

Main Request for Funding Form

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

Program or Project Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program Phase V

Funds Requested: \$4,226,000

Manager's Name: Brad Cobb

Title: Program Manager

Organization: Green Corridor Inc.

Street Address: 200 S. Mill St.

City: Redwood Falls, MN 56283

Telephone: 507.637.4004

E-Mail: 1231TLC@charter.net

Organization Web Site: www.tatankabluffs.com

County Locations: Cottonwood, Lyon, Murray, and Nicollet.

Ecological Planning Regions:

- Prairie

Activity Type:

- Restore
- Enhance
- Protect in Fee

Priority Resources Addressed by Activity:

- Wetlands
- Prairie
- Habitat

Abstract

This Green Corridor Legacy Program - Phase V proposal will help create a legacy of habitat connectivity, public access, and economic vitality based on increased outdoor recreational opportunities within the program area. This program is a continuation of previously funded OHF.

Activity Detail

Design and Scope of Work

The Glacial River Warren created the Minnesota River Valley as it drained Lake Agassiz 10,000+ years ago. The bluff to bluff wall of water carved out one of Minnesota's most scenic landscapes, creating unique geological features, and unique plant communities along the valley and its primary tributaries.

This program incorporates the basic concepts of sustainability and ecosystem management. Minnesota has lost 99% of the original prairie and has seen dramatic declines in grassland dependent wildlife. Examples of the species showing the greatest conservation need in the Program area; the American Badger, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Bobolink to name just a few. Traditional game species are also affected by the decline in habitat such as pheasants, deer, wild turkey, and a variety of dabbling ducks which are associated to prairie wetland complexes.

Efforts to restore, protect, and enhance our wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife are timely as escalating development pressures and expiring CRP contracts threaten remaining natural lands and water resources on both public and private lands. The Green Corridor Legacy Program approach will be based on sound science concepts of plan development, setting conservation priorities, developing short and long term strategies to achieve conservation priorities, implement the strategies, and then continue monitoring the outcomes. All of these concepts and practices will follow existing state wildlife and conservation plans and natural resource management practices in conjunction with agency partners.

Publicly owned natural resource infrastructures (WMA, AMA, SNA, parks/trails, waterways) invigorates local and regional economies by providing outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities supported by hunting, fishing, wildlife observation areas, and other forms of outdoor recreation. New business concepts are likely to arise as a direct result of the recreational and tourism opportunities that will be advanced by this Green Corridor Legacy Program. Because of this concept there is wide support from many stakeholders who will assist the Program activities to achieve the desired outcomes.

The proposed fee title acquisitions will be considered from a priority list of properties based on several key factors of which show the most urgent need and/or opportunities from willing and supportive landowners. All selected projects will have the support and cooperation of the DNR for acceptance into the WMA/AMA inventory system. All proposed projects will provide county notifications and will seek their approval.

The primary program area of the Green Corridor Legacy Program will be Redwood, Renville, Yellow Medicine, Chippewa, Brown, Nicollet, Murray, Lyon, and Cottonwood Counties with an emphasis along rivers, tributaries, associated watersheds, and creating/expanding corridor or complexes of habitat. Connecting existing fragments of habitat in the Program area will generate an ecological synergism that will allow game, wildlife, and aquatic species to flourish, while creating multiple outdoor recreational opportunities and improving public access through a series (phases) of funded activities within the nine (9) county Program area.

This Program is directly consistent with the uses of the Outdoor Heritage Fund, as specified in Article XI of the Minnesota Constitution and Minnesota Statute 97A.056: to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife. Furthermore, it will produce multiple conservation benefits across a large targeted and planned geographic area. This Program also supports the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan and its newly emerging partner initiatives.

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
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds
- H6 Protect and restore critical in-water habitat of lakes and streams

Plans Addressed

- A Vision for Wildlife and Its Use -- Goals and Outcomes 2006-2012
- Long Range Plan for Fisheries Management
- Long Range Plan for the Ring-Necked Pheasant in MN
- Long Range Plan for the Wild Turkey
- Minnesota DNR AMA Acquisition Plan
- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda
- Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan
- Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition - The Next 50 Years
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework
- State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Strategic Habitat Conservation Model

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 conservation opportunities that will be lost if not immediately acted on
- Restore or enhance habitat on state-owned WMAs, AMAs, SNAs, and state forests
- Use a science-based strategic planning and evaluation model to guide protection, restoration and enhancement, similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model
- 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
- Target unique Minnesota landscapes that have historical value to fish and wildlife

LSOHC Prairie Section Priorities

- Protect, enhance, or restore existing wetland/upland complexes, or convert agricultural lands to new wetland/upland habitat complexes
- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna
- Convert agricultural land to wetland/upland to protect, enhance, or restore existing habitat complexes, such as WMAs
- Restore or enhance habitat on public lands

- Protect expiring CRP lands
- Protect, enhance, and restore migratory habitat for waterfowl and related species, so as to increase migratory and breeding success

Relationship to Other Constitutional Funds

- Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund

The Green Corridor Legacy Program has received funding from the Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund in FY08 - \$1,000,000 completed and FY12 - \$2,000,000 in progress. The Green Corridor Legacy Program focuses on preserving and restoring natural resources infrastructures while emphasizing habitat connectivity (corridors), viability, and public access to these habitats. The Green Corridor Legacy Program will assist when asked with submissions to the Outdoor Heritage Fund – Conservation Legacy Program (small grants) from our conservation and wildlife group partners like the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, Minnesota Waterfowl Association, National Wild Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and Pheasants Forever. Many other regional initiatives are currently being planned that are in line with Parks & Trails and Arts & Cultural Legacy Funds funding strategies.

