

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2019 / ML 2018 Request for Funding



Date: May 30, 2017

Program or Project Title: Southeast Minnesota Protection and Restoration Phase 6

Funds Requested: \$9,796,200

Manager's Name: Richard Biske

Title: Freshwater Program Director

Organization: The Nature Conservancy

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County Locations: Dodge, Fillmore, Houston, Olmsted, Wabasha, and Winona.

Regions in which work will take place:

- Southeast Forest

Activity types:

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

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Forest
- Prairie
- Habitat

Abstract:

This project will permanently protect critical habitat using conservation easements and fee land acquisition on approximately 3,185 acres and restore and enhance approximately 963 acres of declining habitat for species of greatest conservation need in strategically targeted public land assets of biodiversity significance in the Blufflands resulting in increased public access and improved habitat.

Design and scope of work:

The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Minnesota Land Trust (MLT) and The Trust for Public Land (TPL) in partnership will use Outdoor Heritage Funds to investment in habitat protection and restoration within the Blufflands of Southeast Minnesota to expand and connect larger contiguous blocks of protected lands allowing land managers to restore, enhance and maintain high quality habitats at a scale difficult to accomplish with a fragmented ownership. Benefits of this program include the increased effectiveness of frequent prescribed fire necessary to reclaim "goat prairies", oak savanna and regenerate oak hardwood forests at a larger scale. Protecting and managing these lands is not only important for ecological reasons, but also benefits public use and enjoyment of these lands and the resources they provide. This proposal will enhance prior conservation investments and ensure that the legacy of the Blufflands is preserved in a high quality condition for future generations.

There are 86 different native plant community types mapped by the Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS), covering nearly 149,670 acres within the project area. There are 183 species of state listed rare plants and animals, many of which are concentrated on 749 sites of biodiversity significance. This program has a proven track record of protecting, restoring and enhancing lands that meet both state and local priorities for biodiversity, land access and watershed health.

In addition, despite the area's high demand for outdoor recreation and having more species of greatest conservation need than anywhere else in the state, only 5% of the region is open to the public.

Conservation Easements:

MLT will acquire approximately 2,285 acres of conservation easements and develop restoration and habitat management plans for eased acres. MLT will identify potential projects within targeted priority areas through an RFP process coupled with local outreach via SWCD offices. This competitive landowner bid process will rank projects based on ecological value and cost, prioritizing the best projects and securing them at the lowest cost to the state.

Fee Acquisition:

TNC and TPL will coordinate with MN DNR on all potential fee-title acquisitions. TNC and TPL will assist the participating DNR Divisions by conducting all or some of the following activities: initial site reviews, negotiations with the willing seller, appraisals, environmental reviews and acquisition of fee title. TNC and TPL will transfer lands to the DNR except when TNC ownership is appropriate. Fee acquisition of approximately 600 acres of forest and 300 acres of prairie along 2 miles of coldwater trout stream is planned.

Restoration and Enhancement:

TNC will restore/enhance approximately 589 acres of bluff prairie, floodplain, riparian habitat and forest.

MLT will restore and enhance 88 acres of prairie and 44 acres of forest on existing easements, 143 acres of prairie and forest on new easements.

Ecological restoration enhancement management plans will be developed in coordination with the appropriate DNR staff, landowners and/or hired subcontractors.

Results to date:

Conservation Easements: 1,696 acres

Fee Land Acquisition: 2,661 acres

13 miles of stream

Restoration and Enhancement: 783

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 Action Plan 2015-2025
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

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

OHF 25 Year Framework:

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

-2,661 acres have been opened to public hunting, fishing and recreation to date, improving access and management. Protect, enhance, and restore habitat for wildlife in rivers, cold-water streams, and associated upland habitat.

-13 miles of coldwater troutstreams have been protected to date, including 7 additional miles of fishing access. Restoration and enhancement from bluff to stream has been completed or ongoing on 924 acres.

Protect and Restore Bluff Prairie 169 acres

Restore forest-based habitat that has experienced substantial decline in area in recent decades. 58 ac. forest

Wildlife Action Plan:

Stabilize and increase SGCN populations on: oak savanna, native prairie, cliffs and bluffs and stream habitats. 10 bluff prairies covering 169 acres enhanced and 70 acres have been restored.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Southeast Forest:

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

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

To date 3,777 acres (73%) of land protected through our program include a documented rare species or community element occurrence, half of those have a state rank of 1 or 2. Twenty different rare species or plant communities and 1 unique groundwater feature have been protected. 2,629 acres have been opened for public hunting and fishing, allowing increased management within habitat complexes.

