

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2021 / ML 2020 Request for Funding



Date: May 31, 2019

Program or Project Title: Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge, Phase XI

Funds Requested: \$8,432,700

Manager's Name: Ruth Thornton

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County Locations: Becker, Big Stone, Brown, Chippewa, Clay, Cottonwood, Grant, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Kittson, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Mahnomen, Marshall, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Norman, Otter Tail, Pennington, Pipestone, Polk, Pope, Red Lake, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Roseau, Stearns, Stevens, Swift, Traverse, Wilkin, and Yellow Medicine.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement
- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Prairie

Abstract:

The Nature Conservancy and US Fish and Wildlife Service will work together to permanently protect native prairie and associated complexes of wetlands and native habitats in western and central Minnesota by purchasing approximately 2,350 acres of fee title properties and/or permanent habitat easements. Approximately 1,258 acres will be native prairie. Work will be focused in areas identified as having significant biodiversity by the Minnesota Biological Survey and/or the US Fish and Wildlife Service and located in priority areas in the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan.

Design and scope of work:

The Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) was established in 2000 to address the loss of America's grasslands and the decline of grassland wildlife. The Refuge was created to permanently preserve and restore a portion of our disappearing tallgrass prairie. The Refuge is authorized to work in the prairie landscapes of western Minnesota and northwestern Iowa.

To date, the Refuge has protected 11,400 acres in Minnesota. Funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) will allow The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), working in partnership, to significantly accelerate this progress. TNC and USFWS will cooperate on protecting approximately 2,350 acres of native prairie and associated habitat in the 49 Minnesota counties within the Refuge boundary. We expect to protect approximately 940 acres in fee title and approximately 1,410 acres with permanent habitat easements.

This program's work is targeted at protecting high-quality native habitat in areas with existing concentrations of native prairie, wetlands, and protected lands. The lands protected will consist of native prairie and associated habitats including wetlands, streams, coulees, and lakes.

Potential acquisitions are reviewed using the following criteria:

- 1) Is there untilled native prairie on the tract? If not, is it adjacent to untilled native prairie?

- 2) Is the property in a priority area (core/corridor/complex) identified in the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan (Prairie Plan)?
- 3) Is it adjacent to an existing complex of protected land?
- 4) Was it identified by Minnesota Biological Survey (Biological Survey) or FWS biologists as having concentrations of threatened and endangered species and communities?
- 5) Is it suitable for public recreation?

Because of the nature of parcel ownership, some properties acquired through this program will likely include small areas of converted or degraded habitat needing restoration or enhancement work. Restoration and enhancement will be completed where needed. With this program's focus on native habitat, only a limited amount of cropland restoration has been required. The funds budgeted for this work are primarily for enhancement activities, including tree and brush removal, to prepare these properties for long-term, sustainable management.

Previous OHF support has allowed the partners to make significant progress towards our shared goal of protecting and buffering the remaining native prairie. The first property was acquired in March, 2013. Since then, 5,787 acres have been added to the Refuge with OHF funding. Of these, 3,400 acres (nearly 60%) are classified as untilled native prairie. Additional habitat includes more than 500 acres of wetlands, more than 10 miles of stream front, and more than 2 miles of lakefront. Offers have been extended to landowners for the protection of 215 additional acres. Talks are ongoing with a long list of interested landowners.

With additional support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund, this program will continue to make real and lasting progress towards protecting Minnesota's native prairies and the wildlife that depend on those lands.

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 Prairie Conservation Plan
- Northern Tallgrass Prairie Habitat Preservation Area (HPA) Final Environmental Impact Statement

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

This program's goals are guided by the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan and the Northern Tallgrass Prairie Habitat Preservation Area plan. Individual properties are reviewed/approved by TNC and FWS biologists using the parcel selection criteria described above, including: native prairie, location in prairie complexes, nearby protected lands, and Biological Survey research. To date, of the 5,787 acres protected, more than 4,900 acres (86%) were located either in a Prairie Core or Corridor.

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 rare native remnant prairie

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:

This program targets areas with existing remnant native prairie, oak savanna, and Big Woods forest, and the percentage of remnant prairie is one of the ranking factors used to evaluate and compare parcels submitted for consideration. To date, nearly 60% of the acres added to the Refuge with OHF funding have been native prairie.

