

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2018 / ML 2017 Request for Funding



Date: June 21, 2016

Program or Project Title: Wildlife and Rare Species Habitat (HA05)

Funds Requested: \$13,260,800

Manager's Name: Emilee Nelson

Organization: The Conservation Fund

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County Locations: Anoka, Becker, Big Stone, Cottonwood, Hennepin, Isanti, Kandiyohi, Kanebec, Lake of the Woods, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Pennington, Pipestone, Swift, and Wright.

Regions in which work will take place:

- Northern Forest
- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie
- Metro / Urban

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Forest
- Prairie
- Habitat

Abstract:

Using the best science and biological data available, this program will protect sites that the DNR and has identified as high priority statewide habitat acquisitions that are vital to support specific wildlife targets within that region. The Conservation Fund will proactively contact and negotiate land protection with willing landowners in these complexes in coordination with state and local conservation groups and local communities to maximize wildlife populations of statewide and local importance.

Design and scope of work:

The Conservation Fund was founded on the principle that environmental health and economic vitality can be mutually reinforcing. Our people-focused, business-minded approach is grounded in a conviction that conservation can create lasting economic progress. We have conserved more than 7.5 million acres nationwide over the past 30 years with this approach. We work closely with partners—federal and state agencies, landowners, community leaders, scientific experts, business leaders and others—to identify the best conservation opportunities that advance our shared goals and deliver the highest quality and impact. The Conservation Fund (TCF) is honored to have received the highest rating by the non-profit watchdog organization, Charity Navigator, of any land conservation organization in the nation. TCF is also one of only four land trusts working in Minnesota that is accredited. In the last four years, TCF has conserved more than 33,000 acres in Minnesota.

Throughout Minnesota, the MN DNR Division of Wildlife has identified wildlife habitat complexes, however many are only partially completed and not able to sustain viable populations of targeted species. Regional and state wildlife acquisition staff identified high

priority DNR acquisitions, but have not yet been able, for a variety of reasons, to protect these sites.

The high priorities have been ranked first on the regional level by DNR wildlife management personnel and then vetted through statewide acquisition meetings held by DNR. The parcels listed in this proposal comprise high priorities for DNR and our conservation partners. Although these priorities have been identified on a biologically important basis, it is our intention to also communicate long-term visions for wildlife habitat with local communities to establish a shared vision for conservation outcomes that will positively impact local economic vitality.

Current trends in real estate markets have opened an opportunity to work with willing sellers in these identified areas to potentially protect wildlife habitat for a better value than has been seen in the recent past. This can create a mutually beneficial strategy - to protect ecologically important sites while also allowing willing sellers to liquidate marginal land. Selling non-productive lands benefits wildlife, benefits the local tax-base and benefits the farmer.

Another timely opportunity exists to improve stakeholder communication between wildlife professionals and communities toward a comprehensive vision for how wildlife habitat can be integrated with existing and future local community goals in these identified areas.

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

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H3 Improve connectivity and access to recreation

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition - The Next 50 Years
- Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare

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

DNR priority acquisitions were discussed with local DNR wildlife management staff as well as game and non-game biologists to verify habitat needs and species justifications for acquisition of these properties. The indicator species in the WMA Acquisition Plan include pheasants and ducks; indicator species within the program area that have ongoing monitoring programs referenced in the State Wildlife Action Plan include northern long-eared bat, freshwater mussels, wood turtle, brook trout, Mudpuppy, hornyhead chub, monarch butterfly and Golden-winged Warbler.

Existing occurrences of these species have been documented or modeled using the best available methods by U.S. Fish & Wildlife, MN DNR, and other state ecological research organizations. By modeling current and future projections with and without protection, this program will acquire properties with the intent to ultimately increase species populations by protecting the necessary habitat to sustain targeted species over time.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Prairie:

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

Forest / Prairie Transition:

- Protect, enhance, and restore wild rice wetlands, shallow lakes, wetland/grassland complexes, aspen parklands, and shoreland that provide critical habitat for game and nongame wildlife

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

Metro / Urban:

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

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:

DNR wildlife managers have vetted each acquisition identified in this program and have outlined clear protection goals for sustaining the given target population. The Conservation Fund has consulted with local wildlife managers, non-game experts from DNR, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, local Soil and Water Conservation District personnel as well as local government officials on the importance of these sites in providing lasting conservation outcomes. We are looking holistically at each proposed acquisition to ensure that the parcel in question adds to the conservation goals for the site and to determine what additional land may be needed to protect our initial investment.

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 Conservation Fund has worked with DNR ecologists and Minnesota County Biological Survey staff to identify sites of importance for Species of Greatest Conservation Need to target the essential boundaries needed for a species to persist in perpetuity in each of the priority areas. Once the areas are identified, the estimated carrying capacity the area can hold was then factored into the projected cost to protect those properties. By building on existing habitat complexes and focusing on marginal agricultural lands, the return on investment is far greater to focus protection where species carrying capacity is high and estimated costs of protection are low. This exercise determined within DNR's high priorities where the maximum wildlife benefits for this program should focus, based on a high net return for conservation outcomes relative to the cost of protection. This methodology, along with involvement of local government officials in the planning process, has been proven to work in Martin County where we worked with a wide array of partners to determine local conservation goals with a limited conservation budget.

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:

The unprotected sites identified in this proposal contain 39 rare or threatened species (see Attachment 2) as documented by the Minnesota County Biological Survey staff through the Natural Heritage Information System database. These species range from grassland birds, rare plants, threatened and endangered mammals, and the rarest plant communities in Minnesota. As stated, conservation partners have identified these sites as a high ecological priority to protect critical habitat for the documented species.

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

Pheasants - By looking at ratios of CRP acres to pheasant harvest, DNR estimates that every three acres of grassland habitat has the potential to produce one harvested pheasant rooster. To further refine this estimate after discussions with the DNR State Pheasant Biologist, it is important to note that the protection of grasslands in already existing complexes of 9 square miles have been shown to have the greatest success (Haroldson et al., 2006). Of the properties within the pheasant range listed in our proposal, 12 of 13 (92%) are within these existing grassland complexes and are estimated to support approximately 1,800 pheasants toward the fall population, per the Long Range Plan for the Pheasant (MN DNR 2005, pg. 8). By targeting the acquisitions within developed grassland complexes, as TCF proposes, the chances for pheasant breeding success are enhanced.

