

**Program Title: Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Land Acquisition 2010**

**Request for Funding Form  
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council  
Fiscal Year 2011**

**Program or Project Title: #21** Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Land Acquisition 2010

**Date: October 29, 2009**

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	<b>Council Funding Request</b>	<b>Out-Year Projections of Needs</b>		
<b>Funds Requested (\$000s)</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>
Outdoor Heritage Fund	<b>\$2,500,000</b>	0	0	0

**A. Summary**

The Arboretum proposes to purchase 78 acres of land, located adjacent to the Arboretum's Horticultural Research Center, on the north side of Highway 5 and east of Bavaria Road in Carver County. This site is 78.13 acres which includes approximately 20 acres of wetlands. The property also contains 1,300 feet of lakeshore on Lake Tamarack, the deepest lake in Carver County, and one of the most pristine lakes in the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area Section. Purchasing this property would have multiple significant enduring outcomes including:

- Protecting majestic stands of oak, maple and basswood, as well as an upland meadow and wetlands, that provide habitat for a diverse population of birds, mammals, amphibians, and native plants
- Securing the site to allow future research projects and the restoration of sections on this property (big woods, oak savanna, upland meadow, wetlands, etc.) which have been disrupted by a century of farming
- Providing a wildlife corridor linking the 1,137 acres of the Arboretum with 78 additional undeveloped acres of land north of State Highway 5
- Protecting the water quality of the lake, vigorously preventing water pollution and encouraging a healthy fishery, waterfowl habitat, and native flora and fauna

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- Enhancing the public access to the site via an existing City of Victoria paved trail from the south; additionally an existing Hennepin County Transit Authority Trail will provide access through a proposed City of Victoria Park on the north side of Lake Tamarack
- Securing land for possible future University of Minnesota research projects including restoration ecology, organic fruit crop production and perennial crops (alders and other species) for bio-energy and wildlife habitat research

### **B. Background Information**

#### **1. What is the problem or opportunity being addressed?**

The Arboretum proposes to purchase 78 acres of adjacent land from a willing seller. This is the final remaining parcel to be purchased, as identified on the Arboretum's 1998 Master Plan. The parcel contains tillable land, wetlands, big woods and 1,300 feet of lakeshore on Lake Tamarack. It also contains majestic stands of oak, maple and basswood as well as an upland meadow and wetlands that provide habitat for a diverse population of birds, mammals, amphibians, and native plants.

The lakeshore portion of the new 78 acres, combined with the 1,597 feet already owned by the U of M, and 1,875 feet owned by the City of Victoria will completely protect the deepest lake in Carver County and one of the most pristine lakes in the Metro Area. Lake Tamarack is 24 acres in size and 82 feet deep.

The City of Victoria Master Plan for Parks also describes in detail a potential Lake Tamarack Park Preserve that would protect the entire perimeter of this highly pristine environmental lake. The Lake Tamarack Park Preserve would protect the water quality of the lake, vigorously prevent water pollution and encourage a healthy fishery, waterfowl habitat, and native flora and fauna. A low impact loop trail could be built around the lake. An existing City of Victoria paved trail provides access to the site from the south and an existing Hennepin County Transit Authority Trail provides access through a proposed City of Victoria Park on the north side of Lake Tamarack.

The Arboretum provides a unique opportunity to connect the best practices of research and restoration with the larger community. The Arboretum has seen massive visitor growth each year and now welcomes nearly 320,000 visitors annually. While enjoying the beautiful gardens, guests can also explore engaging conservation models on the site including: Harvest Your Rain, a permanent display area for homeowners which highlights a green roof, rain gardens and the use of cisterns and rain barrels; Geothermal Power which is used in the Oswald Visitor Center; commercial-scale rain gardens which provide a living example for developers and urban planners; and the Rainwater Runoff Models which includes five mini-watersheds to demonstrate how different paving materials and the amount of plant material can vastly affect the amount and the quality of runoff water.

In addition to educating the public about the value and methods available for conservation, the Arboretum has significant experience with the protection, research and restoration of ecosystems. One example is Dr. Susan Galatowitsch's innovative Spring Peeper Sedge Meadow Restoration Research and Demonstration project. This project is the most well

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documented and successful sedge meadow restoration in the United States and has since been expanded to include tall grass prairie and upland woody plant restoration on the slopes surrounding the wetland basin. Spring Peeper meadow is used as a research and demonstration site by K -12 and University Classes as well as classes and workshops for both professionals and the public.

