

Main Request for Funding Form

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Fiscal Year 2014 / ML 2013 Proposal

Program or Project Title: The Camp Ripley Partnership: Protecting the Mission and Mighty Mississippi River

Funds Requested: \$3,048,000

Manager's Name: Helen McLennan

Title: District Manager

Organization: Morrison SWCD

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Organization Web Site: www.morrisonswcd.org

County Locations: Cass, Crow Wing, and Morrison.

Ecological Planning Regions:

- Northern Forest
- Forest / Prairie Transition

Activity Type:

- Protect in Easement
- Protect in Fee

Priority Resources Addressed by Activity:

- Wetlands
- Forest
- Habitat

Abstract

Maintain high quality wildlife and forest communities along the Mississippi River Corridor by enhancing the Nokasippi and Gull River WMA and protecting river corridors. BWSR will partner with Morrison SWCD, Camp Ripley, and DNR with fee acquisitions and conservation easements.

Activity Detail

Design and Scope of Work

The purpose of this initiative is to protect fish, migratory birds, big game, and oak habitat along the Crow Wing, Gull, Nokasippi, and Mississippi Rivers via fee title acquisitions and conservation easements. This project

will utilize Camp Ripley's partnerships with the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), MN Department of Natural Resources (DNR), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and natural resource management planning to enhance the Nokasippi River and Gull River Wildlife Management Area (WMA). These river corridors are critical to the general public for fishing, hunting, and recreational opportunities. In addition this corridor is instrumental State of Minnesota, MN National Guard (MNNG) and National Guard Bureau (NGB), local economy, the National Mississippi River Corridor Flyway, and Mississippi Head Waters Board.

The target work area contains high value existing habitat and public accessibility.

MN DNR 2009 and 2010 fish surveys on the Crow Wing River (Staples to confluence of Mississippi) and Mississippi River (Brainerd to Little Falls) indicate high quality fish communities of walleye, muskellunge, and small-mouth bass. Also, Camp Ripley is home to one of the southern-most wolf populations in Minnesota and 65 Species of Greatest Conservation Needs including the state's highest population of red shouldered hawks. Not only do the river corridors contain wildlife habitat but also provide public recreation opportunities. Camp Ripley along with the MN DNR hosts the largest public archery hunt in the United States with over 5,000 participants chasing record-book white-tailed deer. Additionally, Camp Ripley also hosts deer hunts, such as a Disabled American Veterans (DAV), youth, Deployed Soldier Archery, and Deployed Soldier Muzzleloader. A Deployed Soldier and DAV turkey hunt are also provided. The Crow Wing River and Mississippi River contain over 15 public access points from Staples to the confluence of Mississippi and from Brainerd to Little Falls respectively. This project will enhance and maintain the current habitat along existing public access areas.

Development along these corridors will have adverse effects to existing high quality wildlife habitat, local economies, and to the MNNG training program. The Camp Ripley military training center is located immediately adjacent to the confluence of the Crow Wing and Mississippi Rivers. Camp Ripley contains 19 miles of Mississippi River frontage and 8 miles of Crow Wing River frontage. In many examples across the nation and the world, development or encroachment adjacent to military training sites has limited the facility's ability to maintain their military mission. As a result, the training our Soldiers need to prepare them for the battlefield is sacrificed. It is for that reason that MNG has enrolled Camp Ripley in the ACUB program. One area in particular that is a concern to the mission of Camp Ripley is the east shore of the Mississippi River where high decibel levels of noise is occurring due to weapon firing. Another area of concern is in the vicinity of the flight path of the Camp Ripley airfield. For that reason, the MNNG has asked the partnership to focus on land parcels directly adjacent to the Mississippi and Crow Wing Rivers to help reduce potential conflicts with homeowners. In 2011, Camp Ripley's economic impact to the local economy exceeded \$304 million dollars and Camp Ripley is the largest employer in Morrison County.

These river corridors are also very vulnerable to habitat degradation due to the potential for development. The Hwy 371 Little Falls to Brainerd corridor is projected to have some of the highest growth rates outside the metropolitan area. According to the 2010 US Census Bureau, the City of Baxter's population has increased 37 percent from 2000 to 2010 and Cass County's population increased by 5 percent 2000 to 2010. The University of Minnesota Land Cover Map indicates Sylvan, Crow Wing, and Forty Ripley townships impervious surface cover has increased by 429-566 acres in 10 years with much of the development near the Gull WMA, Gull, Mississippi, and Crow Wing Rivers (UMN Land Cover 1990-2000). Adjacent townships without river frontage have only increased impervious surface by 100-150 acres (UMN Land Cover 1990-2000). The majority of the lakes in Cass and Crow Wing Counties have existing development encompassing lakes which leaves developers and landowners to develop subdivisions and houses along these major river corridors.

