



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Laws of Minnesota 2017 Accomplishment Plan

General Information

Date: 11/03/2021

Project Title: Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project - Phase III

Funds Recommended: \$2,396,000

Legislative Citation: ML 2017, Ch. 91, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd. 5(a)

Appropriation Language: \$1,617,000 the first year is to the commissioner of natural resources to acquire lands in fee and restore wildlife habitat in the Mississippi headwaters and for agreements as follows: \$60,000 to the Mississippi Headwaters Board and \$1,557,000 to The Trust for Public Land. \$779,000 the first year is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources to acquire lands in permanent conservation easements and to restore wildlife habitat. Up to \$59,000 to the Board of Water and Soil Resources is for establishing a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. A list of proposed acquisitions must be included as part of the required accomplishment plan.

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Tim Terrill

Title: Executive Director

Organization: Mississippi Headwaters Board

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Location Information

County Location(s): Aitkin, Beltrami, Crow Wing, Morrison and Hubbard.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Northern Forest
- Forest / Prairie Transition

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement
- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Prairie
- Forest

Narrative**Abstract**

The Mississippi Headwaters Board will work with the Board of Water & Soil Resources, The Trust for Public Land, headwaters counties, and Soil & Water Conservation Districts to protect and preserve targeted habitat in high quality shoreland areas and provide access on the Mississippi River, headwater's reservoirs, and connecting corridor tributaries through fee title acquisitions. Easements will be administered in target areas to protect habitat and shoreland areas.

Design and Scope of Work

The Mississippi River is known as "America's River." It is the largest river in North America, and provides drinking water, industry, and recreation for millions of people, and is the embodiment of Minnesota's outdoor traditions. Strategic and well placed public ownership is essential to maintaining the hunting, fishing, and game habitat along the Mississippi River. Public lands adjacent to private property are in danger of losing habitat connectivity because of the continued development pressures on private lands which result in further fragmentation. Land accessibility to these lands is essential to ensuring high quality, memorable experiences while hunting and fishing within the Mississippi River Corridor. Riparian corridors and tributaries are of particular value to resident and migrating wildlife populations, providing connectivity to multiple habitat types.

As loss of habitat in western Minnesota and the Dakotas occurs, and climate change causes the drying up of existing wetlands, the Mississippi flyway will take on a more important role. The Mississippi flyway is the longest migration route of any in the western hemisphere, and is well timbered and watered to afford ideal conditions to support migrating birds. The Mississippi Headwaters supports more than 350 species of animals, mammals, and birds and is an important national treasure which must be preserved.

The Mississippi Headwaters Board will use targeted fee title land acquisitions and permanent conservation easements to accomplish the goals of this proposal. All fee title acquisitions will be approved by the local governmental unit and the Mississippi Headwaters Board where the property exists. The Mississippi river and its connecting tributaries and headwaters lakes are essential to wildlife, bird, and waterfowl transportation and sustainability. The Mississippi Headwaters Board will work with The Trust for Public Land to protect the priority lands using fee title acquisitions; and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the counties of Clearwater, Beltrami, Hubbard, Cass, Itasca, Aitkin, Crow Wing, and Morrison to implement the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) program through the Board of Water and Soil Resources to gain permanent conservation easements. Fee title acquisitions will protect against fragmentation of forest land, and provide access to existing public land. Parcels identified as potential fee title acquisitions on the Mississippi River are shown on the attached map. The Mississippi Headwaters Board will administer, provide updated reports to the council, coordinate efforts, and

develop a consistent process that utilizes county support to ensure that the program and spirit of this proposal is met. The Department of Natural Resources or individual counties will hold the fee title acquisitions, and the Board of Water and Soil Resources will hold the permanent easements. A local Project Technical Committee will review and rank potential acquisitions and easements.

Local support was obtained by the MHB counties writing resolutions of support for this program. Various conservation partnerships were formed with The Trust for Public Land and the 8 local Soil & Water Conservation Districts to also help implement this program at the field level.

How does the plan address habitats that have significant value for wildlife species of greatest conservation need, and/or threatened or endangered species, and list targeted species?

The areas targeted by this proposal will strategically protect the habitat and connectivity for fish and game using permanent conservation easements and fee title acquisition to target riparian forest, wetland complexes, tributary confluences, and wild rice communities along the Mississippi river, headwater's reservoirs, and connecting corridors and tributaries. Land conversion and forest fragmentation have a threat on habitat, corridor connectivity, and aquatic function on both land and water in this area. This proposal will specifically protect habitat for the Blanding's Turtle, Gray wolf, Red Shoulder hawk, and the Northern Long Eared Bat.