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:

Biological Survey data is a critical part of this review. In addition to an evaluation based on the Minnesota Prairie Plan and location in a Prairie Core, Corridor, or Complex, every proposed project is evaluated using Survey information on: 1) native prairie sites, 2) rare, threatened and endangered species locations, and 3) areas of biodiversity significance.

The selection criteria also recognize the importance of building on existing complexes and reducing fragmentation. If a prairie is small or isolated, the animal and plant species that live there are at risk. The best approach is conserving larger areas, like the Prairie Plan's cores/complexes/corridors, that have the scale, species diversity, and connectivity to support functioning prairie systems over the long-term.

The numbers shared above demonstrate this program's success at identifying and protecting biologically significant lands located in areas with existing complexes of habitat and protected lands.

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 NTP NWR program takes the approach that specific species are best protected by conserving high-quality habitat in the most critical prairie areas.

This focus on habitat quality has produced results. Of the 5,787 acres protected, 2,772 have been identified as having significant biodiversity by the Biological Survey. These high-quality lands provide habitat for a wide range of species, from game species to those that are endangered, threatened, or in greatest conservation need.

Biological Survey field work has identified populations of 28 rare species located wholly or partially on NTP NWR properties protected with OHF-funding. Benefited species include:

Birds – Henslow's sparrow (endangered), Wilson's phalarope (threatened), greater prairie-chicken, marbled godwit, short-eared owl, bald eagle, and yellow rail

Butterflies – Dakota skipper (endangered), Poweshiek skipperling (endangered), arogos skipper, Pawnee skipper, and regal fritillary

Fish - Topeka shiner (endangered)

Reptiles - Blanding's turtle (threatened)

Plants – sterile sedge (threatened), hair-like beak rush (threatened), blanket flower, buffalo grass, few-flowered spikerush, Hall's sedge, least moonwort, Missouri milk-vetch, mudwort, prairie mimosa, slender milk-vetch, slender plantain, small white lady's slipper, and western white prairie clover

Highlights this past year included the protection of a parcel with 1.8 miles feet of frontage on a stream identified as critical habitat for the Topeka Shiner (OHF-funding for this program has now protected almost 6 miles of habitat for this federally-listed species), a parcel with oxbow wetlands and a fen, and protection of more than 180 acres of untilled native prairie.

Future acquisition work will be guided by this same focus on high-quality, diverse habitat, benefiting a wide range of species.

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

The remnant native prairie areas targeted by this program support a wide variety of declining and rare prairie-dependent species. To date, as mentioned above, the program has protected populations of 28 rare species, including federally and state listed animal and plant species, and Species in Greatest Conservation Need. While it is difficult to predict the quantities of rare species that a habitat will support, it has been documented that large, contiguous tracts of prairie are essential for the continued survival of prairie-dependent species. This program targets native remnant prairie located in complexes with associated habitats, such as oak savanna and wetlands, as defined by the Minnesota Prairie Plan. Part of the evaluation process used by TNC and FWS biologists includes a list of species found on submitted parcels, and the ranking system for the evaluation of submitted parcels includes the evaluation of endangered, threatened, or rare species, in addition to the presence of designated critical habitat for federally listed species.

Indicator and rare species that will be targeted for protection include, among others: Topeka shiner, Henslow's sparrow, Wilson's phalarope, greater prairie chicken, short-eared owl, Dakota skipper, Poweshiek skipperling, ottoe skipper, Blanding's turtle, common five-lined skink, prairie bush-clover, western prairie fringed orchid, sterile sedge, hair-like beak rush, blanket flower, and gray ragwort. However, any state or federally listed endemic prairie species will be considered an indicator of prairie habitat.

