

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2018 / ML 2017 Request for Funding



Date: June 15, 2016

Program or Project Title: Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge Land Acquisition - Phase VIII (PA04)

Funds Requested: \$6,175,000

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County Locations: Big Stone, Brown, Chippewa, Clay, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Norman, Pipestone, Pope, Renville, Rock, Wilkin, and Yellow Medicine.

Regions in which work will take place:

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement
- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Prairie

Abstract:

The Nature Conservancy and US Fish and Wildlife Service will cooperate to permanently protect native prairie and associated complexes of wetlands and native habitats in western Minnesota by purchasing approximately 1,800 acres of fee title properties and/or habitat easements, with a target of 900 acres of native prairie.

Design and scope of work:

The Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge (NTP NWR) was established in 2000 to address the loss of America's grasslands and the decline of grassland wildlife. The Refuge was created to permanently preserve and restore a portion of our disappearing tallgrass prairie. The Refuge encompasses all or part of 85 counties in western Minnesota and northwestern Iowa.

A 2015 University of Wisconsin study confirms that conversion is still a very real risk. The recent drop in crop prices may have slowed this, but the threat isn't gone. It's vital that we protect our remaining native prairies before they are lost.

Progress towards the Refuge's goal has been limited by available acquisition funding. Since 2000, the Refuge has protected 4,970 acres in Minnesota with funding from non-OHF sources. The acquisition budget from these sources falls far short of the landowner interest in working with the Refuge.

Funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) will allow The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), working in partnership, to significantly accelerate this progress. TNC and USFWS will cooperate on protecting approximately 1,800 acres of native prairie and associated habitat in the 49 Minnesota counties within the Refuge boundary. Of these, we expect to protect approximately 900 acres in fee title and approximately 900 acres with permanent habitat easements.

This program's work is targeted at protecting high-quality native habitat in areas with existing concentrations of native prairie, wetlands, and protected lands. The majority of the lands protected will consist of native prairie and associated habitats including wetlands, streams, and lakes.

Potential acquisitions are reviewed using the following criteria:

- 1) Is there native prairie on the tract? If not, is it adjacent to native prairie?
- 2) Is the property in a priority area identified in the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan (Prairie Plan)?
- 3) Is it adjacent to an existing complex of protected land?
- 4) Was it identified by Minnesota Biological Survey as having concentrations of threatened and endangered species and communities?
- 5) Is it suitable for public recreation?

Because of the nature of parcel ownership, some properties acquired through this program will likely include small areas of converted or degraded habitat needing restoration/enhancement. Restoration/enhancement will be completed where needed.

Previous OHF support has allowed the partners to make significant progress towards our shared goal of protecting and buffering the remaining native prairie. The first property was acquired in March, 2013. 3,800 acres have now been added to the Refuge. Of these, 2,470 acres are classified as native prairie. Additional habitat includes 410 acres of wetlands and 11 miles of stream and/or lakefront. Landowners have committed a further 294 acres, including 159 acres of native prairie. Negotiations are ongoing with a long list of interested landowners.

With continuing support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund, this program will make real and lasting progress towards protecting Minnesota's native prairies and the plants and animals that depend on those lands.

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

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan
- Northern Tallgrass Prairie Habitat Preservation Area (HPA) Final Environmental Impact Statement

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

This program's work is guided by the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan and Northern Tallgrass Prairie's Habitat Preservation Area plan. Key goals include: 1) Protecting Minnesota's remaining native prairie, and 2) Connecting and buffering prairies in larger complexes of native prairie, grasslands, wetlands, and existing protected lands.

OHF support has helped the partners make substantial progress towards both goals. To date, 2,470 acres of native prairie have been permanently protected. More than 90% of the acres protected have been in the Prairie Plan's priority areas. The Plan identifies areas (cores/corridors/complexes) with the greatest opportunities for long-term conservation of these habitats. Exceptional projects in other areas may be considered. Our recent/pending acquisition work, however, has entirely focused in the Plan's priority areas.

Funding for this proposal builds on this. Approximately 900 acres of native prairie will be protected and the critical areas identified in the Prairie Plan will be strengthened and connected.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Prairie:

- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna

Forest / Prairie Transition:

- Protect, enhance, and restore rare native remnant prairie

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:

The Council's 25-Year Framework identifies protecting our remnant native prairies as a critical priority. By carefully targeting our work, the NTP NWR program can help the Council make significant, and permanent, progress towards that goal.

