

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2017 / ML 2016 Request for Funding



Date: June 04, 2015

Program or Project Title: Minnesota Buffers for Wildlife and Water - Phase VI

Funds Requested: \$15,000,000

Manager's Name: Tabor Hoek

Organization: BWSR

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County Locations: Not Listed

Regions in which work will take place:

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Southeast Forest
- Prairie
- Metro / Urban

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Prairie

Abstract:

The RIM Buffers for Wildlife and Water - Phase VI will protect and restore 1,981 acres of riparian buffers on 99 conservation easements without a CREP. It will expand Clean Water Funded easements to provide additional wildlife benefits.

Design and scope of work:

The RIM Buffers for Wildlife and Water - Phase VI funded with OHF will protect and restore 1,981 acres of riparian buffers on 99 conservation easements without a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). It will double the size of Clean Water Fund (CWF) easements to provide additional wildlife benefits on areas that are not required by law or rule to have buffers. OHF funded buffers, when linked to CWF buffers, will yield a total of 3,962 acres of buffers. Due to guidance from LSOHC, only the acres (1,981) and funding (\$15 million) from OHF have been displayed in the Output Tables.

The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and many federal, state and local agencies and non-government organizations have been formulating a 100,000 acre CREP proposal focused on wildlife habitat and water quality. A final draft proposal has been completed and is being reviewed by USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) and state partners. In addition, an Environmental Assessment will be completed in the next few months.

Upon final agreement between the State of MN and the United States Dept. of Agriculture, MN conservation agencies and partners will embark on a seven year effort to implement a CREP to benefit wildlife habitat and provide water quality and hydrology benefits in 54 counties. This will be Minnesota's third CREP and the opportunity will be created to enroll 100,000 acres of permanently protected buffers, wetlands and floodplain easements using a combination of the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve program. Of the 100,000 acre total, 50,000 acres will be focused on buffers directly associated with this proposal. The CREP will be a total of an estimated \$800 million of federal, state and local funding, leveraging up to four federal dollars for every state/local dollar.

If the CREP does not come to fruition stand-alone RIM Buffer easements will be secured. Due to not having a signed CREP agreement at the time of this submittal, leverage has not been included in any of the budget figures and projected acreage outcomes represent a non-CREP stand-alone RIM option. If a CREP agreement is signed later in 2015, acreage totals and number of easements will increase by a maximum of approximately four times, and our request will shift to less easement money (since USDA will pay a majority of the payments to landowners through the CRP) and to more technical assistance, processing and stewardship money since it is estimated that easement numbers will increase dramatically. See attached CREP budget for further information.

MN continues to see a net loss of grasslands each year. Expiring CRP is the leading cause of this landscape change. This exodus is being driven by high land and commodity prices, increased pressure for alternative uses, and declining federal budgets for conservation programs. Minnesota's primary strategy to mitigate the loss of CRP is to target expiring contracts for enrollment into Continuous CRP (CCRP) practices (like buffers) and permanent easements for the most beneficial practices (e.g. wetland restoration, grasslands, and buffers). This program is one proven strategy to provide landowners with a sound option to keep targeted conservation on the land when economic incentives favor row crop production.

This partnership program establishes permanent buffers that provide both critical water quality improvements and improved wildlife habitat. For example, a buffer of 100' generally serves to protect water quality, while adding an additional 100' greatly enhances nesting opportunities for wildlife. Establishing a minimum of 200' on each side of a stream for a total of 400' plus the natural corridor that already exists creates a block of habitat for nesting birds and a critical link between other permanently protected habitats.

Criteria used to evaluate and prioritize buffers funded under this program include: buffers must build upon and leverage a Clean Water Fund Buffer, proximity to other permanently protected habitat, buffers within a designated shallow lake watershed, proximity to lands open to public hunting, plant diversity, overall size, and type of water resource being buffered. A competitive RIM Buffers application process for landowners will be used. The first five phases of this program have created landowner interest that far exceeds available funding. The goal for this new phase will be to increase funding from both LSOHC but also increase match from Clean Water Funding as well as USDA. Wider buffers can provide longer term water quality treatment and provide better habitat. Buffers that are in close proximity to other grasslands also function at a higher level for grassland nesting birds and other wildlife.

