



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Laws of Minnesota 2014 Final Report

General Information

Date: 10/19/2020

Project Title: Accelerating the Wildlife Management Area Program - Phase 6

Funds Recommended: \$10,350,000

Legislative Citation: ML 2014, Ch. 256, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2(b)

Appropriation Language: \$10,350,000 in the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Pheasants Forever to acquire land in fee for wildlife management area purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8. Lands acquired with this appropriation may not be used for emergency haying and grazing in response to federal or state disaster declarations. Conservation grazing under a management plan that is already being implemented may continue. Subject to the evaluation criteria under Minnesota Rules, part 6136.0900, priority must be given to acquisition of lands that are eligible for the native prairie bank under Minnesota Statutes, section 84.96, or lands adjacent to protected native prairie. A list of proposed land acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Sabin Adams

Title: MN Project Manager

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Location Information

County Location(s): Blue Earth, Wright, Martin, Lyon, Yellow Medicine, Lac qui Parle, Le Sueur, Stevens, Jackson, Waseca and Sibley.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie
- Metro / Urban

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Prairie

Narrative**Summary of Accomplishments**

This phase of WMA acquisition protected 1802.55 acres of prairie grassland, wetland, and other wildlife habitat as State Wildlife Management Areas open to public hunting. With these 16 acquisition we have exceeded our planned acres of 1362 by more than 400 acres. Breaking down acres by ecological section we acquired 282 acres in the metro and 1520 acres in the prairie. We have a balance of \$52,798 of grant funds and \$81,837.48 in program income that will be returned despite exceeding our acre goals.

Process & Methods

The pressures from development, industry, and agriculture continue to mount on wildlife habitat within the farmland regions of Minnesota. In fact, despite our collective investments in conservation, it is believed that many of the agricultural counties in Minnesota are continuing to experience a net loss of wildlife habitat. This unfortunate reality is currently being exacerbated by conversion of lands expiring out of CRP. Now, more than ever, is the time to accelerate our investments in permanently protected high quality public habitat complexes that will protect, maintain, and increase Minnesota's wildlife populations. In addition, being able to provide public areas for Minnesotans to hunt, trap, fish and otherwise recreate in the outdoors are urgent needs and is fundamental to ensure Minnesota's outdoor heritage and appreciation of the outdoors is passed on to future generations.

To help slow and reverse the loss of habitat and declining wildlife populations, Pheasants Forever (PF) and our partners will protect (fee acquisition from willing sellers) 1,362 acres of high priority grassland (native prairie if available), wetland, and wildlife habitat as state Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) throughout the pheasant range of Minnesota. Striving to build landscape level habitat complexes that will protect and sustain wildlife populations, many of the potential projects are additions to existing WMAs or WPAs, many of which were originally acquired in partnership with MNDNR, local PF chapters, and conservation partners.

Projects were developed and selected in conjunction with local and regional DNR staff. All projects will meet standards and requirements for inclusion into the WMA system and DNR Commissioner approval will be received for any project funded under this proposal. In addition to meeting the minimum WMA standards, additional criteria were used to develop the potential project list including:

Does the parcel contain habitat restoration potential that will result in an increase in wildlife populations?

Does the parcel build upon existing investments in public and private land habitat (landscape scale significance)?

Does the parcel contain significant natural communities or will it protect or buffer significant natural communities?

Does the parcel have the potential and focus for habitat protection and restoration in the future?

Does the parcel provide multiple benefits (recreation, access, water control, water quality, lakeshore, local community support etc.)?

All acquired lands will meet the minimum initial development standards for WMAs. In addition, providing high quality habitat and keeping future management concerns in mind, all acquisitions will be restored and/or enhanced to as high quality as practicable, with the belief that quality and comprehensive restorations utilizing native species result in lower management costs. Acquired croplands will be permanently retired and restored to diverse grasslands and wetlands to the fullest extent. Enhancement work may include undesirable woody vegetation removal, water control structure installation, inter-seeding to increase diversity and structure, managed grazing, invasive species control, or any other activity that improves the diversity and health of the prairie-wetland habitat complex.

Pheasants Forever's network of 76 Minnesota chapters and 26,000 members have been actively involved in protecting and restoring lands in partnership with the Minnesota DNR for 27 years and will continue to be a priority. WMA's are an integral component to the comprehensive conservation strategy within the prairie region of the state. The WMAs within this proposal will not only protect, increase, and sustain wildlife habitat and populations; they will provide access and recreational opportunities, including hunting, to ALL Minnesotans, so fundamentally important to our outdoor heritage.