This project will build upon existing Camp Ripley partnership success with the Army Compatible Use Buffer program (ACUB). This federal program provides funds to protect adjacent lands from encroaching

development and in the process protects the training center. Since 2004, Camp Ripley partners have completed 80 land transactions. The MN DNR completed 15 transactions representing 1,792 acres and BWSR completed 65 land transactions representing 10,052 acres. Collectively, Camp Ripley partners enrolled over 11,844 into conservation easements and fee acquisitions. This has occurred with \$17.5 million from National Guard Bureau and Department of Army and with over \$48 million in other funds that have been leveraged as a result of ACUB. The success of these accomplishments has brought great recognition to Camp Ripley as a national leader in the ACUB program.

Furthermore, in 2010, the Camp Ripley partnership realized a huge success with the LSOHC Little Nokasippi WMA project. The partnership enrolled 943.9 acres into conservation easements, increased public access to the WMA by 262 acres, and protected the WMA from future development. This project will utilize lessons learned from the 2010 and 2011 LSOHC grants and will complement the MN DNR Gull River WMA. Currently, the Gull River WMA is undergoing MN DNR process for WMA and seeking final approval.

With the proposed funds the Camp Ripley partnership plans to complete conservation easements and fee acquisitions along the Mississippi, Gull, Nokasippi, and Crow Wing Rivers. Additionally, Crow Wing and Morrison SWCDs will work with landowners to assist with oak forest management and cost-share forestry programs. The partnership will act quickly and efficiently to protect this high quality riparian habitat before it is developed, and while the residents are willing to convey easements. Currently, the Partnership has over 38 landowners signed up ready to participate in the program along these river corridors.

Planning

MN State-wide Conservation Plan Priorities

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes
- H3 Improve connectivity and access to recreation
- H6 Protect and restore critical in-water habitat of lakes and streams
- H7 Keep water on the landscape
- LU8 Protect large blocks of forest land

Plans Addressed

- Long Range Plan for Fisheries Management
- Long Range Plan for Muskellunge and Large Northern Pike Management Through 2020
- Minnesota DNR AMA Acquisition Plan
- Minnesota Forest Resource Council Landscape Plans
- Mississippi River Headwaters Comprehensive Plan
- North American Waterfowl Management Plan
- The Nature Conservancy's Superior Mixed Forest Ecoregional Plan
- Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Projects Joint Ventures Plan

LSOHC Statewide Priorities

- Are ongoing, successful, transparent and accountable programs addressing actions and targets of one or more of the ecological sections
- Produce multiple enduring conservation benefits
- Are able to leverage effort and/or other funds to supplement any OHF appropriation

- Allow public access. This comes into play when all other things about the request are approximately equal
- Address wildlife species of greatest conservation need, Minnesota County Biological Survey data, and rare, threatened and endangered species inventories in land and water decisions, as well as permanent solutions to aquatic invasive species
- Provide Minnesotans with greater public access to outdoor environments with hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation opportunities
- Ensures activities for "protecting, restoring and enhancing" are coordinated among agencies, non profits and others while doing this important work

LSOHC Forest Prairie Transition Section Priorities

- Protect, enhance, and restore wild rice wetlands, shallow lakes, wetland/grassland complexes, aspen parklands, and shoreland that provide critical habitat for game and nongame wildlife
- Protect, enhance, and restore migratory habitat for waterfowl and related species, so as to increase migratory and breeding success

LSOHC Northern Forest Section Priorities

- Protect shoreland and restore or enhance critical habitat on wild rice lakes, shallow lakes, cold water lakes, streams and rivers, and spawning areas
- Protect forestland through acquisition or easement to prevent parcelization and fragmentation and to provide the ability to access and manage landlocked public properties

Relationship to Other Constitutional Funds

none

Accelerates or Supplements Current Efforts

Camp Ripley is partnering with the Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC) Landscape Program, BWSR, SWCD, MN DNR and TNC to maintain sustainable forest resources around Camp Ripley. The Landscape program promotes multi-ownership planning focused on voluntary involvement and implementation of landscape visions, goals and strategies. The Camp Ripley landscape has high quality forested systems and ensuring these systems remain healthy requires proper management. Oak is the most dominant cover type and promoting proper management is key to maintaining the forest health while bringing financial support to the landowners.

