

## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

### 2012 Accomplishment Plan

**Program Title:** Protect (Acquire) Key Forest Habitat Lands – Cass County (F-07)

Manager's Name: Joshua Stevenson

Title: Land Commissioner

Organization: Cass County

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**Funds Recommended: \$604,000.00**

**Legislative Citation:** ML 2011, Ch. X, Art. X, Sec. X, Subd. X (x): *(to be completed when signed by Governor)*

#### Abstract:

Project will protect forest wildlife habitat in central Minnesota through fee title acquisition of key forest tracts. Title of lands acquired will be held by Cass County in Fee.

### Program Narrative

#### Design and Scope of Work

Problem: Central Minnesota, especially the area in Cass County from Brainerd/Baxter to Walker, has and will continue to see some of the fastest human population growth in Minnesota. This growth will lead to increased demands/use of this area, its natural resources and related public land base that needs to support this growth. Development of these parcels has resulted in the loss of Jack Pine barrens in the landscape of southern Cass County. Forest tracts currently undeveloped, held by Potlatch and other private property owners, are currently being sold to private developers. These lands often provide access to existing public lands for resource management, are in holdings in otherwise unfragmented landscapes, create contiguous wildlife corridors, and protect larger blocks of land especially useful for stand level management of habitat.

Opportunity: Key forest tracts (i.e. in-holdings in large public land tracts, management access issues, etc.) are being considered or currently being offered for sale by a large industrial forest owner (Potlatch Corporation) and private property owners in this area. Depressed market conditions and a willingness by current owners to sell at this time is

an opportunity that should be addressed now since it is narrow and may close (properties sold) at any time. The strategy is to acquire lands that hold together unfragmented landscapes, avoid incompatible in holding development or creates habitat corridors. The land acquired has existing forest access roads that have been used for management access for years. The sale of these lands to private individuals has already resulted in the loss of access for resource management on public lands. The acquired lands are not being pursued for convenience of management.

The identified parcels play a key role in future management plans of the Jack Pine Barrens including the role of fire as a management tool. The loss of these parcels to private ownership will result in lost access. Management of adjacent public lands will be limited to frozen ground conditions. This will eliminate management tools such as site preparation for Jack Pine plantings and aerial seeding as well as prescribed burns for Jack Pine regeneration. This type of management requires year round access. The acquired lands provide year round management access to existing public lands in the Jack Pine barrens landscape. The acquisition of these lands will provide permanent year round access for forest management as well as protecting habitat in and around the surrounding areas.

The Cass County Forest Resource Management Plan directs the County to acquire lands of this nature whenever possible to protect our management access. The Cass County Comprehensive plan requires no net loss of acres of public land and local unit of government input on all purchases and land sales. This project meets the requirements of both plans and will require stakeholder input as part of the project. The local units of government with the lands to be purchased will be contacted for input before any acquisitions are made. Recent purchases of this nature have been supported by both the County and local units of government. The Cass County Board of Commissioners has a strong history of supporting land sales and acquisitions that have local unit of government support.

### **Planning**

The Cass County Forest Resource Management Plan directs the County to acquire lands of this nature whenever possible. The Cass County Comprehensive plan requires no net loss of acres of public land (Page 34 & 57) (FRMP Page 32) and local unit of government input on all purchases and sales of land. Priorities supported in these plans that are accomplished in this project include: access to inaccessible public land, consolidation of ownership, management for wildlife habitat, and landscape level management between multiple land management agencies. The lands acquired will be open to the public for fishing and the taking of game.

### **Relationship to Other Constitutional Funds**

The Cass County Land Department has used funds from the LCCMR for this type of activity in the past. Property acquisitions using LCCMR were very successful. With new changes to the use of that fund, it seems that our proposal is most likely to be funded from the LSOHC.

### Relationship to Current Organizational Budget

The total value of this project is almost 30% of our annual budget. The entire amount received will be used for acquisition. The amount of money available to the Cass County Land Department for acquisition in the past is directly related to land sale revenue. Land Sales revenue has been down recently and funds to LCCMR are still outstanding pending the sale of land currently available over the counter. Our current staff will use this money to acquire lands in fee following existing procedures. Because our activity in land purchases and sales is currently low due to the depressed land sale market, there will be little or no effect on current duties.

### Sustainability and Maintenance

The Cass County Land Department manages all County Administered lands under our Forest Resource Management Plan. This management plan requires that operations are maintained from revenue generated from timber sales. Cass County has a long history of covering our operation costs with timber revenue. The lands acquired will be managed under this same plan. These lands are not eligible for PILT payments. MN Statute 477A.11 defines lands that are eligible as being held by the state in fee or tax forfeited. The acquired lands for this project will be held in fee by Cass County and therefore are not eligible for PILT Payments. There will be no ongoing cost to the State of MN for the acquisition of these lands.

