

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Laws of Minnesota 2016 Accomplishment Plan



Date: October 15, 2015

Program or Project Title: Shell Rock River Habitat Restoration Program - Phase V

Funds Recommended: \$ 1,200,000

Manager's Name: Andy Henschel
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Legislative Citation:

Appropriation Language:

County Locations: Freeborn

Regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

Activity types:

- Enhance
- Protect in Fee
- Restore

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Habitat
- Wetlands

Abstract:

The Shell Rock River Watershed District's Phase 5 Habitat Restoration Program will restore, enhance, and protect 1040 acres of essential shallow lake, wetland and stream bank habitat benefiting fish, waterfowl and wildlife populations, preserving an outdoor legacy for future generations.

Design and scope of work:

The Shell Rock River Watershed District (SRRWD) covers 246 square miles inside Freeborn County and includes a complex system of wetlands, streams, and shallow lakes that drain into the Shell Rock River. Among the District's 11 lakes are Fountain Lake and Albert Lea Lake, which are located in the core of Freeborn County. These lakes are important to residents for recreation and vital to Albert Lea's tourism economy and identity.

Habitat degradation of wetlands, streams, and shallow lakes is an issue of statewide importance that requires accelerated investment in projects to restore, enhance and protect habitat for fish, waterfowl and wildlife populations. Protection and restoration of this critical habitat is the highest priority in the SRRWD. Reduction of habitat in the watershed is directly affected by invasive aquatic vegetation, populations of invasive fish species such as common carp, and artificial drainage. Degradation in habitat is influencing

available food sources for game fish populations that include Northern Pike, Bluegill, Yellow Perch and Walleye, and duck populations that include Northern Pintail, Redhead, Canvasback, and Greater/Lesser Scaup.

With this growing concern, in 2014 the SRRWD created a 5 year, \$20 million watershed wide effort to restore, protect, and enhance degraded habitat conditions through implementations of projects on a lake-shed basis.

This Watershed Habitat Restoration Program is designed to accomplish the following objectives: restore desirable fish, waterfowl and wildlife populations, enhance native aquatic rooted vegetation, increase fish habitat and spawning areas, waterfowl nesting areas, re-establish flyway habitat, increase wildlife habitat and its natural prairie, and increase and improve community use of restored natural resources. These Program goals will be attained by:

- 70 acres in key habitat targeted acquisition to re-establish native vegetation, improve nesting habitat and waterfowl food sources.
- Establishment of wetland basins of 790 acres to improve upland game and waterfowl nesting habitat.
- Re-establish native vegetation to improve upland game and waterfowl nesting habitat to 180 acres in the watershed.

Phase 5 will utilize elements of successful local and previously funded LSOHC Programs, build upon Phase 4 of the Habitat Restoration Program, and enhance, restore and protect fisheries, waterfowl and wildlife habitat within the SRRWD. Project scope in this Program consists of accelerated wildlife management areas, waterfowl production areas, Minnesota Prairie Recovery, living shallow lakes and wetland initiatives along with accelerated shallow lakes and wetland enhancements. Finally, the scope of work will consist of game fish habitat improvement, enhancement and protection.

The SRRWD is the headwaters to the Shell Rock River, Cedar River, Upper Iowa River, Mississippi River, and the Gulf of Mexico. Creating long-term goals to restore, enhance and protect the lakes, wetlands and streams in the SRRWD that will positively affect downstream conditions is important to improving habitat and water quality of public waters within, as well as, outside of the Shell Rock River Watershed District. These long term goals interconnect and re-establish important flyway habitats within Minnesota, such as: Mississippi, Le Sueur and La Qui Parle. The goal is to establish waterfowl and fish populations to create the wildlife mecca that was recorded in the late 1800's (See attached article). Finally, this Program will preserve an outdoor legacy for Minnesotans to use and enjoy for generations.

The SRRWD proposes to improve degraded habitat conditions through implementation of projects on a lake-shed basis. District staff and board managers have demonstrated the ability and capacity to complete these projects with funding from the LSHOC. The projects are identified as a high priority in the SRRWD Management Plan, a plan developed with public participation, subject to public review and approval by the SRRWD Board. District staff focuses on identifying existing impairments through current conservation modeling and monitoring water quality within the SRRWD, which results in determining project locations with the greatest net return in habitat restoration.

