

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2017 / ML 2016 Request for Funding



Date: June 04, 2015

Program or Project Title: Wetland Habitat Protection Program – Phase 2

Funds Requested: \$2,563,000

Manager's Name: Kris Larson
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Organization: Minnesota Land Trust
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County Locations: Becker, Kandiyohi, Otter Tail, Pope, and Stearns.

Regions in which work will take place:

- Forest / Prairie Transition

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Prairie
- Habitat

Abstract:

Protect 1,200 acres of high priority wetland habitat complexes in Minnesota's Forest-Prairie transition area by securing permanent conservation easements within scientifically prioritized complexes using an innovative project ranking and payment system to maximize conservation benefit and financial leverage.

Design and scope of work:

Of all of Minnesota's wildlife habitat types, wetlands and shallow lakes provide the essential backbone for the survival of waterfowl and other important wildlife species. In fact, more than 50% of the amphibians and birds listed in Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy as species in greatest conservation need (SGCN) use wetlands during their life cycle. Most of the plans developed to protect Minnesota's wildlife—including Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, and the Long Range Duck Recovery Plan—cite the protection and restoration of the state's remaining wetlands as one of the top priorities to achieve the State's conservation goals. Moreover, these plans cite the use of conservation easements on private lands as one of the primary strategies to protect important wetland and shallow lake habitat.

This project encompasses two of Minnesota's Ecological Classification System subsections: the Hardwood Hills and Minnesota River Prairie. Before European settlement, the predominant land cover in the Minnesota River Prairie subsection was tallgrass prairie and wetlands. Today, row-crop agriculture is the primary land use, and the ditching and draining of small wetlands is a concern for wildlife habitat and water quality. Within this subsection, 116 SGCN are known or predicted to occur. Shallow lakes and wetlands both are identified as "key habitats" in Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, with 58 SGCN using those habitats. The Hardwood Hills subsection originally was characterized by maple-basswood forest interspersed with oak savanna, oak forest and tall grass prairie. The subsection also contains numerous lakes, wetlands, and prairie potholes. Similar to the Minnesota River Prairie subsection, the predominant land use today is agriculture, and wetland loss is a primary conservation concern. Eighty-five SGCN are known or predicted to occur within this subsection. And, as with the Minnesota River Prairie subsection, shallow lakes and wetlands are identified as "key habitats" within the Hardwood Hills, with 55 SGCN using those habitats.

In this Phase 2 of our successful Wetlands Habitat Protection Program, the Land Trust proposes to complete 12-15 new conservation easements protecting a minimum of 1,200 acres of important wetland and associated habitat within its Edge of the Prairie Critical Landscape. This landscape, which extends from Meeker County northwest to Becker County, is located at the edge of the once vast prairies of western Minnesota as they transition to the woods and forests that dominate the eastern portion of the State. The prairie pothole lakes and associated wetlands within this landscape form the backbone of one of the continent's most important flyways for migratory waterfowl.

Phase 2 of this program will build on the accomplishments of the Land Trust's very successful first round of the Wetland Habitat Protection Program. In Phase I, the Land Trust is on track to significantly exceed our acreage deliverables. At the time of drafting this proposal, Phase 1 of the Wetland Habitat Protection Program has already protected approximately 300 acres of significant wetland complexes with conservation easements, and eight other easement projects are in various stages of completion. Phase I also saw the successful implementation of the reverse-bid system for easement ranking and payment, thereby advancing a new model for project selection and easement valuation.

MLT will continue to implement this criteria-based ranking system and market approach for purchasing conservation easements, which was originally developed through our work with St. John's University in the Avon Hills. Under this system, potential parcels for easement purchase are prioritized based on their value to wetland protection, proximity to other protected parcels, MCBS data and other appropriate criteria while allowing targeted landowners to bid their desired price to protect their property with an easement. Those properties with the best ratio of environmental benefits to easement cost become the highest priority for acquisition. Several landowners fully donated easements in Phase I with several others accepting approximately 50% of the easement's value (thereby leveraging the other 50%). The attached project list includes parcels where we have had interested landowners in the past. The list will be revised as we initiate this round of bidding and will be continually evaluated to ensure the selection of high-quality projects.