Sustainability and Maintenance

The BWSR and MN DNR easements are perpetual and will be monitored through the BWSR RIM (Re-Invest in Minnesota) Easement monitoring process and the MN DNR Conservation Easement Stewardship and Enforcement Program Plan. The landowner is responsible for property taxes and on-going maintenance as per the documented and signed Conservation Plan. Funds for easement stewardship have been included in the budget. Monitoring scheduling follows the RIM guidelines and funding through the MN Board of Water and Soil Resources. Lands acquired through fee title will be maintained by the DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife through their Wildlife Habitat Area program. Future funding for site development may be secured through bonding or other funding.

Will local government approval be sought prior to acquisition? - Yes

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

Is this land open for hunting and fishing? - **Yes**

Public water along Mississippi, Nokasippi, and Crow Wing Rivers. MN DNR and landowner (Allete) are in progress to attain a long term lease for the proposed Gull River Wildlife Management Area which would open 1,000 acres to hunting, fishing, and public access. Additionally, 2 fee title acquisitions in the Gull River area will provide 136 acres of similar hunting, fishing, and public access that are adjacent to a lake, other public land and DNR conservation easement.

Will the eased land be open for public use? - **No**

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

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Buffer proposed Gull River Wildlife Management Area with DNR Fee title public access	06/30/2016
Protect Mississippi, Crow Wing, Gull, and Nokasippi Rivers with BWSR Conservation easements and buffer the WMAs with Conservation easements on private lands.	06/30/2016

Outcomes

Programs in the northern forest region

- Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation
- Healthy populations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species as well as more common species
- Increased availability and improved condition of riparian forests and other habitat corridors
- Maintain high quality habitat

Programs in forest-prairie transition region

- Increased availability and improved condition of riparian forests and other habitat corridors
- Protected, restored, and enhanced aspen parklands and riparian areas

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$3,048,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Cash Leverage	Cash Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$0	\$0		\$0
Contracts	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$800,000	\$0		\$800,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$2,000,000	\$0		\$2,000,000
Easement Stewardship	\$48,000	\$0		\$48,000
Travel (in-state)	\$0	\$0		\$0
Professional Services	\$200,000	\$0		\$200,000
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$3,048,000	\$0	-	\$3,048,000

Output Tables

Table 1. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	4	14	118	136
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	40	519	1,117	320	1,996
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	40	523	1,131	438	2,132

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$26,900	\$90,300	\$682,800	\$800,000
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$43,500	\$564,300	\$1,219,100	\$421,100	\$2,248,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$43,500	\$591,200	\$1,309,400	\$1,103,900	\$3,048,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	136	136
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	446	1,550	1,996
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	446	1,686	2,132

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$800,000	\$800,000
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$462,000	\$1,786,000	\$2,248,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$462,000	\$2,586,000	\$3,048,000

Table 5. Target Lake/Stream/River Miles

31 miles

Parcel List

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Cass

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Hoghaug	13329233	38	\$150,000	No	No	Full
Lindquist	13329233	12	\$70,000	No	No	Full
Minnesota Power & Light	13329220	18	\$70,000	No	No	No
Minnesota Power & Light	13329220	6	\$70,000	No	No	No
Minnesota Power & Light	13329220	6	\$70,000	No	No	No
Minnesota Power & Light	13329220	6	\$70,000	No	No	No
Minnesota Power & Light	13329220	6	\$70,000	No	No	No
Minnesota Power & Light	13329220	6	\$70,000	No	No	No
Minnesota Power & Light	13329220	5	\$70,000	No	No	No
Minnesota Power & Light	13329220	5	\$70,000	No	No	No
Minnesota Power & Light	13329220	5	\$70,000	No	No	No
Potlatch Forest Prod. Corp	13329229	122	\$240,000	No	No	Not Applicable

Crow Wing

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Bayard	04332216	24	\$60,000	No	No	Full
Colbert	04332225	40	\$50,000	No	No	Limited
Cole	13330230	155	\$180,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Dobosenski	04332203	76	\$80,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Doucette	04332224	40	\$50,000	No	No	Limited
Feierabend	04331220	40	\$40,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Gangstad	04332216	90	\$130,000	No	No	Not Applicable

