

# Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

## Fiscal Year 2021 / ML 2020 Request for Funding



**Date:** May 23, 2019

**Program or Project Title:** Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Protection Program - Phase VIII

**Funds Requested:** \$5,260,000

**Manager's Name:** Shannon Wettstein

**Title:** District Manager

**Organization:** Morrison SWCD

**Address:** 16776 Heron Rd

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**County Locations:** Morrison

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

- Northern Forest
- Forest / Prairie Transition

**Activity types:**

- Protect in Easement

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

- Wetlands
- Forest

### Abstract:

Phase VIII of the RIM Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Partnership will utilize permanent conservation easements to acquire 2,700-acres of high quality habitat along the Crow Wing, Long Prairie, Gull, Nokasippi, and Mississippi River corridors and lake watersheds. Approximately 24 easements will be secured within the project area. BWSR will utilize the RIM easement process in partnership with the Morrison SWCD to secure habitat corridor easements on sites within Crow Wing, Cass, and Morrison counties during the appropriation term. The 1,400-acre Cushing Land Company site will be targeted specifically for its multiple benefits value.

### Design and scope of work:

Phase VIII will protect approximately 2,700-acres of fish, game, migratory bird, and forest habitat along the Crow Wing, Long Prairie, Gull, Nokasippi, and Mississippi River corridors and lake watersheds within a 5-mile radius of Camp Ripley. This phase will secure approximately 24 permanent conservation Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) easements, utilizing partnerships with Camp Ripley, a State Game Refuge, the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and the Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). Easement acquisition will occur in portions of Morrison, Crow Wing, and Cass County that lie within this 5-mile radius.

Easement acquisition in this area will protect river and lake habitat corridors that are critical to the general public for fishing, hunting, and recreational opportunities. These riparian corridors are critical protection for the State of Minnesota, MN National Guard (MNNG) and National Guard Bureau (NGB) and its mission to sustain military training of soldiers, our local economy, the National Mississippi River Flyway, and Mississippi Headwaters Board mission. One large target easement is the 1,400-acre Cushing Land Company tract. This parcel(s) ranks high for MN County Biological Survey value and for its near-shore value in the Lake Alexander watershed. This tract also connects existing protected lands owned by The Nature Conservancy and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Scientific and Natural Area (SNA).

Parcels are targeted that have quality existing habitat, protect corridors and large habitat complexes and reduce future fragmentation. Evaluation criteria include ecological and habitat factors for resident and migratory wildlife species. The target area has been limited to ensure a concentration of easement acquisitions that provide landscape scale benefits and will allow for protection of large forested

parcels that are in imminent threat of conversion.

The forested region of these three counties is where agriculture transitions to existing forested lands. Thousands of acres just outside of this work area are being converted from forest to annual cropping, primarily for potato/corn production. Forests not only provide critical wildlife habitat for game and non-game species, but forests lessen the impact of water quality contamination from land use practices. This region of the state, most specifically Morrison County, is the fastest growing county in the state for the loss of grazing land to annual cropping. The loss of forests would exacerbate problems associated with conversion. Drinking water standards in the area are also in jeopardy with the increase in irrigation and large scale livestock operations, so protecting the forested lands has become a critical issue.

In 2016 Camp Ripley was designated as a federal Sentinel Landscape, one of seven in the nation. This designation by both State and Federal entities coordinates strategies to protect this landscape. Many agencies have identified their scope of priorities within the Sentinel Landscape 10-mile boundary. The Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program has never had less than 250-interested landowners on the waiting list for participation. To date Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) support of \$9M has leveraged \$39M in federal dollars and protected 30,000-acres.

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

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes

### **Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:**

- Minnesota Forest Resource Council Landscape Plans
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

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

MN Forest Resource Council Landscape Plans recommend a strategy protecting large blocks of contiguous forest land that have minimal inclusion of conflicting land uses. In protecting working forest lands natural resource, ecological and economic benefits will help minimize future land use conflicts. The prioritization of this project area boundary will limit fragmentation and ensure contiguous forest land protection. Several of the permanent easement sites secured through this program will protect sensitive and/or undeveloped shoreline along the Crow Wing, Gull, Nokasippi, Long Prairie and Mississippi Rivers.

The 25-year framework expects an outcome that forested lands are protected from development and fragmentation. This Phase VIII proposal will secure 2,700-acres of high quality habitat to restrict future development, sustain habitat connectivity, and maintain large forested habitat blocks within the project area.

### **Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:**

#### **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:**

- Provide access to manage habitat on landlocked public properties or protect forest land from parcelization and fragmentation through fee acquisition, conservation or access easement

### **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:**

Land conversion to urban and agricultural uses within this vulnerable program geography is significant. In the Northern Forest section, forest-based wildlife habitat has experienced substantial decline in recent decades. Securing permanent RIM easements will protect habitat and forest land from further parcelization, fragmentation, and forest to cropland conversion.

The shallow lakes, habitat complexes, and shore land that provide critical habitat for game and nongame wildlife in the Forest/Prairie Transition section are also at risk. These river corridors are very vulnerable to habitat degradation through development and forest to cropland conversion. The Hwy 371 Little Falls to Brainerd corridor is projected to have some of the highest growth rates outside the metropolitan area. According to the 2010 US Census Bureau, the City of Baxter's population has increased 37 percent and Cass County's population increased by 5 percent from 2000 to 2010. Impervious surface cover has increased in Sylvan, Crow Wing, and Fort Ripley

townships over the last 10 years with much of the development near the Gull, Mississippi, Nokasippi, Long Prairie and Crow Wing Rivers (UMN Land Cover 1990-2000). The majority of the lakes have exhausted available development space leaving these major rivers vulnerable to new development.

Securing 2700-acres with permanent easements through this program will protect these important habitat corridors, providing multiple benefits in the face of climate change and other major stressors.

### **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:**

Parcels are targeted that have quality existing habitat, protect corridors and large habitat complexes and will reduce future fragmentation. Evaluation criteria include ecological and habitat factors for resident and migratory wildlife species. The target area has been limited to ensure a concentration of easement acquisitions that provide landscape scale benefits. The target work area also contains high value existing habitat and public access via existing Wildlife Management Areas that are being buffered with easements.