### Accomplishment Timeline

| Activity  | Milestone   | Date              |
|---|---|-------------------|
| <i>Meet with LUG's and prepare purchase agreements</i>  | Local Unit of Government Support and Transparency                   | Jan-Feb 2012      |
| <i>Contract for appraisals and Acquire Lands in Fee</i> | Use existing staff and contract for services                        | March – June 2012 |
| <i>Record Deeds</i>                                     | Achieve “no net loss” of public land by adding to current land base | July - 2012       |

Attachments: **Budget Analysis Parcel v2 CASS November 4 2010.xlsx**

- A. Budget
- B. Proposed Outcome Tables
- C. Parcel List

*No Map is needed for the accomplishment plan*

## Attachment A. Budget Spreadsheet

Name of Proposal:

Protect (Acquire) Key Forest Habitat Lands – Cass County

Date:

4-Nov-10

Legal Citation / Proposal Number:

NA

[Link Here to definitions of the budget items below.](#)

Total Amount of Request

\$

604,000

From page 1 on the funding form.

## Personnel

| Position breakdown here | FTE        | Over # of years | LSOHC Request | Anticipated Cash Leverage | Cash Leverage Source | Total     |
|-------------------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| Resource Manager        | 0.25       |                 |               | \$ 18,500                 | Cass County          | \$ 18,500 |
| Land Commissioner       | 0.25       |                 |               | \$ 18,500                 | Cass County          | \$ 18,500 |
|                         |            |                 |               |                           | \$ -                 | -         |
|                         |            |                 |               |                           | \$ -                 | -         |
|                         |            |                 |               |                           | \$ -                 | -         |
|                         |            |                 |               |                           | \$ -                 | -         |
|                         |            |                 |               |                           | \$ -                 | -         |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>0.5</b> |                 | \$ -          | \$ 37,000                 | \$ -                 | \$ 37,000 |

## Budget and Cash Leverage (All your LSOHC Request Funds must be direct to and necessary for program outcomes.)

Please describe how you intend to spend the requested funds.

| Budget Item  | LSOHC Request | Anticipated Cash Leverage | Cash Leverage Source | Total      |
|--|---------------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Personnel - auto entered from above                | \$ -          | \$ 37,000                 | \$ -                 | \$ 37,000  |
| Contracts  |               |                           | \$ -                 | -          |
| Fee Acquisition w/ PILT (breakout in table 6 & 7)  |               |                           | \$ -                 | -          |
| Fee Acquisition w/o PILT (breakout in table 6 & 7) | \$ 604,000    |                           | \$ -                 | 604,000    |
| Easement Acquisition                               |               |                           | \$ -                 | -          |
| Easement Stewardship                               |               |                           | \$ -                 | -          |
| Travel (in-state)                                  |               |                           | \$ -                 | -          |
| Professional Services                              |               | \$ 2,000                  | Cass County          | \$ 2,000   |
| DNR Land Acquisition Costs                         |               |                           | \$ -                 | -          |
| Other  |               |                           | \$ -                 | -          |
| Capital Equipment (auto entered from below)        | \$ -          | \$ -                      | \$ -                 | -          |
| Other Equipment/Tools                              |               |                           | \$ -                 | -          |
| Supplies/Materials                                 |               |                           | \$ -                 | -          |
|  | \$ 604,000    | \$ 39,000                 | \$ -                 | \$ 643,000 |

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

| Item Name    | LSOHC Request | Leverage |
|--------------|---------------|----------|
|              |               |          |
|              |               |          |
|              |               |          |
|              |               |          |
|              |               |          |
|              |               |          |
|              |               |          |
|              |               |          |
|              |               |          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>0</b>      | <b>0</b> |

## Attachment B. Outcome Tables

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Name of Proposal:</b>                 | Protect (Acquire) Key Forest Habitat Lands – Cass County |
| <b>Date:</b>                             | 4-Nov-10   |
| <b>Legal Citation / Proposal Number:</b> | NA   |

*Table 1 and Table 3 column totals should be the same AND Table 2 and Table 4 column totals should be the same*

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

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

**Table 1. Acres by Resource Type**

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

|              | Wetlands | Prairies | Forest | Habitats | Total |
|--------------|----------|----------|--------|----------|-------|
| Restore      |          |          |        |          | 0     |
| Protect      |          |          | 379    |          | 379   |
| Enhance      |          |          |        |          | 0     |
| <b>Total</b> | 0        | 0        | 379    | 0        |       |

Total Acres (sum of Total column)

379

*These two cells should be the same figure.*

Total Acres (sum of Total row)

379

**Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type**

|              | Wetlands | Prairies | Forest     | Habitats | Total      |
|--------------|----------|----------|------------|----------|------------|
| Restore      |          |          |            |          | \$ -       |
| Protect      |          |          | \$ 604,000 |          | \$ 604,000 |
| Enhance      |          |          |            |          | \$ -       |
| <b>Total</b> | \$ -     | \$ -     | \$ 604,000 | \$ -     |            |

Total Dollars (sum of Total column)

\$ 604,000

*These two cells should be the same figure.*

Total Dollars (sum of Total row)

\$ 604,000

Check to make sure this amount is the same as the Funding Request Amount on page 1 of Main Funding Form.

**Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section**

|              | Metro/Urban | Forest/Prairie | SE Forest | Prairie | Northern Forest | Total |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|-----------|---------|-----------------|-------|
| Restore      |             |                |           |         |                 | 0     |
| Protect      |             |                |           |         | 379             | 379   |
| Enhance      |             |                |           |         |                 | 0     |
| <b>Total</b> | 0           | 0              | 0         | 0       | 379             |       |

Total Acres (sum of Total column)

379

Total Acres (sum of Total row)

379

Total Acres from Table 1.

379

*These three cells should be the same figure.*

## Attachment B. Outcome Tables

**Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section**

|              | Metro/Urban | Forest/Prairie | SE Forest | Prairie | Northern Forest | Total      |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|-----------|---------|-----------------|------------|
| Restore      |             |                |           |         |                 | \$ -       |
| Protect      |             |                |           |         | \$ 604,000      | \$ 604,000 |
| Enhance      |             |                |           |         |                 | \$ -       |
| <b>Total</b> | \$ -        | \$ -           | \$ -      | \$ -    | \$ 604,000      |            |

Total Dollars (sum of Total column)

\$ 604,000

*These two cells should be the same figure.*

Total Dollars (sum of Total row)

\$ 604,000

Check to make sure these amounts are the same as the Funding Request Amount on page 1 of Main Funding Form.

**Table 5. Target Lake/Stream/River Miles**

# miles of Lakes / Streams / Rivers Shoreline

**Table 6. Acquisition by PILT Status *(enter information in acres)***

|  | Wetlands | Prairies | Forests | Habitats | Total |
|--|----------|----------|---------|----------|-------|
| Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability            |          |          |         |          | 0     |
| Acquired in Fee w/o State PILT Liability             |          |          | 379     |          | 379   |
| Permanent Easement<br><i>NO State PILT Liability</i> |          |          |         |          | 0     |
|  | 0        | 0        | 379     | 0        |       |

**Table 7. Estimated Value of Acquisition by PILT Status *(enter information in dollars)***

|  | Wetlands | Prairies | Forests    | Habitats | Total      |
|--|----------|----------|------------|----------|------------|
| Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability            |          |          |            |          | \$ -       |
| Acquired in Fee w/o State PILT Liability             |          |          | \$ 604,000 |          | \$ 604,000 |
| Permanent Easement<br><i>NO State PILT Liability</i> |          |          |            |          | \$ -       |
|  | \$ -     | \$ -     | \$ 604,000 | \$ -     |            |

Attachment C. Parcel List

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Name of Proposal:                 | Protect (Acquire) Key Forest Habitat Lands – Cass County |
| Date:                             | 4-Nov-10   |
| Legal Citation / Proposal Number: | NA   |

| County              | Township | Range | Direction | Section | TRDS | # of acres | Budgetary Estimate (includes administrative, restoration or other related costs and do not include matching money contributed or earned by the transaction) | Description               | Activity<br>R=Restore<br>P=Protect<br>E=Enhance | Any existing protection? (yes/no) | Open to hunting and fishing? (yes/no) |
|---------------------|----------|-------|-----------|---------|------|------------|---|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Parcel Name         |          |       |           |         |      |            |   |                           |   |                                   |                                       |
| Johnson Property    | Cass     | 139   | 31        | 2       | 8    | 13931208   | 206   | 294100 SE¼ and SE¼ of NE¼ | P   | N                                 | Yes after Purchase                    |
| Franklin Property   | Cass     | 134   | 30        | 2       | 18   | 13430218   | 173   | 368700 SW¼                | P   | N                                 | Yes after Purchase                    |
| Goose Lake Trail 40 | Cass     | 140   | 31        | 2       | 34   | 14031234   | 40  | 117300 SW¼ of NW¼         | P   | N                                 | Yes after Purchase                    |
| Hiram 80            | Cass     | 140   | 31        | 2       | 35   | 14031235   | 80  | 196500 S¼ of SE¼          | P   | N                                 | Yes after Purchase                    |
| Pine River 40       | Cass     | 140   | 31        | 2       | 36   | 14031236   | 40  | 87500 NW¼ of SW¼          | P   | N                                 | Yes after Purchase                    |