Breeding pairs of waterfowl - The 3.5 square miles of waterfowl habitat to be protected with this proposal are estimated to support 80 pairs of breeding waterfowl, per the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Thunderstorm model (Cowardin et al., 1995). This model is limited and only takes into account the current state of habitat and not the restoration potential.

Golden-Winged Warbler - Minnesota contains roughly 40% of the world's population. The sites in this proposal have the potential to hold roughly 200 nesting pairs of Golden-Winged Warblers (Confer and Knapp 1981) and have been identified by biologists who wrote the Minnesota Wildlife Action Plan.

Outcomes:

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Healthy populations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species as well as more common species *The sites in our proposal have been evaluated by the MN County Biological Survey and five of the seven northern forest sites have Biological Significance ratings that indicate above average biodiversity on a statewide basis.*

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need *In this proposal, 24 rare or threatened species have been documented in the forest-prairie transition and is measured and evaluated by MN County Biological Survey staff (see Attachment 2).*

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- A network of natural land and riparian habitats will connect corridors for wildlife and species in greatest conservation need As stated in the Star Tribune (5/22/16), areas in Anoka County are a hotbed of rare and threatened plant communities that are in danger of increased urban sprawl and development. The metro sites in this proposal contain 3 rare and threatened species and plant communities, which are monitored by the MN County Biological Survey staff (two occurrences of Blanding’s turtle and one occurrence of Cross-Leaved Milkwort). See Attachment 2.

Programs in prairie region:

- Remnant native prairies are part of large complexes of restored prairies, grasslands, and large and small wetlands Sites in this proposal contain 171-acres of native prairie that have been in complexes of 9 square mile areas of existing grasslands that has the potential to provide habitat for roughly 480 pheasants. DNR conducts annual pheasant roadside surveys to determine the pheasant population. Research from the University of Minnesota has shown that approximately one acre of restored or enhanced grassland could potentially contribute 3 to 8 monarchs to the population. With this estimate, our program would protect grasslands to provide habitat for approximately 8,000 monarchs. This may vary depending upon the seed mix used by the conservation partner.

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

By carefully selecting the parcels in advance for their relative conservation productivity and assessing both the short and long-term costs associated with management, The Conservation Fund will seek to acquire only those parcels that demonstrate the best yield of conservation outcomes relative to cost. This will help to increase the likelihood that the long-term conservation landowner will have sufficient resources to manage the acquired sites. Additionally, The Conservation Fund, as a requirement of our organization and a byproduct of maintaining our accreditation, completes land management plans, including costs estimates for all land management needs.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2017	TCF	Conduct cost-benefit analysis with partner	Complete management plan per accreditation standards	

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

As stated, the properties listed in this proposal have been analyzed and ranked by DNR and comprise high priorities for conservation protection. Mitigating the threat of aggressive land-use practices now, given an agreeable real estate market, can increase the conservation outcomes for the overall cost of protection.

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

The Conservation Fund will include \$100,000 of leverage, in part from a grant awarded to us by the McKnight Foundation.

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:

Not Listed

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 - **Yes**

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

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 - **May 2018**

Land Use:

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

Explain

Fee title lands that will be held and managed in perpetuity by the MN DNR are subject to DNR policies regarding the planting of corn or any crop, and we are unsure at this time what those policies will entail regarding the properties listed in this proposal.

Are any of the crop types planted GMO treated - **No**

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

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

Not Listed

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
Discuss conservation goals with local decision makers and communities	Fall 2017
Begin outreach in high priority areas	Fall 2017 - Fall 2019
Contract appraisals	Spring 2018 - Fall 2019
Contract Phase I Environmental report, title work	Summer 2018 - Fall 2019
Close on high priority sites	Summer 2018 - Fall 2019
Convey to long-term conservation partner	Fall 2018 - Fall 2019

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$13,260,800

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$196,500	\$100,000	Private, Private	\$296,500
Contracts	\$1,378,100	\$0		\$1,378,100
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$10,964,000	\$375,000	Federal, Private, TCF	\$11,339,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$506,200	\$0		\$506,200
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$9,000	\$0		\$9,000
Professional Services	\$132,000	\$0		\$132,000
Direct Support Services	\$33,000	\$0		\$33,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$42,000	\$0		\$42,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$13,260,800	\$475,000	-	\$13,735,800

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
MN State Director	0.30	3.00	\$102,000	\$50,000	Private	\$152,000
MN Acquisition Associate	0.50	3.00	\$94,500	\$50,000	Private	\$144,500
Total	0.80	6.00	\$196,500	\$100,000	-	\$296,500

Amount of Request: \$13,260,800

Amount of Leverage: \$475,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 3.58%

DSS + Personnel: \$229,500

As a % of the total request: 1.73%

Easement Stewardship: \$0

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: -%

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

Our real estate support staff keeps hourly time sheets to track direct time spent on projects by grant source. We have used those past metrics to estimate the costs for this grant.

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

The funding in the contract line depicts contracted costs needed to restore properties protected through this proposal. Estimates were used from MN DNR staff.

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:

There are no costs in the travel line outside of traditional travel costs.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

The Conservation Fund will leverage private donations and private foundation grants toward staff time to complete this project. All sources are confirmed and more than \$100,000 is in-hand.

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:

Acquisition of high priority areas would be reevaluated based on the available project budget. We would evaluate with partners ecological outcomes for the total cost. MN TCF office has only two employees, so we act in an efficient and lean manner to maximize conservation outcomes.

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	3,172	1,485	1,809	367	6,833
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	13	49	0	0	62
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3,185	1,534	1,809	367	6,895

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

Type	Native Prairie
Restore	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	246
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Easement	0
Enhance	0
Total	246

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$5,920,900	\$2,771,900	\$3,376,700	\$685,000	\$12,754,500
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$106,100	\$400,200	\$0	\$0	\$506,300
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$6,027,000	\$3,172,100	\$3,376,700	\$685,000	\$13,260,800

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	553	1,090	0	652	4,538	6,833
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	62	0	0	0	0	62
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	615	1,090	0	652	4,538	6,895

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$1,032,200	\$2,034,600	\$0	\$1,217,000	\$8,470,700	\$12,754,500
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$506,300	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$506,300
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,538,500	\$2,034,600	\$0	\$1,217,000	\$8,470,700	\$13,260,800

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	\$1,867	\$1,867	\$1,867	\$1,866
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$8,162	\$8,167	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Table 6. Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$1,867	\$1,867	\$0	\$1,867	\$1,867
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$8,166	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

0

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:

The MN DNR, along with other conservation partners, met and identified the top ecological priorities for each region of the state. The following list contains the top regional priorities for the DNR and combined has an average SWAAT (Strategic Wildlife Area Acquisition Team) score of 44, which is relatively high (75% of all other current priorities have a SWAAT score lower than 44).

