

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Laws of Minnesota 2014 Accomplishment Plan



Date: October 30, 2014

Program or Project Title: Conservation Partners Legacy Metro Grant Program ML2014

Funds Recommended: \$ 4,000,000

Manager's Name: Jessica Lee
Title: CPL Program Coordinator
Organization: MN DNR
Address: 500 Lafayette Road
Address 2: Box 20
City: St. Paul, MN 55155
Office Number: 651-259-5233
Email: jessica.lee@state.mn.us

Legislative Citation: ML 2014, Ch. 256, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5(n)

Appropriation Language: \$4,000,000 in the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for a program to provide competitive, matching grants of up to \$400,000 to local, regional, state, and national organizations for enhancing, restoring, or protecting forests, wetlands, prairies, or habitat for fish, game, or wildlife in the seven-county metropolitan area and cities with a population of 50,000 or greater. Grants shall not be made for activities required to fulfill the duties of owners of lands subject to conservation easements. Grants shall not be made from the appropriation in this paragraph for projects that have a total project cost exceeding \$575,000. Of this appropriation, \$70,000 may be spent for direct and necessary administrative costs. Grantees may acquire land or interests in land. Easements must be permanent. Grants may not be used to establish easement stewardship accounts. Land acquired in fee must be open to hunting and fishing during the open season unless otherwise provided by law. Lands acquired or lands with easements acquired with this appropriation may not be used for emergency haying and grazing in response to federal or state disaster declarations. Conservation grazing under a management plan that is already being implemented may continue. The program shall require a match of at least ten percent from nonstate sources for all grants. The match may be cash or in-kind resources. For grant applications of \$25,000 or less, the commissioner shall provide a separate, simplified application process. Subject to Minnesota Statutes, the commissioner of natural resources shall, when evaluating projects of equal value, give priority to organizations that have a history of receiving or charter to receive private contributions for local conservation or habitat projects. If acquiring land or a conservation easement, priority shall be given to projects associated with or within one mile of existing wildlife management areas under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8; scientific and natural areas under Minnesota Statutes, sections 84.033 and 86A.05, subdivision 5; or aquatic management areas under Minnesota Statutes, sections 86A.05, subdivision 14, and 97C.02. All restoration or enhancement projects must be on land permanently protected by a permanent covenant ensuring perpetual maintenance and protection of restored and enhanced habitat, by a conservation easement, or by public ownership or in public waters as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 103G.005, subdivision 15. Priority shall be given to restoration and enhancement projects on public lands. Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 13, applies to grants awarded under this paragraph. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2018. No less than five percent of the amount of each grant must be held back from reimbursement until the grant recipient has completed a grant accomplishment report by the deadline and in the form prescribed by and satisfactory to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. The commissioner shall provide notice of the grant program in the game and fish law summary prepared under Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.051, subdivision 2.

County Locations: Not Listed

Regions in which work will take place:

- Metro / Urban

Activity types:

- Enhance
- Protect in Easement
- Protect in Fee
- Restore

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Forest
- Habitat
- Prairie
- Wetlands

Abstract:

The Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program is managed by the Department of Natural Resources to provide competitive matching grants of up to \$400,000 to local, regional, state, and national non-profit organizations and government entities.

Design and scope of work:

The CPL program fulfills MS 97a.056 Subd. 3a, directing LSOHC to establish a conservation partner's grant program encouraging/supporting local conservation efforts. \$3,750,000 of the requested \$4,000,000 will be available for grants.

The CPL metro grant program will depend on support and technical advice from public land managers, habitat and acquisition specialists, and support staff. Stakeholders involved in this program include applicants, reviewers, and land managers. No opposition is known.

Grant activities include enhancement, restoration, and protection of forests, wetlands, prairies, and habitat for fish, game, or wildlife in Minnesota's municipalities and metro areas. Applicants will describe the project location, activity type and habitat, benefit to habitat, fish, game and wildlife, and duration of benefits. A 10% match from nonstate sources is required for all grants. Match may be cash or in-kind, and must be identified at time of application.

