

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2017 / ML 2016 Request for Funding



Date: June 04, 2015

Program or Project Title: Young Forest Conservation Phase II

Funds Requested: \$3,824,300

Manager's Name: George Fenwick

Title: President

Organization: American Bird Conservancy

Address: 4249 Loudoun Ave

Address 2: P.O. Box 249

City: The Plains, VA 20198

Office Number: 540-253-5780

Email: gfenwick@abcbirds.org

Website: www.abcbirds.org

County Locations: Aitkin, Becker, Beltrami, Carlton, Cass, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, Lake of the Woods, Mille Lacs, Pine, and Roseau.

Regions in which work will take place:

- Northern Forest

Activity types:

- Restore
- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Forest
- Habitat

Abstract:

Create new WMA, restore 6000 acres of public forest to help meet wildlife and recreational goals within six Minnesota conservation plans, leverage \$1 million from outside sources for forest restoration on private lands, keep Golden-winged Warbler off the ESA.

Design and scope of work:

Over the years, forestland management has created forests with a limited age class distribution; dominated by trees of the same age. As a result, there has been a decline of many forest dependent wildlife species that require multiple age class forests throughout their annual life cycle. One of those species, the Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA) has suffered a precipitous population decline, falling 60% across its historic range since 1966. Due to this alarming decline, it is presently being considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Minnesota is a key state for the conservation of this species as it holds the largest remaining breeding population of any US state or Canadian province. The GWWA is deemed a Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) in the Minnesota State Wildlife Action Plan and a Minnesota Stewardship Species by Minnesota Audubon. While the GWWA population in Minnesota is stable, maintaining and increasing this state's population is critical to keeping the species off the endangered species list.

Recent research and field tests from scientists across several institutions has shown that to restore GWWA populations and other species dependent on young forest, we must modify or plan treatments of public forestlands to increase and maintain the quality of habitat, particularly the brushland-forest interface. The GWWA's optimal breeding habitat is forest openings called young forest created through natural events such as fire or storm events within larger forested landscapes. Through years of applied conservation research and collaboration, biologists, foresters, wildlife managers and conservationists have succeeded in developing Young Forest Best Management Practices (BMPs) that effectively reproduce this critical stage of forest life. These BMPs result in habitat that is the most productive for wildlife specialists such as GWWA and American Woodcock and habitat generalists, such as Ruffed Grouse and White-tailed Deer.

American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and its many partners in Minnesota working on young forest are grateful to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) recommending critically needed funding in 2013 for Phase I of a determined effort to use these BMPs to optimize the productivity of MN forests to measurably increase GWWA populations – as well as populations of more than 20 other SGCN, game and non-game species – and to create greater recreational and economic benefits for Minnesotans to hunt and birdwatch. Many of these areas also fall within Important Bird Areas, a designation given to a handful of sites in Minnesota, by Minnesota Audubon, that are essential for birds and where immediate and long-term conservation action is needed. Thanks to the united efforts of ABC, State, Federal, and County natural resources managers we are on track to complete Phase I of this project by July 2016, having met or exceeded all prospective goals including leveraging more than \$1 million from outside sources.

To meet the growing support from public and private land managers for this project, which was generated from Phase I, ABC respectfully requests support from LSOHC for Phase II of this project to:

1. Create a new, 560 acre Wildlife Management Area (WMA) adjacent to Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). This acquisition would maintain high quality habitat contiguous with Tamarac NWR. This WMA will be created through the purchase of approximately 400 acres of forest and through the transfer by USFWS to MN DNR of an existing 160 acre tract adjacent to the targeted properties for acquisition. ABC partner, The Conservation Fund, will negotiate the land protection; the resulting 560 acre WMA will be owned and managed by MN DNR Park Rapids Wildlife Office in collaboration with federal, state, county, and private landowners as part of a dynamic forested landscape. The targeted properties are for sale, and will be managed for Golden-winged Warblers, American Woodcock and other SGCN. These acquisitions will enhance landscape scale management opportunities and also help MN DNR to meet its outcome goals to protect at least 12,250 acres a year to sustain a variety of species and provide different kinds of outdoor recreation opportunities to people throughout the state. This proposed new WMA would be open to hunting and recreational opportunities.

2. Use Best Management Practices to restore and maintain an additional 6,000 acres of young forest on public lands. Minnesota continues to be on the vanguard of full life cycle forest wildlife management. This project provides important, additional resources needed to create and manage highly productive early successional forest habitat across Minnesota's northern forested landscapes, integrates wildlife management strategies between county, state, and federal public land managers resulting in a healthy mix of dynamic forest age classes and forest types. With LSOHC funding from Phase I of this project, ABC has developed strong local working relationships in key focal areas including Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge, Chippewa National Forest, Red Lake Reservation: and Aitkin, Cass, Hubbard, and Beltrami Counties, that results in greater wildlife and recreational opportunities through increased collaboration and communication between adjacent land managers. We also have strong working relationships with eight MN DNR Area Wildlife offices.

In addition, the high quality young forest being created or restored through this project matures into high performing mid-successional and ultimately mature forest for additional suites of Minnesota SGCN associated with those forest stages, making the LSOHC investment in this project extremely highly leveraged in terms of conservation outcomes and dollars spent for conservation.

3. Evaluate the impact of Best Management Practices (BMP) on targeted Golden-winged Warblers and other Minnesota Species of Greatest Conservation Need. ABC will use a standardized monitoring protocol to evaluate the use of the early successional forest created on public lands using LSOHC funding from Phase I, and from this proposed Phase II of the project. The results will be analyzed annually and shared with LSOHC, local public land managers, county, state and federal wildlife agencies.

