands Inventory
- Scott Soil and Water Conservation District Wetland Inventory
- Minnesota Land Cover Classification System Inventory for Scott County
- Local wildlife surveys
- Scott Watershed Management Organization geomorphology studies

24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)*

The criteria used to prioritize land acquisition for conservation and habitat protection are:

- **Location** in relation to the Scott County Natural Area Corridors
- **Adjacency** to other important natural resource and habitat lands
- Extent of **natural resource benefit** expected from the acquisition
- **Availability** (willing seller)
- Ability to form **partnerships** to help ensure the project is a success

The Porter Creek Conservation Area meets all five criteria. The extent that a site meets each of these criteria largely determines its priority for the County, with priority also being influenced by funding capacity, community support and other acquisition opportunities.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

Scott County's approach to natural resource protection planning is not unlike that described in the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan's 'Integrated Planning' strategic area. The County's 2030 Comprehensive Land Use Plan started with broad review of challenges, the underlying focus of which was the state of natural resources within the County. This conservation-based community planning focus resulted in the development of the Scott County Natural Area

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Corridors as a prominent tool of the plan and directly influenced innovative land use zoning based on scientific data, such as ground water resources.

The Plan ranks Cedar Lake Township (project location) high in terms of having vulnerable key habitat, and scores it moderately on the 'Integrated terrestrial value score' (Figures H16 and H7; Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, pp. 53 and 44). The proposed project is in-line with many of the plan's recommendations, including several key habitat recommendations:

- Habitat Recommendation 1: Protecting priority land habitats
- Habitat Recommendation 2: Protecting critical shorelands of lakes and streams, especially to shallow lakes
- Habitat Recommendation 3: Improve connectivity and access to out
- Habitat Recommendation 4: Restore and protect shallow lakes
- Habitat Recommendation 5: Restore land, wetlands and wetland associated watersheds
- Habitat Recommendation 7: Keep water on the landscape

The project site also supports recommended actions of Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy: Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare. The project falls within the Big Woods Ecological Subsection. Five of the ten management challenges and responding priority conservation actions for the Big Woods subsection Goal 1 (Stablize and increase SGCN populations) are served by the proposed protection of the Porter Creek Conservation Area, including managing various habitats to enhance Species of Greatest Conservation Need values. Goal three (Enhance people's appreciation and enjoyment of SGCN) can be uniquely implemented this site because of its location adjacent to a Metro regional park planned to focus on land conservation and education oriented towards wildlife, habitats, rare species and hunting and fishing.

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D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	10,000	19,000	
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition	\$4,121,000		
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	4,131,000	19,000	

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
Program Manager	Mark Themig	14,500
Natural Resource Planner	Patricia Freeman	14,500

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F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Soil and Water Conservation District	35,000	50,000	5,000
Watershed Management Organization	15,000	30,000	5,000
KODA Energy/SMSC	50,000	50,000	5,000
TOTAL	100,000	130,000	15,000

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

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Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		<i>184 acres</i>		
Protect				<i>Total Site: 317 acres</i>
Enhance	<i>57 acres</i>			

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				<i>4,150,000</i>
Enhance				

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Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		170,000		
Protect				Total Leverage: 245,000
Enhance	75,000			

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				See note*
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				317 acres
Permanent Easement				

*Note: If land is ultimately conveyed to DNR, PILT liability would occur. However, revenue from biomass production would off-set financial liability.

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Acquisition for Habitat	6/30/2010	Recording Deeds
Planning for Restoration and Enhancement	12/31/2010	Completion of Plan
Restoration and Enhancement Activities	12/31/2011	Completion
Monitoring	Ongoing	

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

This project would fund the acquisition and is supplemental to existing budgets. Scott County is not able to fund this acquisition without this support.

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J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Habitat improvements will be sustained through active management of the site, either by Scott County or in partnership with the Minnesota DNR. Management activities will be funded through revenue generated in biomass production.

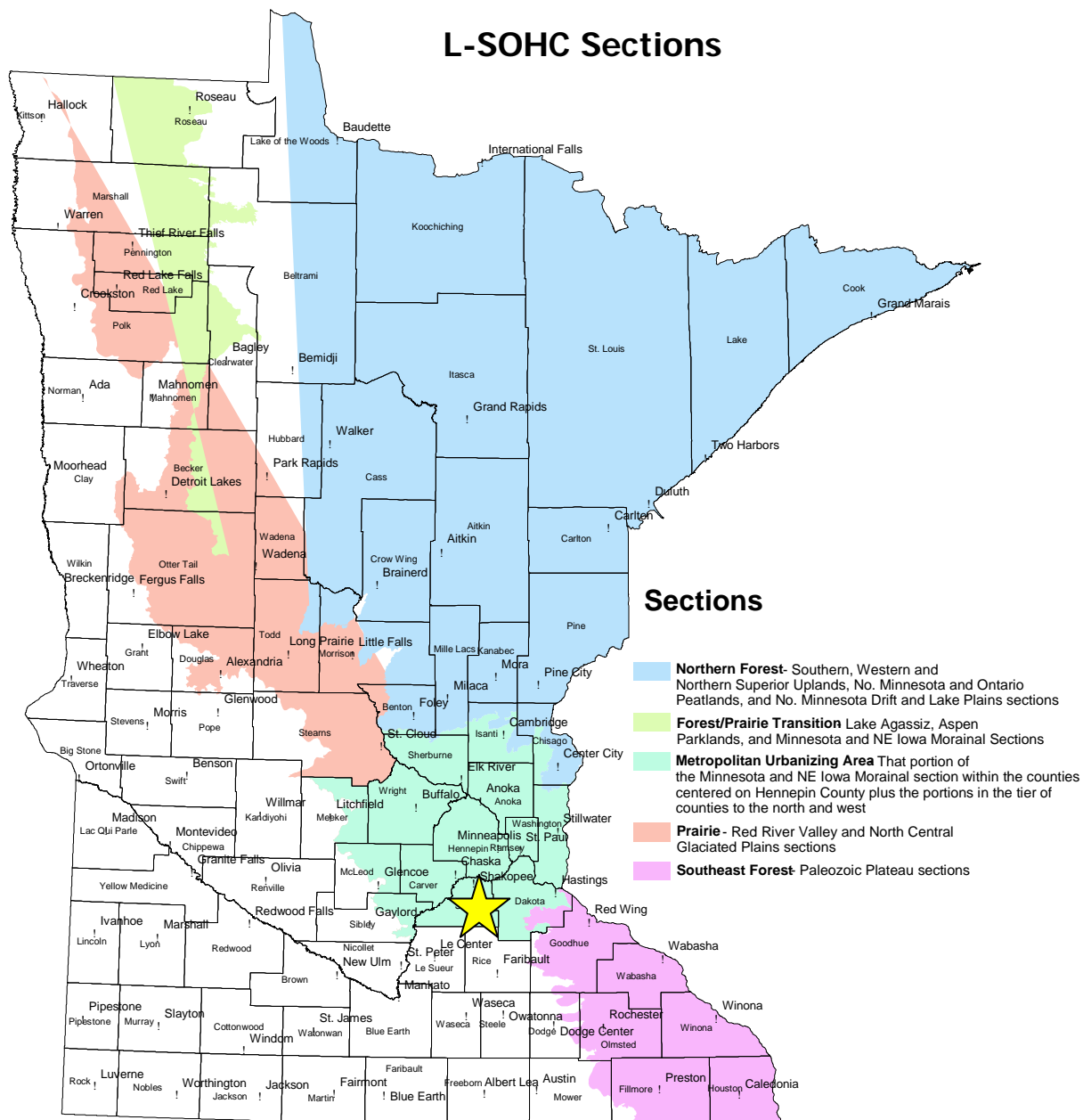
K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Double left click to bring up the map editor. Symbols should be on the left side of the pop-up banner at the top of your screen or at the bottom left depending on your software.