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 is focused on Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs) identified based on their biodiversity significance as mapped by the Minnesota Biological Survey, Wildlife Action Plan and proximity to existing public and conservation lands. These COAs are developed and reviewed periodically by resource professionals representing non-game, wildlife, fisheries, forestry and watershed expertise. Project area viability is based on habitat complex connectivity and potential for restoring and enhancing new and historic conservation lands that otherwise would have diminishing habitat value for rare and non-game species. In addition to habitat fragmentation and lack of disturbance, the program area's cold water trout streams are threatened by sedimentation and high runoff. This program protects and restores trout habitat by protecting forests and grasslands within stream valleys, enhancing their condition and restoring riparian and floodplain corridors along trout streams. This reduces storm event runoff to streams and prevents sedimentation of trout habitat.

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 Blufflands of Southeast Minnesota have more species of greatest conservation need than any other ecological subsection in Minnesota. 70% of the acres completed are within the Wildlife Action Network and most are medium to high priority. Acquisition projects have protected habitat necessary for 39 documented occurrences of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). Projects in this proposal will continue to support SGCN and targeted species by working within complexes identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey. Projects include a mix of mesic hardwood forests, large fire dependent communities including oak/hickory woodlands, oak forests, savannas and bluff and ridgetop prairies. These complexes and the coldwater streams they support are habitat for a variety of SGCN including the state listed timber rattlesnake, grassland nesting birds, neotropical migrants and bats. The program has protected over 13 miles of coldwater trout stream including 10% of a watershed and it's associated habitat for native heritage brook trout and American brook lamprey.

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

Natural populations, including healthy populations with good habitat, vary among locations, and also rise and fall within lakes and rivers. Most fish surveys conducted by DNR produce an index of abundance (catch per unit effort) rather than a population estimate. This project is estimated to benefit 2,400 pounds of brook trout and 3,120 pounds of brown trout.

Outcomes:

Programs in southeast forest region:

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

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

Acquisition projects will be adjacent or within close proximity to existing protected lands, including state-owned lands and lands under conservation easement. Allowing for the expansion of maintenance and restoration activities that are currently taking place on those protected lands and adjacent private lands. Habitats cleared of invasive species will be maintained with prescribed fire and other practices. Protection and restoration projects will improve future prescribed fire and maintenance activities through economies of scale. The tracts protected and enhanced as part of this proposal also meet the prioritization for Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan. MN DNR has been successful in securing federal habitat enhancement funding. Tracts acquired will be transferred to the state for ongoing management unless when TNC ownership is appropriate. MLT - The land protected through conservation easements will be sustained through the state-of-the art easement stewardship standards and practices. MLT is a nationally-accredited and insured land trust with a successful easement stewardship program that includes annual property monitoring and defending the easements as necessary. In addition, MLT encourages landowners to undertake active ecological management of their properties, provides them with habitat

management plans and works with them to secure resources (expertise and funding) to undertake these activities over time.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Every 4-6 years	US Fish and Wildlife Service	prescribed fire		
Every 4-6 years	DNR Game and Fish Fund	Prescribed fire		
2021 and perpetually	MLT Easement Stewardship and Enforcement Fund	Annual monitoring in perpetuity		

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

Two habitat fragmentation threats continue to plague this region. The City of Rochester and surrounding communities are within this program area. Rochester is the state's 3rd largest city and continues to grow with increasing rural residential housing fueled by reasonable forest land prices. Despite a downturn in crop prices, conversion of woodlots and grassland continues to remove habitat. In addition to these habitat conversion and fragmentation threats, the prolonged lack of management on fire dependent communities in the area and increasing densities of invasive species make native habitats more costly to restore and enhance with each passing growing season.

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

US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) State Wildlife Grant funds are used to enhance oak savanna and bluff prairie on private lands within the priority complexes this project operates in an effort to manage at a landscape scale. TNC uses US Forest Service funds to conduct landowner outreach and technical assistance for private lands habitat planning and project development to improve forest condition and habitat enhancement within priority complexes.

MLT:

Minnesota Land Trust encourages landowners to fully or partially donate the value of conservation easements as part of its landowner bid protocol. An estimated leverage of \$822,800 of donated value from landowners from easement acquisition is a conservative estimate. Minnesota Land Trust is also leveraging USFS funds for restoration and enhancement on easement lands.

Relationship to other funds:

- Not Listed

Describe the relationship of the funds:

TNC and TPL are leveraging 50% of direct support services expenses.