To implement the same best management practices on private and corporate lands in Minnesota, ABC has secured more than \$2,000,000 from non-state funding sources to leverage OHF funding because of the strong national and statewide interests in assisting Minnesota achieve its conservation goals.

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:

This project optimizes forest productivity in Northern Forests for 20+ MN Species of Greatest Conservation Need, including the Golden-winged warbler GWWA.

In the Minnesota State Wildlife Action Plan, the GWWA is deemed a Species of Greatest Conservation Need within the Minnesota State Wildlife Action Plan and is a Minnesota Stewardship Species as identified by Minnesota Audubon.

The GWWA requires young forest for nesting and structurally diverse forest cover near nesting areas for successful brood and rearing. As the species uses two types of habitat, managing for this species using established, science based, forestry BMP's benefits a wide range of wildlife species including American Woodcock, Ruffed Grouse, Moose, Canada Lynx, northern long eared bat, white-tailed deer and Black-billed Cuckoo.

This conservation work addresses population declines of the global population of GWWA's documented in biological surveys by a

national/international consortium of scientists.

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

The GWWA is considered for federal protection under the Endangered Species Act. As Minnesota has the largest GWWA breeding population of any state, to avoid listing its urgent to optimize and improve productivity of GWWA in Minnesota.

Describe the science based planning and evaluation model used:

The work in this project advances the scientifically established goals set forth in the GWWA conservation plan by federal, state, academic, and conservation organizations. The project uses science based BMP practices for forestry, and will use a standardized evaluation protocol to evaluate results of forest management for target species.

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

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- LU10 Support and expand sustainable practices on working forested lands

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda
- Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare

Which LSHOC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Northern Forest:

- 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

Relationship to other funds:

- Not Listed

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

ABC and its partners are on track to successfully surpassed all of the outcomes in the current LSHOC Accomplishment Plan for Phase I of the Young Forest Conservation project by July 2015 and are seeking funding to launch Phase II of the project immediately on July. ABC has identified key areas for additional investment and has overwhelming support for this project from public land managers to create the dynamic forest habitats required by priority game and non-game species. On private lands, with dollars leveraged by the support of LHSOC, ABC has worked closely with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to utilize the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) to assist landowners with managing their forest to benefit forest dependent wildlife. With LSHOC funding for Phase II of the Young Forest Conservation project, we will accelerate our current efforts. ABC will leverage additional funds for this project of \$1,000,000+ from other sources for complementary work on private/public forest lands in GWWA focal areas within Minnesota. ABC is also dedicated to working with our partners, beyond the scope of this proposal, to evaluate the effectiveness of our efforts and adapt conservation strategies.

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

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2013	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	216000
2013	US Fish and Wildlife Service	64000

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

Successfully achieving GWWA population goals will require creating, restoring and/or maintaining forested landscapes with balanced distributions of young mature forests. ABC, as a member of the MN Young Forest Partnership, is committed to supporting their efforts to manage the highest performing young forest - the first critical stage of forest life that sets the stage for the health of following stages as needed and appropriate. Public and private foresters in MN have demonstrated a growing interest in using the young forest Best Management Practices being implemented through the Young Forest Conservation project beyond the timeframe of this grant because

of the greater demonstrated wildlife benefits, and recreational opportunities created. ABC is working with sustainable Forestry companies and USDA NRCS staff to continue this work on a parallel track on private lands.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2021-2050	Federal, State, Private	Create and maintain annually sufficient young forest to rebuild SG CN populations	Evaluate annually targeted SG CN species response to young forest restoration and modify strategies as needed.	

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 - **Yes**

Not Listed

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

Not Listed

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**
(WMA, County/Municipal, Refuge Lands, State Forests)

Accomplishment Timeline:

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Acquire property to create a 560 acre new WMA near Tamarac NWF	December 2017
Restore and maintain 6,000 acres of young forest on public lands	July 2020
Conduct annual evaluations of SG CN response to Best Management Practices	July 2020

Federal Funding:

Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program - **Yes**

Are the funds confirmed - **Yes**

Documentation

What are the types of funds?

Cash Match - \$1600000

Outcomes:

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Healthy populations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species as well as more common species *All habitat restoration will be completed with Federal, State and County partnerships with public land biologists and foresters. Upon completion of project acres, ABC has established a monitoring program to evaluate targeted species response.*

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$3,824,300

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$744,500	\$0		\$744,500
Contracts	\$1,580,000	\$0		\$1,580,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$1,300,000	\$0		\$1,300,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$52,800	\$0		\$52,800
Professional Services	\$72,000	\$0		\$72,000
Direct Support Services	\$20,000	\$0		\$20,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$10,000	\$0		\$10,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$45,000	\$0		\$45,000
Supplies/Materials	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$3,824,300	\$0	-	\$3,824,300

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
ABC MN Coordinator	100.00	4.00	\$332,400	\$0		\$332,400
ABC MN Coordinator II	100.00	4.00	\$332,400	\$0		\$332,400
ABC Great Lakes Regional Coordinator	20.00	4.00	\$79,700	\$0		\$79,700
Total	220.00	12.00	\$744,500	\$0	-	\$744,500

Amount of Request: \$3,824,300

Amount of Leverage: \$0

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 0.00%

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	0	6,000	0	6,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	400	0	400
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	6,400	0	6,400

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$2,442,300	\$0	\$2,442,300
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$1,382,000	\$0	\$1,382,000
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$3,824,300	\$0	\$3,824,300

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	6,000	6,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	400	400
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	6,400	6,400

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	\$2,442,300	\$2,442,300
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,382,000	\$1,382,000
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,824,300	\$3,824,300

Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$407	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$3,455	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$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	\$407
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,455
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