Gilson	04332209	40	\$50,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Gilson	04332203	40	\$50,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Gould	04332216	22	\$35,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Hartman	04332234	31	\$90,000	No	No	Full
Japp	04332203	15	\$30,000	No	No	Full
Kramer	04332227	24	\$120,000	No	No	Full
Kruchten	04332216	50	\$60,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Kruchten	04332209	20	\$25,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Ledin	13329227	140	\$130,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Liemandt	04332222	37	\$50,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Madland	04332216	27	\$60,000	No	No	Full
Olson	04332231	120	\$120,000	No	No	Limited
Paine	13329226	78	\$250,000	No	No	Full
Plante	04332234	60	\$170,000	No	No	Full
Ring	13329226	50	\$150,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Trusty	04332210	39	\$40,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Wermter	04431220	80	\$100,000	No	No	Not Applicable

Morrison

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Gaddis	04232203	18	\$36,000	No	No	Full
Goebel	13029218	85	\$115,000	No	No	Not Applicable
LaVergne	13029218	148	\$187,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Montague	04232231	73	\$90,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Moran	04232235	47	\$150,000	No	No	Full
Radloff	04232214	40	\$50,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Stanek	13029219	120	\$161,700	No	No	Not Applicable
Vilinski	13029229	185	\$240,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Waltman	13029218	78	\$100,000	No	No	Not Applicable
Wilcox	13029219	40	\$50,000	No	No	Not Applicable

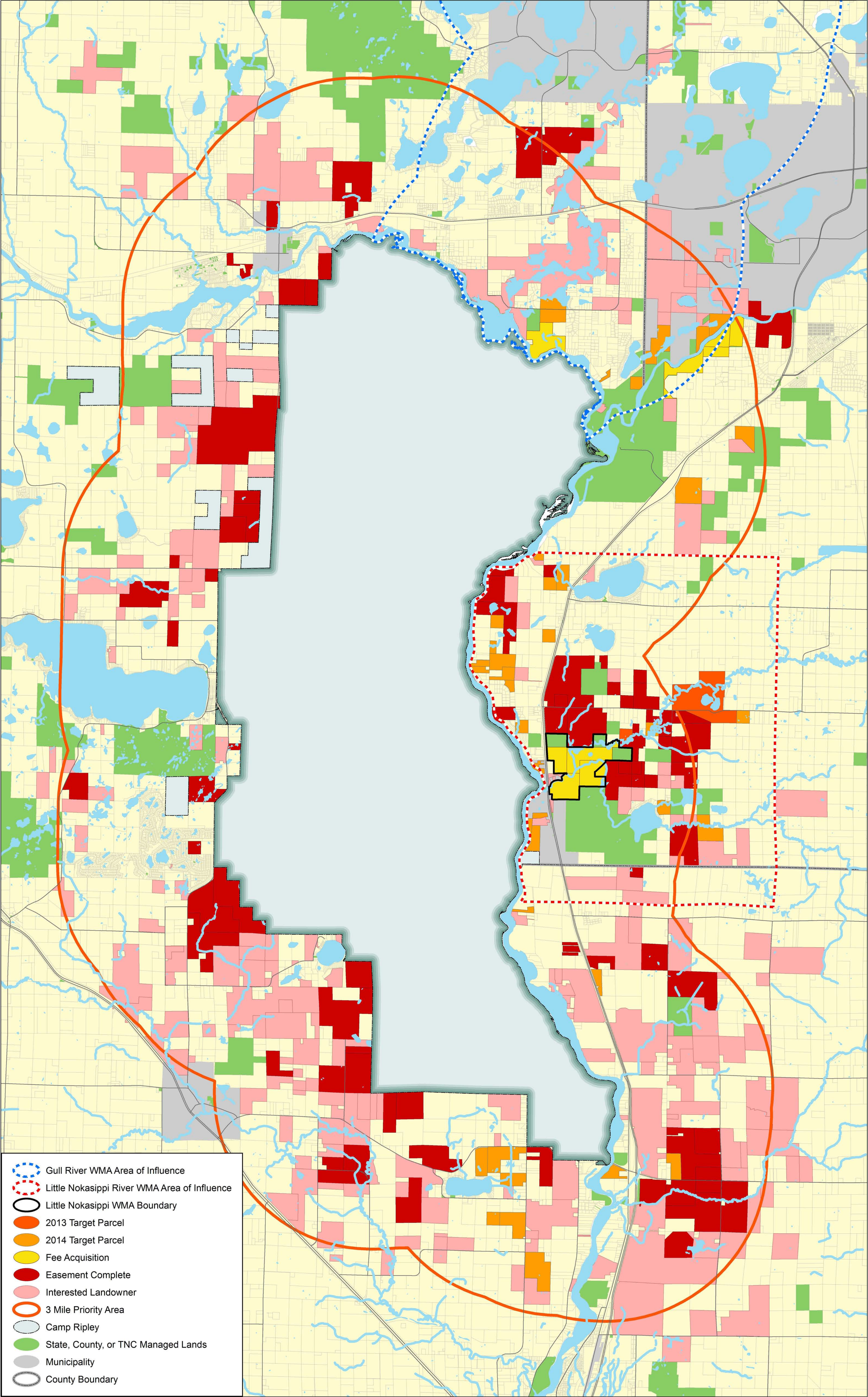
Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

