

# Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

## Laws of Minnesota 2010 Accomplishment Plan

**Date:** March 20, 2014

**Program or Project Title:** Reinvest in Minnesota Wetlands Reserve Program Acquisition and Restoration, Phase 2

**Funds Recommended:** \$ 6,895,000

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**Title:**

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**Legislative Citation:** ML 2010, Ch. 361, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 4(c )

**Appropriation Language:** \$6,895,000 in fiscal year 2011 is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources to acquire permanent conservation easements and restore wetlands and associated uplands in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture Wetlands Reserve Program. A list of proposed acquisitions and a list of proposed projects, describing the types and locations of restorations, must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan. All restorations must comply with subdivision 9, paragraph (b).

**County Locations:** No Counties Listed

**Ecological Planning Regions:**

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Metro / Urban
- Prairie

**Activity Type:**

- Protect in Easement
- Restore

**Priority Resources Addressed by Activity:**

- Habitat
- Prairie
- Wetlands

### Abstract:

The Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) Partnership will accelerate the restoration and protection of approximately 4,620 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 \$6.895 million from the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) will leverage \$9.653 million in WRP funds to Minnesota. We expect to enroll

approximately 46 permanent conservation easements totaling 4,620 acres of wetland grassland wildlife habitat complexes. This will enable the RIM-WRP partnership to restore approximately 230 previously drained wetland basins totaling 1,525 wetland acres, and the restoration of native grassland prairies on approximately 3,095 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.

## **Design and Scope of Work:**

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 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.

The RIM-WRP Partnership, the premier private lands wetland restoration program in the nation, is a local-state-federal partnership delivered locally by 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).

The RIM-WRP Partnership will protect and restore an estimated 230 wetland basins totaling 1,525 wetland acres and associated restored native grassland prairie on 3,095 acres in 46 permanent conservation easements totaling 4,620 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 biological diversity, sequester carbon and increase recreational opportunities.

## **Planning:**

### **MN State-wide Conservation Plan Priorities:**

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes
- H4 Restore and protect shallow lakes
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds
- H7 Keep water on the landscape

### **Plans Addressed:**

- Long Range Duck Recovery Plan
- Long Range Plan for the Ring-Necked Pheasant in MN
- North American Waterfowl Management Plan
- Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare

### **LSOHC Statewide Priorities:**

- Address conservation opportunities that will be lost if not immediately acted on
- Are able to leverage effort and/or other funds to supplement any OHF appropriation
- Are ongoing, successful, transparent and accountable programs addressing actions and targets of one or more of the ecological sections
- Ensures activities for "protecting, restoring and enhancing" are coordinated among agencies, non profits and others while doing this important work
- Produce multiple enduring conservation benefits
- Use a science-based strategic planning and evaluation model to guide protection, restoration and enhancement, similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model

#### **LSOHC Forest Prairie Transition Section Priorities:**

- Protect, enhance, and restore wild rice wetlands, shallow lakes, wetland/grassland complexes, aspen parklands, and shoreland that provide critical habitat for game and nongame wildlife
- Protect, enhance, and restore migratory habitat for waterfowl and related species, so as to increase migratory and breeding success

#### **LSOHC Metro Urban Section Priorities:**

#### **LSOHC Prairie Section Priorities:**

- Protect, enhance, or restore existing wetland/upland complexes, or convert agricultural lands to new wetland/upland habitat complexes
- Convert agricultural land to wetland/upland to protect, enhance, or restore existing habitat complexes, such as WMAs
- Protect expiring CRP lands
- Protect, enhance, and restore migratory habitat for waterfowl and related species, so as to increase migratory and breeding success

## **Relationship to Other Constitutional Funds:**

### **Accelerates or Supplements Current Efforts:**

No Efforts Listed

### **Sustainability and Maintenance:**

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.

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

### **Public Use:**

Will the eased land be open for public use? - **No**

## **Permanent Protection:**

*Is the land you plan to acquire free of any other permanent protection? - **Yes***

## **Accomplishment Timeline**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Approximate Date Completed</b>
Conduct sign-up ranking and selection of easements	Winter 2010
Easement Acquisition Stage	<del>2010-2013</del> <u>2011-2014</u>
Wetland restoration and conservation plan implementation	<del>2011-2013</del> <u>2011-2015</u>

## **Outcomes**

### **Programs in forest-prairie transition region:**

- Protected, restored, and enhanced nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need
- Wetland and upland complexes will consist of native prairies, restored prairies, quality grasslands, and restored shallow lakes and wetlands
- Water is kept on the land

### **Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:**

- A network of natural land and riparian habitats will connect corridors for wildlife and species in greatest conservation need

### **Programs in prairie region:**

- Expiring CRP lands are permanently protected
- Protected, restored, and enhanced habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need
- Protected, restored, and enhanced shallow lakes and wetlands
- Water is kept on the land