The metro grant program will be managed alongside the traditional Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program. All personnel costs will be provided through the traditional CPL admin budget. CPL Program Staff will develop a Request for Proposal (RFP)/ Program Manual incorporating LSOHC priorities. Staff will also solicit applications, work with applicants to submit scoreable applications, oversee grant selection, prepare/execute grant documents, review expenditure documentation ensuring financial integrity, make payments, monitor grant work, assist recipients with closing out agreements, and prepare required reports. CPL staff complies with the Department of Administration-Office of Grants Management policies.

Application Process

The RFP/Program Manual will be posted on the CPL website in August 2014. The metro CPL grant cycle will have one guaranteed grant round and a second round if sufficient funding remains. Applications will be accepted online through mid-September for Round 1. The traditional CPL grant application system will be modified to include the metro cycle. Projects under \$25,000 will have a simplified application. DNR may choose to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with DNR and OHF policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available or if a grantee cannot complete a project as planned. In addition, these funds may be used for ECP projects that fit the metro criteria.

Grant Selection Process

Metro CPL applications will be scored and ranked using a revised evaluation criteria based on the list below. CPL Grant Program Staff will review applications for completeness. Technical Review Committees, selected by the Commissioner of Natural Resources, will evaluate applications and a final score will be given to all applications. Committees may include representatives from local or county park districts, DNR, BWSR, the University of MN, state universities or private colleges, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, or other appropriate members from government, non-profit and business organizations. A final ranking committee comprised of directors of the DNR Divisions of Fish and Wildlife, Ecological and Water Resources, and Forestry will consider the TRC, Division and Regional DNR comments and recommend projects to the Commissioner. The Commissioner will make final funding decisions. CPL Grant Program staff work with grantees to complete financial reviews, grant agreements, and other paperwork. Work may not begin until grant is executed.

Application Criteria

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Amount/quality of habitat restored, enhanced, or protected

Local support

Degree of collaboration

Urgency

Multiple benefits

Habitat benefits

Consistency with current conservation science

Adjacent to protected lands

Full funding of project

Budget/cost effectiveness
Public access for hunting/fishing and other wildlife-based recreation
Use of native plant materials
Applicants' capacity to successfully complete, sustain work

Project Reviews and Reporting

Grantees submit annual accomplishment reports on forms provided by CPL staff, based on L-SOHC report forms. Reports account for the use of grant/match funds, and outcomes in measures of wetlands, prairies, forests, and fish, game, and wildlife habitat restored, enhanced, and protected. The report must include an evaluation of these results. A final report is required by all grantees 30 days after project completion.

CPL Grant staff will submit accomplishment reports to L-SOHC as required and post reports on CPL website.

CPL Administration Budget

Grant administration direct and necessary costs of \$70,000 will be billed using actual costs. Costs include travel, equipment, supplies, and professional services for outreach, monitoring, application and database maintenance, and advertising. An internal Service Level Agreement (SLA) will be developed with DNR's Management Information Systems to update/manage the online grant application system. An additional \$180,000 for personnel costs will be billed using actual costs. These personnel costs will fund the three FTEs necessary to run this new program along with the ongoing CPL grant program with a cumulative budget of over \$20 million. As of May 2013, there are 148 active CPL grants, and an additional 42 grants have recently been completed and closed. Having 3 FTEs will ensure that the CPL program is able to effectively promote the program, monitor grants, and meet all program requirements.

DNR Land Acquisition Costs

Applicants are required to budget for DNR Land Acquisition costs that are necessary to support the land acquisition process for parcels to be conveyed to the DNR. These costs are billed to awarded grants on a professional services basis.

DNR Technical Support

The Division of Fish and Wildlife provides ongoing technical guidance, helping applicants prepare grant proposals and meet requirements for working on state lands. Project development and oversight is provided by area managers and additional guidance is provided for land acquisitions.

