



Legislative Report

Public Land Survey System Monument Grant Program

October 2025

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Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 3.197, requires the disclosure of the cost to prepare this report. The estimated cost of preparing this report is \$3,000.00.

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Executive summary

This report summarizes the work completed on the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) Monument Grant Program, established and funded by the 2023 Minnesota Legislature to provide grants to Minnesota counties for remonumenting the PLSS.

The Public Land Survey System (PLSS) forms the foundation of all real property ownership in Minnesota. It uses a systematic grid of surveyed townships, each divided into one-mile-square sections. These sections are physically marked by monuments originally set by deputy land surveyors from the United States General Land Office. Between 1847 and 1908, approximately 306,675 section corners were established across Minnesota.

Many of the original monuments—often simple wooden posts—have since been destroyed, buried, or decayed over time. Today, only about half of these section corners have been certified by a licensed land surveyor, as required by Minnesota Statute 381.12.

Properly restored and certified section corners protect the integrity of land boundaries and help prevent costly litigation from boundary disputes and discrepancies. They also serve as a foundation for geospatial mapping data, which supports data-informed policies and decision-making. They also serve as a foundation for geospatial mapping data, which supports data-informed policies and decision-making.

PLSS Monument Grants fund the restoration and certification of original section corners by a licensed land surveyor (Minn. Stat. 326.02 Subd.4).

Funding became available on July 1, 2023. Since that time, the Minnesota Geospatial Information Office (MnGeo) has worked in coordination with the Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council (GAC) to:

1. Hire a Survey Coordinator.
2. Create the PLSS Monument Grant Program.
3. Develop the first Request for Proposal (RFP).
4. Launched an online grant management system.
5. Award \$9.1 million to 34 Minnesota counties to restore section corners.

According to Article 1, Section 111 [381.125] Subdivision 2, this report will provide the following:

- 1. A summary of the chief geospatial information officer's activities regarding administration of this grant program for the previous fiscal year, including the amount of money requested and disbursed by county.**
- 2. An assessment of the progress toward completion of the necessary monument restoration and certification by county.**
- 3. A forecast of the amount needed to complete monument recertification in all counties.**

Legislation

Appropriation: [Minnesota Session Laws – 2023, Regular Session, Chapter 62 \(House File 1830\)](#)

Article 1, Section 10 (f)

(f) Public Land Survey System. \$9,700,000 the first year is for the grant program authorized by Minnesota Statutes, section 381.125, and for grants to counties to employ county technical staff to aid surveyors making land survey corners. Up to six percent of this appropriation may be used by the chief geospatial information officer for the administration of the grant program. This is a one-time appropriation and is available until June 30, 2027.

381.125 PUBLIC LAND SURVEY SYSTEM MONUMENT GRANT PROGRAM.

Subdivision 1. Grant program.

The chief geospatial information officer, through the Geospatial Advisory Council established under section 16E.30, subdivision 8, shall work with the stakeholders licensed as land surveyors under section 326.02, to develop a process for accepting applications from counties for funding for the perpetuation of monuments established by the United States in the public lands survey to mark public land survey corners, as provided in section 381.12, subdivision 2, clause (1). Grants may also be used to update records and data regarding monuments. The chief geospatial information officer must establish criteria for prioritizing applicants when resources available for grants are not sufficient to award grants to all applicants. The criteria must favor providing grants to counties that demonstrate financial need for assistance.

Subdivision 2. Report.

By October 1, in each odd-numbered year, the chief geospatial information officer must submit a report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the committees in the senate and the house of representatives with jurisdiction over state government and local government. The report must include the following:

- (1) a summary of the chief geospatial information officer activities regarding administration of this grant program for the previous fiscal year, including the amount of money requested and disbursed by county;
- (2) an assessment of the progress toward completion of necessary monument restoration and certification by county; and
- (3) a forecast of the amount needed to complete monument recertification in all counties.

Subdivision 3. Nonstate match.

No nonstate match is required for grants made under this program.

1. Public Land Survey System (PLSS) Monument Grant Program Creation and Administration

This section summarizes the Minnesota Chief Geospatial Information Officer's (GIO) activities related to administering this grant program. It includes a review of the previous fiscal year, detailing the amounts requested and disbursed by county.

