

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Laws of Minnesota 2012 Final Report



Date: February 06, 2015

Program or Project Title: Cannon River Headwaters Habitat Complex , Phase II

Funds Recommended: \$1,760,000

Manager's Name: Robert McGillivray

Title: Senior Project Manager

Organization: The Trust for Public Land

Address: 2610 University Avenue West

Address 2: Suite 300

City: St. Paul, MN 55114

Office Number: 651-999-5307

Email: rjm@tpl.org

Website: www.tpl.org

Legislative Citation: ML 2012, Ch. 264, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2(c)

Appropriation Language: \$1,760,000 in the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with The Trust for Public Land to acquire and restore lands in the Cannon River watershed for wildlife management area purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8, or aquatic management area purposes under Minnesota Statutes, sections 86A.05, subdivision 14, and 97C.02. A list of proposed land acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

County Locations: Rice

Regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

Activity types:

- Restore
- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Forest
- Prairie

Abstract:

Protect 322 acres near Cannon River Headwaters including wetlands, Big Woods forest, and river & shallow lake shoreline to reverse habitat loss, improve watershed function, and provide access.

Design and scope of work:

The Cannon River Headwaters Habitat Complex Phase II project acquired 322 acres of high-quality wetland, remnant Big Woods forest, and shoreline habitat for fish, game and wildlife in the Cannon River watershed located within Rice County. Protection of two large complexes – Boyd Sartell WMA and Koester Prairie (Prairie Creek WMA) provide new opportunities for public hunting, fishing and wildlife Observation.

The Cannon River Headwaters Habitat Complex Phase II effort was designed to address the following problems: degradation and loss of quality and diversity of habitat in the prairie section of the State; degradation of water quality in the Cannon River Watershed; and lack

of available public lands for hunting and angling opportunities, especially within an hour's drive for over half of the state's population.

Located just south of the Twin Cities metro in an area that has seen development pressure due to the close proximity of the Twin Cities, I-35 and the Upper Cannon Lakes, much of this part of the state has already suffered fragmentation and habitat loss. Historically inhabited by Big Woods, the landscape is now dominated by agricultural fields and, to a lesser extent, development. Agricultural practices and shoreline development are also the major contributors to the impaired status of stretches of the Cannon River and its associated lakes and streams.

This Phase II effort is part of a multi-year conservation effort that includes acquisition, protection, and restoration of core parcels of land that will contribute to a large complex of restored prairies, grasslands, wetlands, lakeshore, and river shoreline. The complex is encircled by the Upper Cannon River, starting at its headwaters at Shields Lake where it flows west, then as it flows south and east through the towns of Waterville and Morristown, and then as it heads northeast before reaching the city of Faribault.

The Phase II acquisitions were prioritized toward existing large wetland/upland complexes, rare communities (Big Woods forest, tamarack swamp), shallow lakes, river shoreline, and lands adjacent to protected areas. Restoration work has been focused on the degraded portions of the lands acquired (approximately 175 acres) and has included restoration of agricultural fields near wetlands, lakes, rivers and existing protected areas to native habitat. Protection of these lands provides critical habitat for game species, including migratory waterfowl (mallards, wood ducks, hooded mergansers, pintails, lesser scaup), upland birds (dove, turkey, pheasant, and woodcock) white tail deer, and fish (northern pike, bluegills, and walleye). Protection will also provide access for a diversity of recreational experiences including duck, pheasant, turkey and deer hunting as well as fishing.

Two acquisitions were completed with Phase II funding:

I. Boyd Sartell WMA (tract 5), Rice County

The Trust for Public Land acquired Boyd Sartell tract 5 and conveyed it to the DNR to be part of the Boyd Sartell WMA on December 20, 2013. This property contains diverse marsh habitats and about 100 acres of uplands consisting of oak islands and grassy knolls, Big Woods and tamarack forests.

Acquisition has conserved a high quality emergent marsh complex (as characterized by MCBS) associated with General Shields Lake and Little Mud Lake. The acquisition also protects seasonally flooded wetlands and other key habitats for waterfowl and wetland wildlife ranging from sedge wrens and ring-necked ducks to sandhill cranes and trumpeter swans. The area provides habitat for rare animals and species of conservation need, including colonial waterbirds and Blanding's turtles. The acquisition expands the Boyd Sartell WMA and protects a part of a large, relatively unfragmented habitat area and corridor - a rare entity in south-central Minnesota.