Minnesota Land Trust encourages landowners to fully or partially donate the value of conservation easements as part of its landowner bid protocol. The leverage portion of the easement acquisition line item is a conservative estimate of value we expect to see donated to the Land Trust.

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

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2013	The Nature Conservancy	\$67,661
2014	The Nature Conservancy	\$2,173,459
2015	The Nature Conservancy	\$10,769
2016	The Trust for Public Land	\$250,000

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 are notified of each proposed land acquisition that will be transferred to the state and program staff are available to discuss projects with local government staff and/or elected officials.

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

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

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

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

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

Land Use:

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

Explain

Short-term use of agricultural crops is an accepted best practice for preparing a site for prairie restoration. For example, short-term use of soybeans could be used for restorations in order to control weed seedbeds prior to prairie planting. In some cases this necessitates the use of GMO treated products to facilitate herbicide use in order to control weeds present in the seedbank, however neonicotinoids will not be used.

MLT - The purpose of the Minnesota Land Trust's conservation easements is to protect existing high quality natural habitat and to preserve opportunities for future restoration. As such, we restrict any agricultural lands and use on the properties. In cases in which there are agricultural lands associated with the larger property, we will either carve the agricultural area out of the conservation easement, or in some limited cases, we may include a small percentage of agricultural lands if it is not feasible to carve those areas out. In such cases, however, we will not use OHF funds to pay the landowners for that portion of the conservation easement.

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

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

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

Not Listed

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 or improved as a result of the OHF acquisition - **No**

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Purchase agreements or options on acquisition of fee land	June 30, 2021
Purchase agreements or options on conservation easements	June 30, 2021
Acquisition of fee land	June 30, 2022
Floodplain and stream corridor restoration and enhancement	June 30, 2023
Bluff prairie and oak savanna enhancement	June 30, 2023
Easement acquisition	June 30, 2022

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$9,796,200

Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$686,700	\$0		\$686,700
Contracts	\$1,871,000	\$0		\$1,871,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$3,905,000	\$0		\$3,905,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$1,920,000	\$822,800	Landowner	\$2,742,800
Easement Stewardship	\$384,000	\$0		\$384,000
Travel	\$32,000	\$0		\$32,000
Professional Services	\$523,000	\$0		\$523,000
Direct Support Services	\$260,500	\$184,300	Private,Private	\$444,800
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$80,000	\$0		\$80,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$9,000	\$0		\$9,000
Supplies/Materials	\$30,000	\$0		\$30,000
DNR IDP	\$95,000	\$0		\$95,000
Total	\$9,796,200	\$1,007,100	-	\$10,803,300

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # o f years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
TPL Protection and Legal Staff	0.30	3.00	\$124,700	\$0		\$124,700
TNC Project Management	0.50	3.00	\$150,000	\$0		\$150,000
TNC Protection Staff	0.33	3.00	\$90,000	\$0		\$90,000
TNC Grant Administration	0.09	3.00	\$25,000	\$0		\$25,000
MLT-Conservation and Legal Staff	1.05	3.00	\$297,000	\$0		\$297,000
Total	2.27	15.00	\$686,700	\$0	-	\$686,700

Budget and Cash Leverage by Partnership

Budget Name	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	Trust for Public Land	\$124,700	\$0		\$124,700
Contracts	Trust for Public Land	\$150,000	\$0		\$150,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	Trust for Public Land	\$2,280,000	\$0		\$2,280,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	Trust for Public Land	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	Trust for Public Land	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	Trust for Public Land	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	Trust for Public Land	\$2,000	\$0		\$2,000
Professional Services	Trust for Public Land	\$98,000	\$0		\$98,000
Direct Support Services	Trust for Public Land	\$50,800	\$50,800	Private	\$101,600
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	Trust for Public Land	\$50,000	\$0		\$50,000
Capital Equipment	Trust for Public Land	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	Trust for Public Land	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	Trust for Public Land	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR IDP	Trust for Public Land	\$50,000	\$0		\$50,000
Total	-	\$2,805,500	\$50,800	-	\$2,856,300

Personnel - Trust for Public Land

Position	FTE	Over # o f years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
TPL Protection and Legal Staff	0.30	3.00	\$124,700	\$0		\$124,700
Total	0.30	3.00	\$124,700	\$0	-	\$124,700

BudgetName	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	The Nature Conservancy	\$265,000	\$0		\$265,000
Contracts	The Nature Conservancy	\$700,000	\$0		\$700,000

Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	The Nature Conservancy	\$1,625,000	\$0	\$1,625,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	The Nature Conservancy	\$0	\$0	\$0
Easement Acquisition	The Nature Conservancy	\$0	\$0	\$0
Easement Stewardship	The Nature Conservancy	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	The Nature Conservancy	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
Professional Services	The Nature Conservancy	\$150,000	\$0	\$150,000
Direct Support Services	The Nature Conservancy	\$133,500	\$133,500	Private \$267,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	The Nature Conservancy	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000
Capital Equipment	The Nature Conservancy	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	The Nature Conservancy	\$0	\$0	\$0
Supplies/Materials	The Nature Conservancy	\$25,000	\$0	\$25,000
DNR IDP	The Nature Conservancy	\$45,000	\$0	\$45,000
Total	-	\$2,978,500	\$133,500	- \$3,112,000

Personnel - The Nature Conservancy

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
TNC Project Management	0.50	3.00	\$150,000	\$0		\$150,000
TNC Protection Staff	0.33	3.00	\$90,000	\$0		\$90,000
TNC Grant Administration	0.09	3.00	\$25,000	\$0		\$25,000
Total	0.92	9.00	\$265,000	\$0		\$265,000

BudgetName	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	Minnesota Land Trust	\$297,000	\$0		\$297,000
Contracts	Minnesota Land Trust	\$1,021,000	\$0		\$1,021,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	Minnesota Land Trust	\$1,920,000	\$822,800	Landowner	\$2,742,800
Easement Stewardship	Minnesota Land Trust	\$384,000	\$0		\$384,000
Travel	Minnesota Land Trust	\$25,000	\$0		\$25,000
Professional Services	Minnesota Land Trust	\$275,000	\$0		\$275,000
Direct Support Services	Minnesota Land Trust	\$76,200	\$0		\$76,200
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	Minnesota Land Trust	\$9,000	\$0		\$9,000
Supplies/Materials	Minnesota Land Trust	\$5,000	\$0		\$5,000
DNR IDP	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	-	\$4,012,200	\$822,800		\$4,835,000

Personnel - Minnesota Land Trust

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
MLT-Conservation and Legal Staff	1.05	3.00	\$297,000	\$0		\$297,000
Total	1.05	3.00	\$297,000	\$0		\$297,000

Amount of Request: \$9,796,200
Amount of Leverage: \$1,007,100
Leverage as a percent of the Request: 10.28%
DSS + Personnel: \$947,200
As a % of the total request: 9.67%
Easement Stewardship: \$384,000
As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 20.00%

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

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

Interior on an annual basis. The proportion requested from the grant represents 50% with the other 50% contributed as leverage.

MLT: 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.

TPL: The Trust for Public Land's DSS request is based upon our federally approved indirect rate, which has been approved by the DNR. 50% of these costs are requested from the grant, 50% is contributed as leverage.

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

TNC and TPL contract line item are dedicated to enhancement and restoration work. Typical contractors include private vendors and Conservation Corps of MN/IA.

MLT will use the contract budget item for three distinct purposes: to complete habitat management plans on the new easement acquisitions; for restoration plans and projects on existing easements; and for partnering with SWCD's on outreach for easement acquisition.

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

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

Vehicle rental is also included.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

TNC and TPL will leverage privately sourced funds to cover half of direct support services (DSS) costs. The Land Trust encourages landowners to donate value as a participant in the program. This leverage (\$822,800) is a conservative estimate of expected landowner contributions.

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:

Personnel costs are associated with projects. Larger protection, enhancement and restoration projects while having higher acquisition, easement or contract costs do allow for greater efficiency in personnel and administrative costs. With additional funds the project would acquire additional tracts of varying size depending on funds available.

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	44	22	0	66
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	300	600	0	900
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	2,285	2,285
Enhance	0	526	48	0	574
Total	0	870	670	2,285	3,825

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

Type	Native Prairie
Restore	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	30
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Easement	0
Enhance	227
Total	257

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$405,400	\$227,700	\$180,500	\$813,600
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$1,572,500	\$3,258,000	\$0	\$4,830,500
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,946,000	\$2,946,000
Enhance	\$0	\$848,400	\$357,700	\$0	\$1,206,100
Total	\$0	\$2,826,300	\$3,843,400	\$3,126,500	\$9,796,200

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	66	0	0	66
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	900	0	0	900
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	2,285	0	0	2,285
Enhance	0	0	574	0	0	574
Total	0	0	3,825	0	0	3,825

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$813,600	\$0	\$0	\$813,600
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$4,830,500	\$0	\$0	\$4,830,500
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$2,946,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,946,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$1,206,100	\$0	\$0	\$1,206,100
Total	\$0	\$0	\$9,796,200	\$0	\$0	\$9,796,200

Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	\$0	\$9,214	\$10,350	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$5,242	\$5,430	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,289
Enhance	\$0	\$1,613	\$7,452	\$0

Table 6. Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$12,327	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$5,367	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$1,289	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$2,101	\$0	\$0

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

2 miles

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:

Not Listed

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

Fillmore

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Brightsdale Unit	10310202	26	\$20,000	Yes
Choice WMA	10208201	60	\$60,000	Yes
Peterson State Land	10408219	27	\$81,000	Yes
Peterson State Land	10408220	37	\$36,500	Yes
Root River 1	10309207	66	\$171,600	Yes
Root River 2	10309218	98	\$254,800	Yes
Rushford Drainage District	10508233	31	\$93,000	Yes
Rushford Sand Barrens 1	10408233	114	\$296,400	Yes
Rushford Sand Barrens 2	10408234	251	\$652,600	Yes
Rushford Sand Barrens 3	10408227	148	\$384,800	Yes

Houston

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Houston County	10306220	33	\$97,500	Yes
Root River 3	10406204	244	\$634,400	Yes
Root River 4	10407225	11	\$28,600	Yes
Root River 5	10407221	154	\$400,400	Yes
Vinegar Ridge 1	10407228	13	\$39,000	Yes
Vinegar Ridge 2	10407234	373	\$5,000	Yes
Vinegar Ridge 3	10407227	30	\$45,000	Yes
Yucatan	10307230	50	\$150,000	Yes

Wabasha

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
East Indian Creek	10910226	70	\$182,000	Yes

Winona

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Crooked Creek	10204221	15	\$39,000	Yes
Wiscoy Valley 1	10507233	25	\$65,000	Yes
Wiscoy Valley 2	10507217	150	\$390,000	No

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Dodge

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Middle Fork Zumbro	10817224	175	\$787,500	No	Full	Full

Fillmore

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Choice WMA 2	10208211	300	\$1,500,000	No	Full	Full
Choice WMA 3	10208203	162	\$729,000	No	Full	Full

Houston

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Wetbark	10306219	100	\$350,000	No	Full	Full

Olmsted

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Whitewater 1	10711224	40	\$160,000	No	Full	Full

Wabasha

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Weaver	10909205	120	\$420,000	No	Full	Full

Winona

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Whitewater	10710209	120	\$480,000	No	Full	Full

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

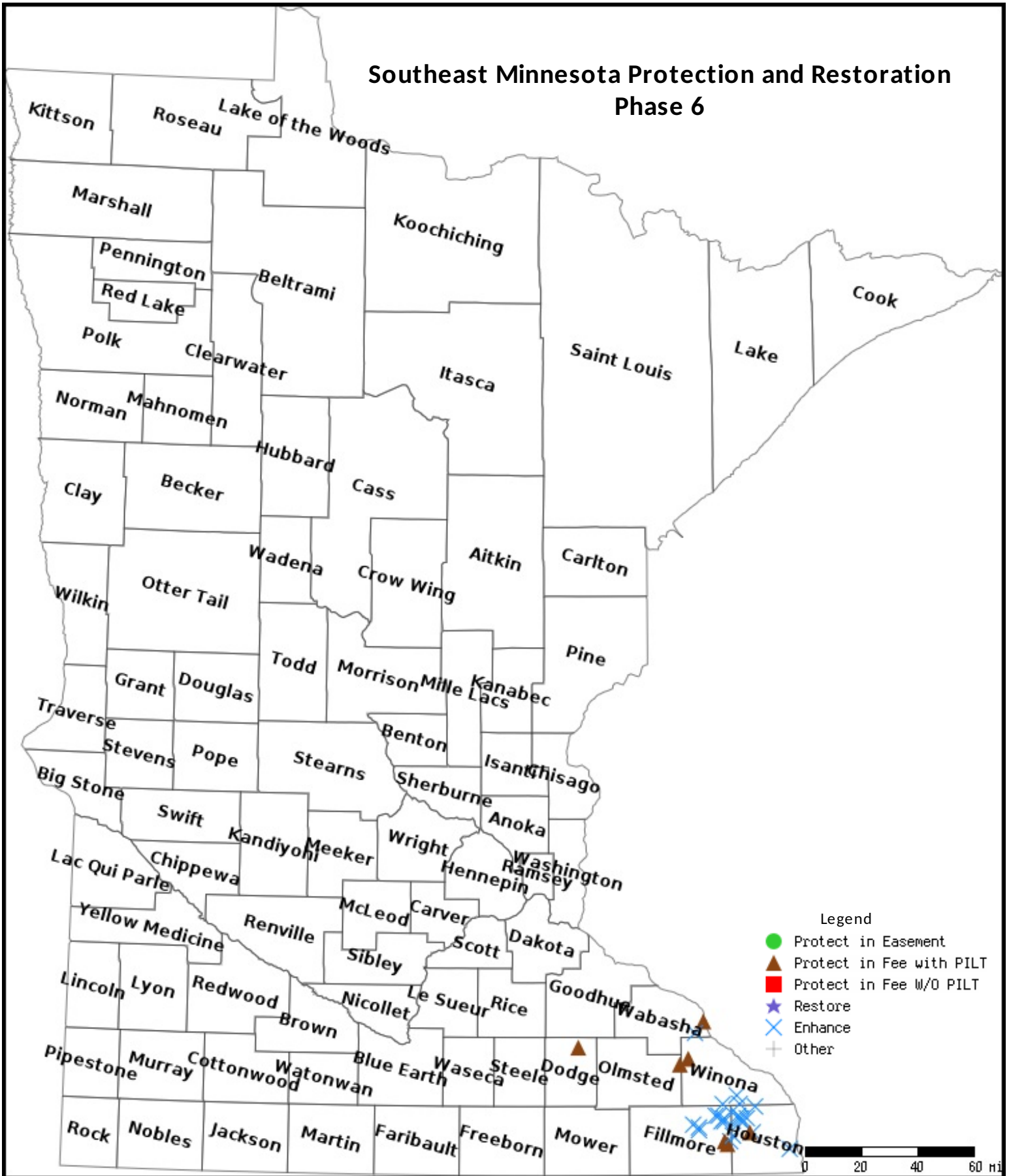
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map

