

**Main Request for Funding Form**

**Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council  
Fiscal Year 2013**

**Program or Project Title:** Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

**Funds Requested:** \$ 6,000,000

**Manager's Name:** Leslie Tannahill

**Organization:** Department of Natural Resources – Division of Fish and Wildlife

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**Organization Web Site:** mndnr.gov

**County Location:** Statewide

**Ecological Planning Regions:** all

Northern Forest       Forest/Prairie Transition       Southeast Forest

Prairie       Metro/Urban

**Activity Type:** all

Protect - Fee       Protect - Easement       Protect - Other

Restore     Enhance

**Priority Resources addressed by activity:** all

Wetlands       Forests       Prairie       Habitat

**Project Abstract**

The Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program will be managed by the Department of Natural Resources to provide competitive matching grants to local, regional, state, and national non-profit organizations, including governments.

## Project Narrative

### Design and scope of work

The Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program (CPL) will be managed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to provide competitive matching grants of up to \$400,000 to local, regional, state, and national non-profit organizations, including governments. This program will fulfill MS 97a.056 Subd. 3a, which directs the LSOHC to establish a conservation partner's grant program to encourage and support local conservation efforts. \$5,620,000 of the requested \$6,000,000 will be available for grants. While this is a stand-alone program, it is dependent support and technical advice from DNR land managers, habitat specialists, acquisition staff, and other support staff.

Grant activities include the enhancement, restoration, or protection of forests, wetlands, prairies, and habitat for fish, game, or wildlife in Minnesota. A 10% match from nonstate sources is required for all grants. Match may be cash or in-kind resources. All match must be identified at the time of application.

CPL Program Staff will develop a Request for Proposal and Program Manual that incorporate the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council's (LSOHC) priorities, solicit applications and work with applicants to submit scorable applications, oversee the grant selection process, prepare and execute grant documents, review expenditure documentation to ensure recipients are only reimbursed for allowable expenses, make reimbursement payments, monitor grant work, assist recipients with closing out their agreements, and prepare reports as required by the LSOHC.

Applicants will describe the location of the work, activity type, and habitat in their application. They will also describe the how their actions will benefit habitat and fish, game and wildlife, and the duration of benefits. For acquisition projects, applicants will describe their parcel selection process.

In administering this program the DNR will comply with the Department of Administration - Office of Grants Management policies.

Stakeholders are involved in this proposal as applicants or reviewers. There is no known stakeholder opposition to this program.

### Grant Application Process

A Request for Proposal (RFP) and Program Manual (PM) will be posted on the CPL website in early August, 2012. These documents will contain grant program information, application requirements and scoring criteria, grant reporting requirements, and state agency contacts.

Applications must be submitted electronically using CPL's Online Grant Application System (OLGA). All project sites must be mapped using OLGA's mapping tool. OLGA will accept applications beginning in August, 2012, until the deadline for the first round of grants in mid-September, 2012. The application system will not accept applications during the review process. Applications requesting less than \$25,000 will have a shorter application form in OLGA.

Grants will be selected for funding up to twice a year. Any ungranted funds from the first cycle will be available for use in a following cycle, or may be distributed to current grantees to assist approved projects. DNR may make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with DNR and Outdoor Heritage Fund policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available or if a grantee cannot carry out their project as planned.

## **Grant Selection Process**

CPL Grant Program Staff will review applications to make sure they are complete and meet grant program requirements. Technical Review Committee(s), selected by the Commissioner of Natural Resources, will review and score applications based on criteria listed below. These committee(s) may include representatives from DNR, BWSR, the University of MN, state universities or private colleges, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and other appropriate members from government, non-profit organizations, and private businesses. A final ranking committee made up of the Directors of the DNR Divisions of Fish and Wildlife, Ecological Resources/Waters, and Forestry will consider TRC, Division and Regional DNR comments, and recommend projects and funding levels to the Commissioner of Natural Resources. The Commissioner will make the final decision on the projects funded and funding levels.

Applications requesting under \$25,000 will be reviewed by CPL staff, using the same criteria as the larger applications.

CPL Grant Program staff will work with grantees to ensure financial reviews, grant agreements, and any other necessary paperwork are completed. Work may not begin until the grant is executed.