Describe how the plan uses science-based targeting that leverages or expands corridors and complexes, reduces fragmentation or protects areas identified in the MN County Biological Survey:

This proposal emphasizes high quality, riparian tracts adjacent to public land to target the best land suitable for habitat protection. Zonation modeling that was developed by the North Central Conservation Roundtable (NCCR) helps prioritize fish and wildlife habitat along with water quality benefits to be utilized on a ranking sheet to help locate areas that provide the best fish, wildlife, and game habitat. The NCCR is a group of non-governmental organizations, state and local agencies that meet quarterly to coordinate and develop strategy for the protection of land in North Central Minnesota. The Mississippi Headwaters sub-watershed prioritization model will be utilized to identify adjacent public land and access. This land that is targeted next to adjacent public land will help expand the corridors and complexes that currently exist through an organized method.

Which two sections of the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan are most applicable to this project?

- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes
- H3 Improve connectivity and access to recreation

Which two other plans are addressed in this program?

- Mississippi River Headwaters Comprehensive Plan
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program?

Forest / Prairie Transition

- Protect, enhance, and restore wild rice wetlands, shallow lakes, wetland/grassland complexes, aspen parklands, and shoreland that provide critical habitat for game and nongame wildlife

Northern Forest

- Protect shoreland and restore or enhance critical habitat on wild rice lakes, shallow lakes, cold water lakes, streams and rivers, and spawning areas

Does this program include leveraged funding?

-

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

Once a RIM easement is acquired, BWSR is responsible for maintenance, inspection and monitoring into perpetuity. The BWSR partners with local SWCDs to carry-out oversight, monitoring and inspection of its conservation easements. Easements are inspected for the first five consecutive years beginning in the year after the easement is recorded. Thereafter, on-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years. SWCDs report to BWSR on each site inspection conducted and partners’ staff document findings. A non-compliance procedure is implemented when potential violations or problems are identified.

Perpetual monitoring and stewardship costs have been calculated at \$6,500 per easement. This value is based on using local SWCD staff for monitoring and landowner relations and existing enforcement authorities. The amount listed for Easement Stewardship cover costs of the SWCD regular monitoring, BWSR oversight, and any enforcement necessary.

The non-governmental organizations will transfer all fee title lands to the Dept. of Natural Resources or county for permanent stewardship. Lands acquired by counties will be managed utilizing individual county land management plans, and lands acquired by the DNR will be required to develop a management plan consistent with their division.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2020	OHF	Work with landowners and agencies to determine interest and develop long term habitat priorities.	Utilize RIM program and work with BWSR to acquire, maintain, and monitor easements.	Perform on-site inspections for 5 consecutive years, and every 3 years thereafter.
2020	OHF	Work with landowners to determine interest and develop long term game, hunting and fishing priorities.	Work with Trust for Public Land to acquire parcels for fee title acquisitions.	Follow monitoring guidelines established by the DNR or Counties (depending on ownership) to monitor acquired parcels.

Activity Details

Requirements

If funded, this program will meet all applicable criteria set forth in MS 97A.056?

Yes

Will local government approval be sought prior to acquisition?

Yes

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

Who will manage the easement?

The Board of Water and Soil Resources will be the responsible party for monitoring and enforcing easements.

Who will be the easement holder?

The Board of Water and Soil Resources will be the easement holder.

Land Use

Will there be planting of any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program?

Yes

Explain what will be planted:

The primary purposes of WMAs are to develop and manage for the production of wildlife and for compatible outdoor recreation. To fulfill those goals, the DNR may use limited farming specifically to enhance or benefit the management of state lands for wildlife.

Lands proposed to be acquired as WMAs may utilize farming to prepare previously farmed sites for native plant seeding. This is a standard practice across the Midwest. On a small percentage of WMAs (less than 2.5%), DNR uses farming to provide a winter food source for a variety of wildlife species in agriculture-dominated landscapes largely devoid of winter food sources.

Are any of the crop types planted GMO treated?

False

Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing?

No

Will the land be open for hunting and fishing after completion?

Yes

Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:

Land conveyed to the Dept. of Natural Resources or counties will fall under management plans that allow for hunting and fishing opportunities.

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

There can be only 2 owners according to our Accomplishment Plan: The Dept. of Natural Resources, or the county that the land resides in.