Grant Program Development

Survey Coordinator

MnGeo hired a survey coordinator who brings a breadth of subject matter expertise and survey community engagement experience and onboarded with the State of Minnesota on Oct. 25, 2023.

Geospatial Advisory Council's (GAC) PLSS Preservation Committee

By statute, MnGeo is advised by the Geospatial Advisory Council (GAC). The Council serves as a coordinating body for the Minnesota geospatial community. It represents a cross-section of organizations that include counties, cities, universities, businesses, nonprofit organizations, federal and state agencies, tribal government, surveyors, and other stakeholder groups that benefit from geospatial data and technology.

The GAC's PLSS Preservation Committee provides input to the PLSS Monument Grant Program in an advisory capacity, while the Geospatial Information Officer (GIO) makes final decisions on grant funding in accordance with state statute. The committee established a charter outlining its objectives:

- Advise Minnesota Geospatial information Officer (GIO) and the Minnesota Geospatial Information Office (MnGeo) in developing a PLSS Preservation grant program pursuant to 381.125.
- Advise the GIO and MnGeo on criteria for reviewing grant applications and their prioritization.

The MnGeo Surveyor Coordinator chairs this committee with the GAC Surveyor Sector Representative as co-chair, and they serve as the primary leads for outreach and collaboration within the geospatial community. See [IX. Appendix](#) for link to the committee web page.

Grant Request for Proposal (RFP) Development

Work on RFP development started immediately upon onboarding MnGeo's Survey Coordinator. Key development milestones include:

- GIO and Survey Coordinator worked with the Department of Administration's Office of Grants Management (OGM).
 - New policies and document templates were reviewed and employed in RFP development
- MnGeo Survey Coordinator started the RFP rough draft to be reviewed by the GAC PLSS Preservation Committee
- Starting Nov. 6, 2023, and meeting weekly through Dec. 2023, the GAC PLSS Preservation Committee met to advise and develop the 2024 PLSS Monument Grant RFP
 - Notes for these development meetings are available on the committee webpage. See [IX. Appendix](#) for link to Committee web page.
- The 2024 PLSS Monument Grant RFP, as developed by MnGeo with guidance from the GAC PLSS Preservation Committee, was reviewed by the following:
 - Department of Administration's Office of Grants Management (OGM)
 - MNIT Communications
 - MNIT Procurement
 - MNIT Finance
 - MNIT's Director of Government Relations
 - MNIT General Counsel
 - MNIT Commissioner & Deputy Commissioner
- Recommended edits and advice from the above reviews were incorporated into the final [2024 PLSS Monument Grant RFP](#), which was posted and distributed on Feb. 1, 2024.
- The first priority for grant funding will be to counties that demonstrate financial need for assistance as well as the most significant need to advance remonumentation. To evaluate this priority, the following criteria and formula will be applied for priority ranking:
Rank = $1000 / (\text{Total County Revenues (in millions)} \times (\text{Percent of certified corners with known geodetic coordinate values}))$
Note: "Total Revenues and Other Financing Sources" as reported in the latest [State Auditors Report](#) will be used for this calculation.
Examples:
Lake County: $1000 / (40.1 \times 0.05) = 498.75$
St. Louis County: $1000 / (365.4 \times 0.42) = 6.52$
Hennepin County: $1000 / (2371.4 \times 1) = 0.42$

In these examples, the higher the score, the greater the need for remonumentation and the higher priority for funding.

Grant Management Solution

While developing the 2024 PLSS Monument Grant RFP, MnGeo simultaneously researched, procured, and implemented a comprehensive grant management solution.

During November and December 2023, MnGeo evaluated multiple systems and consulted with other state agencies to understand best practices for tracking and administering grants. In December, MnGeo procured a solution that serves as a complete system of record, streamlining every stage of the grant lifecycle.

The new system allows applicants to apply, track, and report on their applications and awards through an online portal. Members of the GAC PLSS Preservation Committee can review applications and submit recommendations directly in the system. Agency administrators can manage awards, monitor budgets and reimbursements, track project progress, and document compliance—all in one centralized platform.

MNIT Grant Process Development and Coordination

MnGeo coordinated with MNIT Procurement and Finance to develop a process for executing grant agreements, overseeing fiscal management, and processing grant reimbursement requests.

