

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

Date: December 21, 2009

Project or Program Title: Restoration/Enhancement in the Anoka Sand Plain

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| Funds Recommended (\$000s) | Council Recommendation Funding | Out-Year Projections of Needs | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------|---------|
| | FY 2011 | FY 2012 | FY 2013 | FY 2014 |
| Outdoor Heritage Fund | 747,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Appropriation Language

Abstract

The Anoka Sand Plain is home to the best examples of some of the rarest

The Anoka Sand Plain Habitat Partnership will harness the expertise, resources, and connections of a broad community of committed conservation stakeholders to significantly elevate restoration and enhancement of oak savannas (Minnesota's most critically imperiled habitat), woodlands and forests on public lands across the region. Through funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, National Wild Turkey Federation and an array of other sources (real and in-kind) we will restore and enhance over 1700 acres of oak savanna, prairie, and oak woodland habitat across 11 priority sites, including:

- State WMAs (5 sites; 485 acres): Carlos Avery, Lamprey Pass, Rice Area Sportsman Club, Sand Prairie, and Becklin Homestead WMA
- State SNAs (3 sites; 135 acres): Clear Lake, Uncas Dunes, and Harry W. Cater
- Cedar Creek Ecological Science Reserve, University of Minnesota (600 acres)
- Sherburne NWR (500 acres)
- Isanti County Parks (1 site; 20 acres): Springvale County Park

Narrative

What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

The Anoka Sand Plain (ASP) has been home to an array of storied conservation successes over the past century; however, the future of wildlife in the region is far from assured. Major challenges to long-term conservation success exist and there is a pronounced urgency to act now: While there has been a tremendous loss of native habitat in the ASP, there are also major opportunities to benefit wildlife through expedited restoration and enhancement of existing public lands. Public land managers over the past decades have made good investments of time and resources, but all are facing serious funding shortages. None of our partners have reached their restoration and enhancement goals despite the range of efforts over many years. As the Anoka Sand Plain Habitat Partnership (ASP Habitat Partnership or Partnership), we acknowledge this habitat work has to be an ongoing effort, one that is far more integrated and collaborative than what has been done in the past.

Principle problems being addressed through this proposal are:

Critical Imperilment of Habitat and Associated Species - Wildlife habitats of the Anoka Sand Plain (ASP) are critically imperiled, with oak savanna being the single most imperiled ecological system in Minnesota. These habitats are identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan (CWCP) and Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan as conservation priorities. Habitat loss and degradation has had profound impacts on the wildlife of the ASP; some 97 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) in the state are known or predicted to occur within the ASP. This decline in habitat has had major impacts on game species.

Major Threats & Pressures Requiring Urgent Action - Invasive species, coupled with lack of prescribed fire and other basic management/restoration practices have resulted in declines in value of public lands as wildlife habitat over time. Minnesota's CWCP identifies maintenance, enhancement and protection of oak savannas as its first priority for this ecological subsection.

The ASP is among the fastest growing areas in the state. Urban sprawl is placing immense pressure on remaining natural resources and threatening existing protected areas. As the Metro grows, wildlife habitat in the ASP will face elevated pressures, accentuating the importance of enhanced habitat management on existing public lands.

Increased Cost of Management Actions as Habitats Decline - Inadequate funding for restoration/management activities on public lands has resulted in general declines in the condition of Minnesota's most imperiled habitats, and their value as wildlife habitat. Costs to restore these habitats rise every year that management is delayed.

How will this directly relate to restoring, protecting, or enhancing habitat?

Beginning in FY2011 and over 3-year duration, the Anoka Sand Plain Habitat Partnership will restore and enhance over 1700 acres of oak savanna, oak woodland and prairie habitat occurring on public lands in the project area. Activities will take place principally on State WMAs and SNAs, but also on other public lands as detailed below.

Our actions will result in:

- elimination of invasive plants (trees, shrubs and forbs) over 549 acres of oak savanna and oak woodland habitats;
- seeding/planting of 635 acres of oak savanna habitat;
- seeding of 16 acres of oak woodland habitat; and
- prescribed fire over 1,135 acres of oak savanna habitat.

