Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2019 / ML 2018 Request for Funding

Date: May 31, 2017

Program or Project Title: St. Louis River Restoration Initiative, Ph. V

Funds Requested: $8,598,000

Manager's Name: John Lindgren
Title: St. Louis River AOC Coordinator
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County Locations: St. Louis

Regions in which work will take place:

- Northern Forest

Activity types:

- Restore

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Habitat

Abstract:

MNDNR's St. Louis River Restoration Initiative (SLRRI) applies a collaborative approach to restore sites impacted by legacy habitat alterations of wood waste, wetland loss and sedimentation to establish ecologically resilient aquatic and riparian fish and wildlife habitat that will establish the St. Louis River Estuary as a premier fishing and outdoor recreation destination. MNDNR will restore 181 acres of priority aquatic and riparian habitat at multiple sites in the lower St. Louis River in partnership with the Minnesota Land Trust. Upon completion, approximately 732 acres of habitat will have been restored as a result of OHF's participation.

Design and scope of work:

MNDNR continues its collaboration with Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Army Corps of Engineers, Minnesota Land Trust (MLT) and other agencies to develop and construct projects that will restore aquatic habitat in the Estuary. MNDNR has been actively involved in assessment and planning for restoration and recovery of the St. Louis River Estuary since the early 1980's. The SLRRI was established by MNDNR in 2010 to accelerate implementation of restoration objectives by combining the resources of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) and Minnesota Legacy Amendment.

Past support from the OHF has been applied to several projects critical to restoring estuary fish and wildlife habitat including: (551 acres of restoration completed or in progress)

In Phase 5 of the SLRRI, MNDNR, in partnership with MLT, continues implementation of the SLRRI with restoration of an additional 181 acres of aquatic and shoreline habitat. MLT will be directly appropriated funds from ML2017 and ML2018 to advance elements of project design and construction in partnership with MNDNR.
Proposed projects include:
• Perch Lake – A sheltered bay that was isolated from the river by construction of Minnesota Highway 23. Goal to enhance the hydrologic connection with the estuary to improve water quality and fish habitat.
• Mud Lake – A sheltered bay impacted by legacy wood waste and bisected by a railroad causeway. An opportunity is emerging to enhance the hydrologic connection with the estuary and improve open-water wetlands by removing the causeway and wood waste in partnership with the City of Duluth. The project would also be completed in partnership with an MPCA remedial effort.
• Kingsbury Creek – Degraded cold-water trout stream that drains to Kingsbury Bay. Project would partner with a Natural Resource

Damage Assessment process to reduce sediment transport and restore trout habitat. This will increase the resiliency of the estuary wetland restoration being completed in the bay using earlier OHF appropriations.
• Keene Creek – Degraded cold-water trout streams that drains to Grassy Point. This partner driven restoration will enhance the creek's connection to its floodplain, reduce sedimentation, restore trout habitat, and increase resiliency of the Grassy Point Project, also funded with earlier OHF appropriations.
• Grassy Point – Potential necessary work in Keene Creek wetlands and other shorelines not completed with funds available from previous appropriations.
• Wild Rice – Additional funds are being requested to advance the broad partnership (MNDNR, WDNR, MLT, Fond du Lac, 1854 Treaty Authority and Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission) restoring estuary wild rice.
• Munger Trail Causeway – A fish and wildlife migration barrier along recently restored Knowlton Creek between the estuary and Magney-Snively Forest Complex. Proposed work will remove the causeway and restore a natural stream channel.