PLSS Monument Grant Funds Dispersed

The PLSS Monument Grant Request for Proposal (RFP) opened on Feb.1, 2024 and closed on April 5, 2024. Sixty-two counties submitted a total of 65 applications, requesting \$15.4 million in funding. Grant requests ranged from \$50,000 to \$300,000, with an average request of \$237,429. This strong response underscores the significant demand for funding to preserve PLSS monuments.

On May 1, 2024, Minnesota IT Services (MNIT), through the Minnesota Geospatial Information Office (MnGeo), awarded 34 grants totaling \$9.1 million to counties for restoring, maintaining, and updating PLSS survey markers. Grants were awarded to the following counties: Becker, Big Stone, Carlton, Chippewa, Cook, Cottonwood, Faribault, Grant, Koochiching, Lac qui Parle, Lake, Lake of the Woods, Mahnommen, Marshall, Martin, Meeker, Mower, Murray, Norman, Pennington, Pipestone, Polk, Pope, Red Lake, Redwood, Renville, Roseau, Stevens, Swift, Traverse, Wadena, Waseca, Watonwan, and Yellow Medicine.



62 counties
submitted applications
requesting grant funding.



34 counties
received grant funding.



5,657
Corners to be restored,
maintained or updated.



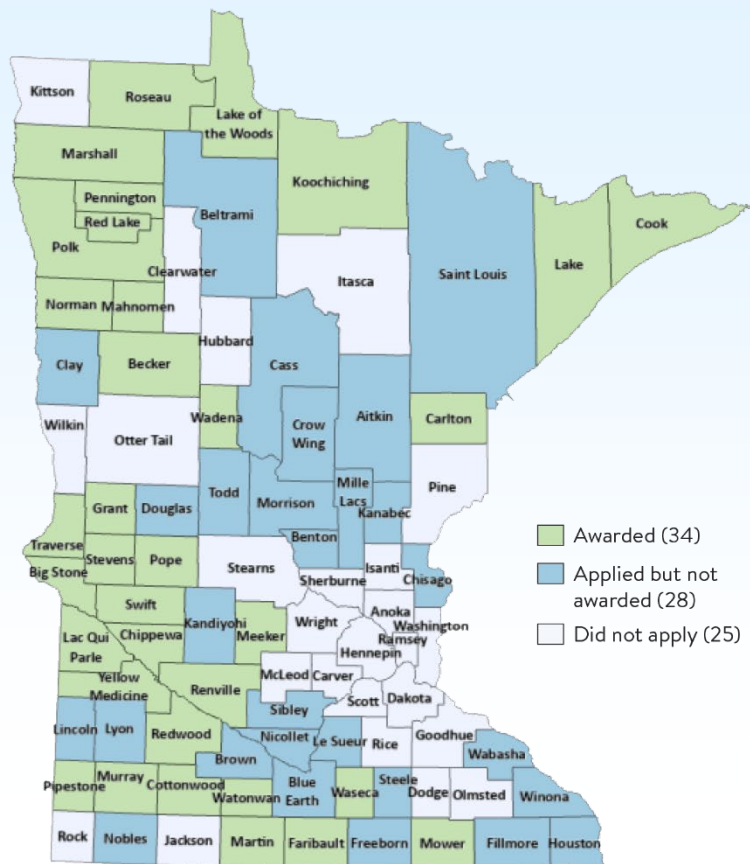
19,836
Records to be updated.

2024 PLSS Monument Grant Applicants & Awards

Requesting Minnesota County	Application Rank	% Certified With Coordinates	Total Grant Request	Grant Award Amount	How many corners will be restored maintained or updated	Approximately how many records will be updated
Carlton (009)	4,101.42	0%	\$298,850.00	\$200,250	87	
Stevens (075)	2,280.28	2%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	172	172
Cook (016)	1,771.89	2%	\$120,193.75	\$120,200	64	
Traverse (078)	1,538.42	5%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	157	575
Norman (054)	1,320.54	3%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	148	460
Mower (050)	1,271.09	1%	\$140,000.00	\$100,150	95	95
Mahnomen (044)	1,230.54	5%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	151	712
Red Lake (063)	1,152.39	6%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	136	656
Redwood (064)	745.19	3%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	218	69
Koochiching (036)	684.32	4%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	147	
Meeker (047)	625.16	3%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	244	
Pope (061)	577.94	9%	\$215,000.00	\$215,000		5000
Big-Stone (006)	492.89	13%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	183	463
Lake of the Woods (039)	448.97	13%	\$265,000.00	\$265,000	156	
Becker (003)	434.34	4%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	201	
Lac qui Parle (037)	398.31	15%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	161	2019
Marshall (045)	369.95	11%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	312	
Watsonwan (083)	293	14%	\$256,400.00	\$256,400	253	
Pennington (057)	263.23	15%	\$250,000.00	\$250,000	282	282
Waseca (081)	238.86	13%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	133	