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Anoka

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 5	03322202	40	\$25,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Tract 6	03322211	80	\$52,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Becker

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 12	14039220	405	\$645,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Big Stone

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 16	12449236	95	\$285,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Hennepin

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 4	11824208	40	\$400,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Isanti

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 3	03425224	393	\$1,500,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Kandiyohi

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 17	12236231	69	\$249,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Kanebec

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 11	04222230	120	\$130,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Lake of the Woods

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 8	16030207	1,297	\$936,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Mille Lacs

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 10	04027215	80	\$71,200	No	Full	Not Applicable
Tract 13	04025230	400	\$425,000	Yes	Full	Not Applicable

Morrison

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 7	04230207	1,716	\$1,500,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Pennington

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 1	15345217	330	\$1,500,000	No	Full	Not Applicable
Tract 2	15345218	760	\$825,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Pipestone

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 19	10744202	245	\$735,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Swift

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 14	12140209	100	\$200,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Wright

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tract 20	12125235	62	\$450,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

Cottonwood

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	# Bldgs?	Bldg Improve Desc	Value of Bldg	Disposition of Improvements
Tract 15	10536209	74	\$450,000	2	Home and garage	\$80,000	Demo lish

Kandiyohi

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	# Bldgs?	Bldg Improve Desc	Value of Bldg	Disposition of Improvements
Tract 18	12236231	69	\$309,000	2	Small home and building	\$50,000	

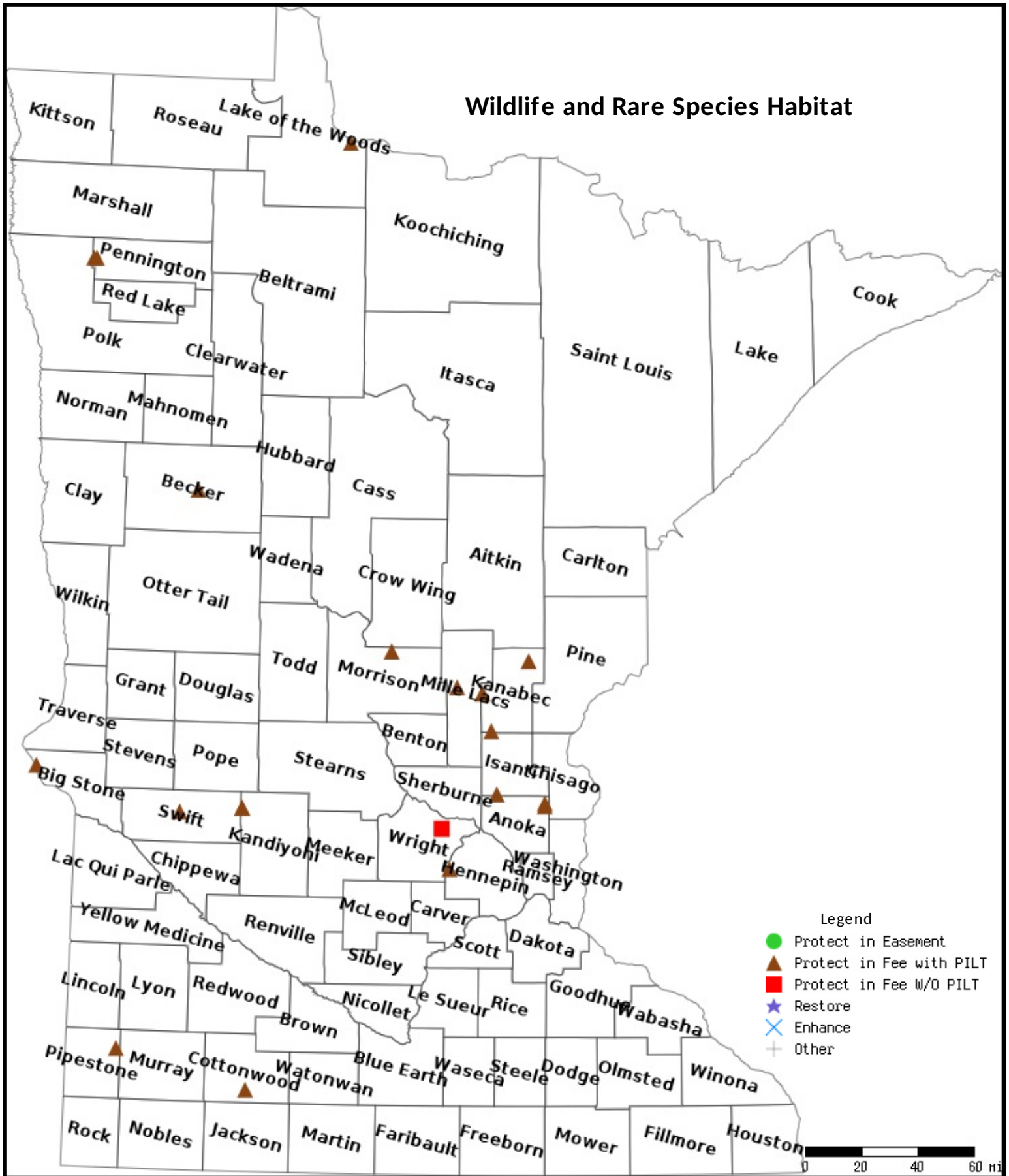
Kanebec

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	# Bldgs?	Bldg Improve Desc	Value of Bldg	Disposition of Improvements
Tract 9	03825234	520	\$733,000	1	Small building	\$10,000	Demo lish