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

- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes
- H6 Protect and restore critical in-water habitat of lakes and streams

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Strategic Habitat Conservation Model

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

The Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan (Habitat Plan) identifies Conservation Targets that need to be addressed to restore the estuary to a desired condition. Resource professionals that developed the Habitat Plan also identified project areas that needed to be restored in order to reach the Conservation Targets. Projects identified in this proposal, as well as projects previously funded are all identified in Habitat Plan. Possibility exists to leverage GLRI and funding from the City of Duluth to present an unparalleled opportunity to accomplish broad, legacy based objectives identified in the Habitat Plan.
The MNDNR has partnered with the USFWS over the last 20 years to advance habitat restoration in the St. Louis River Estuary. Their participation and guidance has resulted in the inclusion of elements of the Strategic Habitat Conservation Model into the Remedial Action Planning process for the St. Louis River Area of Concern (AOC) and the estuary.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Northern Forest:

- Protect shoreland and restore or enhance critical habitat on wild rice lakes, shallow lakes, cold water lakes, streams and rivers, and spawning areas

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:

MNDNR believes the restoration of more than 1,700 acres of habitat within the estuary, which is impaired by legacy impacts, will result in its becoming one of the top fishing destinations in Minnesota. This is based on the unparalleled variety of angling opportunities the estuary's diverse habitats provide. Few waters in Minnesota have the ability to host destination quality fishing for walleye, muskellunge, smallmouth bass, lake sturgeon and black crappie. Restorations and enhanced management of the estuary will increase the number, size and quality of Species of Greater Conservation Need (SGCN) and game fish species as well as improve angler and other recreational access.

In conjunction with the work described in this proposal, wild rice will also be restored to portions of all of the aquatic project sites listed in this proposal as part of the OHF funded St. Louis River Wild Rice Restoration Program. This long-term program is a partner driven effort with key Wisconsin and Tribal entities. The two primary project areas will establish physical conditions that will allow for restoration of approximately 50 acres of additional wild rice beds.

One of the primary outcomes of the work described in this proposal will be the establishment of healthy ecological functions along more than 10,000 feet of restored shorelines. These shorelines will provide critical habitat to support all the "indicator species" described in that section.

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

The 1980's were the turning point for the Estuary. As water quality improved, following construction of wastewater and sewage treatment plants, it became clear that the Estuary's fish and wildlife populations could recover if habitat conditions were restored. MNDNR worked with many local, state and federal resource experts and stakeholders to develop the Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan (Habitat Plan), a comprehensive science based plan for protecting, restoring and managing fish and wildlife of the St. Louis River Estuary.

Scientists from University of Minnesota, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, MNDNR and MPCA continue to monitor and evaluate the estuary's fish and wildlife populations and habitat to prioritize restoration projects and model expected outcomes of restoration alternatives to assist in project design and implementation.

Specifically, the AOC partnership used a source-stressor model to identify impairments to the Estuary. The model identified conservation targets, stresses limiting those targets, and recommended actions to address the source of the stress. All project areas supported by the GLRI also require the development of a Quality Assurance Plan to measure the successful outcomes of the conservation actions.

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 12,000 acre St. Louis River Estuary, at the head of Lake Superior, is a unique Minnesota resource. It is the largest source of biological productivity to Lake Superior as well as the world's largest freshwater shipping port. The combination of extensive wetlands, warmer waters and the connection to Lake Superior resulted in it becoming the primary source of productivity for the western Lake Superior fishery and a critical flyway for waterfowl and other migratory birds. Nearly two-thirds of the estuary's native wetlands have been altered, eliminated or impaired as a result of historic impacts of dredging, filling and waste disposal associated with industrial activities. Although economic uses in the industrialized portion of the estuary continue, many of the historic problems associated with waste disposal have been addressed through the Clean Water Act and subsequent actions. The proposed projects represent an opportunity to balance economic activities, while restoring the negative impacts of historic uses. Additionally, restorations will directly benefit SG CN and other species by improving habitat quality and extent in strategic locations to maximize benefits to populations.

As the Outdoor Heritage Fund's 2009 25-year frame work states, "Success in conservation will depend highly on leveraging traditional and other sources of conservation funding with available OHF funds and coordinating efforts with conservation partners." The proposed project is integrated with local, state, federal, tribal and non-government partners that have worked together to advance projects and secure non-OHF funding at of approximately 50%. Minnesota's legacy funds are an integral part of the overall strategy to restore the health of this unique resource.