## **Application Criteria**

Applications will be scored on the following criteria:

1. Amount of habitat restore, enhanced, or protected
2. Local support
3. Degree of collaboration
4. Urgency
5. Multiple benefits
6. Habitat benefits
7. Consistency with current conservation science
8. Adjacent to protected lands
9. Full funding of project
10. Budget and cost effectiveness
11. Public access for hunting and fishing
12. Use of native plant materials
13. Applicants' capacity to successfully complete work

## **Project Reviews and Reporting**

Grantees will submit annual accomplishment reports on forms provided by CPL staff, based on L-SOHC report forms. Reports must account for the use of grant and match funds, and outcomes in measures of wetlands, prairies, forests, and fish, game, and wildlife habitat restored, enhanced, and protected. The report must include an evaluation of these results. A final report will be required by all grantees 30 days after the project is complete.

CPL Grant Program staff will submit accomplishment reports to the L-SOHC as required. Accomplishment information will also be posted on the CPL website.

## **CPL Administration Budget**

Grant administration costs of \$380,000 will be billed using actual costs. These costs include salary and fringe for grants staff, direct support services, travel, supplies, and expense. An internal Service Level

Agreement (SLA) will be developed with DNR's Management Information Systems to update and manage the online grant application system. (This budget item is included in the Contracts line in the attached Budget Table.)

This level of staff is necessary to run an ongoing, cradle-to-grave grant program with a cumulative budget of over \$14 million (FY10 – FY12). As of June 30, 2011, the program has 81 active grants to manage (from FY10 and FY11 only). Thirty-five new grants are expected from the FY12 appropriation, and also the FY13 appropriation, for a approximate total of 150 grants to manage. Funds are included to cover the direct costs of hiring the additional .5 FTE, a computer, and other start-up costs. The travel budget has also been increased to reflect more grant monitoring and increased technical assistance for applicants and grantees.

### **DNR Land Acquisition Costs**

Applicants will be required to budget for DNR Land Acquisition costs that are necessary to support the land acquisition process for parcels to be conveyed to the DNR. These costs will be billed to the grantees on a professional services basis.

### **DNR Technical Support**

The Division of Fish and Wildlife staff will provide ongoing technical guidance. This technical guidance will help applicants prepare grant proposals, and help grantees meet requirements for working on state lands. Additional technical guidance will be provided for land acquisitions, program planning and management, accounting and grantee payment.

### **Grantee Payment**

Grantees will be paid on a "for services rendered" basis. This means that payment may be made to the grantee after work has been performed or materials purchased, but before the vendor is paid by the grantee. Grantees must provide proof that the work has been completed or a purchase made in order to receive payment. Proof that the vendor has been paid must be submitted to CPL staff before any additional grant payments will be made.

Reasonable amounts may be advanced to projects to accommodate cash flow needs, to match federal share, or for acquisitions. Advances must be specified in the final grant agreement. Partial payments will be allowed.

### **Grantee Match**

Grantees will be required to provide a 10% match from nonstate sources. Match may be cash or in-kind resources, and must be identified at the time of application. All match must be verified before final grant payment will be made.

## **Planning**

This program will provide additional funds to enhance, restore, and protect habitat in Minnesota. All published resource management and species plans—including the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan—recognize that habitat is critical for the success of Minnesota's fish and wildlife species. Lack of funding is consistently listed in many plans as one of the largest issues limiting the amount of habitat work and protection that is completed each year. Specific benefits are dependent upon projects submitted by applicants.

## Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan

In the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan*, habitat restoration, enhancement and protection is specified in the following priorities:

- H1: Protect priority land habitats (pg 63)
- H2: Protect critical shorelands of streams and lakes (pg 67)
- H3: Improve connectivity and access to recreation (pg 74)
- H4: Restore and protect shallow lakes (pg 78)
- H5: Restore land, wetlands, and associated wetlands (pg 80)
- H6: Protect and restore critical in-water habitat of lakes and streams (pg 81)
- H7: Keep water on the landscape (pg 84)
- LU 8: Protect large blocks of forested land (pg 130)
- L10: Support and expand sustainable practices on working forested lands (pg 131)

## Other Published Resource Management Plans

Other plans that list habitat restoration, enhancement and protection as priorities include:

- *Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare* (Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy), which identifies habitat loss and degradation as the primary problem facing species in greatest conservation need in Minnesota.
- The *State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* Strategies #1 and 2.
- The DNR's Division of Fish and Wildlife has several key plans identifying acquisition and habitat goals for fish and wildlife populations. Habitat goals are also addressed through more focused plans and programs that can be found on the DNR's website.
- National plans include the *North American Wetland Management Plan*, various Joint Venture Plans, *National Fish Habitat Initiative*, and all the *Bird Conservation Plans*.
- Non-governmental conservation agencies such as Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and Audubon Minnesota have developed their own conservation plans that list habitat restoration, enhancement and protection as a priority.

