

# Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

## Fiscal Year 2017 / ML 2016 Request for Funding



**Date:** June 02, 2015

**Program or Project Title:** DNR WMA and SNA Acquisition, Phase VIII

**Funds Requested:** \$9,118,000

**Manager's Name:** Patrick Rivers

**Title:** Fish and Wildlife Land Acquisition Supervisor

**Organization:** MN Dept. of Natural Resources

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**County Locations:** Chippewa, Cottonwood, Douglas, Lac qui Parle, Lake, LeSueur, Martin, Murray, Norman, Redwood, Wilkin, and Yellow Medicine.

### Regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

### Activity types:

- Protect in Fee

### Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Prairie

### Abstract:

Acquire 1,160 acres of high priority habitats for designation as Wildlife Management Area or Scientific and Natural Area emphasizing Prairie Conservation Plan implementation and coordinating with partners. All lands will be open for public hunting, fishing and trapping.

### Design and scope of work:

This proposal will protect approximately 1,160 acres of wildlife habitat through fee title acquisition and development as Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs, 1100 acres) and Scientific & Natural Areas (SNAs, 60 acres). Lands will be acquired and developed within the Prairie Planning Section with an emphasis on Prairie Conservation Plan core and corridor areas, working toward the long-term goal of a minimum 40% grassland and 20% wetland in core prairie areas. Lands outside core and corridor areas will be evaluated on their habitat potential and contribution to existing units.

Historically, Outdoor Heritage appropriations for WMA and SNA acquisitions have been matched by donations, Reinvest in Minnesota Critical Habitat Match, and Surcharge (a \$6.50 surcharge on small game license sales to be used in part for land acquisition) at approximately 25% (1 dollar of match to 4 dollars of OHF). The SNA program has one pending ENRTF M.L. 2016 request for \$4million.

Wildlife Management Areas. WMAs are established to protect those lands and waters which have a high potential for wildlife production and to develop and manage these lands and waters for public hunting, fishing and trapping, and for other compatible outdoor recreational uses such as wildlife watching and hiking. While highly successful, the current WMA system does not meet all of the present and future needs for wildlife habitat, wildlife populations management, hunter access and wildlife related recreation. This is notably true in the Prairie Ecological planning section where public ownership in some counties is less than 2 percent. DNR Section of Wildlife uses a geospatial analytical (GIS) based tool to identify the highest priority tracts for potential WMA acquisitions. This approach uses a quantitative approach to score and rank acquisition proposals based on a set of weighted criteria and creates a standardized method for evaluating proposed acquisitions on a statewide level. Criteria and weights are periodically reviewed and adapted to changing conditions and priorities. This ensures that funds are used to acquire available lands consistent with the statutory purpose of WMAs. The WMA acquisition program is guided by the 2002 Citizens' Committee report. The committee was comprised of a

diverse group of eleven major stakeholder groups.

A list of potential acquisition opportunities from willing sellers is coordinated with interested stakeholders and partners to eliminate duplication and identify concerns and support. Coordinating with partners has been successful to ensure we are working cooperatively and on priority parcels.

Scientific & Natural Areas. The SNA Program will increase public hunting and fishing opportunities while protecting sites with outstanding natural resource value. About 60 acres will be acquired in fee by the DNR and designated as SNA in order to protect sites of biodiversity significance and provide public access. Protection will be targeted at high priority areas identified in the SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan with emphasis on prairie core areas identified in the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan. A quantitative system is used to score and rank acquisition proposals at a statewide level based on a weighted set of six criteria. Priority is given to sites of high and outstanding biodiversity significance, sites recommended for protection by the Minnesota Biological Survey, high quality native plant communities and habitat for rare species. Parcels which are larger, adjoin other conservation lands, improve habitat management, are under imminent threat and that are partially donated are also rated higher.

Properties acquired through this appropriation require approval of the County Board of Commissioners in the county of acquisition, will be designated as WMA or SNA through a Commissioner's Designation Order, brought up to minimum DNR standards, and listed on the DNR website. Basic site improvements will include boundary and LSOHC acknowledgement signs and may include any necessary site cleanup and restoration of agricultural fields and minimal parking area development.