# Budget Spreadsheet

*Budget reallocations up to 10% do not require an amendment to the Accomplishment Plan*

**Total Amount of Request: \$ ~~6669800~~ 6895000**

## Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	<del>\$332,700</del> <u>389,400</u>	\$0		<del>\$332,700</del> <u>389,400</u>
Contracts	<del>\$228,000</del> <u>194,000</u>	\$0		<del>\$228,000</del> <u>194,000</u>
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	<del>\$5,513,000</del> <u>6,235,500</u>	\$0		<del>\$5,513,000</del> <u>6,235,500</u>
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	<del>\$87,000</del> <u>8,700</u>	\$0		<del>\$87,000</del> <u>8,700</u>
Professional Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	<del>\$692,700</del> <u>0</u>	\$0		<del>\$692,700</del> <u>0</u>
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	<del>\$41,600</del> <u>29,000</u>	\$0		<del>\$41,600</del> <u>29,000</u>
Supplies/Materials	<del>\$0</del> <u>38,400</u>	\$0		<del>\$0</del> <u>38,400</u>
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$6,895,000	\$0		\$6,895,000

## Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Mgmt	<del>0.00</del> <u>0.05</u>	<del>0.00</del> <u>3.00</u>	<del>\$71,400</del> <u>15,000</u>	\$0		<del>\$71,400</del> <u>15,000</u>
Easement Processor	<del>0.00</del> <u>0.50</u>	<del>0.00</del> <u>3.00</u>	<del>\$36,100</del> <u>97,500</u>	\$0		<del>\$36,100</del> <u>97,500</u>
Adm/IT/Data/GIS	<del>0.00</del> <u>0.10</u>	<del>0.00</del> <u>3.00</u>	<del>\$0</del> <u>19,500</u>	\$0		<del>\$0</del> <u>19,500</u>
Engineer	<del>0.00</del> <u>0.45</u>	<del>0.00</del> <u>3.00</u>	<del>\$0</del> <u>129,900</u>	\$0		<del>\$0</del> <u>129,900</u>
Engineering Tech	<del>0.00</del> <u>0.50</u>	<del>0.00</del> <u>3.00</u>	<del>\$0</del> <u>127,500</u>	\$0		<del>\$0</del> <u>127,500</u>
Total	<del>0.00</del> <u>1.60</u>	<del>0.00</del> <u>15.00</u>	<del>\$107,500</del> <u>389,400</u>	\$0		<del>\$107,500</del> <u>389,400</u>

## Output Tables

**Table 1. Acres by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	1,525 0	3,095 0	0	4,620 0	9,240 0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	1,525 1,519	3,095 2,820	0	4,620 0	9,240 4,339
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3,050 1,519	6,190 2,820	0	9,240 0	18,480 4,339

**Table 1b. How many of these Prairie acres are Native Prairie?**

Type	Native Prairie
Restore	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Easement	0
Enhance	0
Total	0

**Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$718,800 0	\$663,200 0	\$0	\$1,382,000 0	\$2,764,000 0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$1,929,600 2,413,300	\$3,583,500 4,481,700	\$0	\$5,513,000 0	\$11,026,100 6,895,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$2,648,400 2,413,300	\$4,246,700 4,481,700	\$0	\$6,895,000 0	\$13,790,100 6,895,000

**Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section**

Type	Metro Urban	Forest Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	231 0	693 0	0	3,696 0	0	4,620 0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	231 217	693 651	0	3,696 3,471	0	4,620 4,339
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	462 217	1,386 651	0	7,392 3,471	0	9,240 4,339

**Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section**

Type	Metro Urban	Forest Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	\$69,100 0	\$207,400 0	\$0	\$1,105,500 0	\$0	\$1,382,000 0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$275,700 344,800	\$827,000 1,034,200	\$0	\$4,410,400 5,516,000	\$0	\$5,513,100 6,895,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$344,800	\$1,034,400 1,034,200	\$0	\$5,515,900 5,516,000	\$0	\$6,895,100 6,895,000

**Target Lake/Stream/River Miles**

0 miles

# Parcel List

*For restoration and enhancement programs ONLY: Managers may add, delete, and substitute projects on this parcel list based upon need, readiness, cost, opportunity, and/or urgency so long as the substitute parcel/project forwards the constitutional objectives of this program in the Project Scope table of this accomplishment plan. The final accomplishment plan report will include the final parcel list.*

## Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

## Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
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## Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

## Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

# Completed Parcel: test parcel

**# of Total Acres:** 0  
**County:**  
**Township:**  
**Range:**  
**Direction:** 2  
**Section:**  
**# of Acres: Wetlands/Upland:**  
**# of Acres: Forest:**  
**# of Acres: Prairie/Grassland:**  
**Amount of Shoreline:** (Linear Feet)  
**Name of Adjacent Body of Water (if applicable):**  
**Has there been signage erected at the site:**