Although the Land Trust has been active in this landscape for more than 15 years, we now have a unique window of time to deepen our commitment and conservation impact to protect important wetland complexes. With an aging landowner population and organizational momentum, the time is now to implement a robust wetland protection and restoration program for this region. To focus our work, we have completed an initial analysis to identify important wetland complexes in this landscape based on the intersection of high-quality habitat, existing protected areas and restorable agricultural lands. These complexes include a mosaic of wetland, prairie/grassland, and forest habitats, as well as agricultural land. Protection of these complexes will produce the following outcomes: 1) nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species in greatest conservation need; 2) improved water quality; 3) increased participation of private landowners in habitat projects; and 4) enhancement of prior public investment in wetland protection and restoration.

Proposed activities under this grant include:

- 1) contacting and negotiating with interested landowners;
- 2) drafting and completing perpetual conservation easements;
- 3) documenting property conditions and drafting habitat management plans as appropriate;
- 4) dedicating funds for the perpetual monitoring and enforcement of those easements.

As a nationally-accredited land trust, the Minnesota Land Trust works only with conservation easements that are perpetual. These easements prohibit land uses or development that negatively affect important habitat and other conservation values. These easements are monitored annually and enforced as necessary under the Land Trust's comprehensive conservation easement stewardship program.

As with Phase I, we anticipate working in partnership with appropriate public agencies, non-profit organizations and other stakeholders, including BWSR, Ducks Unlimited, and local counties and Soil and Water Conservation Districts to ensure this program meets multi-agency 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:

As described above, Minnesota's wetlands are essential to our wildlife health and diversity. This project directly benefits Species in Greatest Conservation Need and other important game and non-game wildlife species by minimizing the potential threats to their habitat brought about by detrimental agricultural practices, residential or commercial development or imprudent land management. The wetland habitat complexes that will be targeted through the ranking system will include a mosaic of wetlands, grasslands and woodlands. Priority projects will include high or outstanding habitat as identified in County Biological Survey data. They will also be located near other protected lands so as to help build larger habitat complexes which will be comprised of both public and private

lands. In fact, with the vast majority of this landscape in private ownership, working with private owners on land protection strategies is key to successful conservation in this region. Finally, we anticipate working with partners in the region to identify those habitat complexes where private land protection can make a significant contribution to existing conservation investments.

This program addresses LSOHC priorities by protecting shallow lakes, wetland/grassland complexes, and shoreland that provide critical habitat for Minnesota's wildlife, especially its migratory waterfowl and associated species.

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

With an aging landowner population and stabilized land values, we have a narrow window of time to work with these private landowners to achieve significant conservation outcomes. In addition, thanks to the successful landowner outreach in Phase I, multiple landowners are eager to move forward with conserving their properties.

Describe the science based planning and evaluation model used:

MLT's unique ranking system works as follows: 1) MLT conducts outreach in targeted areas; 2) interested landowners submit applications; 3) properties are ranked ecologically through scientific criteria; 4) landowners bid their desired payment; 5) Finally, projects with the highest ecological value at the lowest cost are selected to move forward.

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

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H4 Restore and protect shallow lakes

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Long Range Duck Recovery Plan
- Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

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

Relationship to other funds:

- Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund

The Minnesota Land Trust was a partner in the Habitat Conservation Partnership (HCP), which received grants from the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR), from 2001--2011. This proposed OHF grant accelerates the Land Trust's work protecting critical habitat in the Edge of the Prairie landscape and does not supplant any existing funding sources.

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

This funding would expand upon the Land Trust's successes in Phase I and would accelerate our ability to deliver quality conservation outcomes very cost effectively. As a non-profit, the majority of financial support to the Minnesota Land Trust must be raised on an annual basis, with no dedicated funds or endowment which is targeted to this region. Therefore, funding from this proposal would significantly enhance our efforts in this landscape. Without it, MLT's ability to deliver important wetland habitat conservation would be significantly impaired, as funding for all projects must be raised on a project-by-project basis.

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

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2001--2011	ENRTF	\$2,000,000
2014--2015	McKnight Foundation	\$120,000

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

The land protected through conservation easements will be sustained through state-of-the-art standards and practices for conservation easement stewardship. The Minnesota Land Trust is a nationally-accredited land trust with a very successful stewardship program that includes annual property monitoring, effective records management, addressing inquiries and interpretations, tracking changes in ownership, investigating potential violations and defending the easement in case of a true violation. Funding for these easement stewardship activities is included in the project budget.