Outcomes:

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Remnant native prairies are part of large complexes of restored prairies, grasslands, and large and small wetlands *The percent of native remnant prairie, as determined by the Minnesota Biological Survey and/or FWS biologists, will be documented on each parcel, as will the proximity to other protected land and neighboring habitat types, including oak savanna, wetlands, and Big Woods forest. These factors are considered in the ranking criteria for each parcel.*

Programs in prairie region:

- Remnant native prairies and wetlands are perpetually protected and adequately buffered. *The percent of native remnant prairie, as determined by the Minnesota Biological Survey and/or FWS biologists, will be documented on each parcel. Surrounding natural habitat types and cropped areas will be evaluated as part of the ranking criteria for submitted parcels.*

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

Outdoor Heritage Funds will be used to purchase the land in fee title or to purchase perpetual habitat easements. The land and easements purchased will be transferred to the USFWS to become units of the Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge. Long term costs for restoration, management, and wildlife/habitat/easement monitoring will be funded through annual USFWS operations funding.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Annually	USFWS Annual Service Operating Funds	Monitoring and management by USFWS managers, biologists, field staff, and realty staff to ensure the long-term health of these habitats. Activities may include burning and mechanical, biological, and chemical treatments.		

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

While native prairie once covered one-third of Minnesota, this habitat type has experienced steep declines in recent decades, and it is estimated that only approximately 1% of untilled prairie remains. Many of these remaining areas are small and geographically isolated from each other. Conversion of the few remaining native prairie areas to cropland, sand and gravel mining, and residential development has been a consistent and real threat in many areas of the state. To protect these irreplaceable habitats, it is essential to either place them in public ownership through fee acquisition, which allows the public to enjoy the habitats for recreation or hunting/fishing, or to prevent the conversion of these habitats with permanent conservation easements.

Does this program include leverage in funds:

Yes

This proposal includes \$694,800 in leverage. The USFWS has committed \$250,000 of in-kind staff support from USFWS field staff. A letter has been provided from the USFWS confirming these funds. This phase also includes \$244,800 of support from TNC, covering the unrecovered portion of Direct Support Service (DSS) with private funds. Finally, this round includes \$200,000 in leverage from a Pheasants Forever (PF) North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant for fee and easement acquisition in western Minnesota. For the four completed rounds of this program, we have exceeded our original leverage estimates by over 20%. We hope to continue that success in this round.

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 project does not substitute or supplant any previous funding. The work described in this proposal would not be funded or completed without this appropriation.

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

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2010	USFWS In-kind Contributions	\$308,000
2015	TNC Private Contributions	\$53,354
2016	TNC Private Contributions	\$74,253
2017	TNC Private Contributions	\$917
2016	USFWS In-kind Contributions	\$150,013
2011	USFWS In-kind Contributions	\$144,000
2011	TNC Private Contributions	\$23,200
2010	TNC Private Contributions	\$37,700
2012	USFWS In-kind Contributions	\$139,400
2012	TNC Private Contributions	\$36,100
2014	USFWS In-kind Contributions	\$105,603
2014	TNC Private Contributions	\$64,400
2015	USFWS In-kind Contributions	\$302,316

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, per 97A.056 subd 13(j) - **No**

We will follow the county/township board notification processes as directed by current statutory language.

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**

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

Are the funds confirmed - **Yes**

Documentation

What are the types of funds?

Cash Match - \$200000

In-Kind Match - \$250000

Land Use:

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

Explain

No food plots will be established on OHF-acquired properties. Short-term planting of agricultural crops is an accepted Best Management Practice for preparing a site for prairie restoration. For example, short-term use of soybeans could be used to prepare seedbeds prior to prairie plantings, which has been proven effective in decreasing the need for subsequent invasives control activities, and can shorten the amount of time that additional weed control is needed on the site. In some cases this may necessitate the use of GMO products to facilitate herbicide use to control invasives. Neonicotinoid treated seeds will not be used. We anticipate that the use of agricultural crops would not exceed 3 years on any given OHF-acquired property, and in most cases will be considerably shorter.

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

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

Lands acquired by fee title will be open to public hunting and fishing during the open season according to the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act, United States Code, Title 16, Section 668dd, et seq.