These actions will benefit a broad suite of native species that require high-quality oak savanna, prairie, and oak woodland habitats:

- SGCN (direct impact on 35 species): bobolink, gopher snake, American badger, etc.
- Native song birds, mammals, herps and others
- Game species: white-tailed deer, pheasant, turkey, ruffed grouse, and small-game animals (squirrel, rabbits, fur-bearers, etc.) and waterfowl (upland nesting habitat).

Due to funding limitations, several sites initially proposed for funding were dropped from consideration. Decisions as to which proposed sites would be funded were based on the following criteria:

1. Land Ownership – We gave high preference to state-owned lands over federal and county lands in the following order:
 - State (highest)
 - University or Other Semi-State
 - County
 - Federal (lowest)
2. Other Mitigating Factors – Several additional important factors were considered when refining the action list, including:
 - Presence of MCBS quality ecological system(s); SGCN/T&E species
 - Size of habitat block/managed area
 - Presence within habitat corridors
 - Adjacency (i.e., location relative to other public lands or large habitat blocks)
 - Immediacy of need/action as determined by MCBS. Weight = High;

These mitigating factors had the result of elevating a site like Sherburne NWR (although federal) above state-owned, isolated and lower quality sites. The impact of this large federal land-holding on maintaining large, viable populations of wildlife on adjacent state-owned lands like Uncas Dunes SNA, Rice Lake SNA and Sand Dunes State Forest strongly influenced our decision to retain funding for this project.

3. Funding the Whole Package of Proposed Activities at a Site – The final list of sites reflects our keen desire to fully complete all proposed activities at a given site rather than working at a broader suite of sites but completing partial restorations or enhancements. Biologically this made most sense. In addition, we felt this would be far less confusing to the LSOHC when we return for a subsequent proposal. Because of this, several high-quality sites that otherwise ranked highly in factors 1 and 2 above were moved off of the active project list.

Tier 1 Action Sites

Listed below are each of the sites proposed for action in this accomplishment plan, along with a short summary of their ecological importance, proposed activities, and timeline. We also include a list of Tier 2 sites (those initially proposed for action but pulled due to insufficient funding). As additional funds become available, we propose to expand the list of Tier 1 sites through the inclusion of current Tier 2 sites along with a reallocation of LSOHC funds as appropriate.

Uncas Dunes SNA (Sherburne County) – Uncas Dunes SNA contains a relict dunefield and includes oak savanna, oak forest, and wetland habitats. The rare Uncas skipper gives this site its name; this is one of only two sites in the state where this species has been found. *Actions:* Restoration of 70 acres of oak savanna habitat through removal of invasive trees/shrubs and regenerating pine, planting of old fields and disturbed areas with native seed collected onsite (followed by post-seeding management over two years), and prescribed fire. The restoration project will be led by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR SNA Program and DNR Forestry. Portions of the work (harvesting of pine plantation, etc.) will be

subcontracted to a private consultant specializing in that area of work. Portions of the project will be performed by volunteers as a way to connect the local community to this important land. Restoration will begin in FY 2011 and continue through 2013.

Clear Lake SNA (Sherburne County) – Clear Lake SNA has the distinction of being the first land parcel acquired under the State Wild and Scenic Rivers Program. It contains a mosaic of oak forest, floodplain forest, and old field sumac thicket, along with a small population of the very rare Hill's thistle. Actions: A first phase of oak savanna restoration on 50 acres through woody invasive species control and prescribed fire (to be followed upon by seeding and restoration management in a future proposal). The restoration project will be led by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR SNA Program. Portions of the work may be subcontracted to MCC or a private contractor. Portions of the project will be performed by volunteers as a way to connect the local community to this important land. Restoration will begin in FY2011 and continue through FY2013.

Harry W. Cater Homestead SNA (Sherburne County) – Located on a sandy terrace of the Elk River, this SNA is dominated by dry, upland oak savanna, mesic and wet-mesic prairie openings in aspen groves, floodplain forest along the Elk River, wet meadow and marsh on peat. Actions: Restoration of 15 acres of oak savanna habitat through removal of invasive trees/shrubs and use of prescribed fire. The restoration project will be led by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR SNA Program. Portions of the work may be subcontracted to MCC or a private contractor. Portions of the project will be performed by volunteers as a way to connect the local community to this important land. Restoration will begin in 2010 and continue into 2013.