The MN County Biological Survey has identified several native plant communities within this project area that are vulnerable to extirpation as well as sites with existing high biodiversity. Most of these identified areas lie within the northern extent of this 5-mile project boundary under high development pressure due to their proximity to the cities of Baxter & Brainerd. Protecting these parcels is a high priority for the ACUB Program.

In the fall and spring of 2018/19 DNR staff have started an amendment process to the State Wildlife Action Plan that would include the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape within a future Conservation Focus Area. This effort is expected to be completed in 2019. The largely forested 50-mile section of the Mississippi River, its associated major tributaries, wetland and lake systems all elevate the habitat significance of this program geography.

### **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 forest habitat protected by this proposal falls within the Camp Ripley-Pillsbury-Lake Alexander Important Bird Area (IBA). The 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) identifies 346 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) 92 being birds. This project area supports the greatest concentration of nesting Red-shouldered Hawks in the state along with 65 other SGCN birds. Thirty six other non-avian SGCN have also been identified within this area totaling nearly 30% of all SGCN within the state. This project directly addresses two primary causes of SGCN declines, habitat fragmentation and climate change impacts.

The Cushing Land Company parcel targeted in this proposal abuts the 1988-acre Lake Alexander Woods Scientific and Natural Area and the 1700-acre Lake Alexander preserve. This parcel, combined with the adjacent public lands and parcels already protected by permanent RIM easements will form a nearly 6000-acre permanently protected tract of forest and wetland Native Plant Communities (NPC). This tract includes Central Dry Pine Woodlands and Central Dry Oak-Aspen woodlands which are listed as critically imperiled and vulnerable to extirpation within MN. These fire dependent communities are also already targeted for enhancement using prescribed fire by funding through partner grant sources making their protection fiscally responsible. A State threatened species, Bog Blue grass, has also been documented at the Lake Alexander SNA. The adjoining Cushing Land company parcel boasts nearly identical habitat types making it extremely likely that this threatened species is also located there.

Lands in this proposal are also occupied by two federally listed species, the gray wolf and the northern long-eared bat. Populations of these species rely on unbroken tracts of forest which are the focus of this proposal. Many studies have indicated that road density has direct, negative, impact on wolf habitat utilization especially during their breeding season. The project area is on the fringe of forest habitat that is under extreme pressure from development leading to habitat fragmentation. Permanent protection of these parcels is critical to the long term recovery of these species under the Endangered Species Act as well as many of the state listed SGCN neotropical migratory birds in the area.

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

DNR staff, in consultation with a variety of experts in NGOs and other agencies, have compiled a select group of indicator species and associated quantities to be used by any applicant to answer the question above.

#### **Ovenbird**

Ovenbirds (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) are found in upland forests statewide; typically in relatively mature forest but can also be found in younger forests. This species has been identified as a priority species to monitor, as an indication of the health of mature forest uplands, within the area represented by the LSOHC Northern Forest planning section. While territories vary in size and may overlap, an average of 10 pairs for every 10 hectares may be translated to roughly 16 pairs for every 40 acres.

#### **White-tailed deer**

White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) use a wide variety of forested habitats, are found throughout Minnesota, and are an important game species in the state. Deer have also been suggested as potential ecological indicators for forest systems. In the 33 forested deer permit areas for which deer densities are estimated, covering most of the LSOHC Northern Forest section, the six-year average (2010-2015) for pre-fawn deer densities across all deer permit areas is 13 deer per square mile of land (excluding water) . This translates to 0.02 deer (pre-fawning) per acre of forest land habitat or roughly 1 deer (pre-fawning) for every 50 acres of land.

## Outcomes:

### Programs in the northern forest region:

- Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation *A summary of the total of wetland acres and associated forest land secured under easement through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure maintained outcomes. Sustained habitat availability within a certain region is expected to maintain the carrying capacity of associated wildlife within that region. This would affect both game and non-game species. We expect sustained populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as these easements are secured.*

### Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Rivers and streams provide corridors of habitat including intact areas of forest cover in the east and large wetland/upland complexes in the west *A summary of the total of wetland acres and associated forest land secured under easement through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure maintained outcomes. Sustained habitat availability within a certain region is expected to maintain the carrying capacity of associated wildlife within that region. This would affect both game and nongame species. We expect sustained populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as these easements are secured.*

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

Once a RIM easement is acquired, BWSR is responsible for monitoring and enforcement into perpetuity. The BWSR partners with local SWCDs to carry-out oversight, monitoring and enforcement of its conservation easements. Easements are monitored for the first five consecutive years beginning in the year after the easement is recorded. Thereafter, on-site monitoring is performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years. SWCDs report to BWSR on each site inspection conducted and partners' staff document findings. A non-compliance procedure is implemented when potential violations or problems are identified.

Perpetual monitoring and stewardship costs have been calculated at \$6,500 per easement. This value is based on using local SWCD staff for monitoring and landowner relations and existing enforcement authorities. The amount listed for Easement Stewardship covers costs of the SWCD regular monitoring, BWSR oversight, and enforcement.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2020-Ongoing	Stewardship Account	Compliance Checks first 5 years then every 3rd year.	Corrective actions of any violations.	Enforcement Action taken by MN Attorney Generals office.
2020-Ongoing	Landowner Responsibility	Maintain compliance with easement terms.		

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

Morrison, Crow Wing and Cass counties are transition areas where agriculture gives way to forests. Increasing demand for cropland and urban/residential development is leading to rapid loss of forested lands. Forest conversion is fragmenting habitat blocks and riparian corridors in this region of the state. Thousands of acres just outside of this work area are being converted from forest to annual cropping, primarily for potato/corn production. Morrison County has one of the fastest conversion rates from forest to row crop production of any county within the state. Drinking water in the area is also in jeopardy with the increase in irrigation and large scale livestock operations. The multiple benefits of protecting forested habitat has become a critical focus for implementation for all of the partners associated with the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape program.

## Does this program include leverage in funds:

Yes

The Department of Defense (DOD) Readiness Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program requires a 25% match to those federal funds. The OHF has been a critical piece in the ACUB now Sentinel Landscape partnership success. The Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape partnership with Morrison SWCD as the fiscal will apply for NRCS-Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) dollars



(\$10 million) in the fall of 2019 to further leverage the total partnership funding. In addition, but not secured, year end funding is often appropriated from REPI. In the last fiscal year the program also received a private donation of land (120-acres) to support the program.