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

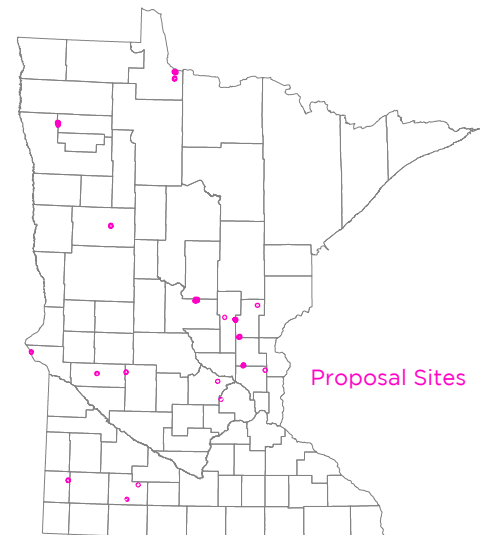
Parcel Map



Data Generated From Parcel List



@ Jamie MacArthur



Project Overview

Using the best science and biological data available, this program will protect sites that the DNR and has identified as high statewide habitat acquisitions that are vital to support specific wildlife targets within that region. The Conservation Fund will proactively contact and negotiate land protection with willing landowners in these complexes in coordination with state and local conservation groups and local communities to maximize wildlife populations of statewide and local importance.

The Conservation Fund has worked with DNR ecologists and Minnesota County Biological Survey staff to identify sites of importance for Species of Greatest Conservation Need to target the essential boundaries needed for those species to persist in perpetuity in each of the priority areas. Once the areas are identified, the estimated carrying capacity the area can hold was then factored into the projected cost to protect those properties.

By building on existing habitat complexes and focusing on marginal agricultural lands, the return on investment is far greater to focus protection where species carrying capacity is high and estimated costs of protection are low. This exercise determined within DNR's high priorities where the maximum wildlife benefits for this program should focus, based on a high net return for conservation outcomes relative to the cost of protection.

Partners

MN DNR
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Counties
Land Trusts

State Funding Requested

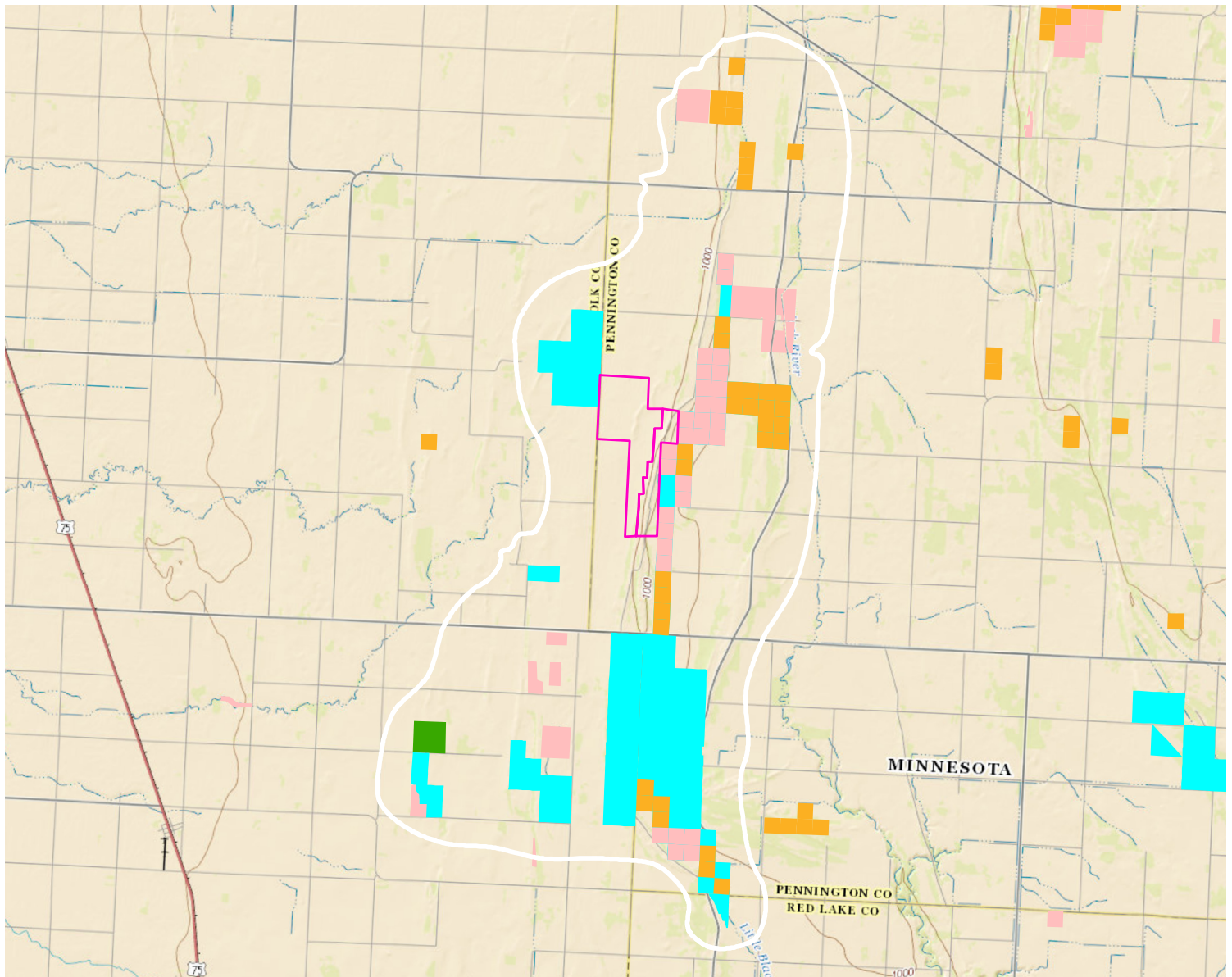
\$13.3 million from Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund

Key Highlights

- 39 rare, threatened or endangered species documented
- 92% of grassland priorities connect existing areas of 9 square miles of grassland habitat complexes
- High ecological priorities identified by DNR State & Regional Field Staff

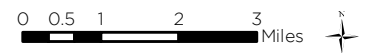
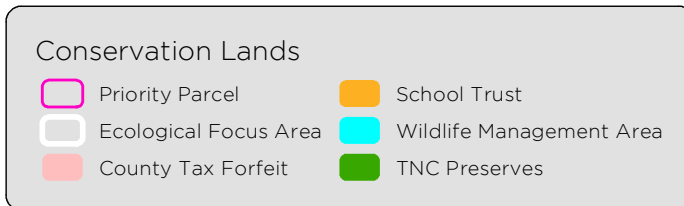
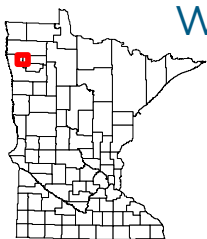
About The Conservation Fund

- Highest rating in 2015 of any land conservation organization by Charity Navigator
- Acquired over 33,000 acres in Minnesota in last four years
- 1 of only 4 accredited land trusts working in Minnesota



Data collected from MN Geo WMS service

Wildlife and Rare Species Habitat - Project Planning



THE
CONSERVATION FUND

Created by Emilee Nelson Date: 5/26/2016

Project Selection & Planning

The map above depicts a **priority parcel** included in this proposal.