Biological Survey data on species and habitat quality helps identify and prioritize project locations. The Prairie Plan identifies sites that build on existing concentrations of prairie habitat and protected lands. TNC and/or USFWS biologists do additional survey work on each proposed site.

Using this information, the Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge program focuses on acquiring high-quality habitat in areas with the best opportunities for long-term success. Of the 3,800 acres protected to date, 65% are identified as native prairie. 2,190 are in areas the Biological Survey identified as having significant biodiversity. 1,060 of these have High or Outstanding biodiversity. Work is closely aligned with priorities in the Prairie Plan.

These lands provide the high-quality, diverse habitats needed by a wide range of wildlife, from game species to other species that may be endangered, threatened, or in greatest conservation need (SGCN).

Future acquisition will continue to focus on protecting properties with the best available habitat and the greatest long-term conservation benefits.

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:

This program's goals are guided by the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan and the Northern Tallgrass Prairie Habitat Preservation Area plan. Individual properties are reviewed/approved by TNC and USFWS biologists using the parcel selection criteria described above, including: native prairie, location in prairie complexes, nearby protected lands, and Minnesota Biological Survey research.

Biological Survey data is a critical part of this review. Every proposed project is evaluated using Survey information on: 1) Native prairie sites, 2) Rare, threatened and endangered species locations, and 3) Areas of biodiversity significance.

The selection criteria also recognize the importance of building on existing complexes/corridors and reducing fragmentation. If a prairie is small or isolated, the survival of the animal and plant species that live there is at risk. The best approach is conserving larger areas, like the Prairie Plan's cores/complexes/corridors, that have the scale, species diversity, and connectivity to support functioning prairie systems over the long-term.

The numbers shared in the section above help show this program's success at identifying/protecting biologically significant lands located in areas with existing complexes of habitat and protected lands.

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 NTP NWR program takes the approach that specific species are best protected by conserving high-quality habitat in the most critical prairie areas.

This focus on habitat quality has produced results. Of the 3,800 acres protected, most are in areas identified by the Biological Survey as having significant biodiversity. These high-quality lands provide habitat for wide range of species, from game species to those that are endangered, threatened, or in greatest conservation need.

Biological Survey field work has identified populations of 21 rare species located wholly or partially on NTP NWR properties protected to date with OHF-funding. Protected species include:

Birds - greater prairie-chicken, marbled godwit, Wilson's phalarope, and yellow rail

Plants - blanket flower, few-flowered spikerush, hair-like beak rush, Hall's sedge, least moonwort, Missouri milk-vetch, prairie mimosa, slender milk-vetch, small white lady's slipper, sterile sedge, western white prairie clover

Reptiles - Blanding's turtle

Fish - Topeka shiner

Our most exciting success has been in protecting habitat for rare butterflies. Surveys of these properties identified historic/current populations of Dakota skipper, Pawnee skipper, Poweshiek skipper, and regal fritillary. Protected properties included 3% of the Dakota skipper occurrences in the state, 4% for Poweshiek skippers, 7% for regal fritillary, and 15% for Pawnee skippers.

Future acquisition work will be guided by this same focus on high-quality, diverse habitat, benefiting a wide range of species.

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

To ensure consistency we are using four indicator species and metrics identified by MNDNR to represent the prairie/grassland habitats: prairie chicken, bobolink, grasshopper sparrow, and monarch butterfly. These species are all identified in the Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge's planning documents.

Prairie Chickens - According to the literature and personal observations in Minnesota, prairie chickens require a minimum of 320 acres of high quality grasslands with no areas hostile to grassland wildlife (woodlots, farmsteads, etc) near these grasslands. For every 320 acre patch of high quality grassland in the prairie chicken range in the northwest part of the state, we can expect there to be a lek, or booming ground. The average size of booming grounds in Minnesota is roughly 11 males.

Bobolink and Grasshopper Sparrow - The breeding territory size of bobolinks and grasshopper sparrows is 1.7 and 2.1 acres respectively in high quality habitat in Wisconsin. If all of the habitat was occupied, 100 acres of habitat could potentially hold approximately 60 and 48 pairs of bobolinks and grasshopper sparrows respectively.