Explain Partners, Supporters, & Opposition

We worked closely with MN DNR to find and evaluate the best properties based on the criteria listed in the process and methods section. During the process, we also worked with many other partners to gauge interest levels and determine if the property is suitable for Wildlife Management Area.

Exceptional challenges, expectations, failures, opportunities, or unique aspects of program

There were no exceptional failures or challenges that were encountered. This is due in part to our high level of collaboration and efficiency. We also strive to be respectful and accommodating in helping to facilitate landowners wishes when working with willing sellers as many see this as leaving their own habitat legacy.

What other funds contributed to this program?

What is the plan to sustain and/or maintain this work after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended?

All acquisition's in this appropriation have been transferred to the MN DNR for enrollment into the Wildlife Management Area program, additionally all WMA's have been fully restored. The long-term management & maintenance of these WMA's will be the responsibility of the MN DNR.

Budget

Totals

Item	Request	Spent	Antic. Leverage	Received Leverage	Leverage Source	Original Total	Final Total
Personnel	\$90,000	\$65,800	-	-	-	\$90,000	\$65,800
Contracts	\$421,000	\$322,000	\$65,000	\$61,000	PF, Private, Federal	\$486,000	\$383,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$9,515,500	\$9,467,600	\$277,000	\$1,237,200	PF, Private, Federal	\$9,792,500	\$10,704,800
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$3,500	\$1,200	-	-	-	\$3,500	\$1,200
Professional Services	\$85,000	\$84,900	-	\$3,700	PF, Private, Federal	\$85,000	\$88,600
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$40,000	\$46,000	-	-	-	\$40,000	\$46,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$195,000	\$114,600	-	\$27,700	PF, Private, Federal	\$195,000	\$222,700
DNR IDP	-	\$41,800	-	-	-	-	\$41,800
Grand Total	\$10,350,000	\$10,143,900	\$342,000	\$1,329,600	-	\$10,692,000	\$11,553,900

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
PF Director of Conservation	0.08	3.0	\$22,000	-	-	\$22,000
PF Regional Field Staff	0.08	3.0	\$21,900	-	-	\$21,900
PF National Grants Staff	0.2	3.0	\$21,900	-	-	\$21,900

Explain any budget challenges or successes:

Pheasants Forever was able to bring \$1.3 million dollars worth of non-state match to this phase of WMA acquisition. We did not experience any budget challenges.

Total Revenue: \$123,839

Revenue Spent: \$42,001

Revenue Balance: \$0

Of the money disclosed above, what are the appropriate uses of the money:

- C. This revenue, or a portion of it, was transferred back to the OHF.
- B. This revenue, or a portion of it, was used for other purposes as approved in the AP by the LSOHC.

Output Tables

Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland (AP)	Wetland (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	Forest (AP)	Forest (Final)	Habitat (AP)	Habitat (Final)	Total Acres (AP)	Total Acres (Final)
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	340	180	1,022	1,623	0	0	0	0	1,362	1,803
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	340	180	1,022	1,623	0	0	0	0	1,362	1,803

How many of these Prairie acres are Native Prairie? (Table 1b)

Type	Native Prairie (AP)	Native Prairie (Final)
Restore	-	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	61
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	0
Protect in Easement	-	0
Enhance	-	0
Total	-	61

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland (AP)	Wetland (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	Forest (AP)	Forest (Final)	Habitat (AP)	Habitat (Final)	Total Funding (AP)	Total Funding (Final)
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$2,588,000	\$1,028,500	\$7,762,000	\$9,115,400	-	-	-	-	\$10,350,000	\$10,143,900
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$2,588,000	\$1,028,500	\$7,762,000	\$9,115,400	-	-	-	-	\$10,350,000	\$10,143,900

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro / Urban (AP)	Metro / Urban (Final)	Forest / Prairie (AP)	Forest / Prairie (Final)	SE Forest (AP)	SE Forest (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	N. Forest (AP)	N. Forest (Final)	Total (AP)	Total (Final)
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	130	282	324	0	0	0	908	1,521	0	0	1,362	1,803
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	130	282	324	0	0	0	908	1,521	0	0	1,362	1,803