## Crops:

Will there be planting of corn or any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program - **Yes**

Explain

The primary purposes of WMAs are to develop and manage for the production of wildlife and for compatible outdoor recreation. To fulfill those goals, the DNR may use limited farming specifically to enhance or benefit the management of state lands for wildlife. This proposal may include initial development plans or restoration plans to utilize farming to prepare previously farmed sites for native plant seeding. This is a standard practice across the Midwest to prepare the seedbed for native seed planting. On a small percentage of WMAs (less than 2.5%), DNR uses farming to provide a winter food source for a variety of wildlife species in agriculture-dominated landscapes largely devoid of winter food sources.

Are any of the crop types planted GMO treated - **Yes**

## 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:

Potential acquisitions for WMAs and SNAs are objectively scored for their habitat value. The DNR uses weighted criteria and prioritizes high scoring parcels for acquisition. For example, candidates for WMAs score higher with a prairie grouse lek, presence of shallow lakes, and occurrence of species of greatest conservation need; candidates for SNAs score higher with high quality native plant communities and habitat for rare species. Both programs also give priority to parcels that adjoin existing units or other conservation lands.

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

Once a state with more than 18 million acres of native prairie, Minnesota has less than two percent remaining. Each year native prairie is lost to agriculture and development. There is no better time than now to protect what remains of North America's most endangered habitat type.

## Describe the science based planning and evaluation model used:

The DNR uses GIS-based scoring systems to objectively rank potential acquisitions and develop statewide priority lists. These systems incorporate scientific data including native plant community mapping, rare species locations, and watershed/wetland qualities as well as habitat management considerations and suitability for public access, hunting and fishing.

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

- H1 Protect priority land habitats

- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds

### Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Minnesota DNR Scientific and Natural Area's Long Range Plan
- Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan

### Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

#### Prairie:

- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna

### Relationship to other funds:

- Not Listed

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

For WMAs, traditional sources of acquisition dollars are bonding and a surcharge on individual small game licenses. The most recent bonding appropriations for acquisition were in M.L. 2010 (\$1M for fee title, \$3M for Reinvest in Minnesota) and M.L. 2014 (\$2M for Reinvest in Minnesota). These funds are not sufficient to meet the acquisition goals of 439,000 acres acquired between 2002-2052 (Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition-- The Next Fifty Years). This proposal will account for 14% of the annual acquisition goal of 8,000 acres per year. Donated value has the potential of increasing the total acres acquired.

SNA acquisition and designation is primarily funded through project funds such as Outdoor Heritage Fund and Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. Occasionally, but not regularly, the state general fund obligation bonding funds are appropriated for SNA acquisition.

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

| Appropriation Year | Source  | Amount      |
|--------------------|---|-------------|
| 2008               | Bonding (WMA)   | \$5,000,000 |
| 2008               | ENRTF (SNA)   | \$1,000,000 |
| 2008               | Bonding (SNA)   | \$2,700,000 |
| 2008               | Reinvest in Minnesota Critical Habitat Match (WMA)          | \$1,684,262 |
| 2008               | ENRTF (WMA)   | \$1,000,000 |
| 2009               | Reinvest in Minnesota (WMA)                                 | \$3,072,138 |
| 2009               | ENRTF (SNA)   | \$1,026,000 |
| 2010               | Reinvest in Minnesota Critical Habitat Match (WMA)          | \$2,308,358 |
| 2010               | Bonding (WMA)   | \$500,000   |
| 2010               | ENRTF (SNA)   | \$1,096,400 |
| 2011               | ENRTF (SNA)   | \$403,000   |
| 2011               | Surcharge on individual small game license (WMA)            | \$1,830,000 |
| 2011               | Reinvest in Minnesota Critical Habitat Match (WMA)          | \$824,259   |
| 2012               | Reinvest in Minnesota Critical Habitat Match (WMA)          | \$864,750   |
| 2012               | Reinvest in Minnesota Critical Habitat Match (SNA)          | \$720,000   |
| 2013               | ENRTF (SNA)   | \$1,500,000 |
| 2013               | Surcharge on individual small game license (WMA)            | \$1,968,000 |
| 2014               | Bonding- Reinvest in Minnesota Critical Habitat Match (WMA) | \$2,000,000 |
| 2014               | ENRTF (SNA)   | \$1,115,450 |
| 2014               | Surcharge on individual small game license (WMA)            | \$1,860,000 |

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

According to WMA/AMA Directive on development standards, WMAs will be developed to at least minimum standards within two years of acquisition for facility and habitat development that will provide basic asset preservation, public access and safety, environmental and cultural resource protection and soil and water resource conservation. Often restoration efforts can extend 2-3 years beyond the "minimum standard" time table to establish high quality native plant community restorations. All new acquisitions require a WMA Initial Development Plan (IDP) be completed by the Area and approved by the Region. As part of the state outdoor recreation system, ongoing maintenance will be accomplished through routine management activities accomplished by our network of DNR offices. Periodic enhancements will be accomplished by existing staff, MCC crews, temporary project staffing or through vendor contract.