Will the eased land be open for public use - **No**

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

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

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Purchase agreements/options secured for 940 acres of fee and 1410 acres of easement parcels	June 30, 2023
Grassland and wetland restoration and enhancement activities on all acquired parcels are completed	June 30, 2028

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$8,432,700

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$729,000	\$250,000	USFWS	\$979,000
Contracts	\$310,000	\$0		\$310,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$3,100,000	\$100,000	PF NAWCA	\$3,200,000
Easement Acquisition	\$3,700,000	\$100,000	PF NAWCA	\$3,800,000
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$13,800	\$0		\$13,800
Professional Services	\$290,000	\$0		\$290,000
Direct Support Services	\$176,900	\$244,800	TNC	\$421,700
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$10,000	\$0		\$10,000
Supplies/Materials	\$103,000	\$0		\$103,000
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$8,432,700	\$694,800		\$9,127,500

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
USFWS In-kind/Volunteer Contributions	0.00	0.00	\$0	\$250,000	USFWS	\$250,000
TNC Staff	2.56	3.00	\$729,000	\$0		\$729,000
Total	2.56	3.00	\$729,000	\$250,000		\$979,000

Amount of Request: \$8,432,700
 Amount of Leverage: \$694,800
 Leverage as a percent of the Request: 8.24%
 DSS + Personnel: \$905,900
 As a % of the total request: 10.74%
 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:

DSS is based on The Nature Conservancy's Federally Negotiated Rate (FNR) as proposed and subsequently approved by the US Dept. of Interior on an annual basis. In this proposal we are requesting reimbursement of 7.5% of eligible base costs, as determined by our annual FNR and based on suggestions from the Council in last year's hearings. The un-recovered portion of the approved rates through the life of the grant is offered as leverage.

What is included in the contracts line?

These funds are entirely for restoration and enhancement work. While this program targets primarily high-quality habitats, small areas included in the acquisition projects may need enhancement and/or restoration. It is anticipated that the majority of the contract work will consist of woody species and invasives removal.

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:

Rental car expense is also included.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

The Personnel line includes USFWS In-kind support. Fee acquisitions w/o PILT and easement acquisitions include leverage from a Pheasants Forever NAWCA fee and easement acquisition grant. The leverage offered on the DSS line reflects the unrecovered portion of the Conservancy's federally approved indirect rate. These funds are privately raised.

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:

If a lesser than requested amount is awarded, we are anticipating that the budget and accomplishments will be reduced approximately at a comparable ratio to the funding reduction. Proposed accomplishments may need to be reduced by a slightly larger amount to account for economies of scale.

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	940	0	0	940
Protect in Easement	0	1,410	0	0	1,410
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	2,350	0	0	2,350

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

Type	Native Prairie
Restore	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	313
Protect in Easement	945
Enhance	0
Total	1,258

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	\$3,844,300	\$0	\$0	\$3,844,300
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$4,588,400	\$0	\$0	\$4,588,400
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$8,432,700	\$0	\$0	\$8,432,700

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	47	0	893	0	940
Protect in Easement	0	70	0	1,340	0	1,410
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	117	0	2,233	0	2,350

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	\$192,200	\$0	\$3,652,100	\$0	\$3,844,300
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$229,400	\$0	\$4,359,000	\$0	\$4,588,400
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$421,600	\$0	\$8,011,100	\$0	\$8,432,700

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	\$4,090	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$3,254	\$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	\$4,089	\$0	\$4,090	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$3,277	\$0	\$3,253	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Automatic system calculation / not entered by managers

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

0

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:

Submitted parcels will be prioritized and selected according to criteria that include: the amount of native remnant prairie on the parcel, location in a Minnesota Prairie Plan priority area (Prairie Core, Corridor, or Complex), adjacency to existing protected lands and habitat complexes, and presence of federally or state listed plant and animal species and Species in Greatest Need of Conservation.

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Becker

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	14142233	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	14142236	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Big Stone

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	12446209	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	12446212	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Brown

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	10834213	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	10834216	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Chippewa

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	11739213	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	11739216	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Clay

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	14247201	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	14247204	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Cottonwood

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	10734220	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	10734223	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Grant

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	13044233	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	13044236	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Jackson

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	10436219	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	10436222	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Kandiyohi

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	12236207	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	12236210	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Kittson

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	16045203	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	16045206	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Lac qui Parle

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	11943209	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	11943212	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Lincoln

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	10945214	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	10945217	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Lyon

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	11243215	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	11243218	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Mahnomen

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	14642208	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	14642211	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Marshall