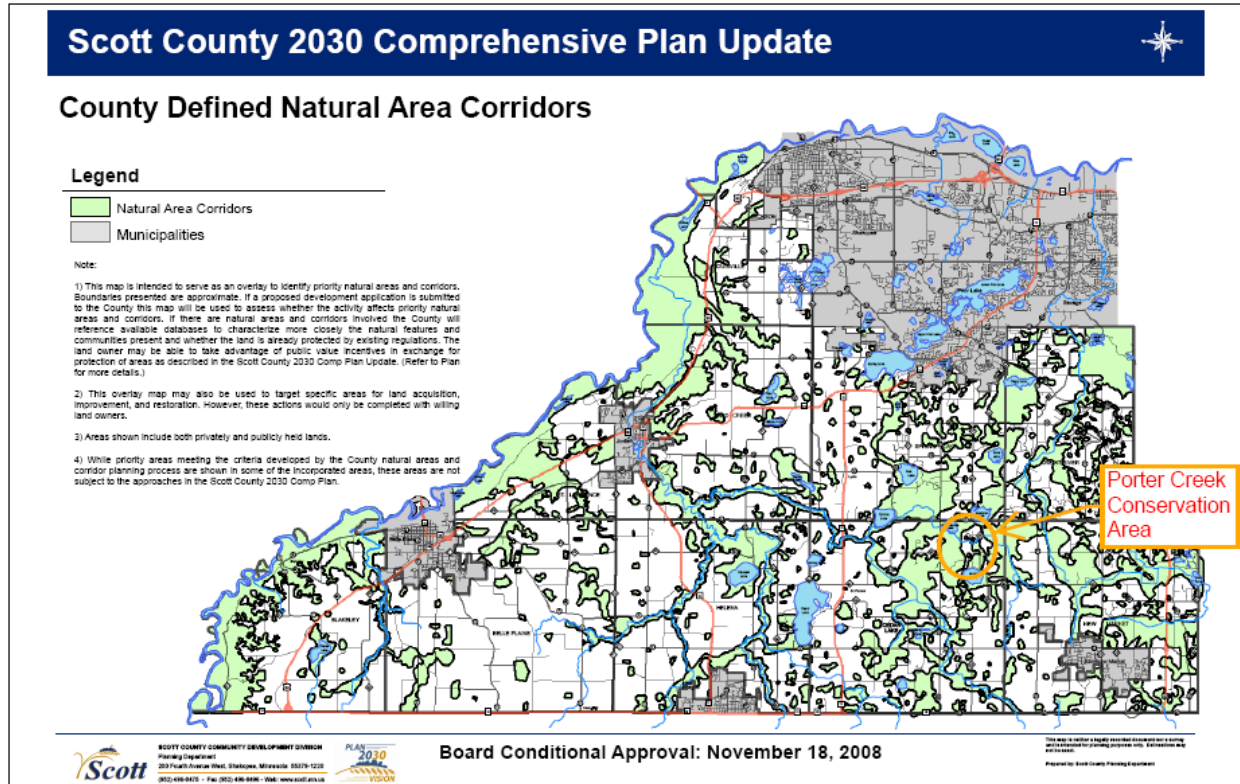
If you can't bring up the interactive map editor follow these instructions:

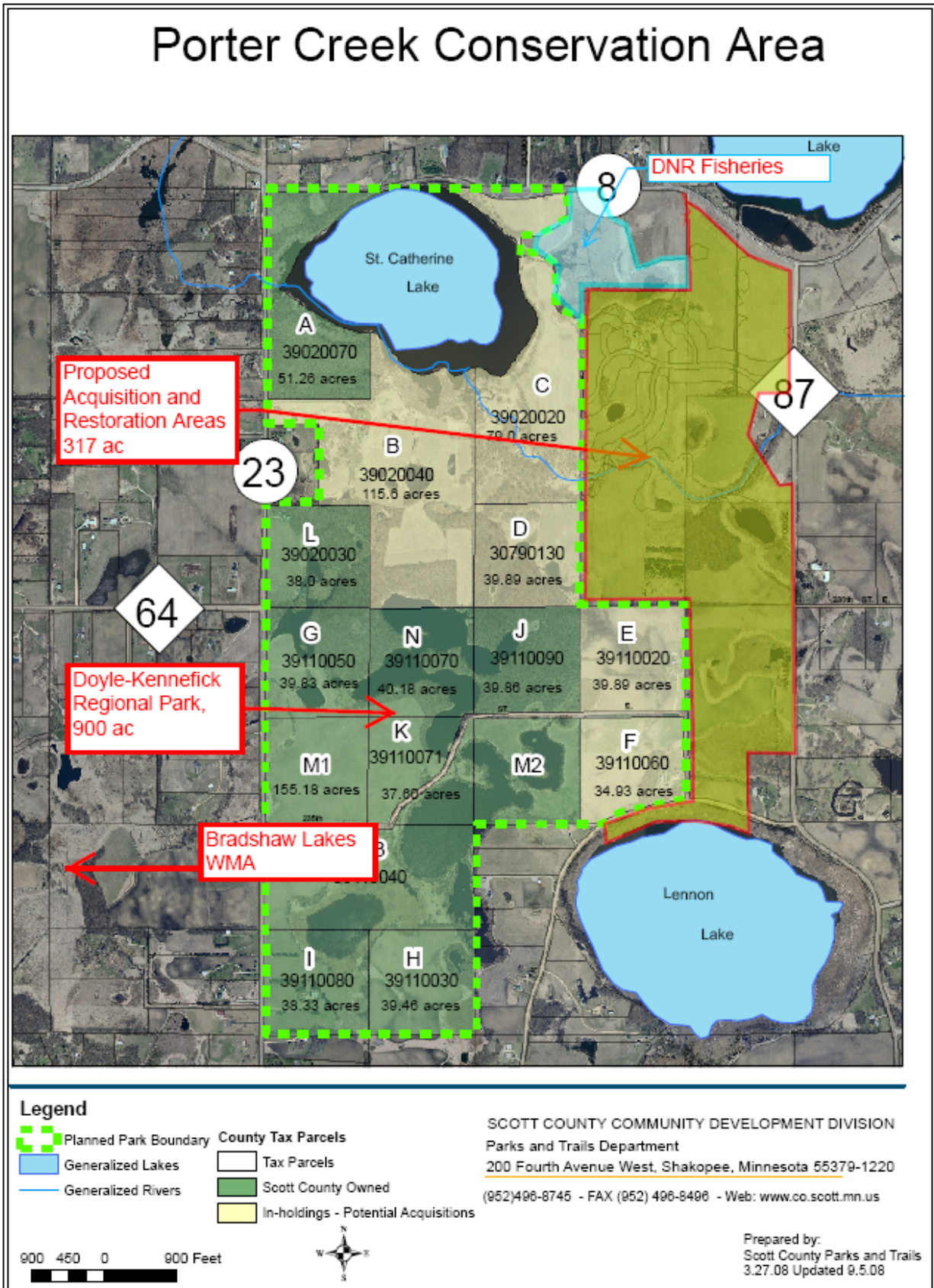
1. Make a paper copy of the map,
2. By hand place symbols on the map corresponding to the location of the projects in your proposal,
3. Scan the marked map to a pdf, and
4. Insert the marked pdf map as the last page in your submission.

