

Request for Funding

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Fiscal Year 2015 / ML 2014

Program or Project Title: Anoka Sandplain Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, Phase 3

Funds Requested: \$1,996,000

Manager's Name: Wayne Ostlie

Title: Director of Conservation Programs

Organization: Great River Greening

Street Address: 35 W Water Street

City: St. Paul, MN 55107

Telephone: 651-665-9500

E-Mail: wostlie@greatrivergreening.org

Organization Web Site: www.greatrivergreening.org

County Locations: Anoka, Benton, Isanti, Morrison, Sherburne, and Stearns.

Ecological Planning Regions:

- Northern Forest
- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie
- Metro / Urban

Activity Type:

- Restore
- Enhance

Priority Resources Addressed by Activity:

- Wetlands
- Forest
- Prairie
- Habitat

Abstract:

The Anoka Sandplain Partnership (Phase 3) proposal will restore and enhance 5,249 acres of wildlife habitat on priority public lands principally within the Anoka Sandplain Ecological Region within the Metropolitan Urbanizing, Forest-Prairie, Prairie and Northern Forest regions.

Design and Scope of Work:

The Anoka Sandplain Partnership includes >23 government agencies and organizations working to *protect, enhance and restore the lands and waters of the Anoka Sandplain*. Using a slate of information to target our actions – DNR's MCBS Sites of Biodiversity Significance, Regionally Ecological Significant Areas, and Habitat Corridors – we put forward an ambitious third proposal to accelerate restoration/enhancement of important wildlife habitat.

Problems Addressed: Wildlife habitat in the ASP is impacted by numerous threats, resulting in an urgent need for action:

1. Native habitats have become rare and continue to be lost. Oak savanna and prairie - the characteristic habitat of the Anoka Sandplain - now persist over <1% of their historic range. Due to its proximity to the Twin Cities, the ASP is realizing immense development pressure on what native habitat remains.
2. Degradation of habitats on public lands and waters threatens associated wildlife populations. Reduction in habitat quality has had profound impacts on wildlife in the ASP. Minnesota's CWCP identifies maintenance, enhancement and protection of oak savannas as its first priority in addressing the 97 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) occurring in this ecological subsection.
3. Government agencies often lack sufficient resources/capacity to manage important lands. Inadequate funding/capacity for restoration activities on public lands has resulted in declines in the condition of Minnesota's most important wildlife habitats.

Scope of Work

The following outcomes will be realized:

1. Expansion of ongoing restoration/enhancement to 20 new project areas. Sites include: 5 state WMAs, 1 Forest, 1 SNA; 2 national wildlife refuges; and 9 local/county/regional parks,
2. Restoration/enhancement of 4,985 acres of habitat across priority lands and waters.
3. Engagement of local communities in the implementation of project activities.

Proposed Project Areas:

Participating partners in this proposal include:

1. Anoka Conservation District

Anoka Nature Preserve, Phase 2 - On the banks of the Rum River, this 200-acre forest/wetland preserve provides habitat for a diversity of species. *Actions:* Restoration of 55 acres of old field into prairie.

Rum River Riparian Restoration, Cedar Creek Nature Preserve & Rum River Central Regional Park - One mile of eroding riverbank has been identified along Anoka County's Rum River on public park lands, impacting habitat for fish species. *Actions:* Enhancement of 850 feet of riparian and instream habitat through installation of weirs, cedar revetments, and willow staking.

Buckthorn Clean Sweep - Anoka County supports over 3,000 acres of high quality (MCBS mapped) natural habitat on public lands, *Actions:* Enhancement of 760 acres of MCBS forest habitat on a variety of public lands through buckthorn control.

2. Great River Greening

Sand Dunes State Forest - The new SDSF *Operational Plan* (2013), developed to bring balance between economic and ecological assets of the Forest, identifies 630 acres of the 5,700-acre forest for immediate action to address imperiled native plant communities and rare species. *Actions:* Enhancement of 375 acres of priority habitat through pine removal, prescribed burning, and invasive species control.

Sherburne NWR, Phase 3 - This 30,700-acre refuge was created to protect/restore habitats for migratory birds and other wildlife, with a focus on oak savanna, wetlands and Big Woods habitat. *Actions:* Enhancement of 2,400 acres of wetland/meadow and oak savanna habitat through prescribed fire, herbicide cattail control, and initiation of a grazing regime (with construction of a 9.5 mile fence).

Crane Meadows NWR - Crane Meadows was established to preserve the state's largest sedge meadow wetland complex and associated breeding sandhill crane population, and includes a diverse mix of native prairie, savanna, and wetlands. *Actions:* Enhancement of 480 acres of habitat through woody thinning/control, seeding, and tree planting.

BenLacs WMA - This 569-acre WMA includes forest interspersed with wetlands, offering diverse recreational opportunities ranging from hunting/fishing to skiing. *Actions:* Enhancement of 322 acres of mixed forest and wetland habitat through woody invasive species control.

McDougall Homestead WMA - This 228-acre WMA of high-quality floodplain forest, oak woodland and restored

prairie, lies along the Mississippi River and is home to more than 30 SGCN. *Actions:* Enhancement of 200 acres of oak woodland and savanna through woody invasive species control.

Sand Prairie WMA, Phase 2 - This 700-acre WMA is characterized by prairie and aspen/oak woodland, and is the first designated Environmental Education Area in the state, providing strong connections to local schools/colleges. *Actions:* Enhancement of 62 acres of oak woodland through invasive species control.