Will the eased land be open for public use?

No

Are there currently trails or roads on any of the proposed acquisitions?

Yes

Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:

Informal trails on private property are typically used for personal access for hunting, fishing. Informal trails on Potlatch property are a remnant of forestry practices.

This appropriation is funding a program that will have a parcel list identified at a later time. Roads or trails are typically excluded from easement areas if they serve no beneficial purpose to easement maintenance, monitoring, or enforcement. Existing trails or roads are identified during the easement acquisition process. Some roads and trails, such as agricultural field accesses, are allowed to remain.

Will the trails or roads remain and uses continue to be allowed after OHF acquisition?

Yes

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?

Land that is in an easement will be maintained by the landowner, and will be involved in a scheduled monitoring program by the County Soil & Water Conservation District. Land that is fee title acquired by the Dept. of Natural Resources will follow typical DNR management rules and monitoring plan. Land acquired by the county will follow a maintenance and monitoring plan developed by specific county forest resource plans.

For easements: This appropriation is funding a program that will have a parcel list identified at a later time. Roads or trails are typically excluded from the easement area if they serve no beneficial purpose to easement maintenance, monitoring, or enforcement. Existing trails or roads are identified during the easement acquisition process. Some roads and trails, such as agricultural field accesses, are allowed to remain.

Will new trails or roads be developed or improved as a result of the OHF acquisition?

Yes

Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:

On easements, though uncommon, there could be a potential for new trails may be developed, if they contribute to easement maintenance or benefit the easement site (e.g. firebreaks, berm maintenance, etc). Unauthorized trails identified during the monitoring process are in violation of the easement. No new trails are planned for fee acquisition.

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?

The easements secured under this project will be managed as part of the MN Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) RIM Reserve program that has over 6,500 easements currently in place. Easements are monitored annually for each of the first 5 years and then every 3rd year after that. BWSR, in cooperation with Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), implement a stewardship process to track, monitor quality and assure compliance with easement terms.

Under the terms of the Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM) easement program, landowners are required to maintain compliance with the easement. A conservation plan is developed with the landowner and maintained as part of each easement. Basic easement compliance costs are borne by the landowner, periodic enhancements may be cost shared from a variety of sources.

Lands acquired by counties will be managed utilizing individual county land management plans, and lands acquired by the DNR will be required to develop a management plan consistent with their division.

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Partners- Landowner negotiations, due dilligence, acquire land and convey to State or County	6/30/2021
SWCDs- Complete conservation easements applications	6/30/2021
BWSR- Process and acquire easements through the RIM program.	6/30/2021
DNR, Counties- Acquire and manage land for habitat	6/30/2021
MHB- Coordination, administration, reporting	6/30/2021

Date of Final Report Submission: 11/01/2021

Budget

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

Grand Totals Across All Partnerships

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$192,100	\$52,800	-, Private	\$244,900
Contracts	\$71,000	-	-	\$71,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$1,170,000	-	-	\$1,170,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$130,000	-	-	\$130,000
Easement Acquisition	\$636,500	-	-	\$636,500
Easement Stewardship	\$58,500	-	-	\$58,500
Travel	\$4,300	-	-	\$4,300
Professional Services	\$50,000	-	-	\$50,000
Direct Support Services	\$31,000	\$31,000	-, Private	\$62,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$1,300	-	-	\$1,300
Supplies/Materials	\$1,300	-	-	\$1,300
DNR IDP	\$30,000	-	-	\$30,000
Grand Total	\$2,396,000	\$83,800	-	\$2,479,800

Partner: BWSR

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$62,100	-	-	\$62,100
Contracts	\$18,000	-	-	\$18,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$636,500	-	-	\$636,500
Easement Stewardship	\$58,500	-	-	\$58,500
Travel	\$1,300	-	-	\$1,300
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$1,300	-	-	\$1,300
Supplies/Materials	\$1,300	-	-	\$1,300
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$779,000	-	-	\$779,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Easement Processing	0.1	3.0	\$16,800	-	-	\$16,800
Program Manager	0.15	3.0	\$45,300	-	-	\$45,300

Partner: MHB**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000
Contracts	\$40,000	-	-	\$40,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$60,000	-	-	\$60,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Administration	0.1	3.0	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000