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L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Program Title: City of Albert Lea - Land Between the Lakes Habitat Restoration, Enhancement and Public Access Improvement

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: #40 City of Albert Lea - Land Between the Lakes Habitat Restoration, Enhancement and Public Access Improvement

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: Victoria Simonsen

Title: City Manager

Mailing Address: 221 East Clark Street, Albert Lea, MN 56007

Telephone: (507) 377-4325

Fax: 507-377-4336

E-Mail: vsimonsen@city.albertlea.org

Web Site: <http://www.cityofalbertlea.org/>

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	1,342,026	0	0	0

A. Summary

B. Background Information

Albert Lea's motto the "Land between the lakes" defines the community's focus for natural resource stewardship in the lakes and rivers surrounding the City and characterizes as a critical component of the City's identity. The ***City of Albert Lea - Land Between the Lakes Habitat Restoration, Enhancement and Public Access Improvement*** project proposes restoration and enhancement of fishery habitat, shoreland and riparian wetlands, forests and prairies along a half mile reach of the Shell Rock River, the segment that connects Fountain Lake to Albert Lea Lake near the core of Albert Lea's commercial/business district. The project partners will restore and enhance a highly visible reach of natural shoreland communities in the center of Albert Lea.

With the adjoining shoreland, wetlands, floodplain, prairie and oak savanna the project will provide multiple benefits to the lake, water quality, habitat, public use and public health through restoration and enhancement of this public open space corridor in an urban setting. The project area is a high priority for the citizens of Albert Lea, the Shell Rock River Watershed District

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Program Title: City of Albert Lea - Land Between the Lakes Habitat Restoration, Enhancement and Public Access Improvement

(SRRWD) and MNDNR Fishery managers and even helps Albert Lea realize their community health “Blue Zones” vision that recognizes healthy lakes and outdoor activity boost a healthy community¹. Because this half-mile stream corridor is the defining natural resource link between land and water the proposed project can help restore the link between man and the environment in Albert Lea.

The project is designed to restore over 10 acres of land and a ½ mile reach of river habitats. The historically degraded shoreland has been acquired by the City for flood mitigation and protection and for the redevelopment of the Farmland Foods complex that was destroyed by fire in 2001. The acquired lands are still being cleared and prepared for restoration of natural features using bioengineering techniques and habitat improvements that will enhance both the land and water. Bioengineering techniques for this project will be defined as utilizing plants and other natural materials to stabilize and restore existing erosion problems. This technique utilizes native vegetation to help improve water quality through the filtration and uptake of sediments and nutrients from stormwater runoff. Through careful plant selection the restoration and enhancement of the stream corridor will provide food, cover and water for wildlife an urban environment.

The restored corridor will provide safe and hospitable public access for fishing and outdoor activities along this urban riparian corridor. The proposed restoration and enhancement plan is ready for the final details and implementation and can be completed within two years. The citizens of Albert Lea are enthusiastic about the opportunity to partner with L-SOHC to bring nature, fish and wildlife back to the core of Albert Lea.

About Albert Lea

The City of Albert Lea, population 18,356², is at the crossroads of I-35 and I-90, 70 miles south of the Twin Cities and 10 miles north of the Iowa boarder. The natural setting is described as the **Glaciated Plain of the Prairie Provenance** and is at the Center of the headlands of the 246 square mile Shell Rock River Watershed which drains southeast across fertile farmland to the Iowa River. The City encompasses Fountain Lake, the headwater of the Shell Rock River and the river restoration reach that flows to the 2,654 acre Albert Lea Lake. The Shell Rock River Watershed and the City of Albert Lea are the southern gateway to Minnesota’s lakes, our signature natural resource.

Albert Lea Lake and the Shell Rock River are a visitors first view of Minnesota’s water, oak savanna and prairie habitat when coming north on I-35 or coming east on I-90. The glaciated plain of the south eastern edge of the prairie provenance has shallow lakes fed and drained by low gradient rivers that are still fringed by wetlands and floodplain forests and have remnant oak savannas and prairies dotting the uplands. The lake and river corridors provide significant aquatic, shoreland and terrestrial habitat in a landscape now dominated by corn and soybean production. Albert Lea Lake is continuing the recovery of water quality and habitat that was degraded for decades due to adjacent industrial activity. With help from the L-SOHC the enhancements and restoration of the ½ mile river corridor, 10 acres of urban shoreland will show an immediate impact on local natural resources and habitat and will stimulate Albert Lea’s continuing efforts.

¹ Albert Lea is designated as an AARP/Blue Zones Vitality Project that focuses on four areas that are crucial to health and longevity: Community Environment, Social Networks, Habitat, and Individual Sense of Purpose. Blue Zones is an organization that studies the world's longest-lived populations for wellness information and lifestyle management tools that can help Americans live longer, healthier lives.

² Albert Lea: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Lea,_Minnesota

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The project is designed to address a list of specific shoreland, water quality, in-stream habitat and ecology problems and take advantage of a growing list of opportunities:

Shoreland Problems: Need to restore the shoreland to a natural condition

The half-mile reach of shoreland has a 130-year history of commercial and industrial development. The recently acquired Farmland site was a meat packing facility since 1877, where from the 1950's until 2001 fire destroyed one of the largest meat packing plants in America. The 29.5 acre facility along the banks of the Shell Rock River and Albert Lea Lake was acquired after the fire by the City. Other shoreland properties have recently been acquired by the City for flood mitigation/prevention and are ready for restoration and enhancement into a new public space that highlights fishing and natural resources in the "Land between the Lakes."

The project proposes natural area restoration, fish habitat improvement and public use in an area that encompasses a significant, highly visible and highly accessible reach of headwaters of the Shell Rock River. The land in this urbanized reach has been identified by local, state and federal resource agencies as a priority restoration project.

Water and in-stream habitat and ecological problems: Low winter oxygen, carp and spawning habitat degradation

The MNDNR assessment of Albert Lea Lake states that "Lake habitat and water quality have been seriously degraded from point and non-point industrial, agricultural, and urban sources. Lake conditions have improved remarkably in the past ten years. Industrial and municipal pollution abatement is nearly complete with agricultural and urban pollution the main existing pollution sources, total phosphorous concentrations have decreased to less than one third of the average concentration measured prior to the upgrade of the wastewater treatment plant" (SSRWD Water Plan, June 2004).

The Albert Lea lakes are eutrophic or hyper-eutrophic with water quality problems that cause winterkill. Fountain Lake has had aerators for many years that have prevented fish kills, and the ½ mile river reach in the project area is a major source of water mixing and oxygenation helping to sustain adequate oxygen in the winter and spring. In the winter of 2004 a fish kill in the Albert Lea Lake created an opportunity to control carp and restock walleye.

2. What action will be taken?

The City has acquired the necessary land along the half-mile river corridor. The Project will clean-up, restore and enhance the riverine and shoreland habitat through a combination of bioengineering and native plantings to restore the river, wetlands, prairies, floodplain forest and oak savanna on 10 acres of land in the stream corridor. The following outcomes are proposed:

- Restore 4,725 feet of bioengineered shoreline along the 0.5 mile river corridor;
- Restore 1 acre of wetland;

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- Enhance 1.1 acres of wetland plant communities by planting native seed stock;
- Restore 2.4 acres of prairie;
 - Enhance 2.4 acres of prairie by planting native seed stock;
- Restore 6.6 acres of forests (0.5 acres floodplain forest and 6.1 acres oak savanna).

An important component of fish habitat in upper-Midwest streams and lakes is wood structure, which is created naturally by stream bank or shoreline trees that fall into the water. In streams, wood structure provides cover and creates pools used by trout and other fish. It also collects fine sediment, allowing cleaner gravel areas downstream where fish will spawn (Figure 3). In lakes, single downed trees provide cover and spawning habitat for fish such as small mouth and largemouth bass. Also, submerged wood moved by waves and currents in a lake can become clustered and form complex structures upon which algae and small aquatic insects attach. These in turn become a food source for small fish such as black crappie, yellow perch and bluegill, which use the structure for forage, cover, and spawning (Figure 4).



