

## Main Request for Funding Form

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

**Program or Project Title:** DNR Accelerated Forest Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Program

**Funds Requested:** \$7,239,000

**Manager's Name:** Bob Welsh

**Title:** Wildlife Habitat Program Mgr

**Organization:** Minnesota DNR

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**County Locations:** Aitkin, Beltrami, Carlton, Clearwater, Cook, Houston, Hubbard, Itasca, Kittson, Koochiching, Lake, Lake of the Woods, Marshall, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Pine, Roseau, St. Louis, Winona, and .

#### Ecological Planning Regions:

- Northern Forest
- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Southeast Forest

#### Activity Type:

- Restore
- Enhance

#### Priority Resources Addressed by Activity:

- Forest

### Abstract

On-the-ground conservation projects will enhance and restore habitat in targeted forest communities on Minnesota public forestlands. Habitat management techniques include prescribed burning, planting, shearing, thinning, pesticide application aimed at increasing diversity of native plant communities. Management will impact about 27,500 acres.

### Activity Detail

### Design and Scope of Work

**Problem to be addressed:** The 16.2 million acres of forestland in Minnesota is roughly half of what it was pre-settlement. As such, our forests face many pressures, not the least of which are fragmentation, invasive species, climate change, disease, and economic pressure from industry and recreation. The State of Minnesota administers about one quarter of the remaining forestland in Minnesota. These important natural communities contribute significantly to habitat for fish and wildlife, biodiversity, watershed protection and clean water, carbon sequestration, recreational opportunities, and jobs.

Forests in Minnesota are managed for diverse age and forest types. Some of this management is accomplished by commercial harvest while also providing natural resource based products to our economy. However, in order to perpetuate and maximize biodiversity and forest health, resource managers prescribe treatments, often supplemental to commercial harvest, to mimic natural disturbances that evolved along with forest communities but are often absent on the landscape due to human settlement, human use and forest fragmentation.

**Scope of our program:** The 53 projects in this proposal are organized by priority management objectives:

1. **Enhance forest community by altering the plant species composition and/or structure;** A variety of forest treatments will be applied such as under planting, young tree release, cut & herbicide treatment, shearing, hydro-axing, seeding, stump sprout thinning, prescribed burning, and deer exclosure in order to diversify age, species and structure composition to improve wildlife habitat and enhance forest health consistent with ecological classifications. The work is expected to benefit white-tailed deer winter browse, moose, pine marten, snowshoe hare, black bear, ruffed grouse, cotton tail, wild turkey, woodcock, squirrels and provide winter and nesting cover for a variety of other game and non-game species.
2. **Enhance brushland habitat by altering the plant species structure and/or composition;** Winter shearing and mowing will be to set back progressed decadent brushlands to rejuvenate these openlands for associated openland wildlife species and enhance brushland health consistent with forest planning processes. The work is expected to benefit early successional wildlife species like sharp-tailed grouse, sandhill crane, short-eared owl, woodcock, snipe, prairie chicken, golden winged warbler and yellow rails as well as white-tailed deer and moose and a variety of other game and non-game species.
3. **Improve the long-term viability of the St. Croix State Forest in response to windstorm event;** Over 40,000 acres of public land within the St. Croix State Forest were affected by a windstorm on July 1, 2011. This project will reforest damaged sites, improve degraded habitats, repair damage to trout stream habitat on 5,900 of those affected acres. Components of this project include: jack pine barrens restoration, conifer and hardwood restoration, conifer enhancement along trout streams to improve trout habitat.

**Urgency and opportunity:** Habitat loss and degradation are identified as the primary challenge facing wildlife. Almost one-third of the state's 292 Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) inhabit forests. Action is imperative in some forest types, especially oak type in the southeast, to regenerate forest types important to wildlife before they succeed to climax forest types that are more difficult to manage back to higher priority forest types. Implementation of these objectives in key habitats will maintain and enhance native forest communities supporting game and non-game wildlife populations.

