

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2017 / ML 2016 Request for Funding



Date: June 04, 2015

Program or Project Title: Accelerating the Waterfowl Production Area Program - Phase VIII

Funds Requested: \$19,309,100

Manager's Name: Eran Sandquist

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County Locations: Becker, Bigstone, Blue Earth, Carver, Cottonwood, Douglas, Faribault, Grant, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Otter Tail, Otter Tail, Sibley, Stearns, Stevens, Wright, and Yellow Medicine.

Regions in which work will take place:

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie
- Metro / Urban

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Prairie

Abstract:

This proposal accelerates the permanent protection of 2,600 acres of wetlands (600 acres) and grasslands (2,000 acres) as Waterfowl Production Areas open to public hunting in Minnesota.

Design and scope of work:

The loss of grassland and wetland habitats in Minnesota is well documented. In the agricultural region of Minnesota over 90% of our wetlands and 99% of our prairie grasslands have been converted for other uses. Grant funding requested through this project will restore and permanently protect these lands for wildlife and the recreational enjoyment of the visiting public. One of the primary ways to reverse this downward trend is to permanently acquire and restore previously converted wetland and grassland habitats on those properties. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and their partners have been employing this strategy for over 50-years with the Small Wetlands Acquisition Program (SWAP). This eighth phase of the acceleration program acquires AND restores 600 acres of wetland and 2,000 acres of grassland habitats which will be permanently protected as Waterfowl Protection Areas managed by the Service.

Using landscape level planning tools [e.g. Thunderstorm Maps produced by the Service's Habitat and Population Evaluation Team (HAPET)], Pheasants Forever (PF) will acquire strategically identified properties. Based on HAPET evaluation strategies, modeling predictions can be made on the numbers of nesting waterfowl, grassland nesting birds, and other wildlife the acres affected by this grant application will produce. Besides the obvious wildlife benefits, once restored, the lands acquired through this grant will provide additional water quality, groundwater recharge, and flood abatement benefits. These strategies are well tested and are supported by the greater conservation community here in Minnesota. Hunting and fishing stakeholders are very interested in increasing opportunities for hunting and fishing public access and have used WPA's extensively in the past. To address concerns related to the

erosion of county tax revenues due to public land, the Service and PF will notify counties prior to acquisition of lands. Once acquired, the Service will make a one-time Trust Fund payment to the county where the property is located. In addition, the Service will make annual Refuge Revenue Sharing payments for all fee lands within the respective counties.

Funding for restoration of the properties will be solicited from partners. If this funding is available, budgeted Outdoor Heritage restoration funds under this proposal would be able to accomplish additional fee title w/o PILT acquisition funds. Wetlands, on the properties acquired, will be restored by either surface ditch "plugs" or breaking sub-surface tile lines. Grasslands will be restored by planting appropriate native grasses and forbs to converted grassland habitats. Grassland restoration on individual tracts may take three to five years and involve one to two years of post acquisition farming to prepare the seed base, one year for seeding and one to two years to establish.

Crops:

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

Explain

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. In these restorations, PF's policy is to use non neonicotinoid treated seed and no herbicides other than glyphosate.

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:

Grant funding will specifically focus on the acquisition and restoration of prairie wetland and grassland habitats previously converted for row crop agriculture. Where available protection of remnant native prairie will also be a priority. Once restored these wetland and high diversity grassland complexes will provide habitat for a myriad of species including mallards, black terns, bobolinks, meadowlarks, ring-necked pheasants, pollinators and monarchs. Other species of concern benefiting from this project include the prairie chicken, short-eared owl, marsh hawk, and yellow rails.

This project will focus on the restoration of prairie wetland and grassland habitats in western and southern Minnesota. These geographic areas of Minnesota are part of the Prairie Pothole Region (PPR), of North America. The PPR is well known for its waterfowl production potential and importance for grassland nesting birds. Recent studies have documented the conversion of grasslands have caused grassland nesting birds to be in a more severe long-term decline as compared to other groups of birds. The protection and restoration of wetland and grassland habitats will assist in reversing the decline of grassland nesting birds and stabilize waterfowl production in Minnesota.

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

Wetland and grassland habitats in the PPR of Minnesota are still converted for agricultural purposes. Those losses are not being off-set by existing State/Federal laws. This project will focus these resources in regions of the state that have sustained the greatest wetland and grassland losses.