Partner: TPL**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$110,000	\$52,800	Private	\$162,800
Contracts	\$13,000	-	-	\$13,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$1,170,000	-	-	\$1,170,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$130,000	-	-	\$130,000
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$3,000	-	-	\$3,000
Professional Services	\$50,000	-	-	\$50,000
Direct Support Services	\$31,000	\$31,000	Private	\$62,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	\$30,000	-	-	\$30,000
Grand Total	\$1,557,000	\$83,800	-	\$1,640,800

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
TPL- Personnel	0.32	3.0	\$110,000	\$52,800	Private	\$162,800

Amount of Request: \$2,396,000

Amount of Leverage: \$83,800

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 3.5%

DSS + Personnel: \$223,100

As a % of the total request: 9.31%

Easement Stewardship: \$58,500

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 9.19%

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

This project has the ability to be scalable.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

Secured from private donations

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?

No

Easement Stewardship

What is the number of easements anticipated, cost per easement for stewardship, and explain how that amount is calculated?

Travel

Does the amount in the travel line include equipment/vehicle rental?

-

Explain the amount in the travel line outside of traditional travel costs of mileage, food, and lodging

I understand and agree that lodging, meals, and mileage must comply with the current MMB Commissioner Plan:

No

Direct Support Services

How did you determine which portions of the Direct Support Services of your shared support services is direct to this program?

The Trust for Public Land's DSS request is based upon our federally approved indirect rate, which has been approved by the DNR. 50% of these costs are requested from the grant, and 50% is contributed as leverage.

Federal Funds

Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program?

No

Output Tables

Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	334	0	334
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	38	0	38
Protect in Easement	0	0	360	0	360
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	732	0	732

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$1,446,700	-	\$1,446,700
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	\$170,600	-	\$170,600
Protect in Easement	-	-	\$778,700	-	\$778,700
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	\$2,396,000	-	\$2,396,000

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	334	334
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	38	38
Protect in Easement	0	36	0	0	324	360
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	36	0	0	696	732

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	\$1,446,700	\$1,446,700
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	\$170,600	\$170,600
Protect in Easement	-	\$77,900	-	-	\$700,800	\$778,700
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	\$77,900	-	-	\$2,318,100	\$2,396,000

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$4,331	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	\$4,489	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	\$2,163	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	\$4,331

Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	\$4,489
Protect in Easement	-	\$2,163	-	-	\$2,162
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Mississippi River, Headwaters Lakes and Reservoirs, connecting tributaries 400 miles

Outcomes

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Rivers and streams provide corridors of habitat including intact areas of forest cover in the east and large wetland/upland complexes in the west ~ *An increase of lineal shoreland habitat permanently protected by easement or fee acquisition. An increase in the percent (%) of minor watersheds habitat being permanently protected.*

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Increased availability and improved condition of riparian forests and other habitat corridors ~ *An increase of lineal shoreland habitat permanently protected by easement or fee acquisition. An increase in the percent (%) of minor watersheds habitat being permanently protected.*

Parcels

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.