In 2004 the SRRWD released its first Watershed Management Plan to implement reasonable and necessary improvements to natural resources and water quality. Some of the major beneficial outcomes were: overall improved water quality, an aggressive Pollution Prevention Program that centered on repairing septic systems, and restoring a key headwaters lake. The SRRWD is in the midst of a watershed habitat transformation and is now implementing its second generation Waterplan. The District welcomes the opportunity to build on the success of the first Watershed Management Plan by adding and continuing the aggressive Habitat Restoration Program designed to protect, enhance and restore, shallow lake, wetland and stream habitat. Creating this partnership with the LSOHC will demonstrate that leveraged watershed based benefits can accrue from a strategic approach to habitat restoration and protection efforts and can be replicated in similar watersheds throughout Minnesota.

The Program was designed to shift habitat capacity of the watershed to a recognizable level for generations to come and complement the habitat restoration and protection benefits from previous LSOHC funding phases: Wedge Creek, White Lake and Fountain Lake Fish Barriers (2009-10); Shell Rock River Headwater's Project (2011-12); Albert Lea Lake Dam and Fish Barrier (2013-14); Goose Creek Fish Barrier (CPL Grant) (2013-2014); Shell Rock River Headwaters Restoration, Phase II (CPL Grant) (2014-15); and Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program, Phase 4 (2015-16). The District will leverage its experience to ensure optimum project design and implementation, resulting in rapid habitat restoration and enhancement benefits. In turn, implementation of these projects will provide long-term protection of the SRRWD's shallow lakes, wetlands and streams.

The Shell Rock River Watershed District has a proven track record with LSOHC, implementing projects that protect, restore, and enhance Minnesota's natural resources. Public fishing, hunting, outdoor recreation, in addition to our recent Shell Rock River Water Trail, give outdoor enthusiasts first-hand use of improved habitat conditions that restore fish and wildlife populations within the Shell Rock River Watershed.

Crops:

Will there be planting of corn or any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program - **No**

How does the request address MN habitats that have: historical value to fish and wildlife, wildlife species of greatest conservation need, MN County Biological Survey data, and/or rare, threatened and endangered species inventories:

Historically the Shell Rock River Watershed is a shallow lake system with diverse populations of fish, waterfowl and wildlife. With degraded habitat becoming a concern, ongoing efforts of District studies, modeling, and monitoring has defined current impairments and invasive species populations. Implementing lake-shed, as well as site specific habitat restoration projects are progressively improving populations of native fish species, waterfowl and wildlife habitat. The Program includes projects that are prioritized based on the significance of benefit to aquatic habitat, urgency of the work, availability of leverage funding, location of projects and agreement with relevant planning documents. This proposal uses a programmatic approach to achieve prioritized aquatic habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement of lakes, streams, and wetlands across the Watershed, to once again create the historic mecca of natural resources we once had, preserving an outdoor legacy for future generations.

What is the nature of urgency and why it is necessary to spend public money for this work as soon as possible:

Sub-watersheds with degraded habitat and impairments still remain in the SRRWD, giving the District an opportunity to build upon existing work by providing habitat, with an attainable timeline, to fish, waterfowl, and wildlife populations with expected measurable benefits resulting from Phase 5 projects.

Describe the science based planning and evaluation model used:

SRRWD utilizes monitoring with precision conservation modeling to identify Priority Management Zones (PMZs) on a sub-watershed basis. The PMZs are prioritized and evaluated conservation project locations chosen to mitigate specific areas contributing to degradation of habitat, which reduces populations of aquatic vegetation, fish, waterfowl and wildlife within the lake-shed.

Which sections of the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan are applicable to this project:

- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Long Range Plan for Muskellunge and Large Northern Pike Management Through 2020
- Managing Minnesota's Shallow Lakes for Waterfowl and Wildlife

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Prairie:

- Protect, restore, and enhance shallow lakes

Relationship to other funds:

- Not Listed

How does this proposal accelerate or supplement your current efforts in this area:

Phase 5 of the Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program supplements Phase 4 of the Program, and consolidates previous programs that include: Fish Barrier Program, Stream Restoration Program, ISTS Program and the Wetland Restoration Program. Projects that the SRRWD undergoes are focused on recovery of impaired resources on a watershed basis that provide measurable and lasting results. Each project is another effort in restoring desirable native habitat to the SRRWD.