In addition, MLT will assist landowners in the development of comprehensive habitat management plans to help ensure that the land will be managed for its wildlife and water quality benefits. Depending upon the property, opportunities for restoration and enhancement in the future will be explored on a case-by-case basis--MLT will assist landowners in connecting with appropriate agencies as such needs and opportunities arise.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2016 and beyond	MLT easement monitoring and enforcement fund	Develop property baseline reports, monitoring plans and habitat management plans	Conduct annual property monitoring, address landowner inquiries and maintain accurate stewardship records	Defend conservation easements as necessary

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
Complete conservation easements, baseline documentation, monitoring plans and habitat management plans	June 30, 2019

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 nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need *The primary evaluation method will be the quality and quantity of habitat that is protected. Through our annual monitoring we will be able to assess the quality of the habitat and determine if there are any threats or violations to the easement. In addition, through the habitat management plans, we will be working with landowners to maintain and/or improve the species diversity on the properties. Overall, we will be evaluating how the protection of an individual parcel contributes to a larger habitat matrix.*

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$2,563,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$270,000	\$0		\$270,000
Contracts	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$1,800,000	\$600,000	Private landowner donation	\$2,400,000
Easement Stewardship	\$240,000	\$0		\$240,000
Travel	\$12,000	\$0		\$12,000
Professional Services	\$196,000	\$0		\$196,000
Direct Support Services	\$45,000	\$0		\$45,000
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	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$2,563,000	\$600,000	-	\$3,163,000

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
MLT Conservation Staff, Legal Staff and Project Support Staff	1.00	3.00	\$270,000	\$0		\$270,000
Total	1.00	3.00	\$270,000	\$0	-	\$270,000

Amount of Request: \$2,563,000

Amount of Leverage: \$600,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 23.41%

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	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	1,200	0	0	0	1,200
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,200	0	0	0	1,200

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	\$2,563,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,563,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$2,563,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,563,000

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	0	1,200	0	0	0	1,200
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	1,200	0	0	0	1,200

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	\$0	\$2,563,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,563,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$2,563,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,563,000

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	\$2,136	\$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	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$2,136	\$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?
Dumbell Lake	14038223	578	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Kandiyohi

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Brenner Lake	12236205	52	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Calhoun Lake	12133228	80	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Fish Lake	12235217	75	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Otter Tail

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Otter Tail River	13441228	233	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Trulse Lake	13239234	130	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Pope

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Gilchrist Lake	12337206	192	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Stearns

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Spunk Creek Watershed	12629219	179	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

