

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2020 / ML 2019 Request for Funding



Date: May 25, 2018

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

Funds Requested: \$12,550,000

Manager's Name: Jessica Lee
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County Locations: Not Listed

Regions in which work will take place:

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

Activity types:

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

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Forest
- Prairie
- Habitat

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. \$12,000,000 of the requested \$12,550,000 will be available for grants. Of this amount, up to \$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 \$550,000 include salary/fringe, direct support services, travel, outreach, ongoing application system/database maintenance, and other professional services. 2.5 FTEs are needed to manage and promote the program, monitor grants, and meet state requirements.

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

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

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

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

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

In general, the CPL program's advancement of these plans' indicators will depend upon the applications received and funded. However, because an effort is made to fund projects in each ecological planning section of the state, any or all key indicators could potentially advance through the CPL program. Most of the above plans are addressed through the CPL program, with nearly 100 projects funded throughout the state of Minnesota every year.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Prairie:

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

Forest / Prairie Transition:

- Protect, enhance, and restore wild rice wetlands, shallow lakes, wetland/grassland complexes, aspen parklands, and shoreland that provide critical habitat for game and nongame wildlife

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

Metro / Urban:

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

biological diversity

Southeast Forest:

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

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

The CPL program encourages a culture of conservation and habitat protection at a local level. By providing grants to local organizations throughout the entire state and encouraging partnerships, habitat is improved and protected for nearly all of Minnesota's fish, game, and wildlife. Over time involvement in the CPL program has grown exponentially, helping to increase conservation awareness in local communities, which demonstrates, promotes, and produces a significant and permanent conservation legacy for the state of Minnesota.

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 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.

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:

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.

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

Species and associated quantities will depend upon the applications received and funded. However, because an effort is made to fund projects across the entire state and in all habitat types, theoretically any or all relevant indicator species could potentially benefit from the CPL program, including but not limited to prairie chickens, pheasants, monarch butterfly, rusty patched bumble bee, golden-winged warblers, white-tailed deer, mallards, trumpeter swans, brook trout, and topeka shiner.

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.

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

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 CPL program will prioritize habitat projects of which applicants have demonstrated a conservation urgency. This may include protecting lands of high conservation value that are at immediate risk of development, preventing the spread of invasive species on public lands or waters, etc. Urgency is one of six evaluation criterion used in the review process. CPL involvement continues to grow every year and supporting this appropriation will keep the momentum going with the local conservation culture.

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

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.

Relationship to other funds:

- Not Listed

Describe the relationship of the funds:

Not Listed

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

Activity Details

Requirements:

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

Will county board or other local government approval be formally sought prior to acquisition? - **Yes**

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

Is the land you plan to acquire (easement) 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 restoration and enhancement 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, Private Land, County/Municipal, Refuge Lands, Public Waters, State Wilderness Areas, State Recreation Areas, 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 - **No**

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 open for hunting and fishing. 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.

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.

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
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

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$12,550,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$440,000	\$0		\$440,000
Contracts	\$12,000,000	\$1,150,000	Grantee match	\$13,150,000
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	\$20,000	\$0		\$20,000
Professional Services	\$50,000	\$0		\$50,000
Direct Support Services	\$36,000	\$0		\$36,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$4,000	\$0		\$4,000
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$12,550,000	\$1,150,000	-	\$13,700,000

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Grants Specialist Coordinator	1.00	2.00	\$190,000	\$0		\$190,000
Natural Resource Specialist	0.50	2.00	\$90,000	\$0		\$90,000
Grants Specialist	1.00	2.00	\$160,000	\$0		\$160,000
Total	2.50	6.00	\$440,000	\$0	-	\$440,000

Amount of Request: \$12,550,000

Amount of Leverage: \$1,150,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 9.16%

DSS + Personnel: \$476,000

As a % of the total request: 3.79%

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:

DNR's D&N calculator

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

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

Travel costs are for staff primarily to provide outreach and monitoring.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

Leverage will be provided through local match of a minimum of 10%, which the required amount. However, historically the CPL program averages 20% leverage through local match. Many projects have multiple leveraging partners.

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:

This project could be scalable; however, the proposed amounts are based on current demand for CPL grants. With reduced funding, CPL may miss many urgent project opportunities. Administrative costs cannot be scaled.

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 Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$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	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	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 Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

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

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

NA

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:

Acquisition applications will be ranked using the CPL evaluation criteria.