Parcel Information

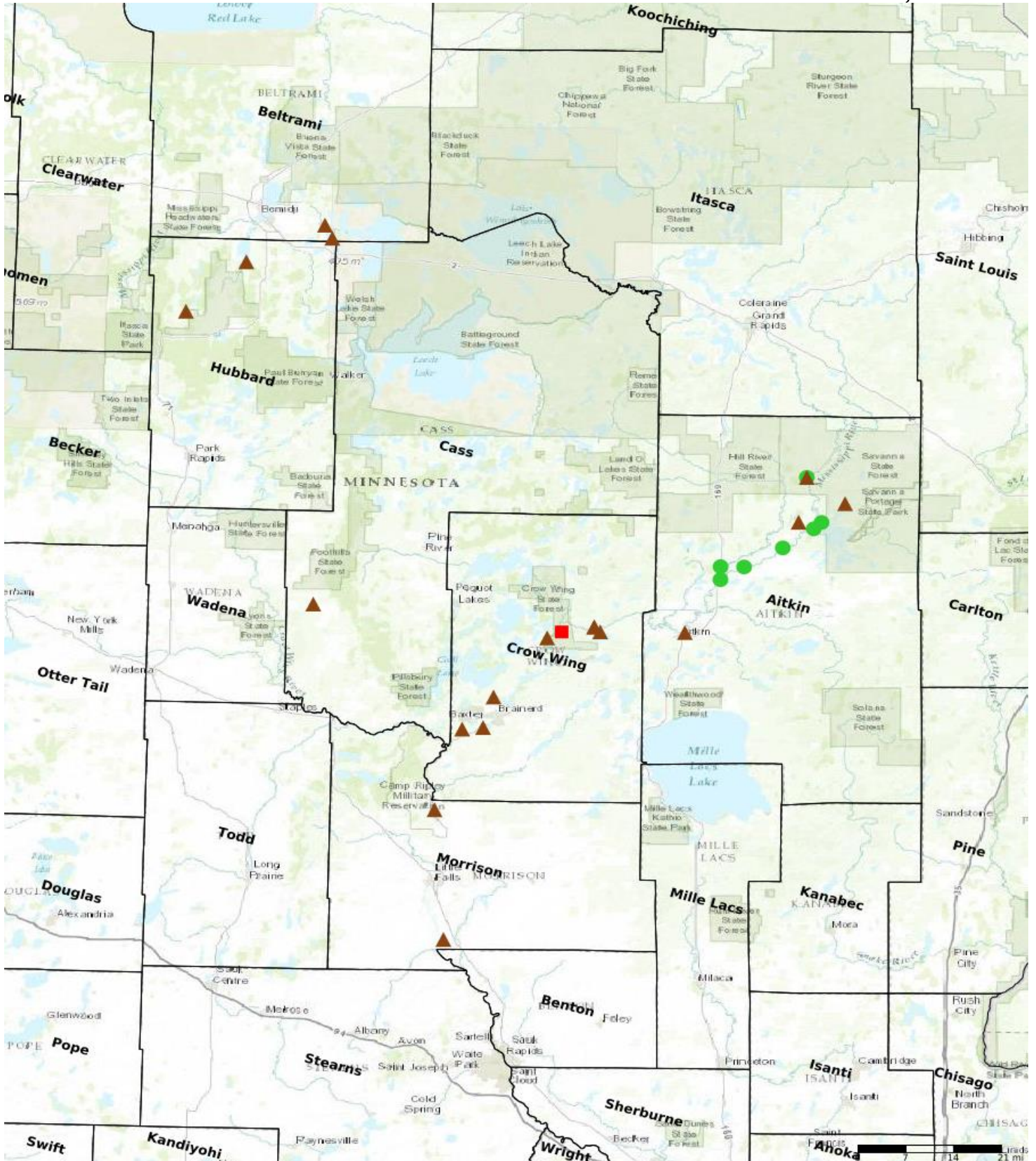
Sign-up Criteria?

No

Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:

Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
01-13-18-13--	Aitkin	05024235	106	\$66,000	No
01-12-18-13--	Aitkin	05124222	78	\$53,500	No
01-08-18-13--	Aitkin	04826211	326	\$202,400	No
01-06-18-13--	Aitkin	04925232	117	\$64,000	No
01-04-18-13--	Aitkin	04924218	211	\$132,000	No
01-03-18-13--	Aitkin	05024225	89	\$49,500	No
01-05-18-13--	Aitkin	04926235	55	\$37,500	No
Savanna Esker	Aitkin	05023209	379	\$511,626	No
Palisade	Aitkin	05024228	712	\$800,000	No
Mississippi River, Aitkin	Aitkin	04727224	247	\$300,000	No
Savanna State Forest Addition	Aitkin	05124222	171	\$232,000	No
Wolf Lake II	Beltrami	14632236	460	\$2,000,000	No
Wolf Lake	Beltrami	14632223	168	\$670,000	No
Island Point	Beltrami	13632215	166	\$430,000	No
Gilbert Lake AMA Addition	Crow Wing	13428228	65	\$800,000	No
Mississippi River, Crow Wing State Forrest South	Crow Wing	04730225	358	\$700,000	No
Indian Jack Lake	Crow Wing	13626234	121	\$423,300	No
Indian Jack Lake WMA II	Crow Wing	13626234	35	\$120,000	No
Rabbit Lake Township	Crow Wing	04728219	73	\$300,000	No
Mississippi River, Buffalo	Crow Wing	04431203	500	\$2,000,000	No
Crow Wing Forest North	Crow Wing	04729220	41	\$130,000	No
Mississippi River, Baxter	Crow Wing	13329223	600	\$1,800,000	No
Schoolcraft River AMA	Hubbard	14533219	130	\$400,000	No
LaSalle Creek SNA	Hubbard	14435235	350	\$800,000	No
Morrison Monahan	Morrison	04232210	40	\$160,000	No
McDougall WMA Addition	Morrison	03932228	50	\$200,000	No



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

Parcel Map
Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project -
Phase III
(Data Generated From Parcel List)