Traditional habitat project funding, bonding, and future requests for funding from dedicated funding sources. Long-term management costs (e.g., invasive species treatments, prescribed fire, and monitoring/evaluation) will be covered by a combination funding sources, including, but not limited to the Game and Fish Fund, ENRTF, Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF), federal grants, small game surcharge, and other funds as appropriated.

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

| Year | Source of Funds                 | Step 1                                | Step 2                   | Step 3 |
|------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------|
| 2018 | Outdoor Heritage ML 2016        | Post signs on all acquired lands      | Initial site development |        |
| 2019 | Outdoor Heritage ML 2016        | Native vegetation planting            |                          |        |
| 2020 | Game and Fish, Surcharge, Other | Standard management of acquired lands |                          |        |

### 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 - **No**

One parcel includes 80 acres of native prairie bank easement that the landowners are willing to donate. The parcel will have the encumbered acres appraised separately.

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

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

There will be no variations from the State of Minnesota regulations.

### Accomplishment Timeline:

| Activity  | Approximate Date Completed |
|---|----------------------------|
| Acquire in fee 1,100 acres for designation as Wildlife Management Area  | 06/30/2018                 |
| Acquire in fee 60 acres for designation as Scientific and Natural Area  | 06/30/2018                 |
| Prepare acquired lands at least to minimum development standards, including signage, parking areas, and native vegetation planting, if necessary. | 06/30/2020                 |

### Federal Funding:

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

### Outcomes:

#### Programs in prairie region:

- Key core parcels are protected for fish, game and other wildlife *Acres of native prairie protected, acres of Prairie Core/Corridor areas protected*

# Budget Spreadsheet

**Total Amount of Request: \$9,118,000**

## Budget and Cash Leverage

| Budget Name                | LSOHC Request | Anticipated Leverage | Leverage Source | Total       |
|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Personnel                  | \$127,000     | \$0                  |                 | \$127,000   |
| Contracts                  | \$0           | \$0                  |                 | \$0         |
| Fee Acquisition w/ PILT    | \$8,320,000   | \$0                  |                 | \$8,320,000 |
| Fee Acquisition w/o PILT   | \$0           | \$0                  |                 | \$0         |
| Easement Acquisition       | \$0           | \$0                  |                 | \$0         |
| Easement Stewardship       | \$0           | \$0                  |                 | \$0         |
| Travel                     | \$2,000       | \$0                  |                 | \$2,000     |
| Professional Services      | \$260,000     | \$0                  |                 | \$260,000   |
| Direct Support Services    | \$41,000      | \$0                  |                 | \$41,000    |
| 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                    | \$368,000     | \$0                  |                 | \$368,000   |
| Total                      | \$9,118,000   | \$0                  | -               | \$9,118,000 |

## Personnel

| Position                                  | FTE  | Over # of years | LSOHC Request | Anticipated Leverage | Leverage Source | Total     |
|---|------|-----------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Acquisition Coordinator                   | 0.02 | 3.00            | \$7,000       | \$0                  |                 | \$7,000   |
| Field staff (spec/tech/labor)             | 0.08 | 3.00            | \$20,000      | \$0                  |                 | \$20,000  |
| Fish and Wildlife Acquisition Coordinator | 0.30 | 3.00            | \$100,000     | \$0                  |                 | \$100,000 |
| Total                                     | 0.40 | 9.00            | \$127,000     | \$0                  | -               | \$127,000 |

Amount of Request: \$9,118,000

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        | 0      | 0        | 0     |
| Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability | 0        | 1,160    | 0      | 0        | 1,160 |
| 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        | 1,160    | 0      | 0        | 1,160 |

**Table 1b. How many of these Prairie acres are Native Prairie?**

| Type                                     | Native Prairie |
|--|----------------|
| Restore                                  | 0              |
| Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability | 0              |
| Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability  | 140            |
| Protect in Easement                      | 0              |
| Enhance                                  | 0              |
| Total                                    | 140            |

**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      | \$9,118,000 | \$0    | \$0      | \$9,118,000 |
| 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      | \$9,118,000 | \$0    | \$0      | \$9,118,000 |