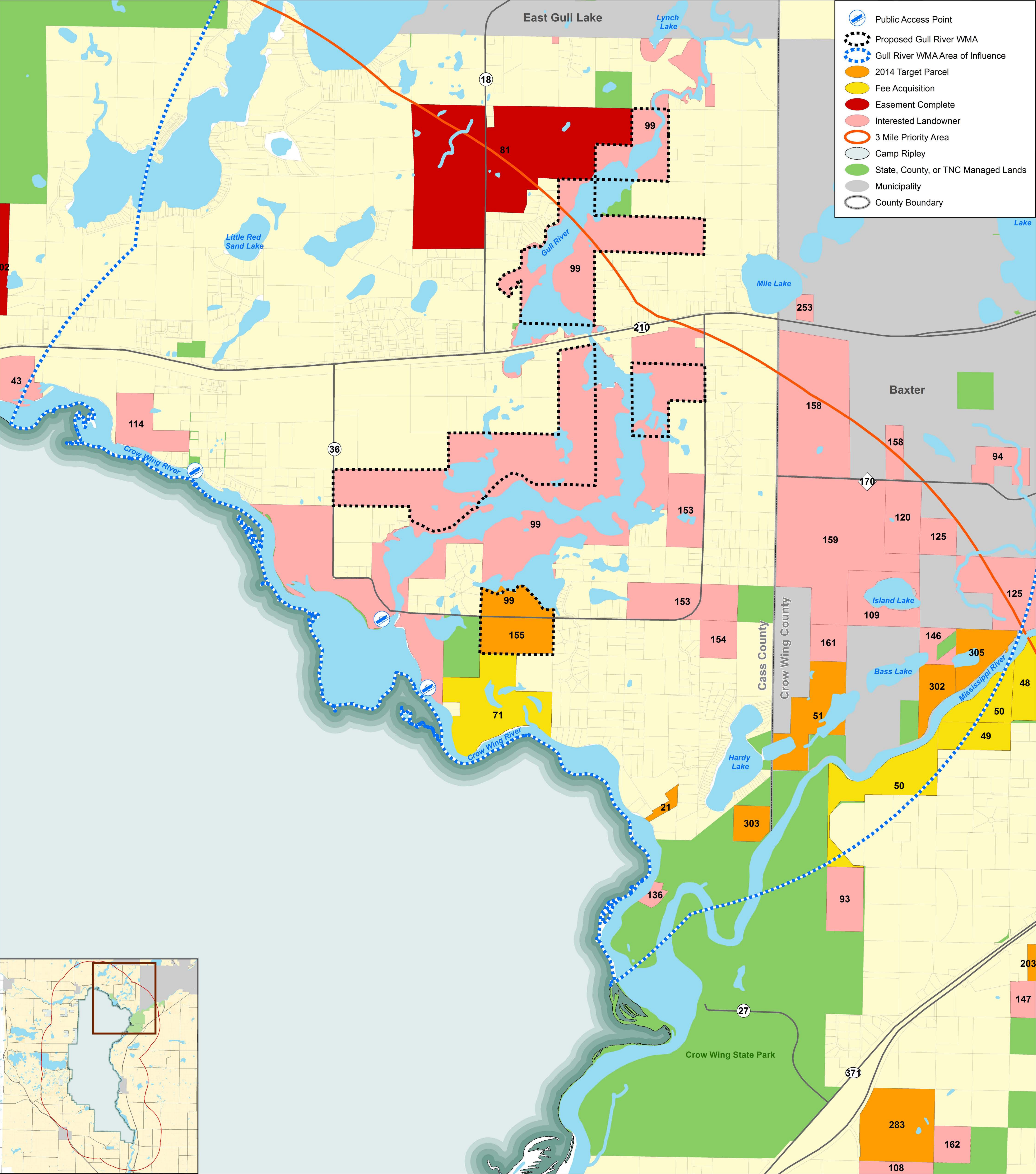
Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

