

Main Request for Funding Form

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

Program or Project Title: Enhanced Public Land Grasslands

Funds Requested: \$ 3,000,000

Manager's Name: Greg Hoch

Organization: MN Prairie Chicken Society

Street Address: 19503 Av N

City Hawley **State** MN **Zip:** 56549

Telephone: 218-443-0476 (cell)

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Organization Web Site: <http://www.prairiechicken.org/>

Manager's Name: Joe Pavelko

Organization: Pheasants Forever

Street Address: 7975 Acorn Circle

City Victoria **State** MN **Zip:** 55386

Telephone: 612-532-3800

E-Mail: jpavelko@pheasantsforever.org

Organization Web Site: www.pheasantsforever.org

County Location:

Ecological Planning Regions:

Northern Forest Forest/Prairie Transition Southeast Forest

Prairie Metro/Urban

Activity Type:

Protect - Fee Protect - Easement Protect - Other

Restore Enhance

Priority Resources addressed by activity:

Wetlands Forests Prairie Habitat

Project Abstract

This project will use a combination of fire, invasive tree removal, grazing, and seeding to improve habitat quality, diversity, and productivity on public lands in Minnesota.

Project Narrative

Design and scope of work

Greater than 95% of Minnesota's prairies have been lost to the plow and development. Many of the remaining acres of native and restored grasslands have been degraded from lack of fire and the spread of invasive trees. Many of these acres have low plant diversity from 1) lack of grazing, a natural and fundamental process in grasslands, or 2) when the grasslands were restored a low diversity or grass only seed mix was used.

Research from across the tallgrass prairie region has shown that trees are almost always detrimental to prairie/grassland wildlife, for several reasons. Tree branches provide perches for hawks, owls, crows, and magpies, while the bases of the trees provide dens for foxes, raccoons, skunks, all of which can prey on eggs or nesting hens.

Carefully managed grazing for conservation almost always increases plant diversity. Several SGCN bird species in the state prefer grazed to ungrazed grasslands. The increase in plant diversity increases invertebrate abundance, providing a food base for grassland birds, while the increase in structural diversity among the plants increases habitat diversity and therefore abundance of many species of grassland birds. Several candidate species for state or federal listing as endangered are dependent on moderate grazing.

Along with grazing, fire is the primary management tool for managing grassland habitat for waterfowl, gamebirds, and songbirds. This project will increase capabilities of DNR and USFWS to conduct prescribed fires on public lands, including DNR Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and USFWS Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA).

Many public hunting areas were purchased as brome fields or were restored using low diversity seed mixes, often only grasses. At these sites, we will overseed into the ash after a fire with a diverse native seed mix.

Each year woody vegetation and invasive species increase on our public hunting lands. Every year we delay management action, the problem becomes larger and the cost increases. The duration of the benefits of this program is ongoing. The goal of this program is to get all WPAs and WMAs into a state where we no longer need mechanical or chemical treatments and high quality habitat can be sustained with maintenance burns.

An RFP process will be developed to solicit qualifying public land enhancement projects from public land managers and in concert with MPCS, PF and other conservation organizations and partners interested in improving the quality of grassland habitat on public lands.

We anticipate costs as below. The exact acreage and ratios of dollars spent on each category each year will vary depending on proposals.

Prescribed Fire – \$3500/burn
Invasive Tree Removal –\$1200/acre
Conservation Grazing – \$0.80/foot of fencing
Diversity Seeding – \$250/acre

Planning

This project addresses the following conservation plans:

Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare – This plan lists prairie chickens as well as at least twenty-six other bird, invertebrate, and plant species as SGCN. This project will enhance the habitat quality for all these species.

Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan – This project addresses several recommendations. Under Habitat Recommendations, we address 1) protect priority land habitats, 3) improve connectivity, 5) restore land, wetland, and wetland-associated watersheds, 9) overall research on land and aquatic habitats, and 13) habitat and landscape conservation and training programs for all citizens. Our work directly addresses the Management Option to Support Prairie SGCN species, “prevent the invasion of grassland by trees and shrubs”.

Partners in Flight – This project will improve habitat for all nine of the grassland obligate species in the Northern Tallgrass Prairie Plan (Physiographic Area 40)

Prairie Pothole Joint Venture Plan – This project will increase habitat quality for at least seventeen species in Bird Conservation Region 11.

Grassland Bird Conservation Areas (GBCA) – This project will improve the habitat quality for all grassland species within these areas.

National Audubon Society 20 Common Birds in Decline – Seven of the twenty birds on this list will benefit from this project.

Ecological Section Vision and Priorities – The project will improve condition of habitats on public lands and restore and enhance upland habitat (priority #1), increase wildlife productivity (#4), and restore and enhance habitat for migratory and unique Minnesota species (#7). We will accomplish this by using multiple tools to enhance grassland habitats increasing the quality, diversity, and productivity of our public land grasslands.

Relationship to Other Constitutional Funds

There is no direct connection to other constitutional funds as this is an acceleration project to achieve higher quality grassland habitat on our public lands in the prairie area of the state.

Relationship to Current Organizational Budget

MPCS and PF do not have specific, existing budgets for enhancing of critical prairie chicken habitat within the prairie chicken range of Minnesota. This proposal is the start of a new partnership between the Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society, Pheasants Forever, USFWS, and MN DNR focused on managing prairie chicken habitat.