Accelerates or Supplements Current Efforts

This program proposal will supplement other traditional forms of funding (past, current, and future) that the Green Corridor Legacy Program has received such as the Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund. This program is proposing federal North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant submissions with other partners. If this program is recommended for OHF funding, we will begin to seek leverage funds for additional support of this program.

Source of Funding	Amount	Status
ENRTF FY2008	\$1,000,000	Completed 2010
OHF FY2010	\$1,617,000	Final Report Submitted
OHF FY2011	\$1,651,000	Final Report Submitted
OHF FY2012	\$1,771,000	Funding started 7/20/11
ENRTF FY2012	\$2,000,000	Funding started 7/20/11
OHF FY2013	\$1,730,000	Funding starts 7/1/12

Sustainability and Maintenance

First, initial site restoration (bare ground with native vegetation) and development (signage, parking lots, fencing) will be accomplished by this appropriation that would need restoration. The DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife will manage these properties into perpetuity. Routine maintenance will be managed and determined by area DNR staff funded by their traditional sources like the Game & Fish Fund. Periodic enhancements or improvements will be funded by special funding requests. The DNR requires management or stewardship plans for each project which identify periodic inspections and continuing management of the property site. These management practices include such things as; prescribed fire, weed control, and invasive tree removal as needed or required and are usually spelled out in the Initial Development Plan (IDP) for each parcel. Regional partners/stakeholders in conjunction with the Green Corridor Legacy

Program will also support these management activities/practices by applying for state funding/grants for on-going maintenance as needed.

Will local government approval be sought prior to acquisition? - **No**

Fee title of acquisitions notifications will be made to the respective County Board of Commissioners and if required by law County Board of Commissioner approval will be sought.

Is the land you plan to acquire free of any other permanent protection? - **No**

In some cases acquired land may have a portion of those acres in a permanent conservation easement (protection) like RIM. In those cases we will seek a donation of those acres from a willing landowner.

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

Is the activity on permanently protected land and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15? - **Yes (WMA, AMA)**

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Complete Appraisals and Reviews for selected parcels	October 2013
Purchase Agreements	October 2013
Closing dates	April 2014
Complete initial restoration & IDP	April 2015

Outcomes

Programs in prairie region

- Core areas protected with highly biologically diverse wetlands and plant communities, including native prairie, Big Woods, and oak savanna
- Expiring CRP lands are permanently protected
- Protected, restored, and enhanced habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need
- Protected, restored, and enhanced shallow lakes and wetlands
- Remnant native prairies and wetlands are permanently protected and are part of large complexes of restored prairie, grasslands, and large and small wetlands

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$4,226,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Cash Leverage	Cash Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Contracts	\$50,000	\$0	-	\$50,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$3,906,000	\$0	-	\$3,906,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Travel (in-state)	\$2,000	\$0	-	\$2,000
Professional Services	\$34,000	\$0	-	\$34,000
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$30,000	\$0	-	\$30,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$0	\$0	-	\$0
DNR IDP	\$204,000	\$0	-	\$204,000
Total	\$4,226,000	\$0	-	\$4,226,000

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Cash Leverage	Cash Leverage Source	Total
Total	0.00	0.00	\$0	\$0	-	\$0

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	240	0	0	240
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	558	0	0	558
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	798	0	0	798

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$204,000	\$0	\$0	\$204,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$4,022,000	\$0	\$0	\$4,022,000
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$4,226,000	\$0	\$0	\$4,226,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	240	0	240
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	558	0	558
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	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	798	0	798

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$204,000	\$0	\$204,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,022,000	\$0	\$4,022,000
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	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,226,000	\$0	\$4,226,000

Table 5. Target Lake/Stream/River Miles

1 miles

Parcel List

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Cottonwood

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Rock Ridge WMA -Tract 1	10735214	160	\$1,120,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Lyon

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Lyndwood WMA	11142228	70	\$490,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Rolling Hills WMA-Tract 1	11140206	19	\$133,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Murray

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Devils Run WMA - Tract 6	10734232	75	\$525,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Irruption WMA - Tract 5	10639220	80	\$560,000	No	Full	Full
Shetek Inlet WMA	10841211	100	\$700,000	No	Full	Full

Nicollet

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Fritsche Creek WMA-Tract 8	11030206	54	\$378,000	Yes	Full	Full

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.