**Site selection and priority setting:** Projects were submitted by regional and area staff in DNR Divisions of Fish and Wildlife, Forestry, and Ecological Resources, from the DNR Central, Northeast, and Northwest Regions. Interdisciplinary DNR teams screened and ranked projects that were then forwarded for inclusion in this proposal. Projects were reviewed with regard to Ecological Classification System (ECS) subsections and

Subsection Forest Resource Management Plans (SFRMP), which are subsection level plans that identify long-term desired future composition goals within the subsection on forest lands administered by the Division of Forestry and Section of Wildlife. Accomplishing SFRMP goals was the primary priority used by Regional and Area DNR staff selecting and ranking forest projects for inclusion in this program.

**Actions planned:** DNR staff will administer the program, engage contractors or CCM to conduct field work, and supervise activities in the field to assure effectiveness. Requested funds are for contracting with private vendors and CCM, supplies/small equipment, and related fleet expenses. Funds are being requested to support 0.25 FTE of a contract administrator position that will be shared between DNR Northeast and Central Regions and with a prairie habitat enhancement proposal to provide contract administration services to support Area Wildlife Staff by handling much of the contract paperwork. Overall, treatments will occur on about 27,500 acres and cost about \$263 per acre.

These projects are not conducted as part of the DNR's commercial timber operations. Projects included in this program are beyond what we are currently able to accomplish. With few exceptions, forest stand improvements will be implemented on state administered lands, (WMAs, state forests, and SNAs). The exceptions are a small number of projects that cross ownership boundaries with other public lands owners (County Forests, and U.S Forest Service National Forests).

**Stakeholder involvement:** The SFRMP process, the source for proposal goals, includes a fairly extensive stakeholder input process. We are not aware of stakeholder opposition to work included in this proposal.

## Planning

### MN State-wide Conservation Plan Priorities

- LU10 Support and expand sustainable practices on working forested lands

### Plans Addressed

- A Vision for Wildlife and Its Use -- Goals and Outcomes 2006-2012
- Driftless Area Restoration Effort
- Long Range Plan for the Wild Turkey
- Minnesota DNR Nongame Wildlife Plans
- Minnesota Forest Resource Council Landscape Plans
- Moose Advisory Committee Report to the Minnesota DNR
- Ruffed Grouse in Minnesota: A Long-Range Plan for Management
- Superior National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan
- SFRMP Plans

### LSOHC Statewide Priorities

- Restore or enhance habitat on state-owned WMAs, AMAs, SNAs, and state forests
- Target unique Minnesota landscapes that have historical value to fish and wildlife

### LSOHC Northern Forest Section Priorities

- Restore and enhance habitat on existing protected properties, with preference to habitat for rare, endangered, or threatened species identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey

- Restore forest-based wildlife habitat that has experienced substantial decline in area in recent decades

### LSOHC Southeast Forest Section Priorities

- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant goat prairies
- Restore forest-based wildlife habitat that has experienced substantial decline in area in recent decades

### Relationship to Other Constitutional Funds

none

### Accelerates or Supplements Current Efforts

These projects are not conducted as part of the DNR's commercial timber operations. Many of these projects are conducted pre or post treatment to assure that desired regeneration occurs following timber harvest activities. Projects included in this program are beyond what can currently be accomplished due either to funding or staffing. With few exceptions, forest stand improvements will be implemented on state administered lands, (WMAs, state forests, and SNAs). The exceptions are a small number of projects that cross ownership boundaries with other public lands owners (County Forests, and U.S Forest Service National Forests). Most of the work in the proposal will be completed by contract either with private vendors or CCM crews. The remainder will be accomplished by supplemental funding for supplies or fleet costs.

### Sustainability and Maintenance

In many cases, the projects outlined in this proposal have impacts that will be realized for decades. In other cases, habitats will be enhanced to the point of inserting them into a normal prescribed burn rotation to be performed by DNR crews or contract vendors funded through license fees and legislative appropriations.