Monarch Butterfly - Research from the University of Minnesota has shown that it takes approximately 30 milkweed plants to result in one monarch butterfly contributing to the overwintering Mexican population. Grasslands can have between 100-250 milkweed stems per acre. An acre of restored or enhanced grassland could potentially contribute 3 to 8 monarchs to the population.

Outcomes:

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Remnant native prairies are part of large complexes of restored prairies, grasslands, and large and small wetlands *This program's work is primarily focused on the Prairie region. A small portion of the Refuge, however, falls in the Forest-Prairie Transition region. If work is done in this region, the following outcomes will be measured using GIS tools and reported: 1) Total acres protected, 2) Acres of native prairie, 3) Acres of wetland, 4) Feet of stream- and lake-front, 5) Acres within Prairie Plan priorities, 6) # of endangered/threatened/SGCN on protected properties.*

Programs in prairie region:

- Remnant native prairies are part of large complexes of restored prairies, grasslands, and large and small wetlands *The program's top priority is protecting native prairie. The majority of lands acquired will be native prairie and associated habitats including wetlands, streams and lakes. The parcel selection criteria also favor building onto existing complexes of prairie/grassland/wetland and protected land. The following outcomes will be measured and reported for acquisition in this region: 1) Total acres protected, 2) Acres of native prairie, 3) Acres of wetland, 4) Feet of stream- and lake-front, 5) Acres within Prairie Plan priorities, 6) # of endangered/threatened/SGCN on protected properties.*

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

Outdoor Heritage Funds will be used to purchase the land in fee title or to purchase perpetual habitat easements. The land and easements purchased will be transferred to the USFWS to become units of the Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge. Long term costs for restoration, management, and wildlife/habitat/easement monitoring will be funded through annual USFWS operations funding.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Annually	USFWS - Annual Service Operating Funds	Monitoring and management by USFWS managers, biologists, field and realty staffs to ensure the long-term health of these habitats. Activities may include burning, mechanical, biological, and sometimes chemical treatments.		

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

A 2015 University of Wisconsin study confirms that the danger of conversion is still very real. This paper showed a 215,000 acre increase in net cropland acres in Minnesota between 2008 and 2012. It estimated that as much as 20% of this increase came from lands that had never been cropped. The recent drop in crop prices has lessened the pace of conversion for now. However, the threat has not gone away. It's vital that we protect and buffer the remaining native prairies before they are lost.

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

This proposal includes \$464,800 in leverage. The largest element is \$250,000 of in-kind staff support from USFWS field staff. It includes \$114,800 of support from TNC, covering half the cost of Direct Support Service (DSS) with private funds. In addition, this round includes \$100,000 in leverage from a FWS Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant for NTP NWR fee acquisition.

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
ML 2010	USFWS In-Kind Contribution	\$308,000
ML 2010	TNC Private Contributions	\$37,700
ML 2011	USFWS In-Kind Contribution	\$144,000
ML 2011	TNC Private Contributions	\$23,200
ML 2012	USFWS In-Kind Contribution	\$139,400
ML 2012	TNC Private Contributions	\$43,600
ML 2014	USFWS In-Kind Contribution	\$67,000
ML 2014	TNC Private Contributions	\$22,100

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 notified in writing of the intent to acquire and donate lands to the US Fish & Wildlife Service, including an offer to answer any 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**

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

Are the funds confirmed - **Yes**

Documentation

What are the types of funds?

Cash Match - \$100000

In-Kind Match - \$250000

Land Use:

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

Explain

No food plots will be established on OHF acquired properties. 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 plantings. In some cases this necessitates the use of GMO treated products to facilitate herbicide

use in order to control weeds present in the seedbank. Neonicotinoid treated seeds will not be used. We would not expect agricultural crop use to exceed 3 years on any given OHF acquired property.

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**

Lands acquired by fee will be open to the public taking of fish and game during the open season according to the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act, United States Code, title 16, section 668dd, et seq.

