

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Laws of Minnesota 2012 Final Report



Date: March 31, 2017

Program or Project Title: Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-Tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership , Phase 3

Funds Recommended: \$1,340,000

Manager's Name: Eran Sandquist

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Legislative Citation: ML 2012, Ch. 264, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 3(c)

Appropriation Language: \$1,340,000 in the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Pheasants Forever in cooperation with the Minnesota Sharp Tailed Grouse Society to acquire and enhance lands for wildlife management area purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8. A list of proposed land acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

County Locations: Aitkin, and Kanabec.

Regions in which work was completed:

- Northern Forest

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Habitat

Summary of Accomplishments:

This sharp-tailed grouse habitat partnership protected 492 acres, primarily brushland, in northeastern Minnesota for addition to the Wildlife Management Area system providing multiple environmental and wildlife benefits. The partnership between Pheasants Forever, MN Sharp-tailed Grouse Society, and the MN Department of Natural Resources has become a strong and efficient partnership through the Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-Tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership appropriations. The Pomroy Pastures and Gun Lake parcels purchased in this appropriation exemplify how we are working together to protect only strategic habitat critical to improving sharp-tailed grouse populations. Over the course of the appropriation, we acquired these 2 parcels for a total of 492 acres which exceeded our acre goal of 476 acres by 16 acres (acre goal was amended on October 31st, 2014 to 476 acres). Of these 492 acres acquired 114.49 of these were wetland acres and 377.51 were upland acres. All acres were acquired in the Northern Forest region near existing sharp-tail grouse leks. Even though we exceeded our acre goal we have a balance of \$33,900 that will be returned to the Fund.

Process & Methods:

Working in close collaboration with partners, Pheasants Forever acquired 492 acres of strategic habitat that builds onto existing protected lands and/or develops corridors for wildlife. All land acquired has been enrolled into the state Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Program and will be protected and managed in perpetuity by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. We have worked together with federal, state and local partners when acquiring both parcels which will now be celebrated as new WMAs. These new WMAs not only provides access and recreational opportunities for all Minnesotans, but helps address a strong need to provide more secure nesting and brood rearing habitat for sharp-tailed grouse near existing leks.

The offers to the landowner were based on fair market values and appraisals. The acquired parcels addressed a backlog of willing sellers that now are helping slow the loss, degradation, and fragmentation of habitat in Minnesota. Parcels were identified in partnership with the MN Sharp-tailed Grouse Society and the MN DNR, ranked, and prioritized on habitat goals and feasibility. Our methods are formed around the principle of accelerating the Wildlife Production Area program in MN by targeting only the best available habitat with willing sellers. We utilize local partner expertise to focus on building a system of interconnected wildlife complexes that create habitat mosaics. We also utilize the latest geospatial layers to help determine factors such as: habitat restoration potential, landscape scale significance, presence of rare features and native habitat, and how these acquisitions fit into other priorities for our partners.

Similar to the Sharp-Tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership Phase 2, this proposal was amended and approved by the council to reduce our acre goal. We came to the council to reduce the obligated acres from the original proposal because of the importance of the Gun Lake parcel and the fact that it costs more per acre than anticipated. The council approved these changes because of this parcel's wildlife value which includes multiple sharp-tail leks, water mitigation credits, a DNR history of grouse viewing blinds. Gun Lake WMA is a complex of 762 acres of contiguous habitat.

All parcels acquired have been restored and/or enhanced to as high a quality as practicable. All agricultural row crops on these parcels have been or will be restored to native grassland/wetland complexes. The grasslands were restored using a broadcast or drill seeded method with a diverse mix of native grasses and forb species. Wetlands were restored using a combination of tile breaking, sediment removal, dike construction, and water control structures. Scattered invasive tree removal and prescribed fire were used where appropriate to enhance existing grassland habitat after protection.

Explain Partners, Supporters, & Opposition:

We worked in close collaboration with MN DNR to find and evaluate the best properties to peruse based on the criteria listed in the process and methods section. During the process, we also worked with many other partners to gauge interest levels and determine if the property is suitable for a Wildlife Management Area.

Additional Comments:

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

There were no exceptional failures or challenges that were encountered. This is due in part to our high level of collaboration and efficiency. We also strive to be respectful and accommodating in helping to facilitate landowners' wishes when working with willing sellers as many see this as leaving their own habitat legacy.

Other Funds Received:

- Not Listed

How were the funds used to advanced the program:

Not Listed

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

All parcels acquired have been transferred to the MN DNR for enrollment into the Wildlife Management Area program. All parcels were acquired then restored as part of this effort. The long-term management & maintenance of these new WMAs will be the responsibility of the MN DNR. Pheasants Forever is also active in additional habitat enhancement and restoration activities on existing public lands where there is a need.