0

Parcel List

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

Aitkin

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Aitkin County #1	04722211	225	\$57,400	Yes
Aitkin County #2	04722227	75	\$19,100	Yes
Aitkin County #3	04422212	150	\$38,300	Yes
Brainerd/Aitkin DNR Wildlife #1	05126227	50	\$12,800	Yes
Brainerd/Aitkin DNR Wildlife #2	04726202	50	\$12,800	Yes
Brainerd/Aitkin DNR Wildlife #3	04822235	50	\$12,800	Yes
Brainerd/Aitkin DNR Wildlife #4	04826213	100	\$25,500	Yes
Brainerd/Aitkin DNR Wildlife #5	04923235	50	\$12,800	Yes
Brainerd/Aitkin DNR Wildlife #6	05026209	150	\$38,300	Yes
Brainerd/Aitkin DNR Wildlife #7	04827227	100	\$25,500	Yes

Becker

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Park Rapids DNR #1	13936207	100	\$25,500	Yes
Tamarac NWR #1	14139233	200	\$51,000	Yes
Tamarac NWR #2	14139236	200	\$51,000	Yes

Beltrami

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Beltrami County #1	15030214	50	\$12,800	Yes
Beltrami County #2	15030202	75	\$19,100	Yes
Beltrami County #3	15132202	50	\$12,800	Yes
Beltrami Island State Forest #4	15635210	50	\$12,800	Yes
Red Lake Reservation #1	15437235	400	\$102,000	Yes
Red Lake Reservation #2	15436228	500	\$127,500	Yes
Red Lake Reservation #3	15136218	400	\$102,000	Yes
Red Lake Reservation #3	15236231	400	\$102,000	Yes
Thief River Falls DNR Wildlife #1	15536202	35	\$8,900	Yes

Carlton

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Sandstone/Cloquet DNR Wildlife #1	04621213	40	\$10,200	Yes
Sandstone/Cloquet DNR Wildlife #2	04618215	100	\$25,500	Yes
Sandstone/Cloquet DNR Wildlife #3	04616214	100	\$25,500	Yes

Cass

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Cass County #1	13832232	100	\$25,500	Yes
Cass County #2	14025202	50	\$12,800	Yes
Cass County #3	13929225	50	\$12,800	Yes
Chippewa NF #5	14227226	110	\$28,100	Yes

Clearwater

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Bemidji DNR Wildlife #1	14837224	40	\$10,200	Yes
Bemidji DNR Wildlife #2	14434204	40	\$10,200	Yes
Red Lake Reservation #4	15137210	400	\$102,000	Yes

Crow Wing

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Brainerd/Aitkin DNR Wildlife #8	13625212	100	\$25,500	Yes

Hubbard

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Hubbard County #1	14234212	50	\$12,800	Yes
Hubbard County #2	14234206	25	\$6,400	Yes
Hubbard County #3	14135211	25	\$6,400	Yes

Itasca

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Chippewa NF #1	14729231	100	\$25,500	Yes
Chippewa NF #2	14830203	50	\$12,800	Yes
Chippewa NF #4	15027232	50	\$12,800	Yes
Grand Rapids DNR Wildlife #1	14927216	35	\$8,900	Yes
Grand Rapids DNR Wildlife #2	14525219	75	\$19,100	Yes
Grand Rapids DNR Wildlife #3	14625207	50	\$12,800	Yes
Grand Rapids DNR Wildlife #4	14525206	40	\$10,200	Yes

Lake of the Woods

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Beltrami Island State Forest #2	15936220	75	\$19,100	Yes
Beltrami Island State Forest #3	15734221	75	\$19,100	Yes

Mille Lacs

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Mille Lacs WMA #1	04025207	75	\$19,100	Yes
Mille Lacs WMA #2	04025209	40	\$10,200	Yes
Mille Lacs WMA #3	04025219	50	\$12,800	Yes
Mille Lacs WMA #4	04026227	60	\$15,300	Yes
Mille Lacs WMA #5	04225231	75	\$19,100	Yes

Pine

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Sandstone/Cloquet DNR Wildlife #4	04019222	200	\$51,000	Yes
Sandstone/Cloquet DNR Wildlife #5	03920224	60	\$15,300	Yes

Roseau

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Beltrami Island State Forest #1	15938203	200	\$51,000	Yes

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Becker

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tamarac #1	14139233	380	\$1,200,000	No	Full	Full