LSOHC funds accelerate ongoing conservation efforts by increasing the number of successful projects the District is able to complete each year in the watershed. Projects selected in the Program contribute to the success of long-term management plans, enhance growth of aquatic plants, reduced populations of undesirable fish and vegetation, increase numbers of game fish, waterfowl and wildlife populations, and provide habitat for fish, waterfowl and wildlife.

Describe the source and amount of non-OHF money spent for this work in the past:

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2012	Local Tax Levy - 25% Grant Matching Funds	180,000
2013	Local Tax Levy - 25% Grant Matching Funds	230,000
2014	Local Tax Levy - 25% Grant Matching Funds	804,750

How will you sustain and/or maintain this work after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended:

The Shell Rock River Watershed District is a permanent entity created by state statute and operates under a series of 10-year plans that are approved by MNBWSR. The first 10 year Waterplan was completed in 2004 and the District is currently completing a second generation 10-year Watershed Management Plan. The second generation Waterplan requires a top-to-bottom comprehensive list of natural resource restoration, management, enhancement, and protection strategies.

SRRWD relies on multiple funding sources including a local levy, a local option sales tax, and multiple public and private partnerships including four previous LSOHC phased projects to assist in funding projects. The District continues an aggressive monitoring protocol, generating yearly regular results that are used for extensive reporting. The habitat efforts that accrue from the Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program will easily be incorporated into this existing results-driven reporting framework, which can be used to generate public interest and education of a watershed-based restoration approach. The District has commitment and funding sources necessary to maintain existing and future natural resource enhancement projects.

Explain the things you will do in the future to maintain project outcomes:

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2019	Sales Tax and LSOHC	Construction and Erosion Control Inspections	Erosion Control and Maintenance Inspections and Maintenance Implementations	Maintenance Inspections and Maintenance Implementation
2020	Sales Tax and LSOHC	Construction and Erosion Control Inspections	Erosion Control and Maintenance Inspections and Maintenance Implementation	Maintenance Inspections and Maintenance Implementation
2021	Sales Tax	Maintenance Inspections and Maintenance Implementation		Maintenance Inspections and Maintenance Implementation

Activity Details:

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

Will local government approval be sought prior to acquisition - **Yes**

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

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

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

Open hunting and fishing will comply with State regulations.

Are there currently trails or roads on any of the acquisitions on the parcel list - **Yes**

Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:

There are currently no trails, but the roads on properties consist of access driveways and only allowable users are landowners.

Will the trails or roads remain and uses continue to be allowed after OHF acquisition - **No**

Will new trails or roads be developed as a result of the OHF acquisition - **Yes**

Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:

For projects consisting of restoration work, temporary roads may be built for the use of construction equipment to reach the desired location.

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished:

The roads will be maintained for the construction period. Once the projects are completed the temporary roads will be removed and seeded with vegetation. Maintenance of the roads will no longer be needed after the construction period.

Will restoration and enhancement work follow best management practices including MS 84.973 Pollinator Habitat Program - **Yes**

Is the activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, subd 13(f), tribal lands, and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15 - **Yes (Public Waters)**

Accomplishment Timeline:

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Begin project planning, design and permitting work following July	July 2016
Begin projects during the 2017 construction season following completion of design, permits, and contracting	2017 Construction Season
Complete all 2017 restoration and habitat improvement projects	End of 2018 Field Season
Vegetation enhancement on restoration projects	June 2019
Maintenance and monitoring of all restoration and habitat improvement projects	Ongoing

Date of Final Report Submission: 11/1/2019

Federal Funding:

Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program - **No**

Outcomes:

Programs in prairie region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced shallow lakes and wetlands *Protected, restored, and enhanced shallow lakes and wetlands will provide habitat to wildlife and support healthy natural resource conditions for long term benefits. They will offer an oasis for migratory waterfowl by re-establishing and connecting the flyways in south-central Minnesota. Measurement of success will require multifaceted data collection. Floristic Quality Assessments of restored wetlands, lakeshore, fish population surveys and wildlife surveys will aid in measuring and evaluating the success of protected, restored and enhanced shallow lakes, streams and wetlands. Increases and declines in wildlife, waterfowl and fish populations will be determined and reported in cooperation with MNDNR.*

Budget Spreadsheet

Budget reallocations up to 10% do not require an amendment to the Accomplishment Plan

How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount

The number of projects has been reduced to meet the allocation amount.