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
Identify priority fee and permanent conservation easement acquisitions	December 31, 2018
Purchase agreements/Options for first 450 acres of fee and 450 acres of easement acquisition	December 31, 2018
Purchase agreements/Options for remaining 450 acres of fee and 450 acres of easement acquisition	June 30, 2020
Grassland/wetland restoration and enhancement completed	June 30, 2022

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$6,175,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$410,000	\$250,000	USFWS	\$660,000
Contracts	\$238,000	\$0		\$238,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$2,879,200	\$100,000	USFWS	\$2,979,200
Easement Acquisition	\$2,160,000	\$0		\$2,160,000
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$12,000	\$0		\$12,000
Professional Services	\$291,000	\$0		\$291,000
Direct Support Services	\$114,800	\$114,800	TNC	\$229,600
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$10,000	\$0		\$10,000
Supplies/Materials	\$60,000	\$0		\$60,000
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$6,175,000	\$464,800		\$6,639,800

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Protection Staff	1.27	3.00	\$322,000	\$0		\$322,000
Project Manager	0.22	3.00	\$55,000	\$0		\$55,000
Grant Administration	0.12	3.00	\$32,000	\$0		\$32,000
Science/Stewardship Staff	0.01	3.00	\$1,000	\$0		\$1,000
USFWS In-Kind Staff Support	0.00	0.00	\$0	\$250,000	USFWS	\$250,000
Total	1.62	12.00	\$410,000	\$250,000		\$660,000

Amount of Request: \$6,175,000

Amount of Leverage: \$464,800

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 7.53%

DSS + Personnel: \$524,800

As a % of the total request: 8.50%

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:

DSS is based on The Nature Conservancy's Federally Negotiated rate as proposed and subsequently approved by the US Dept. of Interior. The portion requested from the grant represents 50% of this rate, with the remaining 50% contributed as leverage.

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

These funds are all for restoration/enhancement work. This program targets lands that are already in good condition. The acquired properties may, however, need some work to get them into a condition where they can be sustained into the future using standard prairie management techniques. The most typical activity is tree or woody vegetation removal, with reseeding of the affected areas. The requested amount is based on our experience in earlier rounds of this program.

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:

Rental car expense is also included.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

The Personnel line item includes USFWS In-Kind support. Fee Acquisition w/o PILT includes leverage from an LWCF fee acquisition grant. See the Federal Funds tab for documentation. The leverage offered on the DSS line reflects one-half of the Conservancy's federally approved indirect rate. These funds are privately raised.

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:

Because this phase is part of an ongoing NTP NWR acquisition program, we have the ability to scale activities up or down depending on the funds available. We are working with a long list of interested landowners however, and reduced funding would mean not completing one or more protection projects.

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	900	0	0	900
Protect in Easement	0	900	0	0	900
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	1,800	0	0	1,800

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

Type	Native Prairie
Restore	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	300
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	600
Protect in Easement	0
Enhance	0
Total	900

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$3,529,000	\$0	\$0	\$3,529,000
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$2,646,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,646,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$6,175,000	\$0	\$0	\$6,175,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	45	0	855	0	900
Protect in Easement	0	45	0	855	0	900
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	90	0	1,710	0	1,800

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$176,000	\$0	\$3,353,000	\$0	\$3,529,000
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$132,000	\$0	\$2,514,000	\$0	\$2,646,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$308,000	\$0	\$5,867,000	\$0	\$6,175,000

Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$3,921	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$2,940	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Table 6. Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$3,911	\$0	\$3,922	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$2,933	\$0	\$2,940	\$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:

Parcels are reviewed/approved by both USFWS and TNC staff to ensure they meet this program's objectives. They are then submitted to LSOHC staff for final review/approval. The following criteria are used:

1. Is there native prairie on the tract? If not, is it adjacent to native grasslands? This program focusses on protecting native prairie, as identified by the Biological Survey or trained biologists inspecting the site. Key parcels that buffer native prairie may also be protected.
2. Is it located in a Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan core/corridor/complex? The long-term survival of native prairie is best ensured in functioning landscapes identified in the Plan. Outstanding properties outside of the Plan may be considered.
3. Is it adjacent to an existing complex of protected land? Larger protected blocks are more effective at conserving the full array of wildlife species and diversity. It may also simplify and reduce overall management costs.
4. Was it identified by Biological Survey, TNC, or USFWS biologists as having concentrations of threatened and endangered species and communities? Parcels with greater habitat and species diversity will be given greater priority.
5. Is it suitable for public recreation? Lands purchased in fee title will be open to the public taking of fish and game. Conservation easements purchased with OHF support will be open only with landowner permission.
6. Willing Seller. We only work with willing sellers.
7. Avoiding buildings. Existing buildings pose many challenges. Potential projects with structures are carefully reviewed.

See the attached Parcel Prioritization Criteria for more details.