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

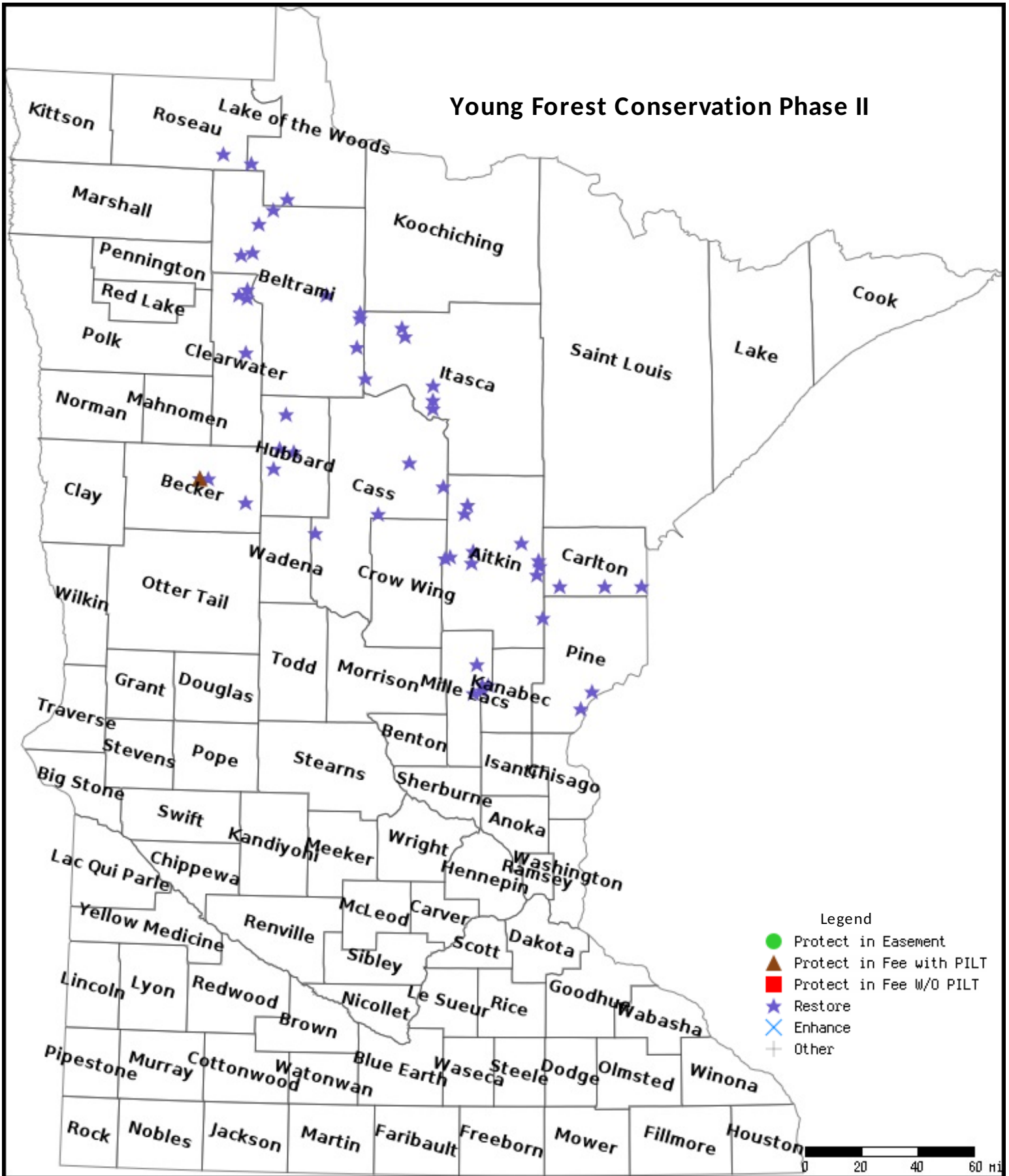
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