Lamprey Pass WMA (Anoka and Washington counties) – Lamprey Pass is the largest WMA outside of Carlos Avery in the North Metro area. Originally owned by Uri Lamprey, it was managed as a hunt club from 1881 until the 1970s. The acquisition of Lamprey pass marked the first time money was used from the Nongame Wildlife Tax Check-off revenue. The unit is identified as a DNR Regionally Significant Ecological Area. Actions: Restoration of 16 acres of old field to oak woodland through direct seeding and follow-up management. DNR Wildlife will lead and implement all phases of this enhancement project. The project will commence in FY2011 and continue into FY2012.

Carlos Avery WMA (Anoka and Chisago counties) – This 25,000-acre WMA is the largest in the Twin Cities Metro Area and is one of the iconic WMAs in the state of Minnesota. The site is composed principally of wetlands and oak woodland and savanna. Actions: Enhancement of 22 acres of native and semi-native grassland through removal of invasive trees and shrubs, followed by prescribed fire. The restoration project will be led by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR Wildlife. Great River Greening will oversee removal of red cedar and other woody invasive trees by a contractor; DNR Wildlife will follow with a prescribed burn. Enhancement will begin in FY2011 and continue through FY2013.

Sand Prairie WMA (Sherburne County) – This 700-acre WMA is situated in the glacial flood plain of the Mississippi River, with mesic to wet remnant prairie, dry prairie, and aspen occurring at the site. In addition to its status as a WMA, Sand Prairie is the first WMA also designated as an Environmental Education Area, providing a strong connection to local school and college students. Actions: Restoration of 159 acres of partially restored oak savanna through the planting of oak trees. The site has one of the most diverse prairie species assemblages in a Minnesota restored prairie. This restoration project will be led by DNR Wildlife in collaboration with Great River Greening. Volunteers will be used in the planting of trees as a way to connect the local community to this important site. The project will begin in FY2011 and conclude in FY2012.

Becklin Homestead WMA & County Park (Isanti County) – This WMA is located along the Rum River and consists of partially restored oak savanna and other habitats. The WMA is also jointly managed as an Isanti County Park and is dedicated to hunting use by Physically Challenged hunters only. Actions: Restoration of 25 acres of oak savanna through direct seeding and planting of trees. Isanti County Parks and DNR Wildlife will collaborate on this restoration project. The project will begin in FY2012 and conclude in FY2013.

Rice Area Sportsman Club WMA (Morrison County) – This WMA (580 acres) consists of extensive oak savanna/woodland along its east border, merging with restored native grass fields and wetlands. Actions: Restoration of 163 acres of deciduous woodland, dry oak woodland and dry oak savanna; enhancement of 29 acres of grassland. Oversight of this project will be provided by Great River Greening in collaboration with the DNR Wildlife. Aside from project oversight, much of the proposed work will be subcontracted through MCC and/or private vendor. The project will begin in FY2011 and will conclude in FY2013.

Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge (Sherburne County) – This 30,700-acre refuge was in 1965 to protect and restore the habitats associated with the St. Francis River Valley for migratory birds and other wildlife, the focus of the Refuge is on the restoration of oak savanna, wetland and Big Woods habitat. Actions: Restoration of 350 acres through prescribed fire and oak seeding of prairie habitats. Great River Greening will hire a contract forester to complement existing USFWS staff engaged in the large-scale oak savanna restoration efforts underway at Sherburne NWR. The forester will flag trees for thinning in line with savanna restoration plans.

Springvale County Park (Isanti County) – This 211-acre park is situated on Johnny's Lake and lies on eskers and wetlands left by the last glaciers. The park includes rolling prairies, oak savanna, northern hardwood forest and wetlands. Actions: Restoration of 20 acres of oak savanna through direct seeding of acorns and planting of oak trees into restored ground layer of restored tallgrass prairie. Isanti County Parks will implement all phases of this restoration project with assistance from volunteers. Restoration will commence in FY2012 and continue into FY2013.

Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve (Anoka & Isanti counties) – Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve is a large ecological research site in central Minnesota with natural habitats that represent the entire state. The Minnesota County Biological Survey ranks Cedar Creek a site of Outstanding Biodiversity Significance, its highest rating, and the Nature Conservancy has named Cedar Creek an Ecologically Significant Area. Actions: Restoration of 1000 acres of oak savanna and 800 acres of oak woodland habitat through prescribed fire and invasive exotic species control. CCESR will hire temporary staff, managed by seasoned employees, to perform most activities related to this restoration. Components (prescribed fire, invasive species control, etc.) may include staff from Great River Greening, MCC and/or the DNR. Restoration will commence in FY2011 and continue through FY2013.

Tier 2 Projects: These projects (which were part of the initial proposal) may be pursued if additional funds are procured through other sources to expand the amount available for restoration and enhancement. At present, these projects, despite their merits are not included in the project action plan.

Rice Lake SNA (Sherburne County) – Glacial meltwaters deposited their outwash sands across this large plain, providing the basis for an open, grassy landscape dotted with bur and pin oak--a classic savanna. Rice Lake Savanna SNA contains examples of oak savanna and oak woodland communities. Actions: Restoration of 80 acres of oak savanna habitat through removal of invasive trees/shrubs, planting of old fields and disturbed areas with native seed collected onsite, and prescribed fire.

Mississippi River Islands SNA (Sherburne County) – This SNA includes five islands formed of outwash and alluvium deposited by the Mississippi River, rising as high as 30 feet above river level. Flooding, erosion, and sedimentation have resulted in various stages of succession, creating a mosaic of wet floodplain forest, drier floodplain forest, and sandbar plant communities. Actions: Restoration of 5 acres of hardwood forest through invasive species removal.

Sartell WMA (Benton County) – This 368-acre WMA is featured by Little Rock Creek (which flows through the site), along with significant oak savanna, oak woodland and prairie in various stages of restoration.

Actions: Restoration of 91 acres of oak savanna/woodland habitat, and enhancement of 21 acres of grassland and woodland through exotic and native woody species control.

Michaelson Farm WMA (Benton County) – This 276-acre WMA occurs on the Mississippi River floodplain forest, lowland grass and brush, and oak woodland on higher grounds. Management of the unit focuses on maintaining and improving habitat for a diversity of native plants and wildlife. Actions: Enhancement of 120 acres of oak woodland, woodland and grassland through control of exotic and native woody invasive plants.

McDougall WMA (Morrison County) – This 228-acre WMA occurs along the Mississippi River and is characterized by floodplain forest, oak woodland and deciduous woodland, with some crop field. The WMA borders a preserve of The Nature Conservancy along its south edge. Actions: Enhancement of 54 acres of oak woodland, deciduous woodland and grassland through control of exotic and native woody invasive species.

Anderson County Park (Isanti County) – The 174-acre park lies within the Typo Chain of Lakes watershed, and consists of open fields (in the process of prairie and oak savanna restoration), woods, and wetlands adjacent to both Horseshoe and Horse Leg Lakes. Actions: Restoration of 20 acres of oak savanna through direct seeding of acorns and planting of oak trees into restored understory of tallgrass prairie.

Why will this strategy work?

The strength of the proposal lies with the ASP Habitat Partnership and the diverse skill sets, expertise and resources of its committed partners. Each partner has a long-term demonstrable track record of achievement in conserving the natural resources of the ASP. Collectively, this expertise is deep, and the resources and skill sets each brings to the table can be used more efficiently, effectively, and with greater impact than each acting alone.