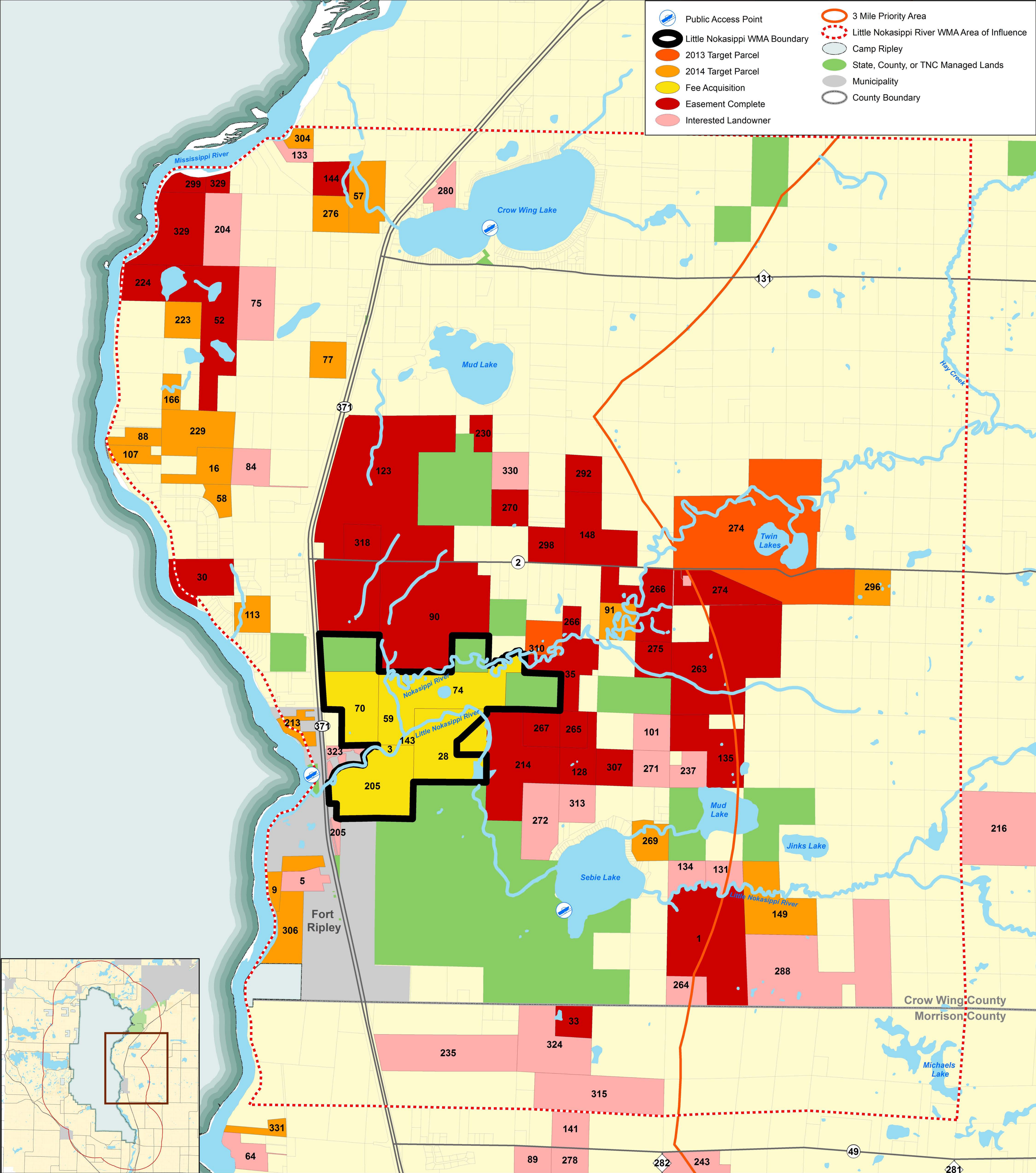
Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) Program Area



Gull River WMA Area of Influence



Little Nokasippi River WMA Area of Influence



The Camp Ripley Partnership: Protecting the Mission and Mighty Mississippi River

Referencing public access for fishing and hunting in the parcel list: The Mississippi River and Crow Wing and Gull Rivers have numerous public accesses available to everyone. Therefore, parcels fronting the river lend themselves to protected habitat for everyone's benefit. However, these private easements will not be open for public hunting.