Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Laws of Minnesota 2018 Accomplishment Plan

Date: October 09, 2017

Program or Project Title: Wetland Habitat Protection and Restoration Program - Phase 3

Funds Recommended: \$ 1,786,000

Manager's Name: Wayne Ostlie Title: Director of Land Protection Organization: Minnesota Land Trust Address: 2356 University Avenue W

Address 2: Suite 240
City: St. Paul, MN 55114
Office Number: 651-917-6292
Mobile Number: 651-894-3870
Email: wostlie @mnland.org

Legislative Citation: ML 2018, Ch. X, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd XX

Appropriation Language:

County Locations: Big Stone, Big Stone/Swift, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, and Swift.

Regions in which work will take place:

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie

Activity types:

- Enhance
- Protect in Easement
- Restore

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Forest
- Habitat
- Prairie
- Wetlands

Abstract:

Phase 3 of the Wetland Habitat Protection and Restoration Program, will result in the protection of 646 acres of high priority wetland habitat complexes in Minnesota's Prairie and Forest-Prairie Transition areas by securing permanent conservation easements within scientifically prioritized habitat complexes. The Minnesota Land Trust will use its innovative landowner bid model to maximize conservation benefit and financial leverage in protection project selection. In addition, an expanding partnership between the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Land Trust will restore/enhance 745 acres of wetlands and associated prairies to benefit important waterfowl and SGCN populations.

Design and scope of work:

Wetlands and shallow lakes provide the essential backbone for the survival of waterfowl and other important wildlife species. In fact, more than 50% of Minnesota's Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) use wetlands during their life cycle. Most of the plans developed to protect Minnesota's wildlife—including Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, the Statewide



Conservation and Preservation Plan, and the Long Range Duck Recovery Plan—cite the protection and restoration of the state's remaining wetlands as one of the top priorities to achieve the State's conservation goals. Moreover, these plans cite the use of conservation easements on private lands as one of the primary strategies to protect important wetland and shallow lake habitat.

Minnesota Land Trust's Wetlands Habitat Protection Program area extends from Meeker northwest to Becker County, located along a vast glacial moraine system at the edge of the of western Minnesota. This prairie pothole country is the core of Minnesota's "duck factory" and is central to one of North America's most important flyways for migratory waterfowl. Through Phases 1 and 2 of this program, the Land Trust has procured 10 conservation easements protecting nearly 1,800 acres of habitat and 70,000 feet of shoreline, with more on the way.

Phase 3 will build on these accomplishments by broadening the Program's focus to include – along with wetland protection – habitat restoration and enhancement. Through a partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, the Land Trust will restore/enhance 745 acres of important prairie and wetland habitat on private lands already protected within the Program area. In addition, the Land Trust will protect 646 acres of new priority wetland and associated upland habitat through conservation easements. The Program will be closely coordinated with other public agencies, non-profit organizations and other stakeholders to ensure this Program meets multi-agency conservation goals.

The Land Trust will continue to implement a criteria-based ranking system and market approach for purchasing conservation easements. The Program will continue to target projects that help complete gaps in existing public ownership, are of the highest ecological value, and provide the greatest leverage to the state. The Land Trust will seek donated easements in these areas whenever possible but also may purchase easements that help complete key complexes as necessary.

To focus our easement protection work, we used the Prairie Plan and other data sets and plans to shape our Wetlands Program plan and identify important wetland complexes in this landscape based on the intersection of high-quality habitat, existing protected areas and restorable agricultural lands. These complexes include a mosaic of wetland, prairie/grassland, and forest habitats, as well as agricultural land. Outcomes from this project include: 1) healthy wetland habitat complexes and associated populations of waterfowl, upland birds, and SGCN; 2) improved water quality; 3) increased participation of private landowners in habitat conservation projects; and 3) enhancement of prior public investment in wetland and upland habitat protection.