The Trust for Public Land acquired the property for a total of \$817,500 using \$627,493 from Cannon River Headwaters Habitat Complex Phase II (ML 2012 OHF; allocated acreage 122.5), as well as \$84,507 in funding from Cannon River Headwaters Habitat Complex Phase I (ML 2011 OHF; allocated acreage 16.5), and RIM funding of \$105,500 (88 acres).

II. Koester Prairie (Prairie Creek WMA) (Rice County)

The Trust for Public Land acquired Koester Prairie and conveyed this 460 acre property to the DNR on December 20, 2013 to be managed as a new Wildlife Management Area. This property contains approximately 327 acres of rolling grassland, prairie, and oak savanna that are associated with Prairie Creek and its tributaries and that directly buffer approximately 133 acres of rare and highly significant native prairie. Over forty native upland prairie species have been documented here as well as a number of sedge meadow and wet prairie species. The dry oak savanna found on the property is also extremely rare, with only 13 occurrences of this type documented in the state.

The site is known to locals as being the biggest and best birding area in the county. Bird Species in Greatest Conservation Need utilizing this site include: Swainson's Hawk, Upland Sandpiper, Red-headed Woodpecker, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Bobolink.

The Trust for Public Land purchased this property for a total of \$1,885,000 using \$1,032,507 from Cannon River Headwaters Habitat Phase II (ML 2012 OHF; allocated acreage 200), and also \$652,493 in funds from Cannon River Headwaters Habitat Phase III (ML 2013 OHF; allocated acreage 127), and RIM funding of \$200,000 (133 acres).

Which LSOHC state-wide priorities are addressed in this proposal:

- Address conservation opportunities that will be lost if not immediately acted on
- Address wildlife species of greatest conservation need, Minnesota County Biological Survey data, and rare, threatened and endangered species inventories in land and water decisions, as well as permanent solutions to aquatic invasive species
- Produce multiple enduring conservation benefits

- Provide Minnesotans with greater public access to outdoor environments with hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation opportunities

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Prairie:

- Protect, enhance, or restore existing wetland/upland complexes, or convert agricultural lands to new wetland/upland habitat complexes
- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna
- Protect, restore, and enhance shallow lakes
- Protect, enhance, and restore migratory habitat for waterfowl and related species, so as to increase migratory and breeding success

Relationship to other funds:

- Not Listed

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

The Cannon River Headwaters Habitat Complex lands have been acquired and conveyed to the DNR who is completing initial site development and restoration work. Costs for this work are included in the IDPs attached to the completed parcel reports. The properties will be managed for the long term as a WMAs and will be maintained by the Minnesota DNR according to their WMA guidelines.

Outcomes:

Programs in prairie region:

- Improved condition of habitat on public lands
- Protected, restored, and enhanced shallow lakes and wetlands
- Remnant native prairies and wetlands are permanently protected and are part of large complexes of restored prairie, grasslands, and large and small wetlands
- Water is kept on the land
- The following short and intermediate term outcomes are expected for this effort in the Prairie Region of the state: Key core parcels are protected for fish, game and other wildlife, Restored and enhanced upland habitat, Protected, enhanced and restored remnants of big woods and oak savanna, Wetlands are perpetually protected and adequately buffered, Agricultural lands adjacent to waterways are converted to grasslands to sustain functioning prairie systems and habitat complexes, Improved access to public lands within an hour's drive of the Twin Cities for hunting fishing and other recreation, Existing upland/wetland complexes are protected, Habitat for migratory and unique Minnesota species is protected and restored

How will they be measured and evaluated?

Core parcels were identified in partnership with the DNR as well as partners of the Cannon River Headwaters Habitat Complex. The acquisition of Boyd Sartell has protected a high quality emergent marsh complex and wetlands for waterfowl and species of greatest conservation need. Acquisition of Koester Prairie (Prairie Creek WMA) has protected a large grassland area that contains over 40 native upland prairie species and many bird species in greatest conservation need.

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount: \$1,760,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	Request	Spent	Cash Leverage (anticipated)	Cash Leverage (received)	Leverage Source	Total (original)	Total (final)
Personnel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Contracts	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$1,660,000	\$1,660,000	\$0	\$305,500	RIM	\$1,660,000	\$1,965,500
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Professional Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0	\$0		\$10,000	\$10,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
DNR IDP	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$0	\$0		\$90,000	\$90,000
Total	\$1,760,000	\$1,760,000	\$0	\$305,500		\$1,760,000	\$2,065,500

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands (original)	Wetlands (final)	Prairies (original)	Prairies (final)	Forest (original)	Forest (final)	Habitats (original)	Habitats (final)	Total (original)	Total (final)
Restore	58	0	59	0	58	0	0	0	175	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	77	61	207	200	144	61	0	0	428	322
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	135	61	266	200	202	61	0	0	603	322