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

Birds
Golden-winged warblers – 54

Waterfowl
Mallards – 146
Trumpeter Swans – 4

Invertebrates
Mussels 1.4 million

Adult gamefish
Walleye – 260 adults
Muskellunge – 26 adults
Northern Pike – 1,300 adults
Cold-water fish
Brook trout – 600
Brown trout – 600

Outcomes:

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Improved availability and improved condition of habitats that have experienced substantial decline *The construction contractor will be required to produce as-built measurements to verify that the contracted design for the projects were built as designed or modified as a result of direct in the field oversight of construction.*

Once the projects are satisfactorily constructed, the MNDNR will work in partnership with the USEPA, the MPCA and other AOC partners to conduct biological sampling intended to monitor the outcome of these and all other AOC projects. Some of projects were not funded by the OHF, but will be monitored as part of this broader program.

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

MNDNR Duluth Area Fisheries manages the Lower St. Louis River through regular monitoring, assessment and regulation. They are partnered with the WDNR, the MPCA, USEPA MED Lab, and NOAA's National Estuary Research Reserve in the effort to monitor and address issues associated with the long-term maintenance of habitat restoration outcomes in the estuary.

St. Louis River habitat restoration projects are designed to be maintained by the natural processes that define these systems. Barring catastrophic events, these projects would not require future adjustment, or clean-up. Restoration of submerged aquatic vegetation beds at locations such as the ones proposed will consider the water depth, substrate type and wave energy environment required to maintain these systems. Similarly, stream restoration at proposed locations will take into account all pertinent morphological and geographical information to produce an appropriate and resilient outcome.
Healthy and robust native communities are resistant to invasion by exotic species. If these species successfully establish on a site they can disrupt the foodweb of the native community and result in reduced populations of target species. Restoration of native plant species will inhibit the establishment of invasives and MNDNR is partnered with the other entities described above to control them.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
All years	Fish & Wildlife Game & Fish fund	Regular surveys/monitoring		
All years	WDNR, MPCA, USEPA, NOAA	Long-term monitoring at specific sites		

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

The AOC partnership has established a deadline of 2020 to complete habitat restoration and work is on track to accomplish this goal. Federal financial support for meeting this goal may be available with a requirement of securing at least 35% support from a non-federal source. Therefore, state funds provide this critical match. Specifically, the balance of the funding required to complete the Perch Lake Project needs to be secured in order to encumber funds to a construction contract in the spring of 2019. If funding to complete this integrated project is not secured from the ML2018 cycle of the OHF, project completion will be delayed for a year. This would jeopardize meeting the deadline for delisting the AOC and jeopardize acquisition of future G LRI funding for habitat restoration. Funding for Mud Lake and the other projects listed in this proposal will also have similar leverage and scheduling requirements.

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

To date, MNDNR has secured federal G LRI funds for past OHF supported projects at approximately a 50% rate. It is anticipated that MNDNR will leverage approximately $600,000 from a non-State source to accomplish the Kingsbury Creek Project. Similarly, it is anticipated that MNDNR will secure $3.5 million from the G LRI through USEPA to support construction cost of the Perch Lake Project. Additionally, MNDNR is in the process of developing a partnership with the USACE that commits $260,000 in federal funds for the design of the Perch Lake project. MNDNR is also working in partnership with the City of Duluth and GLRI/USEPA to align Federal and City contributions to the completion of the Mud Lake, Keene Creek and Munger Trail Bridge Projects.

Many different agencies and organizations share the goals of the SLRRI. The MNDNR has participated in projects that will have completed approximately 545 acres of aquatic and wetland habitat restoration by the end of 2017. The MNDNR completes these projects with assistance of multiple partners. The MPCA provides management support and technical expertise. The USEPA, NOAA, USFWS, USACE and other federal and Tribal agencies have provided funding, technical expertise, or in-kind services.