### **2. What action will be taken?**

With funding support from the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, the Arboretum proposes to purchase 78 acres adjacent to the Arboretum's Horticultural Research Center.

### **3. Who will take action and when?**

The purchase of this property could potentially be completed by the Arboretum by the end of fiscal year 2011.

### **4. How will you coordinate this program with the other Constitutional Funding?**

Additional Constitutional Funding could be used to conduct specific research projects on restoration methods and wildlife habitats on sections of the property. In addition, any restoration models that are created or research that is generated would be available to the nearly 320,000 onsite visitors to the Arboretum each year, as well as available on the internet for other interested parties throughout the state and region.

### **5. What specific habitat changes will occur if this item is funded? Be specific about and list multiple benefits if they exist.**

In addition to providing a site for future research projects, the purchase of this property would have several immediate benefits for the habitat including:

- Protecting majestic stands of oak, maple and basswood as well as an upland meadow and wetlands that provide habitat for a diverse population of birds, mammals, amphibians, and native plants
- Providing a wildlife corridor linking the 1,137 acres of the Arboretum with 78 additional undeveloped acres of land north of State Highway 5
- Protecting the water quality of Lake Tamarack, vigorously preventing water pollution and encouraging a healthy fishery, waterfowl habitat, and native flora and fauna

### **6. When do you expect to see these habitat changes?**

Protecting this habitat would occur when the property is secured, which could potentially occur during fiscal year 2011.

**7. Will your Outdoor Heritage Fund dollar request complete the planned accomplishments?**

The Arboretum will work to identify and solicit additional funders including the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR), the Trust for Public Land, the Minnehaha Watershed District, foundations, and individual private donors.

Future costs that will occur on this piece of property will be added to the Arboretum's general budget and incorporated into the maintenance and programming that is already happening at the Arboretum. Support for the Arboretum's \$9,458,094 operating budget is currently generated by a variety of sources including: the University of Minnesota (11%), Revenue from operations such as restaurant and gift shop sales, facility rentals, etc. (28%), Membership (11%), Private Philanthropy (44%), and other sources (6%).

The City of Victoria Comprehensive Plan guides this parcel's land use as Low Density Residential which would allow over 100 homes to be built. Even with a good erosion control plan, adequate wetland buffers and proper maintenance of streets and storm water management structures, the amount of new impervious surfaces that would come about as a result of development on this parcel would likely impact Lake Tamarack and reduce the amount of potential aquifer recharge on this parcel.

If protected, this land will provide a wildlife corridor linking 1,000 acres of the Arboretum with additional undeveloped land north of State Highway 5, protect the water quality of Lake Tamarack and provide land for possible U of M research projects including restoration ecology, organic fruit crop production and perennial crops (alders and other species) for bio-energy and wildlife habitat research. The Arboretum would use this property for research based education and outreach programs for professionals and the public.

The purchase of this property would ensure that it became permanently protected land.

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As an institution committed to providing knowledge and outreach, and as a unit of the University of Minnesota, the Arboretum is well positioned to share clear, timely and accurate information about the purchase and development of the proposed property to funders, partnering agencies, other stakeholders and the general public.

### **12. Why will this strategy work?**

Currently the Arboretum welcomes nearly 320,000 guests each year. In addition, the Arboretum has a strong web presence and has successfully conducted public education and engagement conferences about restoring, enhancing and protecting fragile environments, conserving precious natural resources and other mission-related topics.

### **13. Who might make decisions that assist or work against achieving the expected impact program?**

As part of the University of Minnesota, the Arboretum is able to leverage a wide variety of resources from within the University community, as well as having access to cutting-edge environmental and restoration researchers and information. The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Foundation Board of Trustees will be a critical element in raising funds to support this land purchase. In addition, by working in active collaboration with the City of Victoria, Carver County and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, the Arboretum will engage multiple stakeholders and ensure a broad base of community support for this project.

### **14. If this is acquisition of land, has the local government formally approved the acquisition?**

☒ **X** **YES**

☐ **NO**

### **15. If this is fee simple acquisition of land, is the land free of any other permanent protection such as a conservation easement?**

☒ **X** **YES**

☐ **NO**

### **16. If this is an easement acquisition, will the eased land be open for public use?**

☐ **N/A** **YES**

☐ **N/A** **NO**

**If Yes what kind of use?**

This request is not for an easement, but rather a fee simple acquisition. However, public access to this property is an important component of this purchase.