Across the Partnership there exists a broad cross-section of expertise, skill sets, and missions that reach to all corners of the conservation arena:

- Deep expertise in areas of protection, restoration and enhancement
- Strong science – both pure and applied
- Public and private partners
- Outreach to private landowners
- Sophisticated educational programs woven throughout partner curricula
- Strong volunteer programs
- Solid grant-writing and fundraising capabilities

As a Partnership, we acknowledge this habitat work has to be an ongoing effort, one that is far more integrated and collaborative than what has been done in the past. We will collaborate on projects, share resources and expertise, broaden the existing funding base for this work, and outreach to public/private partners and the local community in efficient and effective ways – all supported foundationally by a world class ecological research center. The ASP Habitat Partnership has already produced over 2000 hours of in-kind time to form as a coalition and develop these projects. This same kind of energy will be the foundation to our new broad collaborative approach to managing public sites throughout the ASP. By supporting this proposal, the LSOHC will gain far more than the basic investment of wildlife habitat improvements on public lands; it will produce major lasting commitments on the part of local conservation managers to ensure the on-going collaborative nature of this Partnership.

Funding through the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) will be used to leverage further funding and in-kind support on all sites where we work. The Partnership will increase involvement by the public through the combining and integrating of the volunteer programs led by Great River Greening, SWCDs, National Wild Turkey Federation, The Nature Conservancy, USFWS, MFRC, Isanti County Parks and others. These groups have wide recognition for volunteer development, yet to date there has not been a connecting and

sharing of these programs to the degree needed. This project will embark on that next generation of collaboration.

All restoration and enhancement actions will be rooted in sound science and adaptive management. Already a hallmark of its partners, the Partnership is committed to using the most effective practices and restoration/management techniques and monitoring/evaluate results for the benefit of the broader conservation community. In collaboration with the University of Minnesota's Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve, we can ensure that our proposed actions are rooted in the best science.

Finally, through the ASP Habitat Partnership, this funding will spearhead the future investment for wildlife habitat on private lands through a systematic and ongoing public awareness process created and implemented by the Partnership.

Describe the nature and extent of any partnerships in this project, stakeholder and public participation processes associated with the project and any anticipated support or opposition to the project.

The Anoka Sand Plain Habitat Partnership aims, through a coordinated approach, to: 1) elevate and capitalize on resources available for protection, restoration, and enhancement of natural resources in the ASP, 2) share and disseminate management and restoration expertise to public and private landowners, 3) tackle emerging research issues and use findings to guide management actions across public and private lands and waters, and 4) build strong connections to local communities through education, outreach and opportunities for volunteerism.

This Partnership, at present, includes the following stakeholders:

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Anoka County Parks | Morrison SWCD |
| Audubon Minnesota | Mid-Minnesota Mississippi River RC&D |
| Benton SWCD | National Wild Turkey Federation |
| BWSR | Onanegozie RC&D |
| Chisago SWCD | Stearns SWCD |
| Friends of the Rum River | The Nature Conservancy |
| Great River Greening | US Fish & Wildlife Service |
| Isanti County Parks | University of Minnesota |
| Minnesota DNR | Wright SWCD |
| Minnesota Forest Resources Council | |

The concept behind the ASP Habitat Partnership - integrated public and private land management – is a strategic direction of the Minnesota DNR (as stated in A Strategic Conservation Agenda 2009-2013). The ability of the DNR to administer state forests, parks, wildlife management areas, aquatic management areas, and scientific and natural areas is strongly influenced by the management of surrounding lands and waters. Through engagement in partnerships like the ASP Habitat Partnership, the DNR is pursuing integrated management for extensive interspersed public and private lands in order to build its capacity to work across ownership boundaries.

Backed by a slate of seasoned resource professionals (wildlife managers, ecologists, restoration experts, scientists) within an array of established conservation agencies and organizations, the Partnership is poised to begin making immediate impacts across 3904 acres of habitat.

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

The actions highlighted by this proposal are prominently featured in the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan and an array of other published resource management plan, as detailed below:

Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan

Oak savanna habitat is specifically detailed as a protection priority (as is prairie) in the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan (Habitat Recommendation 1). Habitat Recommendation 5 identifies restoration of land, water and wetland-associated watersheds as priorities for restoration. Since oak savanna was identified as a statewide protection priority, it naturally follows that it is a restoration priority as well, as is prairie. Habitat recommendation 9 identifies overall research on land and aquatic habitat as a priority need, emphasizing our relationship to Cedar Creek ESR as a critical element to that end.