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Big Stone

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Big Stone #2	12145206	40	\$30,500	No	No	No
Big Stone #6	12044205	144	\$332,300	No	No	No

Brown

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Brown #1	10835229	110	\$311,500	No	No	No

Chippewa

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Chippewa #1	11942218	90	\$187,000	No	No	No

Clay

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Clay #4	13946202	80	\$120,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Clay #5	13846210	40	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Kandiyohi

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Kandiyohi #2	12236210	153	\$434,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Kandiyohi #4	12235207	76	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Lac qui Parle

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Lac qui Parle #1	11742201	47	\$55,100	No	No	No
Lac qui Parle #2	11746213	219	\$486,400	No	No	No
Lac qui Parle #3	11943215	126	\$188,000	No	No	No
Lac qui Parle #4	11943226	149	\$178,000	No	No	No
Lac qui Parle #5	11943226	39	\$42,000	No	No	No

Lincoln

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Lincoln #4	11345210	40	\$84,000	No	No	No
Lincoln #5	10945216	60	\$70,100	No	No	No

Lyon

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Lyon #2	10942222	32	\$73,000	No	No	No

Murray

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Murray #6	10643232	80	\$227,600	No	No	No

Norman

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Norman #5	14445228	145	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Pipestone

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Pipestone #1	10546223	174	\$360,500	No	No	No
Pipestone #3	10846201	84	\$155,200	No	No	No
Pipestone #4	10846211	76	\$157,300	No	No	No

Pope

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Pope #10	12339234	65	\$208,400	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Pope #11	12337226	18	\$22,900	No	No	No
Pope #12	12339235	80	\$240,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Pope #7	12438229	447	\$594,200	No	No	No
Pope #8	12439215	103	\$117,900	No	No	No
Pope #9	12337226	31	\$34,300	No	No	No

Renville

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Renville #1	11335207	257	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Rock

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Rock #1	10545218	77	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Rock #2	10345218	5	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Rock #4	10346213	12	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Rock #5	10345218	21	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Rock #6	10345208	11	\$0	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Wilkin

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Wilkin #1	13646204	27	\$60,500	No	No	No

Yellow Medicine

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Yellow Medicine #1	11546229	302	\$393,400	No	No	No

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs**Kandiyohi**

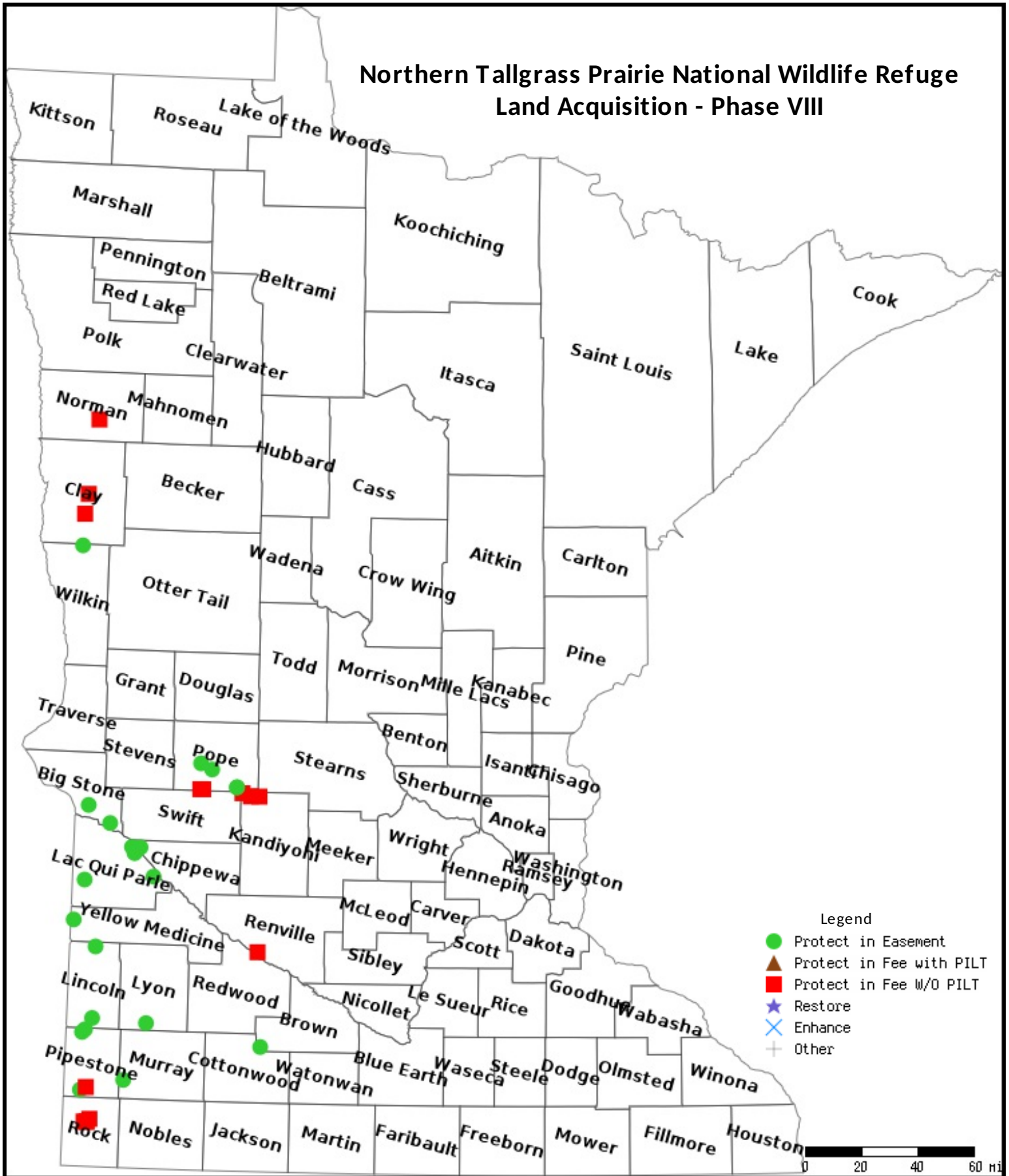
Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	# Bldgs?	Bldg Improve Desc	Value of Bldg	Disposition of Improvements
Kandiyohi #5	12236206	149	\$0	4	House, Barn, 2 other outbuildings, all in tear-down condition.	\$0	Remove