As part of the Arboretum, this property would be openly available for public use in a variety of ways. The public would be able to enjoy this area in ways that are similar to how they use the Arboretum: to connect with the natural world, to view native wildlife, to enjoy the splendid beauty of Minnesota throughout the seasons, and to participate in innovative educational programming.

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However this property also opens up new possibilities to develop a relationship between hunters and sportsmen and the Arboretum. The site at Lake Tamarack has the potential to be opened for public fishing with some protection and conservation stipulations (catch and release only, no use of live bait, etc.). In addition, the property could host some managed hunting (limited hours within season, only bow hunting or musket hunting) that would allow access, but also protect the safety of visitors to the property and within adjacent the neighborhood.

**17. If easement acquisition, will the easement be a permanent conservation easement as described in MS 2009, Chapter 84C.01, specifically protecting the natural resource values of real property forever?**

☐ N/A ☐ YES

☐ N/A ☐ NO

**18. If you are proposing funding for a new or ongoing program how long into the future do you expect this program to operate?**

\_\_\_\_\_ Years

The Arboretum celebrated its 50th anniversary last year and the Horticultural Research Center marked 100 years of cold-hardy research. Purchasing this property would ensure its protection into the next century and beyond.

**19. Which planning sections will you work in? Check all that apply in the list below.**

☐ Northern Forest

☐ Forest/Prairie Transition

☐ Southeast Forest

☐ Prairie

☒ Metropolitan Urbanizing Area

**20. Does the request address an urgent conservation opportunity that will be lost if not immediately funded?**

☒ YES

☐ NO

**If yes, please explain.**

If the Arboretum does not secure this property, it will almost certainly be sold to a developer, probably for construction of private residences. It has been determined that the highest and best use of the site is for residential development. Land immediately to the east of this property has been developed with single family detached homes. Land to the north is zoned residential and most likely will be improved with residential buildings in the near future.

Carver County has been one of the fastest growing communities in Minnesota, almost doubling in population over the past 16 years. The city of Victoria increased by 2.5 times over the same

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time period. Continued growth is expected, but at a slower pace in the next five years primarily due to the decline in the housing market.

**21. Does the request restore and/or enhance habitat on existing state-owned Wildlife or Aquatic Management Areas or Scientific and Natural Areas?**

           YES                           X      NO  
If Yes, list the names of the AMAs, WMAs and/or SNAs and the acres to be restored and/or enhanced.

**22. Is this request based on assessment through a science based strategic planning and evaluation model similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model?**

       YES        X        NO  
If yes explain the model briefly.

**23. Explain the scientific foundation for your project, and the benefits it will produce.**

Protecting this property is not directly addressed in the Strategic Habitat Conservation model. However, securing this site will provide a platform for future research that will use the SHC model to make management decisions about conservation and achieving specific biological outcomes while at the same time constantly reassessing and improving our methods and actions.

**24. How do you set priorities? (Be sure to list the criteria you use and the weight you give each one.)**

In 1998 the Arboretum completed a Master Plan which outlined several neighboring properties that were strategically important to protect the Arboretum's watershed and limit neighboring development that would have a negative impact on the Arboretum. The parcels were then prioritized according to cost, strategic value and the willingness of the seller. Eight tracts of land were identified. Over time, seven have been secured, most recently with a 90 acre inholding that was purchased in August, 2008. The only piece that remains is the 78 acre parcel adjacent to the Horticultural Research Center. Recently, conversations have occurred with the property owner about their willingness to sell the land to the Arboretum and the likelihood of selling to a property developer if the Arboretum is unable to acquire the parcel.

### C. Relationship to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and Other Published Resource Management Plans

This project fits within several areas of the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan*. It most strongly aligns with Habitat Recommendation 2: Protect critical shorelands of streams and lakes, and also Habitat Recommendation 6: Protect and restore critical in-water habitat of lakes

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and streams. Within Habitat Recommendation 2A: Acquire high-priority shorelands, it specifically states that "The highest priority shorelands...should be permanently protected through acquisition. This is one essential component of a multistrategy approach to preserving the clean water legacy that Minnesota's citizens and visitors are used to experiencing." The Arboretum's purchase of this property would permanently protect the shoreline of Lake Tamarack, the deepest lake in Carver County, and one of the most pristine lakes in the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area Section.