RIM Buffers program delivery will be supported by Minnesota's Conservation Assistance Acceleration Project (CAAP – formerly the Farm Bill Assistance Partnership) which includes BWSR, USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service, Minnesota DNR, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Prairie Pothole Joint Venture, Pheasants Forever, LCCMR and numerous local partners. Additionally, the RIM program will be delivered through SWCD's and administered by Minnesota BWSR.

We propose that the LSOHC fund \$15M in perpetual state RIM buffer easements that will build equally upon the RIM buffers funded through the Clean Water Fund and/or new USDA programs such as CREP. This creates a unique partnership program to accomplish a single project with enhanced outcomes that could not otherwise be obtained with a single funding source. In the event equal match is not available during the project period, buffer areas for wildlife will be secured with only available OHF funds.

Crops:

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

Explain

In certain circumstances food plots for wildlife are an allowable use on RIM easements and must be part of an approved Conservation Plan. Food plots on narrow buffers, steep slopes and wet areas are not allowed. RIM policy limits food plots to 10% of the total easement area or 5 acres whichever is smaller. There is no cost share for establishment of food plots and upon termination the landowners must reestablish the vegetation as prescribed in the Conservation Plan at their own expense. Food plots are a rarely selected option by landowners, to date only 2.2% of RIM easements have food plots.

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

Project selection criteria for the buffer program is designed to complement historic investments to protect areas for wildlife habitat in the degraded prairie region and southeastern parts of the state. Providing connections between and adjacent to these previous habitat investments is a key factor in realizing the best return on investment found in wildlife population models. Riparian areas are logical corridors found between these historical habitat areas. Buffers targeting expiring CRP and near existing complexes of greater than 160 acres will be given preference.

Minnesota's original prairie landscapes have been lost at an alarming rate over the last century and a half of European settlement. Minnesota's prairies once comprised nearly 20 million acres, extending from the borders of Iowa and Wisconsin in the southeast to North Dakota and Manitoba in the northwest. Less than 1% of this native prairie remains.

Habitat loss in southeastern Minnesota is equally staggering, with over 100 resident plants and vertebrates occurring in this area listed as Endangered, Threatened, or Special Concern. Any threats to groundwater are amplified by the Karst geology of this area, and intensive land use also leads to sedimentation of trout streams.

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

RIM has a long history of permanent protection, selecting the most impactful sites through a comprehensive scoring system. The CREP will ONLY have a five year window to secure federal leverage, CRP contracts continue to expire, and farming pressure leads to more fragmentation. Therefore the need for RIM is urgent.

Describe the science based planning and evaluation model used:

BWSR uses the Ecological Ranking Tool, MN Nutrient Management Strategy, and Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) for the wildlife and clean water focus. Wildlife benefits are summarized from numerous models (HAPET) and incorporated into our wildlife score sheet.

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

- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes
- H7 Keep water on the landscape

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Long Range Plan for the Ring-Necked Pheasant in MN
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Prairie:

- Protect expiring CRP lands

Forest / Prairie Transition:

- Protect, enhance, and restore wild rice wetlands, shallow lakes, wetland/grassland complexes, aspen parklands, and shoreland that provide critical habitat for game and nongame wildlife

Metro / Urban:

- Protect habitat corridors, with emphasis on the Minnesota, Mississippi, and St. Croix rivers (bluff to floodplain)

Southeast Forest:

- Protect, enhance, and restore habitat for fish, game, and nongame wildlife in rivers, cold-water streams, and associated upland habitat

Relationship to other funds:

- Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund
- Clean Water Fund

This project brings two of the major components of the Legacy Amendment together by matching OHF with the Clean Water Fund for the RIM buffer program. This project will also build upon expiring CRP contracts that have funding associated with them from the USDA CRP contract that is in place. Where possible, partners would leverage the Outdoor Heritage Funds within a larger buffer initiative within Minnesota using other programs like CRP, CREP funding sources to permanently protect buffers within landscapes that add value for grassland wildlife. In the event equal or greater match is not available from identified sources, easements will be secured for wildlife benefits with OHF funding only.

