

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

Date: 6/12/2014

Project or Program Title: Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership

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	Council Recommendation Funding	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
		FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Funds Recommended (\$000s)	FY 2011			
Outdoor Heritage Fund	1,000	0	0	0

Appropriation Language

ML 2010, Ch. 361, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Sub. 5g Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Acceleration

\$1,000,000 in fiscal year 2011 is to the commissioner of natural resources to accelerate agency programs and for cooperative agreements to acquire land in the Root River watershed. A list of proposed acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan. The commissioner of natural resources must agree to each proposed acquisition, restoration, and enhancement. All restorations must comply with subdivision 9, paragraph (b).

Abstract

The Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership is a long-term effort to 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 their floodplains, revitalizing backwaters and channels, and protecting and restoring floodplain forests, wetlands, and prairies that are essential to sustaining the incredible diversity of plants, animals, and human uses provided by this great river. Critical areas include the lower reaches of the Root, Zumbro, Cannon, and Vermillion Rivers, and the backwaters and channels of Mississippi River Pools 2 and 3 (St. Paul to Red Wing). FY2011 funding from the LSOHC will focus on acquisition and restoration of key parcels in the Lower Root River floodplain. Acquisitions will be completed by the MN Dept of Natural Resources or -party partners working under specific terms. Restoration will be accomplished through outside contracts funded by this appropriation and federal funding.

Narrative

Prompt action is needed to protect and restore habitat that has been degraded in critical areas along the Mississippi River for fish and wildlife, including 82 species listed as endangered, threatened, or special concern. Channel modifications and levees along the lower end of the Zumbro and Root Rivers continues to fragment the lower tributary floodplains at their connection to the Mississippi River, resulting in a loss of wetlands, floodplain forest, and prairie. Development along the Vermillion and Lower Cannon Rivers continues to fragment floodplain forests and impact bluff landscapes. Locks and dams combined with excessive sediment from the Minnesota River watershed continue to degrade the river above Lake Pepin, with high turbidity and lack of a low water cycle preventing the growth of aquatic vegetation which provides critical habitat for fish and wildlife. Acting now will protect these critical areas from further degradation and provide opportunities to improve habitat connectivity and restore wetlands, forests, and prairies for fish and wildlife that live and migrate along the Mississippi River corridor.

Outdoor Heritage funding for FY2011 will focus directly on protecting 86 acres of wetlands, 135 acres of prairie, and 98 acres of forest in the Lower Root River floodplain. Of those, 72 acres of prairie and 38 acres of forest will also be restored. Most parcels that are acquired and restored will connect to existing state or federal conservation lands and increase the amount and quality of habitat for fish and wildlife along the Mississippi River.

Over 20 agencies and organizations have joined together as partners in this effort, working cooperatively to meet common goals for the Mississippi River. These partners have successfully protected and restored forests, wetlands and prairies through their individual acquisition and private lands assistance programs, and have helped reduce turbidity and sediment in the Mississippi and its tributaries through TMDL and watershed conservation efforts. Partners have the knowledge and skills to accomplish this work. Outdoor Heritage funding will allow partners to accomplish additional protection and restoration work in critical areas within the Lower Root River floodplain. Partners will leverage this program by providing staff time for restoration planning, outreach and other activities.

There is general local support for these projects. Approval for some parcels was provided in a 2001 Houston County Board resolution. As landowners accept acquisition offers, parcels not previously approved will be presented to the county for approval. It is anticipated the county will continue to approve these acquisitions.

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

This project 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.

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. Outdoor Heritage funding for FY2011 will focus on floodplain restoration.

Project Design and Evaluation

Describe the scope of the project in appropriate measures (i.e. ,acreage numbers of lakes, miles of shoreline)

Acquisition and Tax Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability	86	135	98	*
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

* All acres listed for restoration and protection for wetlands, prairies, and forests will provide habitats for fish, game, and wildlife.

Relationship to Current Budget

Indicate the percentage of this project in relation to your organization/agency's total budget.

Demonstrate how this funding and activity will supplement your current budget.

If existing staff will be reassigned to this project, indicate what current projects or duties will be affected.

This project is 0.002% of the DNR budget. These acquisitions and restorations will be in addition to normal activities and will supplement existing budgets. DNR Area Wildlife Staff and partners (The Nature Conservancy) will complete many of the additional activities associated with these projects including landowner coordination, restoration planning, signing, outreach, etc.

Accomplishment Timeline

Milestones	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2015 FY 2016	Budgetary Expenditure
Initiate acquisition process	XX				
Develop site restoration plans	XX	XX			
Complete acquisitions		XX	XX		\$ <u>950,300</u>
Complete restorations		XX	XX	XX	\$ <u>49,700</u>

Maintenance and Sustainability

Please describe how lasting improvement will be maintained/ sustained. For easement acquisitions and fee acquisitions, explain how maintenance and sustaining costs will be paid.

Parcels acquired and restored will become part of the State Wildlife Management Area system and will be maintained by Area Field Managers and partners through normal operating budgets. Parcels will be maintained following standard management practices for prairie, wetland, and forest habitats. Parcels proposed for acquisition and subsequent restoration are listed below. Direct support services costs are not included in this table:

We request retroactive changes to the budget as shown in Budget Table 4. We request that retroactivity be to January 1, 2012. Current spending in the Professional Services budget item has exceeded original allocation by \$16,425 (36%). Another \$7,100 in professional services charges related to these projects has been covered by other DNR budgets. The over run in Professional Services spending is primarily the result of a particularly challenging acquisition that required a large staff time investment. This acquisition was completed, but at a higher cost than anticipated. Professional Services on acquisitions have proven very difficult to predict – this is true of other appropriations as well. In order to ensure that OHF funding fully covers the cost of these projects vs. shifting it to other state funding, we request retroactive amendment of the accomplishment plan. This will allow after-the-fact funding corrections to make budgets whole. Acquisition acre targets will not change.

We request an amendment to move funding from the Contract budget line to the Fee Acquisition w/PILT and Supplies/Materials lines. The original Budget Spreadsheet reflected funding to accomplish the restoration on land acquired in the Contract line item since this work is largely done under contract. We have been successful in acquiring two parcels and anticipate one more successful acquisition soon. However, the parcels we for which acquisition attempt were unsuccessful were the ones most needing restoration. Therefore the attached Budget Spreadsheet reflects a reduction in the contract budget line and commensurate increase in the Fee Acquisition and Supplies/Materials lines. Supplies/Materials will be used for restoration and initial development of the acquired lands.

Parcel	Wetland acres protected	Prairie acres protected	Forest acres protected	Acquisition cost	Restoration cost (includes initial site development)
B		15	3	\$46,100	\$10,400
C	20	50		\$209,700	\$13,500
D	20	30	15	\$195,200	\$8,000
A	100		258	\$1,241,000	

Table 4. Budget Spreadsheet

Name of Proposal:	Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership
Date:	6/12/2014
Legal Citation:	Laws of MN 2010, Chapter 361, Article 1, Section 2, Subd. 5(g)

Total Amount of Request \$ 1,000,000 *From page 1 on the funding form.*

Personnel

Position breakdown here	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Cash Leverage	Cash Leverage Source	Total
<i>Manager of Programs</i>					\$ -	-
<i>Admin Asst</i>					\$ -	-
<i>position 3</i>					\$ -	-
<i>position 4</i>					\$ -	-
<i>position 5</i>					\$ -	-
<i>position 6</i>					\$ -	-
<i>position 7</i>					\$ -	-
Total	0		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

Budget and Cash Leverage

Please describe how you spent the appropriated funds.

Budget Item	LSOHC Request	Cash Leverage	Cash Leverage Source	Total
Personnel - <i>auto entered from above</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Contracts	\$ 94,700 <u>34,700</u>	\$ 10,000	<i>Federal grant funding</i>	\$ 44,700
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT (<i>breakout in table 6 & 7</i>)	\$ 826,500 <u>871,500</u>			\$ 871,500
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT (<i>breakout in table 6 & 7</i>)				\$ -
Easement Acquisition				\$ -
Easement Stewardship				\$ -
Travel (in-state)				\$ -
Professional Services	78000			\$ 78,000
DNR Direct Support Services (<i>DNR programs only</i>)	\$ 800			\$ 800
DNR Land Acquisition Costs				\$ -
Other				\$ -
Capital Equipment (<i>auto entered from below</i>)	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -
Other Equipment/Tools				\$ -
Supplies/Materials	<u>15,000</u>			\$ 15,000
	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ 1,010,000

Capital Equipment (*single items over \$10,000 - auto entered into table above*)

Item Name	LSOHC Request	Leverage
<i>Item 1 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 2 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 3 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 4 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 5 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 6 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 7 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 8 enter here</i>		
Total	0	0

Attachment B. Outcome Tables

Name of Proposal:	Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership
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Table 1 and Table 3 column totals should be the same AND Table 2 and Table 4 column totals should be the same

If your project has lakes or shoreline miles instead of land acres, convert miles to acres for Tables 1 and 3 using the following conversion:

Lakeshore = 6 acres per lakeshore mile / Stream & River Shore = 12 acres per linear mile, if both sides

Table 1. Acres by Resource Type

Describe the scope of the project in acres (use conversion above if needed)

	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore					0
Protect	86	135	98		319
Enhance					0
Total	86	135	98	0	

Total Acres (sum of Total column)

319

These two cells should be the same figure.

Total Acres (sum of Total row)

319

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore					\$ -
Protect	\$ 253,500	\$ 430,500	\$ 316,000		\$ 1,000,000
Enhance					\$ -
Total	\$ 253,500	\$ 430,500	\$ 316,000	\$ -	

Total Dollars (sum of Total column)

\$ 1,000,000

These two cells should be the same figure.

Total Dollars (sum of Total row)

\$ 1,000,000

Check to make sure this amount is the same

as the Funding Request Amount on page 1 of Main Funding Form.

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore						0
Protect				319		319
Enhance						0
Total	0	0	319	0	0	

Total Acres (sum of Total column)

319

These three cells should be the same figure.

Total Acres (sum of Total row)

319

Total Acres from Table 1.

319

Attachment C. Parcel List

Name of Proposal:	Lower Mississippi River Habitat Restoration Partnership
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	County	Township	Range	Direction	Section	TRDS	# of acres	Budgetary Estimate (includes administrative, restoration or other related costs and do not include matching money contributed or earned by the transaction)	Description	Activity R=Restore P=Protect E=Enhance	Any existing protection? (yes/no)	Open to hunting and fishing? (yes/no)
Parcel Name												
Parcel B	Houston	104	4	W	32	1044W32	18	\$56,500		P	N	Y
Parcel C	Houston	104	4	W	29	1044W29	70	\$223,200		P	N	Y
Parcel D	Houston	104	5	W	28	1045W28	65	\$203,200		P	N	Y
Parcel A	Houston	104	5	W	35	1045W35	358	1,241,237		P	N	Y