Figure 3. Wood structure in a stream.



Figure 4. Rock bass using wood structure in a lake.

Proposed Action: To improve the habitat in the Shell Rock River we propose to increase large woody debris by cutting and dropping selected streamside trees into these streams at a rate of 5 to 10 trees per half mile. The channel between Fountain and Albert Lea lakes will be treated. The cutting and placing of these selected trees would be conducted so as to look as natural as possible and to maintain riparian and stream tree canopy cover. To increase the habitat benefit and prevent the woody debris from blocking the stream channels, the trees may need to be winched into place with a manual or chainsaw winch.

To work toward meeting the habitat needs of Shell Rock River, we propose to install conifer bundles in the lake to provide cover and spawning habitat for black crappie, yellow perch, and other fish species in the lake. Ten bundles of conifers would be placed near each other on the bottom of the lake. Each bundle would contain four to eight 4-8 inch diameter conifer trees. The bundles would either be assembled at the lakeshore and ferried out to the placement site by boat or be assembled on the lake ice and allowed to

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sink during spring thaw. Lake depth where these structures would be placed is approximately 10 to 15 feet. The completed structures would lie parallel to the lake bottom. The conifer bundles would be assembled with trees taken from nearby upland sites. The bundles would be tied together with rope and weighted with concrete blocks.

3. Who will take action and when?

The City of Albert Lea, the Shell Rock River Watershed District and Chamber of Commerce will begin restoration efforts as soon as the grant is awarded, but not before July 1, 21010 when the L-SOHC approves the accomplishment plan. The Master Plan, plans and specifications, streambank bioengineering and wetland, forest and prairie restorations will be completed by the City of Albert Lea in cooperation with a consultant or contractor.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

This project proposal seeks funding for habitat restoration and enhancement that has been already been prioritized and planned by the City of Albert Lea and the Shell Rock River Watershed and seeks funding for a Master Plan and professional design and specification work elements that will address both the specific habitat needs as well as water quality and site access and use issues that may involve other constitutional Funds in the future. Water quality improvements for stormwater or maintenance of winter oxygen levels in the lake and the site access elements are not part of this request, however, depending on the outcome of the Master Planning process there may be future requests to the Clean Water Legacy Fund or the Legislative-citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources.

A component of this project includes developing a trail connection between the newly completed trail around Fountain Lake (October 2009) and the MNDNR Blazing Star State Trail that runs from Albert Lea Lake to Myre-Big Island State Park. A statewide trail connection in the heart of Albert Leas will provide Minnesotans with greater public access to outdoor recreation opportunities. This portion of the project will be coordinated with other constitutional funding in future years, specifically with the Regional Parks and Trails Legacy Grant Program.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

The following habitat changes will be completed:

- Restore 4,725 feet of bioengineered shoreline along the 0.5 mile river corridor;
- Restore 1 acre of wetland;
 - Enhance 1.1 acres of wetland plant communities by planting native seed stock;
- Restore 2.4 acres of prairie;
 - Enhance 2.4 acres of prairie by planting native seed stock;
- Restore 6.6 acres of forests (0.5 acres floodplain forest and 6.1 acres oak savanna).

Program Title: City of Albert Lea - Land Between the Lakes Habitat Restoration, Enhancement and Public Access Improvement

6. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

If not, how will you finance completion?

7. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Since habitat enhancement of the property will be completed on city-owned land, the City of Albert Lea will dedicate at a minimum \$2,000 annually to maintain the Outdoor Heritage Fund accomplishments with revenue from the city's general fund.

8. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

For the past 130 years the project site has been devoted to commercial development. Converting this stream corridor to natural habitat will directly restore and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests and habitat for fish, game and wildlife. The project will enhance public fishing access along the entire stream corridor.

9. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Funding provided by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council for enhancement activities will be completed on land that is owned by the public. Therefore, the enhancement activities will be accomplished on permanently protected land in the City of Albert Lea's ownership.

10. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

The City of Albert Lea is dedicated to make this project highly transparent to the public and ensures Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars will be adequately highlighted. Habitat enhancement activities will occur in the heart of Albert Lea's downtown district on shoreland between Fountain and Albert Lea Lakes. Due to the projects central location enhancement activities will be highly visible by residents and visitors traveling along the U.S. Trunk Highway 65 corridor, a major thoroughfare that bisects the downtown area. Signs will be installed on both sides of the highway near the Shell Rock River channel crediting the Outdoor Heritage Fund for their support of habitat enhancement activities. Based on the 2006 average daily traffic count estimates from the Minnesota Department of Transportation the City of Albert Lea believes the placement of signage will at a minimum provide public transparency for approximately 13,600 vehicles in a given year.

Information about the project will also be posted on the City of Albert Lea and the Shell Rock River Watershed District official websites throughout the projects beautification process. A series of two to three press releases will also be submitted to the local newspaper throughout the project.

11. When do you expect to see these changes?

Immediately after July 1, 2010 when the L-SOHC approves the accomplishment plan changes will begin to occur on the land between the lakes.

12. Why will this strategy work?

Currently the site is in a degraded state from years of industrial and commercial activity. The proposed shoreline bioengineering and wetlands, prairies, forests and fish habitat restoration and enhancement will stabilize stream banks through the installation of native plants, which have proven to be effective strategies to reduce erosion and enhance wildlife habitat. The site is centrally located in the heart of downtown Albert Lea, providing high visibility of L-SOHC funds.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

The City does not anticipate anyone will make decisions that work against the proposed project. The Freeborn County Comprehensive Plan, the Freeborn County Local Water Plan and the Shell Rock River Watershed District Management Plan all indicate restoration of the project area is a high priority. All of these plans have been approved and are favored by local community residents who are supportive of the proposed project.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

Not applicable

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

Not applicable

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?

Not applicable

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?

Not applicable

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

____5____ Years

See Number 4 for explanation.

Program Title: City of Albert Lea - Land Between the Lakes Habitat Restoration, Enhancement and Public Access Improvement

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

- ☐ Northern Forest
- ☐ Forest/Prairie Transition
- ☐ Southeast Forest
- ☒ Prairie
- ☐ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ YES ☐ NO
If yes, please explain.

This project has been selected as a high priority for the City's conservation based planning and will fulfill a need to develop visible projects following years of land acquisition.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☐ YES ☒ NO
If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

☒ YES ☐ NO
If yes explain the model briefly.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

The project has been selected as a high priority for restoration and was selected due to its proximity and connect with land and water in the City of Albert Lea. Scientific methods will be used for the implementation of habitat activities.

Program Title: City of Albert Lea - Land Between the Lakes Habitat Restoration, Enhancement and Public Access Improvement

24. How do you set priorities? (*Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.*)

Lead by the City of Albert Lea and the Shell Rock River Watershed District, in cooperation with the MDNR and MPCA and many other federal, state and local partners, the restoration and enhancement of the River between Fountain and Albert Lea lakes has become a primary goal with high priority when the 2004 Shell Rock River District Water Management Plan was adopted. The adopted Watershed Plan also approved local funding to be dedicated to the identified watershed priorities.

The City and SRRWD restoration plan priorities were developed after reviewing more than 16 local and regional scientific studies and resource management plans dating back to the 1962 Minnesota Health Department "Report on Investigation of Pollution in Albert Lea Lake and Watershed" to the 1999 Visions for the Albert Lea Lake Ecosystem and the more current MNDNR Lake management Plans.

The City has taken into consideration the studies and advice of numerous resource professionals in both the public and private sector.