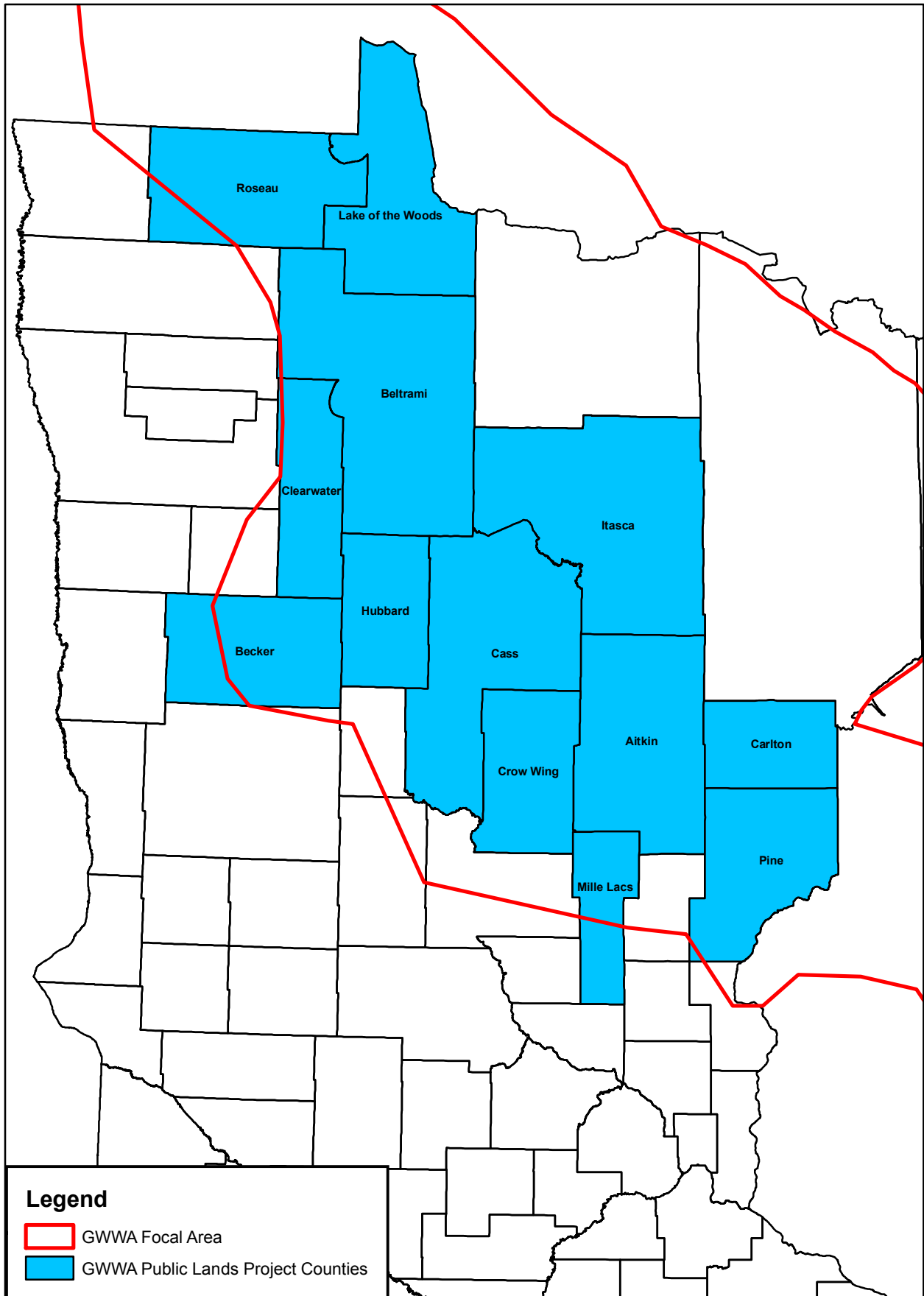
Parcel Map

Young Forest Conservation Phase II



Data Generated From Parcel List

GWWA Public Lands Project Counties 2016-2021



0 20 40 80 Miles



Aitkin County Land Department

209 2nd St. NW Room 206
Aitkin, MN 56431

218-927-7364

May 22, 2015

Mr. George Fenwick
President American Bird Conservancy
P. O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. Fenwick,

On behalf of Aitkin County, I am writing in support of the American Bird Conservancy's (ABC's) 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council: Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management—Phase II. This ongoing project has a role in maintaining a healthy and dynamic balance of forest and brushland age classes in Minnesota's forests. This proposal would provide for multiple species of conservation need and concern.

As a species that requires intricate management prescriptions that include young forest and adjacent mature forest, the Golden Winged Warbler (GWW) is a habitat specialist and continues to be one of Minnesota's premiere forest stewardships species. Although the state encompasses only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, Minnesota is the summer home to 47% of the entire global population. Even a small decline in the MN population would significantly impact the species population.

Furthermore, ABC's GWWA Public Lands Coordinator, Peter Dieser has continued to apply forest treatments and implement educational workshops that have a primary focus on forest health and diversity, not only in their habitats of interest, but across the range of Minnesota's forested habitats. It is this integrated approach, landscape-level awareness and ability to manage projects across jurisdictional boundaries that has lead the ABC and this program to become a partner in the ongoing efforts to manage Minnesota's natural resources. I support the work outlined in this proposal to restore and maintain a dynamic mosaic of upland and lowland habitats.

Sincerely,

Mark Jacobs
Land Commissioner

An Equal Opportunity Employer

Fax - 218-927-7249

e-mail: acld@co.aitkin.mn.us

Beltrami County

Natural Resource Management

701 Minnesota Ave NW, Suite 234 – Bemidji MN 56601-3178

May 27, 2015

Mr. George Fenwick
President
American Bird Conservancy
P. O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. Fenwick,

On behalf of the Beltrami County Natural Resource Management (NRM) Department, I am writing in support of the American Bird Conservancy's (ABC's) 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council titled "Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management - Phase II. In my position as the Natural Resource Management Department Director for Beltrami County, Minnesota, we were privileged to partner with the ABC on two wildlife habitat projects in 2014.

The NRM Department is responsible for the sustainable natural resource management on 146,500 acres of tax-forfeited lands. The Department is committed to multiple use management of its lands including forest management, wildlife habitat management, and recreation. Our goal for the habitat projects were the same as the ABC's goal of providing young forests and young wetland shrubs to benefit a wide variety of wildlife species. An avenue such as the ABC and the programs provided are vital to the regeneration of wetland shrubs. These species have little or no commercial value and, without financial support, the regeneration of these species and habitat would be difficult.

This ongoing project has played an integral role in maintaining a healthy and dynamic balance of forest and brush land age classes throughout Minnesota's forests. This proposal would ensure that critical wildlife habitat continues to be maintained for multiple species of conservation need and concern such as the Golden-winged warbler (GWWA), American Woodcock, Ruffed Grouse, Bobcat, Canada Lynx, and White-tailed Deer.

The Golden-winged warbler continues to be one of Minnesota's premiere forest stewardship species. Although the state encompasses only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, Minnesota is the summer home to 47% of the entire global population. A decline in the Minnesota population would be a huge blow for the future of the species. This species is a habitat specialist that requires intricate management prescriptions that include young forest and adjacent mature forest.

Furthermore, the American Bird Conservancy has continued to apply forest treatments that focus on forest health. The ABC and the GWWA Public Lands Coordinator, Peter Dieser have continually promoted an educated approach that includes identifying potential project sites by considering the distribution of cover types across the landscape, while being able to cross administrative boundaries. It was in this context that Beltrami County was able to coordinate with Peter and partner with ABC on two wildlife habitat projects and hope to partner on similar projects in the future.

I fully support the work outlined in ABC's proposal to restore and maintain a dynamic mosaic of upland and lowland habitats. This proposal recognizes that many wildlife species depend not only on young upland forest, but also on quality shrub wetlands. This project recognizes that the creation of young forest habitat needs to be done in the broader context of sustainable forest management plans that embrace the importance of sustaining a complex patchwork of upland and lowland forest types.

Sincerely,



Richard A. Moore

Beltrami County

Natural Resource Management Director/Land Commissioner



File Code: 2600
Date: May 29, 2015

Mr. George Fenwick
President
P. O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. George Fenwick:

The Chippewa National Forest (CNF) supports the American Bird Conservancy's (ABC) 2015 Lassard – Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Grant titled "Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management - Phase II". This ongoing project has played an integral role in maintaining a healthy and dynamic balance of forest and brushland age classes throughout Minnesota's forests.

The Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA) continues to be one of Minnesota's premiere forest stewardships species. Although the state encompasses only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, Minnesota is the summer home to 47% of the entire global population! Even a small decline in the MN population would significantly impact the species population. The CNF provides important habitat for golden-winged warblers. This project will help to restore/maintain habitat for this species across the Forest.

