

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Laws of Minnesota 2017 Accomplishment Plan



Date: October 07, 2016

Program or Project Title: Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program - Phase VI

Funds Recommended: \$ 1,779,000

Manager's Name: Andy Henschel

Title: Director of Field Operations

Organization: Shell Rock River Watershed District

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Legislative Citation: ML 2017, Ch. X, Art. X, Sec. X

Appropriation Language:

County Locations: Freeborn

Regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

Activity types:

- Enhance
- Protect in Fee
- Restore

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Habitat
- Wetlands

Abstract:

The Shell Rock River Watershed District's Phase VI Habitat Restoration Program will restore, enhance and protect 366 acres of essential shallow lake, wetland and stream bank habitat across the watershed. Over the next five years, agricultural landscapes will be turned into wetland complexes, shallow lakes burdened with rough fish will be restored to provide breeding and migratory waterfowl habitats, streambanks will be enhanced, and key biological functioning parcels will be permanently protected. Projects in Phase VI are critical for the benefit of fish, waterfowl and wildlife populations, reversing the trend of wetland loss and habitat degradation.

Design and scope of work:

The Shell Rock River Watershed District (SRRWD) covers 246 square miles inside Freeborn County and includes a complex system of wetlands, streams, and shallow lakes that drain into the Shell Rock River. Managing habitat for this complex system is imperative to the SRRWD as well as understanding its role for providing critical habitat for fish, waterfowl and wildlife. Habitat degradation of wetlands, streams, and shallow lakes is an issue of statewide importance that requires accelerated investment in projects to reverse this degradation. Protection and restoration of this critical habitat is the highest priority of the SRRWD and is directly affected by invasive aquatic vegetation, land use changes, increased water demands, populations of invasive fish species such as common carp, and artificial drainage. Degradation in habitat is influencing available food sources for game fish populations that include Northern Pike,

Bluegill, Yellow Perch and Walleye, and duck populations that include Northern Pintail, Redhead, Canvasback and Lesser Scaup.

With this growing concern, in 2014 the SRRWD created a phased, \$20 million dollar approach to restore, protect, and enhance degraded habitat conditions through implementations of projects on a lake-shed basis. The Watershed Habitat Restoration Program is designed to accomplish the following objectives: remove rough fish species and restore desirable fish, waterfowl and wildlife populations, enhance native aquatic rooted vegetation, increase fish habitat and spawning areas, waterfowl nesting areas, improve waterfowl breeding and migratory success, restore streambanks, increase wildlife habitat and its natural prairie, increase and improve community use of restored natural resources and protect the watershed from invasive species.

These long term goals will interconnect and re-establish important flyway habitats within Minnesota. Restored habitat will improve the breeding and migratory habitat base for species and recovery of their populations. The goal is to establish waterfowl and fish populations, increase habitat for wetland dependent wildlife, and create the wildlife mecca that was recorded in the late 1800's.

Phase VI will contribute to these goals by:

- Acquire 40 acres of key targeted lands to re-establish native vegetation, improve nesting habitat and waterfowl food sources.
- Restore 35 acres of wetland basins to improve upland game and waterfowl nesting habitat.
- Enhance 266 lake acres with rotenone treatment to control rough fish and re-establish native aquatic vegetation.
- Restore 25 acres of streambank within the Shell Rock River Aquatic Management Area to improve wildlife habitat.

The program includes projects that are prioritized on the significance of the benefits to aquatic habitat, urgency of the work, availability of leverage funding, location of projects and agreements with relevant planning documents. The SRRWD has a proven track record with the LSOHC and implementing projects that protect, restore and enhance natural resources. This proposal uses a programmatic approach to achieve prioritized aquatic habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement of lakes, wetlands and streams across the Watershed to once again create the wildlife mecca. Finally, this program will preserve an outdoor legacy for Minnesotans to use and enjoy for generations.

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:

The SRRWD understands that when critical habitats are lost due to land use changes and other factors, restoring the habitat is imperative to the protection of species and their ecological processes. Important species are disappearing at an alarming rate and the SRRWD has the opportunity to protect wetland habitats and the species that call it home.

Using the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources tool for species in greatest conservation need by habitat, the SRRWD has identified species of importance for the oak savanna landscape. Those species include the Marsh Wren and Common Moorhen for birds, mussels such as Sheepnose and Round Pigtoe, and amphibians including the Blanding's Turtle.

The Common Moorhen is listed as special concern in the Oak Savanna habitat and can be attributed to the loss of well-vegetated ponds and wetlands. With projects proposed by Phase VI, wetland creation and vegetation enhancement can provide restored habitat for both the Common Moorhen and March Wren. Blanding's turtles are listed as being a threatened species and creating streambank restorations that include habitats like turtle hibernaculums and restoring wetland with marshy areas will provide habitat for this threatened species.