The high priority for the proposed project is derived from the existing goals of the City and SRRWD and the City's recent purchase of flood prone shoreland in the project corridor.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

The proposed project is in keeping with the 2009 Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan recommendations including:

- Shoreland (Habitat 2)
- Shallow Lake (Habitat 4)
- Wetland (Habitat 5)
- In-Water Habitat (habitat 6)
- Improvement of connectivity and access to outdoor recreation (Habitat 3)
- Conservation –based Community Land Use Planning (Land Use Community 1 and 2).

The Albert Lea proposal, in advance of the Minnesota Conservation Plan, had adopted a similar strategic framework of integrated conservation planning. These local efforts led to the critical land protection leading to the current request for land and water restoration and enhancement. Albert Lea and SRRWD completed the foundation planning for the restoration of the "Land between the Lakes;" the land acquisition is now completed. It is now necessary to accomplish the needed restoration.

Program Title: City of Albert Lea - Land Between the Lakes Habitat Restoration, Enhancement and Public Access Improvement

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	59,400		
Contracts	1,279,626		
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	4,000		
Fee Acquisition			
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	1,342,026		

E. Personnel Details

Title	Name	Amount.
Environmental Engineer	Kyle Skov	\$16,700 (0.20 FTE)
Engineering Technician	Clark Hagen	\$11,000 (0.20 FTE)

Program Title: City of Albert Lea - Land Between the Lakes Habitat Restoration, Enhancement and Public Access Improvement

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
City of Albert Lea			
Land Acquisition	\$ 82,000		
Maintenance	\$ 4,000		
Albert Lea/Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce	\$ 6,000		
Fountain Lake Sportsmen's Club	\$ 16,000		
MNDNR Fisheries	\$ 6,400		
TOTAL	\$ 114,400		

Program Title: City of Albert Lea - Land Between the Lakes Habitat Restoration, Enhancement and Public Access Improvement

G. Outcomes:

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>Restore 1.1 acres of wetlands</i>	<i>Restore 2.4 acres of prairie</i>	<i>Restore 6.6 acres (0.5 acres floodplain forest and 6.1 acres oak savanna)</i>	<i>Restore ~ 4,725 feet of bio- engineered shoreline</i>
Protect				
Enhance	<i>Enhance wetland plant communities by planting native seed stock on 1.1 acres</i>	<i>Enhance native prairie by planting native seed stock on 2.4 acres</i>		

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>Prairie (1.1 acres)</i>	<i>Prairie (2.4 acres)</i>	<i>Prairie (6.6 acres)</i>	<i>Prairie (~4,725 feet of shoreline)</i>
Protect				
Enhance	<i>Prairie (1.1 acres)</i>	<i>Prairie (2.4 acres)</i>		

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>70,217</i>	<i>66,977</i>	<i>60,977</i>	<i>1,080,857</i>
Protect				
Enhance	<i>3,000</i>	<i>6,000</i>		

Program Title: City of Albert Lea - Land Between the Lakes Habitat Restoration, Enhancement and Public Access Improvement

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	28,600	28,600	28,600	28,600
Protect				
Enhance	\$0	\$0		

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date
Master Plan Completion	June 30, 2012
Site preparation of upland shoreline (10 acres)	September 30, 2010
Seeding and Planting (10 acres)	June 15, 2011
Bioengineering of Shoreline	June 30, 2011

Program Title: City of Albert Lea - Land Between the Lakes Habitat Restoration, Enhancement and Public Access Improvement

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

The City of Albert Lea currently operates and manages a budget well within the capacity of this grant proposal and has a successful history of completing project on time and within budget.

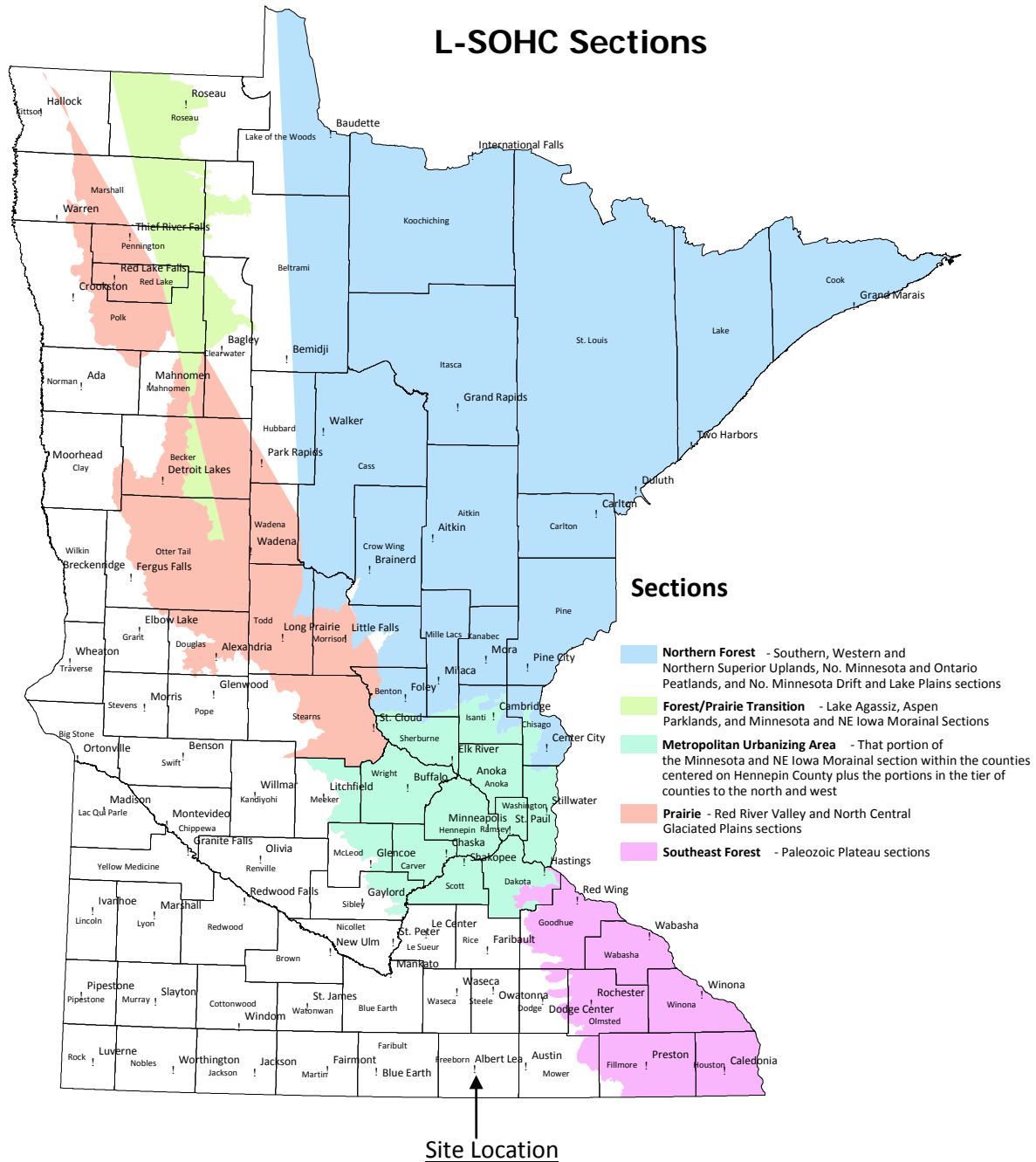
J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

After the grant period has ended the habitat improvements will be maintained by the City of Albert Lea and will be sustained by dedicating a portion of the city's general fund, up to \$2,000 annually to maintain the site.