Minnesota Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy

Oak savanna systems within the ASP were identified as a statewide conservation priority in *Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare: Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (An Action Plan for Minnesota Wildlife)*. Some 30 SGCN species are associated with oak savanna habitat in the ASP. The Action Plan identifies maintenance, enhancement and protection of oak savannas as the state's highest priority for the ASP ecological subsection.

Minnesota Forest Resources Council

The Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC), a state agency responsible for implementing the Minnesota Sustainable Forest Resources Act (SFRA) of 1995, serves as the chief advisors to the Governor and Legislature on sustainable forestry matters. In 2005, the MFRC approved the East Central Forest Resource Management Plan as developed by its East Central regional landscape committee. The plan envisions healthy and sustained forests across the region in an ecologically appropriate manner, and provides a framework of goal and strategies for four ECS subsections including the ASP. The Anoka Sand Plain Habitat Partnership project is supported by the East Central Committee as one of its pilot projects to promote sustainable forestry in the region.

Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda

Restoration and enhancement of imperiled resources through conservation partnerships is captured as explicit goals of the Minnesota DNR in its Strategic Conservation Agenda (2009-2013):

Goals:

- A. Minnesota's natural lands and habitats will be conserved and enhanced
 - a. *Remaining natural ecosystems are conserved* - Healthy habitats are connected by natural corridors. Native prairies are protected, and grasslands and riparian forest are restored. We are responsible stewards of DNR-administered lands and good neighbors to adjacent landowners. Uncommon and rare habitats are protected.
 - b. *Degraded habitats are restored* - Grasslands and forests have been restored.
 - c. *Natural resources thrive in the context of human influences. Urban and developing areas support a diversity of plant and animal communities and offer diverse recreational opportunities* - Local decisions are supported by public-private partnerships, with DNR providing technical assistance and coordination.
- B. Minnesota's fish and wildlife populations will be healthy and provide great recreation opportunities
 - a. *Fish and wildlife populations and the habitats that support them are healthy* - Habitat types in jeopardy, such as prairies, wetlands, and shallow lakes, are restored. Endangered and threatened species are protected.
 - b. *Conservation partnerships and stewardship ethics are strong* - Public- and private-sector partners work together to support Minnesota's resources and promote conservation.

LS-OHC Priorities

STATEWIDE PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Ongoing Programs. The ASP Habitat Partnership is a collaboration of 19 seasoned conservation organizations with the long-term goal of elevating and capitalizing on resources available for conservation of natural resources in the ASP.

Priority 2. Multiple Conservation Benefits. Restoration/enhancement actions will result in:
improved habitat for a broad suite of game/non-game species
improved recreational assets and richer experiences for hunters and others;
enhancement of an existing and irreplaceable investment in land/habitat protection;
opportunities to enhance public awareness, appreciation and a constituency for these important lands;
improvement of habitat within the State's premier ecosystem research facility whose science serves to both underpin oak savanna restoration efforts.
jobs, through work completed by local vendors, businesses and MCC crews.

Priority 3. Leverage. The ASP Habitat Partnership is leveraging at least \$310,000 of non-state funds to match the allocated \$747,000 OHF appropriation.

Priority 4. Public access. This proposal does not have an acquisition component; however, all targeted sites are publicly owned and open to the public for a variety of uses.

Priority 5. Immediacy/Urgency. See Page 2 above for an in-depth discussion of this priority.

Priority 6. WMAs, AMAs, SNAs. 73% of sites (8 of 11) are either WMAs (5) or SNAs (3).

Priority 7. Science-based Strategic Planning. We are well versed in and utilize science-based strategic planning, at the heart of which is scientific rigor and adaptive management.

Priority 8. Consider state T&E, SGCN species and habitats. Each of these is integral to our priority-setting process. Together, this information serves as one of the foundational building blocks for our identified conservation priorities.

Priority 9. Greater public access. All public lands included in this proposal are open to the public.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Metropolitan Urbanizing Area Section

Priority 1. Protect, enhance and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests and oak savanna with an emphasis on areas with high biological diversity.

Priority 2. Protect habitat corridors, with emphasis on the Minnesota, Mississippi and St. Croix rivers (bluff to floodplain).