Connectivity to conservation lands, rare species, future wetland restorations and the overall cost of the project are factors that have been considered in this proposal. The protection of key links can improve connectivity between previous investments in conservation lands and help achieve the conservation goals within ecological focus areas.

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www.conservationfund.org
May 2016

Attachment 2

**Rare, Threatened or Endangered
Species/Communities Documented Within
Project Sites by Minnesota Biological Survey**

	Occurrences
<i>American Bittern</i>	3
<i>Basswood - Bur Oak - (Green Ash) Forest</i>	1
<i>Blanding's Turtle</i>	2
<i>Cross-leaved Milkwort</i>	1
<i>Dry Hill Prairie (Southern)</i>	2
<i>Dwarf Spike-rush</i>	1
<i>Forster's Tern</i>	1
<i>Greater Prairie-chicken</i>	2
<i>Lake and Wetland Composite (Quaternary)</i>	1
<i>Marbled Godwit</i>	2
<i>Mesic Prairie (Northern)</i>	2
<i>Nelson's Sparrow</i>	1
<i>Northern Gentian</i>	1
<i>Northern Wet Meadow/Carr</i>	1
<i>Sandhill Crane</i>	5
<i>Short-eared Owl</i>	1
<i>Slender Milk-vetch</i>	3
<i>Small White Lady's-slipper</i>	1
<i>Soft Goldenrod</i>	1
<i>Trumpeter Swan</i>	1
<i>Upland Sandpiper</i>	1
<i>Wet Prairie (Northern)</i>	1
<i>Wilson's Phalarope</i>	1
<i>Yellow Rail</i>	3