How does the request address MN habitats that have: historical value to fish and wildlife, wildlife species of greatest conservation need, MN County Biological Survey data, and/or rare, threatened and endangered species inventories:

Minnesota's wetlands are essential to our wildlife health and diversity. This project directly benefits Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and other important game and non-game wildlife species by minimizing the potential threats to their habitat brought about by detrimental agricultural practices, residential or commercial development or imprudent land management. The wetland habitat complexes that will be targeted through the ranking system will include a mosaic of wetlands, grasslands and woodlands. Priority projects will include high or outstanding habitat as identified in Minnesota Biological Survey data. They will also be located near other protected lands so as to help build larger habitat complexes which will be comprised of both public and private lands. In fact, with the vast majority of this landscape in private ownership, working with private owners on land protection strategies is key to successful conservation in this region. Finally, we will work closely with partners in the region to identify those habitat complexes where private land protection can make a significant contribution to existing conservation investments.

This program addresses LSOHC priorities by protecting shallow lakes, wetland/grassland complexes, and shoreland that provide critical habitat for Minnesota's wildlife, especially its migratory waterfowl and associated species.

Describe the science based planning and evaluation model used:

This program is focused on procuring easements and restoring prairie and wetland habitats on easement lands within priority complexes of wetlands and associated upland habitats, as guided by the State Wildlife Action Plan, Duck Plan and Prairie Plan. Specific parcels available for acquisition of easements are further reviewed relative to each other to identify priorities among the pool of applicants. This relative ranking is based on three primary ecological factors (amount of habitat on the parcel (size) and abundance of SGCN; the quality or condition of habitat; and the parcel's context relative to other natural habitats and protected areas) and cost. As such, the program serves to build upon past conservation investments in the program area, expanding the footprint of existing protected areas (WMAs, WPAs, etc.), facilitating the protection of habitat corridors and reducing the potential for fragmentation of existing habitats. In addition, our partnership with USFWS will enable us to further reduce effects of fragmentation through restoration of prairie, wetlands and other habitats. Minnesota Biological Survey data is a cornerstone to our assessment of potential conservation easement acquisitions; we also conduct field visits to further identify and assess condition of habitats prior to easement acquisition, as many private lands were not formally assessed through MBS.

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

program:

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

Which other plans are addressed in this program:

- Long Range Duck Recovery Plan
- Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan 2015-2025

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program:

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

Prairie:

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

Relationship to other funds:

• Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund

Describe the relationship of the funds:

The Minnesota Land Trust was a partner in the Habitat Conservation Partnership (HCP), which received grants from the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR), from 2001--2011. This proposed OHF grant accelerates the Land Trust's work protecting critical wetland and associated upland habitat within the program area and does not supplant any existing funding sources.

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

The Minnesota Land Trust and USFWS are collaborating in the delivery of this program. The Land Trust will lead all facets of easement acquisition in the Program. Restoration and enhancement activities on easement properties will be coordinated by the Land Trust, which includes design review, subcontracting, and project management; USFWS will provide project planning, restoration design and project oversight assistance for these activities. The USFWS is not a direct recipient of funding through this proposal; their time committed to the Program is an in-kind contribution (leverage) estimated at \$11,600.

The Land Trust encourages private landowners to fully or partially donate the appraised value of their conservation easement, thereby receiving less than the appraised value might otherwise allow. This donated value is shown as leveraged funds in the proposal. The Land Trust has a long track record in incentivizing landowners to participate in this fashion. In Phase 1 of this program alone, \$1,183,400 in easement value was donated to the program as leverage against the \$1,629,000 grant. We expect a significant landowner contribution to continue in phase 3, with our conservative estimate of leverage being \$223,500.

Per MS 97A.056, Subd. 24, Any state agency or organization requesting a direct appropriation from the OHF must inform the LSOHC at the time of the request for funding is made, whether the request is supplanting or is a substitution for any previous funding that was not from a legacy fund and was used for the same purpose:

Any appropriation to the Land Trust through its Wetlands Program does not supplant or substitute for any previous funding that was not from a Legacy fund and was used for the same purpose.

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

| Appro priatio n Year | Source | Amount |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| 2001-2011 | ENRTF | 2,000,000 |
| 2014-2017 | McKnight Foundation | 240,000 |

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

The land protected through conservation easements will be sustained through state-of-the-art standards and practices for conservation easement stewardship. The Minnesota Land Trust is a nationally-accredited land trust with a very successful stewardship program that includes annual property monitoring, effective records management, addressing inquiries and interpretations, tracking changes in ownership, investigating potential violations and defending the easement in case of a true violation. Funding for these easement stewardship activities is included in the project budget.