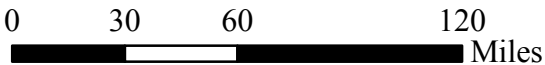
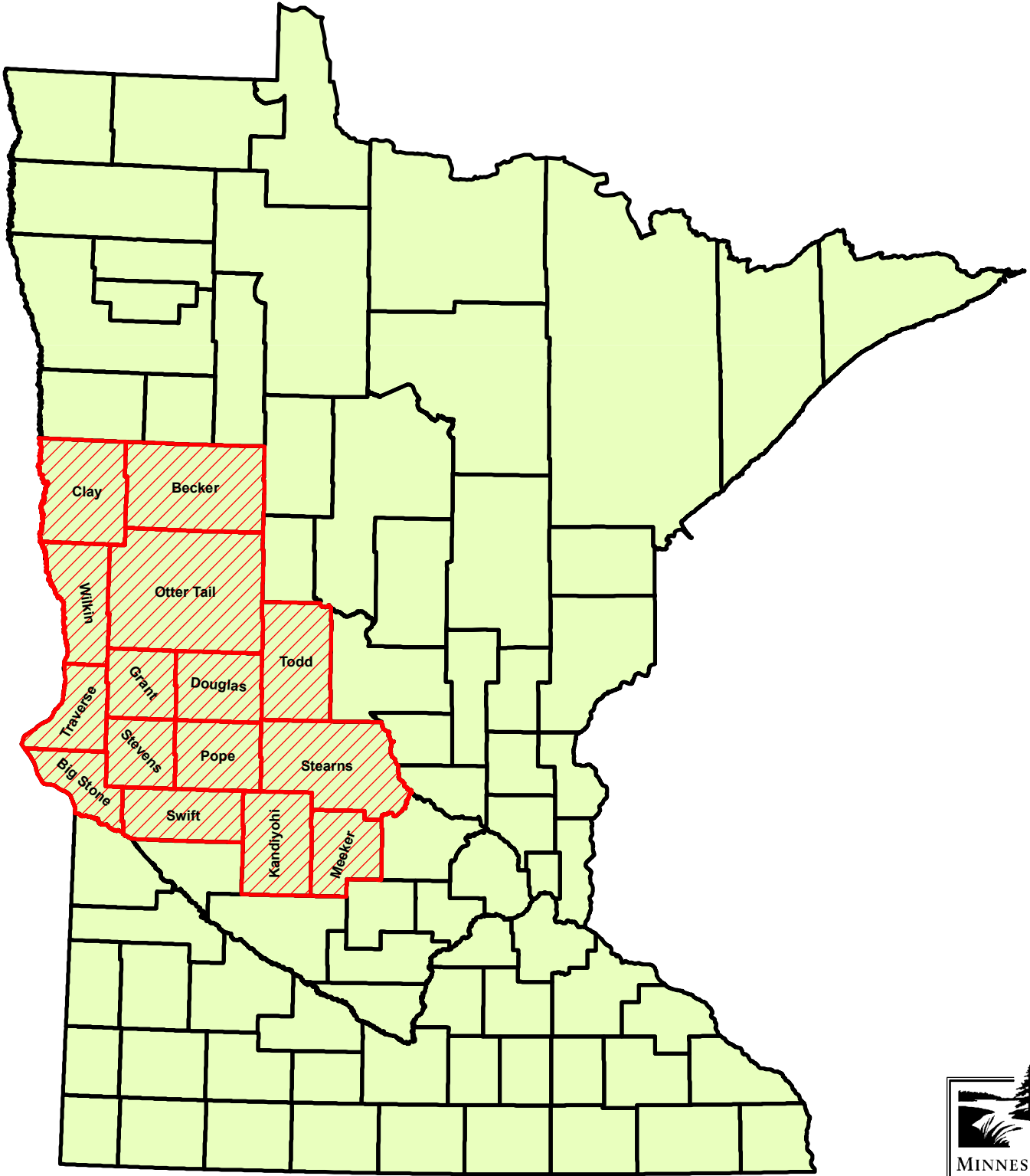
Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Wetlands Habitat Protection Program Phase II Program Area

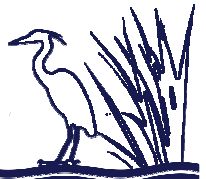


Wetland Habitat Protection Program

The Minnesota Land Trust is a nationally-accredited conservation organization that has been protecting Minnesota's most unique wildlife habitats around the state for more than twenty years.



For more information, please contact Maggie Karschnia at 651-647-9590 or visit www.mnland.org



WHAT IS THE WETLAND HABITAT PROTECTION PROGRAM?

The goal of the Wetland Habitat Protection Program is to protect high priority wetland habitat complexes in Minnesota's Forest-Prairie transition area by securing permanent conservation easements using a cost-effective approach to maximize conservation benefit and leverage. The Land Trust will work with landowners to permanently protect more than 1,000 acres through a ranking system and market approach for purchasing conservation easements. Funding for this program is provided by grants from the Outdoor Heritage Fund and the McKnight Foundation.

HOW WILL PROJECTS BE CHOSEN FOR THIS PROGRAM?

The Minnesota Land Trust is opening the second round of a competitive bidding process to select conservation easements on private lands within Minnesota's Forest-Prairie transition area. Using a multi-faceted approach to prioritizing easements, the Land Trust will weigh the overall habitat benefits of the property against the costs of acquiring the easement.

Up to \$1,000,000 is available during this second round of funding for the project. Funding is restricted to lands within this landscape, including all or portions of Becker, Douglas, Grant, Kandiyohi, Meeker, Otter Tail, Stearns, Stevens, Swift, Pope, and Todd Counties.