Beginning in 2009, the BWSR has received FY10-11, FY12-13 and FY14-15 funding for a total of \$31.9 million through the Clean Water Fund (from the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment) to establish and restore permanent RIM Reserve Riparian easements for buffers to keep water on the land in order to decrease sediment, pollutant and nutrient transport, reduce hydrological impacts to surface waters and increase infiltration for groundwater recharge.

The Conservation Assistance Acceleration Project (CAAP – formerly the Farm Bill Assistance Partnership) with BWSR, DNR, PF, NRCS and SWCDs provides funding to SWCDs to have technicians promote the conservation provisions of the Federal Farm Bill and other conservation program opportunities to private landowners. The Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) provided \$1.0M via an LCCMR recommendation in FY10-11, \$625,000 in FY12-13, \$3.0M in FY 14-15 and \$1.0M in FY 16-17.

This other project has an indirect relationship due to the use of RIM perpetual easements:

BWSR has also received funding in FY10-11, FY12-13 and FY14-15 totaling \$7.5 million from CWF for RIM Reserve easements in areas where the vulnerability of the drinking water supply management area is designated high or very high by the Minnesota Department of Health and in certain groundwater recharge areas in SE MN.

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

RIM was established in statute in 1986 to restore and set aside marginal land principally for increasing fish and wildlife populations. Past funding via bonding varies, with BWSR receiving bond funds in 2008, 2011, 2012 and 2014 for RIM Buffers.

Expiring CRP is a major concern in Minnesota. RIM is targeting the most critical riparian areas for permanent protection that provide water quality benefits and wildlife benefits. This proposal provides a mechanism for Clean Water Fund, Outdoor Heritage Fund, and CRP (also through the CREP) to work in concert to provide Minnesota landowners an opportunity to permanently protect and filter our water in a way that also provides habitat for ground nesting birds (e.g. ring-necked pheasants), pollinators, and other wildlife.

The CREP will total \$800 million of federal, state and local funding, leveraging up to four federal dollars for every state/local dollar and permanently protecting 100,000 acres of which 50,000 acres are focused on riparian buffers directly associated with this proposal. This proposal will be a key component to the CREP and will provide critical RIM resources and essential technical assistance to reach the goals and leverage approximately \$640 million of Federal Farm Bill resources.

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

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2011 to 2014	Clean Water Fund	\$10,059,000
2008, 2011, 2012 and 2014	Bonding	\$17,640,206

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

Under the terms of the RIM easement, landowners are required to maintain compliance with the easement and manage the conservation cover. A conservation plan is developed with the landowner and maintained. Initial costs to establish conservation cover are provided with leverage from Clean Water Fund and the USDA CRP, if applicable. The easements secured are permanent and will be managed by the BWSR RIM Reserve program that has over 6,000 easements currently in place. Easements are monitored annually for each of the first five years and then every third year after that. BWSR in cooperation with Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) implement a stewardship process to track, monitor quality and assure compliance with easement terms. Stewardship costs for 99 easements at \$6,500/easement would cost \$643,500. This cost would be split equally between Clean Water Fund and Outdoor Heritage Fund.

Perpetual monitoring and stewardship costs have been calculated at \$6,500 per easement. This value is based on using local SWCD staff for monitoring and landowner relations and existing enforcement authorities. The amount listed for Easement Stewardship cover costs of the SWCD regular monitoring, BWSR oversight, and any enforcement necessary.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2016-Ongoing	Stewardship Account	Compliance Checks first 5 years then every 3rd year.	Corrective actions of any violations	Enforcement action taken by MN Attorney General office
2016-Ongoing	Landowner Obligation	Maintain compliance with easement terms		

Activity Details:

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

Will the eased land be open for public use - **No**

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

Accomplishment Timeline:

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Obtain applications from eligible landowners	June 30, 2017
Allocations to specific parcels made	July 30, 2017
Easements recorded	June 30, 2019
Restorations completed and final report submitted	June 30, 2024

Federal Funding:

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

Outcomes:

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced aspen parklands and riparian areas *Riparian corridors are a key link in connecting existing core habitat parcels. Parcels will be scored using the eligibility score sheet for wildlife benefits and also incorporating water quality benefits. Permanently protecting expiring CRP lands, enhancing habitat for wildlife and other species, keeping and filtering water on the land and protecting, enhancing and restoring habitats for at risk species will all be benefits of this effort.*

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- A network of natural land and riparian habitats will connect corridors for wildlife and species in greatest conservation need *Riparian corridors are a key link in connecting existing core habitat parcels. Parcels will be scored using the eligibility score sheet for wildlife benefits and also incorporating water quality benefits. Permanently protecting expiring CRP lands, enhancing habitat for wildlife and other species, keeping and filtering water on the land and protecting, enhancing and restoring habitats for at risk species will all be benefits of this effort.*

Programs in southeast forest region:

- Rivers, streams, and surrounding vegetation provide corridors of habitat *Riparian corridors are a key link in connecting existing core habitat parcels. Parcels will be scored using the eligibility score sheet for wildlife benefits and also incorporating water quality benefits. Permanently protecting expiring CRP lands, enhancing habitat for wildlife and other species, keeping and filtering water on the land and protecting, enhancing and restoring habitats for at risk species will all be benefits of this effort.*

Programs in prairie region:

- Expiring CRP lands are permanently protected *Riparian corridors are a key link in connecting existing core habitat parcels. Parcels will be scored using the eligibility score sheet for wildlife benefits and also incorporating water quality benefits. Permanently protecting expiring CRP lands, enhancing habitat for wildlife and other species, keeping and filtering water on the land and protecting, enhancing and restoring habitats for at risk species will all be benefits of this effort.*

Parcel List

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Parcel list provided for final report	2	0	\$0			

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.

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$15,000,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$189,300	\$189,300	Clean Water Fund, Clean Water Fund	\$378,600
Contracts	\$309,000	\$309,000	Clean Water Fund	\$618,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$14,077,000	\$14,077,000	Clean Water Fund	\$28,154,000
Easement Stewardship	\$321,800	\$321,800	Clean Water Fund	\$643,600
Travel	\$26,300	\$26,300	Clean Water Fund	\$52,600
Professional Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
Direct Support Services	\$27,800	\$27,800	Clean Water Fund	\$55,600
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$37,500	\$37,500	Clean Water Fund	\$75,000
Supplies/Materials	\$11,300	\$11,300	Clean Water Fund	\$22,600
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$15,000,000	\$15,000,000		\$30,000,000

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Management	0.25	5.00	\$62,500	\$62,500	Clean Water Fund	\$125,000
Easement Processing	1.30	3.00	\$126,800	\$126,800	Clean Water Fund	\$253,600
Total	1.55	8.00	\$189,300	\$189,300		\$378,600

Amount of Request: \$15,000,000

Amount of Leverage: \$15,000,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 100.00%

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	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	1,981	0	0	1,981
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	1,981	0	0	1,981

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	0
Protect in Easement	0
Enhance	0
Total	0

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$15,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$15,000,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$15,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$15,000,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	200	200	200	1,381	0	1,981
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	200	200	200	1,381	0	1,981

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$10,500,000	\$0	\$15,000,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$10,500,000	\$0	\$15,000,000

Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$7,572	\$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	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,603	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

40

Supplemental Information- Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Fiscal Year 2017 / ML 2016

Program or Project Title: RIM Buffers Phase VI with a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Funds Requested: \$15,000,000

The budget spreadsheet below includes information related to a RIM and CRP combined effort tied to a 100,000 acre CREP. This \$15 million request shows the federal USDA leverage that allows acres to increase from 3,962 to 14,400 and easement numbers to increase from 99 to 720. This then causes a shift of OHF funds to additional non-easement costs due to USDA paying the majority of the payments to landowners for retirement (CRP) and restoration. According to the rules for CREP, USDA may pay up to 80% of the total cost of the CREP and the State must pay at least 20%. Shown below is the 80:20 scenario. Because we do not yet have a signed CREP agreement BWSR chose to not show the leveraged dollars or acres within the proposal. We offer this as an **example** of what leverage could be if the State is successful in negotiating a **maximum allowable CREP agreement**. Once a CREP agreement is formalized, budget and outcome information will be updated and provided to the LSOHC.