Grantee Payment

Grantees are paid on a reimbursement or "for services rendered" basis, meaning payment is made to the grantee after work has been performed or materials have been purchased, but before the vendor is paid by the grantee. Grantees must provide proof that work has been completed or a purchase has been made in order to receive payment. Proof that the vendor was paid must be submitted to CPL staff before additional grant payments are made. Funds may be advanced to acquisition projects to

Crops:

Will there be planting of corn or any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program - **Not Listed**

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
- H3 Improve connectivity and access to recreation
- H4 Restore and protect shallow lakes
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds
- H6 Protect and restore critical in-water habitat of lakes and streams
- H7 Keep water on the landscape
- LU6 Reduce Upland and gully erosion through soil conservation practices
- LU8 Protect large blocks of forest land
- LU10 Support and expand sustainable practices on working forested lands

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- A Vision for Wildlife and Its Use -- Goals and Outcomes 2006-2012
- Driftless Area Restoration Effort
- Ducks Unlimited Living Lakes Initiative
- Grassland Bird Conservation Area
- Grassland Conservation Plan for Prairie Grouse

- Long Range Duck Recovery Plan
- Long Range Plan for Fisheries Management
- Long Range Plan for Muskellunge and Large Northern Pike Management Through 2020
- Long Range Plan for the Ring-Necked Pheasant in MN
- Long Range Plan for the Wild Turkey
- Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan
- Managing Minnesota's Shallow Lakes for Waterfowl and Wildlife
- Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership
- Minnesota DNR AMA Acquisition Plan
- Minnesota DNR Nongame Wildlife Plans
- Minnesota DNR Scientific and Natural Area's Long Range Plan
- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda
- Minnesota Forest Resource Council Landscape Plans
- Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan
- Minnesota Sustainability Framework
- Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition - The Next 50 Years
- Mississippi River Headwaters Comprehensive Plan
- Moose Advisory Committee Report to the Minnesota DNR
- National Audubon Society Top 20 Common Birds in Decline
- National Fish Habitat Action Plan
- North American Waterbird Conservation Plan
- North American Waterfowl Management Plan
- Northern Plains Prairie Potholes Regional Shorebird Conservation Plan
- Northern Tallgrass Prairie Ecoregion: A River and Stream Conservation Portfolio
- Northern Tallgrass Prairie Habitat Preservation Area (HPA) Final Environmental Impact Statement
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework
- Partners in Flight Conservation Plans for States and Physiographic Regions
- Partners in Flight Grassland Bird Plan
- Red River of the North Fisheries Management Plan
- Ruffed Grouse in Minnesota: A Long-Range Plan for Management
- State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Strategic Plan for Coldwater Resources Management in Southeastern Minnesota
- Superior National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan
- The Nature Conservancy's Superior Mixed Forest Ecoregional Plan
- Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Strategic Habitat Conservation Model
- U.S. Prairie Pothole Joint Venture Plan
- Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Projects Joint Ventures Plan

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

- Address Minnesota landscapes that have historical value to fish and wildlife, 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 long-term or permanent solutions to aquatic invasive species
- Are ongoing, successful, transparent and accountable programs addressing actions and targets of one or more of the ecological sections
- Attempts to ensure conservation benefits are broadly distributed across the LSOHC sections
- Ensures activities for "protecting, restoring and enhancing" are coordinated among agencies, non profits and others while doing this important work; provides the most cost-effective use of financial resources; and where possible takes into consideration the value of local outreach, education, and community engagement to sustain project outcomes
- Leverage effort and/or other funds to supplement any OHF appropriation
- Produce multiple enduring conservation benefits
- Provide Minnesotans with greater public access to outdoor environments with hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation opportunities
- Restore or enhance habitat on permanently protected land
- Use a science-based strategic planning and evaluation model to guide protection, restoration and enhancement, similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Metro / Urban:

- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna with an emphasis on areas with high biological diversity
- Protect habitat corridors, with emphasis on the Minnesota, Mississippi, and St. Croix rivers (bluff to floodplain)
- Enhance and restore coldwater fisheries systems
- Protect, enhance, and restore riparian and littoral habitats on lakes to benefit game and nongame fish species

Relationship to other funds:

- Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund
- Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund
- Clean Water Fund
- Parks and Trails Fund

The CPL grant program has the potential to complement all of these other programs and projects supported with constitutional funds by allowing organizations to access Outdoor Heritage Funds for smaller, local projects. Lack of funding is consistently listed in many plans as one of the largest issues limiting the amount of habitat work and protection that is completed each year. Specific benefits are dependent upon projects submitted by applicants.

