

# Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

## Laws of Minnesota 2017 Accomplishment Plan



**Date:** October 18, 2016

**Program or Project Title:** Minnesota Forests for the Future - Phase V

**Funds Recommended:** \$ 2,291,000

**Manager's Name:** Richard F. Peterson  
**Title:** Forest Legacy Coordinator  
**Organization:** MN DNR Forestry  
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**Legislative Citation:** ML 2017, Ch. X, Art. X, Sec. X

**Appropriation Language:**

**County Locations:** Morrison

**Regions in which work will take place:**

- Northern Forest

**Activity types:**

- Protect in Easement

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

- Forest
- Wetlands

### Abstract:

The Minnesota Forests for the Future Program will use \$2.291 million for conservation easement acquisition to protect up to 4,000 acres of forest and wetland habitat in the northern forest region. Parcels selected featured some of the largest private forest parcels in the region, high biodiversity sites, topographic and habitat diversity, and connectivity with additional protected forest and wetland complexes. These properties provide habitat for a range of game and non-game species including waterfowl, deer, grouse, timber wolves, ovenbirds and golden-winged warblers and contain 6.6 miles of lake shore and 1.3 stream miles.

### Design and scope of work:

The Hardwood Hills and Rum River Project Area is a landscape of forests, riparian habitat, extensive wetlands complexes, and open waters. Over 217 species of greatest conservation need are known to occur within this region, including many disturbance-sensitive species such as red-shouldered hawks. Portions of this landscape have been identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey as sites of statewide biodiversity significance on the basis of the number of rare species, the quality of the native plant communities, size of the site, and context within the landscape. This landscape is extremely vulnerable to development. Specifically, between 2008 and 2013, more than 260,000 acres of forest, wetland, and grassland in the Upper Mississippi River Basin were converted to other uses, with a large proportion of this fragmentation occurring within the project area. If unprotected, the long term integrity of the wetland and forest habitats will be compromised by future development activities that could convert and fragment habitat and threaten water quality. The purpose of this project is to preserve the ecological integrity and habitat values of this region by focusing protection efforts in strategic locations that ensure that forests remain undeveloped, with connections maintained between forests and wetlands across

private and public ownerships.

Phase 5 of the Forests for the Future Program will protect parcels ranging in size from nearly 160 acres to nearly 2,000 acres that contain diverse upland and lowland habitats, several small lakes and open water as well as small streams. The northern hardwood forests, conifer forests, and mixed hardwood-conifer uplands communities of the properties provide important nesting habitat for forest-interior songbirds (such as cerulean warblers and ovenbirds) more general forest songbirds (including brown creeper, veery, and hermit thrush), and ruffed grouse. The uplands also offer specialized habitat for red-shouldered hawks and bald eagles. Adjacent shrub thicket habitat and young forests offer habitat for birds of conservation concern such as golden-winged warblers. Mammal species using this landscape includes timber wolf, black bear, white-tailed deer, bobcat, and beaver. Species using the wetlands and riparian corridors on the project tracts include American black duck, wood duck, mallard, alder flycatcher, swamp sparrow, yellow warbler, blackburnian warbler, and American bittern. Woodcock find foraging and nesting sites in the wetlands and riparian areas and the upland open grasslands offer roosting and singing ground sites.

The Forests for the Future Program uses a Geographic Information System (GIS) to identify priority private forest lands for protection. Prioritization goals include: 1. Protecting forests with high public benefits (i.e. high ecological, habitat, economic and recreational values); 2. Focusing protection on the largest, most intact forest lands; and 3. Protecting private forests that will result in the greatest consolidation, linkage, and contiguity of lands. By protecting intact landscapes, the project will help achieve the goals of several resource plans related to the prevention of forest habitat loss and fragmentation. This project is a partnership effort with the Nature Conservancy who has pledged \$230,000 towards the successful completion of this project.

### **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:**

Forested and wetland habitat protection will occur in priority conservation areas as identified in several statewide planning efforts such as The Nature Conservancy's Superior Mixed Forest Ecoregional Plan.

Specifically, several parcels have been identified that rest within the Pine Moraines and Outwash Plains subsection and the Mille Lacs Uplands subsection .

Within the Pine Moraines and Outwash Plains, the highest concentrations of species of greatest conservation need occur in the far southern reach of the subsection, where a 1,478 acre parcel has been identified for protection. The entire property has been identified as a site of high or medium biodiversity due to the quantity and quality of native plant communities by the Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS). There are several known element occurrences on this property including: Tamarack Swamp, Cerulean Warbler, Red Oak, Sugar Maple, Basswood forest type, Red Shouldered Hawk, and Bald Eagle. In addition to the above known elemental occurrences, this property is adjacent to over a dozen known element occurrences including bog bluegrass, a threatened Minnesota species. In addition, the entire property lies within an Audubon Important Bird Area, which recognizes the importance of this property and the surrounding area to bird conservation efforts in Minnesota.

Within the Mille Lacs Uplands subsection, over 128 species of greatest conservation need are known to occur. The parcels in this subsection contain over 5,500 acres out of a total of approximately 9,700 acres that have been identified as sites of high or medium biodiversity due to the quantity and quality of native plant communities by MCBS including several forest and wetland communities that include mesic hardwood forest , basswood-black ash forest, mesic oak-aspen forest, basswood-black ash forest, several lowland conifer forest types and several fen, swamp, sedge meadow and shrub types. They also contain several element occurrences including American Bittern and Bald Eagle. Bog bluegrass, a threatened Minnesota species occurs just outside one of the properties within the same wetland matrix as occurs on the property.

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

The Forests for the Future Program uses a GIS based system to guide the strategic protection (protection from parcelization, conversion and fragmentation) of private forest lands. Protection priority is given to protecting the largest, most intact blocks of forest and those forest tracts that result in the greatest amount of consolidation, linkage, and contiguity of protected forest lands. Included in the GIS model were MCBS sites of biodiversity significance, ecological patches, connections between patches, aquatic habitat scores and priority lake watersheds for the protection of water quality. Our prioritization process also helps identify lands that are closest to protected lands.

Permanent protection of these parcels will prevent forest loss and fragmentation of some of the largest blocks of private land in this region, lands that have been identified by MCBS as sites of high/moderate biodiversity significance. In addition, each of these lands connect to other protected parcels in public ownership thereby expanding forest/wetland complexes in the region. Specifically, the Lake Alexander Project adjoins or is close to The Nature Conservancy Preserves, State Forest, State SNA, ACUB easement properties, and the Camp Ripley Military Reserve making it part of the core conservation areas of the region. The two Rum River parcels adjoin the nearly 3,000 acre Four Brooks WMA as well as portions of the Rum River State Forest and tribal properties. The Blackberry Bog site is

part of a large forest/wetland complex and adjoins 240 acres of county forest.

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

- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes
- LU8 Protect large blocks of forest land

**Which other plans are addressed in this program:**

- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework
- Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare

**Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program:**

**Northern Forest:**

- Provide access to manage habitat on landlocked public properties or protect forest land from parcelization and fragmentation through fee acquisition, conservation or access easement

**Relationship to other funds:**

- Not Listed

**Describe the relationship of the funds:**

Not Listed

**How does this program include leverage in funds or other effort to supplement any OHF appropriation:**

The Nature Conservancy has committed a non-federal match of privately-sourced funds totaling \$230,000 toward the successful completion of this project. We have a request for Federal funding through the Federal Forest Legacy Program of \$900,000 towards the completion of this project.

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

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2010	The Conservation Fund	\$9,750,000
2010	Reinvest in Minnesota	\$328,631
2012	The Nature Conservancy	\$1,437,900
2012	Reinvest in Minnesota	\$229,100
2012	State Capital Bonding	\$231,551

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

All lands protected through permanent conservation easements will be sustained through standards and practices for conservation easement stewardship that have been developed and implemented in the forest easement program over the past 15 years. Our easement stewardship program incorporates annual landowner meetings, annual on-site monitoring of all properties, records management, responding to landowner inquiries, tracking ownership changes and addressing and resolving easement violations.

Funding for the easement stewardship is included in the current proposal. Stewardship funds will be transferred to the designated easement stewardship account and interest earned from the account will fund the annual stewardship and monitoring work for the easement. All easements will have baseline property reports, forest stewardship plans and easement monitoring plans prepared prior to closing of the project. Future forest management will be accomplished through DNR-approved Forest Stewardship Plans. The Forest Stewardship Plans provide direction and guide the sustainable management activities that are consistent with protecting the habitat and other resource values of the properties.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
June 30, 2020 or upon completion of the project	OHF	Transfer stewardship funds to dedicated stewardship account per accomplishment plan and OHF appropriation.	Develop easement stewardship plans prior to closings.	Develop baseline property report and easement monitoring plan prior to closing.
Annually/perpetually	OHF - Permanent Easement Account	Monitor easements annually and enforce easement terms.	Annual landowner contacts and on-site monitoring.	Review forest management activities annually and review and update Forest Stewardship Plans periodically.

### Activity Details:

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

Will there be planting of corn or any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program - **No**

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

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

Who will manage the easement?

DNR Division of Forestry

Who will be the easement holder?

DNR Division of Forestry

Are there currently trails or roads on any of the acquisitions on the parcel list - **Yes**

Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:

Forest Access Roads: These roads have been developed and are maintained to provide access for timber and wildlife management activities on the properties.

Recreational Trails: One property has a grant-in-aid snowmobile trail that follows a forest access road.

Will the trails or roads remain and uses continue to be allowed after OHF acquisition - **Yes**

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished:

Maintenance of the forest access roads will be the responsibility of the landowner.

The grant-in-aid trails are maintained by snowmobile clubs.

Monitoring of roads and trails will be ongoing as part of the annual easement monitoring on the property.

Will new trails or roads be developed or improved as a result of the OHF acquisition - **Yes**

Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:

Additional and temporary timber access routes will be established as needed. These will be to provide temporary or sometimes permanent access for forest and wildlife management activities.

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished:

These will be the responsibility of the landowner.

Monitoring will be ongoing as part of the annual monitoring of the property.

## Accomplishment Timeline:

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Acquire conservation easements	June 30, 2019
Develop conservation easement monitoring plans, forest stewardship plans and dedicate easement stewardship funds	June 30, 2019
Monitor conservation easement annually and enforce easement terms.	Annully, perpetually

**Date of Final Report Submission:** 11/1/2020

## Federal Funding:

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

Are the funds confirmed - **No**

What is the approximate date you anticipate receiving confirmation of the federal funds - **October 2017**

## Outcomes:

### Programs in the northern forest region:

- Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation *Forest lands are protected from development and fragmentation This project will permanently protect up to 4,000 acres of northern forest and associated wetlands and nearly 6.6 miles of undeveloped shoreline on several lakes and 1.3 miles on streams thereby preventing habitat loss, habitat fragmentation and associated degradation of waters and wetlands and helping to conserve several large forest/wetland complexes that link to other protected lands.*

# Budget Spreadsheet

*Budget reallocations up to 10% do not require an amendment to the Accomplishment Plan*

**How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount**

Not Listed

**Total Amount of Request: \$ 2291000**

## Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$15,000	\$0		\$15,000
Contracts	\$10,000	\$0		\$10,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$2,135,000	\$1,130,000	TNC and U.S. Forest Service	\$3,265,000
Easement Stewardship	\$72,000	\$0		\$72,000
Travel	\$2,000	\$0		\$2,000
Professional Services	\$50,000	\$0		\$50,000
Direct Support Services	\$6,000	\$0		\$6,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$1,000	\$0		\$1,000
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$2,291,000	\$1,130,000		\$3,421,000

## Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Project Coordinator	0.10	2.00	\$15,000	\$0		\$15,000
Total	0.10	2.00	\$15,000	\$0		\$15,000

Amount of Request: \$2,291,000  
 Amount of Leverage: \$1,130,000  
 Leverage as a percent of the Request: 49.32%  
 DSS + Personnel: \$21,000  
 As a % of the total request: 0.92%

**How did you determine which portions of the Direct Support Services of your shared support services is direct to this program:**

The amount is determined by using a calculator that has been developed by the Department of Natural Resources

**Does the amount in the contract line include R/E work?**

No

**Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:**

TNC has committed \$230,000 to the project. U.S. Forest Service funds for Federal Fiscal 2018 have been applied for but the 900,000 anticipated from U.S. Forest Service is not confirmed.

## 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	0	4,000	0	4,000
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	4,000	0	4,000

**Table 2. Total 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	\$0	\$2,291,000	\$0	\$2,291,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$2,291,000	\$0	\$2,291,000

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

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N 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	0	0	0	4,000	4,000
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	4,000	4,000

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

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N 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	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,291,000	\$2,291,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,291,000	\$2,291,000

**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	\$0	\$573	\$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	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$573
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles**

0



## Parcel List

For restoration and enhancement programs ONLY: Managers may add, delete, and substitute projects on this parcel list based upon need, readiness, cost, opportunity, and/or urgency so long as the substitute parcel/project forwards the constitutional objectives of this program in the Project Scope table of this accomplishment plan. The final accomplishment plan report will include the final parcel list.

### Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

### Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Morrison

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Parcel 1	13131203	148	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 1	13131204	615	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 1	13231233	400	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 1	13231234	320	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 10	04031207	143	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 10	04032212	111	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 10	04131233	200	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 2	04028210	160	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 2	04028211	669	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 2	04028212	670	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 2	04028213	640	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 2	04028214	640	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 2	04028215	600	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 2	04028221	120	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 2	04028222	640	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 2	04028223	626	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 2	04028224	635	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 2	04028227	647	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 2	04028228	160	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 3	04128222	52	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 3	04128223	283	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 3	04128224	577	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 3	04128225	320	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 3	04128226	400	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 3	04128227	263	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 3	04128228	10	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 4	04230204	489	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 4	04230205	587	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 4	04230207	80	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 4	04230208	240	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 4	04230209	280	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 5	04227213	40	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 5	04227224	480	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 5	04227225	160	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 6	04228223	160	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 6	04228224	160	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 6	04228214	120	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 7	04229214	320	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 7	04229216	160	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 8	04230232	320	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 8	04230233	160	\$0	No	No	No
Parcel 9	04230232	160	\$0	No	No	No

### Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

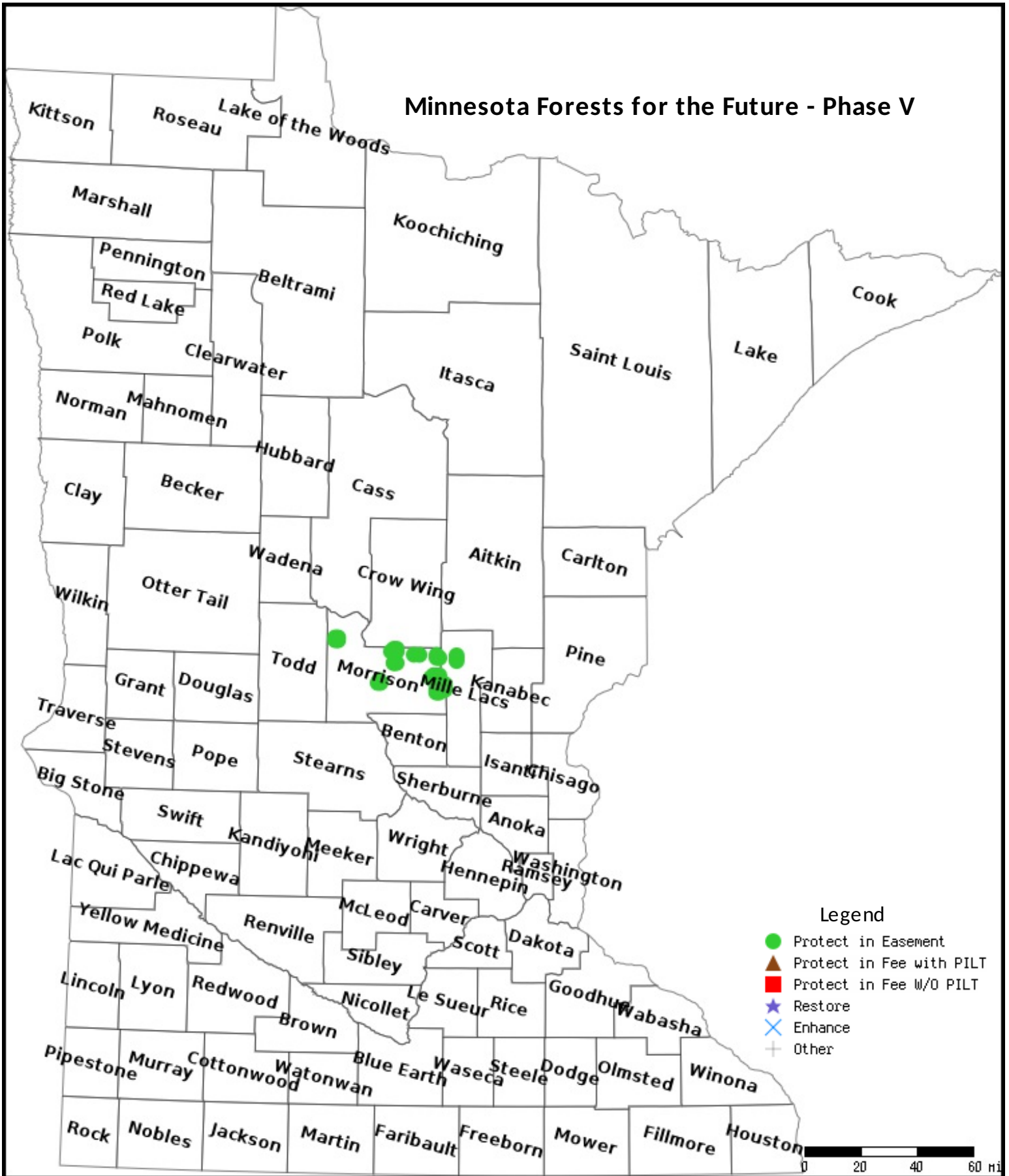
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

### **Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity**

No parcels with an other activity type.

# Parcel Map

## Minnesota Forests for the Future - Phase V



Data Generated From Parcel List



# Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Comparison Report

**Program Title:** 2017 - Minnesota Forests for the Future - Phase V

**Organization:** MN DNR Forestry

**Manager:** Richard F. Peterson

## Budget

Requested Amount: \$8,000,000

Appropriated Amount: \$2,291,000

Percentage: 28.64%

Budget Item	Total Requested		Total Appropriated		Percentage of Request	
	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Appropriated Amount	Anticipated Leverage	Percentage of Request	Percentage of Leverage
Personnel	\$50,000	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	30.00%	-
Contracts	\$20,000	\$0	\$10,000	\$0	50.00%	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$7,643,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,135,000	\$1,130,000	27.93%	56.50%
Easement Stewardship	\$125,000	\$0	\$72,000	\$0	57.60%	-
Travel	\$5,000	\$0	\$2,000	\$0	40.00%	-
Professional Services	\$150,000	\$0	\$50,000	\$0	33.33%	-
Direct Support Services	\$6,000	\$0	\$6,000	\$0	100.00%	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	100.00%	-
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,000,000</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>	<b>\$2,291,000</b>	<b>\$1,130,000</b>	<b>28.64%</b>	<b>56.50%</b>

**How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount?**

Not Listed

# Output

**Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type**

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	0	0	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Easement	11,250	4,000	35.56%
Enhance	0	0	-

**Table 2. Total Funding by Resource Type**

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	0	0	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Easement	8,000,000	2,291,000	28.64%
Enhance	0	0	-

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

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	0	0	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Easement	11,250	4,000	35.56%
Enhance	0	0	-

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

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	0	0	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Easement	8,000,000	2,291,000	28.64%
Enhance	0	0	-