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
2012	Federal (NOAA, NFWF, USEPA, USFWS)	$2,640,000
2014	Federal (NOAA)	$400,000

Activity Details

Requirements:

If funded, this proposal will meet all applicable criteria set forth in MS 97A.056 - **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 (Public Waters)**

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

Are the funds confirmed - **No**

What is the approximate date you anticipate receiving confirmation of the federal funds - **January 1, 2018**

Land Use:

Will there be planting of corn or any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program - **No**

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Perch Lake - Enhance hydraulic connectivity to the estuary and establish desirable sheltered bay bathymetry	December 2020
Mud Lake - Enhance hydrologic connection remove legacy wood waste and restore ecological functions	December 2020
Keene Creek - Reduce sedimentation, restore cold-water fisheries habitat and enhance recreational fishing	December 2021
Kingsbury Creek - Reduce sedimentation, restore cold-water fisheries habitat and enhance recreational fishing	December 2019
Wild Rice - Restore wild rice beds in specified areas of the St. Louis River Estuary	December 2023
Munger Trail Causeway - Remove causeway and restore natural stream channel	December 2021

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: $8,598,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	$486,500	$0		$486,500
Contracts	$7,538,000	$0		$7,538,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	$0	$0		$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	$0	$0		$0
Easement Acquisition	$0	$0		$0
Easement Stewardship	$0	$0		$0
Travel	$6,000	$0		$6,000
Professional Services	$450,000	$0		$450,000
Direct Support Services	$98,000	$0		$98,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	$0	$0		$0
Capital Equipment	$0	$0		$0
Other Equipment/Tools	$13,500	$0		$13,500
Supplies/Materials	$6,000	$0		$6,000
DNR IDP	$0	$0		$0
Total	$8,598,000	$0	-	$8,598,000

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
FAW AOC Coordinator	0.50	3.00	$183,200	$0		$183,200
EWR Habitat Coordinator	0.50	3.00	$168,200	$0		$168,200
FAW OAS	0.75	2.00	$135,100	$0		$135,100
Total	1.75	8.00	$486,500	$0	-	$486,500

Budget and Cash Leverage by Partnership

Budget Name	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	MN Land Trust	$0	$0		$0
Contracts	MN Land Trust	$3,000,000	$0		$3,000,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	MN Land Trust	$0	$0		$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	MN Land Trust	$0	$0		$0
Easement Acquisition	MN Land Trust	$0	$0		$0
Easement Stewardship	MN Land Trust	$0	$0		$0
Travel	MN Land Trust	$0	$0		$0
Professional Services	MN Land Trust	$0	$0		$0
Direct Support Services	MN Land Trust	$0	$0		$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	MN Land Trust	$0	$0		$0
Capital Equipment	MN Land Trust	$0	$0		$0
Other Equipment/Tools	MN Land Trust	$0	$0		$0
Supplies/Materials	MN Land Trust	$0	$0		$0
DNR IDP	MN Land Trust	$0	$0		$0
Total	-	$3,000,000	$0	-	$3,000,000

Budget Name	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	MNDNR	$486,500	$0		$486,500
Contracts	MNDNR	$4,538,000	$0		$4,538,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	MNDNR	$0	$0		$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	MNDNR	$0	$0		$0
Easement Acquisition	MNDNR	$0	$0		$0
Easement Stewardship	MNDNR	$0	$0		$0
Travel	MNDNR	$6,000	$0		$6,000
Professional Services	MNDNR	$450,000	$0		$450,000
Direct Support Services	MNDNR	$98,000	$0		$98,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	MNDNR	$0	$0		$0
Capital Equipment	MNDNR	$0	$0		$0

Other Equipment/Tools	MNDNR	$13,500	$0		$13,500
Supplies/Materials	MNDNR	$6,000	$0		$6,000
DNR IDP	MNDNR	$0	$0		$0
Total	-	$5,598,000	$0	-	$5,598,000

Personnel - MNDNR

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
FAW AOC Coordinator	0.50	3.00	$183,200	$0		$183,200
EWR Habitat Coordinator	0.50	3.00	$168,200	$0		$168,200
FAW OAS	0.75	2.00	$135,100	$0		$135,100
Total	1.75	8.00	$486,500	$0	-	$486,500

Amount of Request:	$8,598,000
Amount of Leverage:	$0
Leverage as a percent of the Request:	0.00%
DSS + Personnel:	$584,500
As a % of the total request:	6.80%
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:

Used Direct and Necessary calculator provided by DNR OHF staff.