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	15746213	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	15746216	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Murray

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	10740207	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	10740210	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Nicollet

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	11132208	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	11132211	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Nobles

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	10140225	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	10140228	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Norman

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	14647201	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	14647204	99	\$1,000	Yes	Full	Full

Otter Tail

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	13244202	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	13244205	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Pennington

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	15345227	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	15345230	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Pipestone

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	10846219	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	10846222	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Polk

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	15449201	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	15449204	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Pope

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	12336213	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	12336216	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Red Lake

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	15144201	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	15144204	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Redwood

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	11336201	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	11336204	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Renville

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	11437219	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	11437222	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Rock

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	10345225	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	10345228	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Roseau

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	16242207	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	16242210	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Stearns

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	12335213	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	12335216	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Stevens

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	12543213	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	12543216	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Swift

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	12042209	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	12042212	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Traverse

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	12548219	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	12548222	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Wilkin

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	13647202	99	\$1,000	No	No	No
NA	13647205	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full

Yellow Medicine

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NA	11546221	99	\$1,000	No	Full	Full
NA	11546224	99	\$1,000	No	No	No

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

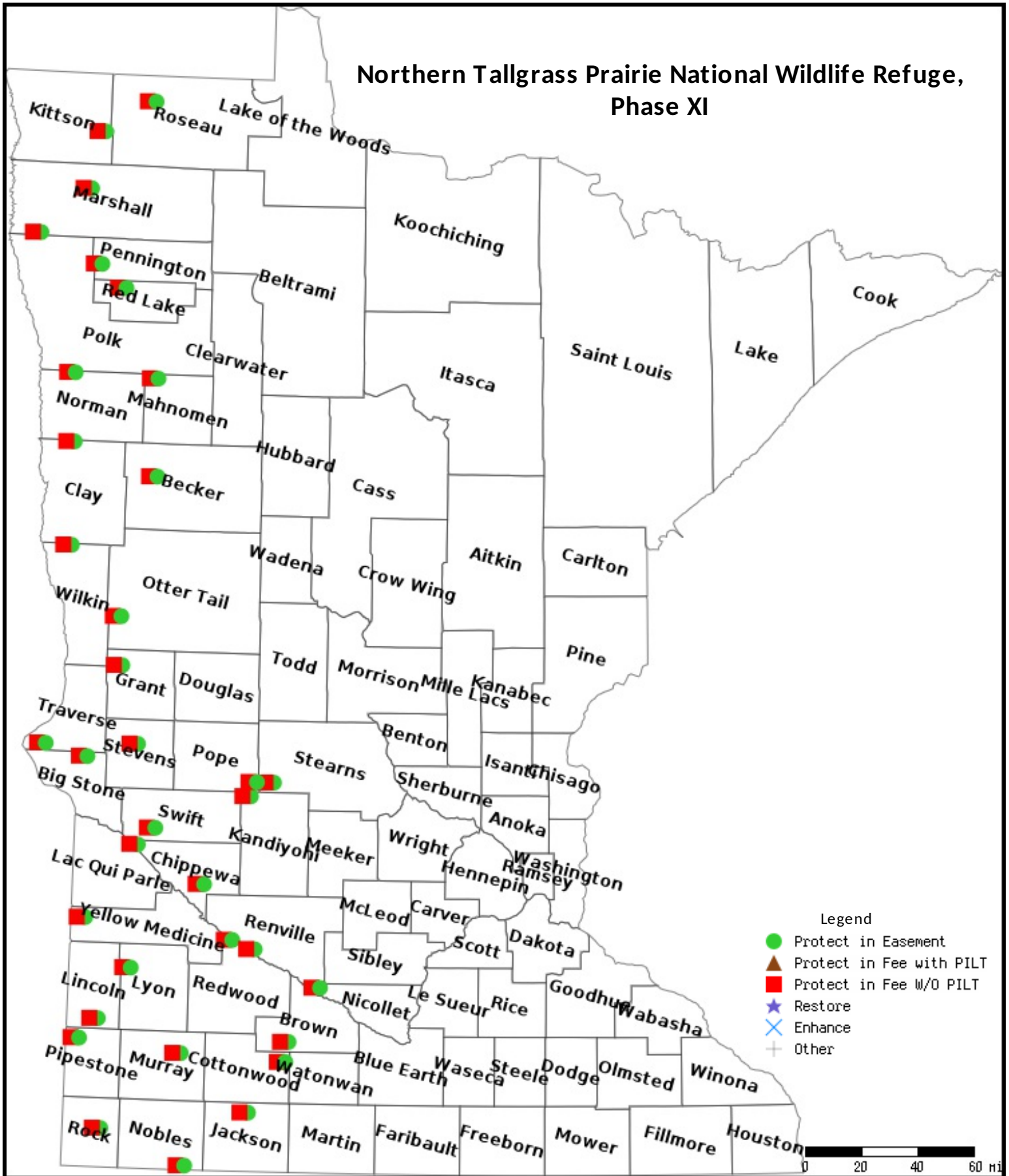
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map

Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge, Phase XI



Data Generated From Parcel List

Parcel Selection Criteria used by the US Fish & Wildlife Service and The Nature Conservancy for the Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge Land Acquisition Program

The purpose of the Northern Tallgrass Prairie Protection National Wildlife Refuge Program is to accelerate progress towards the US Fish & Wildlife Service's (USFWS) goal of permanently protecting and enhancing 77,000 acres of prairie remnants across the broad area originally covered by the Northern Tallgrass Prairie. The Land Acquisition Program supports the acquisition of fee title or conservation easements in the 49 western Minnesota counties included in the refuge boundary. The USFWS and The Nature Conservancy (Conservancy) are partners in this Program.

Parcels are reviewed by both the USFWS and Conservancy to ensure that they meet the priorities of both partners. They are then submitted to LSOHC staff for final review/approval. This review is based on the following criteria:

1. **Native prairie on all or most of tract, or adjacency to existing native prairie.** The emphasis of this Program is protecting and enhancing native prairie, as identified by DNR Biological Survey or site inspection by trained biologist. Protecting native prairie includes the need to buffer and connect native remnants via restoration of non-native lands. The partners will identify and work with private landowners to acquire tracts that further our shared goal of native prairie conservation, and in particular, those that meet the other criteria listed below.
2. **Within core area boundary or in critical corridors between core areas.** This Program will assist with building "functioning landscapes" by focusing in areas with concentrations of existing native prairie. The 2017 Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan identified 28 prairie cores and connecting corridors within the Refuge. The partners will give priority to those parcels that are within these core areas or that help form critical corridors to maintain landscape function.
3. **Near existing protected lands.** Building larger protected complexes is preferred to simplify and reduce overall management costs and travel time. In general, larger protected blocks are more effective at conserving the full array of wildlife species and biological diversity. The partners will strategically identify properties that are in areas where the USFWS already has a presence and prioritize these higher than those that are isolated.
4. **Greater habitat and species diversity, or host to unique species.** Parcels that host a rare habitat or a continuum of habitats, such as interconnected upland, wetland, riparian, and stream features, will be recognized as having added ecological value and given greater priority. Tracts with underrepresented, small-scale features (e.g. threatened species), will also be prioritized.
5. **Suitability for public recreation.** Constitutional language requires that the lands purchased in fee title be open to the public taking of fish and game. Fee title lands purchased with this grant will be opened. Lands especially suited to these uses will be given a higher priority. Conservation easements purchased with Outdoor Heritage Fund support will be open to hunting only with landowner permission.

6. **Willing Seller.** We will only work with willing sellers, and those that can abide by the statutory process laid out for use of public funds. We work with landowners to ensure that they are comfortable with the Program and how it will affect their property.
7. **Avoid buildings.** Existing buildings pose a challenge because they may not be eligible for Outdoor Heritage Fund use and they require additional effort to demolish or sell. Properties with structures are carefully reviewed to ensure that they do not place an undue burden on the USFWS or Conservancy.

Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge - Phase 11

Funding Requested: \$8,432,700



Program Goals

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and The Nature Conservancy will work together to protect native prairie and wildlife habitat in Minnesota for present and future generations.

