



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Restoring Native Habitat and Water Quality to Shell Rock River, Phase 2

Laws of Minnesota 2011 Final Report

General Information

Date: 04/18/2022

Project Title: Restoring Native Habitat and Water Quality to Shell Rock River, Phase 2

Funds Recommended: \$2,577,000

Legislative Citation: ML 2011, First Sp. Session, Ch. 6, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5(f)

Appropriation Language: \$2,577,000 the first year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Shell Rock River Watershed District to acquire land in fee at the headwaters of the Shell Rock River for aquatic management area purposes under Minnesota Statutes, sections 86A.05, subdivision 14, and 97C.02, to restore and enhance aquatic habitat. The leases for gravel mining existing at the time of acquisition may not be extended and all gross income generated from mining operations must be transferred to the commissioner of management and budget and credited to the outdoor heritage fund. A list of proposed land acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Andy Henschel

Title: Director of Field Operations

Organization: Shell Rock River Watershed District

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Location Information

County Location(s): Freeborn.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Forest
- Habitat

Narrative

Summary of Accomplishments

The SRRWD has successfully acquired fee title to 257 acres of land that encompasses the headwaters of the Shell Rock River located at the Albert Lea Lake outlet. This 257 acre parcel will now be a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Aquatic Management Area (AMA) guided by an Aquatic Management Plan.

Process & Methods

The Shell Rock River Watershed District (SRRWD) Management Plan developed in 2004, revised in 2015, has identified goals for accelerating programs for improved habitat, water quality and flood control. Acquiring the 257 acre parcel allowed the SRRWD to meet these goals by protecting such a large portion of undeveloped habitat and opening opportunities for the public by incorporating recreation, hunting, and fishing into the property.

This project was time sensitive, as it was an essential step in securing access for the replacement of the Albert Lea Lake Dam. The Albert Lea Lake Dam and Fish Barrier Project was also funded by the LSOHC and was a 3-in-1 project designed to replace the failing dam and install a draw down structure that provided vegetation and game fish management, an electric fish barrier for protection from aquatic invasive species, and provided an aesthetically appealing rock arch dam. This project complements the 257 headwaters purchase as the water from the outlet of the dam continues to flow south through the middle of the property that was purchased.

The 257 acre parcel has various natural amenities that includes the headwaters and 1.4 miles of the Shell Rock River, floodplain and mesic hardwood forests, undisturbed highly diversified wetland complexes and a riparian and stream bank corridor that is a mile long and approximately ½ mile wide. A majority of the site has undisturbed native plant communities, but some locations have been mined for sand and gravel, and roughly 43 acres of this property was used for row crops. After the purchase of the property the SRRWD, using the MnDNR recommendations, seeded the cropland into native grasses and wildflowers, and once the gravel lease is up, the MnDNR will incorporate that portion into wetland ponds. With the cropland and gravel pit restored, it creates a 257 parcel habitat niche in a predominantly agricultural setting that is at pre-settlement conditions.

The Shell Rock River Water District was the fiscal agent that received the funds for purchase of this property. The process of this reimbursable grant was a relatively simple process that is well executed by LSOHC Staff and Council Members. The property is now in the process of being transferred into an AMA. This DNR management and appraisal process took longer than the District proposed because of the cumbersome DNR requirements. Once fully transferred, the DNR will have regulations for public use of this land as well as maintaining restored conditions.

Explain Partners, Supporters, & Opposition

Exceptional challenges, expectations, failures, opportunities, or unique aspects of program

What other fund may contribute to this program?

- Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund
- Clean Water Fund
- Parks and Trails Fund

How were the funds used to advance the program?

What is the plan to sustain and/or maintain this work after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended?

Long-term costs and maintenance for the property are part of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and a small part of the operating budget for the SRRWD, which derives its financial support from a local option sales tax, grants and donations. The District has a public budgeting process. The SRRWD will be the purchasing agent and would then turn the property over to the Department of Natural Resources as a new Aquatic Management Area for the citizens of Freeborn County and the State of Minnesota.