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

Yes, all funds in the contract line are for R/E. MNDNR will manage the contracting and construction of Mud Lake, Keene Creek, Kingsbury Creek, Wild Rice and the Munger Trail causeway.
MN Land Trust will manage the contracting and construction of Perch Lake in partnership with MNDNR.

Does the amount in the travel line include equipment/vehicle rental? - No

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

NA

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

MNDNR is currently working to secure non-OHF funding opportunities for the proposed projects. It is likely that leverage of approximately $4 million will be achieved.

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:

Projects associated with delisting the AOC (Perch Lake and wild rice) are to be completed by 2020 Therefore, which requires immediate funding. An opportunity is emerging that will require quick action to take advantage of a federal and municipal partnership to achieve desirable outcomes at Mud Lake and Kingsbury Creek.

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	0	0	171	171
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	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	171	171

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	$0	$0	$0	$8,598,000	$8,598,000
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	$0	$0
Enhance	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Total	$0	$0	$0	$8,598,000	$8,598,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	171	171
Protect 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
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	171	171

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	$8,598,000	$8,598,000
Protect 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
Protect in Easement	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Enhance	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Total	$0	$0	$0	$0	$8,598,000	$8,598,000

Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	$0	$0	$0	$50,281
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	$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	$50,281
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	$0	$0
Enhance	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

21,300 ft

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

Parcel List

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

The SLRRI is a partner to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and the Area of Concern Process. As such, there is a Remedial Action Plan that identifies project that need to be completed in order to delist the AOC. The list of actions was developed by a broad group of partner agencies and groups. The MNDNR was identified as the Agency Lead on several of the projects on the action item list. The MNDNR has already received funding for projects on the list and completed restoration at six of those projects. After completion of the AOC delisting process, additional work identified in the Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan will need to be completed to achieve the full habitat restoration potential of the estuary. The AOC process is only intended to bring the estuary to a certain point, after which other federal funding sources other than G LRI will need to be identified.

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

St. Louis

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Keene Creek	04915212	25	$1,038,000	Yes
Kingsbury Creek	04915214	5	$100,000	Yes
Mud Lake	04815202	110	$2,700,000	Yes
Munger Trail Causeway	04915223	1	$500,000	Yes
Perch Lake	04815209	10	$3,000,000	Yes
Wild Rice	04915210	20	$100,000	Yes

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type protect.