**Relationship to other funds:**

- Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund
- Clean Water Fund
- Dept. of Defense and National Guard Bureau

**Describe the relationship of the funds:**

Due to the success of the Camp Ripley ACUB partnership, the MN Legislature passed the Sentinel Landscape Designation in 2015. This law (MS 190.33) formalized a process that we have used to enhance the implementation of the ACUB program that will complement the DOD's national Sentinel Landscape program. Establishing Sentinel Landscapes in state law enabled the federal Sentinel Landscape designation in 2016. This allows the program to better leverage federal funding from agencies beyond just the DOD. It also better aligns federal and state programs that could support private landowners in a Sentinel Landscape. Sentinel Landscape programs seek to preserve the working rural lands and natural values of private lands, which is important for both national defense and conservation priorities. Camp Ripley was the first such designation of a National Guard facility and only the 7th designated Sentinel Landscape in the country. The Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape partnership has secured \$2.8M federal funding through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for EQIP , CSP and Healthy Forest Reserve Program starting 2017. The Partnership will apply for RCPP funding Phase II in the fall of 2019.

The SWCD offices in Crow Wing and Morrison counties have applied for Clean Water Funds and the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) funds to assist landowners with forest stewardship planning, nutrient management planning, and most importantly drainage management. The counties utilize all resources available to enhance the easement properties. Our additional partners and efforts include USDA NRCS, MN Forest Resource Council, local water planning, county planning and zoning offices, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Farm Bill Assistance Partnership (FBAP) with BWSR, DNR, PF, NRCS, MASWCD, and SWCDs as primary partners, provides funding to SWCDs to utilize technicians to promote the conservation provisions of the Federal Farm Bill and other conservation program opportunities to private landowners. The Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) via LCCMR recommendations provided \$1.0M in FY10-11, \$625,000 in FY12-13, \$3.0M in FY14-15 and \$1.0M in FY16-17.

**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 proposal is not supplanting or a substitution for any previous funding not form Legacy Fund sources or for the same purpose.

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

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2007 - Present	Department of Defense (DOD)/National Guard Bureau (NGB)	\$28,400,000
2010 - Present	LCCMR: Camp Ripley Crow Wing/Morrison SWCD and city of Baxter	\$1,460,000
2016 - Present	NRCS-RCPP funding from USDA	\$2,800,000

**Activity Details**

**Requirements:**

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

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

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 - **2020**

## Land Use:

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

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 - **Yes**

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

This appropriation is funding a program that will have a parcel list identified at a later time. Roads or trails are typically excluded from the easement area if they serve no beneficial purpose to easement maintenance, monitoring, or enforcement. This question is being answered with utmost flexibility in absence of a LSOHC definition of trails and specified trail types (permanent or temporary, beneficial for maintenance, animal trails, etc.).

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

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished:

The easements secured under this project will be managed as part of the BWSR RIM Reserve Program that has over 6,500 easements currently in place. Easements are monitored annually for each of the first 5-years and then every 3rd year after that. BWSR, in cooperation with SWCDs, implement a stewardship process to track, monitor quality and assure compliance with easement terms.

Under the terms of the RIM Easement Program, landowners are required to maintain compliance with the easement. A conservation plan is developed with the landowner and maintained as part of each easement. Basic easement compliance costs are borne by the landowner, periodic enhancements may be cost shared from a variety of sources.

Will new trails or roads be developed or improved as a result of the OHF acquisition - **Yes**

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

Though uncommon, there could be a potential for new trails to be developed, if they contribute to easement maintenance or benefit the easement site (e.g. firebreaks, berm maintenance, etc). This question is being answered with utmost flexibility in absence of a LSOHC definition of trails and specified trail types (permanent or temporary, beneficial for maintenance, animal trails, etc.).

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished:

The easements secured under this project will be managed as part of the BWSR RIM Reserve Program that has over 6,500 easements currently in place. Easements are monitored annually for each of the first 5-years and then every 3rd year after that. BWSR, in cooperation with SWCDs, implement a stewardship process to track, monitor quality and assure compliance with easement terms.

Under the terms of the RIM Easement Program, landowners are required to maintain compliance with the easement. A conservation plan is developed with the landowner and maintained as part of each easement. Basic easement compliance costs are borne by the landowner, periodic enhancements may be cost shared from a variety of sources.

## Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Obtain applications from eligible landowners	June 30, 2023
Allocations to specific parcels	June 30, 2023
Easements recorded	June 30, 2023
Final report submitted	November 1, 2023

# Budget Spreadsheet

**Total Amount of Request: \$5,260,000**

## Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$232,600	\$0		\$232,600
Contracts	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$4,621,800	\$0		\$4,621,800
Easement Stewardship	\$156,000	\$0		\$156,000
Travel	\$9,200	\$0		\$9,200
Professional Services	\$195,000	\$0		\$195,000
Direct Support Services	\$28,300	\$0		\$28,300
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$13,200	\$0		\$13,200
Supplies/Materials	\$3,900	\$0		\$3,900
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$5,260,000	\$0		\$5,260,000

## Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Mgmt	0.35	3.50	\$134,800	\$0		\$134,800
Easement Processing	0.31	3.00	\$64,600	\$0		\$64,600
Eci/Eng. (Acres x Eco/Eng avg./acre)	0.66	3.00	\$33,200	\$0		\$33,200
Total	1.32	9.50	\$232,600	\$0		\$232,600

Amount of Request: \$5,260,000  
 Amount of Leverage: \$0  
 Leverage as a percent of the Request: 0.00%  
 DSS + Personnel: \$260,900  
 As a % of the total request: 4.96%  
 Easement Stewardship: \$156,000  
 As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 3.38%

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

BWSR calculates direct support services costs that are directly related to and necessary for each request based on the type of work being done.

**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:**

The travel line will only be used for traditional travel costs.

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

There is no direct leverage for this project. This project would contribute to the goals of the Sentinel Landscape initiative. However, to date the Federal government has contributed \$38,400,000 to other protection projects within the Sentinel Landscape project area.

**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:**

A reduction in funding would reduce outputs proportionally for the most part. Program management costs would be the exception, due to program development & oversight remaining somewhat consistent regardless of appropriation amount.

**What is the cost per easement for stewardship and explain how that amount is calculated?**

Not Listed

## 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	270	0	2,430	0	2,700
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	270	0	2,430	0	2,700

**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	\$526,000	\$0	\$4,734,000	\$0	\$5,260,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$526,000	\$0	\$4,734,000	\$0	\$5,260,000

**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	1,350	0	0	1,350	2,700
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	1,350	0	0	1,350	2,700

**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	\$526,000	\$0	\$0	\$4,734,000	\$5,260,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$526,000	\$0	\$0	\$4,734,000	\$5,260,000

**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	\$1,948	\$0	\$1,948	\$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	\$390	\$0	\$0	\$3,507
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

*Automatic system calculation / not entered by managers*

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

5 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:

Parcels are targeted that have quality existing habitat, protect corridors and large habitat complexes and reduce future fragmentation. Evaluation criteria include ecological and habitat factors for resident and migratory wildlife species. The target area has been limited to ensure a concentration of easement acquisitions that provide landscape scale benefits.

Camp Ripley ranks the parcels with their formula, but OHF dollars target forested parcels, riparian (Crow Wing, Mississippi or tributaries and lakes) lands, and/or lands adjacent to public lands.

The expanded 5-mile radius will capture large forested parcels throughout the ACUB zone to prevent the conversion of forests to non-forest uses while protecting habitat corridors.

## Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

## Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

### Morrison

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Cushing Land Company	13131204	1,400	\$2,000,000	No	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

## Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

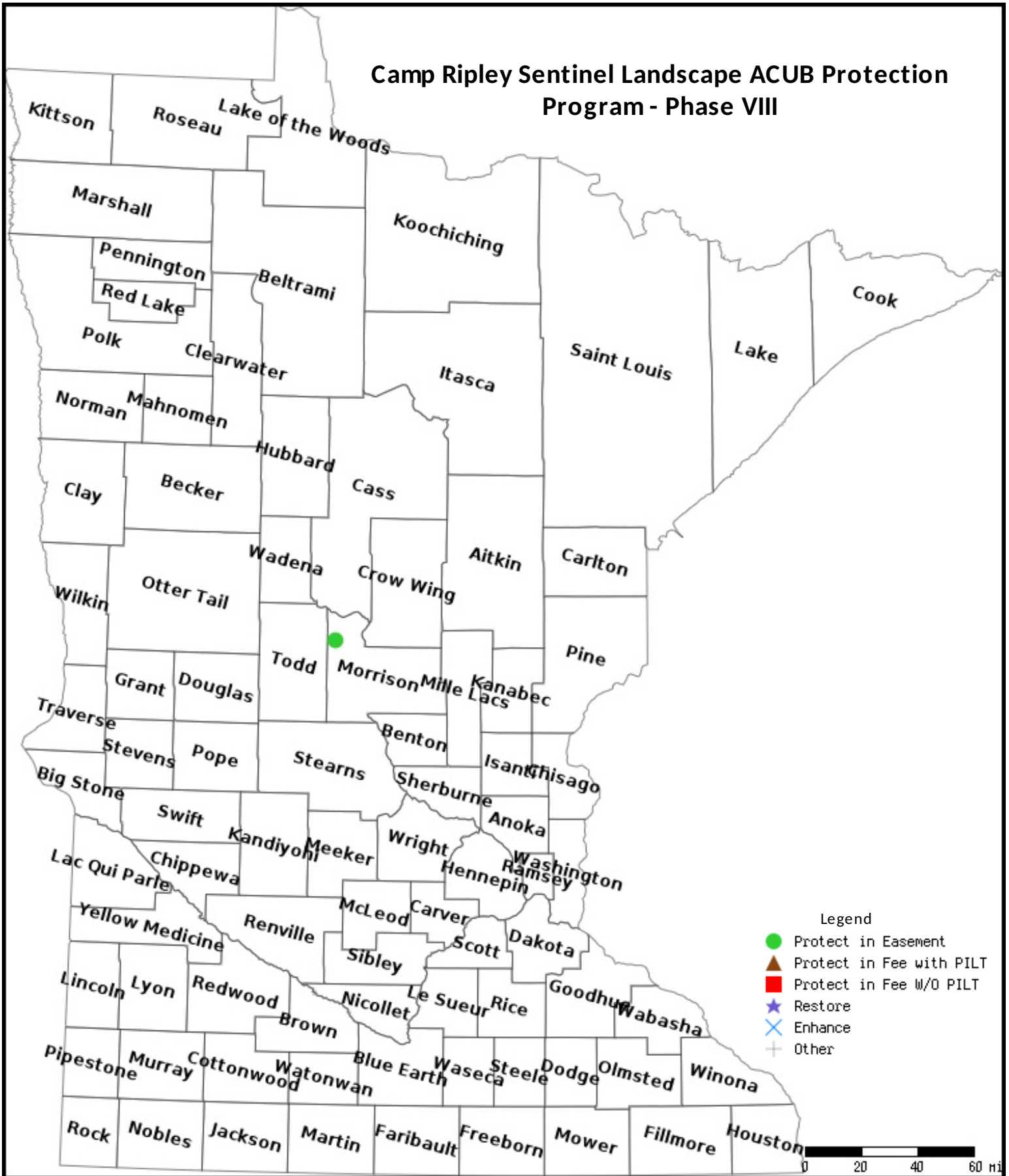
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

## Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

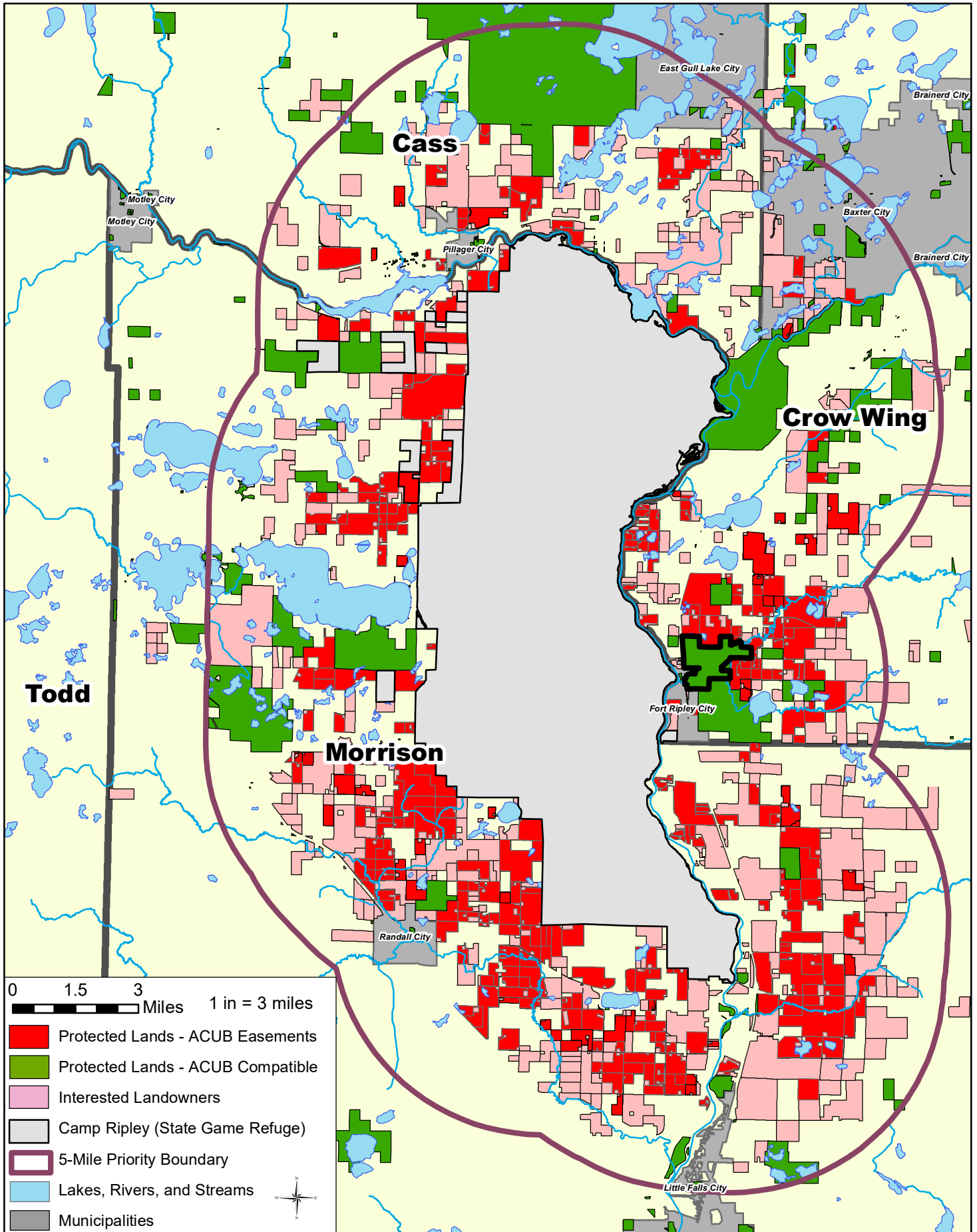
# Parcel Map

## Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Protection Program - Phase VIII



Data Generated From Parcel List

# Camp Ripley Sentinal Landscape (Protection) - ACUB (4/5/2019)



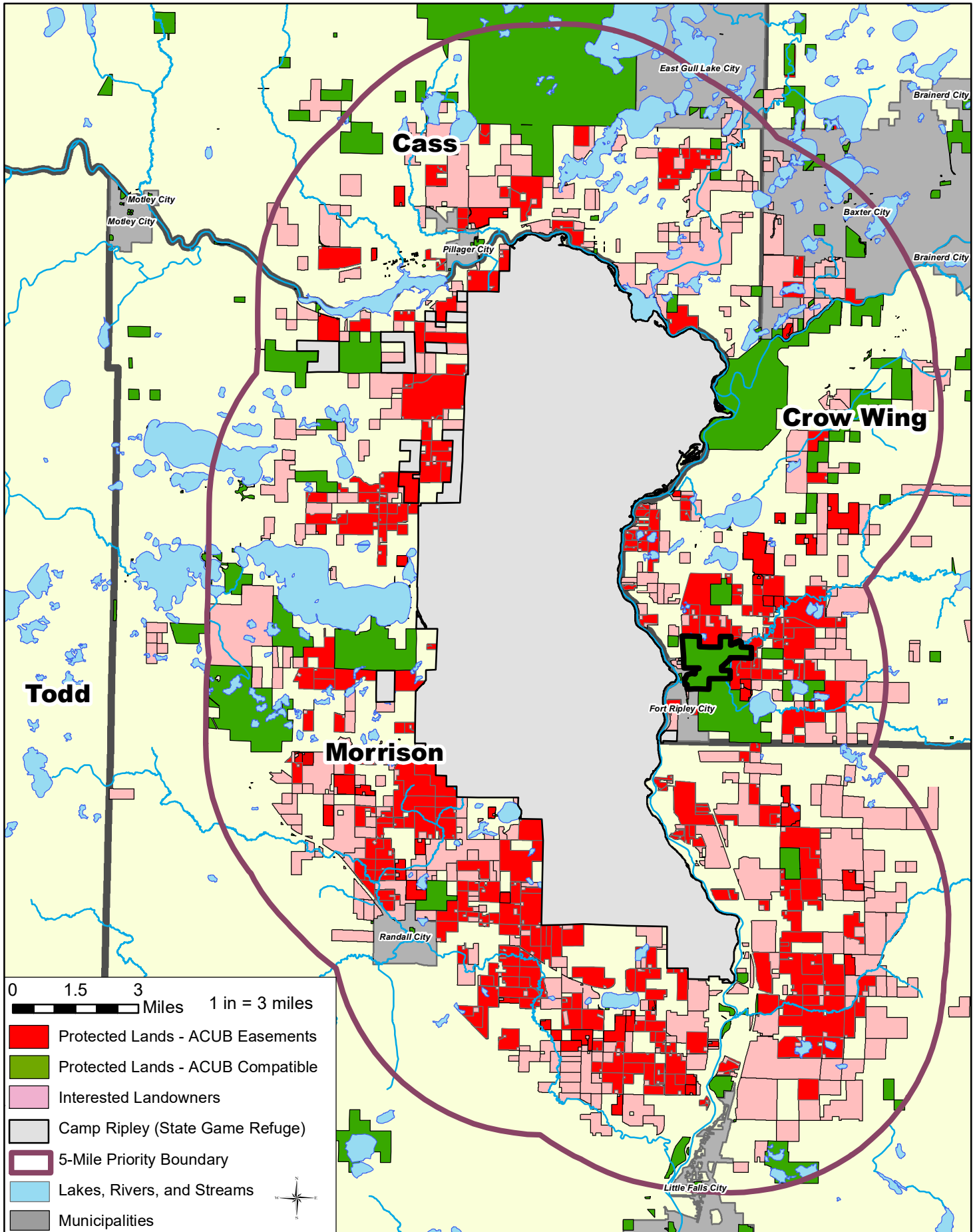
## Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Protection Ranking sheet

<u>Score</u>	<u>Max Score</u>	<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Guidelines:</u>
	30	# Feet of Shoreline	5 points for minimal river frontage on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries. (<500ft) 10 points for at least 500 - 999 feet of shoreland on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries. 15 points for 1,000 - 2,000 feet of shoreland on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries. 20 points for 2,000 - 3,000 feet of shoreline on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries. 30 points for more than 3,000 feet of shoreland on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries.
	15	% of Tract Developable	1-15 points base on the proportion of the tract that is developable (10%=1.5pts)
	10	Wetland fringe width	1-10 points based on the distance between upland & the bank/water (0'=10pts, 300'=0pts, -1pt/30' wet)
	20	Urgency	Property opportunity is likely to be lost if we do not act quickly
	25	Professional Judgement	0-25 Points based on Landowner actively managing their land & Riparian/Streamshore Needs
	15	Adjoining Applications	15 points for land adjoining another application
	20	Adjoining Public Land	up to 20 points for land adjoining public land on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, and tributaries.
	10	Habitat Value	1-10 points based on the habitat value of the property, uniqueness, and lack of existing development and shoreline alterations. County biological survey, Zonation
	10	% of Parcel/Tract	1-10 points based on the proportion of the parcel enrolled (10% = 1 pt)
	10	% Forest of the parcels	1-10 points based on the proportion of parcel that is forest and/or perennial grass (10% = 1 pt)
	15	Minor Watershed Risk Classification of MHB or County Waterplan	1-15 Points for Classification Enhancement and Protection. Less points for Villigance. Additional points for moving that needle.
	20	Bargain Sale/Leverage	1-20 Points based on percent discount or other funds leveraged

200 TOTAL GROSS SCORE

\*Other factors may raise or lower the priority of a parcel

# Camp Ripley Sentinal Landscape (Protection) - ACUB (4/5/2019)





## Minnesota Army National Guard – Camp Ripley, Minnesota

### *Meeting the Army's Triple Bottom Line:*

#### Mission



#### Environment



#### Community



Camp Ripley is a 53,000 acre facility that has prepared our Soldiers for the battlefield for decades. In addition, Camp Ripley is the largest state game refuge in Minnesota. It is one of the most culturally and ecologically rich environments in the Midwest bordered by 18 miles of the most pristine shoreline along the Mississippi River and eight miles of the Crow Wing River.

#### *Challenges*

Encroachment is any external factor that inhibits military readiness, including but not limited to the growing competition for land, airspace, waterfront access, and frequency spectrum. Incompatible land uses can impact critical, military mission capabilities at different scales over time.

- Lights from residential and commercial development reduce the effectiveness of night-vision training;
- Complaints about the noise, dust and smoke generated by military activities not only impacts community relations but also results in restrictions on the timing, frequency, and type of training activities;
- Communication towers, wind turbines, highways, and energy transmission lines near or through training areas all hinder realistic training and testing; and
- Land development that destroys or fragments endangered species habitat pushes those species onto less developed military lands, resulting in increased restrictions on training and testing land.

These issues are important because our Nation's readiness depends on ensuring our installations and ranges provide realistic training and effective weapon systems testing. Costly workarounds and restricted or unrealistic testing and training will compromise the readiness of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines for their combat missions. In order for military installations to remain active and contributing economic participants in their communities, the installations must have the space necessary to successfully accomplish their missions.



Aerial view of the Mississippi River adjacent to Camp Ripley

#### *Solutions*

To help preserve the integrity of our country's military training and readiness programs, Congress authorized the Office of Secretary of Defense (OSD) to develop partnerships with state and nonprofit conservation organizations to address encroachment. These win-win partnerships share the cost of acquisition of easements or other interests in land from willing sellers to preserve compatible land uses and natural habitats near installations and ranges. In turn, these land transactions help sustain critical, at-risk military mission capabilities. The Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program also supports large landscape partnerships that advance cross-boundary solutions and link military readiness, conservation, and communities with federal, state and NGO partners through a common, collaborative framework.