In addition, MLT will assist landowners in the development of comprehensive habitat management plans to help ensure that the land will be managed for its wildlife and water quality benefits. USFWS and MLT (as easement holders on respective properties) will work with landowners in an ongoing basis to provide habitat restoration plans, resources and technical expertise to undertake restoration, enhancement and ongoing management of these properties.

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

| Year | Source of Funds | Step 1 | Step 2 | Step 3 |
|-----------------|---|---|--------------------------|--------|
| | MLI Long-Term Stewardship and Enforcement | Annual monitoring of conservation easements in perpetuity | Enforcement as necessary | |
| Every 4-6 years | IIISEWS Landowner MII | Prescribed fire, tree control, invasive species control | | |

Activity Details:

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

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

Explain

Easement Acquisition:

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.

Restoration/Enhancement:

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.

Are any of the crop types planted GMO treated - Yes

Will the eased land be open for public use - No

Is the land you plan to acquire (easement) free of any other permanent protection - Yes

Who will manage the easement?

The Minnesota Land Trust will manage the easement.

Who will be the easement holder?

The Minnesota Land Trust will hold the easement.

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

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

Most conservation easements are established on private lands, many of which have driveways, field roads and trails located on them. Often, these established trails and roads are permitted in the terms of the easement and can be maintained for personal use if their use does not significantly impact the conservation values of the property. Creation of new roads/trails or expansion of existing ones is typically not allowed.

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

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished:

Existing trails and roads are identified in the project baseline report and will be monitored annually as part of the Land Trust's stewardship and enforcement protocols. Maintenance of permitted roads/trails in line with the terms of the easement will be the responsibility of the landowner.

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

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

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

Accomplishment Timeline:

| Activity | Approximate Date Completed |
|--|----------------------------|
| Conservation easements completed or options secured. | June 30, 2021 |
| Restoration and enhancement projects completed | June 30, 2023 |

Date of Final Report Submission: 11/1/2023

Federal Funding:

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

Outcomes:

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

• Wetland and upland complexes will consist of native prairies, restored prairies, quality grasslands, and restored shallow lakes and wetlands This program will permanently protect 646 acres of wetland and upland habitat complexes and restore/enhance 745 acres of wetlands and prairies in the forest-prairie transition region. Measure: Acres protected; acres restored; acres enhanced.

Programs in prairie region:

Protected, restored, and enhanced habitat for migratory and unique Minnesota species This program will permanently protect 646 acres
of wetland and upland habitat complexes and restore/enhance 745 acres of wetlands and prairies in the prairie region. Measure: Acres
protected; acres restored; acres enhanced.

Budget Spreadsheet

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

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

The deliverables of the program were reduced proportional to the amount of funding recommended by LSOHC.

Total Amount of Request: \$ 1786000

Budget and Cash Leverage

| Budget Name | LSOHC Request | Anticipated Leverage | Leverage Source | Total |
|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------|--|-------------|
| Personnel | \$155,000 | \$11,600 | USFWS Staff | \$166,600 |
| Contracts | \$457,000 | \$0 | | \$457,000 |
| Fee Acquisition w/ PILT | \$0 | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Fee Acquisition w/o PILT | \$0 | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Easement Acquisition | \$745,000 | \$223,500 | Private lando wner do nation of easement value | \$968,500 |
| Easement Stewardship | \$240,000 | \$0 | | \$240,000 |
| Travel | \$14,700 | \$0 | | \$14,700 |
| Pro fessio nal Services | \$130,500 | \$0 | | \$130,500 |
| Direct Support Services | \$41,800 | \$0 | | \$41,800 |
| DNR Land Acquisition Costs | \$0 | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Capital Equipment | \$0 | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Other Equipment/Tools | \$2,000 | \$0 | | \$2,000 |
| Supplies/Materials | \$0 | \$0 | | \$0 |
| DNR IDP | \$0 | \$0 | | \$0 |
| Total | \$1,786,000 | \$235,100 | | \$2,021,100 |