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map

Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge Land Acquisition - Phase VIII



Data Generated From Parcel List

Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition - Phase 8

Funding Requested: \$6,175,000



Program Goals

The US Fish and Wildlife Service and The Nature Conservancy will cooperate to protect native prairie and associated habitat in Minnesota for future generations

Phase 8 Goals

The requested funding will allow us to permanently protect 1,800 acres of habitat in western and central Minnesota, with 50% being native prairie. Outcomes will include approximately:

- 900 acres of fee acquisition
- 900 acres of permanent conservation easements

This work will target areas identified as priorities in the MN Prairie Conservation Plan.

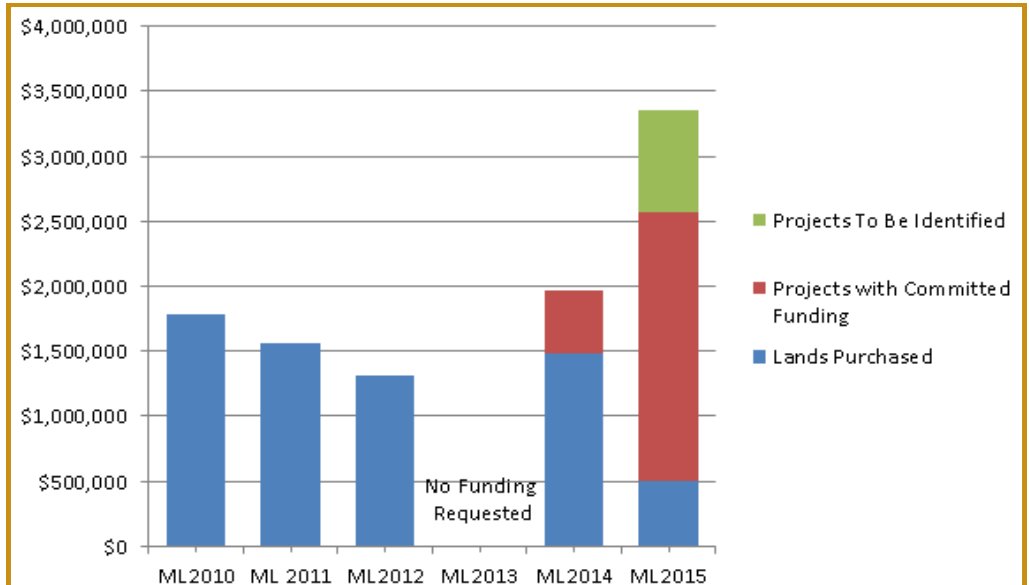


Regal fritillary on milkweed - This program has protected habitat for several butterfly species including the regal fritillary, a species of special concern in Minnesota.



