

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

Date: Dec. 22, 2009

Project or Program Title: Accelerated Forest Wildlife Habitat Program

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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	1,791,000	0	0	0

The Mission of the Outdoor Heritage Fund

The mission of the OHF, as specified in the state Constitution, is to: “protect, restore, and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife.” In pursuit of that mission, the L-SOHC will use the following definitions in the call for requests for the recommendations to the 2010 Legislature.

Restore: action to bring a habitat back to a former state of sustaining fish, game or wildlife, with an ultimate goal of restoring habitat to a desired conservation condition.

Protect: action to maintain the ability of habitat and related natural systems to sustain fish, game or wildlife through acquisition of fee title or conservation easements.

Enhance: action to increase the ability of habitat and related natural systems to sustain and improve fish, game or wildlife in an ecologically sound manner.

Abstract

Our program will increase populations of a variety of game and non-game wildlife species by protecting and enhancing forest habitats on which wildlife depends. This program of on-the-ground forest conservation projects will amplify the wildlife value of forest communities on DNR administered forestlands.

Our forest enhancement will treat 4,012 ac. These activities are not conducted as part of the DNR’s commercial timber operations. Additionally, our program will acquire 404 ac of forestland that contributes to habitat complexes and other high priorities. Acquisitions focus on forestland for public hunting, and compatible outdoor uses.

At a reduced level of funding, we are focusing on management activities that will maximize wildlife habitat outcomes, especially prescribed burning, hand release, and shearing/mowing. Our program will enhance oak and create a mix of young hardwood forest with more open meadow/brush lands to benefit grouse, elk, and deer. Forest opening creation/enhancement will increase nut and berry production, provide roosting/display areas, and create feeding areas for moose, deer, ruffed grouse, woodcock, and bear. Shearing of trees and brush in large open landscape priority areas will benefit sharp-tailed grouse. Shearing and mowing of hardwoods and brush in smaller patches will benefit woodcock and deer.

Our program will benefit a number of nongame species, including yellow rails, sandhill cranes, northern harriers, bobolinks, and upland sandpipers. Activities that create/enhance forest openings will provide habitat for nongame species, including least chipmunks, northern flickers, cooper's hawks, and song sparrows. The less intensive timber management in our program will help protect rare native plant communities and a number of nongame species through retention and enhancement of plant species diversity and structure.

Narrative

Forests face a formidable array of challenges: fragmentation, invasive species, climate change, disease, and changes in forest-based economics and recreation. While Minnesota's 16.2 million ac of forest are diverse, the acreage and composition of forests have changed significantly. The forest acreage is about half of what it was (31.5 million ac) in the mid 1800s.

Just over half of the forestland in Minnesota is publicly owned; the State of Minnesota administers about 24%. Minnesota's forests help maintain the state's environmental and economic health. They are habitat for fish and wildlife, and a source of biodiversity, clean water, watershed protection, carbon sequestration, recreational opportunities, and many other benefits.

Habitat loss and degradation are identified as the primary challenge facing wildlife. Almost one-third of the state's 292 Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) inhabit forests. The management objectives in this program parallel the forest management options outlined in *Minnesota's State Wildlife Action Plan, Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare (Tomorrow's Habitat Plan)*. Implementation of these objectives in key habitats identified in the *Plan* will maintain and enhance native forest communities supporting game and non-game wildlife populations. *Tomorrow's Habitat Plan* also calls for the purchase and protection of key habitats as another tool to address the conservation needs of these species.

Protecting forests threatened by fragmentation or development provide important opportunities for collaborative conservation of larger scale areas of habitat. Restoration of newly acquired state forestlands is essential to assure that sites in state ownership are improved to increase or retain their value as wildlife habitat.

The availability of public hunting lands does not meet the expectations of a growing Minnesota population. Due to the current recession, land prices have stabilized or declined and a short-term opportunity exists to purchase more value for our expenditures.

Broad goals for this program are provided through the Subsection Forest Resources Management Planning process which does include a public participation process. No opposition is anticipated. County board approval is required for all acquisitions.