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Project	County	Township	Range	Section
City of Albert Lea – Land Between the Lakes Habitat Enhancement and Public Access Improvement	Freeborn	102	21	9

Program Title: City of Albert Lea - Land Between the Lakes Habitat Restoration, Enhancement and Public Access Improvement



L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

**Program Title: # 41 Swan Lake Area Wildlife Management Area land acquisition
(Nicollet County)**

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: Pell Johnson
Title: Vice President – Swan Lake Area Wildlife Association (SLAWA)
Mailing Address: 709 North Street, St. Peter, MN 56082
Telephone: (507) 934-1312
Fax: N/A
E-Mail: @mchsi
Web Site:

Funds Requested (\$000s)	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$1,799,400	\$151,832	\$5000	0

A. Summary

Our project will acquire and develop 320 acres of new Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) lands for public hunting, trapping and compatible outdoor uses consistent with the Outdoor Recreation Act (M.S. 86A.05, Subd.8). Parcels will also be consistent with the Swan Lake Area "Project" initiated in 1985 and consistent with the recommendations of The Citizens Advisory Committee report of 2002 "Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition – The Next 50 Years". Lands will be acquired from willing sellers through established acquisition processes governed by statute, rule and policy. Initial site development of new WMAs is included in our program.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The Swan Lake Area Project was initiated in 1985 to solve long standing problems associated with the important waterfowl area. Furthermore the Citizens Advisory Committee on WMA acquisitions recommended that due to

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

rising land costs and continued habitat loss, acquisition efforts should be accelerated.

2. What action will be taken?

The SLAWA will work with the DNR to identify high priority potential wetland complex lands for sale from willing sellers within the Swan Lake Area "Project" and in accordance to The Citizens Report noted above. The SLAWA will follow established land acquisition procedures and, if successful in acquiring, will then develop the land to DNR standards using funds from this program to make the new parcel fully functional as a WMA within the first two years of acquisition. This will include boundary surveys and signage, user access and parking facilities, well and septic closure, building and dump disposal, restoration of shallow temporary and seasonal wetlands and cover bare ground with native prairie vegetation.

3. Who will take action and when?

The SLAWA will begin immediately, upon approval of L-SOHC, to purchase potential acquisitions already identified and approved by DNR for possible acquisition. Upon approval of funding through the Legislature, the DNR will begin appraisals to acquire project acreage goal. Development of parcels will follow with completion within 3 years of acquisition.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

The DNR will be consulted to ensure that strategic conservation lands are purchased to fit prioritized lands within L-SOHC Sections.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.

Acquisition of wildlife lands will focus on protecting and restoring keys habitat important to waterfowl with an emphasis on completing and expanding existing WMAs and other protected lands within habitat complexes. Large blocks of wildlife lands provide a wider range of management options, habitat diversity and wildlife use. Each parcel will be developed to enhance the native habitat characteristics appropriate for the location and the recreation potential for the citizens of Minnesota.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?

Most habitat changes will occur immediately as parcels are transferred to the DNR for management. Acquisition of land typically takes up to one year to complete. Habitat developments will be implemented within two years of acquisition and complete within 3 years of implementation.

7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?

☒ YES ☐ NO
If not, how will you finance completion?

8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

Routine maintenance will be accomplished by DNR Area Wildlife staff as part of their public land management responsibilities. Priority will be given to acquiring additions to existing WMAs to increase efficiency of routine maintenance. Periodic enhancements such as invasive species removal, prescribed burning, supplemental vegetation planting, or wetland and water level management will be accomplished through grant funding or other sources.

9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?

Acquisition and enhancement of priority habitats provide permanent protection of keys lands within the Swan Lake "Project" Area. .

10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?

☒ YES ☐ NO
If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

Lands will be acquired by the SLAWA in fee title and transferred to DNR as State Wildlife Management Areas.

11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.

The SLAWA is a 501-c-3 organization subject to IRS rules and has worked for many years in protecting habitat in the Swan Lake area. The group will provide appropriate information available upon request by the L-SOHC and the Legislature.

12. Why will this strategy work?

The SLAWA has acquired 500 acres of land as WMAs since 1985 and has the support from conservationists, hunters, and legislators.

13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?

All fee title lands acquired and turned over to the State as WMA's must be approved by resolution of the County Boards of Commissioners.

14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?

☐ YES ☒ NO

County Board resolutions are typically sought only after an agreement to purchase has been reached with the landowner.

15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?

 X YES

 NO

16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use? N/A

 YES

 NO

If Yes what kind of use?

17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever? N/A

 YES

 NO

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

 As long as SLAWA exists - Indefinite Years

In 2002, the Citizens Advisory Committee recommended 50 years of accelerated acquisition to acquire an additional 702,200 acres needed to meet conservation goals. This program will be ongoing as opportunity and needs arise.

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

 Northern Forest

 Forest/Prairie Transition

 Southeast Forest

 X Prairie

 Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

☒ YES

☐ NO

If yes, please explain.

These two parcels that are critical as waterfowl habitat will be lost if not acted upon in the immediate future. The current landowners are not willing to wait indefinitely and the opportunity may be lost if not acted upon soon.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☐ YES

☒ NO

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?

☐ YES

☒ NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

The DNR uses a priority setting process that focuses proposed acquisitions on lands of greatest conservation protection need as part of existing habitat complexes. We follow their lead.

23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.

Acquisition and sound ecological management of lands focused within habitat complexes has proven to provide optimum wildlife habitat and diversity of species by targeting efforts in areas that build on existing conservation assets.

24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)

Appropriate land purchase offers will be selected according to the following criteria by planning section:

In order of priority:

1. In-holdings/additions to existing WMAs
2. Wetland/Grassland complexes
3. Shallow Lakes/large wetlands
4. County Biological Site – native prairie community
5. Collaborative partnerships
6. Habitat Corridor

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

Minnesota's Long Range Duck Recovery Plan lists the objective of restoring a breeding population of 1 million ducks by 2056. The primary strategy is the protection and restoration of 2 million additional acres of habitat.

The Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan identifies habitat loss and degradation as the number one driver of change for wildlife in Minnesota. The plan further states that the prairie regions have experienced the greatest amount of habitat loss of any region.

Citizens report Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition – The Next 50 Years recommends acquisition goals of an additional 702,200 acres of WMAs over the next 50 years.

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	0	0	0
Contracts	0	151,832	5,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	0	0	0
Fee Acquisition	1,7899,400	0	0
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services	0	0	0
Travel	0	0	0
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	1,799,400	151,832	5000

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
-------	------	---------

None

F. All Leverage *In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.*

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
None			
TOTAL			

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Table 1 Accomplish- ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		<i>Restore native habitat complexes on 297 ac. of new acquired WMA</i>		
Protect		<i>Protect 320 ac. of wildlife lands through fee acquisition</i>		
Enhance				

Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Northern Forests				
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				
Forest Prairie Transition				
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				
Southeast Forest				
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				
Prairie Section				
Restore		<i>Restore 297ac.of native habitat on new WMA</i>		
Protect		<i>Acquire 320ac.of new WMA with emphasis on protecting existing native prairie ecosystems and prairie/wetland complexes.</i>		
Enhance				
Met/Urbanizing				
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		156,832		
Protect		1,799,400		
Enhance				

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

Table 4 Leverage \$	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability		320 acres		.
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Protect through fee acquisition	6/30/2011	320 ac
Implement Initial Development Plan	6/31/2012	297 ac
Protect through fee acquisition	6/31/2012	0 ac
Implement Initial Development Plan	6/31/2013	0 ac

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

Priority acquisitions will be lands associated with existing protected lands or in large blocks that will foster economies of scale and location. Ongoing maintenance will be accomplished through routine management activities accomplished by our Area Wildlife

office in Nicollet. Periodic enhancements will be accomplished by existing staff or through contract .

K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.