Requesting Minnesota County	Application Rank	% Certified With Coordinates	Total Grant Request	Grant Award Amount	How many corners will be restored maintained or updated	Approximately how many records will be updated
Pipestone (059)	232.55	21%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	152	1500
Swift (076)	226.46	17%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	131	1197
Martin (046)	220.21	14%	\$118,000.00	\$118,000	236	236
Chippewa (012)	210.53	18%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	158	2100
Murray (051)	209.23	20%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	167	
Roseau (068)	206.44	17%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	309	
Grant (026)	200.54	30%	\$200,000.00	\$200,000	89	
Yellow Medicine (087)	199.81	17%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	112	1168
Faribault (022)	199.22	14%	\$299,950.00	\$299,950	266	
Wadena (080)	189.5	18%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	153	623
Lake (038)	176.75	14%	\$292,800.00	\$292,800	185	
Cottonwood (017)	164.17	26%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	200	
Polk (060)	160.02	9%	\$276,290.00	\$200,250	61	28
Renville (065)	143.65	17%	\$300,000.00	\$300,000	117	2475
Todd (077)	141.67	17%	\$300,000.00	\$0		
Sibley (072)	113.86	18%	\$165,000.00	\$0		
Lincoln (041)	111.01	40%	\$289,600.00	\$0		
Clay (014)	109.3	12%	\$300,000.00	\$0		
Kandiyohi (034)	107.67	11%	\$300,000.00	\$0		
Morrison (049)	100.36	18%	\$299,958.00	\$0		
Lyon (042)	87.68	40%	\$300,000.00	\$0		
Aitkin (001)	82.17	31%	\$115,000.00	\$0		

Requesting Minnesota County	Application Rank	% Certified With Coordinates	Total Grant Request	Grant Award Amount	How many corners will be restored maintained or updated	Approximately how many records will be updated
Nobles (053)	78.71	28%	\$279,700.00	\$0		
Fillmore (023)	60.41	44%	\$300,000.00	\$0		
Le Sueur (040)	55.09	37%	\$100,000.00	\$0		
Nicollet (052)	51.78	38%	\$299,800.00	\$0		
Brown (008)	48.24	49%	\$300,000.00	\$0		
Cass (011)	45.42	27%	\$160,000.00	\$0		
Houston (028)	42.99	80%	\$108,000.00	\$0		
Kanabec (033)	39.21	79%	\$140,000.00	\$0		
Steele (074)	36.2	46%	\$50,000.00	\$0		
Blue-Earth (007)	32.4	29%	\$300,000.00	\$0		
Freeborn (024)	31.29	52%	\$150,000.00	\$0		
Wabasha (079)	29.43	96%	\$208,400.00	\$0		
Beltrami (004)	27.26	39%	\$210,000.00	\$0		
Winona (085)	23.28	59%	\$100,000.00	\$0		
Mille Lacs (048)	21.45	91%	\$59,413.08	\$0		
Crow Wing (018)	20.22	50%	\$295,559.00	\$0		
Benton (005)	17.86	100%	\$50,000.00	\$0		
Douglas (021)	16.46	97%	\$103,500.00	\$0		
Chisago (013)	14.36	86%	\$125,000.00	\$0		
St. Louis (069)	5.65	45%	\$95,000.00	\$0		
Koochiching (036)		4%	\$286,500.00	\$0		
Cass (011)		27%	\$120,000.00	\$0		
Beltrami (004)		39%	\$190,000.00	\$0		



Timeline

- Counties completed the full grant applications by April 5, 2024.
- The Geospatial Advisory Council (GAC) PLSS Preservation Committee, a cross-sector team, evaluated applications prioritizing criteria defined in the legislation.
- Selected grantees were announced April 30, 2024.
- Workplans were approved, and grant projects began May 2024.
- Project work, evaluation, and final reimbursements are to be completed by March 31, 2026.