## LSOHC Section Priorities

The CPL Grant Program has the potential to address all LSOHC section priorities. Habitat restoration, enhancement and/or protection are a part of each priority, and these are the activities CPL funds. Again, specific benefits depend upon the projects submitted by applicants.

## Relationship to Other Constitutional Funds

The CPL Grant Program will complement other programs and projects supported with constitutional funds by allowing organizations to access Outdoor Heritage Funds for smaller, local projects.

## Relationship to Current Organizational Budget

In FY10, DNR received \$4 million for grants and administration of this program. These were new funds for a new program and did not supplant existing funds. In FY11, DNR received \$4,386,000, and in FY12, \$5,629,000 was recommended by the LSOHC to continue the program. None of these funds supplanted existing funds.

This program funding is of reasonable size given the scale of DNR's recent fiscal year expenditures. Though Outdoor Heritage Funds will be spread out over multiple years, below are approximate Fiscal Year 2010 expenditures from all sources, not including bonding:

All DNR expenditures - \$456 million  
Ecological and Water Resources Division - \$74.6 million  
Fish and Wildlife Division - \$90.3 million  
Forestry Division - \$83.2 million

## **Sustainability and Maintenance**

Projects on public lands will be the responsibility of the government entity that owns or accepts the land. Projects on private lands will be the responsibility of the private land owner and easement holder. Stewardship plans must identify the sources and amount of funding for monitoring and identify the parties responsible for monitoring and enforcing the easement agreement.

Because the actual projects have not been identified at this time, it is not possible to provide specific details on the cost, schedule, and sources of funding needed to sustain CPL projects.

## **Outcomes**

Because the CPL program works statewide, in all habitat types, and with all activities, it has the potential to provide all of the outcomes listed in the Outdoor Heritage Fund Framework. Final benefits are dependent upon the projects completed by grantees.

The CPL program has already provided benefits to people and resources throughout the state of Minnesota. Local conservation clubs have taken the time to work with public land managers to apply for grants to protect, restore, and enhance habitat for fish, game and wildlife in or near their communities. Lands have been acquired that provide public access for outdoors-related recreation, provide permanent protection for sensitive features, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife. Existing habitat has been restored or enhanced to further benefit fish, game and wildlife.

More Minnesotans have become involved in conservation work. By talking about specific projects with local land managers, participating in grant writing and management, volunteering to pull buckthorn and hand-harvest prairie seed, folks are getting outside and performing conservation work.

## **Activity Type Detail**

### **Fee Acquisition Projects**

Will local government approval be sought prior to acquisition?

### **For Acquisitions to be Donated to the DNR**

DNR Operational Order 6 provides for county notification as follows:

The DNR will notify the appropriate county official of all proposed land acquisitions and easements, including donations. The DNR discipline initiating the transaction is

responsible for the notification. For each transaction, the timing as to when the notification will occur will vary, but it will normally occur after an option has been signed but before there is an election to purchase.

County board approval is required for the purchase or lease of wildlife management area lands, wildlife management area easements and scientific and natural areas, and lands purchased with Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) match funds (Minn. Stat., secs. 84.033, subd. 3, 84.944, subd. 3, and 97A.145, subd. 2).

**For Acquisitions NOT to be Donated to the DNR**

Grantees will be required to follow the local government notification requirements of the entity that will hold the fee title or conservation easement to the property.

Is the land you plan to acquire free of any other permanent protection?

X Yes                       No, please explain                       not applicable

If no, please explain here:

**Easement Acquisition Projects**

Will the eased land be open for public use?

Yes                      X No, please explain                       not applicable

If no, please explain here: Public access will depend upon the requirements of the title holder.

Will the conservation easement be permanent?

X Yes                       No, please explain                       not applicable

If no, please explain here:

**Restoration and Enhancement Projects**

Is the activity on permanently protected land and/or public waters?

X Yes                       No, please explain                       not applicable

If no, please explain here:

Does the activity take place on an Aquatic Management Area (AMA), Scientific and Natural Area (SNA), Wildlife Management Area (WMA), or State Forests?