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

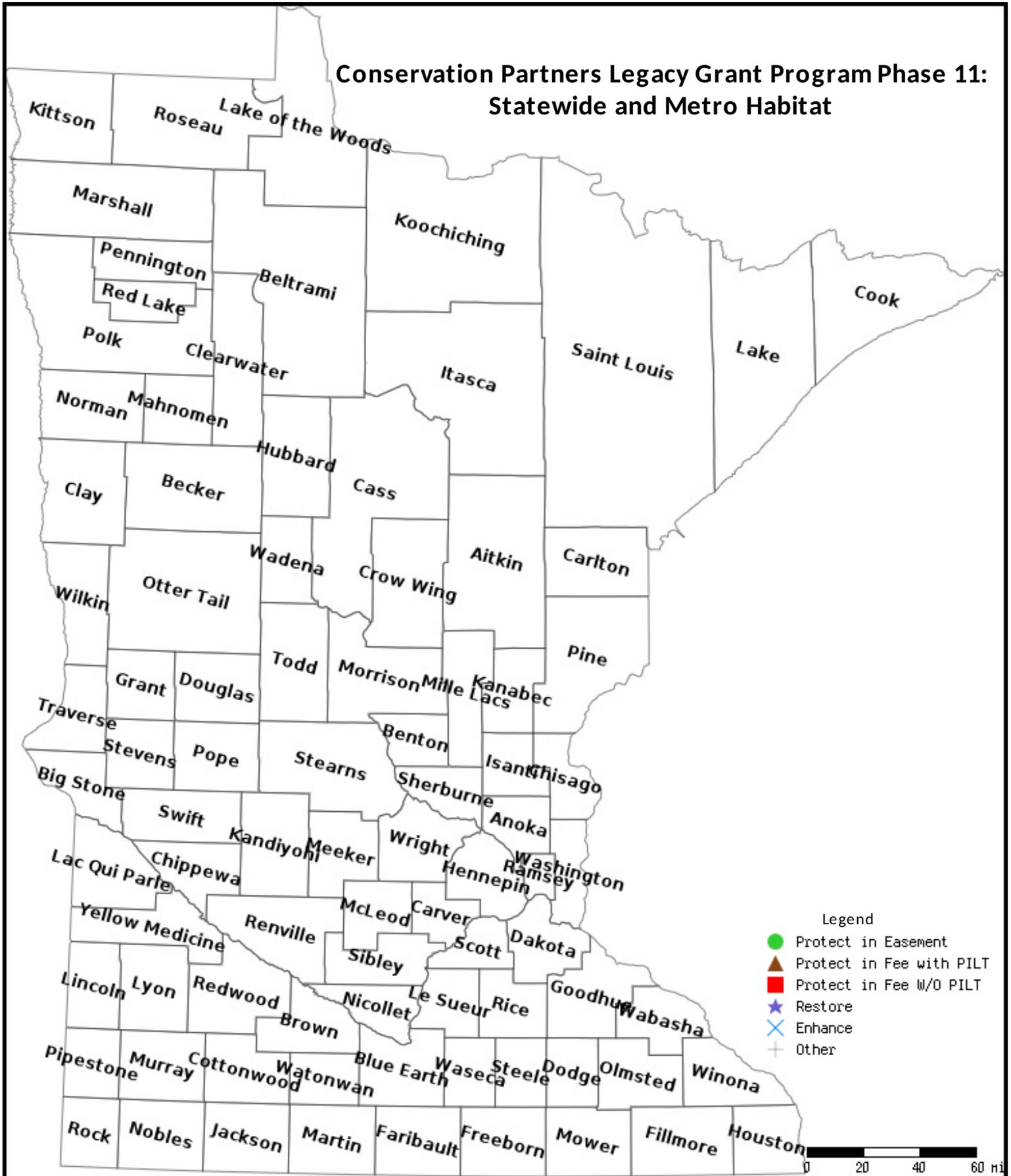
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

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

Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

Evaluation Criteria Table

Applications are scored based on the 6 criteria listed below, using only the information provided within the application. Applicants should be sure their applications contain enough information for reviewers to consider all 6 criteria. Information may be provided on the Project Summary page of the application, or specifically requested on the Project Information page.