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

The *Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan* identifies habitat loss and degradation as the number one driver of change for wildlife in Minnesota. The *Plan* addresses key issues of land and habitat fragmentation, degradation, loss and conversion, and land use practices. Recommended key strategies to positively impact habitat include: integrated planning, land and water restoration and protection, and sustainable practices. Our program addresses these key issues and incorporates many of the key strategies.

The *State Wildlife Actions Plan, Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild & Rare*, calls for focused efforts to address the conservation needs of rare game and nongame wildlife species. Habitat loss and degradation are identified as the primary challenge facing wildlife. Almost one-third of the state's 292 Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) inhabit

forests. The management objectives in our program parallel the forest management options outlined in *Tomorrow's Habitat Plan*. Implementation of these objective in key habitats identified in the *Plan* will maintain and enhance native forest communities supporting game and non-game wildlife populations. *Tomorrow's Habitat Plan* also calls for the purchase and protection of key habitats as another tool to address the conservation needs of these species.

Citizens report Minnesota's *Wildlife Management Area Acquisition – The Next 50 Years* recommends acquisition goals of an additional 702,200 ac of WMAs s over the next 50 years. Our program helps meet these goals.

Our program helps meet the *DNR Scientific and Natural Area Long Range Plan*.

Our program makes significant progress towards accomplishing goals of the multiple DNR landscape level forest management plans (*Subsection Forest Resources Management Plans*)
 (://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/subsection/index.)

Our program directly achieves the DNR's *Strategic Conservation Agenda 2009-2013* indicators and targets under Integrated Public & Private Land Management.

Appendix J (Sensitive Native Plant Communities) of The *MN Forest Resources Council's Voluntary Site-Level Forest Management Guidelines for Landowners, Loggers, and Resource Managers* lists Sensitive Native Plant Communities. Our program works in at least 12 of the 40 listed communities.

Our program implements the goals of the *DNR A Vision for Wildlife and Its Use - Goals and Outcomes, 2006-2012* (FAW core functions, MN Statute 84.941): wildlife resource goals, population and habitat strategies, brushlands and prescribed burning, Ecological Subsection regional challenges.

Our program meets the goals of several MN Forest Resources Council landscape plans
 (://www.frc.state.mn.us/Landscp/Landscape.).

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				
Protect			404	
Enhance			4,012	

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			Hubbard Aitkin Crow Wing Winona	
Enhance			Aitkin Becker Beltrami Cass Crow Wing Dakota Fillmore Goodhue Itasca Koochiching Lake Mahnomen Marshall Mille Lacs Pine Rice St Louis Wabasha Wadena Winona	

Acres Within Each Ecological Section	Metropolitan-Urbanizing Area	Forest-Prairie Transition	Southeast Forest	Prairie Region	Northern Forest
Restore					
Protect		404			
Enhance	35	3,557	420		

Funding Per Ecological Section	Metropolitan-Urbanizing Area	Forest-Prairie Transition	Southeast Forest	Prairie Region	Northern Forest
Restore					
Protect		\$988,000			
Enhance	\$7,200	\$705,393	\$90,407		

Funding Resource Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect			\$988,000	
Enhance			\$803,000	

Acquisition and Tax Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability			404	
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	93,400	68,400	
Contracts	313,946	268,600	
Equipment/Tools	1,700	10,500	
Materials/Supplies	3,000	2,500	
Fee Acquisition	926,500		
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Travel	11,800	8,300	
Additional Budget Items			
Professional Services*	45,027	27,327	
TOTAL	\$1,405,373	\$385,627	

*Professional services includes contracted costs for shared services activities including DNR Office of Management and Budget Services, Human Resources, Management Resources and Information & Education base level services.

Works (and spending) for FY11 & 12 may continue into a third year (FY13) in order to complete projects. Project completion is dependent on weather and availability of plant material.

Relationship to Current Budget

FY2009 expenditures:

DNR	\$350 mil
Division of Fish & Wildlife	\$92.6 mil
Division of Forestry	\$65.7 mil
Division of Ecological Resources	\$25.8 mil

Our program \$1.79 mil (0.5% total DNR budget)

The program includes work we are currently unable to accomplish. We do not plan on reassigning staff.