Mud Lake WMA - This 718-acre WMA is a mosaic of marsh, brushland, prairie and hardwood forest that provides habitat for game and non-game species alike. *Actions:* Enhancement of 88 acres of hardwood forest through woody invasive species control.

Kelsey Round Lake Park - Situated on Round Lake, the park's woodlands and restored prairies provide habitat for many species ranging from waterfowl and songbirds to Blanding's turtles. *Actions:* Enhancement of 35 acres of Big Woods forest through invasive species control and planting.

3. Isanti County Parks

Vegsund County Park - This 80-acre park consists of oak woodland, restored prairies, wetlands, along 1/2 mile of Lake Seventeen's undeveloped shoreline, an attractive fishery. *Actions:* Enhancement of 18 acres of woodland through removal of woody invasive species and prescribed burning

Anderson County Park - The 174-acre park lies adjacent to Horseshoe and Horse Leg lakes, and consists of wetlands, prairie and oak savanna/woodland in the process of restoration. *Actions:* Enhancement of 18 acres of oak woodland through removal of woody invasive control and prescribed fire.

Springvale County Park, Phase 2 - This 211-acre park is situated on Johnny's Lake and lies on rolling eskers of prairie, woodlands and wetlands. *Actions:* Enhancement of 34 acres of oak woodland through removal of woody invasive control and prescribed burning.

Cambridge City Park - This 151-acre park protects floodplain forest situated along 1.5 miles of the Wild & Scenic Rum River. *Actions:* Enhancement of 67 acres of floodplain forest through woody invasive control.

4. Stearns SWCD

Mississippi River County Park - This 340-acre park contains 1.3 miles of Mississippi River frontage, and 80 acres of upland forest and restored prairie managed in their natural state. *Actions:* Enhancement of forest through invasive species control; restoration of 630 feet of river shoreline.

Planning

MN State-wide Conservation Plan Priorities:

- H3 Improve connectivity and access to recreation
- H4 Restore and protect shallow lakes
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds
- LU10 Support and expand sustainable practices on working forested lands

Plans Addressed:

- Long Range Plan for the Wild Turkey
- Minnesota DNR Nongame Wildlife Plans
- Minnesota DNR Scientific and Natural Area's Long Range Plan
- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda
- Minnesota Forest Resource Council Landscape Plans
- National Audubon Society Top 20 Common Birds in Decline
- North American Waterfowl Management Plan
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework
- State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Strategic Habitat Conservation Model
- Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Projects Joint Ventures Plan

LSOHC Statewide Priorities:

- Address Minnesota landscapes that have historical value to fish and wildlife, 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 long-term or permanent solutions to aquatic invasive species
- Are ongoing, successful, transparent and accountable programs addressing actions and targets of one or more of the ecological sections
- Attempts to ensure conservation benefits are broadly distributed across the LSOHC sections
- Ensures activities for "protecting, restoring and enhancing" are coordinated among agencies, non profits and others while doing this important work; provides the most cost-effective use of financial resources; and where possible takes into consideration the value of local outreach, education, and community engagement to sustain project outcomes
- Leverage effort and/or other funds to supplement any OHF appropriation
- Produce multiple enduring conservation benefits
- Provide Minnesotans with greater public access to outdoor environments with hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation opportunities
- Restore or enhance habitat on permanently protected land
- 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

LSOHC Prairie Section Priorities:

- Restore or enhance habitat on public lands

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 rare native remnant prairie
- Protect, enhance, and restore migratory habitat for waterfowl and related species, so as to increase migratory and breeding success

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

LSOHC Metro Urban Section Priorities:

- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna with an emphasis on areas with high biological diversity
- Protect habitat corridors, with emphasis on the Minnesota, Mississippi, and St. Croix rivers (bluff to floodplain)
- Protect, enhance, and restore riparian and littoral habitats on lakes to benefit game and nongame fish species

Relationship to Other Constitutional Funds:

- Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund
- Clean Water Fund

Although the ASP Partnership is using and pursuing funds available through other constitutional funds (Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund and Clean Water Fund, specifically) to achieve its goals in the Anoka Sandplain, none of those funds are being tapped to simultaneously address the habitat restoration and enhancement needs proposed here. This proposal to LSOHC for Outdoor Heritage Fund support does not supplant any other sources of funds. In all cases, this proposal and the projects to be completed accelerate habitat work in the Anoka Sandplain.

Accelerates or Supplements Current Efforts:

Although the ASP Partnership is using and pursuing funds available through other constitutional funds

(Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund and Clean Water Fund, specifically) to achieve its goals in the Anoka Sandplain, none of those funds are being tapped to simultaneously address the habitat restoration and enhancement needs proposed here.

This proposal to LSOHC for Outdoor Heritage Fund support does not supplant any other sources of funds. In all cases, this proposal and the projects to be completed accelerate habitat work in the Anoka Sandplain.

Sustainability and Maintenance:

Site-specific resource management plans will be utilized (and developed, if not already in place) to guide effective long-term management of targeted habitats/species. All land managers associated with sites included in this proposal have committed to the long-term maintenance of these habitat improvements in line with prescribed actions. A principle goal of this proposal is accelerate enhancement/restoration of respective sites and bring them to a point where on-going management costs are diminished and the resource can be effectively maintained over time.

The ASP Partnership is committed to working with respective land management agencies (local, state and federal) and conservation organizations in an on-going basis to identify and procure financial resources for maintaining these improvements as needed, bring volunteers to bear, and otherwise assist in reducing the financial and capacity burden in the face of fiscal constraints.