In support of this project, the CNF will: 1) complete all required environmental reviews and public scoping required for portions of this project that are located on USFS lands; 2) provide assistance in the lay-out and design of treatment areas on USFS lands; and 3) provide assistance with project inspecting during the implementation of this project on USFS lands.

We fully support the work outlined in this proposal to restore and maintain a dynamic mosaic of upland and lowland habitats. We look forward to working with ABC's GWWA Public Lands Coordinator, Peter Dieser, on the project if ABC is successful in securing the Lassard-Sams OHF grant.

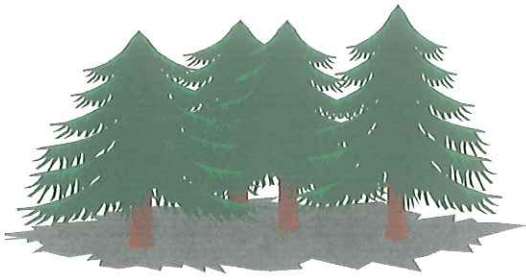
Please contact Cory Mlodik, District Wildlife Biologist at 218-835-3119 or corymlodik@fs.fed.us if you need any further information.

Sincerely,

DARLA LENZ
Forest Supervisor

cc: Cory Mlodik





HUBBARD COUNTY
NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OFFICE
Public Works Building 101 Crocus Hill Street
PARK RAPIDS, MN 56470
PHONE (218) 732-4270
FAX (218) 732-7640
www.co.hubbard.mn.us

May 28, 2015

Mark "Chip" Lohmeier
Land Commissioner

Mark Juberian
N.R Manager

Allen Lysdahl
N. R. Manager

Aaron Funk
N. R. Manager

Greg Hensel
Parks & Rec.
Supervisor
Ag Inspector

Donna Carter
Adm. Assistant

Mr. George Fenwick
President, American Bird Conservancy
P. O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. Fenwick,

On behalf of the Hubbard County Natural Resource Management Department, I am writing in support of the American Bird Conservancy's (ABC's) 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council: Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management—Phase II. This ongoing project has played an integral role in maintaining a healthy and dynamic balance of forest and brushland age classes throughout Minnesota's forests. This proposal would ensure that critical wildlife habitat continues to be maintained for multiple species of conservation need and concern such as the Golden-winged Warbler, American Woodcock, Ruffed Grouse, Bobcat, Canada Lynx, Elk, and White-tailed Deer. As a species that requires intricate management prescriptions that include young forest and adjacent mature forest, the GWWA is a habitat specialist whose science-based management practices serve to most uniformly address the habitat needs of this wide range of young forest and forest interior wildlife species.

The Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA) continues to be one of Minnesota's premiere forest stewardships species. Although the state encompasses only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, Minnesota is the summer home to 47% of the entire global population! Even a small decline in the MN population would significantly impact the species population.

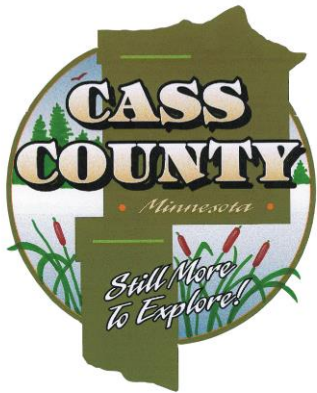
Furthermore, ABC's GWWA Public Lands Coordinator, Peter Dieser has continued to apply forest treatments and implement educational workshops that have a primary focus on forest health and diversity, not only in their habitats of interest, but across the range of Minnesota's forested habitats. It is this integrated approach, landscape-level awareness and ability to manage projects across jurisdictional boundaries that has lead the ABC and this program to become an essential partner in the ongoing efforts to manage Minnesota's natural resources. I fully support the work outlined in this proposal to restore and maintain a dynamic mosaic of upland and lowland habitats.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark Lohmeier".

Mark "Chip" Lohmeier
Hubbard County Land Commissioner

LAND DEPARTMENT



218 Washburn Ave E
PO Box 25
Backus, MN 56435
Pine Mountain Professional Building

218-947-3338 Phone
218-947-3230 Fax
<http://www.co.cass.mn.us>
cass.land@co.cass.mn.us

Land Commissioner
Stevenson, Josh 947-7501

Assistant Land Commissioner
Dahlman, Kevin 947-7503

Forest Resource Managers
Bundy, Pat 947-7502
Lindquist, Erik 947-7505
Rand, Amy 947-7508
Frame, Kim 947-7507

May 29, 2015

Mr. George Fenwick
President
American Bird Conservancy
P. O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. Fenwick,

On behalf of the Cass County Land Department, I am writing in support of the American Bird Conservancy's (ABC's) 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council: Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management—Phase II. This ongoing project has played an integral role in maintaining a healthy and dynamic balance of forest and brushland age classes throughout Minnesota's forests. This proposal would ensure that critical wildlife habitat continues to be maintained for multiple species of conservation need and concern such as the Golden-winged Warbler, American Woodcock, Ruffed Grouse, Bobcat, Canada Lynx, Elk, and White-tailed Deer. As a species that requires intricate management prescriptions that include young forest and adjacent mature forest, the GWWA is a habitat specialist whose science-based management practices serve to most uniformly address the habitat needs of this wide range of young forest and forest interior wildlife species.

The Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA) continues to be one of Minnesota's premiere forest stewardships species. Although the state encompasses only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, Minnesota is the summer home to 47% of the entire global population! Even a small decline in the MN population would significantly impact the species population.

