

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2018 / ML 2017 Request for Funding



Date: June 21, 2016

Program or Project Title: Southeast Minnesota Protection and Restoration - Phase V (FA04)

Funds Requested: \$8,699,700

Manager's Name: Richard Biske
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County Locations: Fillmore, Goodhue, Houston, Wabasha, and Winona.

Regions in which work will take place:

- Southeast Forest

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement
- Restore
- Enhance
- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Forest
- Prairie
- Habitat

Abstract:

This project will protect approximately 2,373 acres and restore and enhance approximately 631 acres of declining habitat for species of greatest conservation need in strategically targeted areas of biodiversity significance in the Blufflands resulting in increased public access and habitat.

Design and scope of work:

Investment in habitat protection and restoration in the Blufflands with use of Outdoor Heritage Funds in partnership with The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Minnesota Land Trust (MLT) and The Trust for Public Land (TPL) would expand and connect larger contiguous blocks of protected lands, allowing land managers to restore and maintain native habitats at a scale difficult to accomplish with a fragmented ownership. Benefits of this program include the increased effectiveness of frequent prescribed fire necessary to reclaim "goat prairies", oak savanna and regenerate oak hardwood forests at a larger scale. This proposal will enhance prior conservation investments and ensure that the legacy of the Blufflands is preserved for future generations.

Within the program area there are 86 different native plant community types mapped by the Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS), covering nearly 149,670 acres. There are 183 species of state listed rare plants and animals, many of which are concentrated on 749 sites of biodiversity significance. The area is very popular for turkey and deer hunting with growing potential for pheasant and grouse. Hiking, biking and fishing draw visitors from throughout the Midwest to enjoy the scenic views and support the local economy. Despite

this high demand for outdoor recreation only 5% of the region is open to the public. Development pressure continues to increase from nearby Rochester and La Crosse resulting in bluff top development and forest fragmentation along with cropland expansion. Since 2008, approximately 7% of the grasslands in the focus area of this program have been converted to cropland threatening the coldwater trout streams that make the region unique.

Fee Acquisition:

The Nature Conservancy and The Trust for Public Land will coordinate with MN DNR on all potential fee-title acquisitions. TNC and TPL will assist the participating DNR Divisions by conducting all or some of the following activities: initial site reviews, negotiations with sellers, appraisals, environmental reviews and acquisition of fee title. TNC and TPL will transfer lands to the DNR except when TNC ownership is appropriate.

Fee Acquisition of approximately 614 acres of forest and 559 acres of prairie along 1 mile of coldwater trout streams.

Conservation Easements:

Minnesota Land Trust will acquire approximately 1,200 acres of conservation easements and develop restoration and management plans for eased acres. MLT will use a competitive bidding and ranking system to prioritize the best projects and secure them at the lowest cost to the State.

Restoration and Enhancement:

Ecological restoration enhancement management plans will be developed in coordination with DNR Forestry, Fisheries and Wildlife and Ecological and Water Resources.

Enhancement of approximately 143 acres of bluff prairie and 227 acres of forest.

Restoration of approximately 117 acres of prairie and 58 acres of forest and 26 acres of stream habitat.

Results to date from previous appropriations:

Fee Acquisition: Closed and transferred 1,605 acres to WMA, 151 scheduled to close to State Forest

Conservation Easement: 979 acres, 2.7 miles of stream, 561 acres pending

Enhanced: 142 acres of bluff prairie

Restored: 70 acres of prairie

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

- H3 Improve connectivity and access to recreation
- LU8 Protect large blocks of forest land

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

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

Describe how your program will advance the indicators identified in the plans selected:

Our program targets protection and enhancement projects that expand existing conservation lands onto key habitats identified in both Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare and Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework. It will protect through acquisition areas of goat prairie, oak savanna and deciduous forest, and stream riparian habitat that connects to existing protected land within critical complexes identified by MBS to reduce fragmentation and improve connectedness. It will use prescribed fire to maintain oak savannas and improve goat prairies threatened by cedar encroachment, maintaining habitat types identified as a priority in both plans.

Restoration projects on acquired tracts will restore native prairie, a key habitat identified in Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare. Riparian forest restorations will benefit aquatic habitat in trout streams while increasing forest habitat that has experienced decline.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Southeast Forest:

- Protect forest habitat through acquisition in fee or easement to prevent parcelization and fragmentation and to provide the ability to access and manage landlocked public properties

Describe how your program will produce and demonstrate a significant and permanent conservation legacy and/or outcomes for fish, game, and wildlife as indicated in the LSOHC priorities:

Southeast Minnesota is the biodiversity hotspot of Minnesota. The Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework notes that of the 40% habitat remaining only 6% is permanently protected. In our program's focus area, less than 5% of the region is accessible to the public. Our program has identified strategic areas where acquisition of tracts will expand existing conservation assets. This increases public

access to natural areas, while also preventing fragmentation of our most biologically diverse habitat complexes. Expanding these state land assets also allows broader scale management, letting area specialists manage habitat complexes, not just habitat patches. In doing so, we not only protect, enhance, and restore goat prairies, cold-water streams, and forest-based habitat that has experienced decline, but protect those key habitat types within a functioning ecological landscape. This both preserves the critical biodiversity of the region and maintains habitat for the game and fish species that bring tourists to the region and make up an essential part of its identity.

Describe how the proposal uses science-based targeting that leverages or expands corridors and complexes, reduces fragmentation or protects areas identified in the MN County Biological Survey:

The program prioritizes protection, restoration and enhancement projects within Conservation Opportunity Areas identified by a diverse group of local resource managers. Conservation Opportunity Areas were identified based on the most viable large units identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey containing existing conservation lands that can be expanded and connected to other complexes while also protecting and improving stream habitat. We continue to procure protection projects within the highest priority complexes that are within the Wildlife Action Network and improve habitat conditions within these priority areas at a large functioning scale not possible with individual projects.

