

# Request for Funding

## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Fiscal Year 2016 / ML 2015

**Program or Project Title:** State Forest Acquisition Phase 3 - Protecting Forest Habitat in the Richard J. Dorer Memorial Forest

**Funds Requested:** \$4,020,000

**Manager's Name:** David Schuller

**Title:** Lands Program Coordinator

**Organization:** DNR - Forestry

**Street Address:** 500 Lafayette Road

**City:** St. Paul, MN 55304

**Telephone:** 651-259-5255

**E-Mail:** david.schuller@state.mn.us

**Organization Web Site:** www.mndnr.gov

**County Locations:** Fillmore, Goodhue, Houston, Wabasha, and Winona.

### Ecological Planning Regions:

- Southeast Forest

### Activity Type:

- Protect in Easement
- Protect in Fee

### Priority Resources Addressed by Activity:

- Forest

## Abstract:

Using the land asset plan for the RJ Dorer State Forest developed in 2013, acquire 1447 acres of in-holdings within the state forest and critical access easements to state forest land to improve recreational opportunities, forest habitat and watershed protection.

## Design and Scope of Work:

Minnesota's population has grown by over 1 million people, to 5.3 million, in the past 20 years and is projected to continue this growth rate for the next 20 years. Thousands of acres of habitat are being converted to intensive commercial, residential, and agricultural development each year.

This proposal will protect 1447 acres of critical forestland habitat and provide access to over 4,300 acres of State Forest (SF) through fee and permanent access easement acquisition. Parcels were selected from a pool of desirable parcels identified in area land asset management plans. These pool parcels were selected from three classifications; those providing access to state land, those consolidating fragmented state land parcels, and those providing protection of a critical forest habitat. Parcels were further prioritized by the acres accessed, completion of consolidation and values protected. To provide public access to all of this forest, 170 private land parcels or easements are needed. To consolidate fragmented state forest, 120 additional private land parcels containing 4700 acres would need to be acquired. This proposal continues the work of acquiring key land parcels from willing sellers.

This project includes the initial land development of each parcel acquired including boundary surveys and signage, well and septic closure, building and dump disposal, and restoration of bare ground with native vegetation.

This program is supported by all traditional outdoor stakeholders. All known stakeholders are supportive of these

acquisitions including county boards and forest user groups such as Pheasants Forever, The Nature Conservancy, and the Minnesota Deer Hunter's Association which have contributed funding for previous acquisitions. We coordinate efforts with these groups to develop complimentary proposals that prevent duplication and enhance outcomes. Specific organizations and letters of support are available upon request.

## **How the request addresses MN habitats:**

The Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwoods State Forest (RJ Dorer) in southeast Minnesota is a unique forest biome of rolling hills, goat prairie, and river bottom forest. This forest provides habitat to deer, turkey, rattlesnakes, trout, many migratory birds and flora and fauna of special concern. The state land within the RJ Dorer provides significant outdoor recreational opportunities. The parcels to be acquired either provide access to large areas of currently inaccessible state land or consolidate fragmented forestland, mostly in connection with streams and rivers. These acquisitions will protect the declining forest base from fragmentation due to development and provide opportunities to further enhance habitat for fish, game and other wildlife.

## **Please explain the nature of urgency:**

Due to the current recession, land prices have stabilized or declined and a short-term opportunity exists to purchase more value for our expenditures. This window of opportunity is quickly closing as the real estate market begins its recovery.

## **Planning**

### **MN State-wide Conservation Plan Priorities:**

- H3 Improve connectivity and access to recreation
- LU8 Protect large blocks of forest land

### **Plans Addressed:**

- Driftless Area Restoration Effort
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

## **Please describe the science based planning and evaluation model used:**

The planning model used for parcel selection is based on three metrics: acres of existing state land accessed, miles of boundary reduced and acres of critical habitat protected. Parcels of land with willing sellers that meet one or more of these metrics have been selected and prioritized by total score.