Total Amount of Request: \$ 1200000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$45,000	\$0		\$45,000
Contracts	\$204,200	\$0		\$204,200
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$744,700	\$0		\$744,700
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0		\$0
Professional Services	\$128,300	\$40,000	Local Option Sales Tax	\$168,300
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$15,000	\$0		\$15,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$62,800	\$0		\$62,800
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$1,200,000	\$40,000		\$1,240,000

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Manager	0.43	1.00	\$25,000	\$0		\$25,000
Program Assistant	0.30	1.00	\$20,000	\$0		\$20,000
Total	0.73	2.00	\$45,000	\$0		\$45,000

Amount of Request: \$1,200,000

Amount of Leverage: \$40,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 3.33%

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	790	0	0	0	790
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	70	70
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	180	180
Total	790	0	0	250	1,040

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$275,800	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$275,800
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$842,400	\$842,400
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$81,800	\$81,800
Total	\$275,800	\$0	\$0	\$924,200	\$1,200,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	790	0	790
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	70	0	70
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	180	0	180
Total	0	0	0	1,040	0	1,040

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$275,800	\$0	\$275,800
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$842,400	\$0	\$842,400
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$81,800	\$0	\$81,800
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,200,000	\$0	\$1,200,000

Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	\$349	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$12034
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$454

Table 6. Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$349	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$12034	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$454	\$0

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

9 miles

Parcel List

For restoration and enhancement programs ONLY: Managers may add, delete, and substitute projects on this parcel list based upon need, readiness, cost, opportunity, and/or urgency so long as the substitute parcel/project forwards the constitutional objectives of this program in the Project Scope table of this accomplishment plan. The final accomplishment plan report will include the final parcel list.

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

Freeborn

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Albert Lea Lake Unnamed Creek	10220206	202	\$201,300	No
Pickereel Lake Site 12	10222213	587	\$40,300	No
Wedge Creek Reach 1	10221206	181	\$72,500	No

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Freeborn

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Mud Lake Property	10222212	27	\$332,800	No	Full	Full
Olson Property	10321236	33	\$406,800	No	Full	Full
Remakel Property	10222212	7	\$87,800	No	Full	Full