Outcomes:

The original accomplishment plan stated the program would

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Short-term and Intermediate Outcomes: Protection of 1,015 acres of brushland habitat around three existing sharp-tailed grouse leks, providing secure nesting and brood rearing habitat. Improved access to public lands (1,015 additional acres of previously private lands protected and opened permanently for public access). Long Term and End Results This proposal is working towards a long term outcome of creating stable and/or increasing wildlife populations of game and non-game species while increasing opportunities for wildlife dependent recreation through an increase in permanently protected publicly owned Wildlife Management Areas.

How will the outcomes be measured and evaluated?

We permanently protected 492 acres of grassland, brushland, and wetland complexes resulting in secure nesting and brood rearing habitat for sharp-tailed grouse. These new WMAs improve access to public habitat, build on existing protected lands, and create an essential mosaic of habitat complexes. These short term outcomes contribute to our long term goals of creating stable and/or increasing game and non-game wildlife populations while increasing opportunities for wildlife dependent recreation by the public.

Budget Spreadsheet

Final Budget line item reallocations are allowed up to 10% and do not need require an amendment to the Accomplishment Plan

Total Amount: \$1,340,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	Request	Spent	Cash Leverage (anticipated)	Cash Leverage (received)	Leverage Source	Total (original)	Total (final)
Personnel	\$20,000	\$11,000	\$0	\$0		\$20,000	\$11,000
Contracts	\$54,000	\$47,500	\$0	\$0		\$54,000	\$47,500
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$1,167,000	\$1,167,100	\$0	\$300	PF	\$1,167,000	\$1,167,400
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	\$30,000	\$11,300	\$0	\$0		\$30,000	\$11,300
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$10,500	\$10,500	\$0	\$0		\$10,500	\$10,500
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$58,500	\$58,700	\$0	\$0		\$58,500	\$58,700
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
To tal	\$1,340,000	\$1,306,100	\$0	\$300		\$1,340,000	\$1,306,400

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	Spent	Cash Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
PF Director of Conservation	0.03	3.00	\$6,600	\$0		\$6,600
PF Regional Representative	0.04	3.00	\$4,400	\$0		\$4,400
To tal	0.07	6.00	\$11,000	\$0		\$11,000

Explain any budget challenges or successes:

We came in under budget for personal costs, using only \$11,000 of the \$20,000 budgeted. We will be returning a total of \$33,900 back to the Outdoor Heritage Council.

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	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,015	492	1,015	492
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	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,015	492	1,015	492

Table 2. Total 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	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,340,000	\$1,306,100	\$1,340,000	\$1,306,100
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	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,340,000	\$1,306,100	\$1,340,000	\$1,306,100

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	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,015	492	1,015	492
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	0	0	1,015	492	1,015	492

Table 4. Total 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	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,340,000	\$1,306,100	\$1,340,000	\$1,306,100
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	\$0	\$0	\$1,340,000	\$1,306,100	\$1,340,000	\$1,306,100

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

0

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

0

Explain the success/shortage of acre goals:

* Acre goal was amended on October 31st, 2014 to 476 acres* We acquired 2 parcels for a total of 492 acres which exceeded our total acre goal of 476 acres by 16 acres. Breaking down acres by ecological section we exceed our 476 acre goal for the northern forest region by 16 acres.

Parcel List

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Aitkin

Name	TRDS	Acres	OHF Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?	Description
Gun Lake WMA (addition) Thompson land	04825205	366	\$1,022,500	No	Yes	Yes	

Kanabec

Name	TRDS	Acres	OHF Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?	Description
Pomroy Pastures WMA (new) Alm Land	04122204	126	\$134,500	No	Yes	Yes	

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: Gun Lake WMA (addition) Thompson land