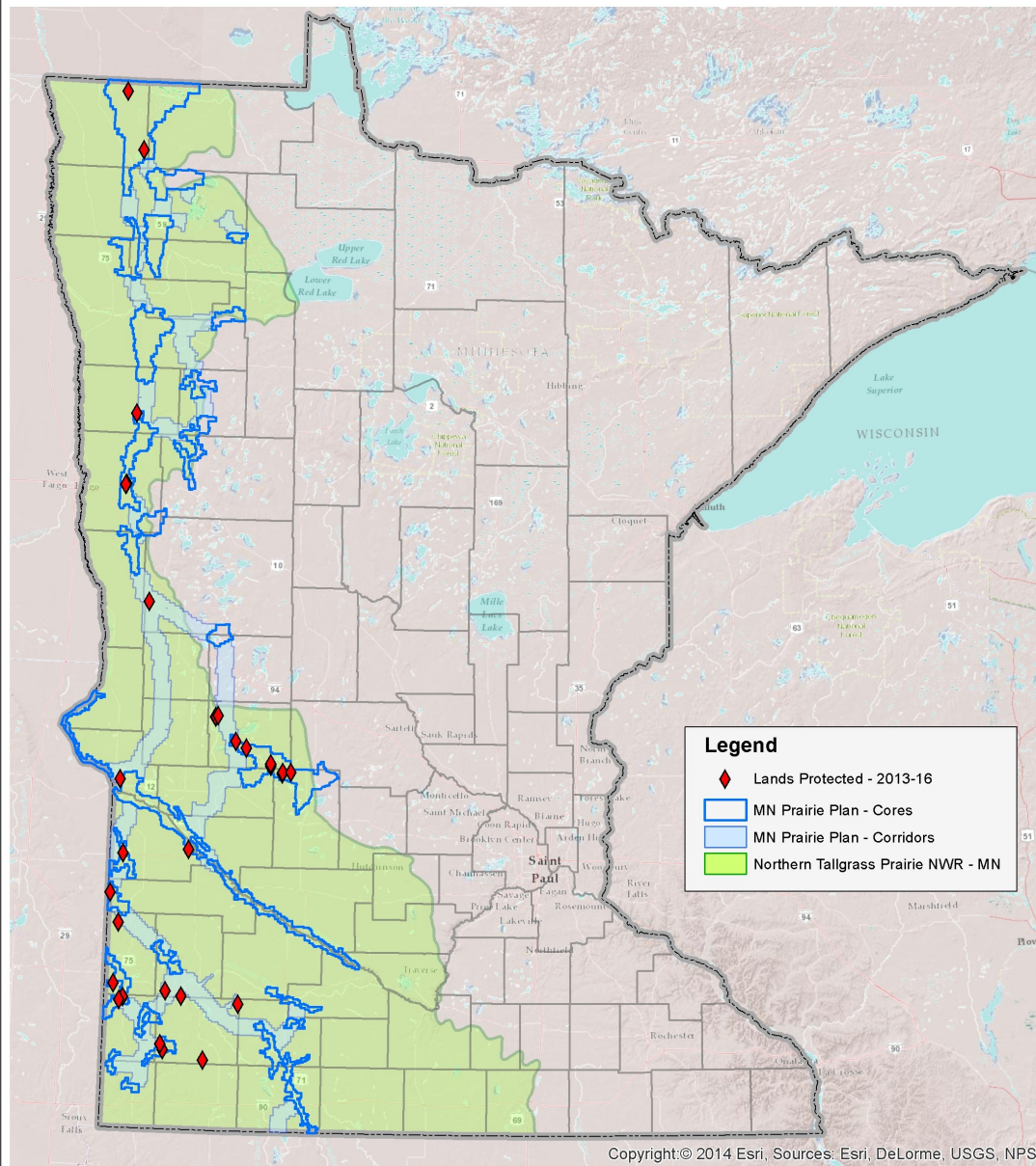
An Upland Prairie Protected by NTP NWR - This Dry Sand-Gravel Prairie in central Minnesota was protected in 2014. The Biological Survey ranks this property as having outstanding biological significance.