Grant Information Webpage

MnGeo developed a 'Grant Information' webpage to share and distribute grant-related material. Visit the webpage at <https://plss-minnesota.hub.arcgis.com/pages/3bc9f1be7de54c648939a0c11b0100f9>.

Grantee Feedback

During annual compliance monitoring in Feb. and Mar. 2025, grantees evaluated the overall PLSS Monument Grant process on a scale of 1 to 10. The program received an average rating of 9, demonstrating strong satisfaction with the efficiency, clarity, and support provided throughout the grant lifecycle.

2. PLSS Preservation Progress in Minnesota

This section assesses Minnesota counties' progress in restoring and certifying required corner monuments.

During the 2024 PLSS Monument Grant application process, counties were asked to inventory the current status of the PLSS within their boundaries and estimate the time and funding needed to complete restoration and certification. The 2024 inventory shows Minnesota has 306,675 original corner monuments of which 156,030 (51%) are currently certified. However, only 107,314 of those certified monuments have survey-derived geodetic coordinates assigned. In total, just 35% of the original PLSS corner monuments are both certified and have geodetic coordinates established.

The 2023 legislation provided a one-time appropriation of \$9.7 million, which includes 6% administration costs. As highlighted in “[PLSS Monument Grant Funds Dispersed](#)” section of this report. \$9.1 million has been awarded and will result in the certification and geodetic positioning of 5,657 corner monuments or approximately 2% of the original PLSS corner monuments in Minnesota. The table and map below show the current PLSS status by county.

Table of Public Land Survey System Status by County

County	% Certified PLSS Corner	Original PLSS Corners	Certified PLSS Corners	Certified PLSS Corners No Coordinates	Certified PLSS Corners Coordinates	Years to Complete PLSS Restoration	Annual Funding Needed to Complete PLSS Restoration	Total Funding Needed to Complete PLSS Restoration
Aitkin	33	7000	2297	125	2172	45	\$150,000	\$6,750,000
Anoka	98	1686	1660	0	1660	2	\$60,000	\$120,000
Becker	13	7600	953	672	281	35	\$300,000	\$10,500,000
Beltrami	45	12281	5538	795	4743	20	\$200,000	\$4,000,000
Benton	100	1331	1331	1	1330	5	\$60,000	\$300,000
Big Stone	18	1565	280	82	198	15	\$300,000	\$4,500,000
Blue Earth	37	2493	922	210	712	25	\$150,000	\$3,750,000
Brown	59	2029	1195	192	1003	4	\$320,000	\$1,280,000
Carlton	48	2900	1406	1396	10	20	\$500,000	\$10,000,000
Carver	100	1400	1400	0	1400			
Cass	50	7946	3958	1779	2179	40	\$250,000	\$10,000,000
Chippewa	56	1960	1103	753	350	26	\$150,000	\$3,900,000
Chisago	100	1700	1700	237	1463	1	\$125,000	\$125,000
Clay	80	3355	2694	2299	395	22	\$200,000	\$4,400,000
Clearwater	26	7253	1900	0	1900			
Cook	23	6347	1484	1370	114	25	\$250,000	\$6,250,000