Budget

Totals

Item	Requested	AP Amount	Spent	Antic. Leverage	Received Leverage	Leverage Source	Original Total	Final Total
Personnel	-	-	-	\$69,400	\$69,400	SRRWD Sales Tax, SRRWD Sales Tax, SRRWD Sales Tax	\$69,400	\$69,400
Contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$2,560,000	\$2,560,000	\$2,560,000	\$280,000	-	Landowner donation	\$2,840,000	\$2,560,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$16,500	\$23,000	-	SRRWD Sales Tax	\$40,000	\$16,500
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	\$21,000	-	SRRWD Sales Tax	\$21,000	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	\$7,486,000	\$7,486,000	Army Corp of Engineers	\$7,486,000	\$7,486,000
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	\$65,600	-	SRRWD Sales Tax	\$65,600	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$2,577,000	\$2,577,000	\$2,576,500	\$7,945,000	\$7,555,400	-	\$10,522,000	\$10,131,900

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Manager of Programs	0.5	0.0	-	\$40,300	SRRWD Sales Tax	\$40,300
Admin Asst	0.2	0.0	-	\$10,400	SRRWD Sales Tax	\$10,400
Technician	0.3	0.0	-	\$18,700	SRRWD Sales Tax	\$18,700

Capital Equipment

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
206 Federal Grant	-	\$7,486,000	Army Corp of Engineers	\$7,486,000

Explain any budget challenges or successes:

Total Revenue: \$0

Revenue Spent: \$0

Revenue Balance: \$0

Of the money disclosed above, what are the appropriate uses of the money:

Output Tables

Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland (AP)	Wetland (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	Forest (AP)	Forest (Final)	Habitat (AP)	Habitat (Final)	Total Acres (AP)	Total Acres (Final)
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	20	20	0	0	100	99	137	137	257	256
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	20	20	0	0	100	99	137	137	257	256

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland (AP)	Wetland (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	Forest (AP)	Forest (Final)	Habitat (AP)	Habitat (Final)	Total Funding (AP)	Total Funding (Final)
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$100,000	\$100,000	-	-	\$1,000,000	\$999,500	\$1,477,000	\$1,477,000	\$2,577,000	\$2,576,500
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$100,000	\$100,000	-	-	\$1,000,000	\$999,500	\$1,477,000	\$1,477,000	\$2,577,000	\$2,576,500

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro / Urban (AP)	Metro / Urban (Final)	Forest / Prairie (AP)	Forest / Prairie (Final)	SE Forest (AP)	SE Forest (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	N. Forest (AP)	N. Forest (Final)	Total (AP)	Total (Final)
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	257	256	0	0	257	256
Protect in	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Fee w/o State PILT Liability												
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	257	256	0	0	257	256

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro / Urban (AP)	Metro / Urban (Final)	Forest / Prairie (AP)	Forest / Prairie (Final)	SE Forest (AP)	SE Forest (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	N. Forest (AP)	N. Forest (Final)	Total (AP)	Total (Final)
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$2,577,000	\$2,576,500	-	-	\$2,577,000	\$2,576,500
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$2,577,000	\$2,576,500	-	-	\$2,577,000	\$2,576,500

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

2.6 miles

Outcomes

Programs in prairie region:

- Core areas protected with highly biologically diverse wetlands and plant communities, including native prairie, Big Woods, and oak savanna ~ *For protecting 257 acres of highly diverse wetlands, prairie, big wood and oak savanna we have partnered with the MN DNR to increase the biological diversity of the prairie. Once this is fully turned over to the DNR as an Aquatic Management Area we will be able to better evaluate and measure the A.M.A.*
- Remnant native prairies and wetlands are permanently protected and are part of large complexes of restored prairie, grasslands, and large and small wetlands ~ *For protecting 257 acres of highly diverse wetlands, prairie, big wood and oak savanna we have partnered with the MN DNR to increase the biological diversity of the prairie. Once this is fully turned over to the DNR as an Aquatic Management Area we will be able to better evaluate and measure the A.M.A.*
- Improved condition of habitat on public lands ~ *For protecting 257 acres of highly diverse wetlands, prairie, big wood and oak savanna we have partnered with the MN DNR to increase the biological diversity of the*

prairie. Once this is fully turned over to the DNR as an Aquatic Management Area we will be able to better evaluate and measure the A.M.A.

- *Protected, restored, and enhanced habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need ~ For protecting 257 acres of highly diverse wetlands, prairie, big wood and oak savanna we have partnered with the MN DNR to increase the biological diversity of the prairie. Once this is fully turned over to the DNR as an Aquatic Management Area we will be able to better evaluate and measure the A.M.A.*