How does the proposal address habitats that have significant value for wildlife species of greatest conservation need, and/or threatened or endangered species, and list targeted species:

Of the completed projects 70% of the acres are within an identified Wildlife Action Network corridor and over half the the acres protected are medium or high priority. Acquisition projects have protected habitat necessary for 39 documented occurrences of Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Projects in this proposal will continue to support SGCN and targeted species by working within complexes identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey and include a mix of mesic hardwood forests, large fire dependent communities including oak/hickory woodlands, oak forests, savannas with bluff and ridgetop prairie. These complexes and the coldwaters streams they support are habitat for a variety of species of greatest conservation need, including the state threatened timber rattlesnake, other snakes and songbirds. One recent project protected 10% of the watershed home to heritage brook trout, a rare native strain of native trout nearly extirpated from the state.

Identify indicator species and associated quantities this habitat will typically support:

White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) use a wide variety of forested habitats, are found throughout Minnesota, and are an important game species in the state. Deer have also been suggested as potential ecological indicators for forest systems . In the 33 forested deer permit areas for which deer densities are estimated, covering most of the LSOHC Northern Forest section, the six-year average (2010-2015) for pre-fawn deer densities across all deer permit areas is 13 deer per square mile of land (excluding water) . This translates to 0.02 deer (pre-fawning) per acre of forest land habitat or roughly 1 deer (pre-fawning) for every 50 acres of land. On average, densities within the Forest/Prairie Transition, Metropolitan Area, and Southeast Forest LSOHC planning sections will be higher than those in the Northern Forest. Note that pre-fawn estimates provide an indication of deer numbers when they are at their seasonal low (spring).

Outcomes:

Programs in southeast forest region:

- Large corridors and complexes of biologically diverse wildlife habitat typical of the unglaciated region are restored and protected *We will track the acres of priority parcels protected within the Conservation Opportunity Areas identified in regional planning. Success within each Conservation Opportunity Area will be determined based on the percentage of area protected restored and/or enhanced.*

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

Acquisition projects will be adjacent or within close proximity to existing protected lands, including state-owned lands and lands under conservation easement. This will allow for the expansion of maintenance and restoration activities that are currently taking place on those protected lands and adjacent private lands. Habitats cleared of invasive species will be maintained with prescribed fire.

Protection and restoration projects will improve future prescribed fire and maintenance activities through economies of scale. The tracts protected and enhanced as part of this proposal also meet the prioritization for the State Wildlife Action Plan and the MN DNR has been successful in securing federal habitat enhancement funding for Southeast Minnesota. Each project is within a Conservation Opportunity Area that receives a higher level of coordination and resource priority by many partners for maintaining and enhancing protected habitats. Tracts acquired will be transferred to the state for ongoing management.

MLT - The land protected through conservation easements will be sustained through the state-of-the art easement stewardship standards and practices. MLT is a nationally-accredited and insured land trust with a successful easement stewardship program that includes annual property monitoring and defending the easements as necessary.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Every 4 to 6 years	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Prescribed Fire		
Every 4 to 6 years	DNR Game and Fish Fund	Prescribed Fire		
2020 and perpetually	MLT Easement Stewardship and Enforcement Fund	Annual Monitoring in perpetuity		

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

Protection projects involve large tracts threatened by fragmentation and development; forests are subdivided for rural residential and recreation property and upland and floodplain forests are developed for cropland. Enhancement of bluff prairie and oak savanna are threatened by lack of fire that will continue to degrade without ecological management. Access to public recreation land for hunting and fishing is in high demand within this region with more large tracts of habitat being purchased for private hunting and lease. This program makes high quality habitat available for long-term enhancement and enjoyment for the public for multiple low impact recreational uses.

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

We plan to leverage US Fish and Wildlife Service State Wildlife Grant funds to perform oak savanna and prairie restoration on lands within the same priority complexes of this program.
MLT - The Land Trust encourages landowners to fully or partially donate the value of conservation easements as part of its landowner bid protocol. The leverage portion of the easement acquisition line item is a conservative estimate of value we expect to see donated to the Land Trust.

Relationship to other funds:

- Not Listed

Describe the relationship of the funds:

Not Listed

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

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2013	Private The Nature Conservancy	\$50,112
2014	Private The Nature Conservancy	\$2,125,000
2015	Private The Nature Conservancy	\$3,282

Activity Details

Requirements:

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**

Local governments will be informed of the project and project managers made available for questions.

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

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

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, SNA, AMA, Private Land, County/Municipal, State Forests)**

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 2018**

Land Use:

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

Explain

Short-term use of agricultural crops is an accepted best practice for preparing a site for prairie restoration. For example, short-term use of soybeans could be used for restorations in order to control weed seedbeds prior to prairie planting. In some cases this necessitates the use of GMO treated products to facilitate herbicide use in order to control weeds present in the seedbank. MLT - The purpose of the Minnesota Land Trust's conservation easements is to protect existing high quality natural habitat and to preserve opportunities for future restoration. As such, we restrict any agricultural lands and use on the properties. In cases in which there are agricultural lands associated with the larger property, we will either carve the agricultural area out of the conservation easement, or in some limited cases, we may include a small percentage of agricultural lands if it is not feasible to carve those areas out. In such cases, however, we will not use OHF funds to pay the landowners for that portion of the conservation easement.

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

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

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

NA

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

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

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

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Acquisition of fee land	June 30, 2021
Close on conservation easements	June 30, 2021
Floodplain and stream corridor restoration	October 15, 2022
Bluff prairie and oak savanna restoration on newly acquired tracts	June 30, 2022

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$8,699,700

Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$613,500	\$44,100	Private	\$657,600
Contracts	\$1,000,500	\$0		\$1,000,500
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$4,693,600	\$0		\$4,693,600
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$1,200,000	\$400,000	Private	\$1,600,000
Easement Stewardship	\$240,000	\$0		\$240,000
Travel	\$34,500	\$0		\$34,500
Professional Services	\$483,000	\$0		\$483,000
Direct Support Services	\$253,600	\$253,600	TNC - Private,Private,Private	\$507,200
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$50,000	\$0		\$50,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$61,000	\$0		\$61,000
DNR IDP	\$70,000	\$0		\$70,000
Total	\$8,699,700	\$697,700		\$9,397,400

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # o f years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Protection and Legal Staff	0.30	3.00	\$91,800	\$44,100	Private	\$135,900
Project Manager	0.50	3.00	\$122,300	\$0		\$122,300
Grant Administration	0.12	3.00	\$32,000	\$0		\$32,000
Protection Staff	0.32	3.00	\$83,900	\$0		\$83,900
Conservation Staff	1.05	3.00	\$283,500	\$0		\$283,500
Total	2.29	15.00	\$613,500	\$44,100		\$657,600

Budget and Cash Leverage by Partnership

Budget Name	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	Trust for Public Land	\$91,800	\$44,100	Private	\$135,900
Contracts	Trust for Public Land	\$70,000	\$0		\$70,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	Trust for Public Land	\$2,460,000	\$0		\$2,460,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	Trust for Public Land	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	Trust for Public Land	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	Trust for Public Land	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	Trust for Public Land	\$2,000	\$0		\$2,000
Professional Services	Trust for Public Land	\$90,000	\$0		\$90,000
Direct Support Services	Trust for Public Land	\$48,400	\$48,400	Private	\$96,800
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	Trust for Public Land	\$20,000	\$0		\$20,000
Capital Equipment	Trust for Public Land	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	Trust for Public Land	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	Trust for Public Land	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR IDP	Trust for Public Land	\$40,000	\$0		\$40,000
Total		\$2,822,200	\$92,500		\$2,914,700

Personnel - Trust for Public Land

Position	FTE	Over # o f years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Protection and Legal Staff	0.30	3.00	\$91,800	\$44,100	Private	\$135,900
Total	0.30	3.00	\$91,800	\$44,100		\$135,900

BudgetName	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	The Nature Conservancy	\$238,200	\$0		\$238,200
Contracts	The Nature Conservancy	\$616,000	\$0		\$616,000

Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	The Nature Conservancy	\$2,233,600	\$0	\$2,233,600
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	The Nature Conservancy	\$0	\$0	\$0
Easement Acquisition	The Nature Conservancy	\$0	\$0	\$0
Easement Stewardship	The Nature Conservancy	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	The Nature Conservancy	\$7,500	\$0	\$7,500
Professional Services	The Nature Conservancy	\$200,000	\$0	\$200,000
Direct Support Services	The Nature Conservancy	\$126,200	\$126,200	TNC - Private \$252,400
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	The Nature Conservancy	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000
Capital Equipment	The Nature Conservancy	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	The Nature Conservancy	\$0	\$0	\$0
Supplies/Materials	The Nature Conservancy	\$60,000	\$0	\$60,000
DNR IDP	The Nature Conservancy	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000
Total	-	\$3,541,500	\$126,200	- \$3,667,700

Personnel - The Nature Conservancy

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Project Manager	0.50	3.00	\$122,300	\$0		\$122,300
Grant Administration	0.12	3.00	\$32,000	\$0		\$32,000
Protection Staff	0.32	3.00	\$83,900	\$0		\$83,900
Total	0.94	9.00	\$238,200	\$0		\$238,200

Budget Name	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	Minnesota Land Trust	\$283,500	\$0		\$283,500
Contracts	Minnesota Land Trust	\$314,500	\$0		\$314,500
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	Minnesota Land Trust	\$1,200,000	\$400,000	Private	\$1,600,000
Easement Stewardship	Minnesota Land Trust	\$240,000	\$0		\$240,000
Travel	Minnesota Land Trust	\$25,000	\$0		\$25,000
Professional Services	Minnesota Land Trust	\$193,000	\$0		\$193,000
Direct Support Services	Minnesota Land Trust	\$79,000	\$79,000	Private	\$158,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	Minnesota Land Trust	\$1,000	\$0		\$1,000
DNR IDP	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	-	\$2,336,000	\$479,000	-	\$2,815,000

Personnel - Minnesota Land Trust

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Conservation Staff	1.05	3.00	\$283,500	\$0		\$283,500
Total	1.05	3.00	\$283,500	\$0		\$283,500

Amount of Request: \$8,699,700
Amount of Leverage: \$697,700
Leverage as a percent of the Request: 8.02%
DSS + Personnel: \$867,100
As a % of the total request: 9.97%
Easement Stewardship: \$240,000
As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 20.00%

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

TNC: DSS is based The Nature Conservancy's Federally Negotiated rate as proposed and subsequently approved by the US Dept. of

Interior. The proportion requested from the grant represents 50%, with the other 50% contributed as leverage.
MLT: For each program, MLT determines the direct costs of outreach, IT, printing, grant support and other allowable direct organizational costs associated with delivering completed conservation easements.
TPL: TPL requests grant funds for half their federally-approved indirect rate, and will leverage the other half.

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

Yes. The entire contract line item is dedicated to enhancement and restoration work. Typical contractors include private vendors and Conservation Corps of MN/IA.

Does the amount in the travel line include equipment/vehicle rental? - Yes

Explain the amount in the travel line outside of traditional travel costs of mileage, food, and lodging:

Vehicle rental is also included.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

TNC: Leverage funds are privately sourced to cover half of direct support costs.
The Trust for Public Land has committed to contributing staff fringe costs and one half of its DSS as leverage for this proposal.
The Land Trust encourages landowners to participate in this fashion by including easement cost and donative value as specific scoring elements within prioritization criteria set forth by this program. Highest-ranked projects will have both strong ecological scores and significant donated value from the landowner.

Does this proposal have the ability to be scalable? - Yes

Tell us how this project would be scaled and how administrative costs are affected, describe the "economy of scale" and how outputs would change with reduced funding, if applicable:

With additional funds the project would acquire additional tracts of varying size depending on funds available. If funding were reduced one or more protection projects would not be completed and/or less habitat enhancement or restoration would take place on protected lands.