Yes, which ones                      X No, please explain                       not applicable

If so, please indicate which ones: Location of projects will be determined by applicants.

## Past Outdoor Heritage Fund Appropriations Received for this program

ML 2009	ML 2010	ML 2011
\$4,000,000	\$4,386,000	\$5,629,000 (requested)

## Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Milestone	Date
Solicit and select grant applications	RFP and PM posted online	Aug 2012
	First round applications due	Mid-Sept 2012
	First round FY 13 grantees announced	Mid-Nov 2012
	First round grants encumbered	Feb 2013
Grantees start work	First round grants executed	March 2013
Solicit and select second round grant applications (if necessary)	Second round applications due	Feb 2013
	Second round FY 13 grantees announced	May 2013
	Second round grants encumbered	June 2013
Grantees start work	Second round grants executed	July 2013
Grant monitoring starts	Per OGM policy	April 2013
Annual Grantee reports due	Reports received	Sept of each year
Program report to Council	Report submitted	Aug and Feb of each year

### Attachments:

- A. Budget
- B. Proposed Output Tables 1-5
- C. Parcel List



**Attachment A. Budget Spreadsheet**

Name of Proposal:

Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

Date:

30-Jun-11

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

**Total Amount of Request**     \$ 6,000,000 *From page 1 on the funding form.*

**Personnel**

Position breakdown here	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Cash Leverage	Cash Leverage Source	Total
<i>Grant Coordinator</i>	1	2	\$ 142,000		\$	142,000
<i>Grant Spec Intermed</i>	1	2	\$ 104,000		\$	104,000
<i>Grant Spec Intermed</i>	1	2	\$ 104,000		\$	104,000
<i>position 4</i>					\$	-
<i>position 5</i>					\$	-
<i>position 6</i>					\$	-
<i>position 7</i>					\$	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>		\$ 350,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 350,000

**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 - <i>auto entered from above</i>	\$ 350,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 350,000
Contracts	\$ 5,635,000	\$ 562,000	<i>est. grantee match</i>	\$ 6,197,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT <i>(breakout in table 7)</i>			\$	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT <i>(breakout in table 7)</i>			\$	-
Easement Acquisition			\$	-
Easement Stewardship			\$	-
Travel (in-state)	\$ 5,000		\$	5,000
Professional Services			\$	-
Direct Support Services	\$ 6,500		\$	6,500
DNR Land Acquisition Costs <i>(\$3,500 per acquisition)</i>			\$	-
Other			\$	3,500
Capital Equipment <i>(auto entered from below)</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$ 2,000		\$	2,000
Supplies/Materials	\$ 1,500		\$	1,500
	\$ 6,000,000	\$ 562,000	\$ -	\$ 6,562,000

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

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

## Attachment B. Output Tables

<b>Name of Proposal:</b>	Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program
<b>Date:</b>	30-Jun-11

*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	TBD by grantees				0
Protect Fee					0
Protect Easement					0
Protect Other					0
Enhance					0
<b>Total</b>	0	0	0	0	0
Total Acres (sum of Total column)					0
Total Acres (sum of Total row)					0

*These two cells should be the same figure.*

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

	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	TBD by grantees				\$ -
Protect Fee					\$ -
Protect Easement					\$ -
Protect Other					\$ -
Enhance					\$ -
<b>Total</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Dollars (sum of Total column)					\$ -
Total Dollars (sum of Total row)					\$ -

*These two cells should be the same figure.*

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	TBD by grantees					0
Protect Fee						0
Protect Easement						0
Protect Other						0
Enhance						0
<b>Total</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Acres (sum of Total column)						0
Total Acres (sum of Total row)						0
Total Acres from Table 1.						0

*These three cells should be the same figure.*



### Attachment C. Parcel List

**Name of Proposal:** Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program  
**Date:** 30-Jun-11

County	Township (25-258)	Range (01-51)	Direction most parcels are 2 with the exception of some areas of Cook County which is 1	Section (01 thru 36)	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 PF=Protect Fee PE=Protect Easement PO=Protect Other R=Restore E=Enhance	If Easement, what is the easement cost as a % of the fee acquisition?	Any existing protection? (yes/no)	Open to hunting and fishing? (yes/no)
<b>Parcel Name</b>												
<i>TBD by grantees</i>												

*Information provided will be used to map project locations. Incomplete or inaccurate information will result in that parcel or program not being mapped.*