

# Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

## Laws of Minnesota 2019 Accomplishment Plan



**Date:** June 13, 2019

**Program or Project Title:** Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program Phase 11: Statewide and Metro Habitat

**Funds Recommended:** \$ 10,760,000

**Manager's Name:** Kathy Varble

**Title:** CPL Program Coordinator

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**Legislative Citation:** ML 2019, 1st Sp. Session, Ch. 2, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd, 5(p)

**Appropriation Language:** \$10,760,000 the first year is to the commissioner of natural resources for a program to provide competitive matching grants of up to \$400,000 to local, regional, state, and national organizations for enhancing, restoring, or protecting forests, wetlands, prairies, or habitat for fish, game, or wildlife in Minnesota. Of this amount, at least \$3,000,000 is for grants in the seven-county metropolitan area and cities with a population of 50,000 or greater. Grants must not be made for activities required to fulfill the duties of owners of lands subject to conservation easements. Grants must not be made from the appropriation in this paragraph for projects that have a total project cost exceeding \$575,000. Of the total appropriation, \$445,000 may be spent for personnel costs and other direct and necessary administrative costs. Grantees may acquire land or interests in land. Easements must be permanent. Grants may not be used to establish easement stewardship accounts. Land acquired in fee must be open to hunting and fishing during the open season unless otherwise provided by law. The program must require a match of at least ten percent from nonstate sources for all grants. The match may be cash or in-kind resources. For grant applications of \$25,000 or less, the commissioner must provide a separate, simplified application process. Subject to Minnesota statutes, the commissioner of natural resources must, when evaluating projects of equal value, give priority to organizations that have a history of receiving, or a charter to receive, private contributions for local conservation or habitat projects. If acquiring land in fee or a conservation easement, priority must be given to projects associated with or within one mile of existing wildlife management areas under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8; scientific and natural areas under Minnesota Statutes, sections 84.033 and 86A.05, subdivision 5; or aquatic management areas under Minnesota Statutes, sections 86A.05, subdivision 14, and 97C.02. All restoration or enhancement projects must be on land permanently protected by a permanent covenant ensuring perpetual maintenance and protection of restored and enhanced habitat, by a conservation easement or public ownership or in public waters as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 103G.005, subdivision 15. Priority must be given to restoration and enhancement projects on public lands. Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 13, applies to grants awarded under this paragraph. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2023. No less than five percent of the amount of each grant must be held back from reimbursement until the grant recipient has completed a grant accomplishment report by the deadline and in the form prescribed by and satisfactory to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. The commissioner must provide notice of the grant program in the summary of game and fish law prepared under Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.051, subdivision 2.

**County Locations:** Not Listed

**Eco regions in which work will take place:**

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

**Activity types:**

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

#### Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Forest
- Habitat
- Prairie
- Wetlands

#### Abstract:

The Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program is managed by the Department of Natural Resources to provide competitive matching grants of up to \$400,000 to local, regional, state, and national non-profit organizations and government entities. In its first 9 years of funding, the CPL program provided 560 grants totaling \$54 million to 175 different grantee organizations, enhancing, restoring, or protecting over 280,000 acres of habitat. Project site monitoring has confirmed that grantees are achieving project goals, and demand continues to grow as word spreads to new applicants and successful applicants return for additional grants for local habitat improvement.

#### Design and scope of work:

The CPL program fulfills MS 97a.056 Subd. 3a, directing LSOHC to establish a conservation partner's grant program encouraging/supporting local conservation efforts. \$10,315,000 of the \$10,760,000 will be available for grants. Of this amount, at least \$3,000,000 will be used for projects in the 7-county metro area and in cities with a population of 50,000 people or greater. If funds remain from this \$3,000,000 after two grant rounds, they may be used for projects statewide. Statewide funds may be used in the metro area. This is a stand-alone program, but depends on support/technical advice from public land managers and habitat and acquisition specialists.

Grant activities include enhancement, restoration and protection of forests, wetlands, prairies, and habitat for fish, game, or wildlife in Minnesota. A 10% match from non-state sources is required for all grants, and may be in-kind or cash. Applicants must describe the project goals, methods, location, activity, habitat, urgency, and overall benefit. For acquisition projects, applicants describe the parcel selection process. CPL staff develops an RFP incorporating LSOHC priorities. Staff works with applicants to submit applications, oversee grant selection, prepare/execute grant documents, review expenditures, approves payments/reports, monitor work, and assist recipients with close-out. Staff complies with Office of Grants Management policies. Grantees are required to submit annual and final accomplishment reports.