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	117	58	26	201
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	559	614	0	1,173
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	250	950	0	1,200
Enhance	0	143	227	0	370
Total	0	1,069	1,849	26	2,944

Table 1b. How many of these Prairie acres are Native Prairie?

Type	Native Prairie
Restore	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Easement	0
Enhance	20
Total	20

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$300,000	\$333,000	\$350,000	\$983,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$1,981,300	\$3,325,000	\$0	\$5,306,300
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$395,200	\$1,571,800	\$0	\$1,967,000
Enhance	\$0	\$278,800	\$164,600	\$0	\$443,400
Total	\$0	\$2,955,300	\$5,394,400	\$350,000	\$8,699,700

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	201	0	0	201
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	1,173	0	0	1,173
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	1,200	0	0	1,200
Enhance	0	0	370	0	0	370
Total	0	0	2,944	0	0	2,944

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$983,000	\$0	\$0	\$983,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$5,306,300	\$0	\$0	\$5,306,300
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$1,967,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,967,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$443,400	\$0	\$0	\$443,400
Total	\$0	\$0	\$8,699,700	\$0	\$0	\$8,699,700

Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	\$0	\$2,564	\$5,741	\$13,462
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$3,544	\$5,415	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$1,581	\$1,655	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$1,950	\$725	\$0

Table 6. Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$4,891	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$4,524	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$1,639	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$1,198	\$0	\$0

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

5

I have read and understand Section 15 of the Constitution of the State of Minnesota, Minnesota Statute 97A.056, and the Call for Funding Request. I certify I am authorized to submit this proposal and to the best of my knowledge the information provided is true and accurate.

Parcel List

Explain the process used to select, rank and prioritize the parcels:

State-owned properties represent significant blocks of ownership in Conservation Opportunity Areas(COA) in Southeast Minnesota as identified by Landscape Stewardship Plans and present opportunities for targeted stewardship. Where landscape stewardship plans and identified Conservation Opportunity Areas do not exist, core areas are identified by the Areas of Significant Native Biodiversity Significance. State-owned lands containing mapped native plant communities were selected as a starting point. Additional management acreage and contiguous land cover were increased by selecting adjoining parcels of private land that met certain criteria. This initial private parcel selection was made using the following criteria, with each parcel satisfying all points

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

Fillmore

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Choice 1	10208211	26	\$375,000	Yes

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Fillmore

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
7 Springs	10212217	120	\$585,000	No	Full	Full
Choice 2	11208212	40	\$160,000	No	Full	Full
Choice 3	10307231	379	\$1,800,000	No	Full	Full

Goodhue

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Red Wing (Ghie)	11315229	70	\$0	No	No	No

Houston

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Crooked Creek (Novotny)	10204221	250	\$280,000	No	No	No
Wet Bark	10204221	260	\$980,000	No	Full	Full
Yucatan	10307224	160	\$670,000	No	Full	Full
Yucatan 2	10307231	130	\$500,000	No	Full	Full

Wabasha

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
East Snake Creek (Gates)	10910226	204	\$260,000	No	No	No
Lower Zumbro	11010218	120	\$742,000	No	Full	Full

Winona

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Homers Ridge (Bach)	10607203	200	\$0	No	No	No
Whitewater	10710206	90	\$500,000	No	Full	Full
Whitewater	10710208	0	\$425,000	No	Full	full
Wisoy Valley (Mueller 2)	10507233	223	\$312,200	No	No	No

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

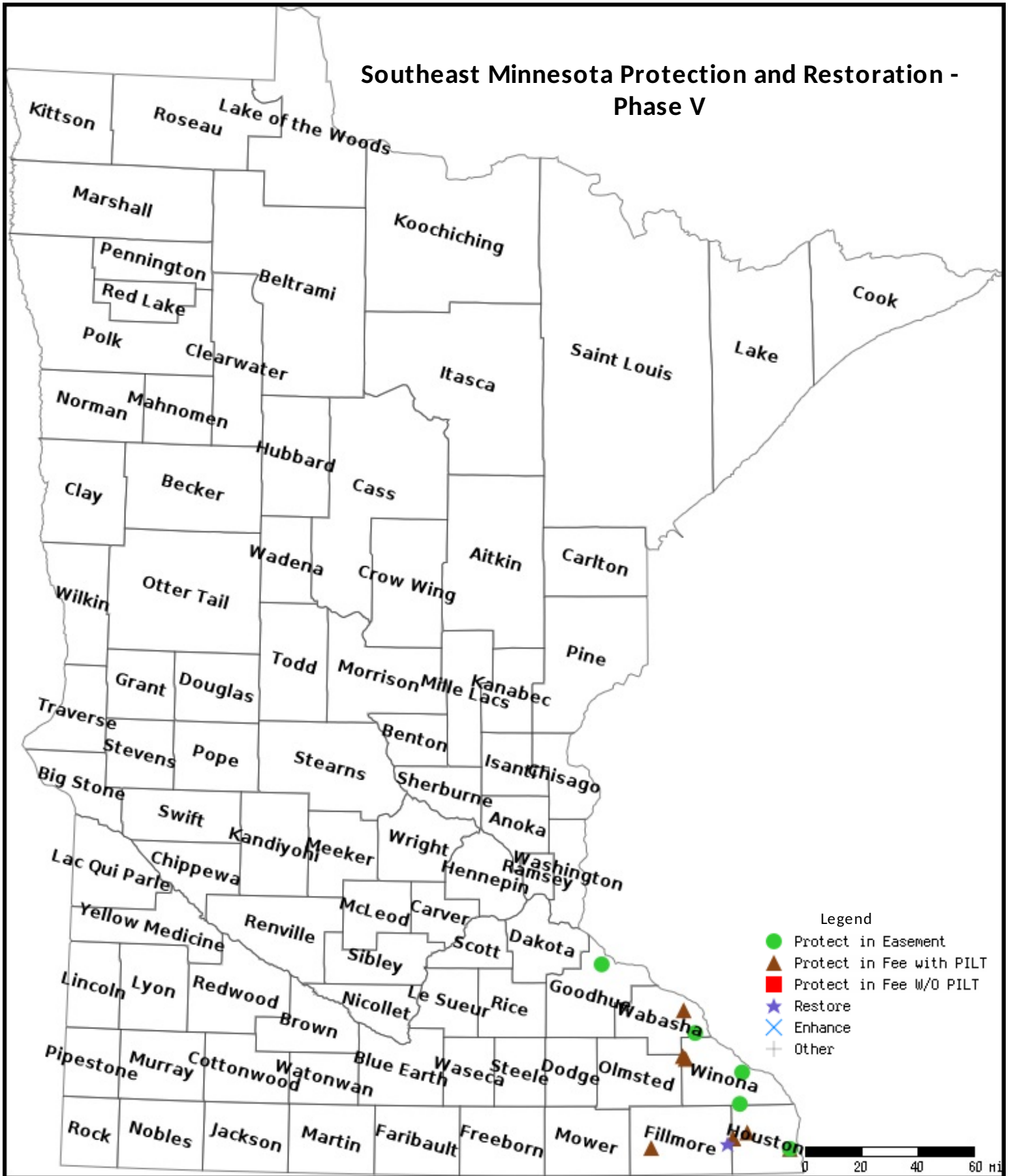
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map

Southeast Minnesota Protection and Restoration - Phase V



Data Generated From Parcel List

Southeast MN Protection & Restoration Phase 5

Summary of Proposed Activity:

Phase 5 covers the entire Blufflands Region.

- 1,173 acres of state land acquisition
- 631 acres of restoration & enhancement, including prairie, savanna, forest
- 1,200 acres of perpetual conservation easements

All projects take place in priority areas and support on-going activities in the region.

Prioritizing Projects

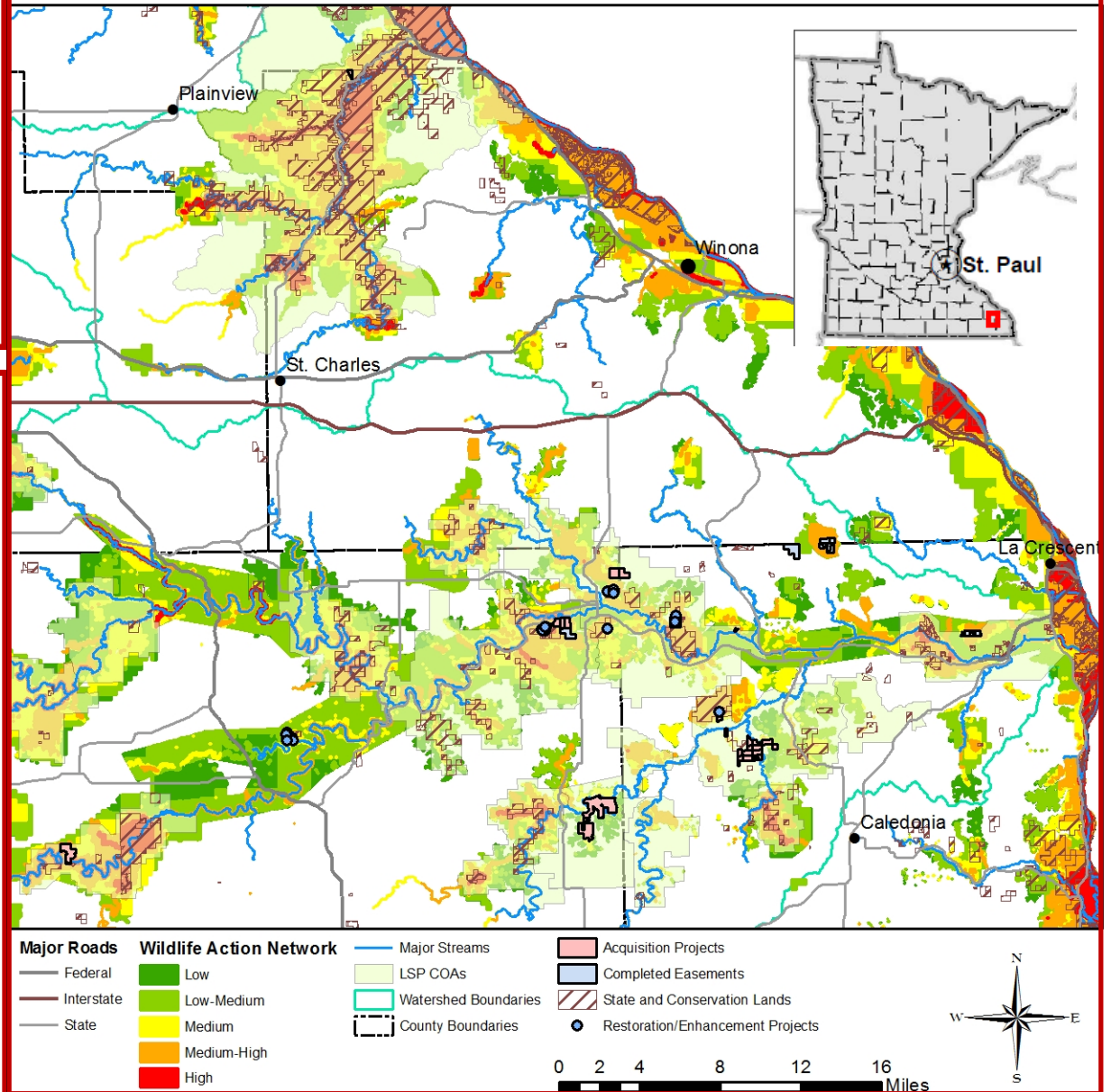
Protection

All fee title land acquisition projects are coordinated with DNR Forestry, SNA and Wildlife. Priority areas have been selected around existing state land assets and long-term management goals. For both conservation easements and fee title acquisitions, projects that include High or Outstanding Biodiversity Significance and/or are adjacent to existing conservation lands are given highest priority along with those that limit fragmentation and improve large landscape management for species of greatest Conservation Need.

Restoration

Restoration projects are prioritized with consideration of the landscape context and long-term viability. Because the Blufflands are dominated by fire dependent communities, projects are selected considering the potential to implement prescribed fire at a large scale, thus maintaining the viability of natural habitats and minimizing long-term management costs.

Protection, Restoration, and Enhancement Projects in Southeast Minnesota



Status of Phase 1 - 3

Starting July, 2013

Goals: Acquisition of 2,451 acres

750 acres easements

306 acres of Restoration & Enhancement

Accomplishments

Fee Acquisition: Closed or pending on 1,798 acres (73% of goal) 6.7 miles of trout stream (150%)

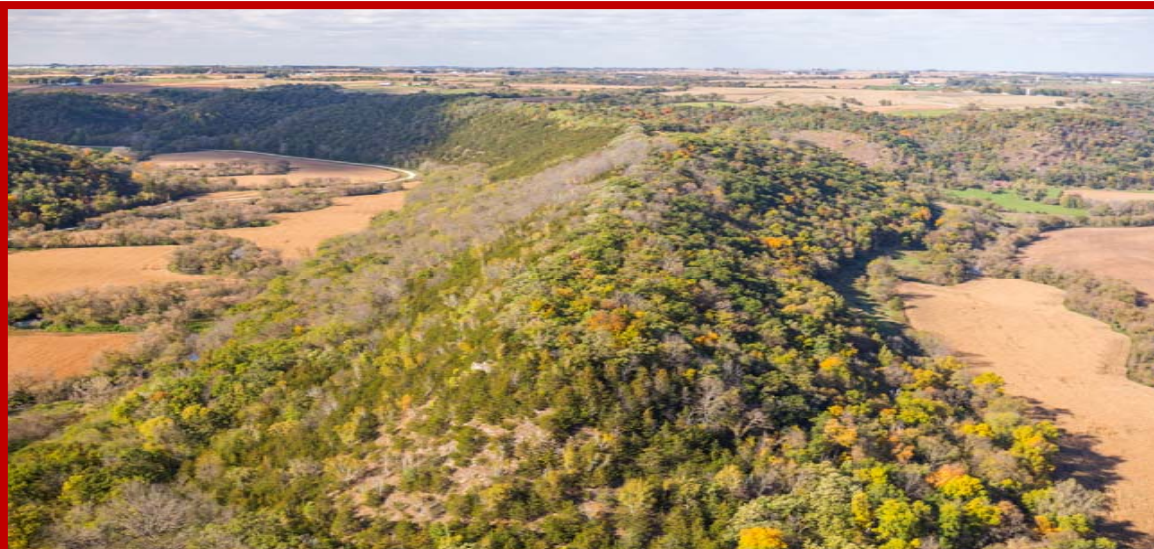
Restore/Enhance completed on 212 acres (69% of goal)

Completed 979 acres of conservation easements (130%)

Raised **\$2.1+M** of private funds to complete acquisition, leveraged **\$200k** of Federal funds for enhancement



Phase 2/ML 14 Project - 26 acres of goat prairie enhancement on steep slopes completed in Winter 2016 and 10 acres of lowland hardwood seeding completed in fall 2015 on 274 acre WMA acquisition from Phase II.



Phase II/FY 14 Project - 1,054 acre acquisition along 5+ miles of trout stream. Hardwood forest, oak savanna, bluff prairie, ridgetop grassland and bottomland forest.

Partners:

The Nature Conservancy and The Trust for Public Land will complete all fee-simple land acquisitions in conjunction with the Minnesota DNR. Additionally, TNC will also coordinate the habitat restorations and enhancement with DNR divisions.

The Minnesota Land Trust will complete the permanent conservation easement transactions in partnership with private landowners.



Southeast Minnesota Protection and Restoration

Parcels are reviewed by both a Division of MN DNR and Conservancy to ensure that they meet the priorities of both partners.

Criteria for identification of key conservation parcels.

State-owned properties represent significant blocks of ownership in Conservation Opportunity Areas (COA) in Southeast Minnesota as identified by Landscape Stewardship Plans and present opportunities for targeted stewardship. Where landscape stewardship plans and identified Conservation Opportunity Areas do not exist, core areas are identified by the Areas of Significant Native Biodiversity Significance. State-owned lands containing mapped native plant communities were selected as a starting point. Additional management acreage and contiguous land cover were increased by selecting adjoining parcels of private land that met certain criteria. This initial private parcel selection was made using the following criteria, with each parcel satisfying all points (Figure 1):

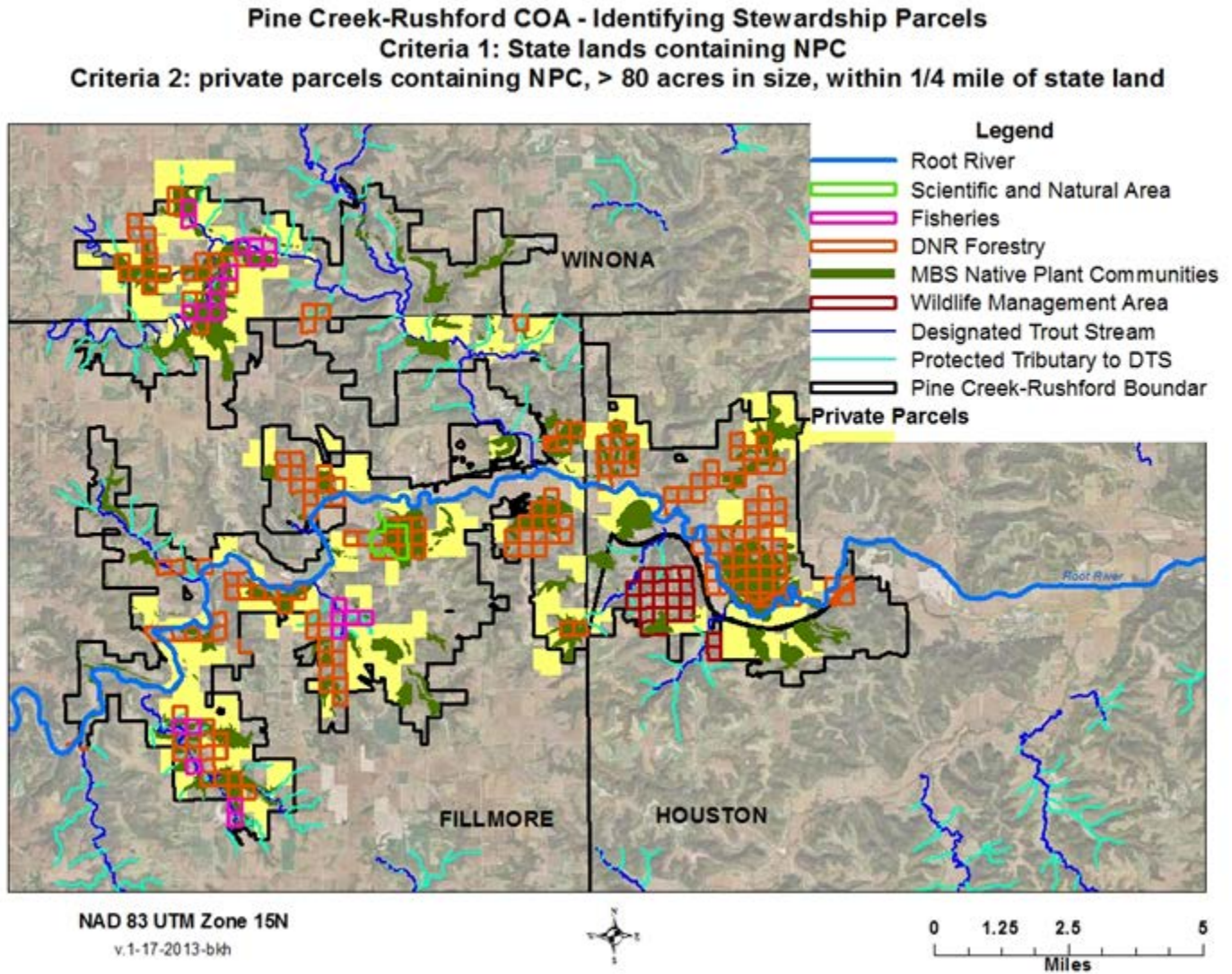
- Parcel is within Conservation Opportunity Area or Area of Significant Native Biodiversity (allows for large landscape management and management efficiencies, i.e. large scale Rx fire)
- Parcel contains an Minnesota Biological Survey mapped native plant community
- Parcel was equal to or greater than 80 acres in size
- Parcel property line began within ¼ mile of a state-owned parcel
- A Conservation Partner is willing to accept the property/meets partner objectives (SNA, WMA, Forestry)
- Willing seller

Some land parcels were selected for stewardship activities, while others were chosen for potential acquisition or conservation easement purchase.

Where multiple units of conservation lands exist within a COA , habitat corridors may need to be established to support the larger landscape and identified core areas. Parcels within an identified corridor should meet the following criteria:

- Between 2 conservation land units
- Within ½ mile of existing conservation land unit
- Contain more than 50% habitat

Figure 1. Example of parcels identified for stewardship activities in Pine Creek/Rushford Conservation Opportunity Area. The selected private parcels meet criteria and are considered for acquisition, easement, or management.





Southeastern Minnesota Blufflands Program

-Minnesota Land Trust Easement Criteria-

The Southeastern Minnesota Blufflands program protects, restores, and enhances Minnesota's rich and diverse array of wildlife habitat within the Blufflands ecological subsection. Funded through the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund, the Minnesota Land Trust (Land Trust) employs perpetual conservation easements in collaboration with private landowners to protect important wildlife habitat (forest, wetlands, and grasslands) and their associated wildlife.

Through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process, landowners will submit an application to the Land Trust for protection of their land via conservation easement. At the close of the open submission period, submitted projects are initially scored and ranked relative to one another on two primary factors: 1) ecological significance, and 2) cost.

Ecological Significance is determined through an analysis of three subfactors:

- Quantity – the size of habitat and/or length of shoreline associated with a parcel, and abundance of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and Threatened & Endangered (T&E) species;
- Quality – the condition of the associated habitat and populations of SGCN and T&E species;
- Landscape Context – the extent and condition of natural habitat surrounding the parcel, and the degree to which adjacent property has been protected.

Cost is determined in large part by the bid amount proposed by the landowner, and ultimately substantiated through an appraisal process. Landowners are given additional credit through whole or partial donation of appraised easement value.

These two factors inform an initial score that is used to initially rank a proposed parcel relative to others. Subsequent discussions with each landowner participating in the program allow the Land Trust to gain a better sense of the landowner's desires for and expected uses of the property, and to ground-truth the parcel's ecological condition. These post-proposal evaluations may result in proposed parcels moving up or down on the prioritization list. This additional evaluation allows for the Land Trust to most effectively target priority lands for protection.

The Land Trust has set certain minimum criteria for inclusion into the program:

- Lands must be located within the Blufflands Program area.
- Lands must have a maximum of 20% of total proposed easement area in agricultural use; areas targeted for restoration are not included in this acre cap.
- Lands must contain high quality examples of native plant communities (forests, prairies, woodlands, etc.), trout streams, shoreland along rivers and streams, or rare and threatened species.
- Lands cannot be enrolled previously in permanent protection programs (e.g., RIM).

Additional requirements are stipulated within the body of each conservation easement, as pertinent to the special characteristics of the land and the particular situation of the landowner.

The Land Trust's ranking and selection system is informed by ranking and prioritization modules used by the Minnesota DNR, The Nature Conservancy, and nationally by the Natural Heritage Data Center Network. Utilizing a ranking system that prioritizes projects based upon ecological value and cost enables the Land Trust to secure conservation easements that effectively and efficiently protect Minnesota's wildlife resources.

Initial Ranking of Applications									
<i>Existing Ecological Significance</i>	<i>Units Affected</i>	<i>Scoring framework for prioritizing conservation value among applicants through an RFP process.</i>							
		1. Size/Abundance of Habitat Protected by Easement (Maximum 100 pts)							
	0	Total acres of native plant community or extent of target feature within proposed easement							
	0	Feet of shoreline to be protected by an easement							
		2. Diversity/Quality of Natural Resources to be Protected by the Easement (Maximum 100 pts)							
	0	Average quality of existing native plant communities							
	0	Number and quality of rare species on parcel; rarity of the species							
		3. Landscape Context (Maximum 100 pts)							
	0	Location of parcel relative to biodiversity "hotspots" or priority areas delineated in conservation plans							
	0	Location of parcel relative to other conservation lands							
	0	Location of parcel relative to existing moderate-high quality native plant communities; degree of habitat fragmentation							
		Total Score (Maximum 300 pts)							
<i>Cost</i>	<i>Score</i>								
		4. Cost							
	0	Bid amount (\$)/acre							
	0	Estimated Donative value (\$)/acre							
Revised Scoring of Applications Following Discussion with Landowner									
<i>Potential Impacts by Landowner</i>	<i>Score Adjustments (+/-)</i>	<i>Enhancement or downgrade of existing biodiversity significance scores based on easement rights retained by the landowner, easement actions required of the landowner, and their potential impact on existing biodiversity.</i>							
		5. Size/Abundance of Habitat Protected by Easement							
	0	Total acres of native plant community or extent of target feature impacted by retained rights or proposed actions if exercised.							
		6. Diversity/Quality of Natural Resources to be Protected by the Easement							
	0	Estimated potential impact on diversity/quality of native plant community or extent of target feature by retained rights or proposed actions if exercised.							
	0	Estimated potential impact on number/quality of rare species resulting from retained rights or proposed actions if exercised.							
0	REVISED BIODIVERSITY SIGNIFICANCE SCORE								

The Trust for Public Land
Direct Support Services Methodology

In order to achieve the critical mission outcomes for programs supported by the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) and Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF), The Trust for Public Land (TPL) incurs cost which although direct and necessary, are difficult to identify at the program level. For example, information services and technology enable the Trust to communicate with funders and partners, account for time and expense, ensure appropriate internal controls and safeguard assets and confidential information; however, it would be both inefficient and cost ineffective to attempt to track these services by specific activity.

To enable TPL to continue to maintain these vital functions supporting the mission outcomes of its partners, TPL has adopted a methodology for documenting and verifying them on an annual basis. This methodology is based on actual costs incurred for Direct Support Services (DSS) and involves pooling these costs and then allocating them to projects based on a ratio of these costs to those readily assignable to projects, with certain modifications to ensure an equitable, acceptable and verifiable result. This ratio is adjusted annually based upon the most current costs, and both the methodology and the results are audited annually and utilized by all federal funding agencies.

Audited financial statements serve as the basis for our calculation (see table below). Modifications are made to remove significant expenses such as Land Costs which do not have the same relationship to DSS costs as other expenses. Other modifications are made to comply with federal guidelines; for example, excluding donated services and grants made to partners. Finally, Unallowable Costs (e.g. marketing, lobbying, investment management, bad debt, entertainment, employee and donor recognition, etc.) are excluded to arrive at Total Modified Direct Costs and the Adjusted Support Services pool. The result is a DSS Rate.

The Trust for Public Land										
Schedule of Functional Expenses										
Fiscal year ending March 31, 2013										
Description	Total		Total		Total		Total Modified		Total	
	Expenses	Program Services	Development	Direct Costs	Modifications to Direct Costs	Direct Costs	Support Services	to Support Services	Support Services	Adjusted Support Services
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 33,507,773	\$ 15,785,791	\$ 6,868,789	\$ 22,654,580		\$22,654,580	\$ 10,853,193			10,853,193
Professional Services	21,141,697	18,536,918	1,163,029	19,699,946	(105,443)	\$19,594,503	1,441,750	(196,681)		1,245,069
Travel and Meetings	2,242,347	982,085	680,881	1,662,966		\$1,662,966	579,381			579,381
Equipment & Occupancy	6,993,731	1,893,419	1,113,462	3,006,881	(679,344)	\$2,327,537	3,986,850	679,344		4,666,194
Other Operating Expense	4,726,916	3,876,038	172,426	4,048,463	(2,246,736)	\$1,801,727	678,453	912,042		1,590,495
Contributions of Land	51,651,832	51,651,832	-	51,651,832	(51,651,832)	\$0		-		0
Total Expenses	\$120,264,296	\$ 92,726,082	\$ 9,998,586	\$102,724,669	\$ (54,683,355)	\$ 48,041,314	\$ 17,539,627	\$ 1,394,705		\$ 18,934,332
Unallowable Expenses					\$ 2,852,352	\$ 50,893,666		\$ (3,215,261)		\$ 15,719,071
Direct Support Services Rate (B/A)	30.9%					A				B

TPL proposes to use the above Federal approved and audited rate for DSS for OHF and ENRTF funded programs. This rate will only be applied to categories included in our funding requests and will exclude categories such as Land Acquisition, Capital Equipment and the portion of subawards/subcontracts that exceed \$25,000. Total amounts will be determined as part of the allocation process with the governing body and reflected on each Accomplishment Plan or Work Plan as a specific line item. Reimbursement requests will likewise separately identify any DSS amounts. For the 2016 Legislative Session (ML 2016), TPL requested reimbursement of 50% of eligible DSS costs with the remaining 50% to be contributed as leverage by TPL.