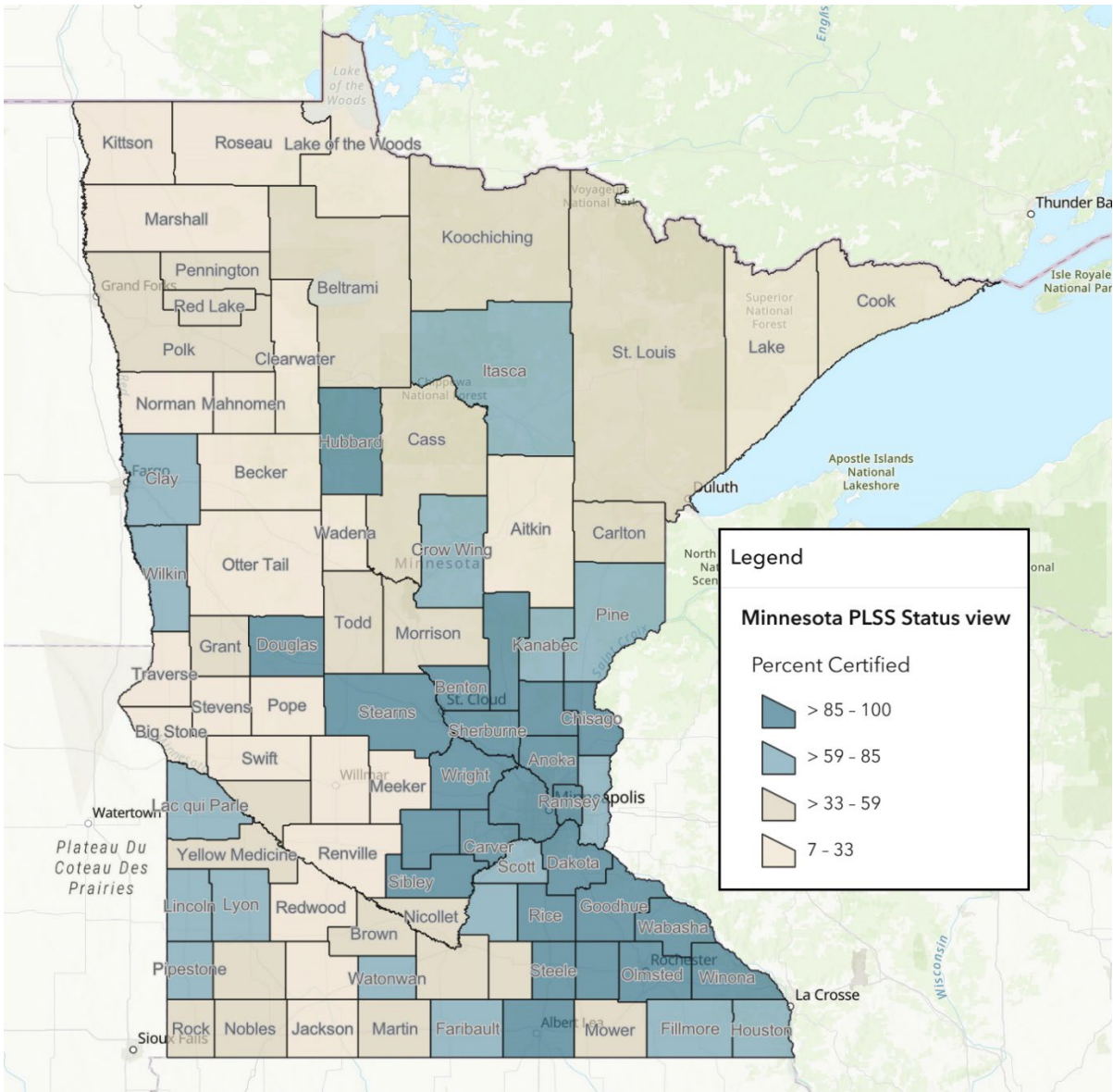
County	% Certified PLSS Corner	Original PLSS Corners	Certified PLSS Corners	Certified PLSS Corners No Coordinates	Certified PLSS Corners Coordinates	Years to Complete PLSS Restoration	Annual Funding Needed to Complete PLSS Restoration	Total Funding Needed to Complete PLSS Restoration
Cottonwood	28	2165	608	53	555	25	\$100,000	\$2,500,000
Crow Wing	68	4384	3001	816	2185	10	\$182,520	\$1,825,200
Dakota	100	2200	2200	0	2200			
Dodge	96	1382	1320	0	1320			
Douglas	97	2761	2674	0	2674	0	\$-	\$-
Faribault	73	2304	1675	1360	315	20	\$150,000	\$3,000,000
Fillmore	82	2713	2236	1036	1200	10	\$100,000	\$1,000,000
Freeborn	100	2321	2321	1121	1200			
Goodhue	100	2495	2495	0	2495			
Grant	36	2176	788	132	656	20	\$200,000	\$4,000,000
Hennepin	100	2310	2310	0	2310	0	\$-	\$-
Houston	82	1825	1495	41	1454	6	\$108,000	\$648,000
Hubbard	90	3700	3312	6	3306	10	\$230,000	\$2,300,000
Isanti	91	1670	1516	0	1516			
Itasca	73	11072	8107	50	8057	5	\$250,000	\$1,250,000
Jackson	21	2313	496	0	496			
Kanabec	85	1800	1523	96	1427	10	\$65,000	\$650,000
Kandiyohi	22	3016	656	322	334	30	\$150,000	\$4,500,000
Kittson	19	3556	671	0	671			
Koochiching	38	11806	4470	3945	525	32	\$900,000	\$28,800,000
Lac qui Parle	75	2479	1858	1493	365	18	\$320,000	\$5,760,000