Southeast Minnesota Protection and Restoration Phase 6



Data Generated From Parcel List

Southeast MN Protection & Restoration Phase 6

Summary of Proposed Activity:

Phase 6 covers the entire Blufflands Region.

- 2,285 acres of perpetual conservation easements
- 900 acres of state land acquisition
- 919 acres of restoration & enhancement, including prairie, savanna, forest

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

Prioritizing Projects

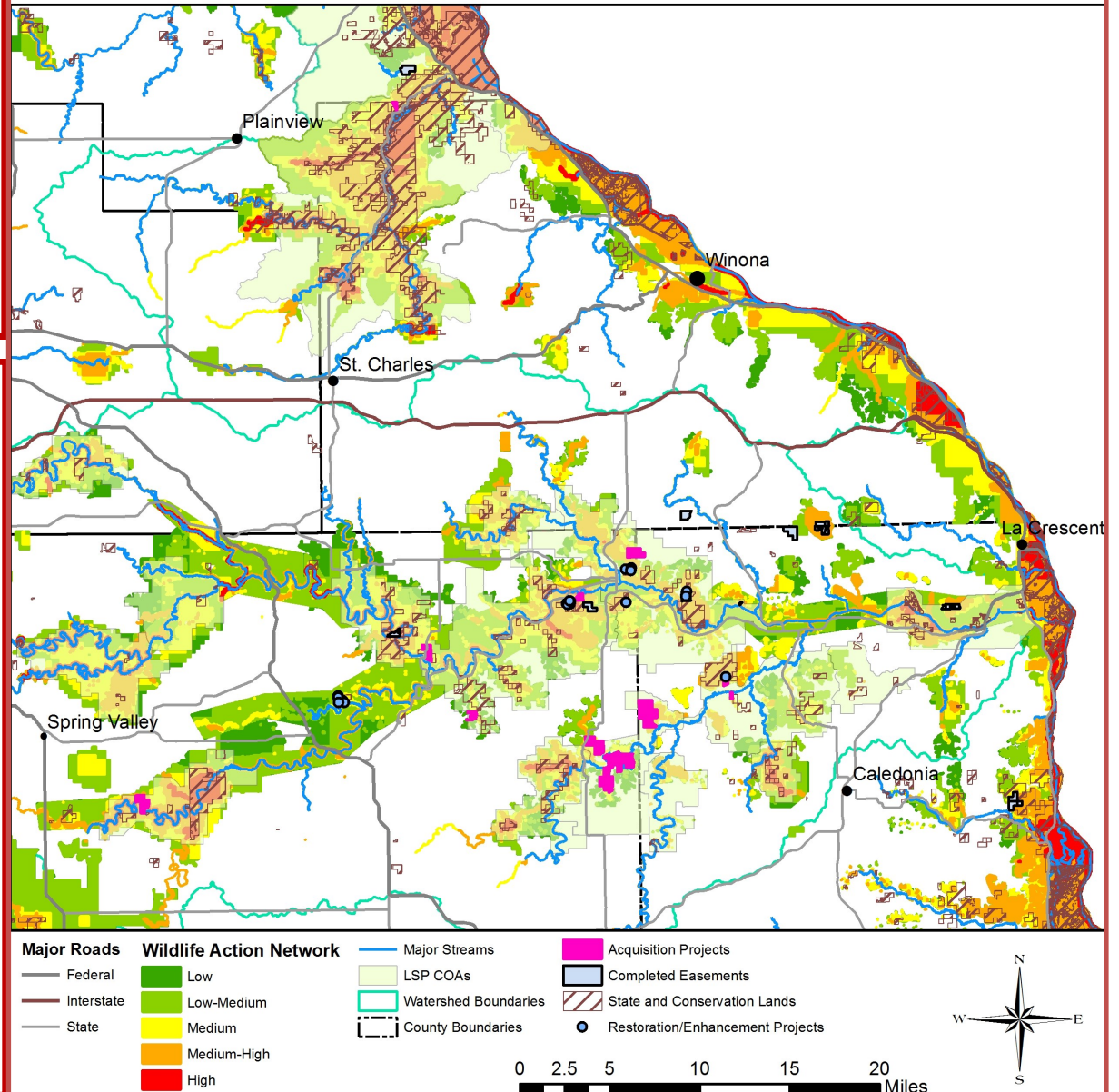
Protection

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

Restoration

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

Protection, Restoration, and Enhancement Projects in Southeast Minnesota



Status of Phase 1 - 4

Starting July, 2013

Goals: Acquisition of 3,526 acres

1,050 acres easements

783 acres of Restoration & Enhancement