Financial Update — Status of Acquisition Funding from Previous OHF Rounds



Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge

Lands Protected 2013-2016



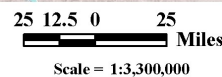
Program Accomplishments through May, 2016

- 3,800 acres of habitat acquired at an average cost of \$2,005 acre
- 2,470 acres of native prairie protected
- 410 acres of wetlands and 11 miles of stream or lake-front protected
- 2,190 acres surveyed by the Minnesota Biological Survey and determined to have significant biodiversity
- 90% of projects completed in MN Prairie Plan priority areas
- Protected habitat for numerous species of concern, including endangered and threatened species. Animal and plant species found on conserved properties include: Wilson's phalaropes, small white lady's slippers, and Dakota skippers.

Prioritizing Projects

Each project is reviewed using the following criteria:

- 1) Is there native prairie on the tract? If not, is it adjacent to native prairie?
- 2) Is the property in a priority area identified in the MN Prairie Plan?
- 3) Is it adjacent to an existing complex of permanently protected habitat?
- 4) Was it identified by Minnesota Biological Survey as having concentrations of threatened and endangered species and communities?
- 5) Is it suitable for public recreation?



Created by: RCI, TNC in MN/DUSD, 2016/5/28
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Proposed\Handout\NWR Hearing Map - 20160528.mxd

Parcel Selection Criteria used by the US Fish & Wildlife Service and The Nature Conservancy for the Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge Land Acquisition Program

The purpose of the Northern Tallgrass Prairie Protection National Wildlife Refuge Program is to accelerate progress towards the US Fish & Wildlife Service's (USFWS) goal of permanently protecting and enhancing 77,000 acres of prairie remnants across the broad area originally covered by the Northern Tallgrass Prairie. The Land Acquisition Program supports the acquisition of fee title or conservation easements in the 49 western Minnesota counties included in the refuge boundary. The USFWS and The Nature Conservancy (Conservancy) are partners in this Program.

Parcels are reviewed by both the USFWS and Conservancy to ensure that they meet the priorities of both partners. They are then submitted to LSOHC staff for final review/approval. This review is based on the following criteria:

1. **Native prairie on all or most of tract, or adjacency to existing native prairie.** The emphasis of this Program is protecting and enhancing native prairie, as identified by DNR Biological Survey or site inspection by trained biologist. Protecting native prairie includes the need to buffer and connect native remnants via restoration of non-native lands. The partners will identify and work with private landowners to acquire tracts that further our shared goal of native prairie conservation, and in particular, those that meet the other criteria listed below.
2. **Within core area boundary or in critical corridors between core areas.** This Program will assist with building "functioning landscapes" by focusing in areas with concentrations of existing native prairie. The 2010 Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan identified 35 prairie cores and corridors within the Refuge. The partners will give priority to those parcels that are within these core areas or that help form critical corridors to maintain landscape function.
3. **Near existing protected lands.** Building larger protected complexes is preferred to simplify and reduce overall management costs and travel time. In general, larger protected blocks are more effective at conserving the full array of wildlife species and biological diversity. The partners will strategically identify properties that are in areas where the USFWS already has a presence and prioritize these higher than those that are isolated.
4. **Greater habitat and species diversity, or host to unique species.** Parcels that host a rare habitat or a continuum of habitats, such as interconnected upland, wetland, riparian, and stream features, will be recognized as having added ecological value and given greater priority. Tracts with underrepresented, small-scale features (e.g. threatened species), will also be prioritized.
5. **Suitability for public recreation.** Constitutional language requires that the lands purchased in fee title be open to the public taking of fish and game. Fee title lands purchased with this grant will be opened. Lands especially suited to these uses will be given a higher priority. Conservation easements purchased with Outdoor Heritage Fund support will be open to hunting only with landowner permission.

6. **Willing Seller.** We will only work with willing sellers, and those that can abide by the statutory process laid out for use of public funds. We work with landowners to ensure that they are comfortable with the Program and how it will affect their property.
7. **Avoid buildings.** Existing buildings pose a challenge because they may not be eligible for Outdoor Heritage Fund use and they require additional effort to demolish or sell. Properties with structures are carefully reviewed to ensure that they do not place an undue burden on the USFWS or Conservancy.