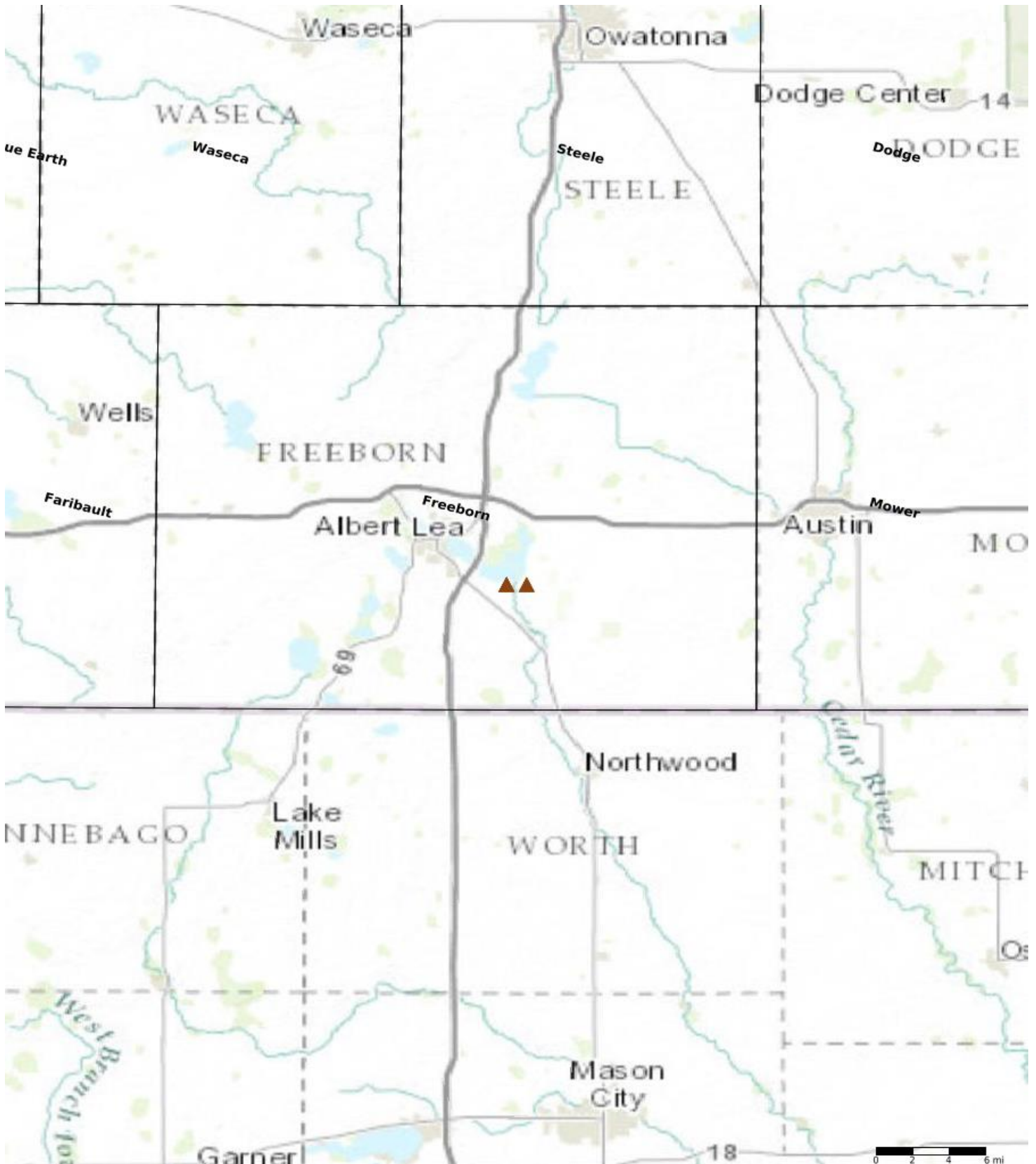
Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?

[Yes](#)

Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
All 7 parcels: 08-25-0021; 08-25-0043; 08-25-0030; 07-030-0080; 07-030-0050; 07-030-0071; 08-025-0044	Freeborn	10221225	257	\$2,560,000	No
Parcel 08-25-0021	Freeborn	10221225	113	\$1,123,800	No
Parcel 08-25-0043	Freeborn	10221225	7	\$66,600	No
Parcel 08-25-0030	Freeborn	10221225	40	\$396,800	No
Parcel 07-030-0080	Freeborn	10220230	10	\$97,300	No
Parcel 07-030-0050	Freeborn	10220230	41	\$407,000	No
Parcel 07-030-0071	Freeborn	10220230	29	\$294,400	No
Parcel 08-025-0044	Freeborn	10221225	17	\$174,100	No



- Protect in Easement
- ▲ Protect in Fee with PILT
- Protect in Fee W/O PILT
- ★ Restore
- ✕ Enhance
- ⊕ Other

Parcel Map
Restoring Native Habitat and Water Quality to Shell
Rock River, Phase 2
(Data Generated From Parcel List)