How does this proposal accelerate or supplement your current efforts in this area:

Currently, the CPL program staff is managing 148 active grants from four years of appropriations that have impacted every habitat type and every area of the State. Over 10,000 acres have been restored, enhanced or protected since the CPL program was established. Offering a metro grant cycle through the CPL program makes it possible to fund more projects that will increase the number of acres that enhance, restore, and protect Minnesota's fish, game and wildlife habitat. Lack of funding is consistently listed in many plans as one of the largest issues limiting the amount of habitat work and protection that is completed each year. Specific benefits are dependent upon projects submitted by applicants.

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

Projects on public lands will be the responsibility of the government entity that owns or accepts the land. Because the actual projects have not been identified at this time, it is not possible to provide specific details on the cost, schedule, and sources of funding needed to sustain CPL projects.

Activity Details:

Will local government approval be sought prior to acquisition - **Yes**

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

Is this land open for hunting and fishing - **Yes**

Not Listed

Will the eased land be open for public use - **Yes**

Not Listed

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

Is the activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, subd 13(f) and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15 - **Yes (WMA, WPA, SNA, AMA, Private Land, County/Municipal, Refuge Lands, Public Waters, State Wilderness Areas, State Recreation Areas, State Forests, no)**

Accomplishment Timeline:

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Solicit applications: RFP posted online	August 2014
First round applications due	September 2014
First round grantees announced	December 2014
First round grants encumbered	February 2015
Grantees begin work	March 2015
Solicit and select round 2 applications, if needed	Jan-Feb 2015
Round 2 applications due	February 2015
Round 2 grantees announced	May 2015
Round 2 grants encumbered	June 2015
Round 2 grantees start work	July 2015
Grant monitoring ongoing, per OGM policy	July 2015-2018
Annual grantee reports due	September 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018
Status updates to the council	February 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018
Status updates to the council	August 2015, 2016, 2017
Final report to the council	September 2018

Federal Funding:

Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program - **Not Listed**

Outcomes:

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- All outcomes are dependent on grantee's project choices.

Budget Spreadsheet

Budget reallocations up to 10% do not require an amendment to the Accomplishment Plan

How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount

Not Listed

Total Amount of Request: \$ 4000000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$180,000	\$0		\$180,000
Contracts	\$3,750,000	\$375,000		\$4,125,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$10,000	\$0		\$10,000
Professional Services	\$35,000	\$0		\$35,000
Direct Support Services	\$21,000	\$0		\$21,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$2,000	\$0		\$2,000
Supplies/Materials	\$2,000	\$0		\$2,000
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$4,000,000	\$375,000		\$4,375,000

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Grants Coordinator	0.47	2.00	\$76,000	\$0		\$76,000
Grants Specialist	0.47	2.00	\$85,000	\$0		\$85,000
NR Specialist	0.47	2.00	\$19,000	\$0		\$19,000
Total	1.41	6.00	\$180,000	\$0		\$180,000

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	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0

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	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N 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	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N 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	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

0

Parcel List

For restoration and enhancement programs ONLY: Managers may add, delete, and substitute projects on this parcel list based upon need, readiness, cost, opportunity, and/or urgency so long as the substitute parcel/project forwards the constitutional objectives of this program in the Project Scope table of this accomplishment plan. The final accomplishment plan report will include the final parcel list.

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type protect.