One of the fastest declining populations in Minnesota has been the loss of Minnesota's native mussels. The freshwater mussel is threatened by a multitude of sources including dams and stream channelization, wetland drainage, bank erosion, invasive mussels and water pollution. The District is focused on improving habitat and water quality conditions, as well as providing habitat with instream features will improve that quality of habitat for threatened Round Pigtoe, and endangered Sheepnose mussels.

Describe the science based planning and evaluation model used:

The SRRWD utilizes precision conservation modeling with monitoring to identify Property Management Zones (PMZs) on a sub-watershed basis. The PMZs are prioritized, evaluated conservation measures and project locations chosen to mitigate specific areas contributing to degradation of habitat which reduces populations of aquatic vegetation, fish, waterfowl and wildlife within the lake-shed.

Historically the Shell Rock River Watershed is a shallow lake system with diverse populations of fish, waterfowl and wildlife. With degraded habitat becoming a concern, and more areas listed as below biodiversity significance in the Freeborn County Biological Survey (MCBS), the District has ongoing efforts with identifying key PMZs to implement projects that expands habitat corridors and protects areas identified by the MCBS.

The lake reclamation projects for School Section, Halls, and Sugar lakes are adjacent to properties identified on the MCBS as being

below, moderate, and high biodiversity significance, respectively. The wetland restoration and land acquisition are also adjacent to sites identified on the MCBS. Projects such as these are important to expanding corridors and complexes and reaching the targeted 9 square mile parcels. Additional projects include the stream bank restoration project that is contained within a moderate biodiversity significant area which the District plans to further enhance. Implementing site specific habitat restorations projects, in line with areas identified in the MCBS, are progressively improving populations of native fish, waterfowl and wildlife habitat.

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

- H4 Restore and protect shallow lakes
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds

Which other plans are addressed in this program:

- Long Range Plan for Fisheries Management
- Managing Minnesota’s Shallow Lakes for Waterfowl and Wildlife

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program:

Prairie:

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

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 Habitat Restoration Program, Phase VI, builds and expands upon previous LSOHC funding including the Wedge Creek, White Lake and Fountain Lake Fish Barriers (2009-10); Shell Rock River Headwater’s Project (2011-12); Albert Lea Lake Dam and Fish Barrier (2013-14); Goose Creek Fish barrier (CPL Grant) (2013-14); Shell Rock River Headwaters Restoration, Phase II (CPL Grant) (2014-15); Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program, Phase IV (2015-16); and the Habitat Restoration Program, Phase V (2016-17). The LSOHC funded projects consolidates previous SRRWD projects including the Fish Barrier Program, Streambank Restoration Program, the ISTS Program, and the Wetland Restoration Program.

The District has a proven record of leveraging local funds into successful projects in a timely manner. The District will also leverage its experience to ensure optimum project design and implementation, resulting in rapid habitat restoration and enhancement benefits. In turn, implementation of these projects will provide long-term protection of the SRRWD’s shallow lakes, wetlands and streams. Projects that are implemented are focused on recovery of impaired resources on a watershed basis that provide measurable and lasting results.

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

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2012	Local TaxLevy - 25% Grant Match	180,000
2013	Local TaxLevy - 25% Grant Match	230,000
2014	Local TaxLevy- 25% Grant Match	804,750
2015	Local TaxLevy - 25% Grant Match	200,000

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

The Shell Rock River Watershed District is authorized by State Statue 103D and operates under a series of 10 year water management plans that are approved by the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR). The District recently updated its second generation Waterplan that was approved by BWSR in 2015. This second generation plan includes a top to bottom comprehensive list

detailing natural resource restoration, management, enhancement and protection strategies.

The SRRWD relies on multiple funding sources including a citizen driven local option sales tax, local levy, and multiple public and private funding sources including five previously LSOHC phased projects to assist in the Districts restoration efforts. The District has an aggressive monitoring protocol that generates yearly data used for extensive reporting. The habitat efforts that accrue from the Phase VI Restoration Program will be easily incorporated into this existing results-driven reporting framework. This reporting can be used to generate public interest and education of a watershed based restoration approach. The District has commitment and funding sources necessary to maintain existing and future natural resource enhancement projects.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2020	Local Option Sales Tax and LSOHC	Construction and Erosion Control Inspections	Erosion Control and Maintenance Inspections and Maintenance Implementations	Maintenance Inspections and Maintenance Implementations
2021	Local Option Sales Tax and LSOHC	Construction and Erosion Control Inspections	Erosion Control and Maintenance Inspections and Maintenance Implementations	Maintenance Inspections and Maintenance Implementations
2022	Local Option Sales Tax and LSOHC	Maintenance Inspections and Maintenance Implementations		Maintenance Inspections and Maintenance Implementations

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 local government approval be sought prior to acquisition - **Yes**

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

Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing - **Yes**

School Section, Halls and Sugar Lakes are currently open to hunting and fishing that comply with State Regulations. The Shell Rock River is also open to state fishing regulations. The wetland restorations and land acquisitions are currently not open to hunting and fishing.

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

Yes and will follow the State of Minnesota fishing and hunting laws

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

The SRRWD will own the fee title for the property.

Are there currently trails or roads on any of the acquisitions on the parcel list - **No**

Will new trails or roads be developed or improved as a result of the OHF acquisition - **No**

Will restoration and enhancement work follow best management practices including MS 84.973 Pollinator Habitat Program - **Yes**

Is the activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, subd 13(f), tribal lands, and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15 - **Yes (WMA, AMA, Public Waters)**

Accomplishment Timeline:

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Begin project planning, design, permitting work and acquisitions	July 2017
Begin projects during the 2018 construction season following completion of design, permits and contracting	2018 Construction Season to 2019
Complete all restoration and habitat improvement projects and finalize acquisitions	End of 2019 Construction Season
Vegetation enhancement on restoration projects	June 2020
Maintenance and monitoring of all restoration and habitat improvement projects	Ongoing

Date of Final Report Submission: 6/30/2021

Federal Funding:

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

Outcomes:

Programs in prairie region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced habitat for migratory and unique Minnesota species *will be measured by the increase of use days for migrating waterfowl and improved habitat acres for unique species. The protected, restored and enhanced shallow lakes, wetlands, and streambanks will provide habitat to wildlife and support healthy natural resource conditions for long term benefits. They will offer an oasis for migratory waterfowl by re-establishing and connecting MCBS corridors, and flyway habitats. Improved and permanently protected areas will provide a lasting habitat for Minnesota's unique species.*

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

The number of projects has been reduced to meet the allocation amount.

Total Amount of Request: \$ 1779000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$45,000	\$0		\$45,000
Contracts	\$863,800	\$0		\$863,800
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$360,000	\$0		\$360,000
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0		\$0
Professional Services	\$239,400	\$100,000	Local Option Sales Tax	\$339,400
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$5,000	\$0		\$5,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$265,800	\$0		\$265,800
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$1,779,000	\$100,000		\$1,879,000

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Manager	0.43	1.00	\$25,000	\$0		\$25,000
Program Assistant	0.30	1.00	\$20,000	\$0		\$20,000
Total	0.73	2.00	\$45,000	\$0		\$45,000

Amount of Request: \$1,779,000

Amount of Leverage: \$100,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 5.62%

DSS + Personnel: \$45,000

As a % of the total request: 2.53%

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

Yes, all of the work in the contract line is centered on restoration and enhancement projects.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

The SRRWD is an agency that has a Local Option Sales Tax in place that will be used to leverage funds.

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	35	0	0	25	60
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	40	40
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	266	266
Total	35	0	0	331	366

Table 2. Total Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$225,600	\$0	\$0	\$795,600	\$1,021,200
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$365,000	\$365,000
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$392,800	\$392,800
Total	\$225,600	\$0	\$0	\$1,553,400	\$1,779,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	60	0	60
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	40	0	40
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	266	0	266
Total	0	0	0	366	0	366

Table 4. Total Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,021,200	\$0	\$1,021,200
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$365,000	\$0	\$365,000
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$392,800	\$0	\$392,800
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,779,000	\$0	\$1,779,000

Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	\$6446	\$0	\$0	\$31824
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9125
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1477

Table 6. Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$17020	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9125	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1477	\$0

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

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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

Freeborn

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Headwaters Stream Bank Restoration	10221225	25	\$775,600	No
School Section Lake	10322236	266	\$327,800	No
Wedge Creek Wetland Restoration	10322215	35	\$225,600	No

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Freeborn

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Owens Property	10221230	40	\$400,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

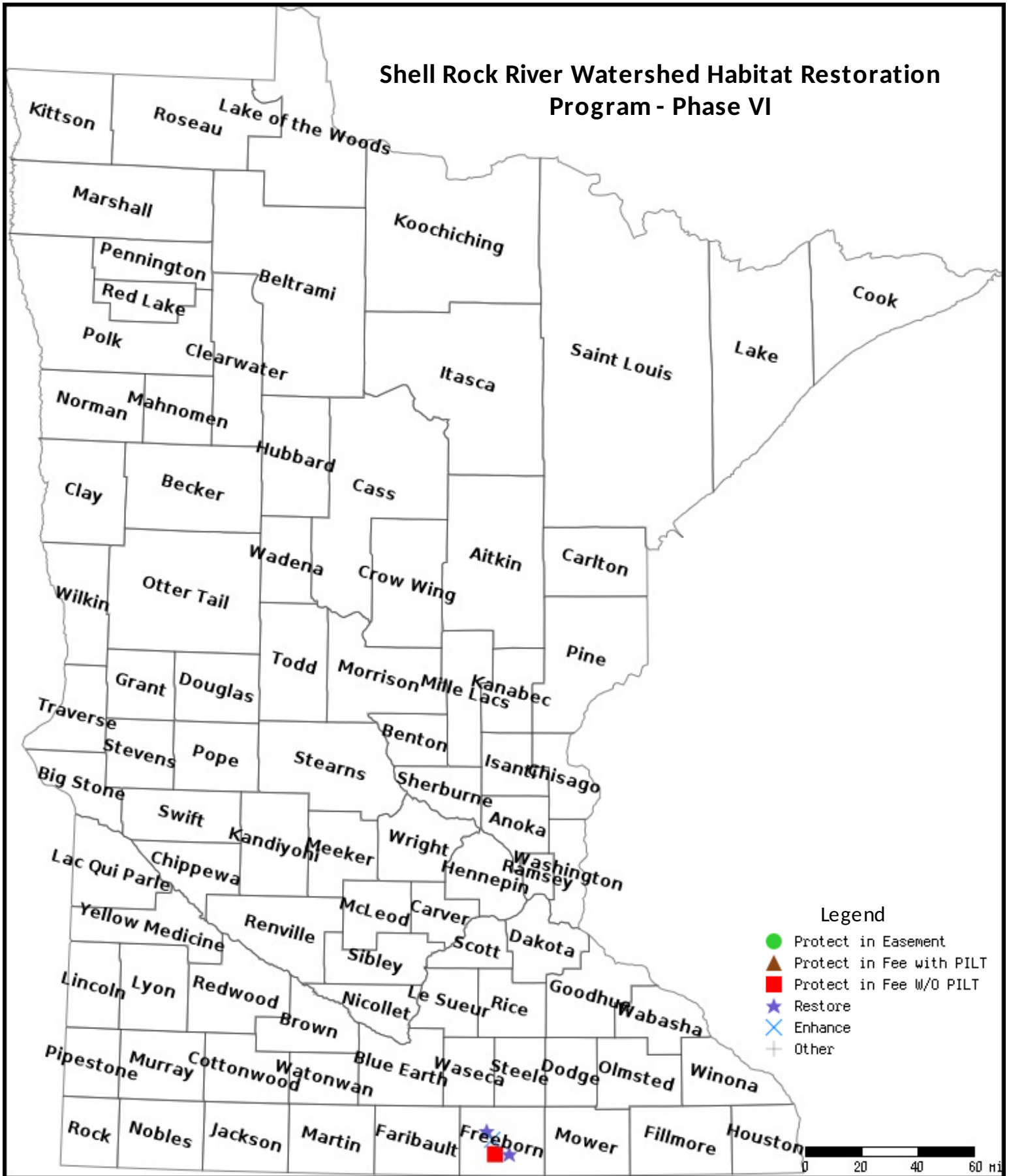
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map

Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program - Phase VI



Data Generated From Parcel List

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Comparison Report

Program Title: 2017 - Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program - Phase VI

Organization: Shell Rock River Watershed District

Manager: Andy Henschel

Budget

Requested Amount: \$4,122,400

Appropriated Amount: \$1,779,000

Percentage: 43.15%

Budget Item	Total Requested		Total Appropriated		Percentage of Request	
	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Appropriated Amount	Anticipated Leverage	Percentage of Request	Percentage of Leverage
Personnel	\$45,000	\$0	\$45,000	\$0	100.00%	-
Contracts	\$1,105,600	\$0	\$863,800	\$0	78.13%	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$2,125,300	\$0	\$360,000	\$0	16.94%	-
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Professional Services	\$491,300	\$200,000	\$239,400	\$100,000	48.73%	50.00%
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$15,000	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	33.33%	-
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$340,200	\$0	\$265,800	\$0	78.13%	-
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
Total	\$4,122,400	\$200,000	\$1,779,000	\$100,000	43.15%	50.00%

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

The number of projects has been reduced to meet the allocation amount.

Output

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	120	60	50.00%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	191	40	20.94%
Protect in Easement	0	0	-
Enhance	266	266	100.00%

Table 2. Total Funding by Resource Type

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	1,388,100	1,021,200	73.57%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	2,391,500	365,000	15.26%
Protect in Easement	0	0	-
Enhance	342,800	392,800	114.59%

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	120	60	50.00%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	191	40	20.94%
Protect in Easement	0	0	-
Enhance	266	266	100.00%

Table 4. Total Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	1,388,100	1,021,200	73.57%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	-
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	2,391,500	365,000	15.26%
Protect in Easement	0	0	-
Enhance	342,800	392,800	114.59%