Describe the science based planning and evaluation model used:

The Habitat and Population Evaluation Team (HAPET) of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), located in Fergus Falls, Minnesota, provides landscape level planning and decision support tools used to identify the most important wetland and grassland habitats remaining in the PPR of Minnesota.

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:

- Long Range Duck Recovery Plan

- North American Waterfowl Management Plan

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Prairie:

- Protect, enhance, or restore existing wetland/upland complexes, or convert agricultural lands to new wetland/upland habitat complexes

Forest / Prairie Transition:

- Protect, enhance, and restore migratory habitat for waterfowl and related species, so as to increase migratory and breeding success

Metro / Urban:

- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna with an emphasis on areas with high biological diversity

Relationship to other funds:

- Not Listed

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

WPAs are acquired with funds derived from the sale of Federal Duck Stamps and managed for wildlife and conservation benefits as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Land acquisition and restoration have not kept pace with habitat restoration needs or the backlog of willing sellers. The Service’s Midwest Region receives on average \$5,000,000 annually from duck stamp proceeds to purchase lands for WPAs in Minnesota. If funded, this proposal will accelerate the protection and restoration of Minnesota’s valuable wetland and grassland habitats and provide additional public hunting and fishing areas.

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

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
Annual	PF	None

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

All grant monies received for this project will result in fee title transfers of additional land into the National Wildlife Refuge System. The long-term protection and management of these habitats will be the responsibility of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, an agency that employs professional managers, biologists, field staff, realty staff, and enforcement officers and has an annual operating budget designated specifically for the management of Refuge resources. Wetlands and their contributing watersheds will be protected and prairie habitats monitored and managed. The Service has an active, professional prescribed burning program and utilizes fire to reduce woody invasion of prairies, enhance diversity, and rejuvenate uplands. Biological, mechanical, and sometimes chemical treatments are used as needed in an integrated management approach to provide high quality migration and breeding habitats. Acquisitions are targeted within areas that have existing USFWS ownership to reduce management and administrative costs. In addition, great care is given to the creation and acquisition of possible new Waterfowl Production Area outside existing ownership areas. It is not the intent of the partners to apply for management/maintenance funds for the acquired tracts in the future.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Post Transfer	Federal	Monitoring	Maintenance	Habitat Management

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 - **No**

We will notify local government in writing of the intent to acquire and donate lands to the Service and follow up with questions prior to acquisition.

Is the land you plan to acquire free of any other permanent protection - **No**

Some of the parcels may have a federal or state easement which provides permanent protection for wetlands or grasslands. If a parcel has one of these encumbrances, and is still deemed a high priority by the partners, we will follow guidance established by the Outdoor Heritage Fund to proceed, or use non-state funding to acquire the residual value of the protected portion of the property.

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

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

All acquired lands will be open to the public taking of fish and game during the open season according to the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act, United States Code, title 16, section 668dd, et seq.

Accomplishment Timeline:

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Identify priority acquisitions	07/01/2016
Contract appraisals ordered	09/01/2017
Purchase agreements	02/01/2017
Re-evaluate tract priority	02/14/2017
Contract appraisals ordered	04/01/2017
Purchase agreements	07/01/2018
Close on tracts	01/01/2019
Restoration completed	06/30/2021

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 - \$5100000

Outcomes:

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need *Number of acres of wetlands and uplands protected and restored.*

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- Protected habitats will hold wetlands and shallow lakes open to public recreation and hunting *Number and acres of wetlands protected and restored. Number of acquisitions that provide additional access to existing public lands.*

Programs in prairie region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced habitat for migratory and unique Minnesota species *Number of acres of wetlands and uplands protected and restored.*

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$19,309,100

Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$150,000	\$0		\$150,000
Contracts	\$1,050,000	\$0		\$1,050,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$17,500,000	\$5,100,000	Federal, Private, PF (100k)	\$22,600,000
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0		\$0
Professional Services	\$160,000	\$0		\$160,000
Direct Support Services	\$54,100	\$0		\$54,100
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$20,000	\$0		\$20,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$375,000	\$0		\$375,000
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$19,309,100	\$5,100,000	-	\$24,409,100