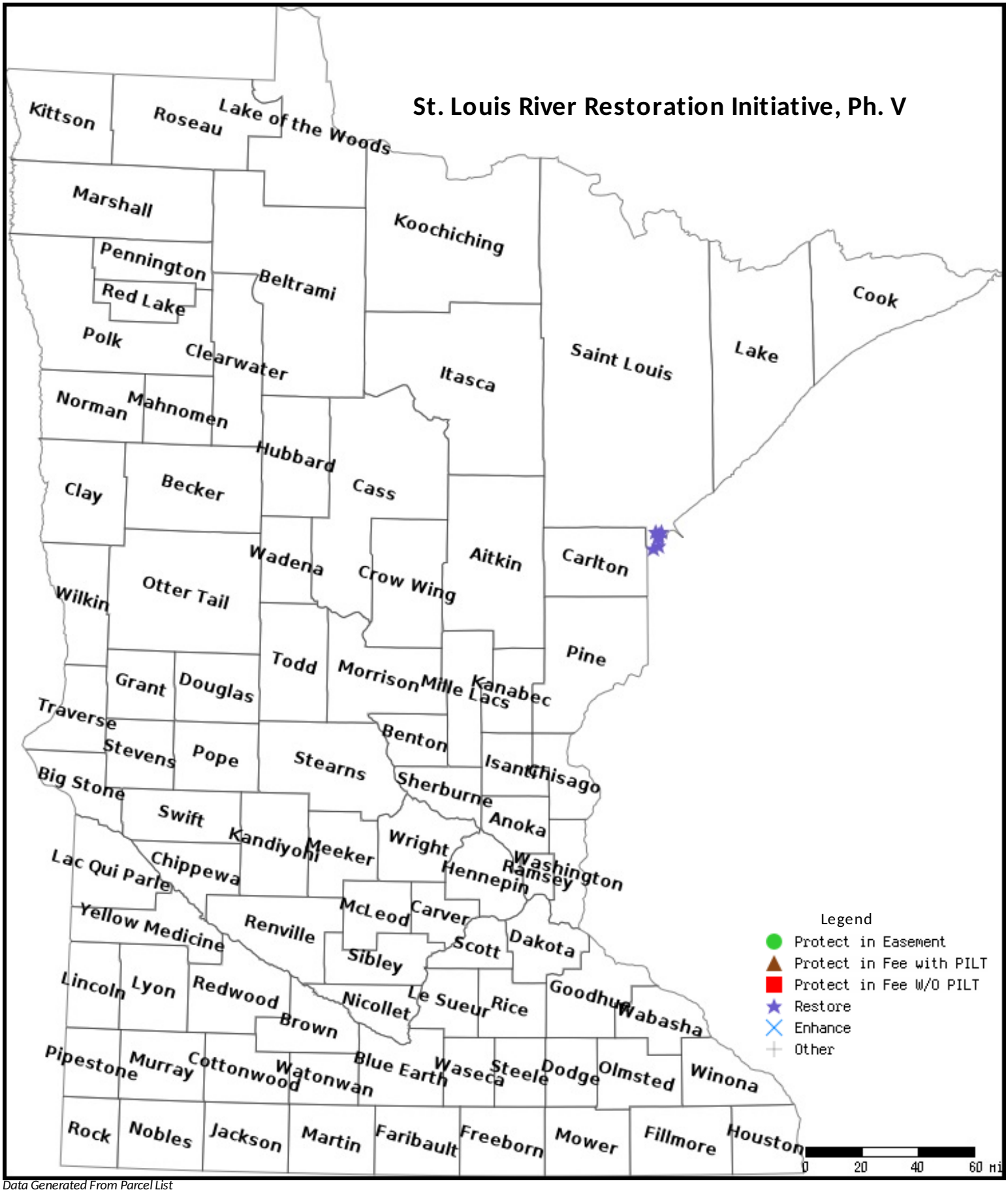
Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map



Data Generated From Parcel List

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Fiscal Year 2019 / ML 2018 Request for Funding
St. Louis River Restoration Initiative Phase 5 – Implementation Proposal Illustration

MNDNR's St. Louis River Restoration Initiative (SLRRI) applies a collaborative approach to restore sites impacted by legacy habitat alterations of wood waste, wetland loss and sedimentation to establish ecologically resilient aquatic and riparian fish and wildlife habitat that will establish the St. Louis River Estuary as a premier fishing and outdoor recreation destination. MNDNR will restore 181 acres of priority aquatic and riparian habitat at multiple sites in the lower St. Louis River in partnership with the Minnesota Land Trust. Upon completion, approximately 732 acres of habitat will have been restored as a result of OHF's participation in the SLRRI.