County	% Certified PLSS Corner	Original PLSS Corners	Certified PLSS Corners	Certified PLSS Corners No Coordinates	Certified PLSS Corners Coordinates	Years to Complete PLSS Restoration	Annual Funding Needed to Complete PLSS Restoration	Total Funding Needed to Complete PLSS Restoration
Lake	23	9000	2093	838	1255	100	\$150,000	\$15,000,000
Lake of the Woods	18	5372	986	306	680	15	\$300,000	\$4,500,000
Le Sueur	66	1673	1097	486	611	10	\$50,000	\$500,000
Lincoln	76	1895	1436	680	756	17	\$150,000	\$2,550,000
Lyon	71	2407	1715	759	956	20	\$150,000	\$3,000,000
Mahnomen	7	7328	517	148	369	73	\$300,000	\$21,900,000
Marshall	23	5870	1365	692	673	35	\$150,000	\$5,250,000
Martin	39	2307	900	587	313	9	\$130,000	\$1,170,000
McLeod	100	1750	1750	0	1750			
Meeker	27	2150	579	524	55	11	\$300,000	\$3,300,000
Mille Lacs	92	1781	1644	20	1624	2	\$60,000	\$120,000
Morrison	51	3848	1967	1267	700	12	\$150,000	\$1,800,000
Mower	48	2233	1077	1051	26	20	\$150,000	\$3,000,000
Murray	46	2417	1104	617	487	25	\$150,000	\$3,750,000
Nicollet	48	2320	1124	239	885	12	\$150,000	\$1,800,000
Nobles	57	2256	1288	649	639	10	\$290,000	\$2,900,000
Norman	12	2876	343	243	100	15	\$300,000	\$4,500,000
Olmsted	100	2116	2116	0	2116	0	\$-	\$-
Otter Tail	25	8458	2077	2077	0			
Pennington	38	2053	784	471	313	14	\$115,000	\$1,610,000

County	% Certified PLSS Corner	Original PLSS Corners	Certified PLSS Corners	Certified PLSS Corners No Coordinates	Certified PLSS Corners Coordinates	Years to Complete PLSS Restoration	Annual Funding Needed to Complete PLSS Restoration	Total Funding Needed to Complete PLSS Restoration
Pine	77	5200	4000	500	3500	5	\$230,000	\$1,150,000
Pipestone	72	1504	1082	771	311	20	\$150,000	\$3,000,000
Polk	36	6580	2397	1825	572	45	\$300,000	\$13,500,000
Pope	13	2464	328	111	218	40	\$150,000	\$6,000,000
Ramsey	100	556	556	0	556	0	\$-	\$-
Red Lake	37	1502	560	468	92	12	\$300,000	\$3,600,000
Redwood	30	2836	860	85	775	15	\$199,500	\$2,992,500
Renville	33	3181	1050	512	538	25	\$150,000	\$3,750,000
Rice	92	1720	1580	0	1580			
Rock	41	1578	643	643	0			
Roseau	27	5813	1569	565	1004	16	\$300,000	\$4,800,000
Scott	69	1436	989	191	1245	0	\$250,000	
Sherburne	88	1625	1425	0	1425			
Sibley	99	2810	2783	2286	497	10	\$80,000	\$800,000
St. Louis	49	24506	12140	1164	10976	18	\$1,500,000	\$27,000,000
Stearns	100	4957	4950	50	4907	0	\$-	\$-
Steele	100	1521	1521	821	700	20	\$60,000	\$1,200,000
Stevens	19	2006	399	356	43	22	\$150,000	\$3,300,000
Swift	31	2520	770	330	440	22	\$150,000	\$3,300,000
Todd	55	3352	1855	1284	571	25	\$150,000	\$3,750,000
Traverse	24	1765	415	332	83	30	\$150,000	\$4,500,000

County	% Certified PLSS Corner	Original PLSS Corners	Certified PLSS Corners	Certified PLSS Corners No Coordinates	Certified PLSS Corners Coordinates	Years to Complete PLSS Restoration	Annual Funding Needed to Complete PLSS Restoration	Total Funding Needed to Complete PLSS Restoration
Wabasha	96	1786	1719	0	1719	2	\$100,000	\$200,000
Wadena	31	1998	623	265	358	15	\$300,000	\$4,500,000
Waseca	44	1332	590	423	167	12	\$225,000	\$2,700,000
Washington	73	1525	1109	0	1109			
Watonwan	81	1374	1110	924	186	6	\$260,000	\$1,560,000
Wilkin	79	2561	2029	2029	0			
Winona	90	2152	1941	676	1265	16	\$50,000	\$800,000
Wright	100	2550	2550	0	2550	0	\$-	\$-
Yellow Medicine	38	2561	972	524	448	30	\$150,000	\$4,500,000

Map of Public Land Survey System Status by County



An interactive web map of the above information can be viewed at the following web address:

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/0cfc9b462ef64868a38755f5d5c81713>

3. Minnesota PLSS Preservation Completion Forecast

This section provides a forecast of the funding need to complete monument recertification in all Minnesota counties.

The 2023 legislation provided a one-time appropriation of \$9.7 million, which included 6% administration costs.

- Administrative costs included MnGeo staff salary, grant management solution license, PLSS Monument Grant Outreach, travel reimbursements, and staff development.
- \$9.1 million has been awarded and will result in the certification and geodetic positioning of 5,657 corner monuments, approximately 2% of the original PLSS corner monuments in Minnesota. As highlighted in Section 2 of this report, only 35% of the original PLSS corner monuments in Minnesota are certified and have a geodetic coordinate determined for their position.

The estimated cost to complete PLSS restoration statewide is \$354 million over 37 years.

Other factors that may influence the above estimate:

- Lack of consistent/ permanent funding of the PLSS Monument Grant Program
 - Gaps in funding will result in inconsistent county and land surveyor coordination to make sufficient and timely progress.
- Statewide licensed land surveyor capacity.
 - The number of licensed land surveyors across the state is decreasing.
 - The demand for licensed land surveyors in the private and public sectors remains high and is expected to increase.
- Ongoing PLSS maintenance needs due to monument damage and destruction.
 - Ongoing private and public development leads to the loss or destruction of PLSS monuments every year, increasing the urgency of restoration efforts.
 - To keep pace with ongoing damage and loss, county surveyors recommend revisiting and maintaining 3-5% of PLSS corner monuments each year.

Next Steps

The next steps for the PLSS Monument Grant Program:

- Maintain consistent oversight and due diligence to the 34 awarded grants.
- Support and ensure county grantees complete their projects.
- Complete end-of-grant evaluations and file reports with the Department of Administration's Office of Grants Management (OGM).
- Engage Minnesota's surveying and geospatial community to publicize grant program progress and encourage future participation.
- Apply lessons learned and gathered insights to improve future grant cycles.
- Prepare to distribute future funding according to strategic priorities.

- Provide updates on progress to the Minnesota legislative, surveying and geospatial communities, and include ongoing outreach about the importance of this effort and need to provide ongoing support of the program.

Appendix

- PLSS Website (<https://plss-minnesota.hub.arcgis.com/>). This website describes the overall efforts to preserve the public land survey system, provides answers to frequently asked questions, and provides an interactive map of the state of PLS monuments by county.
- Grant Information Website
(<https://plss-minnesota.hub.arcgis.com/pages/3bc9f1be7de54c648939a0c11b0100f9>)
- Geospatial Advisory Council (GAC) PLSS Preservation Committee Website
(https://www.mngeo.state.mn.us/committee/plss_preservation/index.html)
This web page provides a summary of the GAC PLSS Preservation Committee that will advise MnGeo including its charter, objectives and deliverables, and committee leadership.
- Minnesota's Public Land Survey System (PLSS) Web Map
(<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/0cfc9b462ef64868a38755f5d5c81713>)
- History of the PLSS and the General Land Office surveys in Minnesota
(<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/dcf1f4998652479f98c86cb0bedd6e99/>)