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban (AP)	Metro/Urban (Final)	Forest / Prairie (AP)	Forest / Prairie (Final)	SE Forest (AP)	SE Forest (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	N. Forest (AP)	N. Forest (Final)	Total (AP)	Total (Final)
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$1,576,000	\$1,614,500	\$1,478,000	-	-	-	\$7,296,000	\$8,529,400	-	-	\$10,350,000	\$10,143,900
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$1,576,000	\$1,614,500	\$1,478,000	-	-	-	\$7,296,000	\$8,529,400	-	-	\$10,350,000	\$10,143,900

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland (AP)	Wetland (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	Forest (AP)	Forest (Final)	Habitat (AP)	Habitat (Final)
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$7,611	\$5,713	\$7,594	\$5,616	-	-	-	-

Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro / Urban (AP)	Metro / Urban (Final)	Forest / Prairie (AP)	Forest / Prairie (Final)	SE Forest (AP)	SE Forest (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	N. Forest (AP)	N. Forest (Final)
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$12,123	\$5,725	\$4,561	-	-	-	\$8,035	\$5,607	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

18407.19

Outcomes

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Water is kept on the land ~ *We did not acquire any tracts in the Forest-Prairie transition region.*
- Other ~ *We did not acquire any tracts in the Forest-Prairie transition region.*
- Protected, restored, and enhanced nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need ~ *We did not acquire any tracts in the Forest-Prairie transition region.*

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- A network of natural land and riparian habitats will connect corridors for wildlife and species in greatest conservation need ~ *We acquired three tracts in the metropolitan urbanizing region totaling 282.25, including 45.82 acres of wetlands. Two of these tracts are additions to existing WMA's and create greater connected habitat corridors for wildlife. All acres are open to public recreation an hunting.*
- Protected habitats will hold wetlands and shallow lakes open to public recreation and hunting ~ *We acquired three tracts in the metropolitan urbanizing region totaling 282.25, including 45.82 acres of wetlands. Two of these tracts are additions to existing WMA's and create greater connected habitat corridors for wildlife. All acres are open to public recreation an hunting.*
- Other ~ *We acquired three tracts in the metropolitan urbanizing region totaling 282.25, including 45.82 acres of wetlands. Two of these tracts are additions to existing WMA's and create greater connected habitat corridors for wildlife. All acres are open to public recreation an hunting.*

Programs in prairie region:

- Expiring CRP lands are permanently protected ~ *Pheasants Forever acquired 13 tracts in the Prairie region of Minnesota. These acquisitions add 1520.3 acres of quality prairie and wetland habitat for wildlife as well as public land access for hunting and other outdoor recreation.*
- Agriculture lands are converted to grasslands to sustain functioning prairie systems ~ *Pheasants Forever acquired 13 tracts in the Prairie region of Minnesota. These acquisitions add 1520.3 acres of quality prairie and wetland habitat for wildlife as well as public land access for hunting and other outdoor recreation.*
- Improved access to public lands ~ *Pheasants Forever acquired 13 tracts in the Prairie region of Minnesota. These acquisitions add 1520.3 acres of quality prairie and wetland habitat for wildlife as well as public land access for hunting and other outdoor recreation.*
- Protected, restored, and enhanced habitat for migratory and unique Minnesota species ~ *Pheasants Forever acquired 13 tracts in the Prairie region of Minnesota. These acquisitions add 1520.3 acres of quality prairie and wetland habitat for wildlife as well as public land access for hunting and other outdoor recreation.*

Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?