In addition to the relationship this project has to the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan*, it is also a critical component within the city of Victoria Master Plan for Parks which describes in detail a potential Lake Tamarack Park Preserve that would allow public access and use and also protect the entire perimeter of Lake Tamarack. The creation of this preserve would protect the water quality of the lake, vigorously prevent water pollution and encourage a healthy fishery, waterfowl habitat, and native flora and fauna.

### D. Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel			
Contracts			
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition	\$7,000,000		
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Professional Services			
Travel			
Additional Budget Items			
TOTAL	\$7,000,000		

**E. Personnel Details** *In the space below list the names, titles and anticipated program funds to be paid by this recommendation. If you will need to fill a position just list the title and amount.*

Title	Name	Amount.
N/A		



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**F. All Leverage** *In the table below list the sources and amounts of leverage you anticipate by fiscal year you anticipate receiving it. Include state and non-state leverage.*

Source of Non-State Leverage	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council	\$2,500,000		
Legislative-Citizen Commission on MN Resources (LCCMR)	\$1,750,000		
Trust for Public Land	\$ 250,000		
Minnehaha Watershed District	\$ 750,000		
Foundations and Individual Donors	\$1,750,000		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,000,000</b>		

**G. Outcomes:**

- 1) *In the first table below, quantify the outcomes you plan to achieve with the recommended funds.*
- 2) *In the second table show list the sections where outcomes will occur.*
- 3) *In the third table, allocate your recommended funds to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1.*
- 4) *In the fourth table show the leverage to be applied to each cell with outcomes listed in table 1. and*
- 5) *If you have any outcomes listed in the "protect" row in table 1, account for them according to the type of acquisition and PILT status in table 5*

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<b>Table 1 Accomplish- ments</b>	<b>Wetlands</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Forests</b>	<b>Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife</b>
<b>Restore</b>				
<b>Protect</b>	<i>Protect 20 acres of wetland, including 1,300 feet of lakeshore</i>	<i>Protect an Upland Meadow</i>	<i>Protect stands of oak, maple and basswood</i>	<i>Protect 78 acres which will preserve habitats and plant communities</i>
<b>Enhance</b>				<i>Providing a wildlife corridor linking the 1,137 acres of the Arboretum with 78 additional acres</i>

<b>Table 2 Sections Impacted and Impact Quantifier</b>	<b>Wetlands</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Forests</b>	<b>Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife</b>
<b>Restore</b>				
<b>Protect</b>	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (20 acres)</i>	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (+/- 10 acres)</i>	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (+/- 10 acres)</i>	<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (78 acres)</i>
<b>Enhance</b>				<i>Metropolitan Urbanizing Area (78 acres)</i>

<b>Table 3 Recommend Fund Allocation</b>	<b>Wetlands</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Forests</b>	<b>Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife</b>
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<b>Restore</b>				
<b>Protect</b>	\$ 750,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$1,250,000
<b>Enhance</b>				N/A

<b>Table 4 Leverage \$</b>	<b>Wetlands</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Forests</b>	<b>Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife</b>
<b>Restore</b>				
<b>Protect</b>	\$ 1,500,000	\$ \$ 375,000	\$ 375,000	\$2,250,000
<b>Enhance</b>				N/A

<b>Table 5 Acquisition Data</b>	<b>Wetlands</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Forests</b>	<b>Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife</b>
<b>Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability</b>				
<b>Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability</b>	<i>Acquire 78 acres which includes 20 acres of wetland, an upland meadow, and stands of oak, maple and basswood which will provide a wildlife corridor with the Arboretum for an estimated \$7,000,000.</i>			
<b>Permanent Easement</b>				

**H. Accomplishment Time Table** Using the headings below, include a clear statement of how much of what is being accomplished and when. Attach a map showing where accomplishments are anticipated. Accomplishments should clearly restore, enhance or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game and wildlife.

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<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Measure</b>
Property Purchased	6/30/2011	

**I. Relationship to Your Current Budget**

The Arboretum's current budget for fiscal year 2010 is \$9,458,094.

**J. How Will the Habitat Improvements Be Sustained?**

After it is secured, this property will become part of the Arboretum and its monitoring, improvements and maintenance will be incorporated into the operations and master plan of the Arboretum.

**K. Attach a list of your projects listing their county location and edit the map of Minnesota on the next page to show each project as a symbol.**

Project Name: Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Land Acquisition 2010  
County Location: Carver

## L-SOHC Sections