Furthermore, ABC's GWWA Public Lands Coordinator, Peter Dieser has continued to apply forest treatments and implement educational workshops that have a primary focus on forest health and diversity, not only in their habitats of interest, but across the range of Minnesota's forested habitats. It is this integrated approach, landscape-level awareness and ability to manage projects across jurisdictional boundaries that has lead the ABC and this program to become an essential partner in the ongoing efforts to manage Minnesota's natural resources. I fully support the work outlined in this proposal to restore and maintain a dynamic mosaic of upland and lowland habitats.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Josh Stevenson', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Joshua Stevenson
Land Commissioner

RED LAKE BAND
of CHIPPEWA INDIANS
RED LAKE NATION HEADQUARTERS



OFFICERS:
DARRELL G. SEKI, SR., Chairman
DON R. COOK, SR., Secretary
ANNETTE JOHNSON, Treasurer

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES:
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RANDALL KINGHIRD
JULIUS "TOADY" THUNDER
ALLEN PEMBERTON
ROMAN "DUCKER" STAFELY
ROBERT "BOB" SMITH
RICHARD BARRETT, SR.
ROBERT "CHARLIE" REYNOLDS

ADVISORY COUNCIL:
7 HEREDITARY CHIEFS

PO Box 550, Red Lake, MN 56671

Phone 218-679-3341 • Fax 218-679-3378

May 29, 2015

Mr. George Fenwick
President
American Bird Conservancy
P. O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. Fenwick,

On behalf of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians, I am writing in support of the American Bird Conservancy's (ABC's) 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council: Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management—Phase II. This ongoing project has played an integral role in maintaining a healthy and dynamic balance of forest and brushland age classes throughout Minnesota's forests. This proposal would ensure that critical wildlife habitat continues to be maintained for multiple species of conservation need and concern such as the Golden-winged Warbler, American Woodcock, Ruffed Grouse, Bobcat, Canada Lynx, Elk, and White-tailed Deer. As a species that requires intricate management prescriptions that include young forest and adjacent mature forest, the GWWA is a habitat specialist whose science-based management practices serve to most uniformly address the habitat needs of this wide range of young forest and forest interior wildlife species.

The Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA) continues to be one of Minnesota's premiere forest stewardships species. Although the state encompasses only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, Minnesota is the summer home to 47% of the entire global population! Even a small decline in the MN population would significantly impact the species population.

Furthermore, ABC's GWWA Public Lands Coordinator, Peter Dieser has continued to apply forest treatments and implement educational workshops that have a primary focus on forest health and diversity, not only in their habitats of interest, but across the range of Minnesota's forested habitats. It is this integrated approach, landscape-level awareness and ability to manage projects across jurisdictional boundaries that has lead the ABC and this program to become an essential partner in the ongoing efforts to manage Minnesota's natural resources. I fully support the work outlined in this proposal to restore and maintain a dynamic mosaic of upland and lowland habitats.

Sincerely,

Darrell G. Seki, SR.
Chairman
Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians
Red Lake Nation Headquarters
P.O. Box 550
Red Lake, MN 56671



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge
36289 State Hwy 65
McGregor, MN 55760
218-768-2402

May 26, 2015

Mr. George Fenwick
President
American Bird Conservancy
P. O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. Fenwick,

On behalf of Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge, I am writing in support of the American Bird Conservancy's (ABC's) 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council: Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management—Phase II. This ongoing project has played an integral role in maintaining a healthy and dynamic balance of forest and brushland age classes throughout Minnesota's forests, including at Rice Lake NWR. This proposal would ensure that critical wildlife habitat continues to be maintained for multiple species of conservation need and concern such as the Golden-winged Warbler, American Woodcock, Ruffed Grouse, Bobcat, Canada Lynx, Elk, and White-tailed Deer. As a species that requires intricate management prescriptions that include young forest and adjacent mature forest, the GWWA is a habitat specialist where science-based management practices serve to most uniformly address the habitat needs of this wide range of young forest and forest interior wildlife species.

The Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA) continues to be one of Minnesota's premiere forest stewardships species. Although the state encompasses only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, Minnesota is the summer home to 47% of the entire global population! Even a small decline in the MN population would significantly impact the species population.

Furthermore, ABC's GWWA Public Lands Coordinator, Peter Dieser has continued to apply forest treatments and implement educational workshops that have a primary focus on forest health and diversity, not only in their habitats of interest, but across the range of Minnesota's forested habitats. It is this integrated approach, landscape-level awareness and ability to manage projects across jurisdictional boundaries that has lead the ABC and this program to become an essential partner in the ongoing efforts to manage Minnesota's natural resources. I fully support the work outlined in this proposal to restore and maintain a dynamic mosaic of upland and lowland habitats.

Sincerely,

Walt Ford
Wildlife Refuge Manager



May 27, 2015

Mr. George Fenwick, President
American Bird Conservancy
P. O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. Fenwick,

I am writing in support of the American Bird Conservancy's (ABC's) 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council: Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management—Phase II on behalf of Minnesota State Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF-MN). The NWTF-MN strongly believes that thoughtful, active forest management is critical to the conservation of a wide array of species that require young forests for a portion of their life cycles.

Phase I of this project successfully restored hundreds of acres of habitat for Golden-winged Warblers (GWWA) and associated species like American Woodcock, Ruffed Grouse, Bobcat, Canada Lynx, Elk, and White-tailed Deer. The GWWA continues to be one of Minnesota's premiere forest stewardships species. Although the state encompasses only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, Minnesota is the summer home to 47% of the entire global population! Even a small decline in the local population would significantly impact the entire species.

ABC's integrated approach to bird conservation, landscape-level awareness, and ability to manage projects across jurisdictional boundaries has made them a valued partner in managing Minnesota's natural resources. NWTF-MN supports the work outlined in this proposal to restore and maintain a dynamic mosaic of upland and lowland habitats. We will urge the Council to look favorably on funding Phase II of the project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rick Horton', is written over a light blue circular watermark.