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

| Type                                     | Metro/Urban | Forest/Prairie | SEForest | Prairie | Northern Forest | Total |
|--|-------------|----------------|----------|---------|-----------------|-------|
| Restore                                  | 0           | 0              | 0        | 0       | 0               | 0     |
| Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability | 0           | 0              | 0        | 1,160   | 0               | 1,160 |
| 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        | 1,160   | 0               | 1,160 |

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

| Type                                     | Metro/Urban | Forest/Prairie | SEForest | Prairie     | Northern Forest | Total       |
|--|-------------|----------------|----------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Restore                                  | \$0         | \$0            | \$0      | \$0         | \$0             | \$0         |
| Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability | \$0         | \$0            | \$0      | \$9,118,000 | \$0             | \$9,118,000 |
| 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      | \$9,118,000 | \$0             | \$9,118,000 |

**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      | \$7,860  | \$0    | \$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     | \$0             |
| Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability | \$0         | \$0            | \$0       | \$7,860 | \$0             |
| 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

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

### Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

#### Cottonwood

| Name                       | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost  | Existing Protection? | Hunting? | Fishing? |
|----------------------------|----------|-------|-----------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Budolfson WMA 10, 10A, 10B | 10738223 | 131   | \$750,000 | No                   | Full     | Full     |

#### Douglas

| Name           | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost  | Existing Protection? | Hunting? | Fishing? |
|----------------|----------|-------|-----------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Hegg WMA       | 12740227 | 34    | \$59,000  | No                   | Full     | Full     |
| Lee Urness WMA | 12840222 | 85    | \$340,000 | No                   | Full     | Full     |

#### Lac qui Parle

| Name         | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost  | Existing Protection? | Hunting? | Fishing? |
|--------------|----------|-------|-----------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Baxter WMA 6 | 11742204 | 80    | \$400,000 | No                   | Full     | Full     |

#### Lake

| Name                         | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost  | Existing Protection? | Hunting? | Fishing? |
|------------------------------|----------|-------|-----------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Art Lake Hardwood Ridges SNA | 05807215 | 240   | \$300,000 | No                   | Full     | Full     |

#### LeSueur

| Name          | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost | Existing Protection? | Hunting? | Fishing? |
|---------------|----------|-------|----------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Cordova WMA 6 | 11124219 | 11    | \$28,250 | No                   | Full     | Full     |

#### Martin

| Name              | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost  | Existing Protection? | Hunting? | Fishing? |
|-------------------|----------|-------|-----------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Perch Creek WMA 5 | 10430206 | 100   | \$400,000 | No                   | Full     | Full     |

#### Murray

| Name             | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost    | Existing Protection? | Hunting? | Fishing? |
|------------------|----------|-------|-------------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Plum Creek WMA 3 | 10839210 | 280   | \$1,006,000 | No                   | Full     | Full     |

#### Norman

| Name                    | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost    | Existing Protection? | Hunting? | Fishing? |
|-------------------------|----------|-------|-------------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Prairie Dunes WMA 1, 15 | 14644219 | 480   | \$1,200,000 | No                   | Full     | Full     |
| Twin Valley WMA 5       | 14344228 | 320   | \$640,000   | No                   | Full     | Full     |

#### Redwood

| Name           | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost  | Existing Protection? | Hunting? | Fishing?       |
|----------------|----------|-------|-----------|----------------------|----------|----------------|
| Cedar Rock SNA | 11336203 | 60    | \$420,000 | No                   | Full     | Not Applicable |

#### Wilkin

| Name            | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost    | Existing Protection? | Hunting? | Fishing?       |
|-----------------|----------|-------|-------------|----------------------|----------|----------------|
| Dow Prairie SNA | 13545207 | 506   | \$1,337,900 | No                   | Full     | Not Applicable |



## Yellow Medicine

| Name                      | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost  | Existing Protection? | Hunting? | Fishing?       |
|---------------------------|----------|-------|-----------|----------------------|----------|----------------|
| Mound Springs Prairie SNA | 11546218 | 160   | \$800,000 | No                   | Full     | Not Applicable |

## Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

### Chippewa

| Name                | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost    | # Bldgs? | Bldg Improve Desc                | Value of Bldg | Disposition of Improvements |
|---------------------|----------|-------|-------------|----------|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Bergo WMA 7, 10, 11 | 11841222 | 400   | \$1,885,425 | 6        | Grain bins, machine shed, garage | \$96,300      | Sell                        |