Personnel

Position	Amount
SNA Acquisition Specialists, 0.05 FTE	\$6,000
SNA Contract and project management, 0.05 FTE	8,000
SNA Specialists & technician, .45 FTE	54,000
SNA Laborers & Seasonal Crews, 1.4 FTE	15,000
FOR Burn Crew, 1.5 FTE (6 people part time)	56,800
FAW Contract and project management, 0.20 FTE	22,000

Leverage

SOURCE	FY 11		FY 12		FY 13	
	In hand	Anticipated	In hand	Anticipated	In hand	Anticipated
State						
In-kind (DNR)	150,000		150,000			
Non state						
Wildlife Management Institute		30,000		30,000		
Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration	63,109		63,109			
Federal Grant for State Wildlife		25,000		25,000		
TOTAL	213,109	55,000	213,109	55,000		

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			50,000					
Enhance			250,000				236,218	

Accomplishment Timeline

Milestones	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Budgetary Expenditure
Acquired in fee	404 ac			\$988,000
Enhancement assessment and project completion	2,500 ac	1,516 ac		\$803,000

Works (and spending) for FY11 & 12 enhancement and restoration activities may continue into a third year (FY13) in order to complete projects. Project completion is dependent on weather and availability of plant material. Some acquisitions will take three years to complete. Restoration and enhancement of lands acquired later in the funding cycle will be completed in the third year.

Maintenance and Sustainability

All sites funded through this proposal are or will be state lands, and are part of the state outdoor recreation system. Ongoing maintenance will be accomplished through routine management activities accomplished by our network of DNR offices. Periodic enhancements will be accomplished by existing staff, MCC crews, temporary project staffing or through vendor contract using traditional habitat project funding, bonding, and future requests for funding from dedicated funding sources.

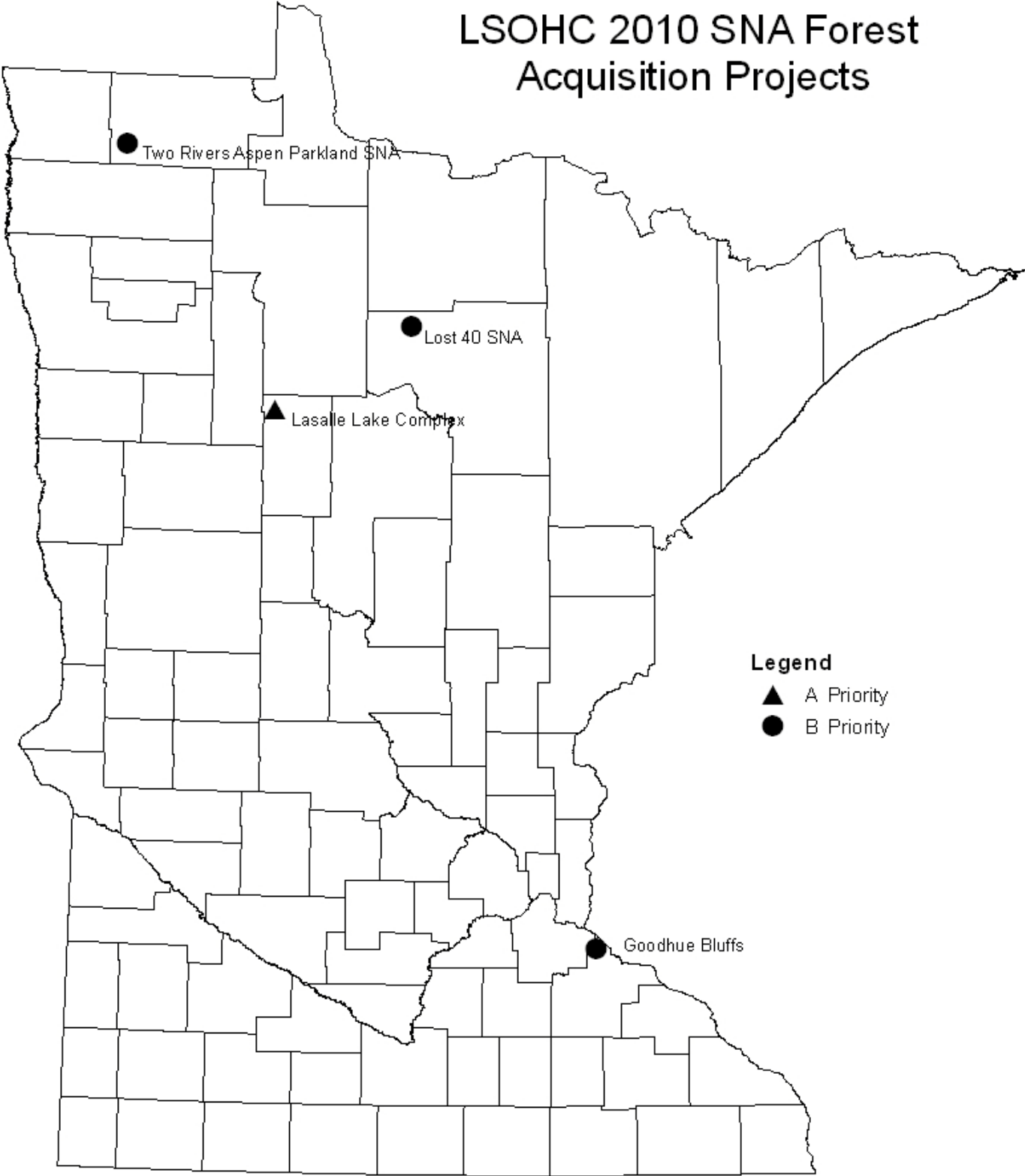
“A” List of Forest Enhancement and Protection Projects (Includes counties and acres)