Personnel

| Position | FTE | Over#of years | LSOHC Request | Anticipated Leverage | Leverage Source | Total |
|--|-------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Land Trust Protection Staff (Program Manager, Legal, Director of Land Protection, etc.) | 0.30 | 3.00 | \$83,000 | \$0 | | \$83,000 |
| Land Trust Restoration Staff (Program Manager, etc.) | 0.30 | 3.00 | \$72,000 | \$11,600 | USFWS Staff | \$83,600 |
| | To tal 0.60 | 6.00 | \$155,000 | \$11,600 | | \$166,600 |

Amount of Request: \$1,786,000

Amount of Leverage: \$235,100

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 13.16%

DSS + Personnel: \$196,800

As a % of the total request: 11.02%

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

In a process that was approved by the DNR on March 17, 2017, Minnesota Land Trust determined our direct support services rate to include all of the allowable direct and necessary expenditures that are not captured in other line items in the budget, which is similar to the Land Trust's proposed federal indirect rate. We will apply this DNR-approved rate only to personnel expenses to determine the total amount of direct support services.

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

Of the total funding shown in the contract line item (\$457,000), 87.5% is for restoration/enhancement contracts. The remainder (\$57,000) is for the writing of habitat management plans and landowner outreach through local SWCD offices.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

We provide a conservative estimate (\$223,500) - under Easement Acquisition - of landowner donative value we expect to be put forward by those participating in the program. In addition, the USFWS has committed in-kind staff contributions totaling \$11,600 for

restoration/enhancement project engineering and design.

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

| Туре | Wetlands | Prairies | Forest | Habitats | Total |
|---|----------|----------|--------|----------|-------|
| Restore | 28 | 60 | 0 | 367 | 455 |
| Pro tect in Fee with State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Protect in Easement | 0 | 0 | 0 | 646 | 646 |
| Enhance | 0 | 40 | 0 | 250 | 290 |
| Total | 28 | 100 | 0 | 1,263 | 1,391 |

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

| Туре | Native Prairie |
|---|----------------|
| Restore | 0 |
| Pro tect in Fee with State PILT Liability | 0 |
| Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability | 0 |
| Pro tect in Easement | 0 |
| Enhance | 0 |
| Total | 0 |

Table 2. Total Funding by Resource Type

| Туре | Wetlands | Prairies | Forest | Habitats | Total |
|--|----------|----------|--------|-------------|-------------|
| Restore | \$37,400 | \$27,400 | \$0 | \$338,700 | \$403,500 |
| Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Protect in Easement | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$1,287,900 | \$1,287,900 |
| Enhance | \$0 | \$12,400 | \$0 | \$82,200 | \$94,600 |
| Total | \$37,400 | \$39,800 | \$0 | \$1,708,800 | \$1,786,000 |

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

| Туре | Metro Urban | Fo rest Prairie | SE Forest | Prairie | N Forest | Total |
|---|-------------|-----------------|-----------|---------|----------|-------|
| Restore | 0 | 180 | 0 | 275 | 0 | 455 |
| Pro tect in Fee with State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Pro tect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Pro tect in Easement | 0 | 300 | 0 | 346 | 0 | 646 |
| Enhance | 0 | 40 | 0 | 250 | 0 | 290 |
| Tota | 0 | 520 | 0 | 871 | 0 | 1,391 |

Table 4. Total Funding within each Ecological Section

| Туре | Metro Urban | ForestPrairie | SEForest | Prairie | N Forest | Total |
|---|-------------|---------------|----------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| Restore | \$0 | \$170,500 | \$0 | \$233,000 | \$0 | \$403,500 |
| Pro tect in Fee with State PILT Liability | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Pro tect in Easement | \$0 | \$687,900 | \$0 | \$600,000 | \$0 | \$1,287,900 |
| Enhance | \$0 | \$12,400 | \$0 | \$82,200 | \$0 | \$94,600 |
| Total | \$0 | \$870,800 | \$0 | \$915,200 | \$0 | \$1,786,000 |

Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type

| Туре | Wetlands | Prairies | Forest | Habitats |
|--|----------|----------|--------|----------|
| Restore | \$1336 | \$457 | \$0 | \$923 |
| Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Protect in Easement | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$1994 |
| Enhance | \$0 | \$310 | \$0 | \$329 |