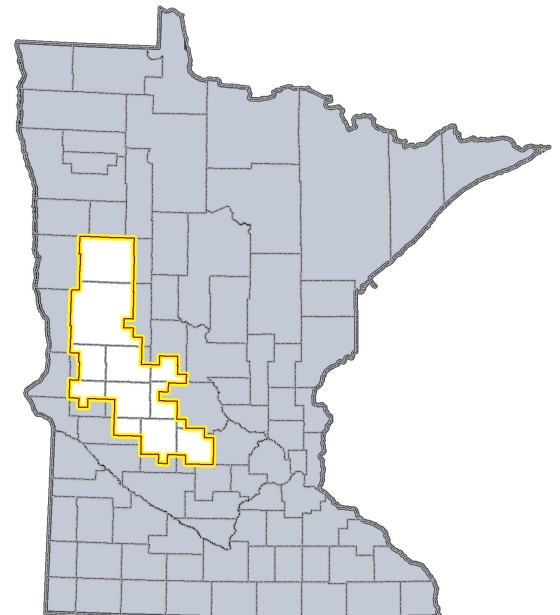
During the first round of the program which began in 2013, four bid properties and three donated properties were accepted and work has commenced to protect over 500 acres and 10,000 feet of shoreline. In the second round of funding, the Land Trust will use a similar ranking system and selection criteria.

All bids in this round of funding are non-binding. Landowners and the Land Trust are not legally bound to a conservation easement until both parties agree to and sign final conservation easement documents at closing.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BIDDING PROCESS:

Each property will be scored based on a set of established habitat value factors. This habitat value score takes into account the size of the parcel, ecological features, amount of shoreline, protection of water quality, location in relation to other protected lands, etc.

The landowner then offers a bid for the amount of compensation they would like to receive for conveying a conservation easement over their land. The bid is in the format of dollars per acre (e.g. \$300/acre, \$1,000/acre, etc.). Those willing to donate the entire value of the conservation easement may forgo the bidding process and automatically enter their property into the program, as long as their property meets a minimum habitat value score and satisfies all qualifying criteria.





The applications will then be ranked based on the ratio of the habitat value score to the cost per acre. Land that has a high habitat value score and a low cost per acre will have a higher project value rating, thus giving it higher priority. After all bids have been received, a compilation of scores with rankings will be distributed to all applicants.

$$\text{Project Value Rating} = \frac{\text{Habitat Value Score}}{\text{Cost per Acre}}$$

Easements will be funded in order of highest project value rating to lowest. After the highest rated bid is selected, the bids with the next highest ratings are selected in order, until all available funds have been assigned to selected projects. If for any reason a conservation easement does not move forward or the bid is withdrawn, the next highest rated project may be selected. All conservation easement projects selected in this round of funding must be completed and payments must be made no later than June 30, 2016.

WHAT RESTRICTIONS WILL THE CONSERVATION EASEMENT HAVE?

Each conservation easement completed by the Minnesota Land Trust is unique and is individually crafted to reflect the special characteristics of the land and the particular situation of the landowner. However, in order to protect the habitat complexes targeted in the Wetland Habitat Protection Program, certain criteria and restrictions are required.

Required criteria and restrictions for ALL projects:

- Minimum 40 acres in size.
- Agricultural use consisting of row crops, tree farms, orchards, etc. must not comprise more than 10% of the property. Alternatively, cultivated fields in perennial cover, such as hay, may comprise an additional 10% of the property, not to exceed a total of 20% of the property in agricultural use. This acreage will not be included in the per-acre purchase price.
- Those acres currently enrolled in temporary programs, such as CRP, are considered agricultural land. However, if the landowner does not intend to re-enroll CRP acres into the program and would like to permanently keep those acres in grassland or woodland, those acres will count as natural areas in the scoring process and will be included in the per-acre purchase price.
- Acres already enrolled in permanent protection, such as RIM, are ineligible.
- If the property is grazed, a conservation grazing plan will be required prior to closing. Pasturing must be conducted intermittently as part of a rotational system with other nearby lands, and no continuous grazing of animals will be allowed on the property. Feedlots (open ground or buildings for the confined raising, breeding and holding of animals) are not allowed.
- 50-foot buffers along all wetlands and streams and 100-foot buffers along all rivers and lakes must be established prior to closing.
- At least 50% of the property to be included in the per-acre purchase price must include uplands that would otherwise be susceptible to agricultural row crops or residential development and be in a relatively natural vegetative cover. Any acreage above this threshold may be included in the bid property to improve the habitat scoring, but would not be included in the per-acre purchase price.
- Must contain at least 10 acres of wetlands and/or have undeveloped shoreline along a shallow lake.
- Maximum of one single-family residence allowed.
- No divisions of the property allowed.

Wetland Habitat Protection Program



Funding for this project was provided by the Outdoor Heritage Fund as recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC).



Landowner Application

FOR A NON-BINDING BID TO OBTAIN A CONSERVATION EASEMENT



Second Round of Bidding Ends August 15, 2014

This application is intended to allow landowners to voluntarily bid and compete for public funds made available through a grant provided by the Outdoor Heritage Fund. Bids will be prioritized based on a competitive bid method developed by Saint John's University which considers the habitat value and the amount a landowner bids to compile a project value rating. Successful bidders will be paid upon finalizing a conservation easement with the Minnesota Land Trust.

Please complete, sign, and return this application along with a copy of the tax statement of the bid property to:
Minnesota Land Trust, 2356 University Avenue West, Suite 240, St. Paul, MN 55114.
or by email at mkarschnia@mnland.org
to be received no later than 4pm on Friday, August 15th, 2014.

Landowner Name(s): _____

Designated Contact Person (if different than above): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please indicate that you have read, understand, and agree to each of the following statements by placing your initials to the left. Leaving any blank will be considered an incomplete application and will not be accepted.

_____ I understand that a conservation easement will place permanent restrictions on the land to benefit long-term conservation. I understand that I may sell or transfer my property to any person or entity, but that these restrictions will permanently encumber the land.

_____ I understand that certain information regarding completed conservation easements and this application will be considered public information, as public funds are being used.

_____ I understand that I am not legally committed to the easement until both parties agree to and sign a final document. I may withdraw at any time for any reason prior to signing the final document.

_____ I understand that the Minnesota Land Trust is not legally committed to the easement until both parties agree to and sign a final document. The Land Trust may withdraw at any time for any reason prior to signing the final document without legal recourse by the applicants.

_____ I understand that the Minnesota Land Trust will determine a habitat value score based on ecological mapping information from the property and from information I provide in this application. I understand that some mapping information is partially subjective and that I will accept the score as determined.



Wetland Habitat Protection Program

- _____ I understand that the final project value rating given to a property is determined by dividing the habitat value score by the cost per acre that has been bid. I also understand that the project with the highest project value rating will be selected first, and so on, until all funds have been assigned.
- _____ I understand that the Minnesota Land Trust may not compensate landowners for more than the appraised value of the conservation easement. Should the bid amount turn out to be more than the appraised value, I would then have an opportunity to withdraw the bid without penalty, or lower the bid to the appraised value.
- _____ I understand that the Minnesota Land Trust requires a minimum 50-foot buffer along all wetlands and streams and a minimum 100-foot buffer along all rivers and lakes consisting of natural vegetation. If the property does not currently meet the minimum requirements of the buffers and the bid is accepted, I understand that the Land Trust will require restoration of the required buffer areas to have been initiated prior to closing.
- _____ I understand that if I graze animals on the property, a conservation grazing plan will be required prior to closing. I further understand that pasturing must be conducted intermittently as part of a rotational system with other nearby lands, and no continuous grazing of animals would be allowed.
- _____ I understand that the Minnesota Land Trust will help guide landowners through the process of the conservation easement project, but it cannot provide any legal or tax advice. The cost of retaining an attorney or other advisors will be at the expense of the landowner.
- _____ I understand that, if selected, the conservation easement will require that the property stay in single ownership and it would no longer be able to be divided in the future.
- _____ I understand that the property must meet the minimum criteria outlined in the Wetland Habitat Protection Program fact sheet for this application to be eligible.
- _____ I understand that any payment I/we receive for a conservation easement may have tax consequences. Any value given up that is not compensated for may be considered a charitable donation.

Please provide the following information for the submission of your bid:

- Total acres to be protected by a conservation easement
- Acres to be allowed for agricultural uses (e.g. row crops, tree farms, CRP, orchards, hay fields, etc.)
- Acres included above to be restricted to perennial cover crops, such as hay
- Acres of natural areas (e.g. forest, grasslands, etc.) to be allowed for use as pasture
- Is there an existing home site on the property or would you like to retain the right to build a home in the future? (yes/no)
- Enter the \$ per acre you would like to be compensated for the conservation easement.