DIVISION	Administrative Unit	County	LSOHC Section	E or P	COMMENT/PRIORITY	Treated Acres
F	Bemidji, Park Rapids, and Brainerd forestry areas	Crow Wing	Northern Forest	E	burn	100.00
W	Yaeger Lake WMA (FIM Stand 79): DNR Wildlife Park Rapids	Wadena	Northern Forest	E	burn	25.00
W & F	Aitkin Forestry Area	Aitkin	Northern Forest	E	burn	60.00
W & F	Blackduck Forestry Area	St. Louis	Northern Forest	E	burn	30.00
W & F	Cloquet Area Forestry	St. Louis	Northern Forest	E	burn	90.00
W & F	Orr Forestry Area	Aitkin	Northern Forest	E	burn	60.00
W & F	Two Harbors Forestry Area	Lake	Northern Forest	E	burn	60.00
W & F	Deer River Area Forestry (Adaptive Forest Management Area)	Itasca	Northern Forest	E	burn	60.00
W	Moose Willow WMA	Aitkin	Northern Forest	E	burn	50.00
E	Lost 40 SNA	Itasca	Northern Forest	E	Burning	10.00
F	Deer River Area Forestry	Itasca	Northern Forest	E	Hand Release	14.00
F	Deer River Area Forestry	Itasca	Northern Forest	E	Hand Release	23.00
F	Littlefork Forestry Area	Koochiching	Northern Forest	E	Hand Release	50.00
F	Sandstone Forestry - Nemadji State Forest	Pine	Northern Forest	E	Hand Release	100.00
F	Orr Forestry Area	St. Louis	Northern Forest	E	Hand Release	100.00
F	Tower Forestry Area	St. Louis	Northern Forest	E	Hand Release	100.00
E	Pine Bend Bluffs SNA	Dakota	Metropolitan	E	Hydroaxing	35.00
E	Cannon R Turtle Preserve SNA	Goodhue	Southeast Forest	E	Hydroaxing	45.00
E	Cherry Grove Blind Valley SNA	Fillmore	Southeast Forest	E	Hydroaxing	30.00
E	Prairie Creek Woods SNA	Rice	Southeast Forest	E	Hydroaxing	20.00
F	Deer River Area Forestry	Itasca	Northern Forest	E	Hand release	30
F	Deer River Area Forestry	Itasca	Northern Forest	E	Hand release	15
F	Littlefork Forestry Area	Koochiching	Northern Forest	E	Hand release	142
F	Tower Forestry Area	St. Louis	Northern Forest	E	Hand release	30
F	TH Area - StTrFnd	St. Louis	Northern Forest	E	Hand release	75
F	Badoura State Forest Hubbard County tax forfeiture land: DNR Wildlife Park Rapids	Hubbard	Northern Forest	E	Hydroaxing	160
F	Littlefork Forestry Area	Koochiching	Northern Forest	E	Hydroaxing	46
F	TH Area - StTrFnd & CoTxFor	Lake	Northern Forest	E	Hydroaxing	20
F	Beltrami Island State Forest	Beltrami	Northern Forest	E	Shearing	300
F	TH Area - Moose/State Forest	Cook	Northern Forest	E	Shearing	70
F	Deer River Area Forestry	Itasca	Northern Forest	E	Shearing	5
E	Moose Mountain	St Louis	Northern Forest	E	Mowing	160.00
W	Mille Lacs WMA	Mille Lacs	Northern Forest	E	oak	100.00
W	Whitewater WMA	Winona	Southeast Forest	E	oak	175.00
W	Sax-Zim WMA	Aitkin	Northern Forest	E	shear +	300.00
W	Thief Lake Wildlife Work Area	Marshall	Transition	E	shear +	1200.00
F	Manitou Collaborative - Patch Project (manage towards old growth stage, large conifer patch in high biodiversity site, AFMP)	Lake	Northern Forest	E	special site	90.00
W	Four Brooks WMA	Mille Lacs	Northern Forest	E	special site	25.00
W	Four Brooks WMA	Mille Lacs	Northern Forest	E	special site	250.00
W	Ray Cook WMA	Crow Wing	Northern Forest	P	Complete Acquisition of Existing Unit. Protect remainder of shallow lake and adjacent upland	120.00
W	Willowssippi WMA	Aitkin	Northern Forest	P	Complete purchase of inholdings within WMA. Partnership with Hill Cith Chapter of	80.00
W	Whitewater WMA	Winona	Northern Forest	P	Riparian corridor/in holding within WMA	4.00
E	LaSalle Lake	Hubbard	Northern Forest	P		200.00