### Cottonwood

| Name               | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost    | # Bldgs? | Bldg Improve Desc      | Value of Bldg | Disposition of Improvements |
|--------------------|----------|-------|-------------|----------|------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| String Lakes WMA 1 | 10536229 | 302   | \$1,500,000 | 2        | Old barn, machine shed | \$6,300       | Demolish                    |

### Norman

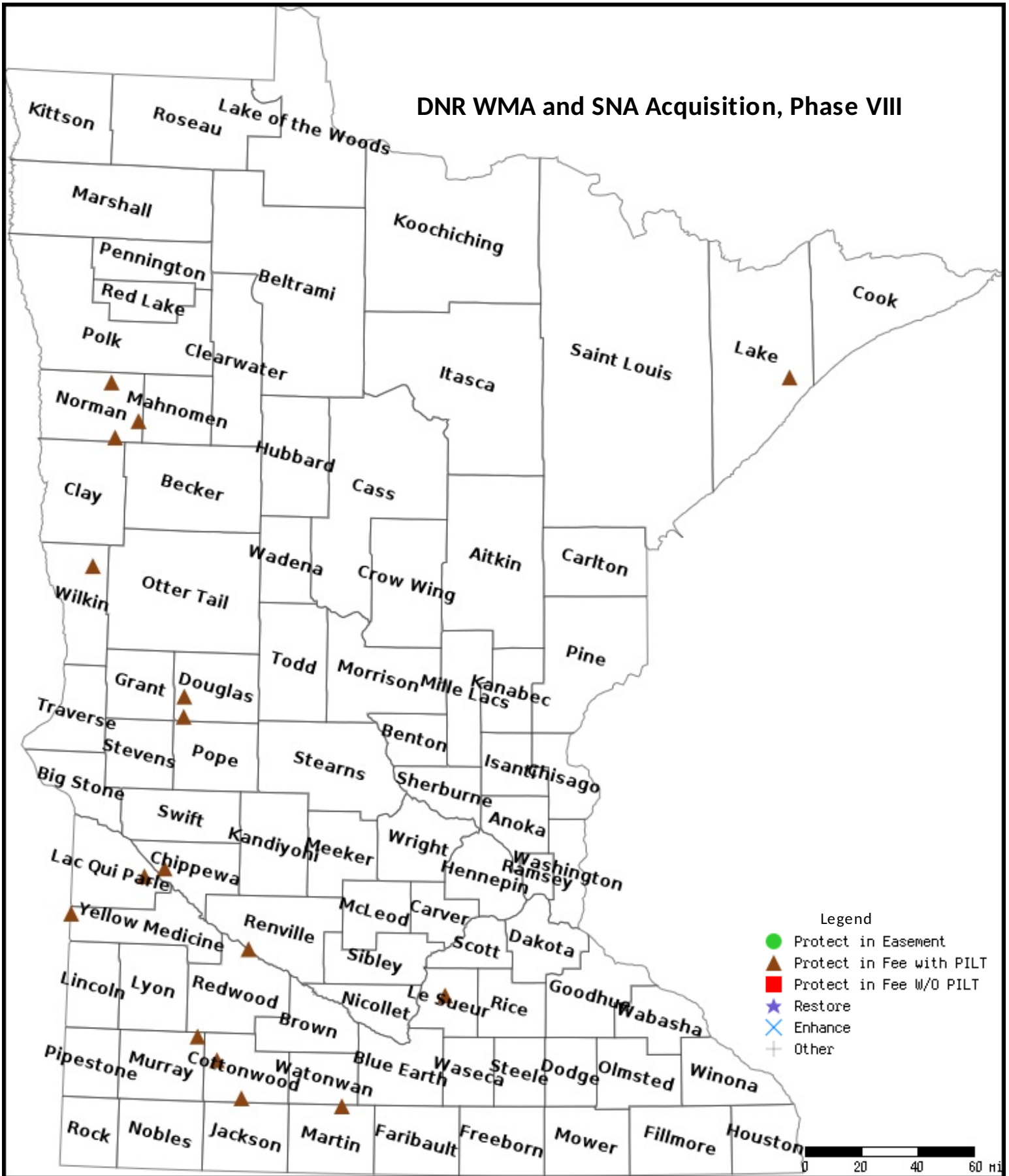
| Name        | TRDS     | Acres | Est Cost  | # Bldgs? | Bldg Improve Desc                        | Value of Bldg | Disposition of Improvements |
|-------------|----------|-------|-----------|----------|--|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Faith WMA 8 | 14443226 | 240   | \$355,000 | 5        | Old house, garage, barn, silo, grain bin | \$0           | Demolish                    |

## Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

# Parcel Map

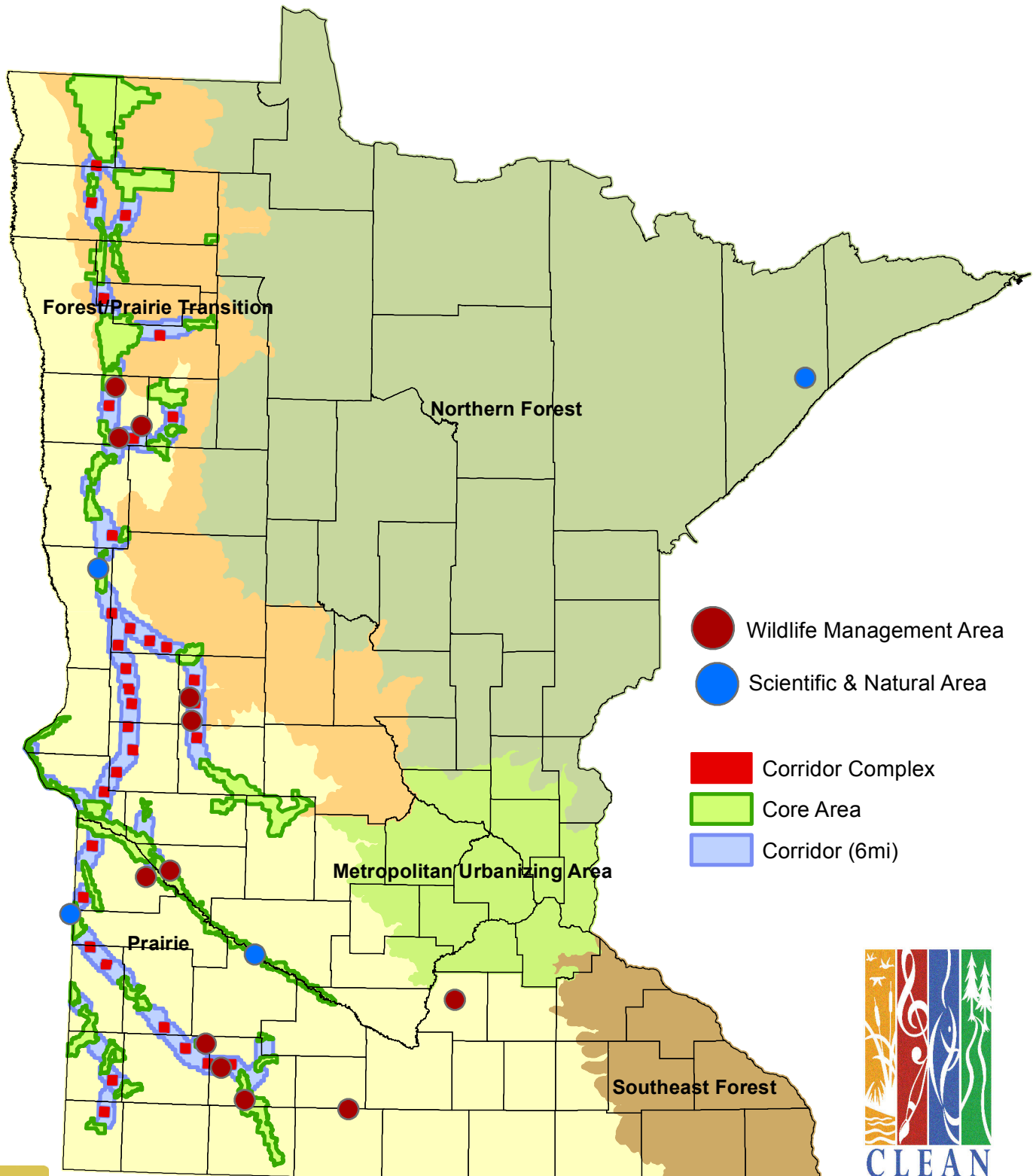
## DNR WMA and SNA Acquisition, Phase VIII



Data Generated From Parcel List

# DNR Wildlife Management Area and Scientific & Natural Area Acquisition Phase VIII

1,160 Acres acquired by June 30, 2018



- Wildlife Management Area
- Scientific & Natural Area
- Corridor Complex
- Core Area
- Corridor (6mi)

