



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Cannon River Watershed Habitat Complex - Phase VIII
Laws of Minnesota 2018 Accomplishment Plan

General Information

Date: 08/08/2022

Project Title: Cannon River Watershed Habitat Complex - Phase VIII

Funds Recommended: \$1,345,000

Legislative Citation: ML 2018, Ch. 208, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd 2(e)

Appropriation Language: \$1,345,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with The Trust for Public Land, in cooperation with Great River Greening, to acquire lands in fee in the Cannon River watershed for wildlife management under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8; to acquire lands in fee for scientific and natural areas under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 5; to acquire lands in fee for state forests under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 7; and to restore lands in the Cannon River watershed. Of this amount, \$945,000 is to The Trust for Public Land and \$400,000 is to Great River Greening. Subject to evaluation criteria in Minnesota Rules, part 6136.0900, priority must be given to acquiring lands that are eligible for the native prairie bank under Minnesota Statutes, section 84.96, or lands adjacent to protected native prairie. A list of proposed land acquisitions and restorations must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Nick Bancks

Title: Program Manager

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Location Information

County Location(s): Rice, Le Sueur, Dakota, Goodhue and Steele.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

- Metro / Urban
- Southeast Forest

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee
- Restore
- Enhance

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Prairie
- Forest
- Habitat

Narrative

Abstract

The Cannon River Watershed Habitat Complex Phase VIII program will protect approximately 160 acres in fee, and restore and enhance approximately 188 acres of high priority wildlife habitat within the Cannon River Watershed, including wetlands, prairies, Big Woods forest, and river/shallow lake shoreline. Its goal is to reverse habitat loss, prevent degradation of water quality, improve watershed function, and provide public access.

Design and Scope of Work

Phase VIII of the Cannon River Watershed Habitat Complex program will continue to prevent degradation and loss of quality habitat in the Prairie section of the State, specifically the Cannon River Watershed. It will increase the amount of available public lands for hunting and angling opportunities within an easy drive for over half of the State's population. In addition, increased restoration activities will occur in this phase to improve the habitat conditions of currently protected public lands.

Located south of the Twin Cities, the Cannon River Watershed has seen increased development pressure due to the I-35 corridor and the Cannon Lakes, and much of this area 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 the major contributors to the impaired status of stretches of the Cannon River and its associated lakes and streams. The DNR's Southern Region Conservation Focus Area assessment tool ranked the Cannon River area as having the highest level of interdivisional conservation priority when examined at the landscape level.

This conservation effort is part of a multi-year, multi-partner strategy 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.

Acquisitions are targeted toward existing large wetland/upland complexes, rare communities (Big Woods forest, tamarack swamp), shallow lakes, river shoreline, and lands adjacent to existing protected areas. There is an effort underway which involves several partners (including Great River Greening, Cannon River Watershed Partnership, The Nature Conservancy and MN DNR) for landscape planning in the Cannon River watershed. This effort is expected to help the partnership further identify priority conservation opportunities and protection strategies for high biodiversity areas.

Protecting and restoring vegetative cover within basins and the riparian areas of the lakes, rivers and streams in this focus area will also help protect water quality by reducing surface water runoff and by providing ecological services such as infiltration through natural buffers to our waterways. Parcels targeted for restoration will be evaluated by Great River Greening, and in collaboration with MN DNR and county SWCD personnel, to determine existing and desired conditions for each site. Information gathered will be used to develop a site specific scope of work plans for restoring ecologically desired habitats. Project management plans will detail the methods and practices to be used and a time line for successful completion of each site/project. Restoration practices could include; invasive species removal via controlled burning, chemical treatment, physical removal of individual plants, reseeding and/or plug planting, and shoreline revetments using native materials. All restoration efforts are aimed at improving habitat and protecting and water quality for the benefit of all wildlife and human communities.

Work will be completed in phases depending on funding availability and landowner willingness to sell. Properties targeted for acquisition and restoration can be found in the parcel list below.

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 the Trust for Public Land have been identified and prioritized through state, regional and local natural resource plans due to their high biodiversity qualities and connectivity. Their protection will occur through fee title acquisition, and will target Big Woods, oak savannas, wetlands and sensitive shoreline communities within the Cannon River watershed.

Great River Greening will conduct significant habitat restoration work on already permanently protected conservation lands identified by DNR and County Staff within the watershed. The aim is to improve habitat values for wildlife and Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), including birds using the Mississippi River migratory corridor, and pollinators. Work will restore and enhance riverine, forest, wetlands, Broadleaf Forest, oak savanna, and prairie habitat at 7 conservation sites.