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
PF State Coordinator - MN	0.21	3.00	\$50,000	\$0		\$50,000
PF Field Staff	0.32	3.00	\$50,000	\$0		\$50,000
PF Grants Staff	0.26	3.00	\$50,000	\$0		\$50,000
Total	0.79	9.00	\$150,000	\$0	-	\$150,000

Amount of Request: \$19,309,100

Amount of Leverage: \$5,100,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 26.41%

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	600	2,000	0	0	2,600
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	600	2,000	0	0	2,600

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	40
Protect in Easement	0
Enhance	0
Total	40

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	\$4,456,200	\$14,852,900	\$0	\$0	\$19,309,100
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$4,456,200	\$14,852,900	\$0	\$0	\$19,309,100

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	100	700	0	1,800	0	2,600
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	700	0	1,800	0	2,600

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	\$742,700	\$5,198,900	\$0	\$13,367,500	\$0	\$19,309,100
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$742,700	\$5,198,900	\$0	\$13,367,500	\$0	\$19,309,100

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	\$7,427	\$7,426	\$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	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$7,427	\$7,427	\$0	\$7,426	\$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

Becker

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Lee Marshes WPA Addition	14042230	160	\$800,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Bigstone

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Goldsmith WPA	12246201	117	\$475,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Kufrin WPA Addition	12245221	120	\$600,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Blue Earth

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Lincoln WPA Addition	10729235	200	\$1,500,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Carver

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Perbix WPA Addition	11526234	160	\$1,520,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Cottonwood

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Christensen WPA Addition	10536228	320	\$1,220,300	No	Full	Not Applicable
Harder Lake WPA Addition	10636216	80	\$600,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Long Lake WPA Addition	10638227	160	\$1,200,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Watonwan River WPA Addition	10636210	198	\$1,485,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Douglas

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Millerville WPA Addition	13038206	60	\$250,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Reger WPA Addition	13039206	80	\$320,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Faribault

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
New WPA	10128211	295	\$2,212,500	No	Full	Not Applicable
Pilot Grove WPA Addition	10128202	110	\$825,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Grant

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Pomme De Terre WPA Addition	13042236	39	\$234,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Jackson

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Fish Lake WPA	10435205	20	\$100,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Kruger WPA	10236205	80	\$100,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
New WPA	10438216	78	\$585,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
New WPA	10438216	160	\$1,200,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Sio ux Forks WPA Addition	10136219	145	\$1,087,500	No	Full	Not Applicable

Kandiyohi

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Brenner Lake WPA Addition	12236206	160	\$512,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Lac qui Parle

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Taylor WPA Addition	11646205	80	\$450,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Lincoln

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
New WPA	10944228	135	\$850,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
New WPA	11146228	80	\$550,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Lyon

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Bendix WPA Addition Tr. 2	10941221	121	\$907,500	No	Full	Not Applicable
New WPA	10941220	140	\$1,100,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Martin

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Lake Belt WPA Addition Tr. 5	10132202	223	\$1,895,500	No	Full	Not Applicable

McLeod

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Barber Lake WPA Addition	11630227	120	\$900,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Meeker

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tyrene Flats WPA Addition	12131223	80	\$320,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Murray

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Giese WPA Addition	10741210	40	\$25,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Johnson WPA Addition	10539225	80	\$560,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Otter Tail

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Bjerkevedt WPA Addition	13239228	60	\$200,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Julsrud WPA Addition	13644205	150	\$480,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Nicholson WPA Addition	13142207	96	\$350,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Pelican Valley WPA Addition Tr. 3	13543205	150	\$825,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Otter Tail

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Putnam WPA Addition	13742202	80	\$400,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Sibley

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
High Island WPA Addition	11428218	80	\$600,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Mud Lake WPA Addition Tr. 6	11426221	120	\$1,020,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Stearns

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
New WPA	12229219	0	\$0	No	Full	Not Applicable
New WPA	12230224	278	\$975,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Stevens

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Grossman WPA Addition	12344205	231	\$1,500,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Grossman WPA Addition	12444232	0	\$0	No	Full	Not Applicable

Wright

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Pelican Lake Addition	12125235	60	\$360,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Yellow Medicine

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Dakota WPA Addition	11546204	163	\$950,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Kontz WPA Addition	11446231	321	\$1,950,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