Our priorities include oak savanna, prairie and other systems as mapped by Minnesota County Biological Survey, and habitat corridors that link these lands together (as mapped by the DNR). Actions proposed focus on restoration and enhancement of these habitats/corridors through prescribed fire, invasive species control, and seeding/planting of natural communities to the benefit of associated species.

Forest/Prairie Transition Section

Priority 2. Protect, enhance and restore rare native remnant prairie. Restoration actions (prescribed fire, seeding, invasive species control) focusing on oak savanna and prairie will increase the quality of habitat for a broad suite of species.

Project Design and Evaluation

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

| 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 | 0 | 1652 acres | 216 acres | 0 |
| Protect | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Enhance | 0 | 51 acres | 0 | 0 |

| 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 | None | Anoka, Isanti, Morrison, Sherburne, Chisago, Washington | Anoka, Chisago, Isanti, Washington, Morrison, Sherburne | None |
| Protect | None | None | None | None |
| Enhance | None | Morrison, Anoka, Chisago | None | None |

| Acres Within Each Ecological Section | Metropolitan-Urbanizing Area | Forest-Prairie Transition | Southeast Forest | Prairie Region | Northern Forest |
|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Restore | 1705 acres | 163 acres | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Protect | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Enhance | 22 acres | 29 acres | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Funding Per Ecological Section | Metropolitan-Urbanizing Area | Forest-Prairie Transition | Southeast Forest | Prairie Region | Northern Forest |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Restore | \$483,400 | \$201,200 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Protect | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Enhance | \$ 46,000 | \$ 16,400 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Indicate what is being funded

| Funding Resource Type | Wetlands | Prairies | Forests | Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---|
| Restore | 0 | \$675,500 | \$ 9,000 | 0 |
| Protect | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Enhance | 0 | \$ 62,500 | 0 | 0 |

| Acquisition and Tax Data | Wetlands | Prairies | Forests | Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---|
| Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Permanent Easement | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Budget

Please describe how you intend to spend the recommended funds

| Budget Item | Fiscal Year 11 | Fiscal Year 12 | Fiscal Year 13 |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Personnel | \$ 65,000 | \$ 65,000 | \$ 55,470 |
| Contracts | \$170,000 | \$170,000 | \$132,300 |
| Equipment/Tools | \$ 11,000 | \$ 11,000 | \$ 11,875 |
| Materials/Supplies | \$ 10,000 | \$ 10,000 | \$ 10,000 |
| Fee Acquisition | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Easement Acquisition | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Easement Stewardship | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Travel | \$ 2,500 | \$ 2,500 | \$ 2,157 |
| Project Administration/Reporting | \$ 6,066 | \$ 6,066 | \$ 6,066 |
| | | | |
| TOTAL | \$264,566 | \$264,566 | \$217,868 |

Relationship to Current Budget

Great River Greening has an annual operating budget of \$195,000 for general, administration, office, fees, and an annual program budget of approximately \$785,000. The total current annual budget is just shy of \$1,000,000.

The allotted funding of \$747,000 (adjusted over the 3 year project duration) accounts for approximately 25% of Great River Greening's annual budget. Of the allotment, approximately \$105,000 is scheduled to salaries of Great River Greening staff as detailed under *Personnel* below. When adjusted over 3 years, this amounts to 3.5% of the organization's current annual budget.

The great majority of project funding will be disbursed to partners and to vendors and/or MCC crews via contracts for project-related work as detailed in this accomplishment plan.

The body of work detailed in this proposal is additive to our standard annual work load and will simply enable Great River Greening and its partners to achieve more. This body of work will be integrated into the standard work load for staff, and if necessary, additional hires above current capacity (most probably for crew technicians) will be made. However, that decision will be determined by the full magnitude of project work across the organization. Staff reassignments will not be necessary.