Phase 11 Goals

The requested funding will allow us to permanently conserve approximately 2,350 acres of native prairie and wildlife habitat in western and central Minnesota. Planned outcomes include:

- 940 acres of fee acquisition
- 1,410 acres of permanent conservation easements

This work will target areas identified as having significant biodiversity by the Minnesota

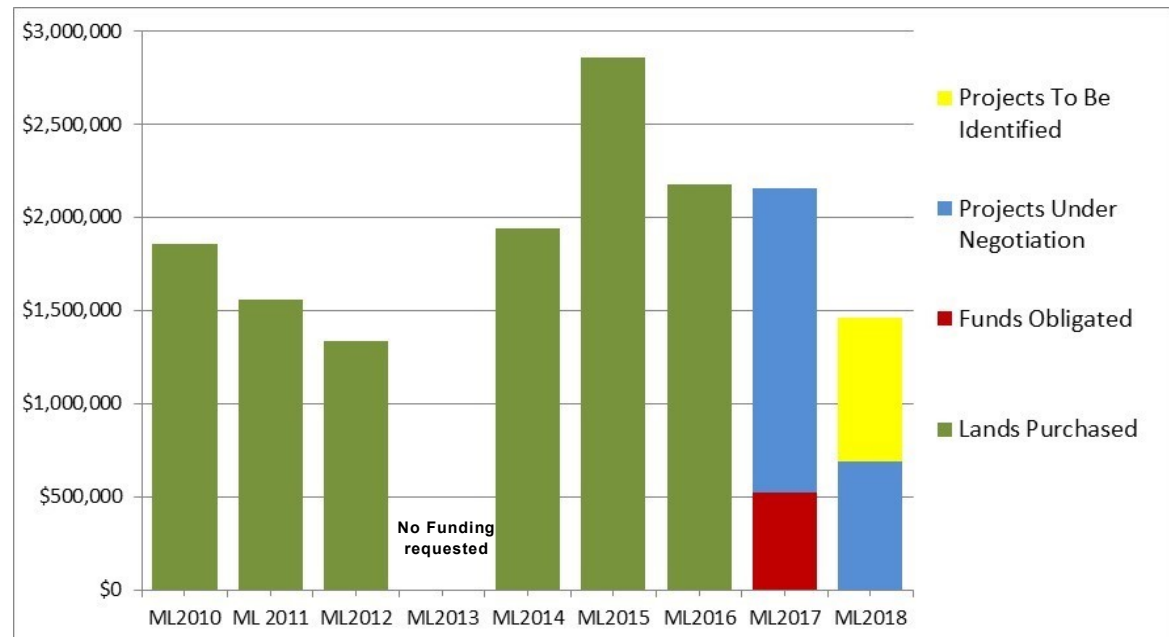


Topeka shiner - OHF funding for this program protected 1.8 miles of streamfront that is designated critical habitat for this federally endangered species last year. This acquisition also protected 115 acres of native remnant prairie.