Permanent Protection:

Is the activity on permanently protected land and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15? - Yes (WMA, SNA, County/Municipal, Refuge Lands, Public Waters, State Forests, Regional Parks)

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Enhancement completed across 3951 acres (GRG)	6/30/17
Enhancement completed across 137 acres (Isanti County Parks)	6/30/17
Enhancement/restoration completed across 81 acres (Stearns SWCD)	6/30/17
Enhancement/restoration completed across 816 acres (Anoka Conservation District)	6/30/17
One Mile Rum River - Design Completed/Bids Let (Anoka Conservation District)	9/30/14
Buckthorn Clean Sweep - 400 acres treated (Anoka Conservation District)	12/31/14
Site Prep and Prairie Seeding Completed (Anoka Conservation District)	12/31/15
Fence Installation Completed - Sherburne NWR (GRG)	6/30/16
Site-based management/restoration plans completed or in hand (GRG)	6/30/16

Outcomes

Programs in the northern forest region:

- No Programs Listed

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Improved aquatic habitat vegetation *FWS and Greening staff will monitor the results of wetland restoration/enhancement work at Sherburne and Crane Meadows NWRs.*
- Protected, restored, and enhanced aspen parklands and riparian areas *Oak savanna and parkland is a*

priority target of our work in the Anoka Sandplain. Restoration/enhancement success is evaluated/monitored by land management agencies over time. SGCN species monitoring is carried out by DNR staff across the ecoregion.

- Protected, restored, and enhanced nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need *At specific sites (e.g., Sand Dunes State Forest, Sherburne NWR, Crane Meadows NWR), monitoring of breeding birds is conducted by citizen volunteers, DNR staff, and FWS employees to track population/abundance of upland birds and wildlife.*
- Wetland and upland complexes will consist of native prairies, restored prairies, quality grasslands, and restored shallow lakes and wetlands *The ASP Partnership targets its work in part toward larger landscape systems remaining or restorable in the ecoregion and work with land managers to create complexes via a variety of mechanisms and using native species. Restoration/enhancement success is evaluated/monitored through land management agencies over time.*

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- A network of natural land and riparian habitats will connect corridors for wildlife and species in greatest conservation need *Partners target priority lands using Metro Conservation Corridor mapping and other available tools/plans. Analysis of mapping shows progress in enhancing quality of corridors over time. Ongoing inventory by county and DNR employees and others track occurrences of SGCN species, which are fed into the DNR central database.*
- Core areas protected with highly biologically diverse wetlands and plant communities, including native prairie, Big Woods, and oak savanna *Partners target priority lands using Metro Conservation Corridor mapping, County Biological Survey data and other other available tools/plans. Analysis of mapping shows progress in enhancing quality of corridors over time.*

Programs in prairie region:

- No Programs Listed

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$1,996,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$181,900	\$48,900		\$230,800
Contracts	\$1,754,100	\$157,000	Anoka County, Anoka SWCD, Stearns SWCD, Isanti County Parks, USFWS	\$1,911,100
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	\$6,700	\$0		\$6,700
Professional Services	\$0	\$15,000	Mn REAP	\$15,000
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$31,000	\$0		\$31,000
Supplies/Materials	\$22,300	\$4,600	Anoka SWCD	\$26,900
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$1,996,000	\$225,500		- \$2,221,500

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Project Manager (GRG)	0.17	3.00	\$26,000	\$33,900	Greening, FWS, NWTF	\$59,900
Dir. Cons. Programs (GRG)	0.16	3.00	\$35,000	\$0		\$35,000
Dir. Finance (GRG)	0.12	3.00	\$30,000	\$0		\$30,000
Grant Mgmt Asst. (GRG)	0.04	3.00	\$5,000	\$0		\$5,000
Field Tech (GRG)	0.29	3.00	\$30,000	\$0		\$30,000
Project Manager (ACD)	0.05	3.00	\$27,400	\$7,500	Anoka County, City of Anoka	\$34,900
Field Tech (ACD)	0.06	3.00	\$28,500	\$7,500	Anoka SWCD, Anoka County	\$36,000
Total	0.89	21.00	\$181,900	\$48,900	-	\$230,800

Output Tables

Table 1. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	55	0	2	57
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	1,898	1,690	1,314	0	4,902
Total	1,898	1,745	1,314	2	4,959

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$40,200	\$0	\$218,000	\$258,200
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	\$429,000	\$795,500	\$513,300	\$0	\$1,737,800
Total	\$429,000	\$835,700	\$513,300	\$218,000	\$1,996,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	56	1	0	0	0	57
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	3,717	760	0	85	340	4,902
Total	3,773	761	0	85	340	4,959

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	\$212,200	\$48,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$260,200
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	\$1,139,600	\$326,100	\$0	\$68,400	\$201,700	\$1,735,800
Total	\$1,351,800	\$374,100	\$0	\$68,400	\$201,700	\$1,996,000

Table 5. Target Lake/Stream/River Miles

3 miles

Parcel List

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

Anoka

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Anoka Nature Preserve	03225225	55	\$40,195	Yes
Boot Lake SNA	03322219	187	\$8,120	Yes
Carlos Avery WMA	03322201	259	\$11,246	Yes
Cedar Creek Conservation Area	03225206	1	\$170,000	Yes
Kelsey Round Lake Park	03224220	25	\$57,400	Yes
Linwood Community Forest	03322205	82	\$3,560	Yes
Martin-Island-Linwood Regional Park	03322216	66	\$2,866	Yes
Mickelson WMA	03322205	166	\$7,208	Yes