The CPL program has 3 annual grant cycles- Traditional, Metro, and Expedited Conservation Projects (ECP). The Traditional and Metro cycles will have one grant round beginning August 2019 and a second round if funds remain. Projects under \$25,000 will have a simplified application. The ECP grant cycle will be open continuously for eligible projects under \$50,000 beginning August 2019, and applications will be awarded up to 5 times through May 2020, depending on available funds. DNR may choose to make additional awards, consistent with DNR and OHF policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available.

CPL staff provides an administrative review of all applications. Technical Review Committees, comprised of habitat experts across the state, then review and score Traditional and Metro applications based on evaluation criteria (see attached). The DNR Directors of Fish and Wildlife, Eco Waters, and Forestry review the committee's recommendations and provide a ranking to the Commissioner. Final funding decisions are made by the Commissioner's office. ECP grants are reviewed by CPL staff and DNR habitat experts using established criteria. The Director of Fish and Wildlife makes final funding decisions for ECP.

CPL staff conducts site visits for most projects over \$50,000, and smaller projects if needed. For projects over \$250,000, staff may conduct site visits annually for the duration of the grant to ensure that project objectives are being met.

Administration costs of \$445,000 include salary/fringe, direct support services, travel, outreach, ongoing application system/database maintenance, and other professional services. 2 FTEs are needed to manage and promote the program, monitor grants, and meet state requirements.

#### 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:

All CPL project requests include a Natural Heritage Database Review, which addresses wildlife species of greatest conservation need, the MN County Biological Survey data, and/or rare, threatened and endangered species inventories. These results are incorporated into the requests, along with mitigation measures if needed. Habitat value/species benefits is also one of the evaluation criterion used to score applications. When the projects are reviewed by the technical habitat experts, wildlife species of greatest conservation need, targeted species, and threatened/endangered species are all discussed, and add to the overall habitat quality and urgency of applications which is reflected in the scoring and funding recommendations.

### **Describe the science based planning and evaluation model used:**

The CPL program has a Technical Review Committee that reviews and scores projects based on evaluation criteria. One of the evaluation criterion addresses the overall project value, and includes the habitat quality and quantity of the site, whether or not it is part of a habitat corridor, and the use of currently accepted practices based on sound conservation science. A second evaluation criterion addresses the habitat benefits of the proposal, such as protecting areas identified in the MN County Biological Survey. A third evaluation criterion addresses public use and access, and the project's proximity to other protected lands. The technical experts ensure that CPL proposals recommended for funding are using current conservation science and best management practices.

### **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:**

- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda
- Plans addressed will vary depending on applications received and approved.

### **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

#### **Metro / Urban:**

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

#### **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

#### **Prairie:**

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

#### **Southeast Forest:**

- Protect, enhance, and restore habitat for fish, game, and nongame wildlife in rivers, cold-water streams, and associated upland habitat

### **Relationship to other funds:**

- Not Listed

### **Does this program include leverage in funds:**

Yes

This CPL proposal accelerates and/or supplements the wildlife and habitat management plans and activities of numerous nonprofit organizations and governments throughout the state of Minnesota. Partnerships and leverage are both encouraged, as reflected in the Evaluation Criteria. A minimum of 10% match is required, but more is often contributed. The average leverage over the past 9 years has been 20% in local match, which includes cash donations, in-kind donations, and volunteer labor. Many proposals include local match from multiple partner organizations which demonstrates the collaborative nature of the CPL program. One of the evaluation criterion addresses the financial assessment of the project, which includes partner commitment and match as well as how the project supplements existing funding.

**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:**

This request is for the continuation of a program that did not exist prior to the legacy fund and would not continue to exist without an OHF appropriation.

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

Not Listed

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

Applicants are asked to describe or submit their long-term management plans when submitting a project proposal, and the Technical Review Committee considers these plans when scoring proposals and making funding recommendations. The sustainability of the project is also addressed through one of the evaluation criterion. Long-term maintenance commitment from the applicant is crucial to a successful proposal. The CPL program has a monitoring process to ensure that funds are being used to complete work as described in the grantee's work plans. The CPL program manager and natural resource specialist conducts site visits for projects that are over \$50,000, and smaller projects as needed. When conducting site visits, CPL staff meets with the project manager and land manager to discuss and evaluate the work, and to address any issues that may have come up during the grant period, as well as discuss long-term management goals.