Table 6. Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section

| Туре | Metro/Urban | Forest/Prairie | SE Forest | Prairie | Northern Forest |
|--|-------------|----------------|-----------|---------|-----------------|
| Restore | \$0 | \$947 | \$0 | \$847 | \$0 |
| Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Protect in Easement | \$0 | \$2293 | \$0 | \$1734 | \$0 |
| Enhance | \$0 | \$310 | \$0 | \$329 | \$0 |

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

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Parcel List

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

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

Big Stone

| Name | T RDS | Acres | EstCost | Existing Protection? |
|-----------------|----------|-------|-----------|----------------------|
| HD/R | 12244225 | 69 | \$10,455 | Yes |
| HFarms et al | 12245227 | 136 | \$42,890 | Yes |
| Big Stone/Swift | | | | |
| Name | TRDS | Acres | EstCost | Existing Protection? |
| CVac | 12044213 | 65 | \$22,000 | Yes |
| Douglas | | | | |
| Name | TRDS | Acres | EstCost | Existing Protection? |
| GLil | 13040203 | 40 | \$10,000 | Yes |
| MOIs | 13040213 | 80 | \$50,000 | Yes |
| Grant | | | | |
| Name | TRDS | Acres | EstCost | Existing Protection? |
| JLue | 12842210 | 100 | \$100,000 | Yes |
| Otter Tail | | | | |
| Name | TRDS | Acres | EstCost | Existing Protection? |
| BStef | 13743217 | 160 | \$80,000 | Yes |
| CSha | 13644213 | 80 | \$50,000 | Yes |
| DHes | 13243212 | 10 | \$10,000 | Yes |
| DKlu | 13642213 | 5 | \$7,500 | Yes |
| JOle | 13239235 | 10 | \$7,500 | Yes |
| WVal | 13242228 | 80 | \$40,000 | Yes |
| WVal #2 | 13242228 | 3 | \$5,000 | Yes |
| Swift | | | | |
| Name | TRDS | Acres | Est Cost | Existing Protection? |
| G Str | 12238224 | 100 | \$13,290 | Yes |

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type protect.

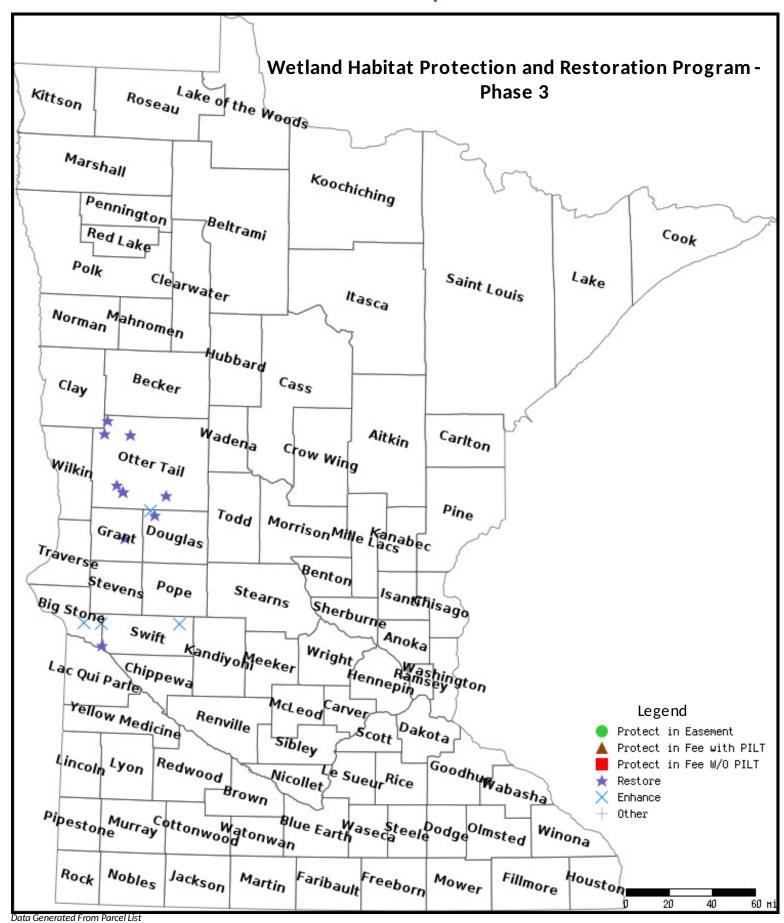
Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map