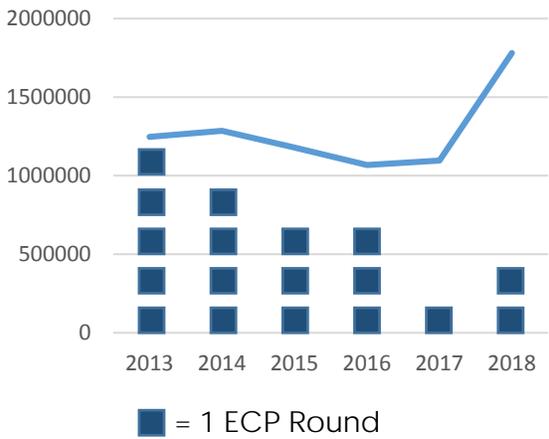
1	Overall Project Value	
	Critical habitat corridor; habitat quality/quantity	Amount, quality, and/or connectivity of habitat restored, protected and/or enhanced
	Consistent with current conservation science	Project use of currently accepted science and methods, increased efficiency and life expectancy of work completed
	Sustainability	Overall life expectancy of project
	Use of native plants	Use of local ecotype, native vegetation in form of seed, seedlings, root stock, etc.
2	Applicant Performance	
	Encouragement of local conservation culture	Applicant's past activities with local community in regards to conservation
	Collaboration and local support	Applicant's current interaction with other groups or agencies; current application support by multiple entities
	Capacity to successfully complete work	Applicant's history of receiving and successfully completing conservation work and grants
3	Project Benefits	
	Multiple benefits	Multiple or diverse species benefits; project directly improves intended species, indirect benefit to others
	Habitat benefits	Multiple or diverse habitat benefits; project directly improves intended habitat, indirect benefit to others
4	Public Benefits	
	Adjacent to protected lands	Project site(s) proximity to current protected land (public or private)
	Public access	Project site(s) availability for hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-based recreation
5	Financial Assessment	
	Full funding of project	All costs are identified and accounted for; all partners have submitted letters committing funds
	Supplements existing funding	Project would not be completed without CPL funding; CPL does not replace traditional sources of funding
	Budget and cost effectiveness	Project is succinct- no unnecessary costs or work has been added; costs are relative to location of project
6	Urgency	
	Urgency	Funding importance at this time: species or opportunity potentially lost