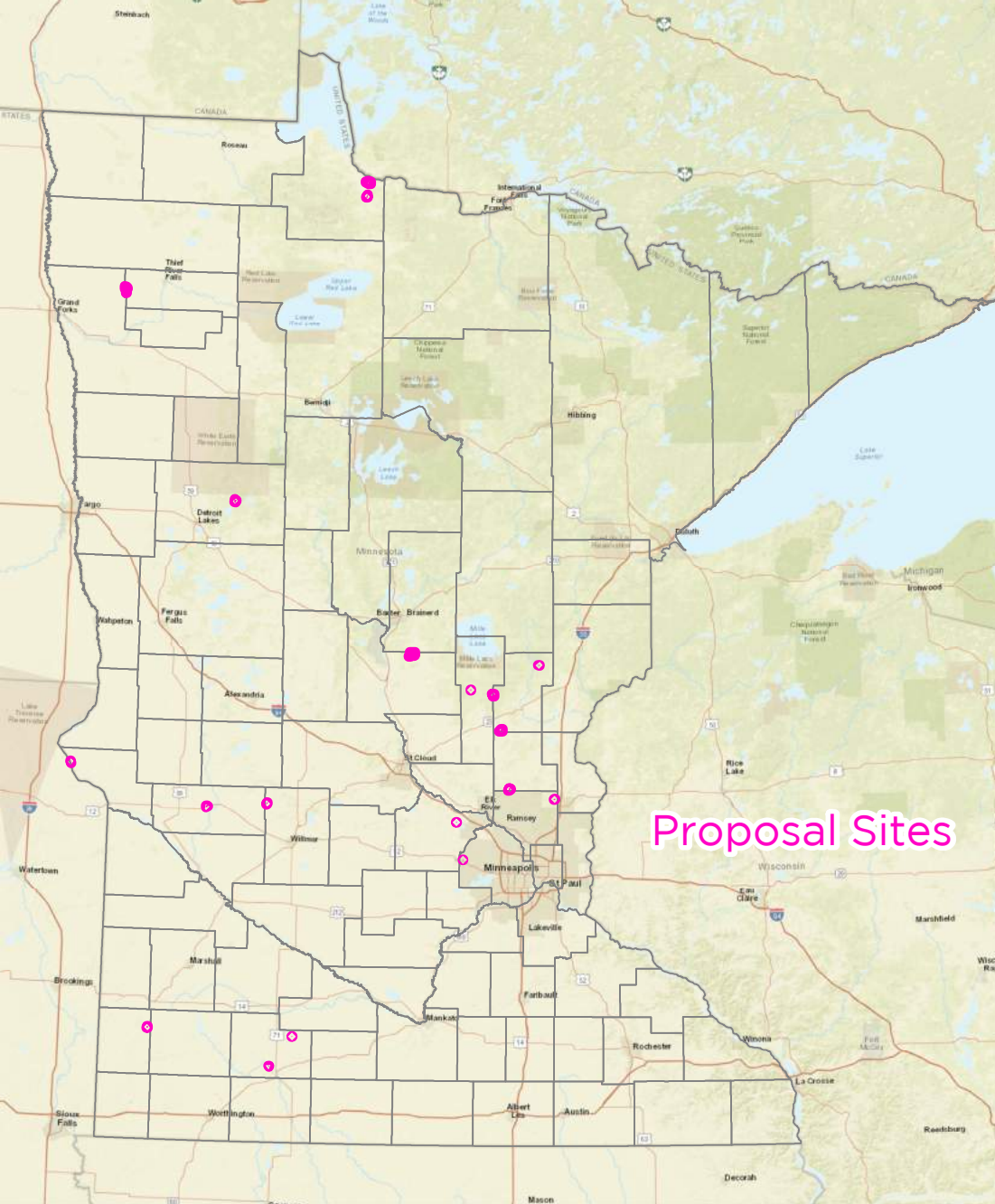
Total 39

Wildlife and Rare Species Habitat

The Conservation Fund

Submission to MN LSOHC

FY 2018



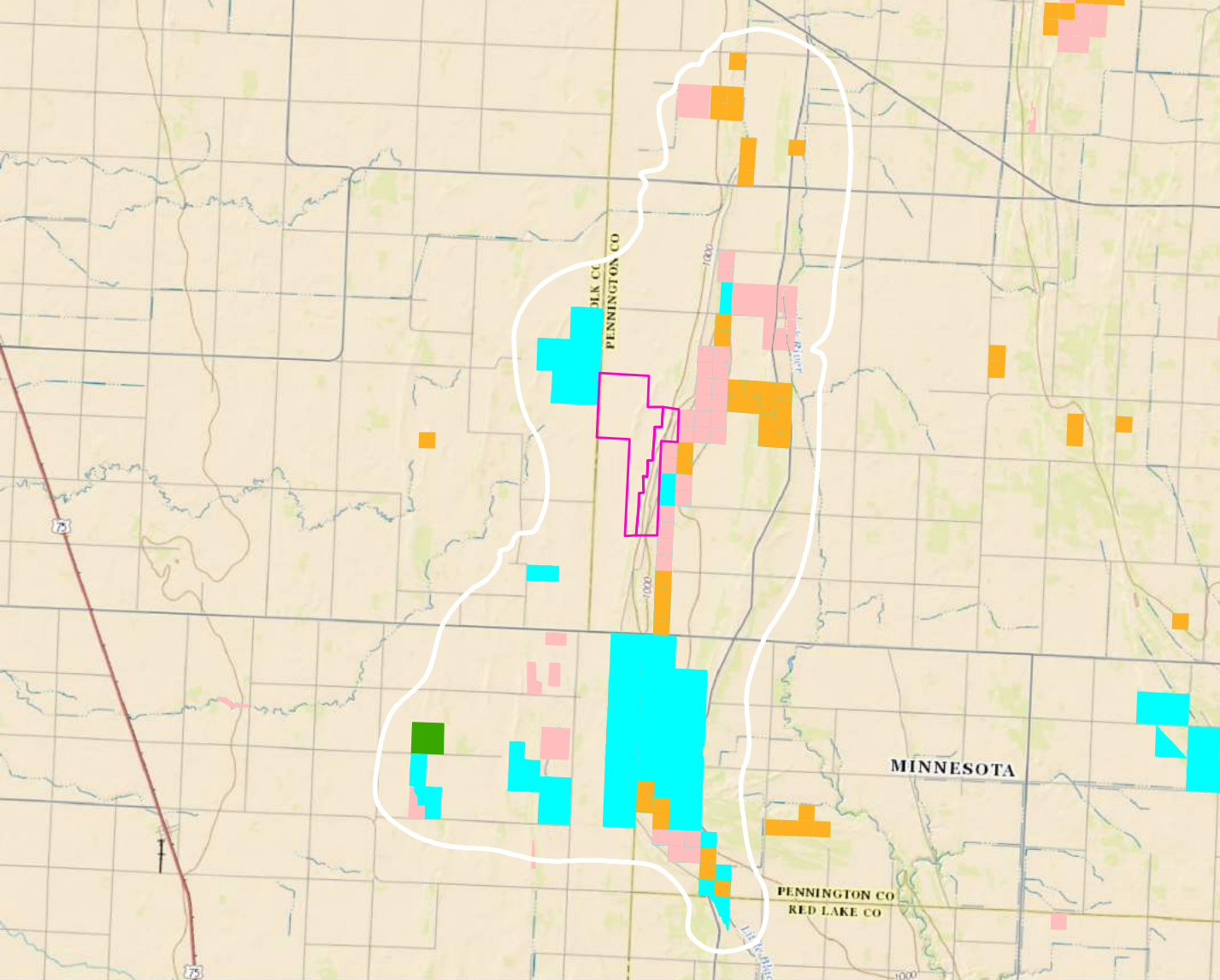
Proposal Sites



Landscape-Level Protection

The map depicts one of the priority projects in this proposal that connects adjacent conservation lands. This concept is taken into consideration by conservation partners in planning stages to increase connectivity of existing conservation lands.

The white line represents a guideline area to focus conservation efforts for multiple benefits (species protection, wetland restoration and protection, and public access).

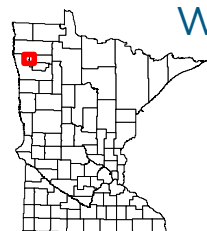
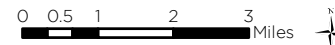