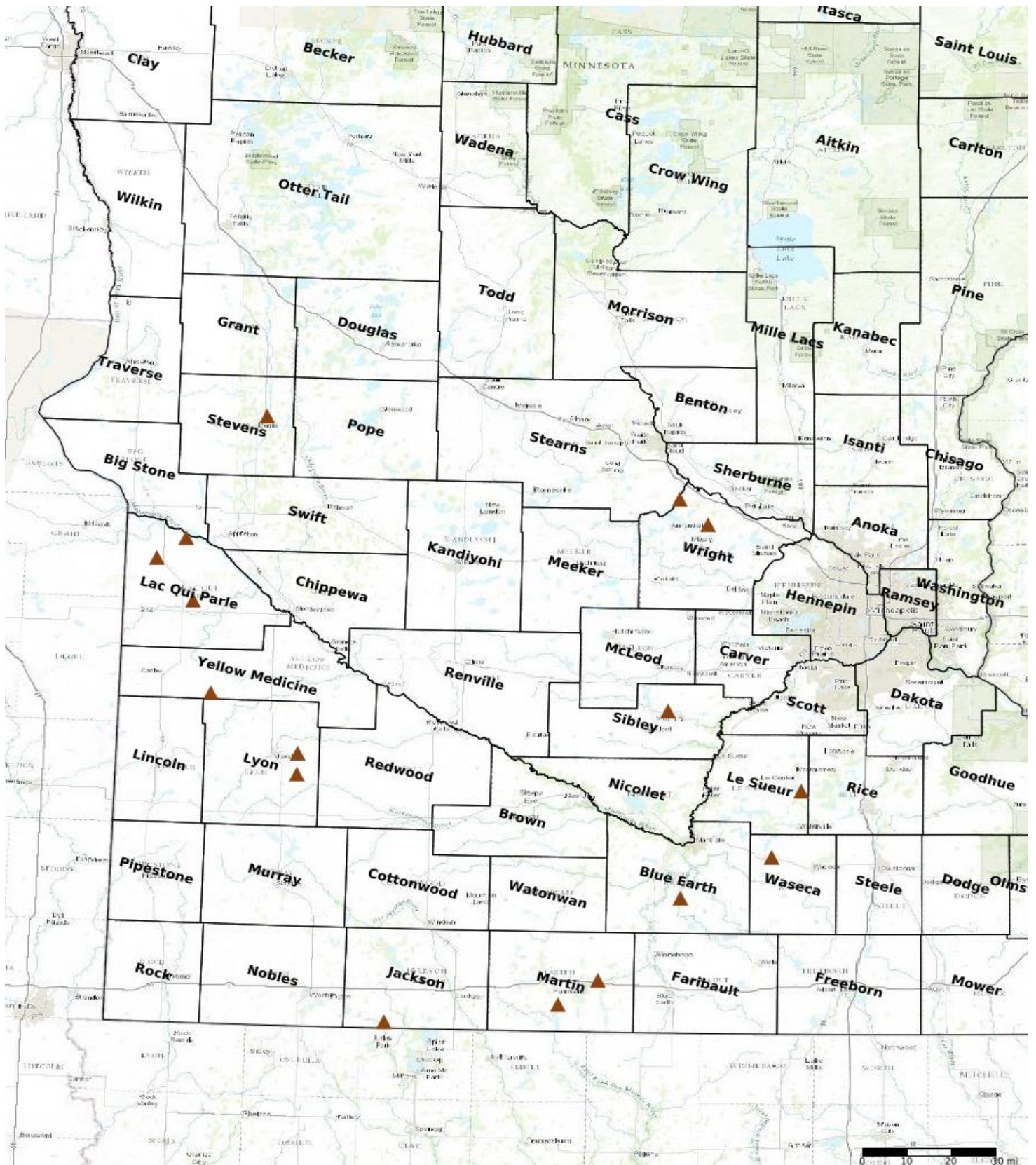
No

Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Maple River WMA Addition	Blue Earth	10627222	116	\$700,000	No
Sioux Valley WMA Addition	Jackson	10137228	247	\$1,000,000	No
Lac Qui Parle WMA	Lac qui Parle	12044220	160	\$360,000	-
25th Anniversary WMA Addition	Lac qui Parle	11744203	158	\$770,000	No
Caerulean WMA Addition	Lac qui Parle	11945217	73	\$250,000	No
Dora Lake WMA	Le Sueur	11023211	84	\$400,000	No
Rolling Hills WMA Addition	Lyon	11140205	120	\$1,000,000	No
Amiret WMA Addition	Lyon	11140232	119	\$745,000	No
Gruven WMA	Martin	10330235	101	\$800,000	No
Arlington WMA Addition	Sibley	11327206	99	\$444,600	Yes
Dolven WMA Addition	Stevens	12541219	29	\$120,000	No
Linde WMA Addition	Waseca	10824235	76	\$650,000	No
MN Veterans WMA Addition	Wright	12227221	31	\$120,000	No
New WMA (Maple Lake)	Wright	12126221	160	\$650,000	No
Meager WMA	Yellow Medicine	11443229	158	\$800,000	-

Protect Parcels with Buildings

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Buildings	Value of Buildings
Island WMA Addition (Skoby-King)	Martin	10231233	72	\$310,000	No	4	\$0



- Protect in Easement
- ▲ Protect in Fee with PILT
- Protect in Fee W/O PILT
- ★ Restore
- ✕ Enhance
- ⊕ Other

Parcel Map
Accelerating the Wildlife Management Area
Program - Phase 6
(Data Generated From Parcel List)