### **LSOHC Southeast Forest Section Priorities:**

- Protect forest habitat through acquisition in fee or easement to prevent parcelization and fragmentation and to provide the ability to access and manage landlocked public properties

## **Accelerates or Supplements Current Efforts:**

As Phase III, this project continues and accelerates a renewed effort to protect critical habitat and watersheds in southeastern Minnesota made possible with Phase I & II funding from OHF in FY 2012 and FY 2015. The goal of the Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwoods State Forest, initiated over 50 years ago was to protect watersheds, habitat, goat prairies and forests on the highly erodible soils of southeastern Minnesota through the establishment and expansion of a state forest. Sporadic funding over the years has yielded 49,000 acres protected in state forest. Phases one and two of this project have protected, or are expected to protect an additional 600 acres of forest habitat in southeast Minnesota toward a goal of protecting 4700 acres for consolidation, plus 170 access parcels. This phase three project, along with partner projects will bring us over half way to this goal.

## Non-OHF Money Spent in the Past:

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2005	Bonding	1500000
2006	Bonding	1000000

## Sustainability and Maintenance:

Lands acquired in this project become part of the RJ Dorer Memorial Hardwoods State Forest. This project is very sustainable as management costs are reduced by the project through improved access to and consolidation of existing state forest lands. Funding for management comes from the Forest Management Investment Account of the Natural Resources Fund, funded by timber sales revenue from the existing portions of the state forest.

## Maintain Project Outcomes:

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2020	Natural Resource Fund -FMIA	Manage forests to maximize forest health and wildlife benefits consistent with guidance documentation	Maintain boundaries	Monitor and manage public use

## Applicable Criteria:

*If funded, this proposal will meet all applicable criteria set forth in MS 97A.056?* - **Yes**

## Government Approval:

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

Local government approval is not required, however, it is the policy of the DNR to notify county boards of all acquisitions prior to closing for their information and to solicit comments and concerns.

## Permanent Protection:

*Is the land you plan to acquire free of any other permanent protection?* - **Yes**

## Current Hunting and Fishing Plan:

*Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing?* - **No**

## Future Hunting and Fishing Plan:

*Will the land be open for hunting and fishing after completion?* - **Yes**

All land acquired for state forest purposes is open for hunting and fishing.

## Public Use:

Will the eased land be open for public use? - **Yes**

The purposes of easements acquired under this project is to provide access to state land for public use. In some cases the landowner may only desire to provide an easement for forest management access and not allow public access across the easement, but the goal is public access.

## Permanent Protection:

Is the land you plan to acquire free of any other permanent protection? - **Yes**

## Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Acquire 1413 acres of state forest inholdings	June 2019
Acquire 34 access easements to state forest land	June 2019

## Outcomes

### Programs in southeast forest region:

- Forestlands and savannas are protected from parcelization and fragmentation and accessible for resource management purposes *Protection from parcelization and fragmentation is measured by the miles of state/private boundary reduced by the acquisition. The goal of this project is a reduction by 3.5 miles. Access is measured by acres of existing state land made accessible by an easement. The goal of this project is to gain access to 4300 acres.*

## Relationship to Other Funds:

- General Fund

\$120,000 for .4 FTE and misc costs to manage the project over 4 years are paid by the general fund.

# Budget Spreadsheet

**Total Amount of Request: \$4,020,000**

## Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$0	\$120,000	General Fund	\$120,000
Contracts	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$3,450,000	\$0		\$3,450,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$120,000	\$0		\$120,000
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0		\$0
Professional Services	\$430,000	\$0		\$430,000
Direct Support Services	\$20,000	\$0		\$20,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$4,020,000	\$120,000	-	\$4,140,000

## Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Land Acquisition Coordinator	0.40	4.00	\$0	\$120,000	General Fund	\$120,000
Total	0.40	4.00	\$0	\$120,000	-	\$120,000

Amount of Request: \$4,020,000

Amount of Leverage: \$120,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 2.99%