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

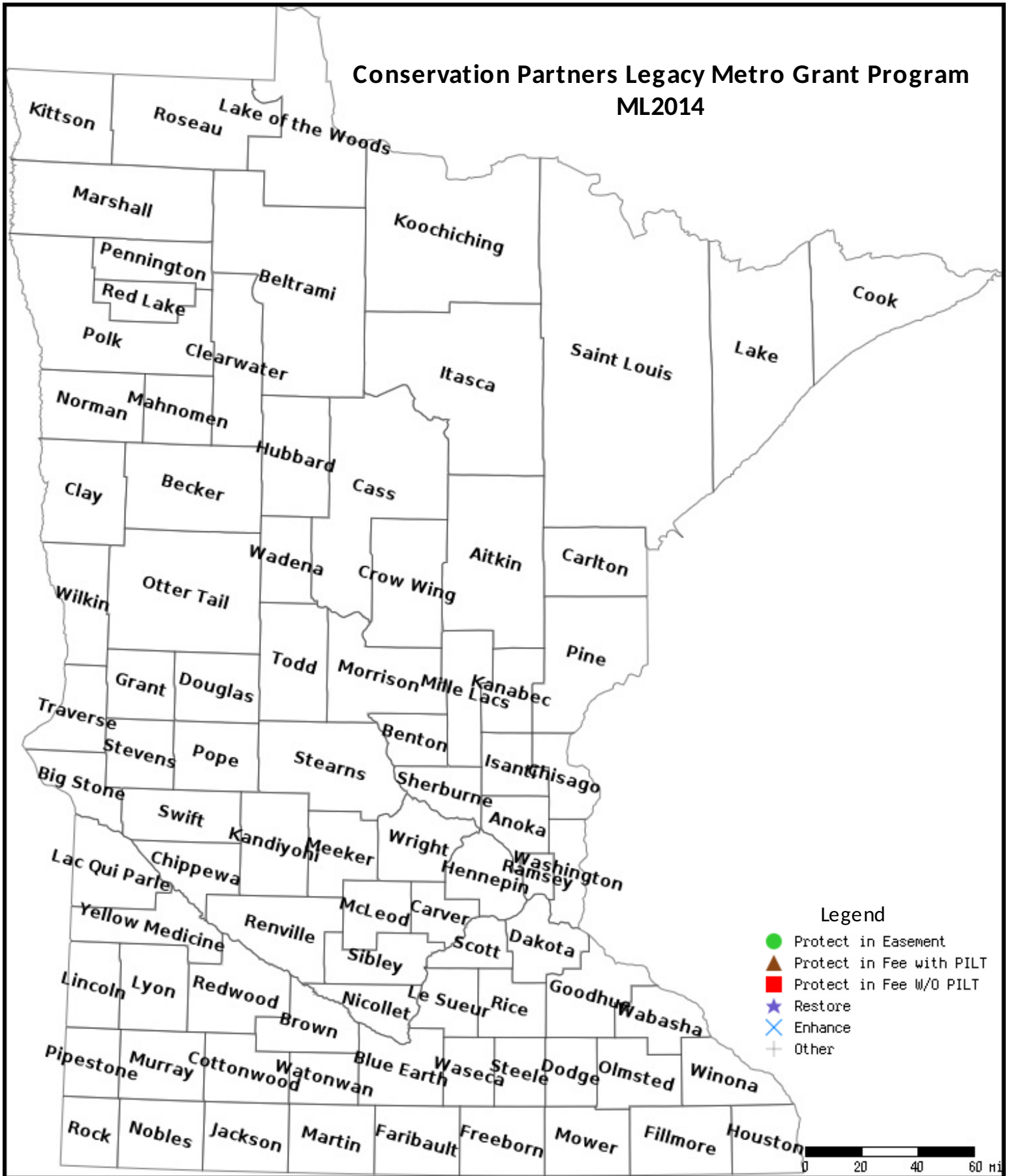
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map

Conservation Partners Legacy Metro Grant Program ML2014



Data Generated From Parcel List