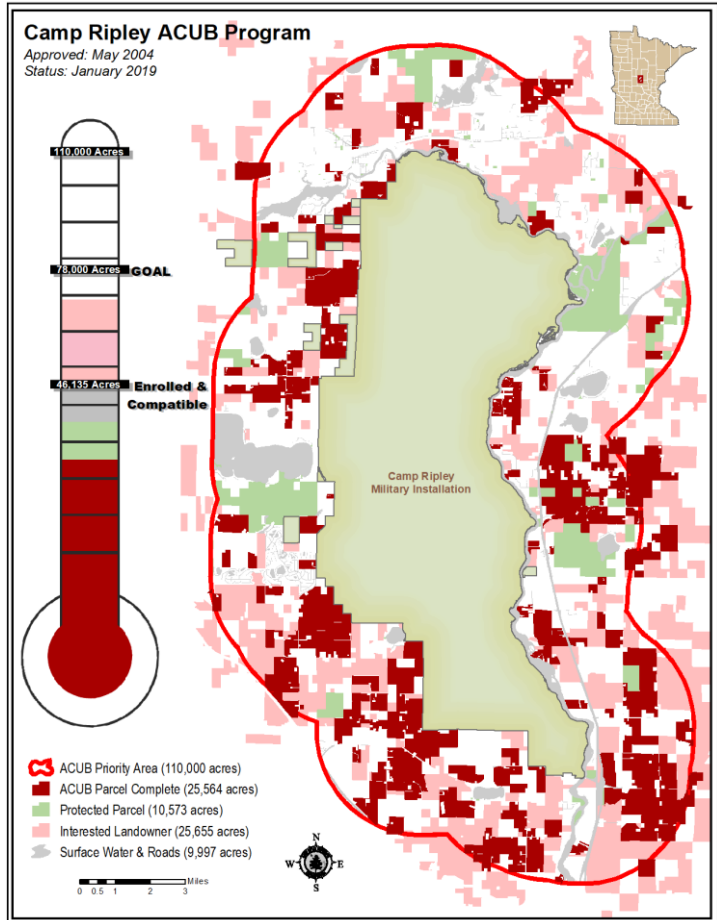
## Where We've Been

In 2004, under the REPI program, Camp Ripley established its Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program. The purpose was to create and enhance a natural buffer around Camp Ripley by working with willing landowners to prevent encroachment and enhance conservation. This partnership has enabled Camp Ripley to help the community maintain its rural character and provide critically important, high quality military training and operations to ensure combat readiness, as well as mitigate community development encroachment around the installation.

This program has had outstanding support and the success is evident. Since the programs inception, \$42.4 million in federal funds along with \$11.5 million in Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council funds have been used to completed more than 230 land transactions representing over 27,700 acres. Currently, there are 380 landowners interested in participating in the program representing 43,720 acres as shown in pink.

In 2013, recognizing the success of the REPI program, The US Departments of Agriculture, Defense, and the Interior signed a Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Sentinel Landscape Partnership which sought to leverage federal funding in large landscapes surrounding military installations in order to recognize and incentivize landowners to continue maintaining these landscapes in ways that contribute to the nation's defense.

***"With over 17,000 acres currently in Reinvest in Minnesota Reserve (RIM) easements, our partnership is having a major impact in not only protecting the military mission, but our mission to improve and protect soil and water resources in central Minnesota." John Jaschke, Executive Director Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.***



**Camp Ripley ACUB program "Thermometer"**

*"For more than 30 years the Department of Natural Resources has worked in partnership with the Minnesota National Guard. Together, we have successfully blended natural resource conservation and restoration with high quality military training. With the addition of the Sentinel Landscape Program, our partnership has grown. The DNR is enthusiastic and committed to helping create a buffer around Camp Ripley that serves both a military mission and protects significant natural areas."*

- Tom Landwehr, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

## Where We've Been

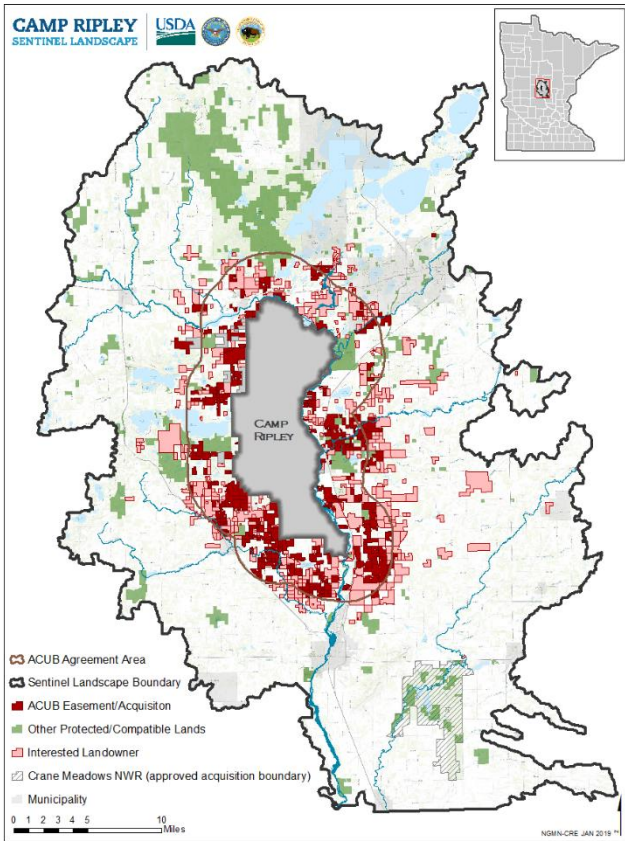
The ACUB partnership recognized that by expanding conservation efforts, particularly in sustainable forestry and agriculture management, that a more diverse conservation mission could be achieved. In 2015, Camp Ripley, through state law, was designated as the first state Sentinel Landscape in the Nation. The designation established a state coordinating committee in March 2016. This committee is comprised of State Commissioners from BWSR, DNR, Minnesota Department of Military Affairs, and Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA). This committee was charged to identify their priorities around Camp Ripley and establish the foot print of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape (CRSL) and seek federal landscape designation.

The established footprint of the CRSL encompasses 40 sub-watersheds grouped in 8 watershed management units within an approximate 10 mile radius of Camp Ripley encompassing 804,557 acres. Once federal designation was achieved in late 2016, partners of the CRSL began work to achieve one mission; Protecting the current and future training mission of Camp Ripley while preserving our local economy and the working and rural character of private and public lands within the CRSL program area. *"To Keep Forests Forests and Farms Farms"*

Upon receiving Federal designation, agencies such as the NRCS, USFS, and USFWS who envisioned enhancing their program priorities and interests within this area were engaged by the partnership. In 2017, the CRSL was awarded \$2.8 million through the NRCS's Regional Conservation Partnership Program to carry out forest easements and agricultural BMP's within the CRSL. This program has successfully funded agricultural BMP's on 1,200 acres of land and is currently working to permanently protect a 428 acre forested parcel under the Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP). This will be the first execution of HFRP in the state of MN.