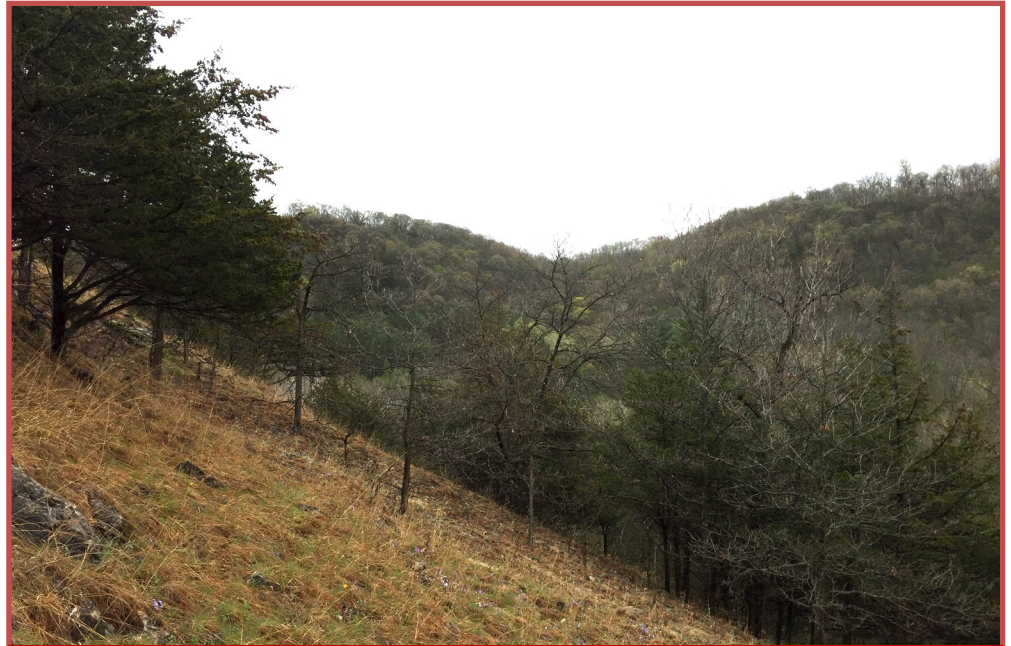
Accomplishments

Fee Acquisition: Closed or pending on 3,362 acres (95% of goal) 13 miles of trout stream (150% of goal)

Completed 1,696 acres of conservation easements (109% of goal)

Restore/Enhance completed on 559 acres (71% of goal)

Raised **\$2.5M** of private funds to complete acquisitions, leveraged **\$200k** of Federal funds for enhancement, **\$172K** from easement landowners



Proposed 31 acre bluff prairie and oak savanna enhancement.



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

Partners:

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

The Minnesota Land Trust will complete the permanent conservation easement transactions in partnership with private landowners and restoration and enhancement projects in partnership with USFWS.





