

**Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
FY 2011 Recommendation
Accomplishment Plan**

Date: 11/2/2012 2/25/2013 – Amendment Request

Project or Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

Manager’s Name: Joe Pavelko

Title: MN Director of Conservation

Agency/organization: Pheasants Forever

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Funds Recommended (\$000s)	Council Recommendation Funding FY 2011	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
		FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	3,015,000	0	0	0

Appropriation Language:

Laws of Minnesota 2010, Chapter 361, Article 1, Section 2, Subd. 2(c).

\$3,015,000 in fiscal year 2011 is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Pheasants Forever to acquire and restore land to be added to the state wildlife management area system. A list of proposed fee title acquisitions and a list of proposed restoration projects, describing the types and locations of restorations, must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan. The commissioner of natural resources must agree in writing to each proposed acquisition. All restorations must comply with subdivision 9, paragraph(b).

Abstract

Pheasants Forever and partners including the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will protect 900 acres of priority prairie grassland, wetland habitat, and native remnant prairie (if available) as state wildlife management areas (WMA). In addition, acquired lands will be restored and/or enhanced to prairie and/or wetland habitat. Once complete, these WMAs will provide quality grassland/wetland habitat complexes that will benefit a myriad of game and non-game species and will provide public recreational opportunities for the citizens of Minnesota.

Narrative

The threats to wildlife habitat in the farmland regions of Minnesota are constant and increasing. Development pressures from urbanization, industry (e.g. wind, gravel), and agriculture put our existing habitats in constant jeopardy. Minnesota is also losing significant acreage of grassland habitat (approximately 70,000 acres last year) in the farmland region of Minnesota due to expiring CRP contracts. Now it is even more urgent to provide the vital permanent, high quality habitat complexes on a landscape level to protect and maintain

wildlife populations. In addition, providing a place for Minnesotans to hunt, trap, fish and otherwise recreate in the outdoors are urgent needs, and needs we can deliver right now.

To help slow and reverse the loss of habitat and declining wildlife populations, Pheasants Forever and our partners will protect (fee acquisition from willing sellers) 900 acres of high priority grassland, wetland habitat, and native remnant prairie (if available) as state wildlife management areas (WMA). Striving to build landscape level habitat complexes that will protect and sustain wildlife populations, 17 of the 20 potential projects are additions to existing WMA’s and all projects have been developed in consultation with the local DNR managers. DNR Commissioner approval will be received for any project funded under this proposal.

All acquired lands will be restored and/or enhanced. In addition, tracts acquired under the FY2010 Prairie Heritage Fund Grant may be restored utilizing FY2011 OHF funds. Acquired croplands will be restored to diverse grasslands and wetlands to the fullest extent. Enhancement to existing prairie grasslands and wetlands will also occur as determined by the DNR Manager and PF Biologists. Enhancements could include undesirable woody vegetation removal, water control structure installation, inter-seeding within grasslands to increase diversity and structure, managed grazing, invasive species control, or any other activity that improves the diversity and health of the prairie-wetland habitat complex. We will use as diverse of a seed mixture as reasonable for the site to achieve diversity and quality functional habitat using plants native to Minnesota.

Pheasants Forever’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. Wildlife Management Areas have proven to be an invaluable tool in protecting and sustaining habitat and the myriad of species that call them home. WMA’s provide many recreational opportunities and are enjoyed by thousands of Minnesotans every year.

Relationship to *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and other published resource management plans.

This effort directly protects, restores or enhances prairie grasslands, wetlands and habitat for game and wildlife. In cooperation with DNR Managers, we use existing data (e.g. County Biological Survey, HAPET Thunderstorm maps, Restorable wetlands inventory, and protected lands GIS layers), to identify, prioritize, and permanently protect prairie grassland and wetland habitats that improve habitat function for wildlife.

The work of this proposal is consistent with many of the strategies and objectives of existing plans including the *Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan*, the *Long-range plan for the ring-necked pheasant in Minnesota*, *Long-range Duck Recovery Plan*, *North American Waterfowl Management Plan*, *Partners in Flight Physiographic Area Plan for the Tallgrass Prairie*.

Project Design and Evaluation

Project Scope	Wetlands and Wetland Systems	Prairies and Prairie Systems	Forests and Forest Systems	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife (Include Description in Footnote)
Restore				
Protect		900 acres		
Enhance				

Prairie systems include wetlands and vice versa. Wetlands and wetland systems are a key consideration for prioritizing projects and will be acquired and restored to their fullest extent.

Counties in which activities will take place	Wetlands and Wetland Systems	Prairies and Prairie Systems	Forests and Forest Systems	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore*				
Protect		<i>Benton, Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Dakota, Goodhue, LaQui Parle, McLeod, Meeker, Morrison, Mower, Pipestone, Rock, Swift, Todd, LeSueur</i>		
Enhance*				

*Parcels acquired will be those that are restored and enhanced. At this time, we do not know which projects will come to completion.

Acres Within Each Ecological Section	Metropolitan-Urbanizing Area	Forest-Prairie Transition	Southeast Forest	Prairie Region	Northern Forest
Restore					
Protect	<i>150 acres</i>	<i>150 acres</i>		<i>600 acres</i>	
Enhance					

Potential projects are identified in the Metropolitan-Urbanizing Area, Southeast Forest, Prairie, Forest-Prairie Transition and Northern Forest Region. While a majority of the projects will occur within the prairie region, it is largely dependent on which projects actually are completed as to where the acres and dollars are expended.

Funding Per Ecological Section	Metropolitan-Urbanizing Area	Forest-Prairie Transition	Southeast Forest	Prairie Region	Northern Forest
Restore		<i>\$30,000</i>		<i>280,000</i>	
Protect	<i>\$512,500</i>	<i>432,500</i>		<i>\$1,760,000</i>	
Enhance					

Personnel costs are prorated based on acres per ecological section and are assigned to the protect category.

Funding Resource Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore	<i>\$40,000</i>	<i>\$270,000</i>		
Protect	<i>\$433,000</i>	<i>\$2,272,000</i>		
Enhance				

Personnel costs are prorated based on acres type and are assigned to the protect category.

Acquisition and Tax Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability	<i>150 acres</i>	<i>750 acres</i>		
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	<i>35,000</i>	<i>10,000</i>	
Contracts	<i>\$100,000</i>	<i>\$100,000</i>	<i>\$31,000</i>
Equipment/Tools			
Materials/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition	<i>\$1,902,000</i>	<i>\$405,000</i>	<i>\$402,000</i>
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
DNR Acquisition Costs	<i>\$30,000</i>		
TOTAL	<i>\$2,607,000</i>	<i>\$515,000</i>	<i>\$433,000</i>

Relationship to Current Budget

In recent years, PF has acquired approximately 2,000 acres of land that has been donated to a public agency. This grant significantly accelerates our ability to acquire priority parcels. We have assigned portions of positions to this project and directly deliver the outcomes outlined in this proposal. In addition, PF has added capacity to assist in the delivery of these types of projects. A new Director of Conservation Programs position was hired in December of 2009 to bring more capacity to deliver the Pheasants Forever habitat mission here in Minnesota. Only documented, direct to project costs will be reimbursed under this grant. Any dollars allocated under personnel that are unused will be moved to acquisition or restoration projects to accomplish more.

Personnel

Position	Name	Amount
PF Personnel	<i>Joe Pavelko/Matt Holland</i>	<i>45,000</i>

Director of Conservation Programs/Sr. Field Coordinator		20,000
Regional Biologist	Eran Sandquist/Scott Roomhildt	15,000
Grant Department Staff	National Office Grant Department	10,000

Leverage

SOURCE	FY 11		FY 12		FY 13	
	In hand	Anticipated	In hand	Anticipated	In hand	Anticipated
State						
Non state		500,000		25,000		
In-kind/Volunteer						
TOTAL		500,000		25,000		

Leverage will come from PF Chapters, local partners, documented land value donations, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, and other non-state sources.

Leverage	State				Non-State			
	Wetlands and Wetland Systems	Prairies and Prairie Systems	Forests and Forest Systems	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife	Wetlands and Wetland Systems	Prairies and Prairie Systems	Forests and Forest Systems	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore								
Protect						525,000		
Enhance								

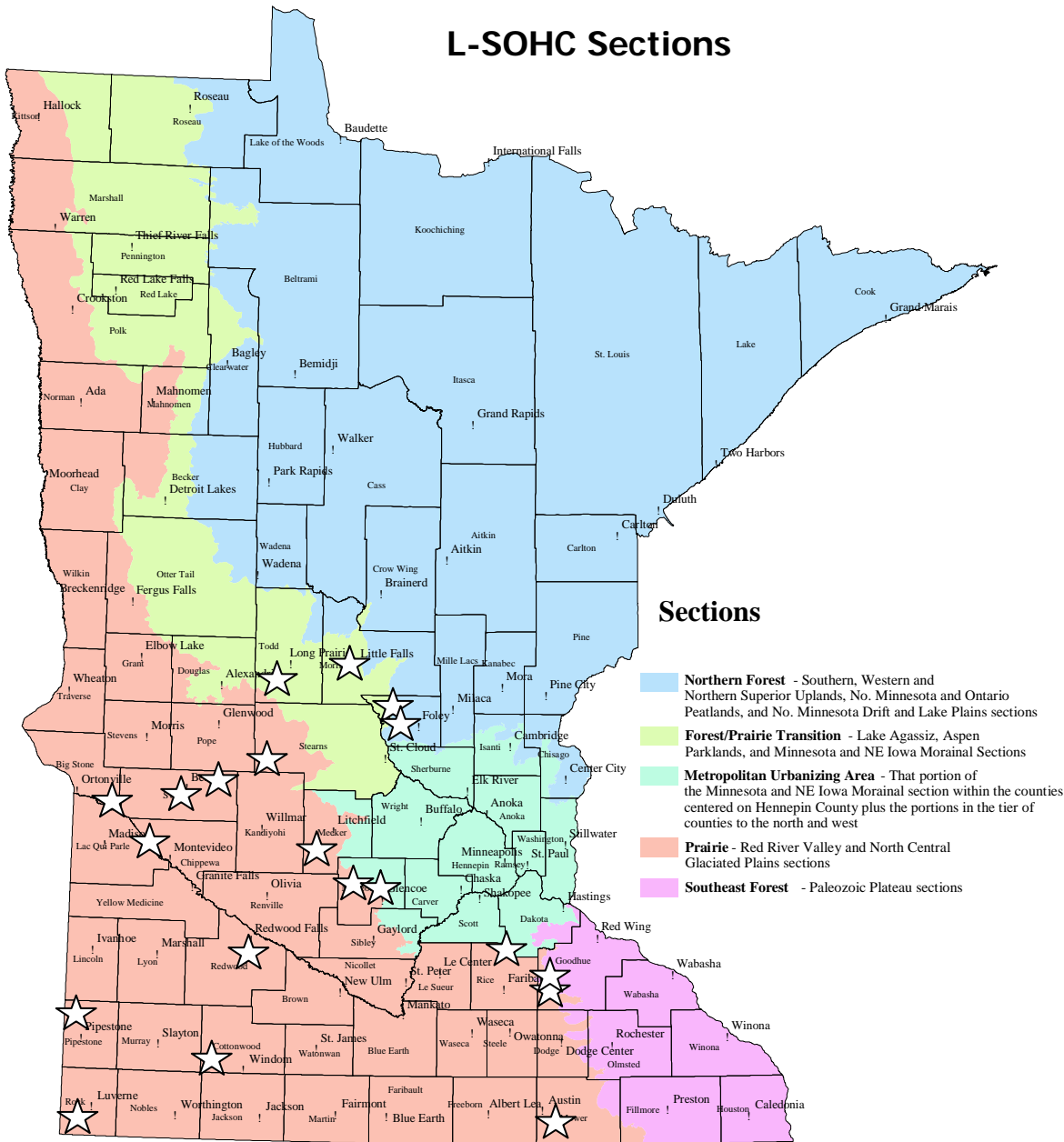
Accomplishment Timeline

Milestones	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Budgetary Expenditure
Identify priority acquisitions.	7/1/2010			
Contract appraisals ordered.	7/11/2010			30,000
Purchase agreements.	12/01/2010			
Restoration actions initiated	10/01/2010			
Close on optioned tracts	Starting 11/1/2010			\$2,675,000
Donate Lands to DNR	6/30/13			
Habitat restorations Completed	6/30/13			\$231,000

Maintenance and Sustainability

All lands will be enrolled into the state Wildlife Management Area system and will be managed in perpetuity by the Minnesota DNR. In addition, our local Pheasants Forever chapter members and volunteers maintain a high interest in seeing the habitat and productivity of acquired parcels at high-quality levels.

L-SOHC Sections



Sections

- Northern Forest** - Southern, Western and Northern Superior Uplands, No. Minnesota and Ontario Peatlands, and No. Minnesota Drift and Lake Plains sections
- Forest/Prairie Transition** - Lake Agassiz, Aspen Parklands, and Minnesota and NE Iowa Morainal Sections
- Metropolitan Urbanizing Area** - That portion of the Minnesota and NE Iowa Morainal section within the counties centered on Hennepin County plus the portions in the tier of counties to the north and west
- Prairie** - Red River Valley and North Central Glaciated Plains sections
- Southeast Forest** - Paleozoic Plateau sections

Program Title: Prairie Heritage Fund

Program Manager: Joe Pavelko, Pheasants Forever

Program Manager Telephone: 612-532-3800

Project Name**	Primary County	Geo-location Town, Range, Section	Select one by inserting an "X"			Number of buildings or other	Description of buildings	Estimated value of improvements	Disposition of improvements (S= sell; D= demolish; R= remove)
			Protect	Restore *	Enhance*				
Sanborn Lake WMA	LeSueur	112-23-26,35	x						
Lac Qui Parle WMA Addition	Big Stone	120-44-5	x						
Benderberg WMA Tr. 29	Chippewa	119-41-28	x						
Florida Creek WMA Addition	Lac Qui Parle	117-45-28	x						
Darling WMA	Morrison	130-30-10	x						
Camp Kerk WMA Addition	Swift	122-38-25	x						
TBA WMA (Platt Lake)	Todd	128-35-3	x						
Wieker WMA Addition	Meeker	118-32-5&6	x						
Graham WMA Addition	Benton	138-30-1	x						
Winter WMA Addition	Pipestone	108-46-22	x						
Talcot Lake WMA Addition	Cottonwood	105-38-29	x						
Mill Pond WMA Addition	Mower	103-18-14	x						
NEW WMA (Voosen)	Redwood	112-38-19	x						
						House, machine shed, garage, outbuilding			
NEW WMA (Kujawa)	Benton	38-29-27	x		4		\$160,000	S, D, R	
Ras-Lyn WMA Addition	McLeod	116-30-33	x						
Warsaw WMA Tract 2	Goodhue	111-18-5	x						
Warsaw WMA Tract 3	Goodhue	111-18-8	x						
Kvernmo WMA Addition	Lincoln	112-46-22	x						
Younger Bros Tract 2 WMA Addition	Watonwan	107-31-26	x						
Rich Valley WMA Addition	McLeod	116-28-19	x						
Mud Creek WMA Addition	Dakota	112-20-29	x						
Madrena WMA Addition	Lac Qui Parle	118-45-12	x		1	Quonset building	\$5,000	DNR may keep for storage	
Pelican Lake WMA	Wright	120-24-16	x						
Nelson Tract (New WMA)	Pope	123-36-28	x						
Prairie Heritage Addition	Stearns	123-34-36	x						
Winter WMA Addition***	Pipestone	108-46-28		x					
Younger Brothers WMA Addition***	Watonwan	107-31-25		x					
Clifton WMA Addition***	Lyon	111-40-5,6,7		x					
Verona WMA***	Brown	108-34-2,3		x					

*An Initial Development Plan will be created and executed for each property acquired and enrolled into the WMA system

*Desired habitat enhancement and restoration activities will be part of that initial development plan

**This list is dynamic and projects will fall off and be added regularly for a variety of reasons (e.g. seller decides not to sell)

***These parcels were acquired with FY2010 OHF funds and will be restored with FY2011 OHF funds