Cottonwood

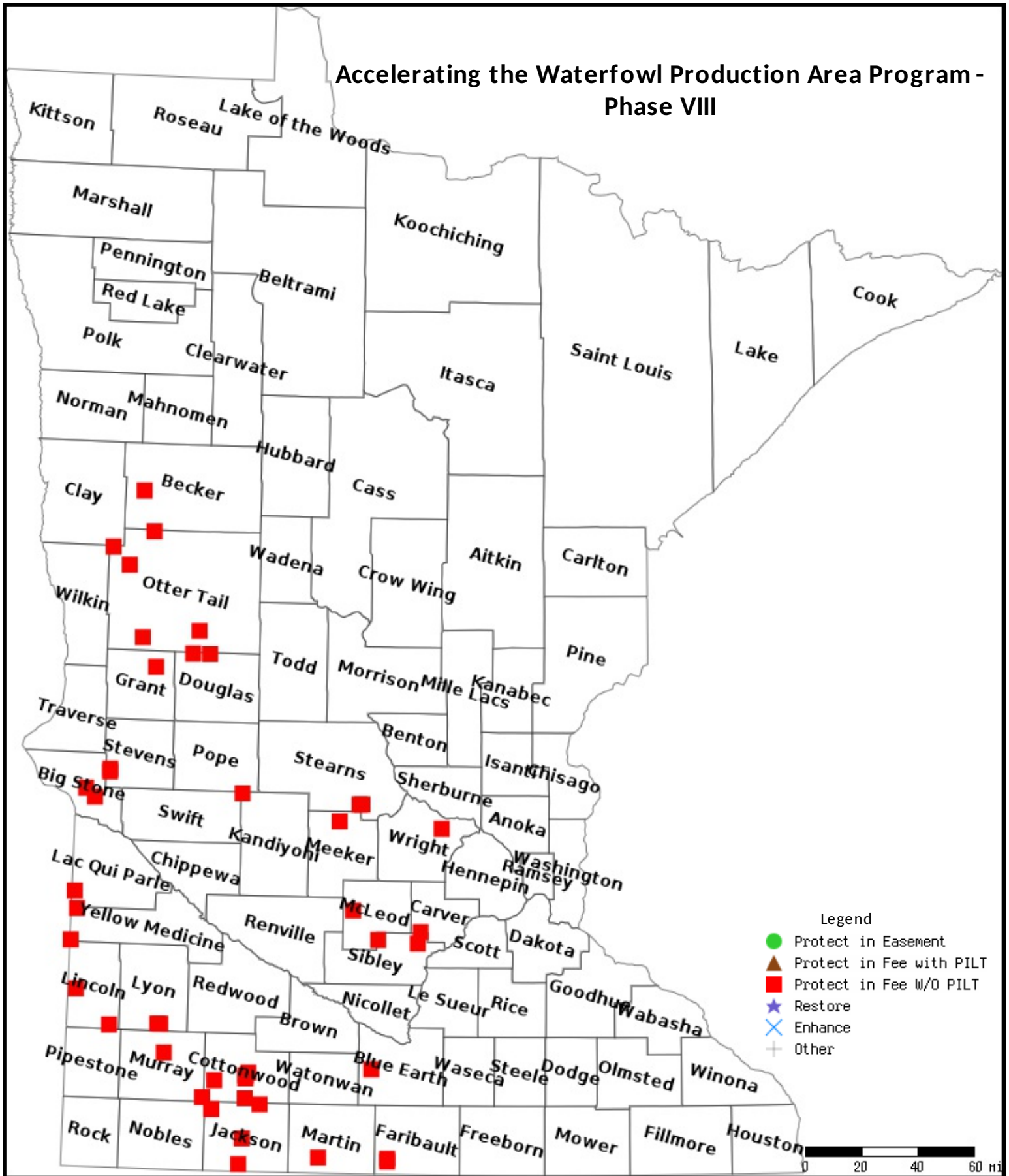
Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	# Bldgs?	Bldg Improve Desc	Value of Bldg	Disposition of Improvements
Harder Lake WPA Addition	10636221	227	\$1,400,000	2	2 small hunting shacks	\$0	Remove

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map

Accelerating the Waterfowl Production Area Program - Phase VIII



Data Generated From Parcel List

Accelerating the Waterfowl Production Area Program - Phase 8



2,600 Proposed Acres to be Permanently
Protected and Restored