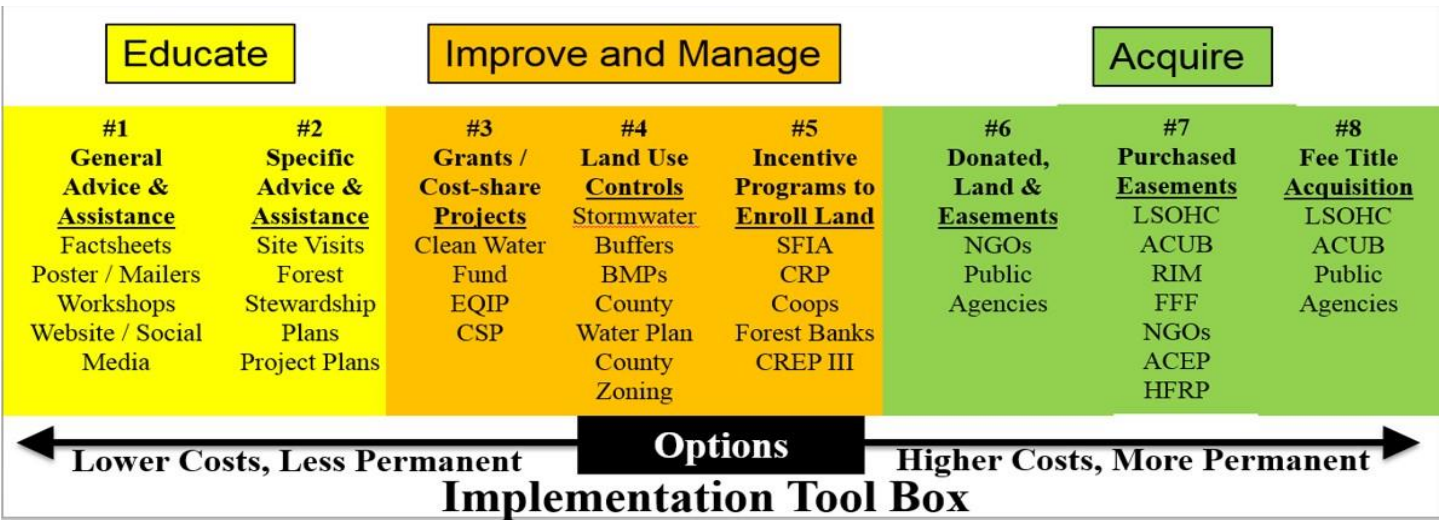
## What Makes This Landscape Important?

The CRSL is a diverse landscape. It was chosen because it sits at a convergence of several high quality water features, including 50 miles of the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River and four major tributaries to the river; two major continental ecological transitions zones and thousands of acres of public and private conservation lands that can potentially be connected in conservation corridors. This landscape is also one of Minnesota's most important source water protection areas for drinking water. This convergence provides an excellent opportunity to protect, maintain, and restore natural and cultural resources in the CRSL. Providing multiple benefits for military, ecological, social, and economic interests, will be achieved through coordinated conservation efforts. Watersheds are not confined to political boundaries, hence, collaborative efforts across this landscape are critical to protect, maintain, and restore agriculture and forested lands resulting in cleaner water, less erosion, habitat for fish and wildlife and more recreational opportunities.



## Where We're Going

The 15 partner agencies and organizations involved in the CRSL Committee are committed to using a wide array of federal and state tools and programs, which are already being used to achieve goals. The CRSL committee will develop strategies to implement State and Federal partner programs and seek to carry out a full suite of conservation tools from education and outreach to fee acquisition. (See Implementation Tool Box). The CRSL partnership will continue to implement and develop the ACUB program within the established buffer area. In 2019, CRSL partners will apply for Phase II of the RCPP and have begun engaging the National Park Service to identify priorities within the landscape.



*The Sentinel Landscapes are working or natural lands significant to the Nation's defense mission. Our efforts here are an important partnership opportunity to preserve the working lands through partner engagement while addressing the existence of farms, ranches, and forests viability through conservation of habitat and natural resources. The efforts here among the Federal, state, local and private agencies, organizations and associations is a positive win-win for the American people and our great state of Minnesota. Cathee Pullman MN State Conservationist, NRCS*

### Partners Engaged in the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Committee:

- Minnesota Department of Military Affairs
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources
- Minnesota Forest Resources Council
- United States Fish & Wildlife Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- The Nature Conservancy
- Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District
- Morrison County
- Crow Wing County
- Cass County
- City of Baxter
- Mississippi Headwaters Board
- The Conservation Fund

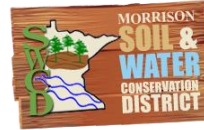




## Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Partnership: ACUB Phase 8

April 2019

CAMP RIPLEY  
SENTINEL LANDSCAPE



### Phase 8 Request

- \$5,260,000 request
- Protects 2,700 targeted acres of habitat within 5-mile radius of Camp Ripley with RIM easements
- \$2,200,000 to acquire 1,400 acres from the Cushing Land Company
- Permanently protects resources while private ownership continues
- Target area includes Crow Wing, Gull, Nokasippi, Long Prairie and Mississippi River corridors
- Parcels are targeted that have/or serve to:
  - quality existing habitat
  - protect corridors and large habitat complexes
  - reduce future fragmentation
  - buffer or add to public land assets



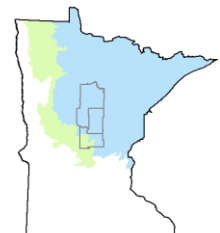
*ACUB allows for protection of large forested parcels that are in imminent threat of conversion to cropland.*

### A Piece of the Sentinel Landscape Mosaic

- In 2016 Camp Ripley was federally designated as a Sentinel Landscape; one of only six in the nation
- Coordinates all Federal, State, and local efforts to protect this area in a broader 10-mile radius (previously 3-miles)
- LSOHC Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) appropriations are focused on a 3-mile radius, but program eligibility extends to a 5-mile radius
  - Federal REPI/State leverage of funds coordination
  - extends habitat along existing river corridors
  - protects native plant communities identified in the MN Biological Survey



*Minnesota's largest red-shouldered hawk concentration occurs in the Camp Ripley area. Photo credit: Audubon.org.*





*This proposal targets 2,700 acres of habitat along the Crow Wing, Gull, Nokasippi, Long Prairie and Mississippi River Corridors.*