Benton

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
BenLacs WMA	03628213	322	\$189,400	Yes

Isanti

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Cambridge City Park	03623232	67	\$95,088	Yes
Irving & John Anderson County Park	03422202	18	\$9,350	Yes
Springvale County Park	03624220	34	\$15,530	Yes
Vegsund Family County Park	03723217	18	\$12,303	Yes

Morrison

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Crane Meadows NWR	04031219	480	\$150,790	Yes
McDougal Farms WMA	03928229	201	\$105,300	Yes
Mud Lake WMA	12931201	85	\$68,400	Yes

Sherburne

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Sand Dunes State Forest	03427227	376	\$420,300	Yes
Sand Prairie WMA	03530208	62	\$56,300	Yes
Sherburne NWR	03528216	2,400	\$454,600	Yes

Stearns

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Mississippi River County Park	12628216	81	\$118,000	Yes

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

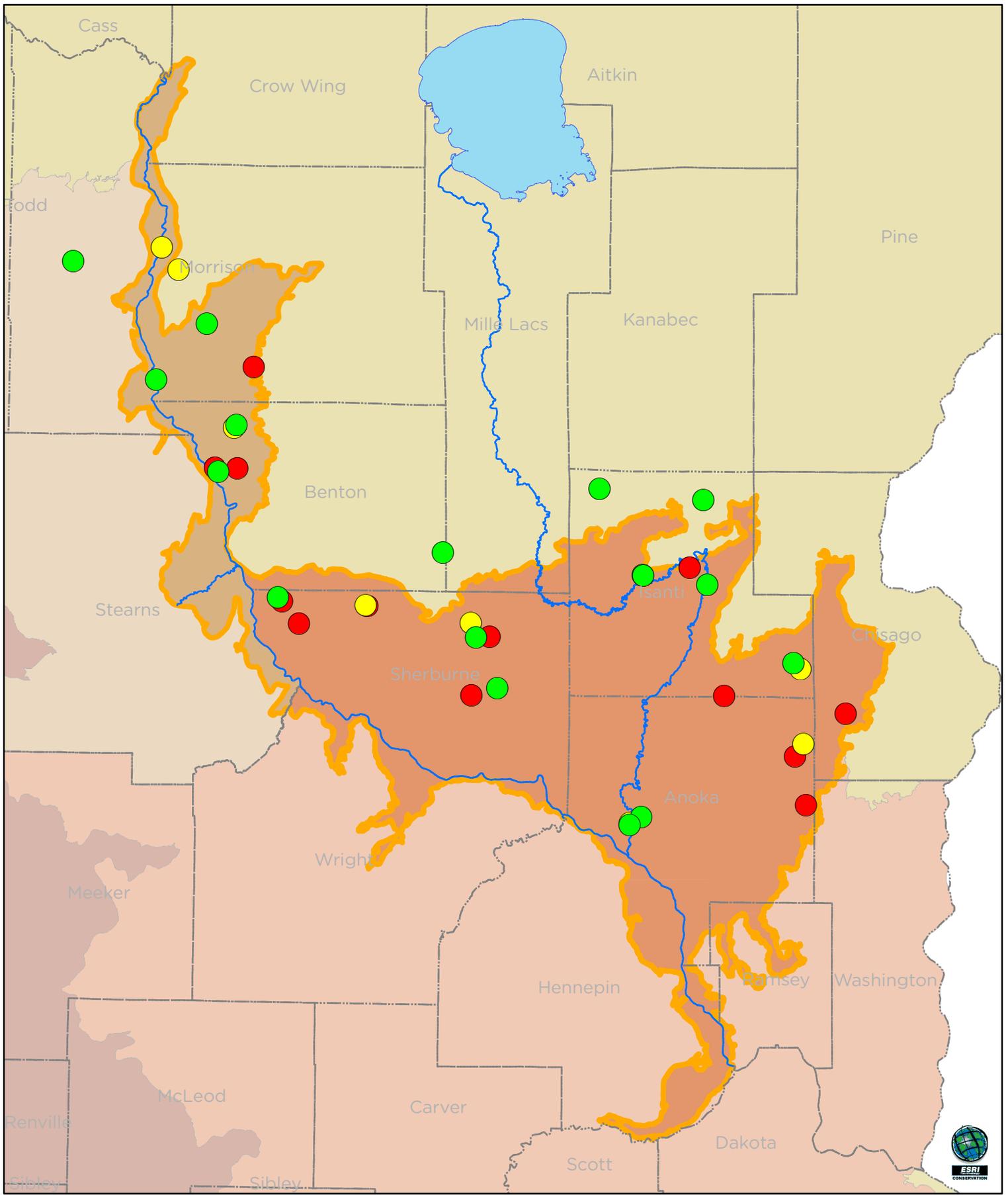
No parcels with an activity type protect.

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

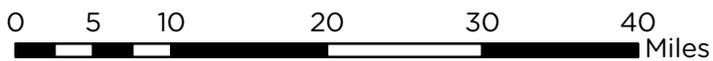
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.



Anoka Sand Plain Partnership Project Map



- 2013 Proposed Projects
- Projects in Progress
- Completed Projects



MINNESOTA DEER HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

460 Peterson Road • Grand Rapids, MN 55744-8413
218.327.1103 • Toll Free: 800.450.DEER (MN Only) • Fax: 218.327.1349
www.mndeerhunters.com

June 6, 2013

David Hartwell, Chair
Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
95 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN

Dear Mr. Hartwell:

On behalf of the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association (MDHA) I would like to express our support for the proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) by Great River Greening as part of the Anoka Sandplain Partnership in Accelerating Restoration/Enhancement of Key Public Lands/Waters in the Anoka Sandplain.

MDHA is a conservation organization that promotes working for tomorrow's wildlife and hunters today. As such, we truly believe this proposal would be beneficial to Minnesota's landscape.

Sincerely,



Mark Wm. Johnson
MDHA Executive Director

“Working for tomorrow’s wildlife and hunters today through education, habitat and legislation.”



Minnesota Waterfowl Association, INC

907 First Street North, Hopkins, MN 55343 • 952-767-0320 • FAX 952-767-0324

June 6, 2013
David Hartwell, Chair
Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
95 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN

Dear Mr. Hartwell:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the Anoka Sandplain Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, Phase 3, being submitted to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council for FY 2015. The Minnesota Waterfowl Association has a mission of protecting and restoring Minnesota's outdoor resources, and we are excited by the proposal to enhance 198 acres of one of Minnesota's largest sedge meadows, as well as enhancing the entire project area back to pre-settlement conditions.

This project will have huge positive impacts for many species of wildlife by using tools such as grazing along with traditional management techniques I am confident that there will be tremendous habitat value over the entire project. I have worked directly with the Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge on numerous projects and know they have the expertise get the work completed the right way. I am also confident that this investment will be multiplied many times over.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of the Anoka Sandplain Partnership as they seek funding to create better habitat in this remarkable region with its diversity of plants and animals.

Sincerely,

Bradley D. Nylin
Executive Director



June 10, 2013

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Members:

The National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) would like to express support for the Anoka Sandplain Partnership's FY14 habitat enhancement project entitled, ***“Accelerating Restoration and Enhancement of Key Public Lands and Waters in the Anoka Sandplain (Phase 3)”*** as spearheaded by Great River Greening. As a member of the Anoka Sandplain Partnership, we have seen firsthand the accomplishments of the first two phases of this project, which have exceeded acreage goals and resulted in hundreds of acres of enhanced wildlife habitat.

Phase 3 of the project expands upon prior accomplishments by bringing in new partners and operating on different public lands to address real resource problems in a landscape filled with management challenges. This phase will continue to address the threat that woody invasive species pose to oak savanna and woodland restoration, and will enhance wetlands on state and federal lands.

We urge the Council to give this project due consideration, and to ultimately recommend that the Minnesota Legislature provide an Outdoor Heritage Fund appropriation to this proven, successful program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rick Horton', is placed below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Rick Horton
Midwest Conservation Field Supervisor
National Wild Turkey Federation

National Wild Turkey Federation

P.O. Box 530 • 770 Augusta Road • Edgefield, South Carolina 29824 • Phone: (803) 637-3106 • Fax: (803) 637-0034

www.nwtf.org



Stearns County Chapter of Pheasants Forever

On the Web – www.stearnscounty.org
pheasantsforever.org

Date: June 11, 2013

To: Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Subject: Letter of Support – Great River Greening - Anoka Sand Plain Program

On behalf of the Stearns County chapter of Pheasants Forever please accept this letter of support for Great River Greening's Anoka Sand Plain program.

They have a broad partnership of public agencies, nonprofit organizations, universities, industries, and citizens united to actively protect and enhance the unique and characteristic natural habitats of the Anoka Sand Plain, which in turn offers a higher quality of life for citizens of the region.

Great River Greening will succeed in this program proposal because they will be:

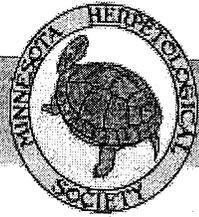
- Educating local citizens and local governments about the natural resources of the Anoka Sand Plain,
- Raising funds through grants and other sources to increase the scale and magnitude of protection, restoration and enhancement efforts on both public and private lands,
- Sharing information, expertise and financial resources to increase efficiency in our actions.
- Developing and implementing a diverse array of conservation tools to bring transformative change to the Anoka Sand Plain, and to adjacent areas that significantly contribute to the environmental quality of the region.

Sincerely,

Steven Sellnow

Steven Sellnow – President Stearns County Pheasants Forever

The Minnesota Herpetological Society



8 June 2013

David Hartwell, Chair
Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
95 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN

Dear Mr. Hartwell:

It is our pleasure to write a letter in support of Anoka Sandplain Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, Phase 3, being submitted to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council for FY 2015 funding. We are especially pleased to see the project that will restore portions of the Sand Dunes State Forest to native plant communities focusing on their function as habitat for the many rare animal species in the area. As an organization that supports the study and conservation of reptiles and amphibians, we are particularly excited by the promise of the proposal to restore and enhance habitat for many of the rare and imperiled reptile species that inhabit this area. Sand prairie ecosystems host many fascinating snake, turtle, lizard, frog, toad, and salamander species that are currently at risk in Minnesota. The restoration of such a key portion of their habitat within the Anoka Sandplain will undoubtedly contribute to their continued survival in the face of a changing landscape.

The MHS has contributed to work on the reptiles and amphibians of this unique ecosystem in the past and we are thrilled to see continued attention to the restoration and protection of the habitats that species such as Bullsnares, Plains Hog-nosed Snakes, Blanding's Turtles and Tiger Salamanders depend on. We have seen throughout the years the many pressures that urban sprawl and conflicting land management goals have placed on this fragile ecosystem. This site, within a complex of national wildlife refuge, SNA, recreation area, and state forest property, is one of the largest remaining pieces of habitat within the Anoka Sandplain Ecological Subsection and thus represents a crucial handhold for these animal species. These species will need areas like this if they are to persist as Minnesota grows and changes over time. Outdoor Heritage funding would serve to kick-start the excellent on-the-ground efforts that the Minnesota DNR have so carefully planned for this site in order to ensure that these amphibian and reptile species will be around for future Minnesotans to learn from and enjoy. We have worked with and watched the planning progress with Erica Hoaglund, Hannah Texler, Don Mueller (and many others working in the region) over the years and are impressed by their passion and care for this unique area. We are confident that the investment of Natural Heritage Resources will be multiplied many times over by this excellent MN DNR team.

In conclusion, we fully support the efforts of the Anoka Sandplain Partnership as they seek funding to restore, maintain and enhance the imperiled and fascinating habitats within Sand Dunes State Forest for the remarkable diversity of rare animal species that reside there.

Sincerely,

Beth Girard
Recording Secretary – Minnesota Herpetological Society



Anoka Conservation District
1318 McKay Dr NE, Suite 300
Ham Lake, Minnesota 55304
Ph: 763-434-2030 Fx: 763-434-2094
www.AnokaSWCD.org

June 6, 2013

Kameron Kytönen
Natural Resources Technician
City of Andover
1685 Crosstown Blvd. NW
Andover, MN 55304

Re: Letter of Support – Kelsey Round Lake Park

Dear Mr. Kytönen:

On behalf of the Anoka Conservation District, I would like to express our support of the proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) by Great River Greening as part of the Anoka Sandplain Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, Phase 3, for restoration/enhancement work at Kelsey Round Lake Park in Andover, MN. The importance of establishing native grasses and flowers in areas crowded by development cannot be overstated as more and more of our open space is urbanized. In addition, removal of invasive species from the park will go a long way to ensuring a diverse plant community that will serve as high quality habitat and food sources to a variety of wildlife. Because the project area is adjacent to an important water resource and wildlife hub, the native vegetation will serve to protect the water quality of Round Lake and provide important habitat for nesting waterfowl and other aquatic wildlife.

With such limited financial resources available for this type of work, it is great to see a city putting effort toward conserving and restoring their natural resources. This project sets an example for other cities and shows that with careful planning and pursuit of additional funding sources, budgets can allow for improvements to our natural resources. These short-term planning efforts result in long-term benefits to the people and wildlife in the community. I hope you are successful in your application and your efforts to improve native habitats in the City of Andover.

Good luck pursuing this great opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mitch Haustein".

Mitch Haustein
Conservation Specialist
Anoka Conservation District



Anoka County Parks and Recreation

550 Bunker Lake Boulevard NW, Andover, MN 55304

June 11, 2013

Chris Lord, District Manager
Anoka Conservation District
1318 McKay Drive NE Suite 300
Ham Lake, MN 55304

Re: Accelerating Restoration and Enhancement of Key Public Lands in the Anoka Sandplain III

Mr. Lord:

I'm writing in support of your Accelerating Restoration and Enhancement of Key Public Lands in the Anoka Sandplain III for the Rum Riverbank Stabilization, buckthorn treatment on public lands with MCBS mapped natural communities, and the prairie restoration project. I'm looking forward to working with your organization on this project. Your conservation projects are innovative and will provide many long term benefits for the Rum River, natural community diversity and function, wildlife habitat enhancements.

The Anoka County Parks and Recreation Department is committed to assisting you with this project by allowing access to county property and providing some in-kind equipment and personnel assistance as needed. We appreciate you considering us, and others, as part of this effort, and we believe this concerted effort will result in a top-quality conservation project in the northern Metropolitan Area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Perry".

Jeff Perry
Park Planning and Natural Resources Manager
Anoka County Parks and Recreation Department

OPEN SPACES IN NEARBY PLACES

6/6/13

David Hartwell, Chair
Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
95 State Office Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155-5555

Dear Mr. Hartwell:

I am representing the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association (MDHA), Morrison County Chapter. I am in support of the Anoka Sandplain Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, Phase 3, being submitted to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) for FY 2015 funding. The Morrison County Chapter of MDHA believes in any and all restorations that will benefit wildlife.

In general our Chapter supports Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. As with the Refuge, we are a group concerned with the health and welfare of our natural resources. Obviously, this goes hand-in-hand with the mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This project will restore the southern dry savanna which at one time was common in the Anoka Sandplains. Now this is one of the rarest habitat types in the area, as well as in the nation. Hopefully, this restoration work will be made possible with funding from the LSOHC.

The MDHA has co-sponsored a variety of events with Crane Meadows. Most recently was Habitat Day and the White-tailed Deer Hunt for Persons with Disabilities. The Refuge has been a good conscientious partner to work with. The proposed savanna restoration work is planned for the Headquarters Unit. The Platte River Trail is located on this tract of land. It is also one of the Hunt Units used by the Refuge. I believe in the long run these restoration activities will add to the health and welfare of the land. It will also add to the experience an individual has as they use the area, whether it be for hunting, hiking, wildlife observation, etc. The restoration activities will be an asset to the Refuge, not only in restoring a lost and unique habitat type, but in benefiting fauna that may have been displaced from the area.

I fully support the efforts of the Anoka Sandplain Partnership. Restoration of this rare habitat type is a step in the right direction. We continually support the Refuge and hope our partnership grows bigger and stronger as we work together in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Schuett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Mike Schuett
President, Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, Morrison County Chapter



Friends of Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge

19502 Iris Road, Little Falls, Minnesota 56345 • (320) 632-1575

6/7/13

David Hartwell, Chair
Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
95 State Office Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155-5555

Dear Mr. Hartwell:

It is with pleasure that I am writing in support for the Anoka Sandplain Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, Phase 3, being submitted to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) for FY 2015 funding. The Friends of Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Inc. is an organization that fosters community understanding and appreciation of natural resources while supporting the Refuge goals of preservation, restoration, and education.

The Friends Group has been supporting the Refuge for numerous years; we have a close, tight bond. In fact, the Friends Group was actively involved in the planning process for the Refuge. Future direction for the Refuge is outlined in its Comprehensive Conservation Plan. This project fits perfectly with Refuge goals and objectives set forth for the Headquarters Unit. Thus, we support the grant 100%. Oak savanna is one of the rarest habitat types in the area. Hopefully, habitat restoration will be made possible with LSOHC funding.

The Refuge has always set clear direction and accomplished projects as proposed. If funded, I have no reservations in seeing this project completed as outlined in the grant proposal. The habitat restoration work will be such an asset to the Refuge and a critical area for wildlife, as well as providing a great demonstration area to showcase and educate.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of the Anoka Sandplain Partnership as they seek funding to restore a rare, diverse habitat type in this remarkable region. The Friends of Crane Meadows has been in charge of the greenhouse located on the Refuge. For years the Group has been working with the Refuge on increasing flora diversity. This project goes hand-in-hand with the greenhouse goals.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Emerson, President
Friends of Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Inc.

Friends of Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge

Board Members: Marilyn Emerson, Dr. Bill Faber, Jerry Goedderz, Dave Stish, Paulette Pappenfus, Andrea Wearne, James Storland, and Steve Emerson



FRIENDS OF SHERBURNE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
17076 293rd Avenue Zimmerman, MN 55398

June 9, 2013

David Hartwell, Chair
Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
95 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN

Dear Mr. Hartwell:

It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of the Anoka Sandplain Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, Phase 3, proposal being submitted to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council for FY 2015 funding.

The Friends of Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge is a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization that believes in and supports the mission of Sherburne Refuge. We understand the value of these lands to the wildlife that uses them as well as to the members of the public who visit for recreation and educational opportunities. We are very interested in the refuge's continued restoration of wetlands and oak savanna and believe these grant funds will enable the refuge to make significant inroads in controlling invasive species that are affecting these important refuge habitats. Habitat restoration has been underway for many years; however, new resources will enable the refuge's skilled land managers to make a greater impact and achieve desired results much sooner by employing a variety of methods and on a larger scale.

We hope you will support the efforts of the Anoka Sandplain Partnership as they seek funding to create good habitat in this remarkable region with its diversity of plants and animals. Thank you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue Hix". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sue Hix
President, Friends of Sherburne NWR
www.ExploreSherburne.org
www.facebook.com/SherburneRefugeFans

Isanti County Environmental Coalition



June 10, 2013

Barry Wendorf
Isanti County Parks Department
555-18th Ave SW
Cambridge, MN 55008

OAK SAVANNA RESTORATION GRANT APPLICATION

Dear Mr. Wendorf:

On behalf of the Isanti County Environmental Coalition I am writing in support of the proposed Oak Savanna habitat restoration efforts at Springvale, Vegsund and Anderson County Parks. Each of the parks contains areas of buckthorn, prickly ash and other invasive species. Removal of the invasive plants, along with restoration of the native understory, would greatly benefit plant diversity in the parks. The Isanti County Environmental Coalition has helped with past efforts to restore these three parks with plantings of native wildflowers and grasses, installation of rain gardens and prescribed burnings. We strongly support your additional efforts with the Anoka Sandplain Partnership to acquire additional funding to restore habitat within the parks.

Sincerely,

Mike Mueller,
Chairman

**LOWER RUM RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION
ANDOVER-ANOKA-COON RAPIDS-RAMSEY
2015 FIRST AVENUE, ANOKA MN 55303**

June 5, 2013

Kameron Kytonen
Natural Resources Technician
City of Andover
1685 Crosstown Blvd. NW
Andover, MN 55304

Re: Kelsey Round Lake Park Restoration Project

Dear Mr. Kytonen:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of Anoka Sandplain Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, Phase 3, being submitted to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council for FY 2015 funding. Kelsey Round Lake Park is an ideal candidate amongst other important sites in this proposal.

Kelsey Round Lake Park is a large area of open space that serves many important purposes including wildlife habitat, storm water treatment, recreation and aesthetics. It is valuable not only to the City of Andover, but to the whole Lower Rum River Watershed as well.

However, the effect of non-native vegetation continues to threaten the integrity of the park. Thus, enhancing the ecological components and overall quality of the park is fully supported by the Lower Rum River Watershed Management Organization (LRRWMO). The organization understands the important wildlife habitat benefits that would result from this effort. Being adjacent to Round Lake, an important resource for migratory waterfowl and a host of other wildlife, further accentuates the project's importance. Finally, the project fits in well with long-term goals of the organization and its Comprehensive Plan as well.

Sincerely,



Todd J. Haas, Chair
Lower Rum River WMO

The Friends of Anderson Park

June 11, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the *Friends of Anderson Park*, I am writing this letter to offer our enthusiastic support for Isanti County's proposal to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council to enhance oak savannah habitats in three of our county parks.

The Friends of Anderson Park is an all-volunteer organization formed to support the Irving and John Anderson County Park. While our primary focus is on Anderson Park, we also support efforts to improve other Isanti County park sites. We have worked closely with Barry Wendorf, Isanti County Parks Director on the development of and programming for Anderson Park. In the last five years, we have logged over 2,600 hours of volunteer labor for Anderson Park by sponsoring work days and community events in the park, promoting family activities, raising money and providing volunteers for special projects, and helping with development activities.

Each of the three Isanti County parks included in this proposal has unique features important for critical native vegetation and bird habitat. For example, over the years members of our group have identified 132 bird species at Anderson Park. On our workdays we discovered a rare native orchid, observed Red-headed Woodpeckers, and watched several Blanding's Turtles seeking nesting sites. These experiences created excitement and provided an opportunity for impromptu lessons on wildlife and flora.

As residents of Isanti County and neighbors to a county park, we place a strong value on restoring our parks to their natural state. This grant proposal will allow enhancement of approximately 70 acres of oak savanna habitats in the Isanti County parks through the removal of invasive woody species, prescribed burning, and understory native plantings.

We wholeheartedly support this application and hope you will view it favorably.

Sincerely,

Lee Kingsbury

Lee Kingsbury, Chair
Friends of Anderson Park
651-462-2015



Linwood School Forest and Community Park

21900 Typo Creek Drive NE, Wyoming, MN 55092 (651) 982-1900



June 10, 2013

David Hartwell, Chair
Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
95 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN

Dear Mr. Hartwell:

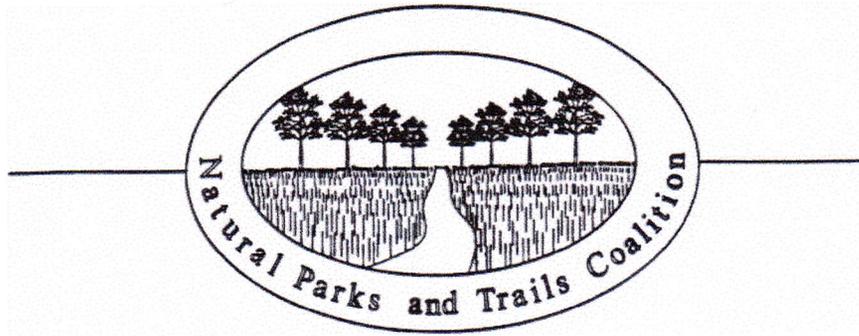
It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of Anoka Sandplain Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, Phase 3, being submitted to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council for FY 2015 funding. As an organization that promotes outdoor education, we are particularly excited by the proposal to treat the invasive species of common buckthorn in our otherwise ecologically pristine public lands.

The Linwood School Forest is one of the last remaining stands of undisturbed, native dry oak forest in Anoka County. This pristine ecosystem is being threatened by buckthorn. The Linwood School Forest has worked with the Anoka Soil and Water Conservation District on a number of projects and I am confident that the state investment will be multiplied many times over.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of the Anoka Sandplain Partnership as they seek funding to maintain these last parcels of our natural ecosystems.

Sincerely,

Cheri Stockinger
President – Linwood School Forest and Community Park



June 10, 2013

David Hartwell, Chair
Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
95 State Office Building
Saint Paul, MN

**Re: Letter of Support – Anoka Sandplains Partnership- Stearns County
Mississippi River Park Habitat Improvements.**

Dear Mr. Hartwell:

We are writing to support the Anoka Sandplain Partnership proposal being submitted to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council for FY 2015 funding. Our organization formed in 1997 to foster preservation and protection of natural areas in central Minnesota. We work with area cities and counties to acquire natural areas for parks and to promote understanding and appreciation of the natural environment. We are particularly excited by the promise of the proposal to enhance and improve wildlife habitat at one of the Stearns County Parks along the Mississippi River.

Members of our organization have worked on buckthorn removal in other parks and we know how valuable this can be in restoring habitat. Funding this project at Mississippi River County Park for removal of invasive species will improve the habitat in the park, and shoreland restoration will also improve the health of the river. Both improvements will make this more truly a natural park.

In conclusion, our organization supports the efforts of the Anoka Sandplain Partnership as they seek funding to create good habitat in this remarkable region with its diversity of plants and animals.

Sincerely,

Lowell Olson

Lowell Olson
Natural Parks and Trails Coalition
23 Pandolfo Place
St Cloud MN 56303



PHEASANTS

forever®

June 12, 2013
Chris A. Lord
District Manager
Anoka County Soil & Water Conservation District
1318 McKay Drive NE
Suite 300
Ham Lake, MN 55304

Anoka County Chapter #13
6327 W. Shadow Lake Drive
Lino Lakes, MN 55014

Dear Mr. Lord:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the Anoka Nature Preserve Prairie Restoration project. As an organization that is dedicated to conservation of wildlife through habitat improvements, Anoka County Pheasants Forever is particularly excited by the promise of the proposal to restore 55 acres of the field to prairie.

With the agricultural use of the field scheduled to end in 2015 it is critical that a plan is put in place now to prepare the field for its return to a natural prairie state. Your time and investment in this project will result in 55 acres of natural prairie to be utilized and enjoyed by local wildlife and residents of the Anoka area.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of the Anoka Sandplain Partnership and the Anoka County Soil & Water Conservation District as they work together to seek funding to create good habitat in this remarkable region with its diversity of plants and animals.

Sincerely,

John Newpower
President
Anoka County Pheasants Forever