## Output Tables

**Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	1,413	0	1,413
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	34	0	34
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	1,447	0	1,447

**Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$3,900,000	\$0	\$3,900,000
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$120,000	\$0	\$120,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$4,020,000	\$0	\$4,020,000

**Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	1,413	0	0	1,413
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	34	0	0	34
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	1,447	0	0	1,447

**Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$3,900,000	\$0	\$0	\$3,900,000
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$120,000	\$0	\$0	\$120,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$4,020,000	\$0	\$0	\$4,020,000

**Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$2,760	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$3,529	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**Table 6. Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$2,760	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$3,529	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

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

0

# Parcel List

## Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

## Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

### Fillmore

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
RJD-Fillmore 2	10408222	160	\$480,000	No	Full	Full
RJD-N Rushford	10408225	3	\$6,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
RJD-Peterson	10408228	4	\$7,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
RJD-Trust	10407231	4	\$7,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
RJD-Watson Crk	10310220	63	\$189,000	No	Full	Full

### Goodhue

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
RJD-Wells Crk	11214224	40	\$120,000	No	Full	Full

### Houston

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
RJD-Benson Crk	10204218	3	\$6,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
RJD-Freeburg	10205214	2	\$5,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
RJD-Houston 2	10306230	320	\$650,000	No	Full	Full
RJD-Jefferson	10104202	60	\$180,000	No	Full	Full
RJD-Jefferson2	10104226	2	\$5,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
RJD-Jefferson3	10104227	3	\$6,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
RJD-Money Crk	10407228	40	\$120,000	No	Full	Full
RJD-Reno	10204221	240	\$720,000	No	Full	Full
RJD-Sheldon	10306214	3	\$6,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
RJD-WReno	10204214	4	\$7,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
RJD-WReno2	10204217	3	\$6,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

### Wabasha

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
RJD-Krueger	11010218	93	\$280,000	No	Full	Full
RJD-Weaver	10909230	2	\$5,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
RJD-Zumbro Bottoms	11011223	91	\$274,000	No	Full	Full
RJD-Zumbro Falls	10913217	100	\$300,000	No	Full	Full



### Winona

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
RJD-Pine Crk	10509235	28	\$84,000	No	Full	Full
RJD-Preston Valley	10809225	13	\$39,000	No	Full	Full
RJD-Speltz Crk	10809235	1	\$2,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
RJD-Trout Valley 2	10809204	30	\$90,000	No	Full	Full
RJD-Trout Valley 3	10809209	53	\$160,000	No	Full	Full

### Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

### Goodhue

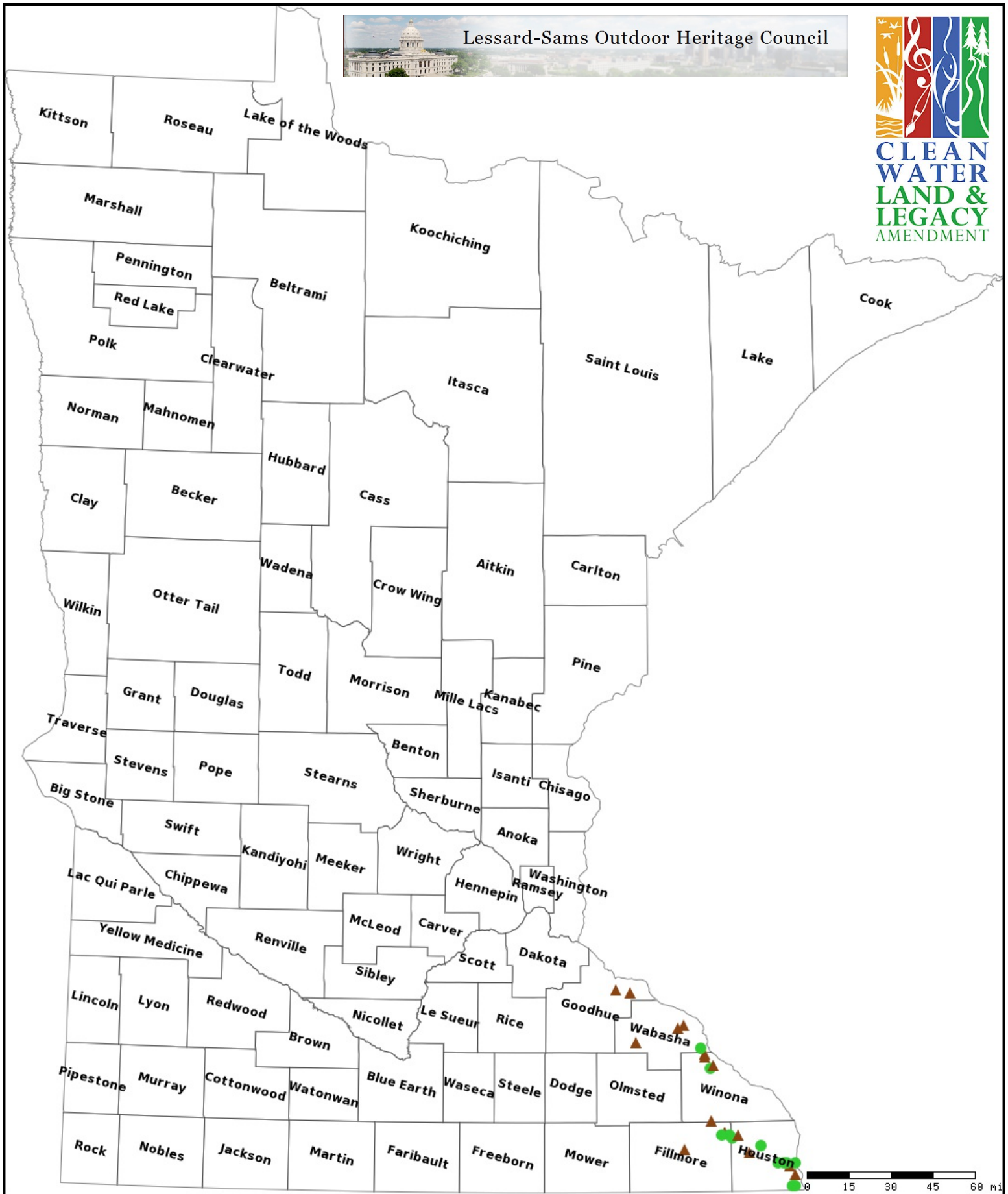
Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	# Bldgs?	Bldg Improve Desc	Value of Bldg	Disposition of Improvements
RJD-Hay Creek	11214218	82	\$246,000	1	Outbuilding to be removed	\$10,000	Remove

### Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.



