

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Laws of Minnesota 2010 Accomplishment Plan



Date: April 14, 2015

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

Funds Recommended: \$ 1,033,000

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Legislative Citation: ML 2010, Ch. 361, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5(h)

Appropriation Language: \$1,033,000 in fiscal year 2011 is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Washington County to acquire permanent easements to protect habitat associated with the St. Croix River Valley. A list of proposed acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan. The accomplishment plan must include an easement stewardship plan. M.L 2013, Chapter 137, Article 1, Section 2, Subd. 10. Appropriations Carryforward; Fee Title Acquisition The availability of the appropriation for the following project is extended to July 1, 2015: Laws 2010, chapter 361, article 1, section 2, subdivision 5, paragraph (h), Washington County St. Croix River Land Protection, and the appropriation may be spent on acquisition of land in fee title to protect habitat associated with the St. Croix River Valley. A list of proposed acquisitions must be provided as part of the accomplishment plan.

County Locations: Washington

Regions in which work will take place:

- Metro / Urban

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement
- Restore

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Forest
- Habitat
- Prairie
- Wetlands

Abstract:

Washington County seeks to preserve the ecological integrity of the St. Croix River by completing a 85-acre permanent conservation easement to protect critical riparian habitat and over one mile of shoreland. The property is located in Denmark Township within the state-managed portion of the St. Croix Scenic Riverway and is one of the remaining large lots along the lower St. Croix River. It provides a critical connection needed to create a continuous corridor of forested bluff lands and ravines. This funding will address three of the Outdoor Heritage Council's priority actions for the Metropolitan Urbanizing Section: to protect a prairie and habitat corridor along the St. Croix River and to protect, enhance and restore big woods forests and oak savanna with an emphasis on areas with high biological diversity.

Design and scope of work:

This project works with the Thomas E. and Edna D. Carpenter Foundation to fund a 85-acre conservation easement in southern Washington County. The Carpenter Foundation will remain owner and manage the property. Funding partners include Washington County through its Land and Water Legacy Program that ranks land along the St. Croix River as high priority for its funding because these parcels help preserve critical habitat, protect water resources, create networks of protected habitat and protect lands that are accessible or highly visible to the public. Carpenter Foundation is also making a donation to the project.

The St. Croix River and its watershed is a national treasure whose habitat and water quality is threatened. The St. Croix River watershed is considered to be one of the most biologically diverse rivers in the Upper Mississippi River basin. Its waters support 95 fish and approximately 38 mussel species, many of which are on the state and federal endangered species lists. Its forested lands provide nesting habitat for Bald Eagles and are home to several threatened and endangered species. Although the waters of the St. Croix River are very pristine, they are impacted by nutrient and sediment pollution. 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 designation mandates that the federal, state and local governments take actions to ensure the lake's recovery. With increasing urbanization in the watershed it will be difficult to do. By limiting development and maintaining mature forests along the river, the proposed acquisition will help defray pollution impacts and will aid in arresting the decline in water quality in the lower stretch of the river. The proposed acquisition will maintain essential habitat for resident and migratory wildlife, both game and non-game species. This acquisition helps maintain a high quality river fishery that is dependent on clean water.

Crops:

Will there be planting of corn or any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program - **No**

Which sections of the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan are applicable to this project:

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes
- H7 Keep water on the landscape
- LU6 Reduce Upland and gully erosion through soil conservation practices

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework
- St. Croix Corridor of the Metro Conservation Corridors Plan, St. Croix National Scenic Riverway District Management Plan

Which LSOHC state-wide priorities are addressed in this proposal:

- Allow public access. This comes into play when all other things about the request are approximately equal
- 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
- Produce multiple enduring conservation benefits
- Provide Minnesotans with greater public access to outdoor environments with hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation opportunities

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Metro / Urban:

- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna with an emphasis on areas with high biological diversity
- Protect habitat corridors, with emphasis on the Minnesota, Mississippi, and St. Croix rivers (bluff to floodplain)

Relationship to other funds:

- Donation by Carpenter Nature Center and Washington County Land and Water Legacy Program funds

How does this proposal accelerate or supplement your current efforts in this area:

This proposal helps the County meet its Land and Water Legacy program goals to improve water quality, protect drinking water sources,

preserve wetlands and woodlands, protect land along bodies of water from development.

How will you sustain and/or maintain this work after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended:

The Carpenter Foundation continues to own and manage the property and development of a management plan by Carpenter is part of the project requirements.

The long-term protection will be assured through a perpetual conservation easement that confines development, management and use of the property to activities that are consistent with preservation of the public values. 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 acquisitions annually. The county attorney enforces the terms of the conservation easement. The easement requires preparation of a management plan that recommends activities to improve and restore the ecological functions of the property. Washington County works often works with its easements land owners to secure funds and technical assistance to implement the management recommendations. The cost of these activities is funded through county property tax dollars.

Activity Details:

Will the eased land be open for public use - **Yes**

The property will be open for public use seven days a week during Carpenter Nature Center's business hours.

Additionally, regional and connector trails scheduled to be built around the property will be open between 7 am until 1/2 after sunset per Washington County Ordinance #174.

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

Is the activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, subd 13(f) and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15 - **Yes**

Accomplishment Timeline:

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Purchase of a conservation easement	June 30, 2015

Federal Funding:

Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program - **No**

Outcomes:

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- A network of natural land and riparian habitats will connect corridors for wildlife and species in greatest conservation need
- Core areas protected with highly biologically diverse wetlands and plant communities, including native prairie, Big Woods, and oak savanna

Budget Spreadsheet

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

How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount

Not Listed

Total Amount of Request: \$ 1033000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$0	\$0		\$0
Contracts	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0	none	\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$1,028,000	\$2,784,000	County Levy/Landowner Donation	\$3,812,000
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0		\$0
Professional Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$5,000	\$0	DNR Appraisal Review	\$5,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$1,033,000	\$2,784,000		\$3,817,000

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	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	0	8	67	10	85
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	8	67	10	85

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	85
Enhance	0
Total	85

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$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	\$0	\$97,000	\$814,000	\$122,000	\$1,033,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$97,000	\$814,000	\$122,000	\$1,033,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	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	85	0	0	0	0	85
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	85	0	0	0	0	85

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$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	\$1,033,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,033,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,033,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,033,000

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Property is approximately 1 1/2 miles in length along the St. Croix River

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

Washington

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Carpenter Conservation Easement	026202404	0	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Carpenter Conservation Easement	026203109	0	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Carpenter Conservation Easement	026203109	0	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Carpenter Conservation Easement	026203109	0	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Carpenter Conservation Easement	026203109	0	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Carpenter Conservation Easement	026203109	0	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
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Carpenter Conservation Easement	026203109	0	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Carpenter Conservation Easement	026203109	0	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Carpenter Conservation Easement	026203109	0	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Carpenter Conservation Easement	026203109	0	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Carpenter Conservation Easement	026203109	0	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

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: Carpenter Conservation Easement

# of Total Acres:	0
County:	Washington
Township:	026
Range:	20
Direction:	31
Section:	09
# 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:	

Completed Parcel: Carpenter Conservation Easement

# of Total Acres:	0
County:	Washington
Township:	026
Range:	20
Direction:	31
Section:	09
# 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:	

Completed Parcel: Carpenter Conservation Easement

# of Total Acres:	0
County:	Washington
Township:	026
Range:	20
Direction:	24
Section:	04
# 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:	

Completed Parcel: Carpenter Conservation Easement

# of Total Acres:	0
County:	Washington
Township:	026
Range:	20
Direction:	31
Section:	09
# 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:	

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# 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:	

Parcel Map

Washington County St. Croix River Land Protection