Sustainability and Maintenance

The goal is to accelerate grassland habitat enhancements on our public lands in the prairie region of Minnesota so that we can ensure the long-term productivity and sustainability of wildlife populations.

Outcomes

The immediate results will be measured in acres burned, acres of trees removed, acres reseeded, and acres fenced for grazing. The goals of these actions are to improve habitat for grassland game and other wildlife and ultimately increase grassland wildlife productivity. The results of this proposal specifically address several items in the results management framework including 1) improved habitat conditions on public lands, 2) enhanced upland habitat, increased wildlife productivity, 3) enhanced habitat for migratory and unique Minnesota species, and ultimately 4) healthy, resilient ecosystems that provide habitat for migratory waterfowl and other grassland species.

Activity Type Detail

Fee Acquisition Projects

Will local government approval be sought prior to acquisition?

Yes No, please explain not applicable

If no, please explain here:

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

Yes No, please explain not applicable

If no, please explain here:

Easement Acquisition Projects

Will the eased land be open for public use?

Yes No, please explain not applicable

If no, please explain here:

Will the conservation easement be permanent?

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?

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 No, please explain not applicable

If so, please indicate which ones: All projects will be done on public lands (e.g. Wildlife Management Areas, Aquatic Management Areas, Waterfowl Production Areas, etc.) in the prairie subsection of the state. The ultimate goal of this effort is elevate the quality of grassland habitats on public lands in the prairie portion of the state .

Past Outdoor Heritage Fund Appropriations Received for this program

ML 2009	ML 2010	ML 2011
\$NA	\$NA	\$NA

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Milestone	Date
Distribute RFP to agency offices	Proposals Received	Fall 2012
Present selected projects to LSOHC	Develop final list of projects	Winter 2012-13
Enhancement Work Begins	Award proposals (75)	Winter 2012-13
Enhancement Completed	Completed Projects (75)	June 30, 2015

Attachments:

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

Attachment A. Budget Spreadsheet

Name of Proposal:	Enhanced Public Land Grasslands
Date:	15-Jul-11

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

Total Amount of Request \$ 3,000,000 *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>PF Director of Conservation</i>	0.05		\$ 20,000		\$
<i>PF Regional Staff (2)</i>	0.15		\$ 50,000		\$	50,000
<i>PF Grants Staff</i>	0.15		\$ 30,000		\$	30,000
					\$	-
					\$	-
					\$	-
					\$	-
Total	0.35		\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100,000

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	Anticipated Cash		Cash Leverage Source	Total
	LSOHC Request	Leverage		
Personnel - auto entered from above	\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100,000
Contracts	\$ 2,900,000			\$ 2,900,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT (breakout in table 7)				\$ -
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT (breakout in table 7)				\$ -
Easement Acquisition				\$ -
Easement Stewardship				\$ -
Travel (in-state)				\$ -
Professional Services				\$ -
Direct Support Services				\$ -
DNR Land Acquisition Costs (\$3,500 per acquisition)				\$ -
Other				\$ -
Capital Equipment <i>(auto entered from below)</i>	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -
Other Equipment/Tools				\$ -
Supplies/Materials				\$ -
	\$ 3,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,000,000

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

Item Name	LSOHC Request	Leverage
Total	-	-

Attachment B. Output Tables

Name of Proposal:	Enhanced Public Land Grasslands
Date:	15-Jul-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					0
Protect Fee					0
Protect Easement					0
Protect Other					0
Enhance		44000			44000
Total	0	44000	0	0	0

Total Acres (sum of Total column)

44000 *These two cells should be the same figure.*

Total Acres (sum of Total row)

44000

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore					\$ -
Protect Fee					\$ -
Protect Easement					\$ -
Protect Other					\$ -
Enhance		\$ 3,000,000			\$ 3,000,000
Total	\$ -	\$ 3,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	-

Total Dollars (sum of Total column)

\$ 3,000,000 *These two cells should be the same figure.*

Total Dollars (sum of Total row)

\$ 3,000,000

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 Fee						0
Protect Easement						0
Protect Other						0
Enhance				44000		44000
Total	0	0	0	44000	0	0

Total Acres (sum of Total column)

44000 *These three cells should be the same figure.*

Total Acres (sum of Total row)

44000

Total Acres from Table 1.

44000

Attachment B. Output Tables

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore						\$ -
Protect Fee						\$ -
Protect Easement						\$ -
Protect Other						\$ -
Enhance				\$ 3,000,000		\$ 3,000,000
Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,000,000	\$ -	

Total Dollars (sum of Total column) \$ 3,000,000 *These two cells should be the same figure.*
 Total Dollars (sum of Total row) \$ 3,000,000
 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					0
Permanent Easement <i>NO State PILT Liability</i>					0
	0	0	0	0	

Table 7. Estimated Value of Land 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					\$ -	\$ -
Permanent Easement <i>NO State PILT Liability</i>					\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		

FYI: should match total in budget table that is auto entered below

Attachment C. Parcel List

Name of Proposal:

Enhanced Public Land Grasslands

Date:

15-Jul-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)
Parcel Name												
Parcel list provided after RFP												

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