Swan Lake WMA - Wiwi Bay Unit – Nicollet County (240 acres)

Swan Lake WMA - Courtland Middle Unit (Nicollet County (80 acres)



Program Title: Sandy Lake Habitat Project

**Request for Funding Form
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2011**

Program or Project Title: # 42 Sandy Lake Habitat Project

Date: November 2, 2009

Manager's Name: T.A. Towers c/o Wayne Alden

Title:

Mailing Address: 23247 Street McGregor, MN 55760

Telephone: 218-426-5137

Fax:

E-Mail: wayne.a@settlersridgemn.com

Web Site:

	Council Funding Request	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
Funds Requested (\$000s)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	2,000,000	0	0	0

A. Summary

The purpose of this request is to open nearly 1000 acres of one of the best waterfowl hunting, bird-watching and hiking areas in Aitkin County to the public under a conservation easement. A permanent conservation easement will stop the flow of fertilizer run-off into the Sandy River caused by the farming of wild rice. In addition, the largest property tax base in Aitkin County, Big Sandy Lake, will be protected from further water quality degradation, thereby further enhancing property values. Within a short period of time, Big Sandy Lake will show measureable water restoration and significant improvement of its existing water quality bringing it back toward the pristine condition it once was. Big Sandy lake is identified as

an impaired water by the MN Pollution Control Agency through an on-going Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) study. Preliminary indications are that a significant source of excess nutrients is the Sandy River downstream of the rice paddies referenced in this application.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS REPRESENTS A ONE TIME CONSERVATION EASEMENT OPPORTUNITY THAT WOULD BE LOST IF NOT TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF IMMEDIATELY.

B. Background Information

1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

Over the last several years, Big Sandy Lake has progressively become greener and greener due to the increase in algae. Aerial views of Big Sandy indicate an increasing level of unwanted plant growth throughout the lake which, at some point in the future, could dramatically impact the fish population and enjoyment of the lake. A major reason for this greening is the dumping of fertilizer from 300 - 800 acres of rice paddies into Sandy River which flows into Big Sandy Lake.

2. What action will be taken?

About 1000 acres of one of the best waterfowl hunting, bird-watching and hiking areas in Aitkin County will be opened to the public under a conservation easement. This permanent conservation easement will prevent any future flow of fertilized run-off water into Sandy River. Commercial farm application of fertilizers, and pesticides will be prohibited on this site. Drainage of the site will be stopped so that the wetlands can filter nutrients and provide outstanding wildlife habitat.

3. Who will take action and when?

Aitkin County SWCD is presenting this application to LSOHC for funding. Organizations from the State of Minnesota and Aitkin County will purchase the easement and control the permanent easement area.

4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?

A Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) for Forest Habitat application is being submitted on behalf of 15 northern Minnesota counties. In that application, the BWSR will hold the easements in the RIM program and will require yearly compliance checks. This project will be accepted as well.

5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.
- a. Restores nearly 1000 acres of wetlands to original state of sustaining game and wildlife
 - b. Restores Big Sandy Lake to original state by improving and protecting water quality
 - c. Enhances lakeshore property values on Big Sandy and adjacent lakes
 - d. Enhances adjacent property values and increases business opportunity
 - e. Opens pristine duck and goose hunting conservation easement to public hunting
 - f. Protects and advances the public interest for generations to come
 - g. Preserves existing ecological systems and prevents future degradation of those systems

By purchasing the conservation easement in the existing rice paddies, this pristine duck and goose hunting property will be opened to public hunting, thereby dramatically increasing access to nearly 1000 acres of one of the best duck and goose hunting areas in Aitkin County. By significantly reducing the outflow of fertilizer and pesticides into Big Sandy Lake, the quality of fishing in Big Sandy will markedly improve. Swimming, water skiing, boating, and other water related activities will become more enjoyable. Together, these actions will significantly increase the desire of tourists to visit Aitkin County for their hunting, fishing, boating and recreational enjoyment, thereby raising the economic base in Aitkin County.

6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?
- a. The wildlife habitat improvements will occur immediately.
 - b. The improvement in the quality of water in Big Sandy Lake will occur over a period of time. Definite measureable progress should be seen within 5 years.
7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?
- ☒ X ☐ YES ☐ NO
- If not, how will you finance completion?
8. How will you pay for the maintenance of the accomplishments?

There should be only minimal maintenance required to maintain trails for access. This could be accomplished with existing county and State personnel. Annual RIM funds provide for easement monitoring and any necessary enforcement of the easement terms.

- 9. How does this action directly restore, enhance, or protect prairies, wetlands, forests or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife?**
- a. As indicated above, some of the best private wetlands in Aitkin County used for duck and goose hunting, and bird-watching will be opened to public enjoyment. These wetlands will be restored and enhanced by maintaining water levels for wildlife habitat benefits throughout the year rather than draining them in the summer in preparation for wild rice harvesting in the fall.**
 - b. Once the millions of gallons of water, containing truckloads of commercial fertilizer from the rice paddies, is no longer discharged into Sandy River, the quality of water in Big Sandy Lake will improve. Big Sandy has approximately 77 miles of shoreline and 6,500 acres of water for fish and wildlife, boating, swimming, fishing, and other recreational activities. Currently, some areas of the lake are too green to swim in from late June through September. Terminating the fertilizer discharge will directly and significantly enhance the water quality of Big Sandy Lake.**

- 10. If you are restoring or enhancing property, is the activity on permanently protected land?**

x YES

NO

If yes briefly describe the kind of protection.

A permanent environmental easement will be purchased to ensure the restoration continues in perpetuity.

- 11. How will you ensure transparency and provide information about your work and use of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars.**

The purchase of the environmental easement will be public knowledge and controlled by local and state agencies.

- 12. Why will this strategy work?**

It will open one of the most desirable private duck and goose hunting and bird-watching areas to the public.

It eliminates the massive amount of fertilizer released into Sandy River each year by the wild rice paddies and will dramatically reduce the amount of unwanted nutrients flowing into Big Sandy Lake.

- 13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?**

No one that I know of would be opposed to this purchase.

Most of the hundreds of Minnesota residents who live and have cabins around and on Big Sandy Lake are concerned about the dramatic increase in algae in the lake. It currently impacts everything they do on the lake.

- 14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition? N/A**

_____ YES

_____ NO

- 15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement? N/A**

_____ YES

_____ NO

- 16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?**

____X____ YES

_____ NO

If Yes what kind of use?

It ensures this conservation easement will remain open to the public for hiking, bird-watching and the taking of waterfowl and game as provided by law.

- 17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?**

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☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?

This will be a permanent conservation easement.

_____ **Years**

19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.

☒ Northern Forest

☐ Forest/Prairie Transition

☐ Southeast Forest

☐ Prairie

☐ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

If yes, please explain.

Continued dumping of fertilizer into Sandy River will continue to dramatically degrade the quality of Big Sandy Lake for fishing, boating and other types of recreation on the water.

Soon new owners of the property will make decisions on how the rice paddies are to be used in the future. The conservation easement must be purchased from these new owners immediately or the opportunity to purchase it may be lost forever. This would dramatically impact the quality of Big Sandy Lake.

21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?

☒ **YES**

☐ **NO**

L-SOHC Request for Funding Form

If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

Hunting in the Grayling Wildlife Management Area along with hunting in thousands of acres of adjacent State property will be enhanced by the conservation easement in the wild rice paddies. The Grayling Marsh WMA is managed by the DNR for multiple wildlife and public benefits. This proposed area will provide a perfect complement to the Grayling WMA.

- 22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?**

_____ YES ___X___ NO

If yes explain the model briefly.

- 23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.**

Studies, including the on-going TMDL effort, show that excessive levels of algae in lake waters are detrimental to optimum fish production and lake enjoyment. The continued massive drainage of fertilizer from the wild rice paddies into Sandy River which flows into Big Sandy Lake is now turning Big Sandy "green" throughout a good portion of the summer. Continued dumping of this fertilizer into Big Sandy could destroy the existing fish population. It will also dramatically reduce the use of the lake for swimming, water skiing, fishing, and other outdoor water sports. Once this occurs, there will be a significant economic impact to Aitkin County and the State of Minnesota as people will no longer consider Big Sandy Lake a desirable place for outdoor enjoyment. Demand for housing will decrease as people look elsewhere for summer cabins and millions of dollars normally spent in Aitkin County on recreation will be spent elsewhere.