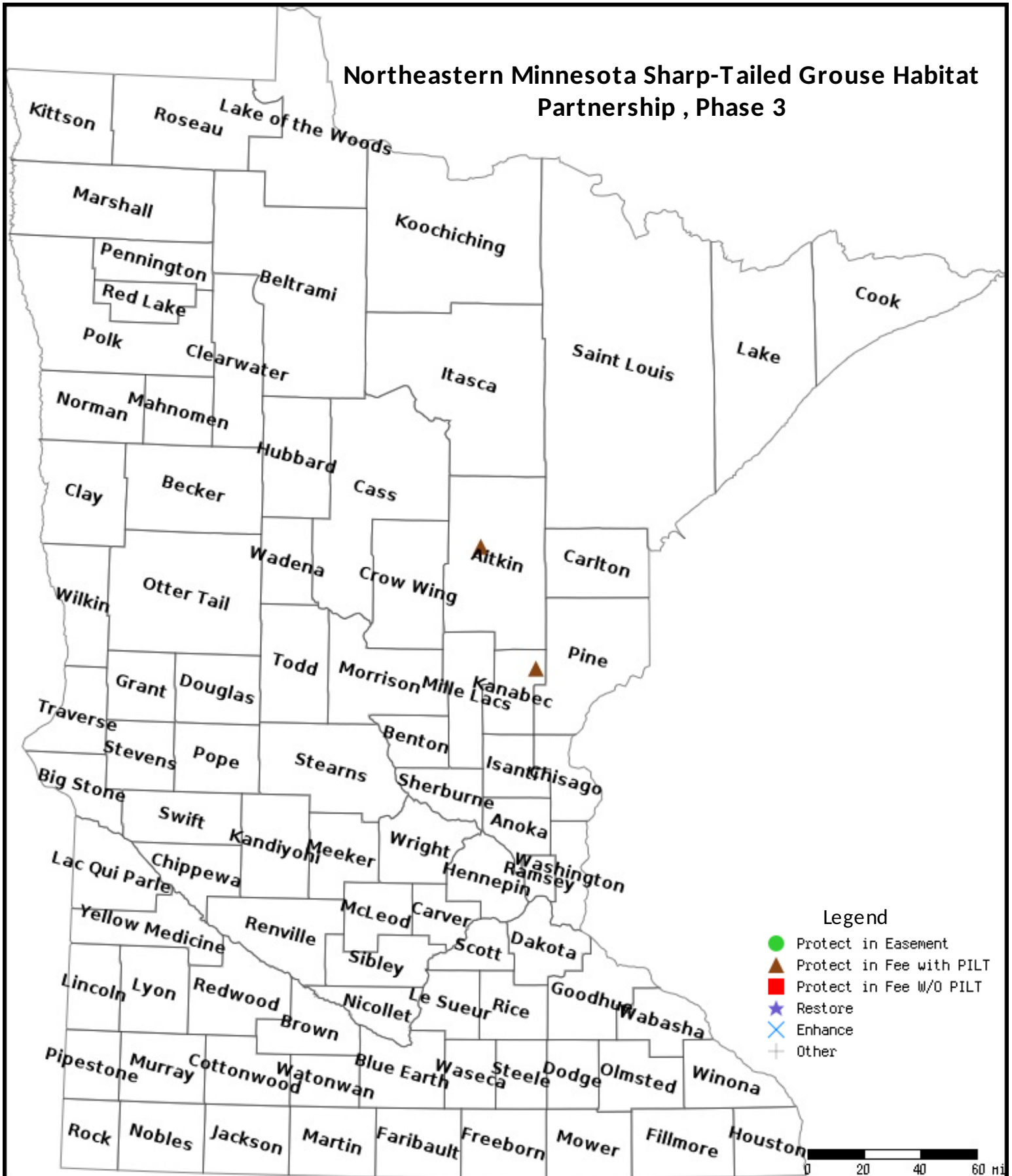
# of Total Acres:	366
County:	Aitkin
Township:	048
Range:	25
Direction:	2
Section:	05
# of Acres: Wetlands/Upland:	76.49
# of Acres: Forest:	
# of Acres: Prairie/Grassland:	
Amount of Shoreline:	
Name of Adjacent Body of Water (if applicable):	
Has there been signage erected at the site:	Yes
Annual Reporting Organization Name:	MN DNR
Annual Reporting Manager Name:	Kim Hennings
Annual Reporting Address:	500 Lafayette Rd
Annual Reporting City:	St. Paul
Annual Reporting State:	MN
Annual Reporting Zip:	55155
Annual Reporting Email:	kim.hennings@state.mn.us
Annual Reporting Phone:	6512595220
Purchase Date:	November 15, 2013
Acquisition Title:	
Purchase Price:	\$1,022,500
Appraised Value:	\$1,022,500
Professional Service Costs:	\$9,480
Assessed Value:	\$383,773
Total Project Cost:	\$1,022,500
Fees Received:	\$0
Donations:	\$0
Related Parties:	
Property Managed By:	DNR - Wildlife Management Area -
Name of the unit area or location government unit or land manager:	Russell Reisz

Completed Parcel: Pomroy Pastures WMA (new) Alm Land

# of Total Acres:	126
County:	Kanabec
Township:	041
Range:	22
Direction:	2
Section:	04
# of Acres: Wetlands/Upland:	38
# of Acres: Forest:	
# of Acres: Prairie/Grassland:	
Amount of Shoreline:	
Name of Adjacent Body of Water (if applicable):	
Has there been signage erected at the site:	Yes
Annual Reporting Organization Name:	MN DNR
Annual Reporting Manager Name:	Kim Hennings
Annual Reporting Address:	500 Lafayette Rd
Annual Reporting City:	St. Paul
Annual Reporting State:	MN
Annual Reporting Zip:	55155
Annual Reporting Email:	kim.hennings@state.mn.us
Annual Reporting Phone:	6512595220
Purchase Date:	October 01, 2012
Acquisition Title:	
Purchase Price:	\$134,500
Appraised Value:	\$134,500
Professional Service Costs:	\$2,194
Assessed Value:	\$134,500
Total Project Cost:	\$134,500
Fees Received:	\$0
Donations:	\$0
Related Parties:	
Property Managed By:	DNR - Wildlife Management Area -
Name of the unit area or location government unit or land manager:	Tim Marion

Parcel Map

Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-Tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership , Phase 3



Data Generated From Parcel List