Southeastern Minnesota Blufflands Program

-Minnesota Land Trust Easement Criteria-

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

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

Ecological Significance is determined through an analysis of three subfactors:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Nature Conservancy's Direct Support Service Methodology

Background

Through the course of implementing grants awarded by the Legacy and Environmental Trust Fund (ENTRF) processes there are numerous costs which are directly related to and necessary for program implementation but which, for practical reasons, cannot be assigned to specific projects. For example, all projects involve the Payroll Department, but because of the size and complexity of the Conservancy's accounting systems it is not possible to determine how much of each payroll administrator's salary should be charged to specific projects.

To account for these and similar costs the Nature Conservancy has developed a methodology for documenting them on an annual basis. This methodology is based on actual costs of Direct Support Services from the previous year and is essentially a ratio of unassignable costs to those which are easily assigned. The ratio is annually adjusted based on real costs. Further, the methodology and costs are annually audited and accepted as our official "Indirect Cost Rate" by all federal funding agencies.

Costs included in this category are deemed internally as General and Administrative or Facilities and are represented as the sum in Column X in the table below. General and Administrative costs include: payroll and accounting, general legal services, human resources, grants administration, information systems, and executive management. Specifically excluded from this category are: Fundraising, Lobbying, Government Relations, Membership Development, and costs directly assigned to projects.

The Nature Conservancy Statement of Total Costs by Program Operating and Land Funds July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011											
M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X
Elements of Costs	Total Costs for ICR	Conservation	Membership Development	Fundraising	Lobbying	Government Relations	Land Fund	(O)+(P)+(Q)+(R)+(S)+(T) Total Direct Costs	Indirect Costs	Facilities	Total Indirect
Salaries	188,252,493	107,171,712	1,413,799	31,063,301	1,524,236	4,866,810	0	146,039,859	42,212,634		42,212,634
Fringe Benefits	81,164,511	46,206,242	602,953	13,294,927	640,926	2,122,490	0	62,867,538	18,296,973		18,296,973
Fees and charges	123,019,361	84,092,866	2,835,357	4,901,214	3,852,422	541,458	16,114,142	112,337,459	7,057,317	3,624,585	10,681,902
Supplies and communications	33,510,127	14,944,395	11,552,986	2,359,259	56,972	240,693	284,768	29,439,074	4,071,053		4,071,053
Travel	18,278,067	12,304,999	40,573	2,479,549	155,797	563,214	246,294	15,790,427	2,487,640		2,487,640
Occupancy	28,963,791	7,666,782	0	501,639	2,241	40,855	9,658,196	17,869,713	0	11,094,078	11,094,078
Equipment	6,706,276	5,044,065	0	210,406	2,090	13,877	174,352	5,444,789	1,261,487		1,261,487
Unallowables	54,513,986	22,750,087	743,309	1,941,114	576,903	74,275	20,814,167	46,899,855	7,614,130		7,614,130
Exclusions	332,331,508	146,925	0	15,753	0	500	332,163,871	332,327,049	4,459		4,459
Total Costs for ICR calculation	866,740,119	300,328,073	17,188,978	56,767,161	6,811,589	8,464,173	379,455,790	769,015,763	83,005,693	14,718,663	97,724,356
	Expenditures before Exclusions	Exclusions	Indirect unallowable charges	Fringe Benefits charges in non-benefit centers	Expenditures after Exclusions				G&A	Facilities	Total
Reconciliation:											
Direct Base	769,015,763	-332,327,049	0	642,754	437,331,468			Indirect Cost Pool	75,387,104	14,718,663	90,105,767
Indirect Cost Pool	97,724,356	-4,459	-7,614,130	0	90,105,767			Direct Base	437,331,468	437,331,468	437,331,468
Total Expenditures	866,740,119	-332,331,508	-7,614,130	642,754	527,437,235			Indirect Cost Rate	17.24%	3.37%	20.60%

Methodology and Implementation

The Conservancy uses the methodology and subsequent ratios that have been developed for our Federal approved and audited rate as the basis for calculating Direct Support Services for Legacy and ENTRF projects and programs. A budget amount will be determined as part of the allocation process with the governing body and reflected on each Accomplishment Plan or Work Program as a specific line-item. Direct Support Service reimbursement requests will not be applied to categories that unnecessarily inflate the overall rate. Excluded line items include Land and Easement Acquisition, Capital Equipment purchases over \$50,000 and DNR IDP and Land Acquisition Costs. For this project, TNC requests reimbursement of 50% of eligible DSS costs with the remaining 50% to be contributed as leverage by TNC.