Protection, restoration and/or enhancement of these significant parcels will provide critical habitat for game species, including upland birds (dove, turkey, pheasant, and woodcock), white tail deer, migratory waterfowl (mallards, canvasback, wood ducks, hooded mergansers, pintails, and lesser scaup), and aquatic species critical for the protection of fish (northern pike, black crappies, bluegills, and walleye). Protection will also provide access for

a diversity of recreational experiences including duck, pheasant, turkey and deer hunting as well as river, stream, and lake fishing. The nongame wildlife, including species in Greatest Conservation Need, that also benefit from this effort includes Bald Eagle, Bell’s Vireo, Cerulean Warbler, Loggerhead Shrike, Sandhill Crane, Red-headed Woodpecker, Greater Yellowlegs, Buffbreasted Sandpiper, Blanding’s Turtle, Mudpuppies, and the Giant Floater, a species of freshwater mussel.

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 program uses the Minnesota County Biological Survey, and several other GIS data analysis tools to identify priority lands for protection and restoration to create and expand conservation corridors and habitat complexes. In addition, we will consult watershed wide landscape planning efforts as discussed above and the Cannon River Watershed - Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) to further identify critical lands in need of protection and restoration.

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

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds

Which two other plans are addressed in this program?

- Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition - The Next 50 Years
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program?

Metro / Urban

- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna with an emphasis on areas with high biological diversity

Prairie

- Protect, enhance, or restore existing wetland/upland complexes, or convert agricultural lands to new wetland/upland habitat complexes

Southeast Forest

- Protect forest habitat through acquisition in fee or easement to prevent parcelization and fragmentation and to provide the ability to access and manage landlocked public properties

Does this program include leveraged funding?

-

Non-OHF Appropriations

Year	Source	Amount
2011	ENRTF	350000
2012	ENRTF	200000
2012	RIM	105000
2013	RIM	200000

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

Once land has been acquired and conveyed to the DNR, initial site development and restoration of these lands will begin. Estimated costs for initial restoration work are included in this proposal. The Trust for Public Land will work with DNR to complete a restoration and management plan, and implementation of that plan will be completed in the following years. These properties will be managed and maintained by the Minnesota DNR according to their guidelines.

In collaboration with MN DNR and county SWCD personnel, parcels targeted for restoration will be evaluated by Great River Greening to determine existing and desired conditions for each site. Information gathered will be used to develop a site specific scope of work plans for restoring ecologically desired habitats. Project management plans will detail the methods and practices to be used and a timeline for successful completion of each site/project.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2019	TPL - OHF and DNR	Post property	Develop restoration/management plan for property	-
2020	TPL - DNR	Develop restoration/management plan for property	Restore and steward property for habitat and public recreation	-
2021	TPL - DNR	Restore and steward property for habitat and public recreation	-	-
2019	GRG - OHF	Perform site evaluation and assessment in collaboration with DNR	Develop R/E plan for property. Begin monitoring	Initiate site preparation from R/E work. Continue monitoring
2020	GRG - OHF	Initiate R/E work	Continue R/E depending on appropriate methods and time of year	Continue R/E and begin stewardship as needed using appropriate methods and dependent on time of year
2021	GRG - OHF	Continue R/E and begin stewardship. Target actions to maintain habitat	Restorative action to correct damage as needed	Evaluate progress and determine if additional actions are needed

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?

No

Describe any measures to inform local governments of land acquisition under their jurisdiction:

Local governments are notified of each proposed land acquisition that will be transferred to the State and program staff are available to discuss projects with local government staff and/or elected officials.

Is the land you plan to acquire (fee title) free of any other permanent protection?

Yes

Will restoration and enhancement work follow best management practices including MS 84.973 Pollinator Habitat Program?

Yes

Is the restoration and enhancement activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, Subd 13(f), tribal lands, and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15?

Yes

Where does the activity take place?

- WMA
- SNA
- AMA
- Permanently Protected Conservation Easements
- County/Municipal
- State Forests

Land Use

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

Yes

Explain what will be planted:

For lands acquired that are conveyed as WMAs to the DNR, the DNR has indicated the following:

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?

True

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:

N/A. All lands acquired will be open to public hunting and fishing. Any needed limitations will be established according to state law and regulations.

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

MN Department of Natural Resources

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

No

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

No

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Landowner negotiations, agreements and due diligence	June 30, 2021
Land acquired	June 30, 2021
Initial site development/restoration	Fall 2021
Finalize restoration and enhancement plans	June 30, 2019
Restoration and enhancement	June 30, 2023

Date of Final Report Submission: 11/01/2023

Availability of Appropriation: Subd. 7. Availability of Appropriation

Money appropriated in this section may not be spent on activities unless they are directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation and are specified in the accomplishment plan approved by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. Money appropriated in this section must not be spent on indirect costs or other institutional overhead charges that are not directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation. Unless otherwise provided, the amounts in this section are available until June 30, 2021. For acquisition of real property, the amounts in this section are available until June 30, 2022, if a binding agreement with a landowner or purchase agreement is entered into by June 30, 2021, and closed no later than June 30, 2022. Funds for restoration or enhancement are available until June 30, 2023, or five years after acquisition, whichever is later, in order to complete initial restoration or enhancement work. If a project receives at least 15 percent of its funding from federal funds, the time of the appropriation may be extended to equal the availability of federal funding to a maximum of six years if that federal funding was confirmed and included in the second draft accomplishment plan. Funds appropriated for fee title acquisition of land may be used to restore, enhance, and provide for public use of the land acquired with the appropriation. Public-use facilities must have a minimal impact on habitat in acquired lands.