Conservation Partners Legacy Grant 2010-2018

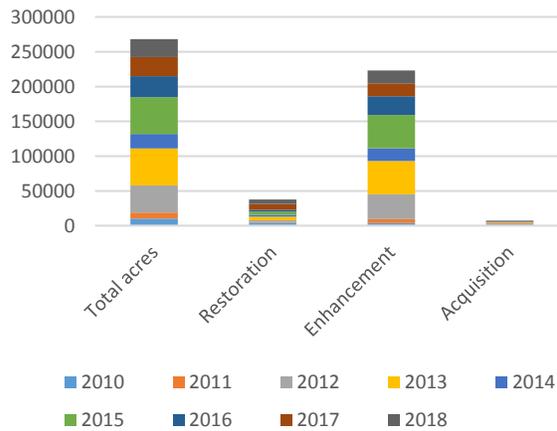
GRANTS AWARDED BY ACTIVITY



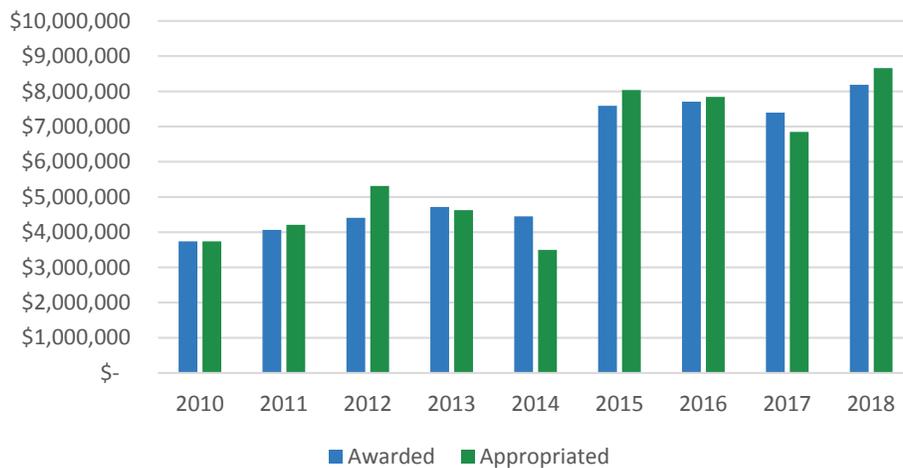
\$ Allocated to ECP



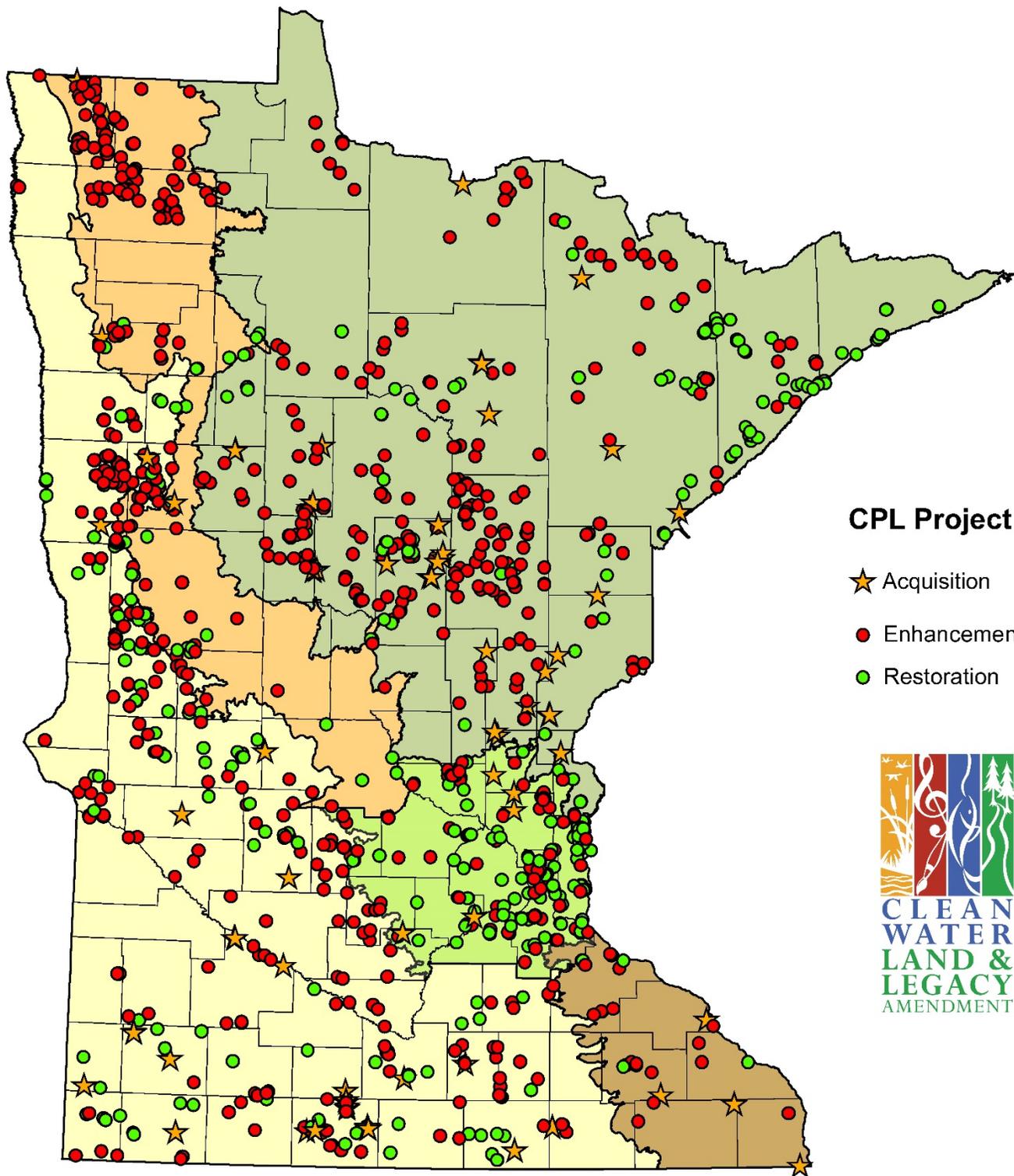
Acres Impacted



Awarded and Appropriated \$/year



Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program: 9 Years of CPL Projects



CPL Project Type

- ★ Acquisition
- Enhancement
- Restoration



Note: This map shows the approximate relative location of property boundaries and other features but was not prepared by a professional land surveyor. This map is provided for informational purposes only and may not be sufficient or appropriate for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes.