



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

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### Laws of Minnesota 2015 Final Report

#### General Information

**Date:** 03/03/2021

**Project Title:** Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Partnership

**Funds Recommended:** \$3,002,000

**Legislative Citation:** ML 2015, First Sp. Session, Ch. 2, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 3(f)

**Appropriation Language:** \$3,002,000 in the first year is to the commissioner of natural resources to acquire lands in fee and for permanent conservation easements in the Mississippi Headwaters and for agreements as follows: \$1,217,000 to The Trust for Public Land; and \$824,000 to Minnesota Land Trust, of which up to \$80,000 is for establishing a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. A list of proposed acquisitions must be included as part of the required accomplishment plan.

#### Manager Information

**Manager's Name:** Robert McGillivray

**Title:** Senior Project Manager

**Organization:** The Trust for Public Land

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#### Location Information

**County Location(s):** Crow Wing, Beltrami, Itasca, Aitkin, Wadena and Hubbard.

**Eco regions in which work will take place:**

- Northern Forest

**Activity types:**

- Protect in Easement
- Protect in Fee

## Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Habitat

## Narrative

### Summary of Accomplishments

Through the ML2015 Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Partnership appropriation, we permanently protected 1,923 acres of wildlife habitat in the quickly developing Mississippi Headwaters area. These accomplishments exceed the appropriation goal by 209%. Utilizing both fee-title acquisition and conservation easements, the partnership protected 10 projects, totaling over 11 miles of shoreline along the Mississippi River, its tributaries and nearby lakes. This has reversed habitat loss, improved watershed function, and increased access to public lands for quality hunting and fishing opportunities.

### Process & Methods

The ML2015 Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Partnership (The Trust for Public Land, Minnesota Land Trust, and the MN DNR) permanently protected 1,923 acres (209% of our goal) of sensitive shoreline and wildlife habitat in the Mississippi Headwaters area. These activities occurred in Aitkin, Beltrami, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, and Wadena County. They resulted in three new units of public land (WMA/AMA), two additions to existing public lands (AMAs), and five conservation easements.

As background, the Mississippi River is one of the world's greatest river systems in terms of size, habitat diversity, biological productivity, and sources of drinking water. It is the fourth longest river in the world with over 18 million people depending on this watershed for drinking water supply. The critical Headwaters Region, roughly the first 400 miles of the main stem and associated watersheds, is home to some of our state's most outstanding freshwater ecological resources. It provides outstanding habitat for fish and wildlife and is a major route for migratory waterfowl. It is also an unparalleled recreational resource for outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, boating and hiking.

The idea to form this partnership around habitat protection and restoration in the area grew out of a series of habitat conservation successes and related partnership work in the Headwaters area in the early 2010s: LaSalle Lake, Mississippi River Northwoods, numerous forest legacy projects; shoreland easements initiatives; aquatic management areas additions; and more. For the ML15 appropriation, it consists of three partner organizations - The Trust for Public Land, Minnesota Land Trust, and the Minnesota DNR.

This partnership sought to protect sensitive shoreline and habitat resources in the Headwaters area from fragmentation in order to ensure these recreational and natural resource benefits continue into the future. We focused our efforts on the mainstem of the Mississippi River; key tributaries; critical lakesheds; specific natural resource communities; habitat lands with a proven link to water quality; and, recreational access. We exceeded our intentions, and the habitat protected furthered the goals and strategies outlined in numerous state/area resource management plans, including Aquatic Management Area Acquisition Plan; Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare; and, Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework.

The specific successes of each of the three partners is outlined below:

The Trust for Public Land: In January 2016, The Trust for Public Land acquired and conveyed 705 acres of mixed pine and hardwood forest with over three miles of river frontage on the Crow Wing River, a major tributary to the Mississippi River, to the MN DNR as the new Crow Wing River Corridor Wildlife Management Area (WMA). This protected property creates outstanding public recreational opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife

observation and canoeing, as well as significant water quality benefits. This highly developable land was previously owned by the Potlatch Corporation and its protection is responsible for the currently occurring jack pine woodland restoration.

Minnesota Land Trust: Over the course of this appropriation, the Land Trust protected 4 priority properties totaling 964 acres and 34,207 feet (~6.5 miles) of shoreline. Acres protected exceeded that proposed for the grant by 301%. In addition, projects provided \$381,000 in leverage through landowner donation of easement value. Specifically, the following properties were protected:

The Black Lake (Bakker) project in Beltrami County permanently protected in easement 6,568 feet (1.24 miles) of shoreline and 391 acres of mixed coniferous and deciduous forest, wetland, and other habitat. The owner donated the value of the conservation easement for this project.

Two conservation easements in Crow Wing County – Island Lake (Flemmer) and Island Lake (Flemmer Trust) – were protected, permanently protecting in easement 25,287 feet (4.8 miles) of shoreline and 514 acres of outstanding quality medic hardwood forest, diverse wetlands, and shoreline habitat along Mud Lake, Island Lake, Owl Pond and Mud Brook.

The 132-acre Ann Lake (Killeen) property in Itasca County was protected with funds drawn in part through both the Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Partnership, and the Land Trust’s Critical Shoreland Protection – Phase 3 program grants. The Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Partnership grant funded the protection of 59 acres of high-quality northern mesic forest and northern rich tamarack swamp, in addition to 2,333 feet of shoreline on Ann and Link lakes. Ann Lake is a state-designated wild rice lake. The property abuts George Washington State Forest on two sides.

Minnesota DNR: The Minnesota DNR protected 4 properties through fee-title acquisition and 1 through a conservation easement. Specifically, the following properties were protected:

The newly created Greenwood Lake Aquatic Management Area (AMA) is 86 acres with over 3,700 shoreline feet on Greenwood Lake in Crow Wing County. The 6-acre Pickerel Lake AMA with over 2,275 feet of shoreline protected in Hubbard County. The Hill Lake AMA is 31 acres with over 2,000 shoreline feet on Hill Lake in Aitkin County. The 11-acre Preece Point AMA with over 1,100 shoreline feet on Marquette Lake in Beltrami County.

The Cuyuna Scout Camp AMA conservation easement added 118 acres of protection to the existing Aquatic Management Area (AMA) in Crow Wing County.

### **How did the program address habitats of significant value for wildlife species of greatest conservation need, threatened or endangered species, and/or list targeted species?**

All of the areas protected through this appropriation were identified and prioritized through, state, regional and local natural resource plans due to their high biodiversity, connectivity and ability to preserve habitat for both game species and species of greatest conservation need. Specifically, the shoreline zones protected are one of the most essential, and one of the most threatened, habitat resources in the state. They provide a range of benefits for fisheries, migratory waterfowl and upland game species.

## **How did the program use science-based targeting that leveraged or expanded corridors and complexes, reduced fragmentation, or protected areas in the MN County Biological Survey.**

Our science-based targeting utilized the Minnesota Wildlife Action Network's data along with other state data sets, including The MN County Biological Survey, to identify priority areas for permanent fish and wildlife protection within the minor watershed of the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River, or along major tributaries. The Wildlife Action Network was developed to help implement the 2015-2025 MN Wildlife Action Plan, which identified species of greatest conservation need and rare, threatened and endangered species. The project's geographic targeting also considered specific areas of species richness and/or biodiversity importance and areas where aquatic and terrestrial habitats have been compromised. These identified priority areas were the primary focus geography in selecting parcels for permanent land protection using fee-title acquisition or conservation easements.

## **Explain Partners, Supporters, & Opposition**

This was a partnership of The Trust for Public Land, Minnesota Land Trust, and the Minnesota DNR. Supporting organizations include the Mississippi Headwaters Board, the headwaters County SWCDs, The Nature Conservancy, and various other organizations and individuals. Local government support was sought and received for fee-title acquisition. In addition to utilizing OHF funds, landowner donations and MN DNR RIM funds were also critical to the success of multiple projects.

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

The Headwaters of the Mississippi River, the first 400 miles, includes lands in the minor watershed of the river, along with its' tributaries and headwaters lakes. With such a large geography that includes high quality forests, pristine waters and shoreline, and a critical part of the Mississippi flyway for migratory waterfowl, there were abundant opportunities for excellent fish and wildlife habitat protection. The challenge was identifying the highest priority lands for protection in a manageable way for landowner outreach and negotiation.

## **What other funds contributed to this program?**

- Other : Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM)

## **How were the funds used to advance the program?**

Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) funds were used as 50% match on the Preece Point AMA project.

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

The lands acquired in fee-title and conveyed to the DNR have completed initial site development and restoration work. Costs for this work are included in the IDPs attached to the completed parcel reports. The properties will be managed for the long term as WMAs or AMAs, and will be maintained by the Minnesota DNR according to their WMA/AMA guidelines.

Land protected through conservation easement by the Land Trust will be sustained through the best standards and practices for conservation easement stewardship, including annual property monitoring and enforcement as necessary. Funding for these easement stewardship activities was provided through the grant and was incorporated into the Land Trust's long-term stewardship and enforcement fund.

In addition, the Land Trust encourages landowners of these properties to ecologically manage their lands, and provided them with habitat management plans to guide their actions. The Land Trust will work with and otherwise assist, these landowners in undertaking this work.

## Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Post Fee-Title Protection	DNR Land Management Funds	Property acquired directly by the DNR, and through conveyance from TPL, will be managed according to IDP and DNR land management policy.	DNR lands acquired in fee-title will remain permanently protected and open to the public.	On-going DNR management.
Post Easement Protection	MLT Easement Stewardship Funds	Secured easements—monitor, manage, and enforce the easement through MLTs stewardship program.	-	-

## Budget

### Grand Totals Across All Partnerships

Item	Request	Spent	Antic. Leverage	Received Leverage	Leverage Source	Original Total	Final Total
Personnel	\$67,000	\$77,800	-	-	-	\$67,000	\$77,800
Contracts	\$17,000	\$34,800	-	-	-	\$17,000	\$34,800
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$1,555,000	\$1,871,700	\$100,000	\$75,300	RIM, Various state, local and private funds	\$1,655,000	\$1,947,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$300,000	-	\$30,000	-	-, Various state, local and private funds	\$330,000	-
Easement Acquisition	\$837,000	\$602,400	-	\$381,000	-, Land Value Donation	\$837,000	\$983,400
Easement Stewardship	\$80,000	\$60,000	-	-	-	\$80,000	\$60,000
Travel	\$8,000	\$3,200	-	-	-	\$8,000	\$3,200
Professional Services	\$106,200	\$106,000	-	-	-	\$106,200	\$106,000
Direct Support Services	\$4,800	\$2,400	-	-	-	\$4,800	\$2,400
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$12,000	\$6,200	-	-	-	\$12,000	\$6,200
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	\$10,100	-	-	-	-	\$10,100
DNR IDP	\$15,000	\$38,900	-	-	-	\$15,000	\$38,900
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$3,002,000</b>	<b>\$2,813,500</b>	<b>\$130,000</b>	<b>\$456,300</b>	-	<b>\$3,132,000</b>	<b>\$3,269,800</b>

**Partner: MN DNR**

**Totals**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Request</b>	<b>Spent</b>	<b>Antic. Leverage</b>	<b>Received Leverage</b>	<b>Leverage Source</b>	<b>Original Total</b>	<b>Final Total</b>
Personnel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contracts	\$17,000	\$34,800	-	-	-	\$17,000	\$34,800
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$665,000	\$706,700	-	\$75,300	RIM	\$665,000	\$782,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$245,000	\$108,000	-	-	-	\$245,000	\$108,000
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	\$29,200	\$49,200	-	-	-	\$29,200	\$49,200
Direct Support Services	\$4,800	\$2,400	-	-	-	\$4,800	\$2,400
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$961,000</b>	<b>\$901,100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$75,300</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$961,000</b>	<b>\$976,400</b>

**Partner: MN Land Trust**

**Totals**

Item	Request	Spent	Antic. Leverage	Received Leverage	Leverage Source	Original Total	Final Total
Personnel	\$67,000	\$77,800	-	-	-	\$67,000	\$77,800
Contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$592,000	\$494,400	-	\$381,000	Land Value Donation	\$592,000	\$875,400
Easement Stewardship	\$80,000	\$60,000	-	-	-	\$80,000	\$60,000
Travel	\$8,000	\$3,200	-	-	-	\$8,000	\$3,200
Professional Services	\$77,000	\$56,800	-	-	-	\$77,000	\$56,800
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	\$10,100	-	-	-	-	\$10,100
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$824,000</b>	<b>\$702,300</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$381,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$824,000</b>	<b>\$1,083,300</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Manager	0.25	3.0	\$77,800	-	-	\$77,800



**Partner: The Trust for Public Land**

**Totals**

Item	Request	Spent	Antic. Leverage	Received Leverage	Leverage Source	Original Total	Final Total
Personnel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$890,000	\$1,165,000	\$100,000	-	Various state, local and private funds	\$990,000	\$1,165,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$300,000	-	\$30,000	-	Various state, local and private funds	\$330,000	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$12,000	\$6,200	-	-	-	\$12,000	\$6,200
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	\$15,000	\$38,900	-	-	-	\$15,000	\$38,900
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,217,000</b>	<b>\$1,210,100</b>	<b>\$130,000</b>	-	-	<b>\$1,347,000</b>	<b>\$1,210,100</b>

**Direct Support Services**

**How did you determine which portions of the Direct Support Services of your shared support services is direct to this program?**

DNR provided.

**Explain any budget challenges or successes:**

There were no large-scale unanticipated budget challenges. However, due to a few landowners lack of readiness to sell, the partners are returning some money back to the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

**Total Revenue:** \$0

**Revenue Spent:** \$0

**Revenue Balance:** \$0

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

- E. This is not applicable as there was no revenue generated.

## 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	0	0	0	0	0	0	470	841	470	841
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	130	0	130	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0	320	1,082	320	1,082
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>1,923</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>1,923</b>

### 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	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$1,861,000	\$1,988,300	\$1,861,000	\$1,988,300
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$306,000	-	\$306,000	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$835,000	\$825,200	\$835,000	\$825,200
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$3,002,000</b>	<b>\$2,813,500</b>	<b>\$3,002,000</b>	<b>\$2,813,500</b>

### 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	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	470	841	470	841
Protect in	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	130	0	130	0

Fee w/o State PILT Liability													
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	320	1,082	320	1,082
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>1,923</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>1,923</b>

**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	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$1,861,000	\$1,988,300	\$1,861,000	\$1,988,300
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$306,000	-	\$306,000	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$835,000	\$825,200	\$835,000	\$825,200
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$3,002,000</b>	<b>\$2,813,500</b>	<b>\$3,002,000</b>	<b>\$2,813,500</b>

**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	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$3,959	\$2,364
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$2,353	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$2,609	\$762
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	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$3,959	\$2,364

PILT Liability										
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$2,353	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$2,609	\$762
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles**

11 Miles

**Outcomes**

**Programs in the northern forest region:**

- Increased availability and improved condition of riparian forests and other habitat corridors ~ *This appropriation achieved permanent protection of 1,923 acres of fish and wildlife habitat. The outcome is measured by the actual amount of land acquired in fee-title (841 acres) and protected through a conservation easement (1082 acres). Limiting development on these highly forested lands maintains and improves the forest integrity. In addition, over 11 miles of shoreline along the Mississippi River, its tributaries and nearby lakes were protected. This has reversed habitat loss, improved watershed function, and increased access to public lands for quality hunting and fishing opportunities.*

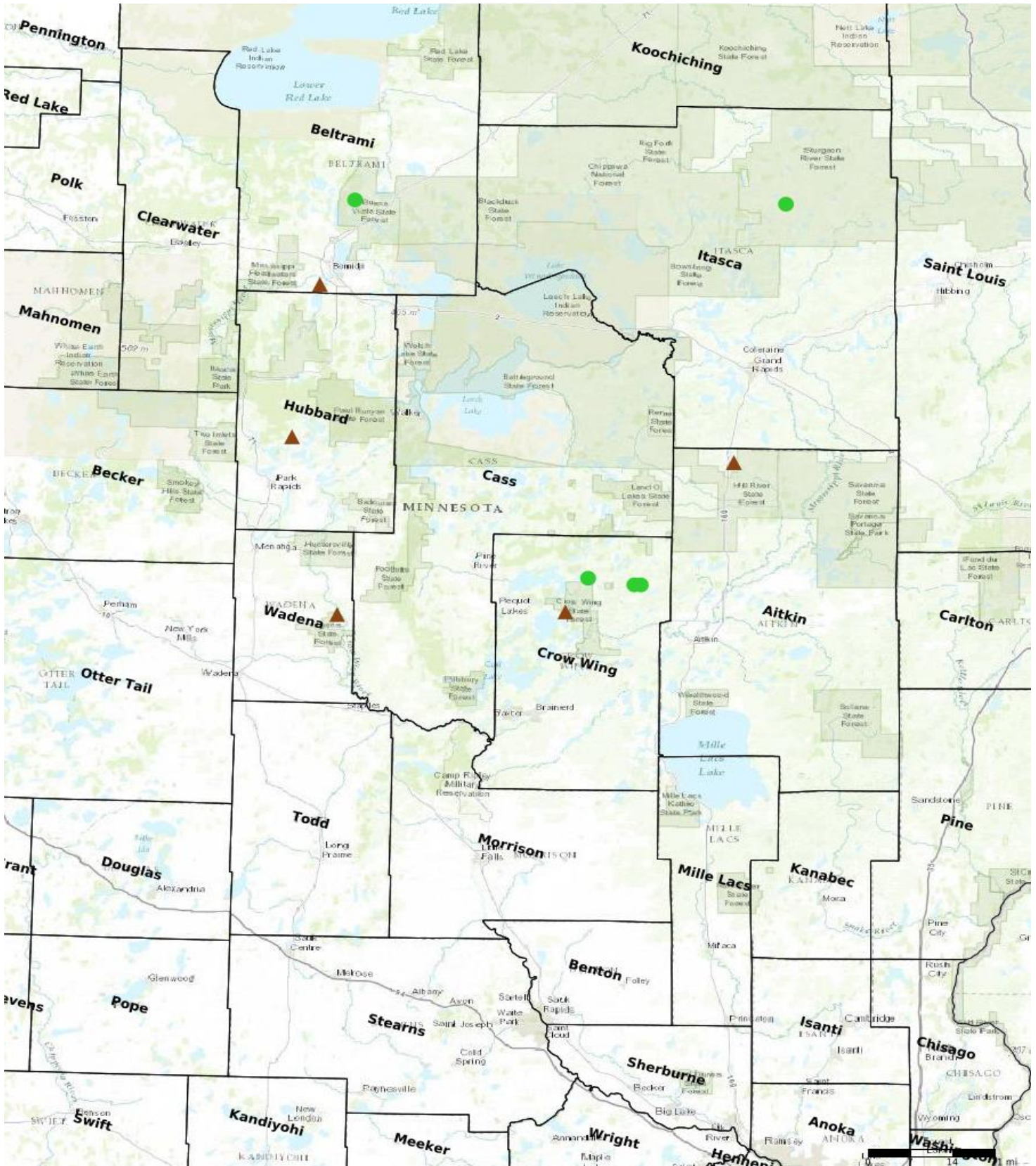
## Parcels

### Sign-up Criteria?

No

### Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
DNR - Hill Lake AMA	Aitkin	05226213	30	\$306,000	No
MLT - Black Lake (Bakker)	Beltrami	14833212	391	\$0	No
DNR - Preece Point AMA	Beltrami	14633230	11	\$150,500	No
MLT - Island Lake (Flemmer Trust)	Crow Wing	13725217	509	\$260,000	No
DNR - Cuyuna Scout Camp AMA - EASEMENT	Crow Wing	13727212	118	\$108,000	No
DNR - Greenwood Lake AMA	Crow Wing	13627208	82	\$305,000	No
MLT - Island Lake (Flemmer)	Crow Wing	13725218	5	\$95,000	No
DNR - Pickerel Lake	Hubbard	14134209	6	\$70,000	No
MLT - Ann Lake (Killeen)	Itasca	06024229	132	\$0	No
TPL - Crow Wing River, Lyons State Forest/WMA/AMA	Wadena	13633215	705	\$1,165,000	No



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

**Parcel Map**  
**Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Partnership**  
 (Data Generated From Parcel List)