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

Type	Native Prairie (original)	Native Prairie (final)
Restore	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0
Enhance	0	0
Total	0	0

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands (original)	Wetlands (final)	Prairies (original)	Prairies (final)	Forest (original)	Forest (final)	Habitats (original)	Habitats (final)	Total (original)	Total (final)
Restore	\$33,100	\$0	\$33,700	\$0	\$33,100	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$99,900	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$298,700	\$363,700	\$802,900	\$1,032,500	\$558,500	\$363,800	\$0	\$0	\$1,660,100	\$1,760,000
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	\$331,800	\$363,700	\$836,600	\$1,032,500	\$591,600	\$363,800	\$0	\$0	\$1,760,000	\$1,760,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban (original)	Metro Urban (final)	ForestPrairie (original)	Forest Prairie (final)	SE Forest (original)	SE Forest (final)	Prairie (original)	Prairie (final)	N Forest (original)	N Forest (final)	Total (original)	Total (final)
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0	175	0	0	0	175	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	428	322	0	0	428	322
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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	603	322	0	0	603	322

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban (original)	Metro Urban (final)	ForestPrairie (original)	Forest Prairie (final)	SE Forest (original)	SE Forest (final)	Prairie (original)	Prairie (final)	N Forest (original)	N Forest (final)	Total (original)	Total (final)
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$100,000	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,660,000	\$1,760,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,660,000	\$1,760,000
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
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	\$1,760,000	\$1,760,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,760,000	\$1,760,000

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles (original)

1.25

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles (final)

1.0

Parcel List

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Rice

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Boyd Sartell WMA (Tract 5)	11022202	227	\$627,500	No	Full	Full
Koester Prairie WMA	11019226	460	\$1,032,500	No	Full	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.

Completed Parcel: Boyd Sartell WMA (Tract 5)

# of Total Acres:	227
County:	Rice
Township:	110
Range:	22
Direction:	2
Section:	02
# of Acres: Wetlands/Upland:	61
# of Acres: Forest:	61
# of Acres: Prairie/Grassland:	0
Amount of Shoreline:	5200 (Linear Feet)
Name of Adjacent Body of Water (if applicable):	Cannon River; Little Mud Lake
Has there been signage erected at the site:	Yes
Annual Reporting Organization Name:	MN DNR
Annual Reporting Manager Name:	Jeanine Vorland
Annual Reporting Address:	19499 780th Avenue
Annual Reporting City:	Albert Lea
Annual Reporting State:	MN
Annual Reporting Zip:	55060
Annual Reporting Email:	jeanine.vorland@state.mn.us
Annual Reporting Phone:	507-379-3401
Purchase Date:	December 20, 2013
Acquisition Title:	
Purchase Price:	\$817,500
Appraised Value:	\$817,500
Professional Service Costs:	\$38,176
Assessed Value:	\$538,100
Total Project Cost:	\$817,500
Fees Received:	\$76,100
Donations:	\$0
Related Parties:	Option Holder
Property Managed By:	DNR - Wildlife Management Area -
Name of the unit area or location government unit or land manager:	DNR

Completed Parcel: Koester Prairie WMA

# of Total Acres:	460
County:	Rice
Township:	110
Range:	19
Direction:	2
Section:	26
# of Acres: Wetlands/Upland:	0
# of Acres: Forest:	0
# of Acres: Prairie/Grassland:	200
Amount of Shoreline:	0 (Linear Feet)
Name of Adjacent Body of Water (if applicable):	
Has there been signage erected at the site:	
Annual Reporting Organization Name:	MN DNR
Annual Reporting Manager Name:	Jeanine Vorland
Annual Reporting Address:	19499 780th Avenue
Annual Reporting City:	Albert Lea
Annual Reporting State:	MN
Annual Reporting Zip:	55060
Annual Reporting Email:	jeanine.vorland@state.mn.us
Annual Reporting Phone:	507-379-3401
Purchase Date:	December 31, 1969
Acquisition Title:	
Purchase Price:	\$1,885,000
Appraised Value:	\$1,885,000
Professional Service Costs:	\$118,644
Assessed Value:	\$0
Total Project Cost:	\$1,885,000
Fees Received:	\$188,500
Donations:	\$0
Related Parties:	Option Holder
Property Managed By:	DNR - Wildlife Management Area -
Name of the unit area or location government unit or land manager:	Jeanine Vorland

Parcel Map

Cannon River Headwaters Habitat Complex , Phase II