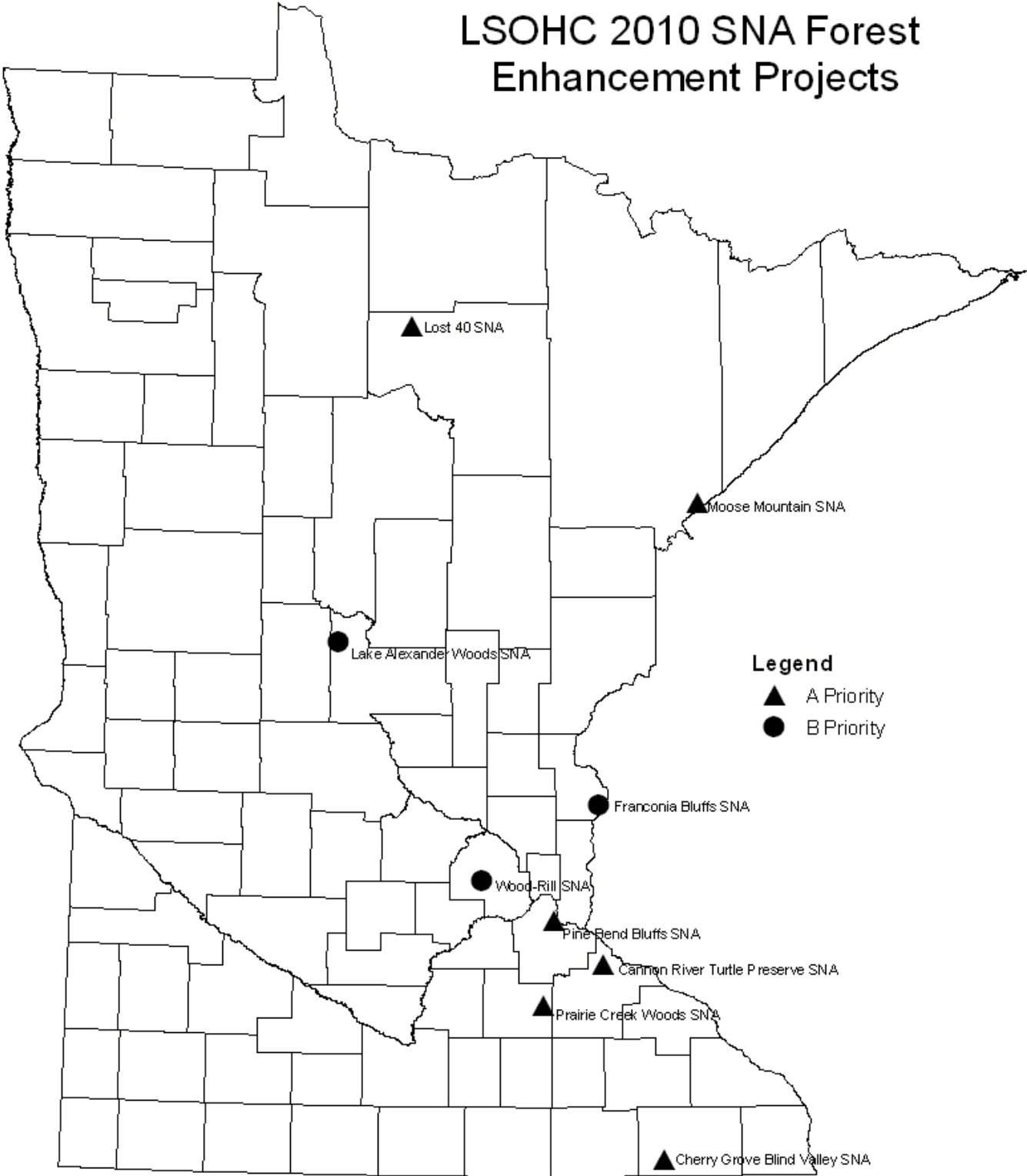
“B” List of Forest Enhancement and Protection Projects (Includes counties and acres)