Data collected from MN Geo WMS service

Wildlife and Rare Species Habitat - Project Planning

Conservation Lands

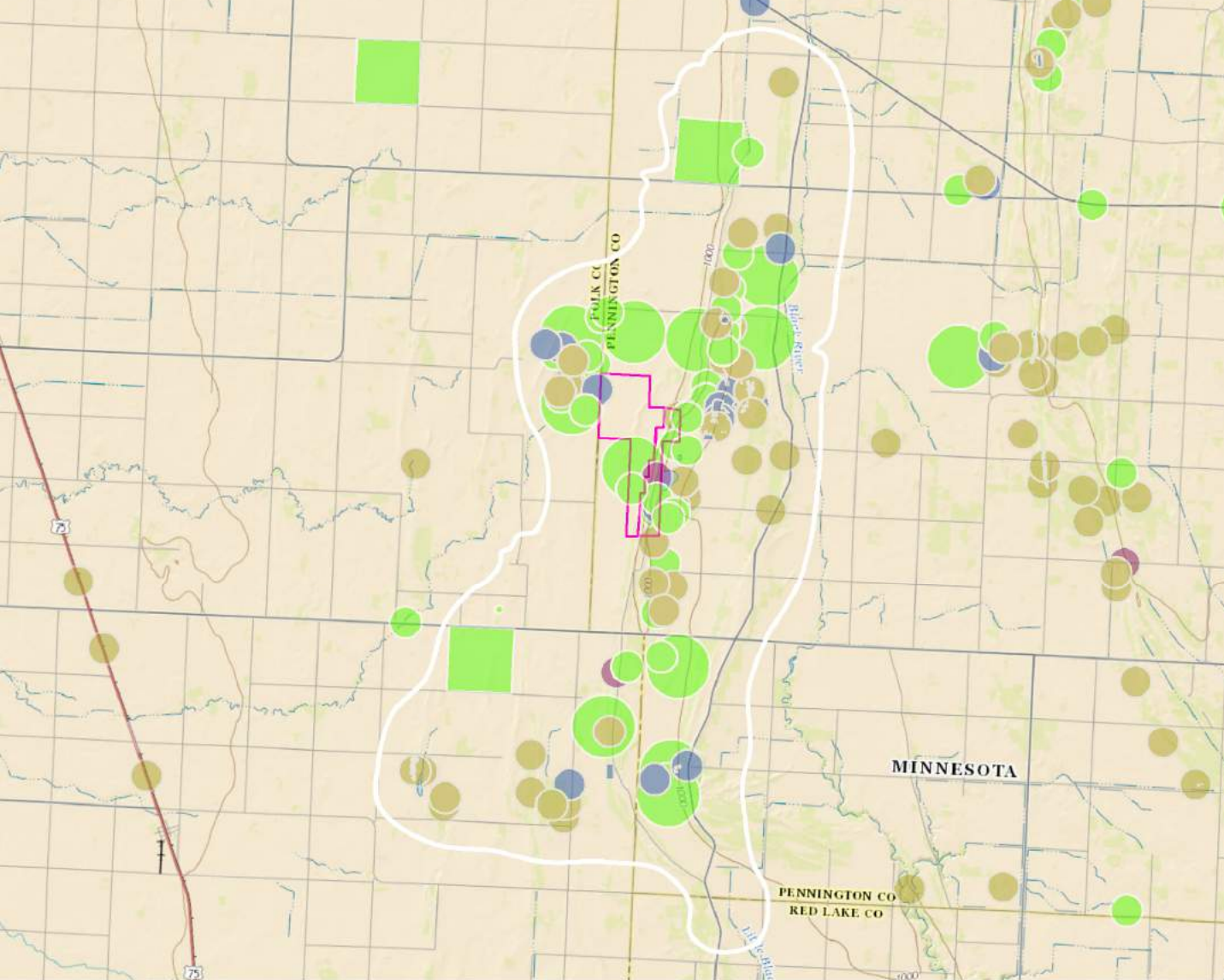
- Priority Parcel
- School Trust
- Ecological Focus Area
- Wildlife Management Area
- County Tax Forfeit
- TNC Preserves



Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species

The MN County Biological Survey staff are continually recording occurrences of rare and threatened features throughout the state, as their staffing time permits.

The Conservation Fund and partners use this data in planning protection strategies to benefit individual species' needs long-term.

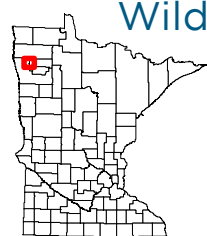
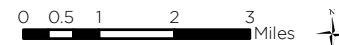


Data collected from MN Geo WMS service

Wildlife and Rare Species Habitat - Project Planning

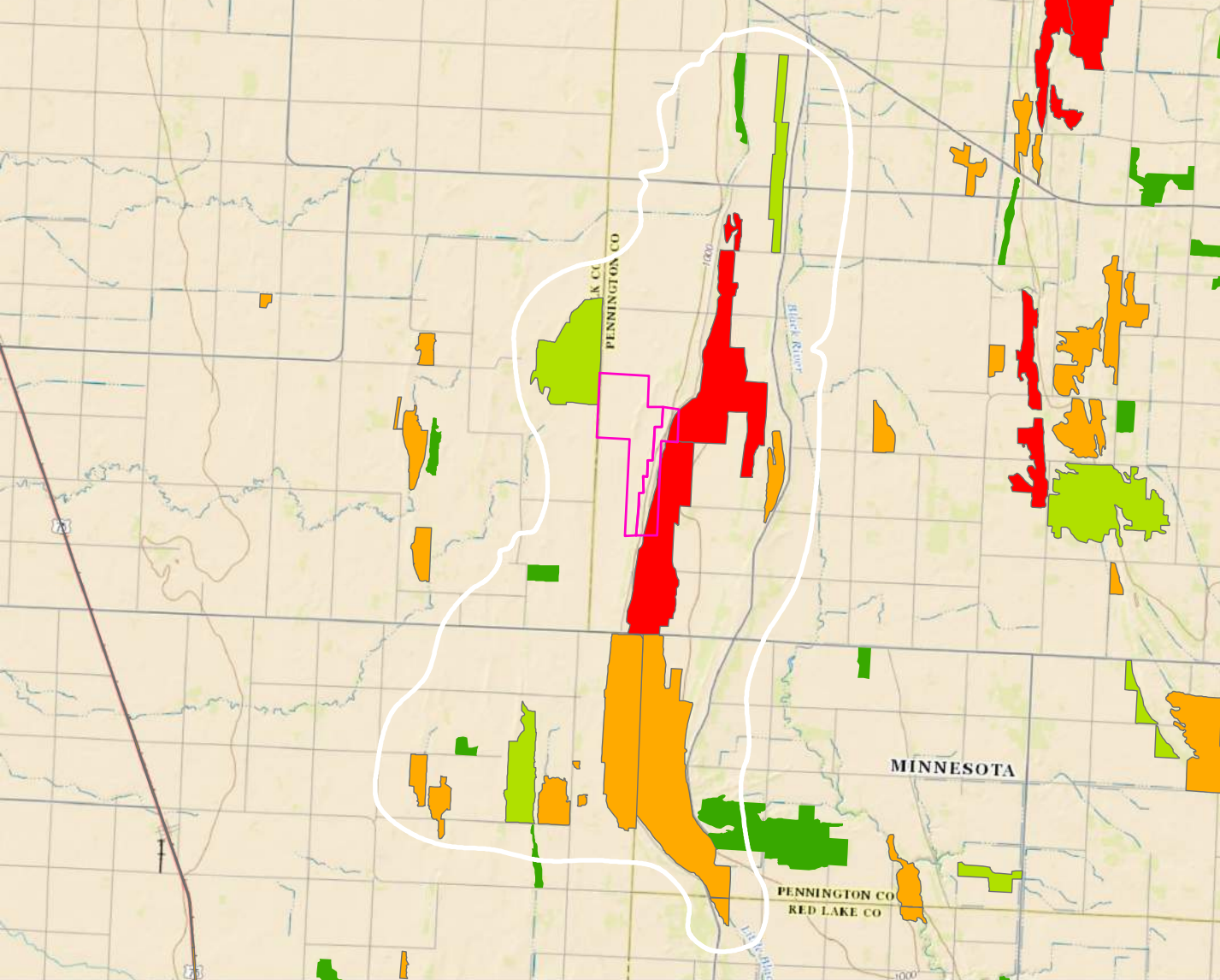
Rare/Threatened Features

Animal Assemblage	Terrestrial Community - Other Classification
Fungus	Vascular Plant
Invertebrate Animal	Vertebrate Animal
Nonvascular Plant	Ecological Priority Parcel
Other (Ecological)	Ecological Focus Area