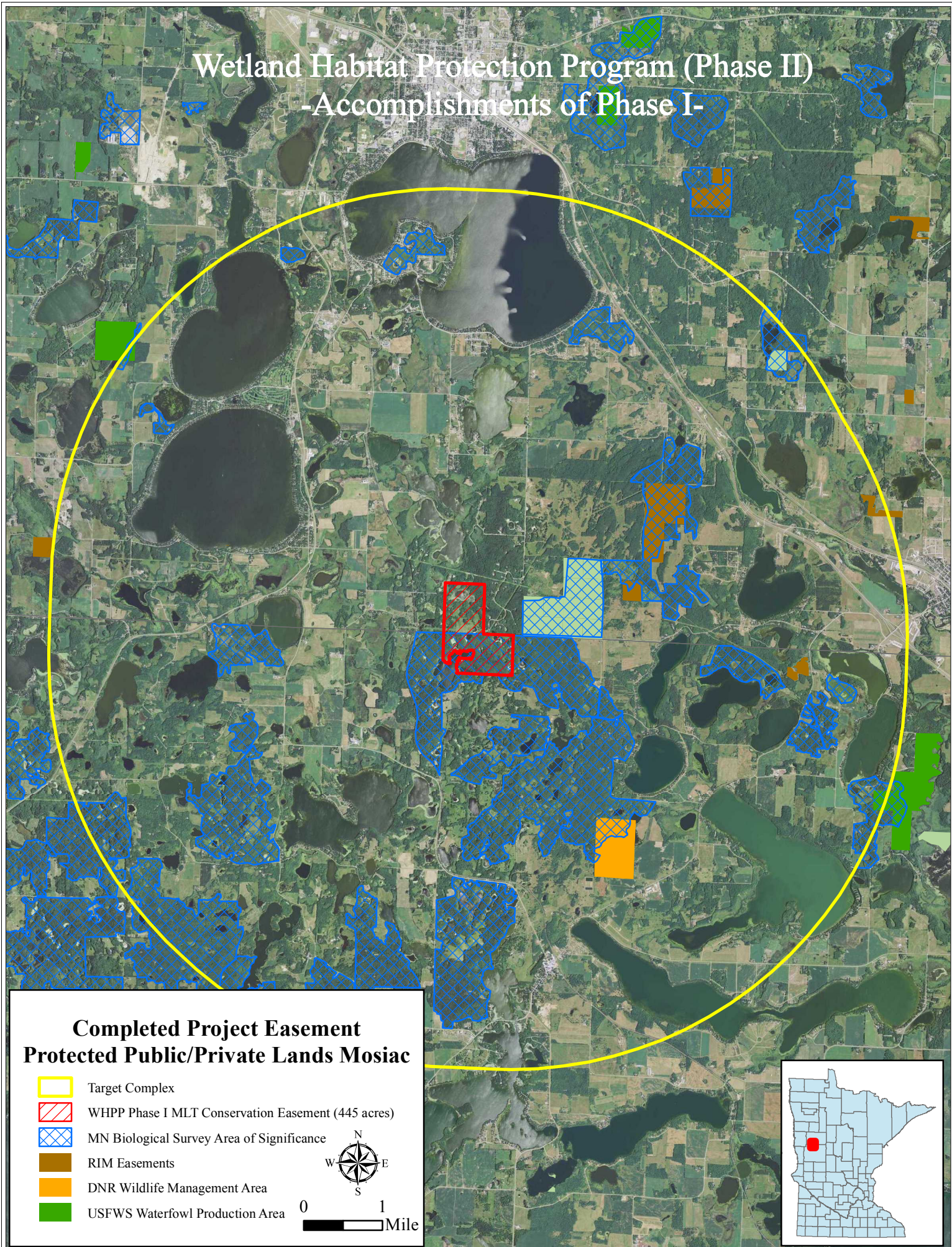
I certify that the information and bid above represents an accurate description of the property and is in full agreement of all owners of the property being submitted for the bid.