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

Not Listed

**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 - **No**

Will county board or other local government approval be formally sought prior to acquisition, per 97A.056 subd 13(j) - **Yes**

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

Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing - **Yes**

The land may be open for hunting and fishing, depending on individual project applications. For the ECP grant cycle, the land must be public. For acquisitions, the land will be open to for hunting and fishing unless otherwise provided by law.

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

All lands acquired with CPL funds will be open for hunting and fishing unless otherwise provided by law.

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:

What is the anticipated number of closed acquisitions (range is fine) you plan to accomplish with this appropriation?

**Not Listed**

Will the eased land be open for public use - **Yes**

Public use will depend on the conditions of the easement. Most but not all CPL projects are on public lands/waters open for public use.

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

Who will manage the easement?

**Not Listed**

Who will be the easement holder?

**Not Listed**

What is the anticipated number of easements (range is fine) you plan to accomplish with this appropriation?

**Not Listed**

Are there currently trails or roads on any of the acquisitions on the parcel list - **No**

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

Will the acquired parcels be restored or enhanced within this appropriation? - **Yes**

acquired parcels will be restored and enhanced if or as needed

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, WPA, SNA, AMA, Permanently Protected Conservation Easements County/Municipal, Refuge Lands, Public Waters, State Wilderness Areas, State Recreation Areas, State Forests)**

### Accomplishment Timeline:

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Solicit applications: RFP posted online	August 2019
First round applications due (ECP applications accepted continuously)	September 2019
First round grantees announced	December 2019
First round grants encumbered, grantees begin work	January 2020
Solicit round 2 applications, if needed	January 2020
Round 2 applications due	March 2020
Round 2 grantees announced	May 2020
Round 2 grants encumbered, grantees start work	June 2020
Ongoing grant monitoring, per OGM policy	June 2021, 2022, 2023
Annual reports to the council	August 2020, 2021, 2022
Grantees complete grants and submit final reports	June 2023
Final report to council	October 2023

**Date of Final Report Submission: 11/1/2024**

### Federal Funding:

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

### Outcomes:

#### Programs in the northern forest region:

- All of the above program outcomes in the northern forest region have been achieved through the CPL program, and are expected to continue to be achieved through CPL restoration, enhancement and protection projects.

#### Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- All of the above program outcomes in the forest-prairie transition region have been achieved through the CPL program, and are expected to continue to be achieved through CPL restoration, enhancement and protection projects.

**Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:**

- All of the above program outcomes in the metropolitan urbanizing region have been achieved through the Metro CPL program, and are expected to continue to be achieved through CPL restoration, enhancement and protection projects.

**Programs in southeast forest region:**

- All of the above program outcomes in the southeast forest region have been achieved through the CPL program, and are expected to continue to be achieved through CPL restoration, enhancement and protection projects.

**Programs in prairie region:**

- All of the above program outcomes in the prairie region have been achieved through the CPL program, and are expected to continue to be achieved through CPL restoration, enhancement and protection projects.

# Budget Spreadsheet

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

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

Not Listed

**Total Amount of Request: \$ 10760000**

## Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$350,000	\$0		\$350,000
Contracts	\$10,315,000	\$1,031,500		\$11,346,500
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	\$30,000	\$0		\$30,000
Professional Services	\$30,000	\$0		\$30,000
Direct Support Services	\$30,000	\$0		\$30,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$5,000	\$0		\$5,000
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$10,760,000	\$1,031,500		\$11,791,500

## Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Grants Coordinator	1.00	2.00	\$180,000	\$0		\$180,000
Grants Specialist	0.50	2.00	\$80,000	\$0		\$80,000
Natural Resources Specialist	0.50	2.00	\$90,000	\$0		\$90,000
Total	2.00	6.00	\$350,000	\$0		\$350,000

Amount of Request: \$10,760,000

Amount of Leverage: \$1,031,500

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 9.59%

DSS + Personnel: \$380,000

As a % of the total request: 3.53%

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

DNR's D&N calculator

**What is included in the contacts line?**

The entire contract line is for grants to organizations for restoration, enhancement, and protection

**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:**

**Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:**

Leverage will be provided through local match of a minimum of 10%

## Output Tables

**Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type**

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

**Table 2. Total Funding by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section**

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	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	0	0

**Table 4. Total Funding within each Ecological Section**

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$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	\$0	\$0

**Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$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	\$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	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

*Automatic system calculation / not entered by managers*

**Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles**

0

# 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

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

## Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type protect.

## Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

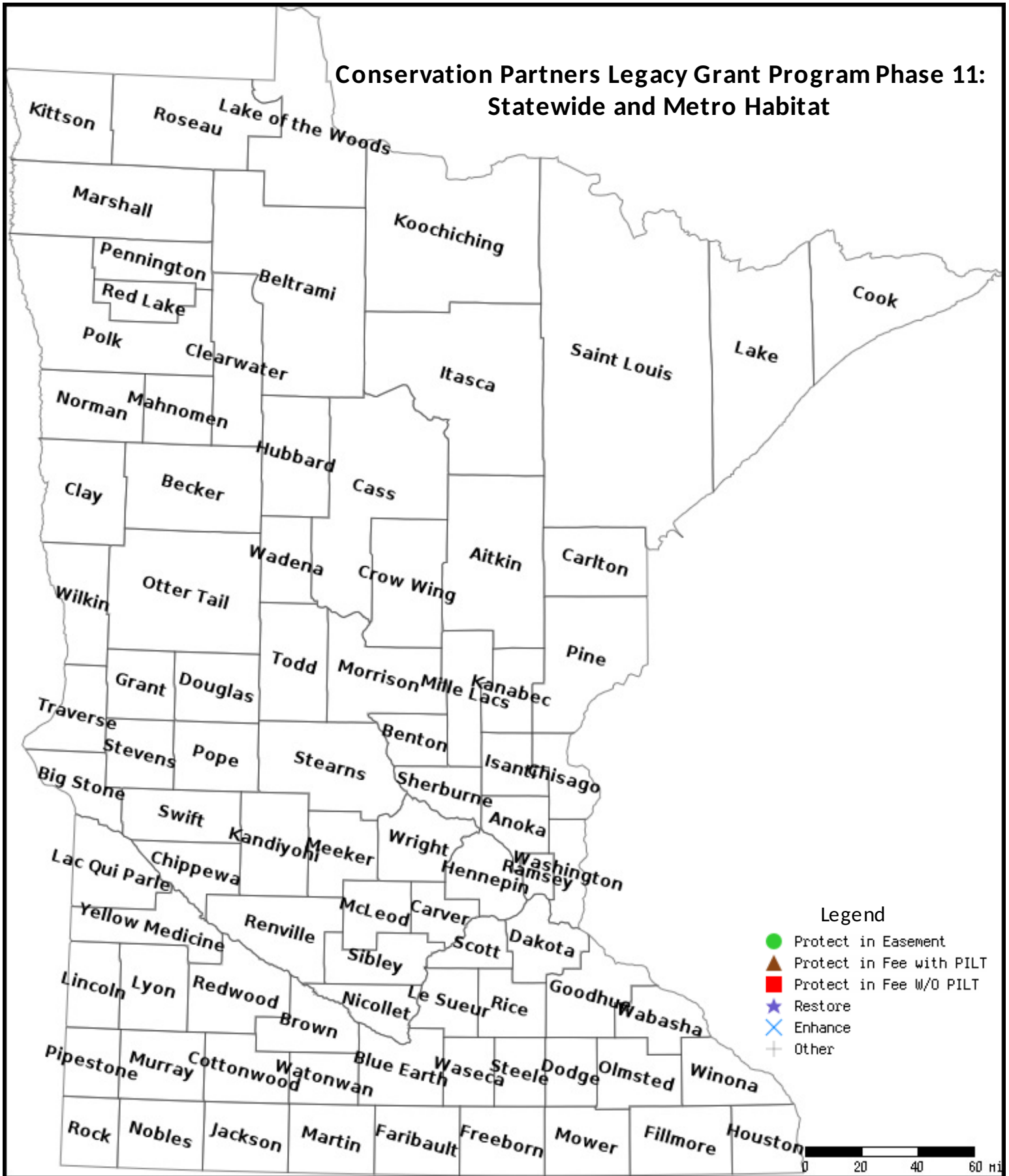
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

## Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

# Parcel Map

## Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program Phase 11: Statewide and Metro Habitat



Data Generated From Parcel List