Supplemental Budget Spreadsheet Showing Potential CREP Leverage

Budget and Cash Leverage

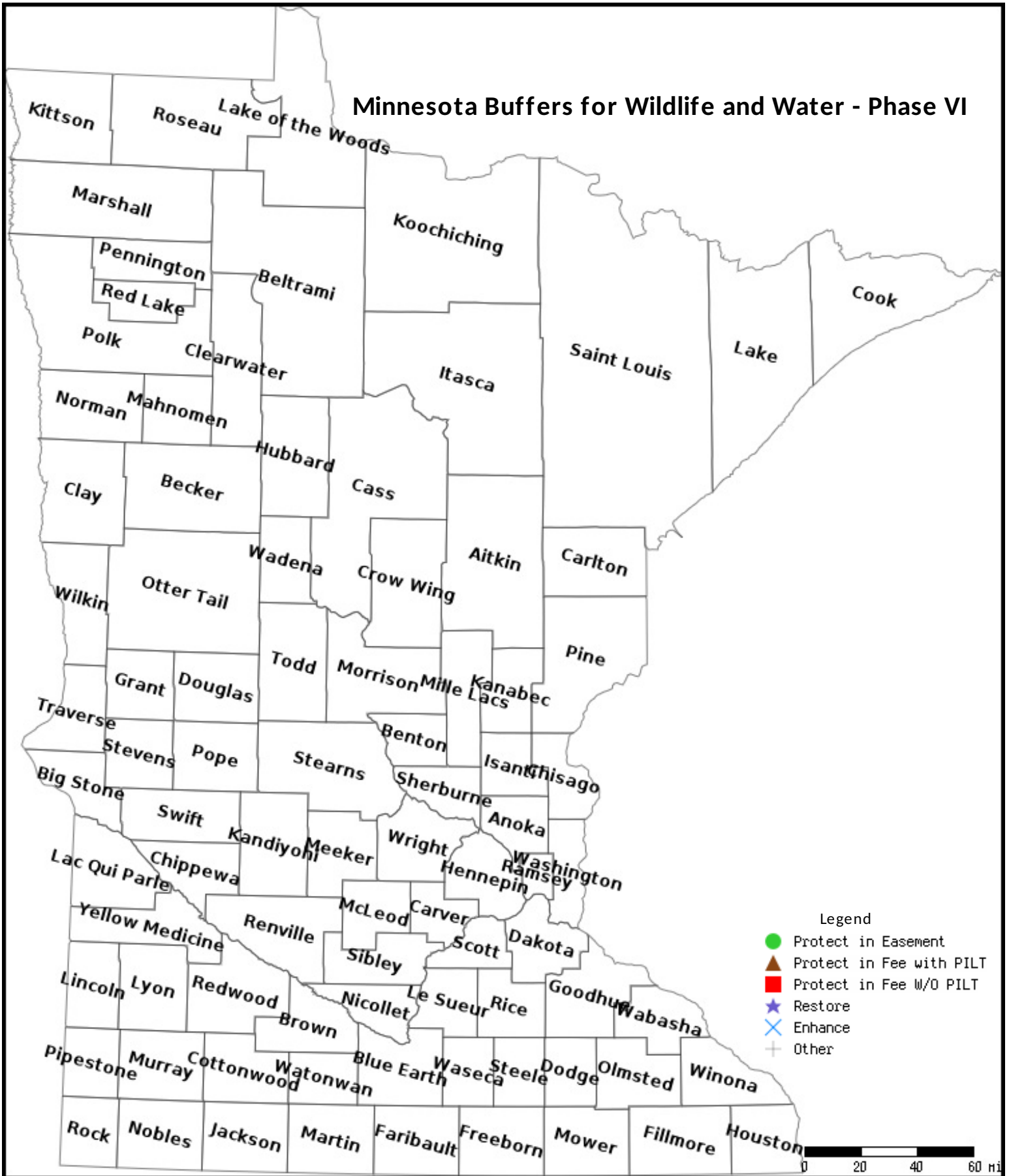
Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$959,500	\$959,500	Clean Water Fund	\$1,919,000
Contracts	\$1,770,000	\$1,770,000	Clean Water Fund	\$3,540,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$9,773,000	\$9,773,000 \$87,321,600	Clean Water Fund USDA-FSA-CREP	\$106,867,600
Easement Stewardship	\$2,340,000	\$2,340,000	Clean Water Fund	\$4,680,000
Travel	\$26,250	\$26,250	Clean Water Fund	\$52,500
Professional Services	\$	\$0		\$
Direct Support Services	\$82,500	\$82,500	Clean Water Fund	\$165,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$	\$0		\$
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$37,500	\$37,500	Clean Water Fund	\$75,000
Supplies/Materials	\$11,250	\$11,250	Clean Water Fund	\$22,500
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$15,000,000	\$102,321,600	-	\$117,321,600

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Management	0.25	5	\$62,500	\$62,500	Clean Water Fund	\$125,000
Easement Processing	2.2	3	\$897,000	\$897,000	Clean Water Fund	\$1,794,000
Total		8	\$959,500	\$959,500		\$1,919,000

Parcel Map

Minnesota Buffers for Wildlife and Water - Phase VI

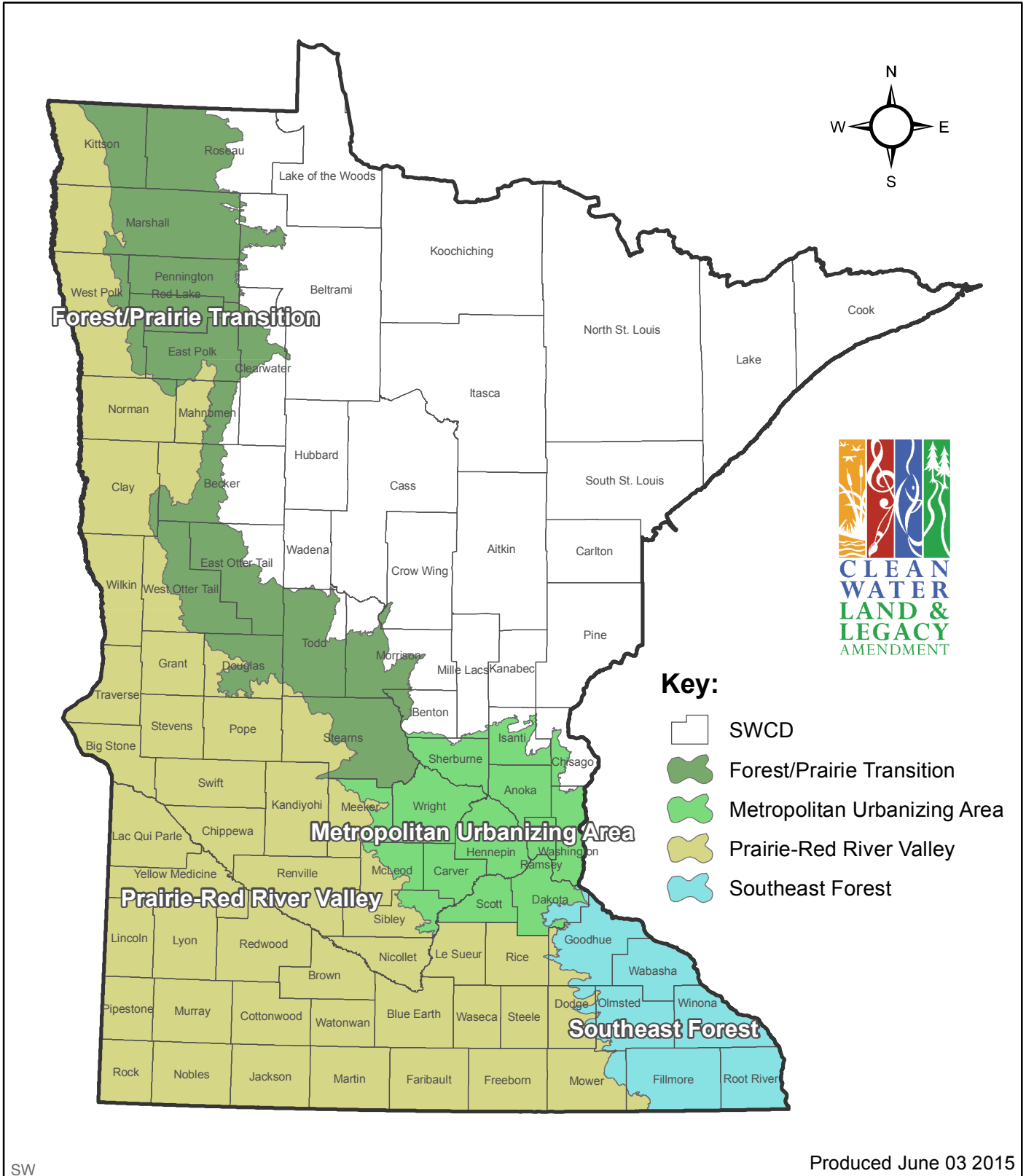


Data Generated From Parcel List



Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources RIM Buffers

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) Planning Areas



RIM Buffers for Wildlife & Water Scoring Form

Landowner/Project Name:	County (Field Office):	Prepared By:	Date:
			6/4/2015

Instructions: For each enrollment requesting a Wildlife Habitat Buffer Expansion, complete the highlighted sections of this score sheet. For question 1-7 select the response from the dropdown that best answers the question. Print and include it with your sign-up materials. A minimum score of 50 points is required to be eligible.

Offer must meet these minimum criteria to be eligible:

- Offer is within the prairie section identified on the LSOHC map.
- Offer has maximum enrollment (200 feet average).
- Offer is built upon a Clean Water Fund buffer.
- Offer scores a minimum of 50 points on the following factors.

	Score
1. Will this offer preserve an existing CRP contract? <div style="background-color: #ffffcc; height: 20px; width: 100%; margin-top: 5px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;">0</div>
2. Is the offer within the watershed of an identified shallow lake? <div style="background-color: #ffffcc; height: 20px; width: 100%; margin-top: 5px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;">0</div>
3. Proximity to an existing protected habitat complex that is larger than 160 acres? <div style="background-color: #ffffcc; height: 20px; width: 100%; margin-top: 5px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;">0</div>
4. Proximity to public land that is open for public hunting? <div style="background-color: #ffffcc; height: 20px; width: 100%; margin-top: 5px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;">0</div>
5. Type of water resource being buffered <div style="background-color: #ffffcc; height: 20px; width: 100%; margin-top: 5px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;">0</div>
6. Type Vegetative Diversity on proposed site? <div style="background-color: #ffffcc; height: 20px; width: 100%; margin-top: 5px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;">0</div>
7. Combined Easement Size <div style="background-color: #ffffcc; height: 20px; width: 100%; margin-top: 5px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;">0</div>
Total Score	<div style="border: 2px solid black; width: 30px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center;">0</div>

RIM Buffers for Wildlife & Water Scoring Form

Landowner/Project Name:	County (Field Office):	Prepared By:	Date:
EXAMPLE HIGH SCORING	PROJECT		6/4/2015

Instructions: For each enrollment requesting a Wildlife Habitat Buffer Expansion, complete the highlighted sections of this score sheet. For question 1-7 select the response from the dropdown that best answers the question. Print and include it with your signup materials. A minimum score of 50 points is required to be eligible.

Offer must meet these minimum criteria to be eligible:

- Offer is within the prairie section identified on the LSOHC map.
- Offer has maximum enrollment (200 feet average).
- Offer is built upon a Clean Water Fund buffer.
- Offer scores a minimum of 50 points on the following factors.

	Score
1. Will this offer preserve an existing CRP contract?	
Yes - 10 points	10
2. Is the offer within the watershed of an identified shallow lake?	
Yes - 15 points	15
3. Proximity to an existing protected habitat complex that is larger than 160 acres?	
Connects two protected habitats together - 20 points	20
4. Proximity to public land that is open for public hunting?	
Immediately adjacent - 15 points	15
5. Type of water resource being buffered	
Lake - 15 points	15
6. Type Vegetative Diversity on proposed site?	
Greater than 20 native species exist or planted - 10 points	10
7. Combined Easement Size	
Greater than 20 acres - 15 points	15
Total Score	100