Signature: _____ Date: _____







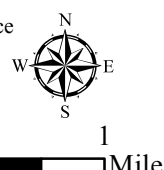


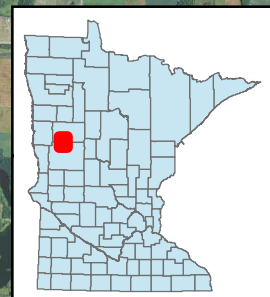
Wetland Habitat Protection Program

Wetland Habitat Protection Program (Phase II) -Accomplishments of Phase I-

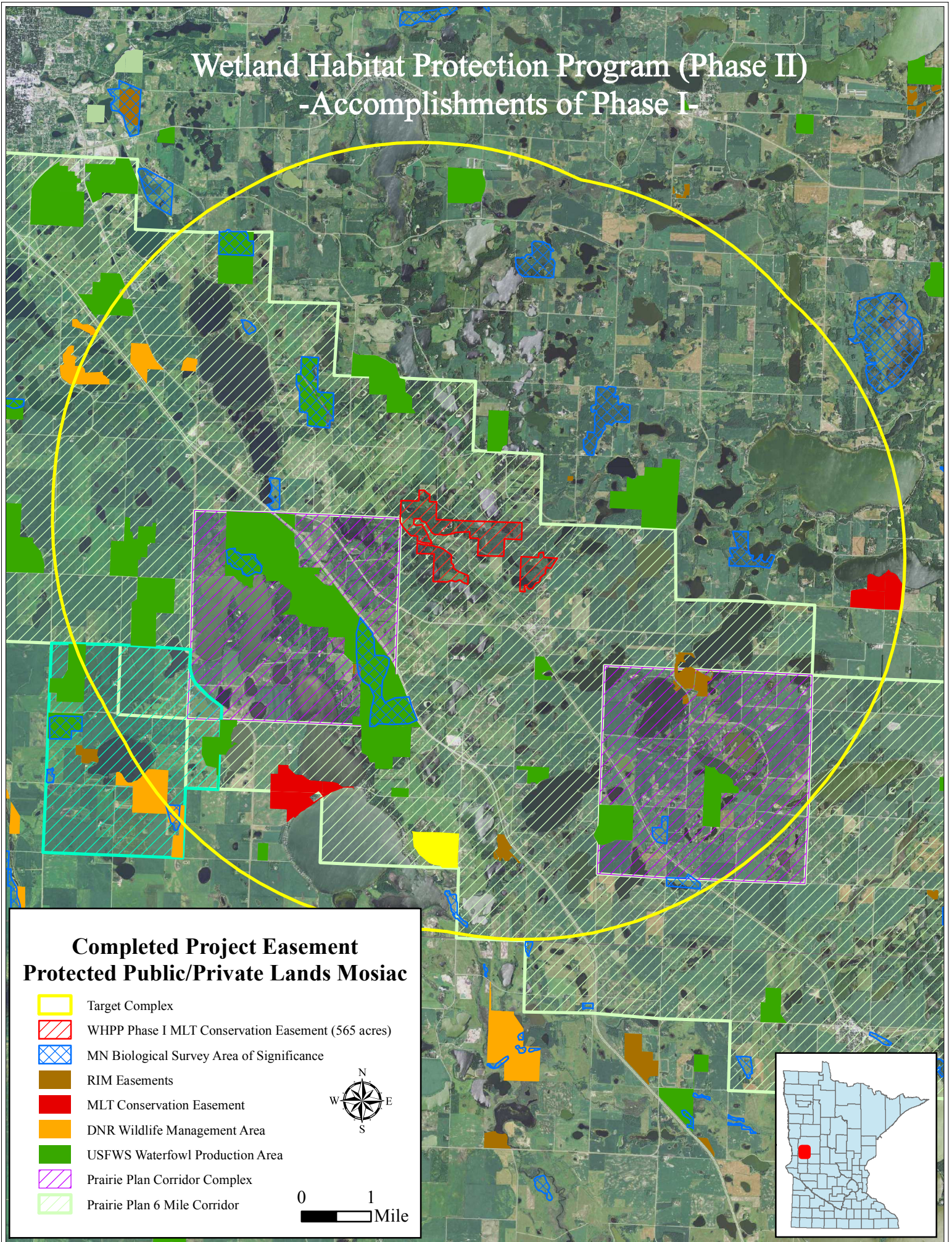


Completed Project Easement Protected Public/Private Lands Mosaic










-  Target Complex
 -  WHPP Phase I MLT Conservation Easement (445 acres)
 -  MN Biological Survey Area of Significance
 -  RIM Easements
 -  DNR Wildlife Management Area
 -  USFWS Waterfowl Production Area
- 0 1 Mile
- 



Wetland Habitat Protection Program (Phase II) -Accomplishments of Phase I-



Completed Project Easement Protected Public/Private Lands Mosaic

-  Target Complex
-  WHPP Phase I MLT Conservation Easement (565 acres)
-  MN Biological Survey Area of Significance
-  RIM Easements
-  MLT Conservation Easement
-  DNR Wildlife Management Area
-  USFWS Waterfowl Production Area
-  Prairie Plan Corridor Complex
-  Prairie Plan 6 Mile Corridor



0 1
Mile