Periodic enhancements such as invasive species removal or supplemental vegetation planting will be accomplished through annual funding requests to a variety of funding sources including, but not limited to, the Game and Fish Fund, bonding, gifts, the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund, the Outdoor Heritage Fund, and federal sources.

*Is the activity on permanently protected land and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15? - Yes (WMA, SNA, County/Municipal, State Forests, Federal Forest Service Land)*

### Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Contract planting	June 30, 2017
Hand tree release	June 30, 2017
Cut and herbicide treatment	June 30, 2017
Shearing, Hydro-axing and Mowing	June 30, 2017
Seeding	June 30, 2017
Stump sprout thinning	June 30, 2017
Prescribed burns	May 30, 2017
Install deer exclosures	June 30, 2014

## Outcomes

### **Programs in the northern forest region**

- 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

### **Programs in forest-prairie transition region**

- Increased availability and improved condition of riparian forests and other habitat corridors
- Protected, restored, and enhanced nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need

### **Programs in southeast forest region**

- Healthier populations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species as well as more common species

## Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$7,239,000

### Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Cash Leverage	Cash Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$14,000	\$0	-	\$14,000
Contracts	\$4,849,100	\$0	-	\$4,849,100
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Travel (in-state)	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Professional Services	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Direct Support Services	\$595,300	\$0	-	\$595,300
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$30,800	\$0	-	\$30,800
Supplies/Materials	\$1,749,800	\$0	-	\$1,749,800
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Total	\$7,239,000	\$0	-	\$7,239,000

### Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Cash Leverage	Cash Leverage Source	Total
Region 2/3 Contract Administrator	0.25	4.00	\$14,000	\$0	-	\$14,000
Total	0.25	4.00	\$14,000	\$0	-	\$14,000

### Capital Equipment

Item Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Cash Leverage	Cash Leverage Source	Total
Total	\$0	\$0	-	\$0

## Output Tables

Table 1. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	0	5,900	0	5,900
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	21,600	0	21,600
Total	0	0	27,500	0	27,500

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$2,497,800	\$0	\$2,497,800
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$4,741,200	\$0	\$4,741,200
Total	\$0	\$0	\$7,239,000	\$0	\$7,239,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	5,900	5,900
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	1,700	5,700	0	14,200	21,600
Total	0	1,700	5,700	0	20,100	27,500

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	\$2,497,800	\$2,497,800
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$408,200	\$1,705,600	\$0	\$2,627,400	\$4,741,200
Total	\$0	\$408,200	\$1,705,600	\$0	\$5,125,200	\$7,239,000

Table 5. Target Lake/Stream/River Miles

0 miles



## Parcel List

### Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

#### Aitkin

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Wagner East Bog Mowing	05026212	280	\$36,400	Yes
Wagner West Bog Mowing	05026211	160	\$20,800	Yes

#### Beltrami

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Habitat Diversity through Conifer Planting & Release	15633217	640	\$95,330	Yes
Red Lake Sedge Meadow/Wet Prairie Enhancement	15835236	650	\$47,000	Yes

#### Carlton

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Hasty Brushland Expansion Shear	04920202	61	\$4,575	Yes
Hasty Ditch Cluster Brush Shear	04920214	81	\$6,075	Yes
Hemlock Ravine SNA Exclosure	04816203	50	\$31,000	Yes
Nemadji Oak and Conifer Hand Release	04616226	1,420	\$72,000	Yes

#### Clearwater

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Northwest Brushland Restoration	14837224	1,400	\$106,050	Yes

#### Cook

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Boreal Forest Restoration	05509228	350	\$49,000	Yes
North Shore Forest Collaborative Cascade Forest Restoration	06402234	40	\$20,000	Yes
Swamp River WMA	06404133	234	\$25,000	Yes

Willow Prescribed Burn				
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#### Houston

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Chisholm Valley WMA Forest Stand Improvement	10307204	45	\$16,000	Yes

#### Hubbard

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Beaver Pond Conifers	14333220	60	\$57,980	Yes

#### Itasca

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Deer River Area Forestry Forest Conifer Stand Establishment	05625222	144	\$47,500	Yes
Deer River Forestry Paper Birch Establishment	05625222	100	\$20,800	Yes
Itasca County Forest Oak Planting	05923234	7	\$20,820	Yes
Lost 40 SNA Rx Burn	15027234	12	\$10,000	Yes

#### Kittson

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Northwest area Buckthorn treatment	16045216	100	\$72,600	Yes

#### Koochiching

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Agassiz Lowlands Beach Ridge Conifer Restoration	15627227	39	\$14,150	Yes
Agassiz Lowlands Long-Lived Conifer Seed Source Establishment in Aspen Stands	06525216	100	\$17,375	Yes
Birchdale Increasing White Pine in Pine Island State Forest	15829229	100	\$88,000	Yes
Northeast Mixed Conifer/Hardwood	15226236	20	\$9,650	Yes

Enhancement				
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#### Lake

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
FY14 OHF Northeast MN Upland Aerial Seeding	05410231	1,350	\$209,250	Yes
Toohey Gegoka Pine Restoration	05907204	551	\$176,475	Yes
Two Harbors Upland Conifer Release in Lake Co.	05608204	244	\$36,600	Yes

#### Lake of the Woods

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Baudette Meadows Shear	15932214	450	\$27,000	Yes
Baudette Underplanting	15735201	100	\$28,500	Yes

#### Marshall

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Thief River Falls Deer browse regeneration	15638202	300	\$45,000	Yes

#### Mille Lacs

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Forest Noxious Weed	04026210	550	\$55,000	Yes
Rum River State Forest Oak Enhancement	03926210	50	\$24,000	Yes
Rum River State Forest White Pine Restoration	04227229	35	\$22,000	Yes

#### Morrison

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Mud Lake WMA Buckthorn Control	12931201	66	\$114,000	Yes

#### Pine

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
St. Croix SF Blowdown Recovery & Restoration	04217234	5,900	\$2,407,000	Yes

#### Roseau

<b>Name</b>	<b>TRDS</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Est Cost</b>	<b>Existing Protection?</b>
Palmville WMA brush shearing	15940221	100	\$7,500	Yes
Red Lake Area Deer Browse Rejuvenation	15937217	20	\$3,000	Yes

St. Louis

<b>Name</b>	<b>TRDS</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Est Cost</b>	<b>Existing Protection?</b>
Brushland Mowing	06115224	600	\$78,000	Yes
Cloquet Area Long Lived Conifer Protection	04817212	323	\$71,060	Yes
Cloquet Valley Mechanical Site Prep & Seeding	04818212	94	\$15,980	Yes
Echo Trail Cooperative Oak- Blueberry Outcrop Habitat Project	06319201	2,000	\$400,000	Yes
Hwy 29 Bog Mow	05418219	59	\$7,670	Yes
Lost Lake Peatland SNA Rx Burn	06216229	12	\$10,000	Yes
Northeast Patch TSI work	06115216	300	\$33,000	Yes
OHF Cloquet Valley Conifer Restoration	04917234	321	\$115,110	Yes
Simek Bog Mow	05418218	56	\$7,280	Yes
Tower Area Forest Enhancement	06115204	800	\$134,400	Yes
Tower Area Upland Conifer Hand Release	06115219	1,000	\$80,000	Yes

Winona

<b>Name</b>	<b>TRDS</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Est Cost</b>	<b>Existing Protection?</b>
Forest Development WWMA	10810225	600	\$300,000	Yes
Oak Stand Improvement for Wildlife	10412210	1,700	\$340,000	Yes
Prescribed Burning on Bluff Prairies and Oak Forests	10310219	600	\$40,000	Yes
Silvicultural Activities	10311207	1,600	\$626,000	Yes

to Enhance Oak				
White Pine Enhancement	10810225	1,200	\$240,000	Yes
Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?

## Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type protect.

## 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.