Budget Breakdowns by Partner Relative to Funding Received:

Isanti County Parks - \$15,000 (Sum Proposed for Allocation)

Total Annual Budget: \$207,000
 Operating Budget = \$95,000
 Program Budget = \$112,000

University of Minnesota, Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve - \$120,000

Total Annual Budget: \$1,000,000
 Operations Budget = \$400,000
 Research/Education Budget = \$600,000

Personnel (including Project Admin/Reporting)

List the positions, name (if known) and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation

| Position | Name | Amount |
|---|---------------------|----------|
| Great River Greening | | |
| Project Manager | Ecologist (Various) | \$36,000 |
| Crew Manager | Michael Varian | \$23,000 |
| Crew Technician (2 positions) | Various | \$31,000 |
| Dir. Conservation Programs | Wayne Ostlie | \$10,000 |
| Volunteer Coordinator | Mark Turbak | \$ 3,168 |
| Director of Finance | Greg Wenz | \$ 7,500 |
| Budget Management | Deborah Gagner | \$ 3,000 |
| Cedar Creek ESR | | |
| Technicians (16 positions) | Various | \$60,000 |
| Field Restoration Specialist (0.25 FTE) | TBD | \$30,000 |

Leverage

Total leverage for the project is anticipated at \$344,000. This includes \$32,000 of other state match.

| SOURCE | FY 11 | | FY 12 | | FY 13 | |
|-------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| | In hand | Anticipated | In hand | Anticipated | In hand | Anticipated |
| State | | | | | | |
| Cedar Creek ESR | \$ 3,000 | | \$ 3,000 | | \$ 3,000 | |
| MN DNR (SNA) | \$ 10,000 | | \$ 10,000 | | \$ 10,000 | |
| MN DNR (Wildlife) | \$ 2,000 | | \$ 2,000 | | \$ 2,000 | |
| MN DNR (Central Region) | \$ 2,000 | | \$ 3,000 | | \$ 3,000 | |
| Non state | | | | | | |
| NFWF (via Greening) | \$ 20,000 | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| National Wild Turkey Federation | \$ 10,000 | | \$ 5,000 | | \$ 5,000 | |
| USFWS | \$ 42,000 | | \$ 42,000 | | \$ 41,000 | |
| NSF (via Cedar Creek ESR) | \$ 10,000 | | \$ 10,000 | | \$ 10,000 | |
| Great River Greening | | \$ 30,000 | | \$ 30,000 | | \$ 30,000 |
| In-kind/Volunteer | | | | | | |
| Volunteers (Greening) | | \$ 5,000 | | \$ 5,000 | | \$ 5,000 |
| Volunteers (Isanti County Parks) | | \$ 4,000 | | \$ 4,000 | | \$ 4,000 |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | \$ 99,000 | \$ 39,000 | \$ 74,000 | \$ 39,000 | \$ 73,000 | \$ 39,000 |

The vast majority of leverage (both state and non-state) will go towards restoration of prairies and prairie systems, principally oak savanna. Smaller amounts will go toward associated oak woodland systems, which have been lumped into forests in the table below.

| 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 | 0 | \$ 23,500 | \$ 2,500 | 0 | 0 | \$291,500 | \$ 8,000 | 0 |
| Protect | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Enhance | 0 | \$ 2,500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | \$ 8,500 | 0 | 0 |

Accomplishment Timeline

| Milestones | FY 2011 | FY 2012 | FY 2013 | Budgetary Expenditure |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------------------------|
| | | | | |
| Restoration & enhancement actions initiated | 8 sites | 3 sites | | |
| Restoration & enhancement actions fully completed | | 3 sites | 8 sites | \$747,000 (LSOHC Portion) |

Maintenance and Sustainability

All land managers participating in this proposal have committed to the long-term maintenance of these habitat improvements once they are made as part of their standard operating costs. Often, the expense of restoration/enhancement on the front end is a major hurdle that first must be overcome. The cost of ongoing management to maintain these improvements is relatively low and can be accommodated in the existing program funds of participating agencies/organizations.

Also, a principle goal of the ASP Habitat Partnership is to elevate and broaden the resource base for use in protecting, restoring and enhancing wildlife habitat throughout the program area. We are committed to raising

funds/resources through an array of channels that will ensure any deficits in funding for the long-term maintenance of these improvements are covered.



Accomplishment Plan
LSOHC