Rick Horton
NWTF Regional Biologist – MN, WI, IA, U.P.
37305 Deer Lake Way
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
rhorton@nwtf.net
218-326-8800

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



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge
35704 County Highway 26
Rochert, Minnesota 56578-9638
Phone: 218/847-2641 Fax: 218/847-9141

May 28, 2015

Mr. George Fenwick, President
American Bird Conservancy
P. O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. Fenwick,

On behalf of Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge, I am writing in support of the American Bird Conservancy's (ABC's) 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council titled: Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management—Phase II. This ongoing project has played a significant role in maintaining a healthy and dynamic balance of forest and brushland age-classes on the refuge that supports our mission of providing high quality wildlife habitats. This proposal would ensure that critical wildlife habitat continues to be maintained for multiple species of public interest and conservation need, such as the Golden-winged Warbler, American Woodcock, Ruffed Grouse, Bobcat, Canada Lynx and White-tailed Deer. As a species that requires intricate management prescriptions that include young forest and adjacent mature forest, the Golden-winged Warbler is a habitat specialist whose habitat needs serve to most uniformly address the habitat needs of this wide range of young and interior forest wildlife species.

The Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA) continues to be one of Minnesota's premiere forest stewardship species and a keystone species for wildlife managers. Although the state encompasses only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, Minnesota is the summer home to 47% of the entire global population! Even a small decline in the MN population would significantly impact the overall population. Furthermore, ABC's GWWA Public Lands Coordinator, Peter Dieser has continued to apply forest management treatments and implement educational workshops that have a primary focus on forest health and diversity, not only in their habitats of interest, but across the range of Minnesota's forested habitats. It is this integrated approach, landscape-level awareness and ability to manage projects across jurisdictional boundaries that has lead the ABC and this program to become an essential partner in the ongoing efforts to manage Minnesota's natural resources. I fully support the work outlined in this proposal to restore and maintain a dynamic mosaic of upland and lowland forest habitats.

Sincerely,

Neil J. Powers
Project Leader



1 June 2015

Mr. George Fenwick, President
American Bird Conservancy
P.O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. Fenwick,

I write to offer Woodcock Minnesota's (WCMN) support to the American Bird Conservancy's 2016 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council titled, Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management (Phase II).

The Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA) is Minnesota's premiere Stewardship Species. Although this state encompasses only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, Minnesota presently supports 47% of the entire global population! Any decline in MN's population could be devastating to the future of GWWA. Recent Minnesota research further demonstrates the importance of adjacent mature forest stands to both adults and young Golden-wings, thus WC MN appreciates the emphasis of this LSOHC application incorporating "Integrated Habitat Management".

As a species that requires intricate management prescriptions that include young forest and adjacent mature deciduous forest, the GWWA is a habitat specialist whose best management practices also benefit a wide range of young forest and forest interior wildlife species, including: American Woodcock, Veery, Oven Bird, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Eastern Towhee, Ruffed Grouse, Bobcat, Canada Lynx, Moose, Northern Long-eared Bat and White-tailed Deer. Our American Woodcock population, another important Stewardship Species in Minnesota, is a priority breeding species in all four of Minnesota's ecological provinces with MN Ornithologist Union nesting records in all 87 counties of the state.

Furthermore, American Bird Conservancy has continued to apply forest treatments that focus on forest health. ABC and the GWWA Public Lands Coordinator, Peter Dieser have continually promoted an educated approach that includes identifying potential project sites by considering the distribution of cover types across the landscape, while being able to cross administrative boundaries.

WC MN supports the work outlined in ABC's proposal to create and restore a dynamic mosaic of forest habitat. This proposal recognizes that both the American Woodcock and Golden-winged Warbler depend not only on young upland forest, but also on quality shrub wetlands and forest interfaces with all ages of forest growth. This project recognizes that the creation of young forest habitat needs to be done in the broader context of sustainable forest management plans that embrace the importance of sustaining a complex patchwork of upland and lowland forest types, as well as a broad mix of forest age classes within close proximity.

Sincerely,

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

Jim Koehler, President
Woodcock Minnesota



Aitkin County Land Department

*209 2nd St. NW Room 206
Aitkin, MN 56431*

218-927-7364

May 22, 2015

Mr. George Fenwick
President American Bird Conservancy
P. O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. Fenwick,

On behalf of Aitkin County, I am writing in support of the American Bird Conservancy's (ABC's) 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council: Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management—Phase II. This ongoing project has a role in maintaining a healthy and dynamic balance of forest and brushland age classes in Minnesota's forests. This proposal would provide for multiple species of conservation need and concern.

As a species that requires intricate management prescriptions that include young forest and adjacent mature forest, the Golden Winged Warbler (GWW) is a habitat specialist and continues to be one of Minnesota's premiere forest stewardships species. Although the state encompasses only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, Minnesota is the summer home to 47% of the entire global population. Even a small decline in the MN population would significantly impact the species population.

Furthermore, ABC's GWWA Public Lands Coordinator, Peter Dieser has continued to apply forest treatments and implement educational workshops that have a primary focus on forest health and diversity, not only in their habitats of interest, but across the range of Minnesota's forested habitats. It is this integrated approach, landscape-level awareness and ability to manage projects across jurisdictional boundaries that has lead the ABC and this program to become a partner in the ongoing efforts to manage Minnesota's natural resources. I support the work outlined in this proposal to restore and maintain a dynamic mosaic of upland and lowland habitats.

Sincerely,

Mark Jacobs
Land Commissioner

An Equal Opportunity Employer

Fax - 218-927-7249

e-mail: acld@co.aitkin.mn.us