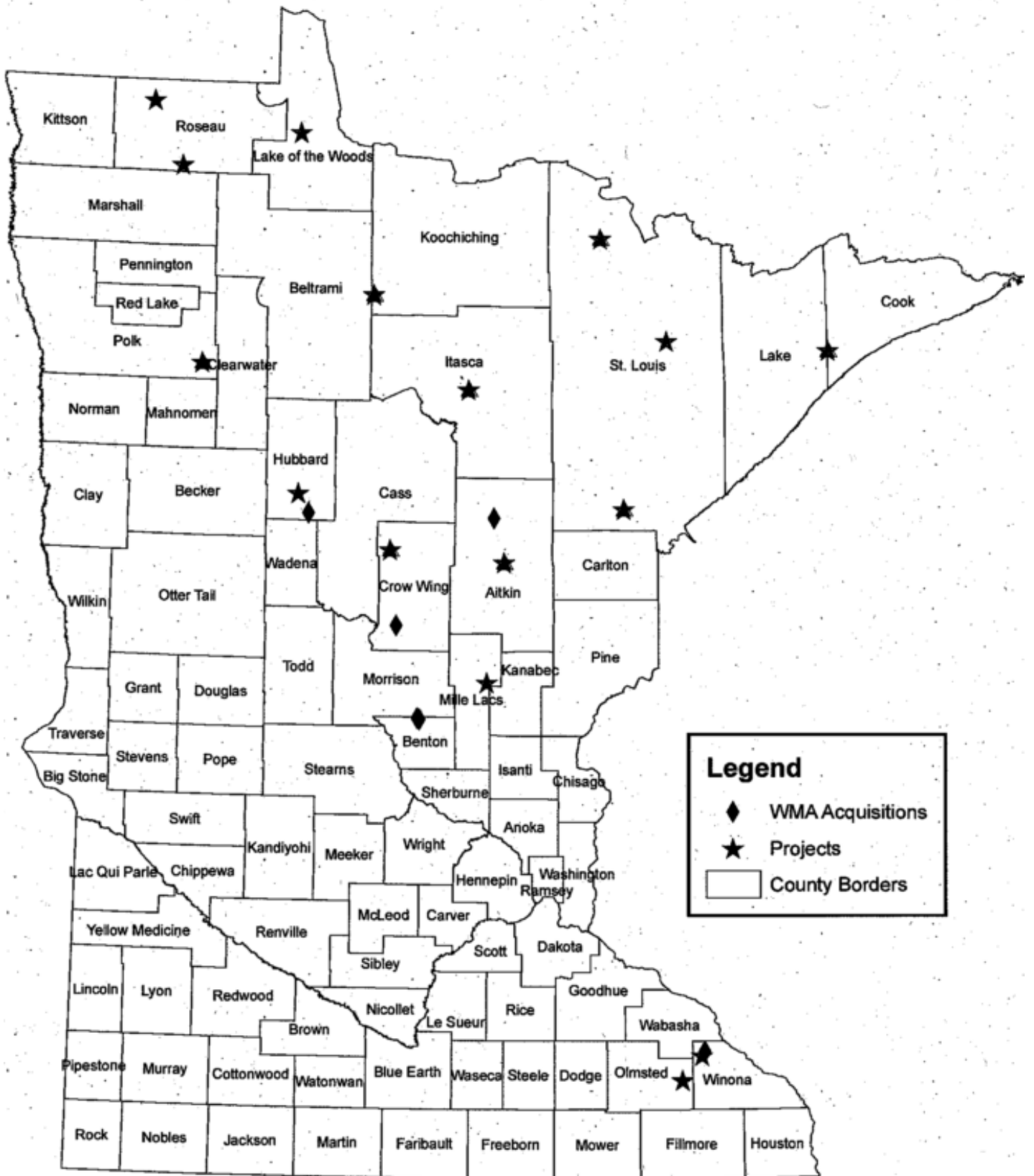
DIVISION	Administrative Unit	County	LSOHC Section	E or P	COMMENT/PRIOTITY	Treated Acres
E	Lake Alexander Woods SNA	Morrison	Transition	E		20.00
E	Franconia Bluffs SNA	Chisago	Northern Forest	E		15.00
E	Wood-Rill SNA	Hennepin	Metropolitan	E		80.00
W	Menahga WMA (FIM Stand 100): DNR Wildlife Park Rapids	Wadena	Northern Forest	E	burn	10.00
W	Leech Lake Open Lands: DNR Wildlife Park Rapids	Cass	Northern Forest	E	shear +	200.00
W	Roseau River and Roseau Lake WMA's	Roseau	Transition	E	shear +	1200.00
W	Baudette Wildlife Work Area	Lake of the Woods	Northern Forest	E	shear +	533.00
F	TH Area - Moose/State Forest	Cook	Northern Forest	E	shear +	70.00
F	TH Area - StTrFnd & CoTxFor	Lake	Northern Forest	E	shear +	20.00
W	Mallard Lake WMA	Aitkin	Northern Forest	E	shear +	130.00
W	Newstrom Lake WMA	Aitkin	Northern Forest	E	shear +	65.00
W	Mille Lacs WMA	Mille Lacs	Northern Forest	E	burn	100.00
W	Root River WMA	Houston	Southeast Forest	E	oak	47.00