**CLEAN  
WATER  
LAND &  
LEGACY**  
AMENDMENT



## State Forest Acquisition Phase 3 - Protecting Forest Habitat in the Richard J. Dorer Memorial Forest

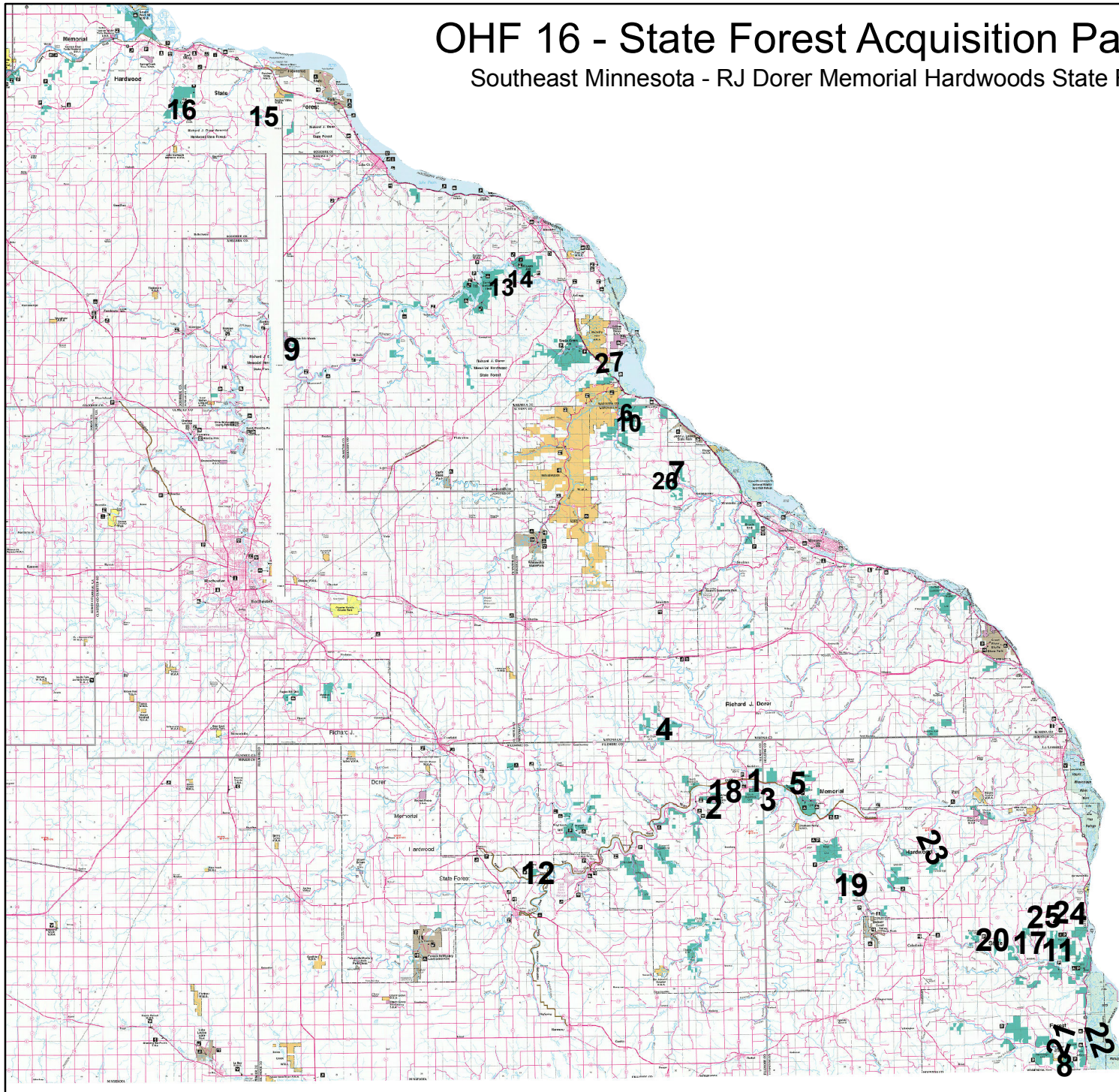
### Legend

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



# OHF 16 - State Forest Acquisition Parcels

Southeast Minnesota - RJ Dorer Memorial Hardwoods State Forest

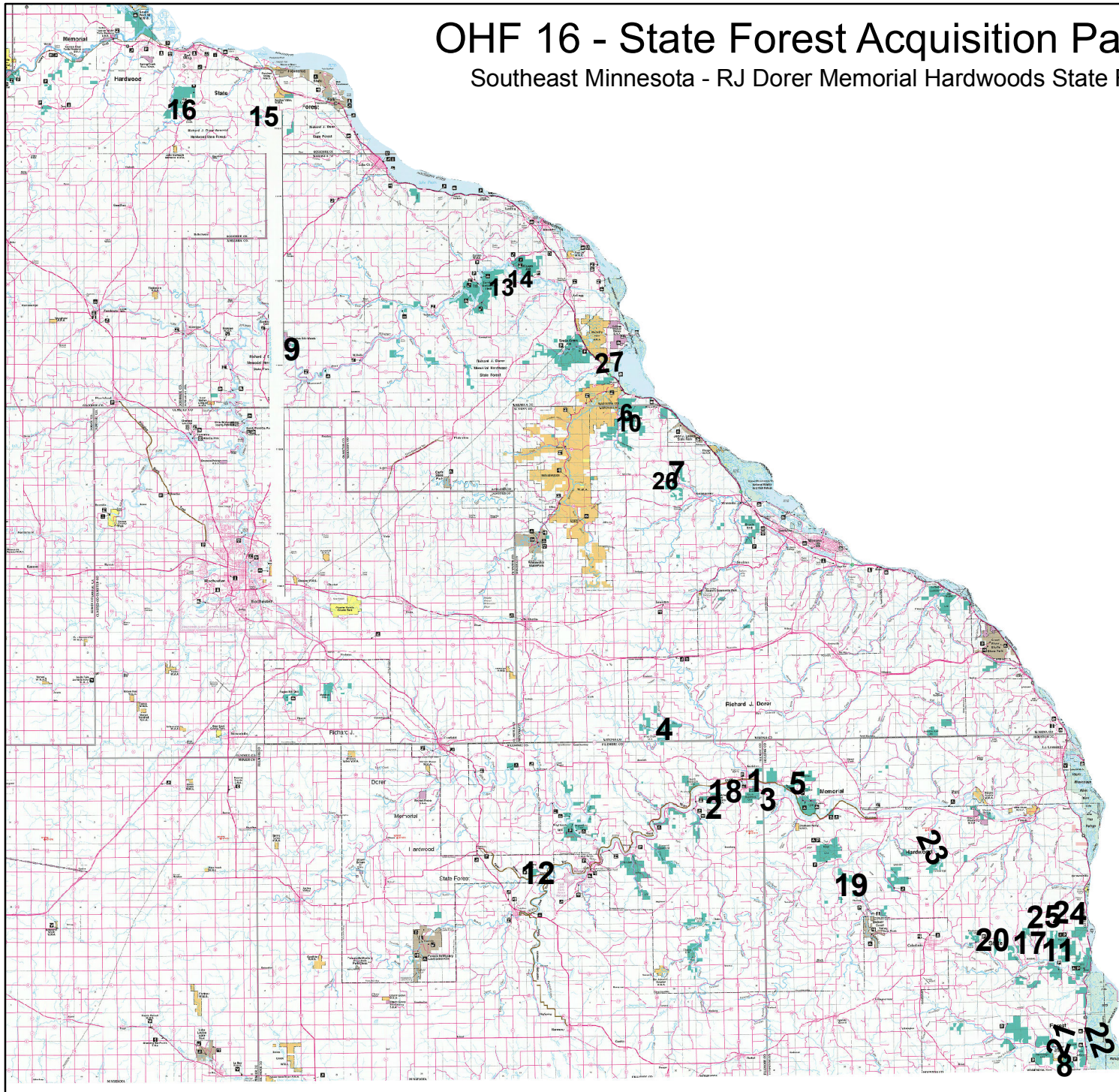


- 1 N\_Rushford
- 2 Peterson
- 3 Trust
- 4 Pine Creek
- 5 Money Creek
- 6 Trout Valley 2
- 7 Preston Valley
- 8 Jefferson
- 9 Zumbro Falls
- 10 Trout Valley 3
- 11 Reno
- 12 Watson Crk
- 13 Zumbro Bottoms
- 14 Krueger
- 15 Wells Creek
- 16 Hay Creek
- 17 Benson\_Crk
- 18 Fillmore 2
- 19 Houston 2
- 20 Freeburg
- 21 Jefferson2
- 22 Jefferson3
- 23 Sheldon
- 24 WReno
- 25 WReno2
- 26 Speltz Crk
- 27 Weaver



# OHF 16 - State Forest Acquisition Parcels

Southeast Minnesota - RJ Dorer Memorial Hardwoods State Forest



- 1 N\_Rushford
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