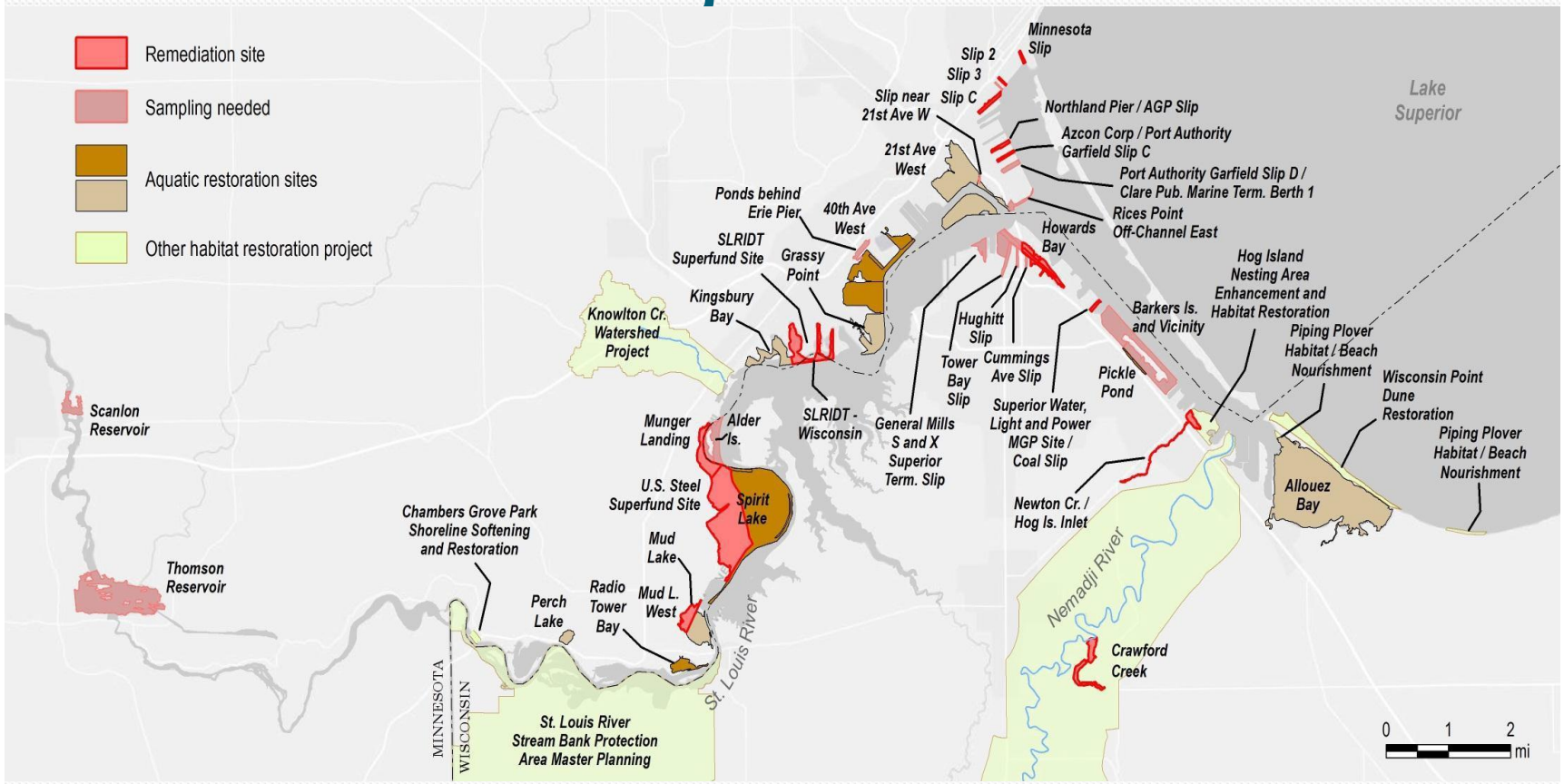
ML2018 Proposed Projects:

Project	Acres	Completion Date	Outcome
Perch Lake	13	December 2020	Enhance hydraulic connectivity to the estuary and establish desirable sheltered bay bathymetry
Mud Lake	120	December 2020	Enhance hydrologic connection, remove legacy wood waste and restore ecological functions
Wild Rice	20	December 2023	Restore wild rice beds in specified areas of the St. Louis River Estuary
Keene Creek	25	December 2021	Reduce sedimentation, restore cold-water fisheries habitat and enhance recreational fishing
Kingsbury Creek	5	December 2019	Reduce sedimentation, restore cold-water fisheries habitat and enhance recreational fishing
Munger Trail Causeway	1	December 2021	Remove causeway and restore a natural stream channel
Total	**181**		

Past support from the OHF has been applied to several projects critical to restoring estuary fish and wildlife habitat including:

Project	Acres	Status	Outcome
Radio Tower Bay	30	Completed	Wood waste removed from estuary wetland
Chambers Grove	7	Completed	Sturgeon and walleye Spawning habitat improvement
Wild Rice	220	In progress	Restoring historic wild rice beds
Interstate Island	6	Completed	Restored critical tern nesting habitat
Knowlton Creek	43	Completed	Restored cold-water trout stream
Kingsbury Bay/Grassy Point	245	In Progress	Restore sheltered bay (wood waste and sedimentation)
Total	**551**		

AOC Wide Projects:



Izaak Walton League of America
W. J. McCabe Chapter

John Lindgren
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
St. Louis River AOC Program Coordinator
5351 North Shore Drive
Duluth, MN 55804

May 29, 2017

Dear Mr. Lindgren,

The W. J. McCabe (Duluth) Chapter of the Izaak Walton League is a non-profit, local conservation group that is affiliated with the national Izaak Walton League of America. Our chapter has long been an advocate for and worked toward the improvement of the water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and recreation values of Lake Superior, the Duluth Harbor, and the St. Louis River.

I am writing to add our organization's strong support for the project proposal that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is currently submitting for the 2018 Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) to continue the St. Louis River restoration. This project advances the Initiative by proposing work at Perch Lake, Mud Lake, Kingsbury Creek and Keene Creek as well as wild rice establishment. Perch and Mud are open-water restoration projects, and Kingsbury and Keene are stream restorations. These stream restorations are especially important to prevent future sedimentation in the upcoming open-water restoration work at Grassy Point and Kingsbury Bay.

We are extremely happy with the significant progress that is being made to remove accumulated sediments and wood waste, and to restore fish and wildlife habitats in the St. Louis River estuary from OHF projects in the estuary. This next proposed project to restore another 181 acres of habitat at several different sites will continue the progress toward completing restoration goals in the estuary.

We greatly appreciate the work that the MNDNR AOC program and your partners are doing with support of the LSOHC and others to return to health the St. Louis River estuary. This is one of the most important shallow water and wetland complexes on the Great Lakes, and deserves the attention it is finally receiving after so many years of past abuse and neglect.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this OHF proposal. Please contact me at 218-879-3186 or rcstaffon@msn.com if you need further information or other support for this effort.

Sincerely,

Rich Staffon, President
W. J. McCabe Chapter

W J. McCabe Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America
PO Box 3063 Duluth, MN 55803
218-879-3186

MUSKIES INC. Lake Superior Chapter

Mr. John Lindgren
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
St. Louis River AOC Program Coordinator.

The Lake Superior Chapter of Muskies Inc. has been active and supportive of the restoration of the St. Louis River. When Radio Tower Bay restoration was started we spoke on the benefits of the restoration and how it will improve fishing in the estuary. When MOHA came to town we spoke in favor of all the restoration projects on the St. Louis River. Our organization believes that anything done to improve the AOC is beneficial to the fishing community.

The restoration of shallow bay habitat is very important for biological productivity and increased fish production. The additional 250 acres of estuary that will be remediated is especially important to Muskie fishermen as there are only about 100 Muskie Lakes in Minnesota and as the sport continues to rapidly grow any new water is appreciated and needed.

We strongly support Grassy Point and Kingsbury Bay and Creek as well as East Mud Lake and Perch Lake. When remediation is complete on these projects fish production will increase as well as improving wildlife habitat. Everyone wins when the 181 acres of river is restored.

Thank You for the opportunity to comment
Curt Ellestad

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5/26/2017

Dear
Mr. John Lindgren
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
St. Louis AOC Program Coordinator

The Board of Directors of Twin ports walleye Association together with our 300 members would like to express our support in favor of the St. Louis River restoration work at Perch Lake, Mud Lake, wild rice, Kingsbury Creek and Keene Creek.

The TPWA is very pleased with the ongoing restoration efforts in the estuary and believe these efforts are having a positive effect on the water quality and the biological productivity of the fish and wildlife. The Outdoor Heritage Funds will make great strides in completing These projects!

The mission of the Twin Ports Walleye Association is in alignment with what these projects represent. Please take every action to protect this priceless resource that our organization and many others like it, have been utilizing for many years.

Respectfully;

David S. Nelson

President- Twin Ports Walleye Association
www.twinportswalleye.com