F	Sandstone Forestry - Chengwatana State Forest	Pine	Northern Forest	E	Herbicide application	60
F	Beltrami Island State Forest	Beltrami	Northern Forest	E	Shearing	400
F	Tower Forestry Area	Lake	Northern Forest	E	Hand release	15
F	Tower Forestry Area	St. Louis	Northern Forest	E	Hand release	10
F	Deer River Area Forestry	Cass	Northern Forest	E	Shearing	8
E	Goodhue Bluffs	Goodhue	Southeast Forest	P		80.00
E	Lost 40 SNA	Itasca	Northern Forest	P		14.00
E	Two Rivers Aspen Parkland SNA	Roseau	Transition	P		40.00
W	Crow Wing WMA	Crow Wing	Northern Forest	P	This parcel adjoins the Crow Wing WMA, contains 2672 feet of lakeshore on a shallow	68.76
W	Graham WMA	Benton	Northern Forest	P	Inholding within Graham WMA	40.00
W	Graceton	Lake of the Woods	Norther Forest	P	This largely wetland area is a key tract that would join two large halves of the Graceton	634.00

LSOHC 2010 SNA Forest Acquisition Projects



LSOHC 2010 SNA Forest Enhancement Projects





Legend

- ◆ WMA Acquisitions
- ★ Projects
- County Borders