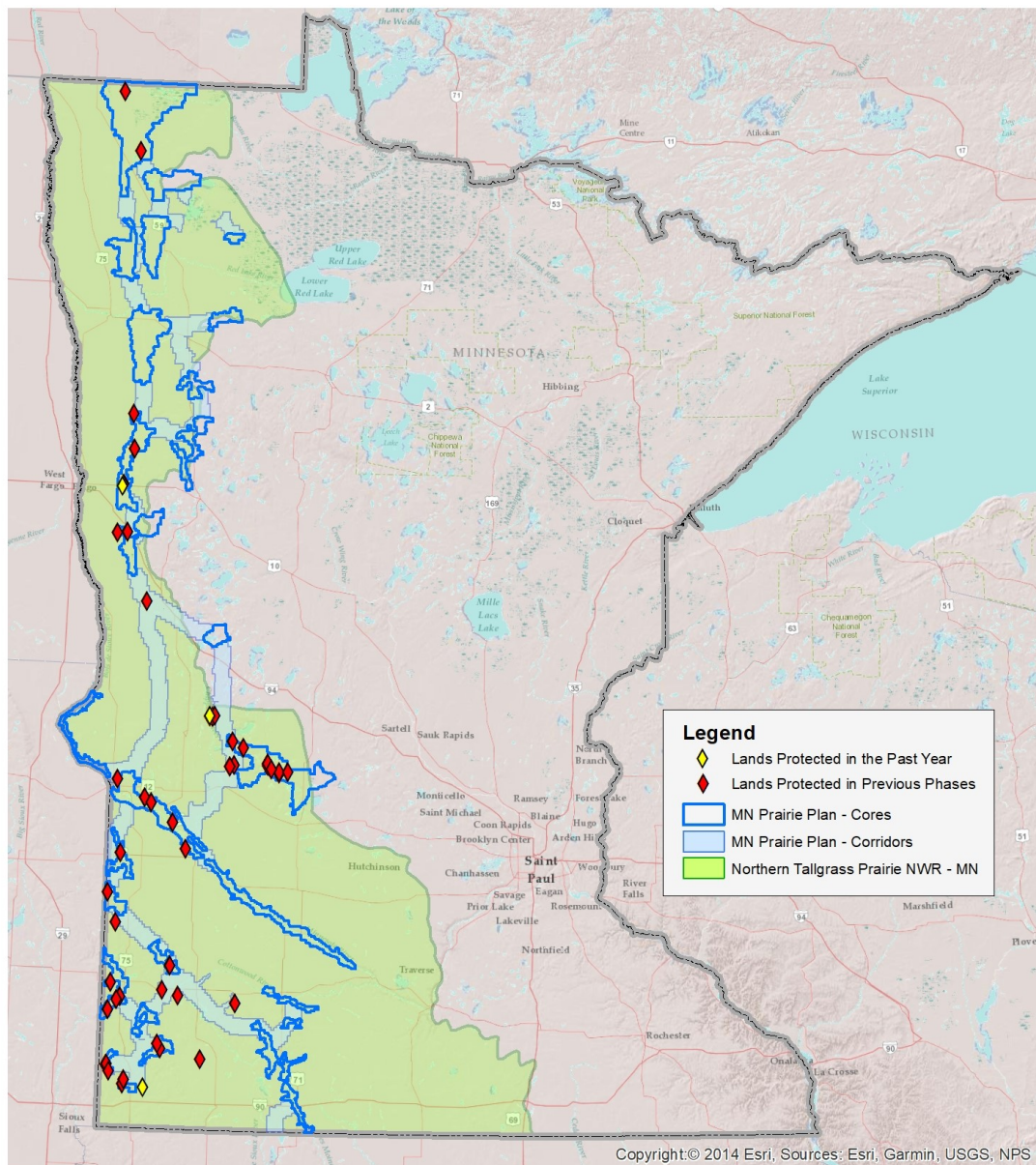
Native Prairie/Wetland Complex - This native prairie and wetland complex in central Minnesota was permanently protected with OHF support last year. This acquisition added 84 acres to an existing block of protected habitat, and protected a fen, spring-fed streams, oxbow wetlands, and native prairie.

Financial Update — Status of Acquisition Funding from Previous OHF Rounds



Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge

Lands Protected with OHF Funding



Program Accomplishments through May 2019

- 5,787 acres of habitat permanently protected at an average purchase price of \$2,020 per acre
- 3,400 acres of native prairie protected
- 530 acres of wetlands and over 14 miles of stream or lakefront protected
- 2,772 acres with significant biodiversity preserved, as determined by the Minnesota Biological Survey
- 86% of projects completed in MN Prairie Plan priority areas
- Protected habitat for endangered and threatened species, species of concern, and other wildlife, including: Wilson's phalarope, short-eared owl, Dakota skipper, Topeka shiner, Blanding's turtle, small white lady's slipper, and sandhill cranes.

Prioritizing Projects

Each project is reviewed using the following criteria:

- 1) Is there native prairie on the tract? If not, is it adjacent to native prairie?
- 2) Is the property in a priority area identified in the MN Prairie Plan?
- 3) Is it adjacent to an existing complex of permanently protected habitat?
- 4) Was it identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey as having concentrations of threatened and endangered species, species of concern, and rare communities?
- 5) Is it suitable for public recreation?



25 12.5 0 25 Miles
Scale = 1:3,300,000

Created by: sjr, TNC in MN/ND/SD, 2019/5/30
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Proposal\Attachments\TP NWR Hearing Map - 20190530.mxd