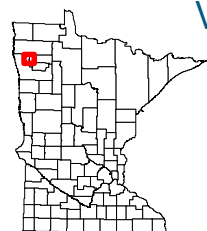
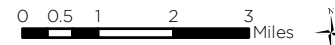
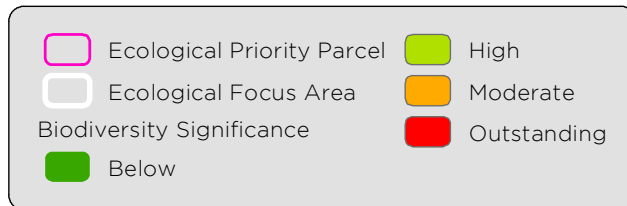
Biodiversity Significance

Partners take biodiversity significance rankings into consideration when planning for conservation outcomes. This data is generated from data collections by MN County Biological Survey and takes into account rare plant communities, such as native prairie, in this case.



Data collected from MN Geo WMS service

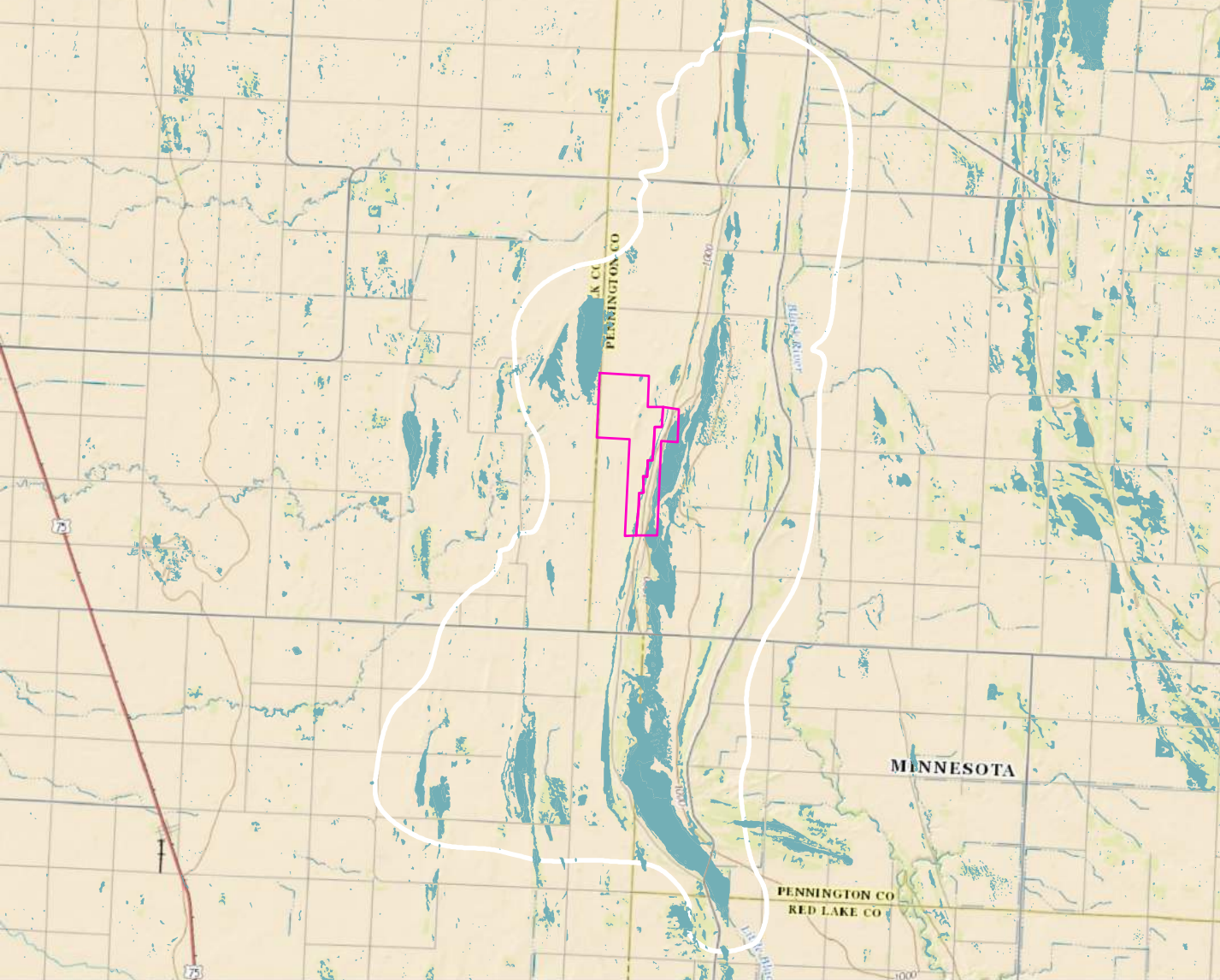
Wildlife and Rare Species Habitat - Project Planning



Wetland & Watershed

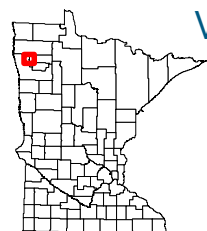
Water is an important factor in conservation planning, and The Conservation Fund discusses long-term water goals with local communities to aim for multiple benefits for people and wildlife.

Wetland restorations also require a larger discussion with conservation partners beyond one parcel of land. As seen here, the acquisition of the priority parcel will aid toward restoration, however other areas are needed to entirely restore the wetland system within the ecological site.



Data collected from MN Geo WMS service

Wildlife and Rare Species Habitat - Project Planning



-  Ecological Priority Parcel
-  National Wetlands Inventory
-  Ecological Focus Area