Wetland Habitat Protection Program



-Minnesota Land Trust Easement Sign-Up Criteria-

The Wetland Habitat Protection Program 3 protects Minnesota's rich array of wildlife habitat within the Prairie and Forest/Prairie Transition zones of Minnesota. Funded through Minnesota's Outdoor Heritage Fund, the Minnesota Land Trust (Land Trust) employs perpetual conservation easements in collaboration with private landowners to protect important wetland habitat and associated forests, grasslands and open water.

Through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process, landowners within targeted priority areas submit an application for participation in the Wetland Habitat Protection program. Submitted projects are initially scored based on two primary factors: 1) ecological value and 2) cost.

Ecological Value 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 associated habitat and populations of SGCN and T&E species;
- Landscape Context the extent and condition of natural habitat and amount of protected land surrounding the parcel.

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 generate a score that is used to initially rank a proposed parcel relative to others. Subsequent discussions with each landowner participating in the RFP 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:

- Land must be located within the Wetlands Habitat Protection Program area.
- Easements must be at least 40 acres in size.
- Easements must contain high quality examples of native plant communities (forest, prairies, etc.) and have at least 10 acres of wetland habitat or contain an undeveloped shoreline.
- Agricultural land consisting of row crops, tree farms, etc. may not amount to more than 10% of the property; consideration to exceed this cap may be warranted if the easement is donated or if agricultural land is slated for restoration. Agricultural land included within an easement is not eligible for payment unless restored to natural vegetation. Feedlots are not allowed.
- Acres previously enrolled in permanent conservation programs (e.g., RIM) are ineligible. However, U.S.
 Fish and Wildlife Service's conservation easements may be eligible, depending on the level of
 protection of that particular program.

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 prioritization modules used by the Minnesota DNR, The Nature Conservancy, and nationally by the Natural Heritage Data Center Network. This system enables the Land Trust to secure conservation easements that effectively and efficiently protect Minnesota's natural resources.

A Framework for Evaluating Landowner Submissions via RFP

| \ | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|--|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|--|----------------|------------|
| | | | Initial | Ranking of Ap | plicatio | ns | | | | |
| Existing Ecological Significance | Units Affected | Scoring framewor | k for prioritizin | g conservation | value am | ong applic | cants thi | rough an RFP process. | | |
| | 1. Size/Abundar | nce of Habitat Pro | tected by Easen | nent (Maximur | n 100 pt | s) | | | | |
| | 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/Qua | ality of Natural Re | sources to be P | rotected by the | Easeme | ent (Maxin | num 10 | 0 pts) | | |
| | 0 | Average quality of | existing native | plant communit | ies | | | | | |
| | 0 | Number and qualit | y of rare species | on parcel; rarit | y of the | species | | | | |
| | 0 | Minnesota Biologi | cal Ranking | | | | | | | |
| | 3. Landscape C | ontext (Maximum | 100 pts) | | | | | | | |
| | 0 | Location of parcel | relative to biodi | versity "hotspot | s" or pri | ority areas | delineat | ed in conservation plans | S | |
| | 0 | 0 Location of parcel relative to other conservation lands | | | | | | | | |
| | | • | relative to exist | ing moderate-hi | gh qualit | y native pl | ant com | munities; degree of hab | itat fragmenta | tion |
| | Total Score (Max | imum 300 pts) | | | | | | | | |
| Cost | Score | | | | | | | | | |
| Cost | 4. Cost | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Bid amount (\$)/aci | re. | | | | | | | |
| | | Estimated Donativ | | | | | | | | |
| | , | | σ γαιασ (φ)/ αστο | | | | | | | |
| | | Revised Sc | oring of Applic | ations Followin | g Discu | ssion with | Landov | vner | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Potential Impacts by Landowner | Score Adjustments (+/-) | | | _ | | | | ed on easement rights r impact on existing biod | - | : |
| | 5. Size/Abundan | ce of Habitat Prot | ected by Easem | ent | | | | | | |
| | 0 | Total acres of nativ | ve plant commu | nity or extent of | target fe | ature impa | cted by | retained rights or propo | sed actions if | exercised. |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 6. Diversity/Qua | lity of Natural Res | | · | | | | | | |
| | 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. | | | | | | xercised. | | |
| 0 | REVISED BIOI | DIVERSITY SIGN | IFICANCE SO | CORE | | | | | | |

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Comparison Report

Program Title: 2018 - Wetland Habitat Protection and Restoration Program - Phase 3

Organization: Minnesota Land Trust

Manager: Wayne Ostlie

Budget

Requested Amount: \$5,283,900 Appropriated Amount: \$1,786,000

Percentage: 33.80%

| | T o tal Requested | | Total App | ro priate d | Percentage of Request | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--|
| Budget Item | LSOHC Request | Anticipated Leverage | Appropriated Amount | Anticipated Leverage | Percentage of Request | Percentage of Leverage | |
| Personnel | \$405,000 | \$26,400 | \$155,000 | \$11,600 | 38.27% | 43.94% | |
| Contracts | \$1,102,000 | \$0 | \$457,000 | \$0 | 41.47% | - | |
| Fee Acquisition w/ PILT | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | - | - | |
| Fee Acquisition w/o PILT | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | - | - | |
| Easement Acquisition | \$2,700,000 | \$810,000 | \$745,000 | \$223,500 | 27.59% | 27.59% | |
| Easement Stewardship | \$552,000 | \$0 | \$240,000 | \$0 | 43.48% | - | |
| Travel | \$35,000 | \$0 | \$14,700 | \$0 | 42.00% | - | |
| Professional Services | \$374,500 | \$0 | \$130,500 | \$0 | 34.85% | - | |
| Direct Support Services | \$109,400 | \$0 | \$41,800 | \$0 | 38.21% | - | |
| DNR Land Acquisition Costs | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | - | - | |
| Capital Equipment | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | - | - | |
| Other Equipment/Tools | \$6,000 | \$0 | \$2,000 | \$0 | 33.33% | - | |
| Supplies/Materials | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | - | - | |
| DNR IDP | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | - | - | |
| Total | \$5,283,900 | \$836,400 | \$1,786,000 | \$235,100 | 33.80% | 28.11% | |

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

 $The \ deliverables \ of \ the \ program \ were \ reduced \ proportional \ to \ the \ amount \ of \ funding \ recommended \ by \ LSOHC.$

Output

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

| Туре | Total Proposed | Total in AP | Percentage of Proposed |
|---|----------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Restore | 963 | 455 | 47.25% |
| Pro tect in Fee with State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | - |
| Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | - |
| Pro tect in Easement | 2,300 | 646 | 28.09% |
| Enhance | 719 | 290 | 40.33% |

Table 2. Total Funding by Resource Type

| Туре | T o tal Proposed | Total in AP | Percentage of Proposed |
|---|------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Restore | 858,600 | 403,500 | 47.00% |
| Pro tect in Fee with State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | - |
| Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | - |
| Pro tect in Easement | 4,197,400 | 1,287,900 | 30.68% |
| Enhance | 227,900 | 94,600 | 41.51% |

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

| Туре | Total Proposed | Total in AP | Percentage of Proposed |
|---|----------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Restore | 963 | 455 | 47.25% |
| Pro tect in Fee with State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | - |
| Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | - |
| Pro tect in Easement | 2,300 | 646 | 28.09% |
| Enhance | 719 | 290 | 40.33% |

Table 4. Total Funding within each Ecological Section

| Туре | Total Proposed | Total in AP | Percentage of Proposed |
|---|----------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Restore | 858,600 | 403,500 | 47.00% |
| Pro tect in Fee with State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | - |
| Pro tect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability | 0 | 0 | - |
| Pro tect in Easement | 4,197,400 | 1,287,900 | 30.68% |
| Enhance | 227,900 | 94,600 | 41.51% |