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

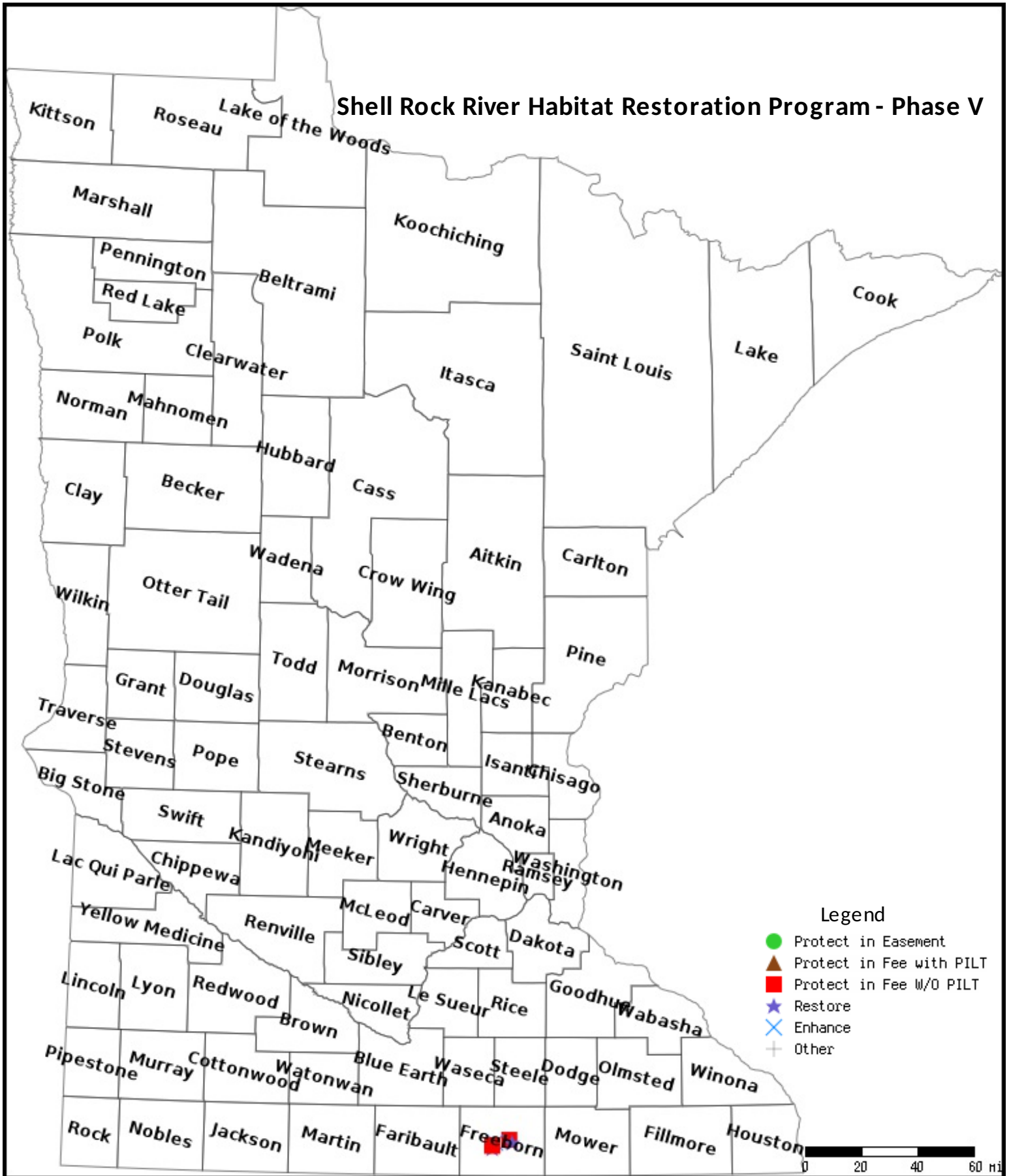
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map

Shell Rock River Habitat Restoration Program - Phase V



Data Generated From Parcel List

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Comparison Report

Program Title: 2016 - Shell Rock River Habitat Restoration Program - Phase V

Organization: Shell Rock River Watershed District

Manager: Andy Henschel

Budget

Requested Amount: \$3,788,800

Appropriated Amount: \$1,200,000

Percentage: 31.67%

Budget Item	Total Requested		Total Appropriated		Percentage of Request	
	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Appropriated Amount	Anticipated Leverage	Percentage of Request	Percentage of Leverage
Personnel	\$45,000	\$0	\$45,000	\$0	100.00%	-
Contracts	\$658,400	\$0	\$204,200	\$0	31.01%	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$2,426,200	\$0	\$744,700	\$0	30.69%	-
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Professional Services	\$421,600	\$100,000	\$128,300	\$40,000	30.43%	40.00%
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$35,000	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	42.86%	-
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$202,600	\$0	\$62,800	\$0	31.00%	-
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Total	\$3,788,800	\$100,000	\$1,200,000	\$40,000	31.67%	40.00%

How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount?

The number of projects has been reduced to meet the allocation amount.

Output

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	804	790	98.26%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	218	70	32.11%
Protect in Easement	0	0	-
Enhance	447	180	40.27%

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	657,800	275,800	41.93%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	2,730,800	842,400	30.85%
Protect in Easement	0	0	-
Enhance	400,200	81,800	20.44%

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	804	790	98.26%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	218	70	32.11%
Protect in Easement	0	0	-
Enhance	447	180	40.27%

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	657,800	275,800	41.93%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	2,730,800	842,400	30.85%
Protect in Easement	0	0	-
Enhance	400,200	81,800	20.44%