- 24. How do you set priorities? *(Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)***

- A. Allow the funding for the conservation easement to be released immediately (this will ensure the remaining items occur)**
- B. Then stop draining millions of gallons of water with fertilizer from the wild rice paddies**
- C. Over a period of time, this will bring Big Sandy Lake back to the pristine condition it once was**

Program Title: Sandy Lake Habitat Project

D. Open the conservation easement to public hunting, hiking, and bird=watching.

C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition	2,000,000 (1000 acres @ \$2,000/acre)		
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL			

E. Personnel Details *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
<i>No new personnel are anticipated</i>		

Program Title: Sandy Lake Habitat Project

F. All Leverage In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.

Source of Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
	RIM maintenance funds through BWSR	RIM maintenance funds through BWSR	RIM maintenance funds through BWSR
TOTAL			

G. Outcomes:

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the “protect” row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

Table 1 Accomplish-ments	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	Up to 1000 ac			Restore water quality in Big Sandy Lake & adjacent lakes
Protect	Up to 1000 ac		Grayling WMA	Water quality, fishing, boating, swimming in 6500 acre Big Sandy lake & adjacent lakes
Enhance	Up to 1000 ac		Grayling WMA	Water quality, fishing boating, swimming, in 6500 ac Big Sandy Lake & adjacent lakes

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Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>Up to 1000 ac</i>			<i>Water quality and fishing in Big Sandy Lake</i>
Protect	<i>Up to 1000 ac</i>		<i>Grayling WMA</i>	<i>Water quality, swimming and fishing in 6500ac Big Sandy lake and adjacent lakes</i>
Enhance	<i>Up to 1000 ac</i>		<i>Grayling WMA</i>	<i>Water quality, swimming, boating, fishing in 6500ac Big Sandy Lake & adjacent lakes</i>

Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>1000ac X 2k/ac=\$2,000,000</i>			<i>Water quality, fishing, & swimming in 6500 ac Big Sandy lake & adjacent lakes</i>
Protect				<i>Water quality, fishing, & swimming in 6500 ac Big Sandy Lake & adjacent lakes</i>
Enhance				<i>Water quality, fishing, boating, & swimming in 6500 ac Big Sandy Lake & adjacent lakes</i>

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Table 4 Leverage \$ N/A	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Table 5 Acquisition Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement	<i>1000 acres rice paddies</i>			<i>Hunting, Water quality, swimming, boating, fishing in 6500ac Big Sandy Lake & adjacent lakes</i>

H. Accomplishment Time Table Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

Milestone	Date	Measure
Purchase necessary portions of wild rice paddies adjacent to the Sandy River to block off flowage of fertilizer into Sandy River and to protect waterfowl and fish habitat.	ASAP	stop water flow from rice paddies to Sandy River

I. Relationship to Your Current Budget

**All included. (Final cost dependent upon the amount of acreage required,
@ \$2,000/acre, approximately 1000 acres anticipated)**

J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?

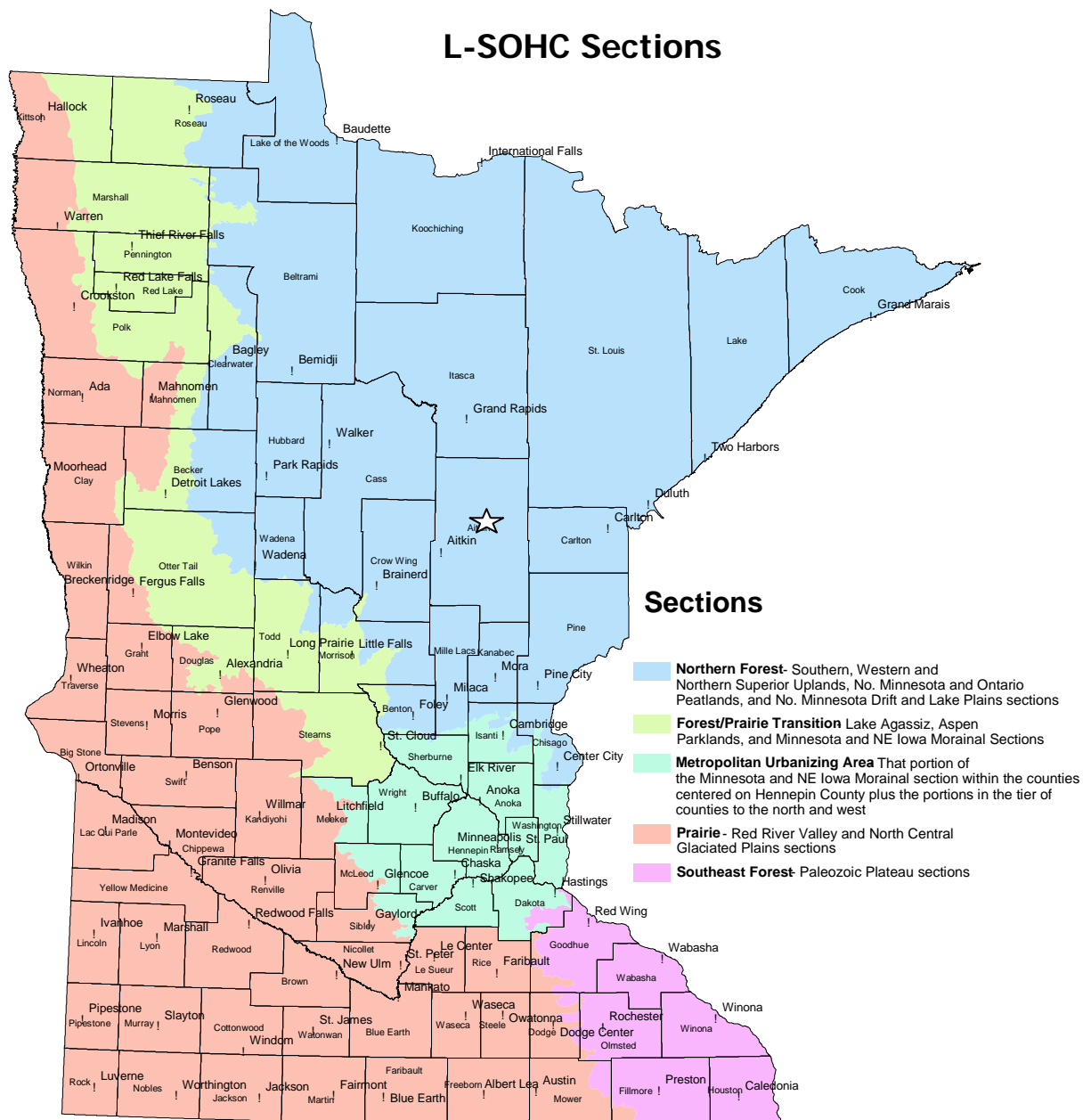
**Should be minimal cost to maintain waterfowl hunting areas in conservation
easement by Aitkin County and State of MN personnel**

**K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map
of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.**

Double left click to bring up the map editor. Symbols should be on the left side of the pop-up banner at the top of your screen or at the bottom left depending on your software.

If you can't bring up the interactive map editor follow these instructions:

1. Make a paper copy of the map,
2. By hand place symbols on the map corresponding to the location of the projects in your proposal,
3. Scan the marked map to a pdf, and
4. Insert the marked pdf map as the last page in your submission.





Some of the waterfowl observed on November 2, 2009 on the easement site.