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	\$122,300	\$48,300	Greening Private Funds	\$170,600
Contracts	\$275,800	-	-	\$275,800
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$788,400	-	-	\$788,400
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$7,100	-	-	\$7,100
Professional Services	\$40,000	-	-	\$40,000
Direct Support Services	\$17,900	\$21,900	Greening Private Funds, TPL Private Funds	\$39,800
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$6,500	-	-	\$6,500
Supplies/Materials	\$47,000	-	-	\$47,000
DNR IDP	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000
Grand Total	\$1,345,000	\$70,200	-	\$1,415,200

Partner: Great River Greening**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$70,600	\$48,300	Greening Private Funds	\$118,900
Contracts	\$265,800	-	-	\$265,800
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$6,100	-	-	\$6,100
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$4,000	\$8,000	Greening Private Funds	\$12,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$6,500	-	-	\$6,500
Supplies/Materials	\$47,000	-	-	\$47,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$400,000	\$56,300	-	\$456,300

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
GRG Staff	0.45	3.0	\$70,600	\$48,300	Greening Private Funds	\$118,900

Partner: The Trust for Public Land**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$51,700	-	-	\$51,700
Contracts	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$788,400	-	-	\$788,400
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000
Professional Services	\$40,000	-	-	\$40,000
Direct Support Services	\$13,900	\$13,900	TPL Private Funds	\$27,800
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000
Grand Total	\$945,000	\$13,900	-	\$958,900

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Protection and Legal Staff	0.14	3.0	\$51,700	-	-	\$51,700

Amount of Request: \$1,345,000

Amount of Leverage: \$70,200

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 5.22%

DSS + Personnel: \$140,200

As a % of the total request: 10.42%

Easement Stewardship: -

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: -

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

Reduced acreage of fee acquisition, restoration, and enhancement activities.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

TPL has committed to contributing one-half of its DSS as leverage. Additional leverage for fee-acquisition is expected as partial donation of the appraised value of the parcel(s). GRG works with partners to identify the amount of leverage they are able to commit to a project.

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?

The entirety of GRG's contract line is for R/E work.

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?

TPL's DSS request is based upon our federal rate which has been approved by the DNR. Great River Greening determined its DSS rate to include all of the allowable direct and necessary expenditures that are not captured in other line items in the budget; this process has been approved by the DNR. We will apply this DNR-approved rate only to personnel expenses to determine the total amount of direct support services. The rate is 9% of personnel expenses.

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	7	30	0	37
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	40	40	40	40	160
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	103	57	0	160
Total	40	150	127	40	357

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	\$12,800	\$54,600	-	\$67,400
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$236,200	\$236,300	\$236,300	\$236,200	\$945,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	\$219,000	\$113,600	-	\$332,600
Total	\$236,200	\$468,100	\$404,500	\$236,200	\$1,345,000

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	37	0	37
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	80	80	0	160
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	43	0	44	73	0	160
Total	43	0	124	190	0	357

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	\$67,400	-	\$67,400
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$472,500	\$472,500	-	\$945,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$53,500	-	\$107,100	\$172,000	-	\$332,600
Total	\$53,500	-	\$579,600	\$711,900	-	\$1,345,000

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	\$1,828	\$1,820	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$5,905	\$5,907	\$5,907	\$5,905
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	\$2,126	\$1,992	-

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	-	-	\$1,821	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$5,906	\$5,906	-

Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$1,244	-	\$2,434	\$2,356	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

2.5 Miles

Outcomes

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- Core areas protected with highly biologically diverse wetlands and plant communities, including native prairie, Big Woods, and oak savanna ~ *Core parcels are identified in partnership with the DNR as well as the partners of the Cannon River Watershed Habitat Complex. Success will be determined based on the acreage of lands protected and restored, and the percentage of protected lands in the watershed.*

Programs in prairie region:

- Key core parcels are protected for fish, game and other wildlife ~ *Core parcels are identified in partnership with the DNR as well as the partners of the Cannon River Watershed Habitat Complex. Success will be determined based on the acreage of lands protected and restored, and the percentage of protected lands in the watershed.*

Programs in southeast forest region:

- Healthier populations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species as well as more common species ~ *We will track the acres of priority parcels protected within the Conservation Opportunity Areas (COA) identified in regional planning. Success within each COA will be determined based on the percentage of area protected restored and/or enhanced.*

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:

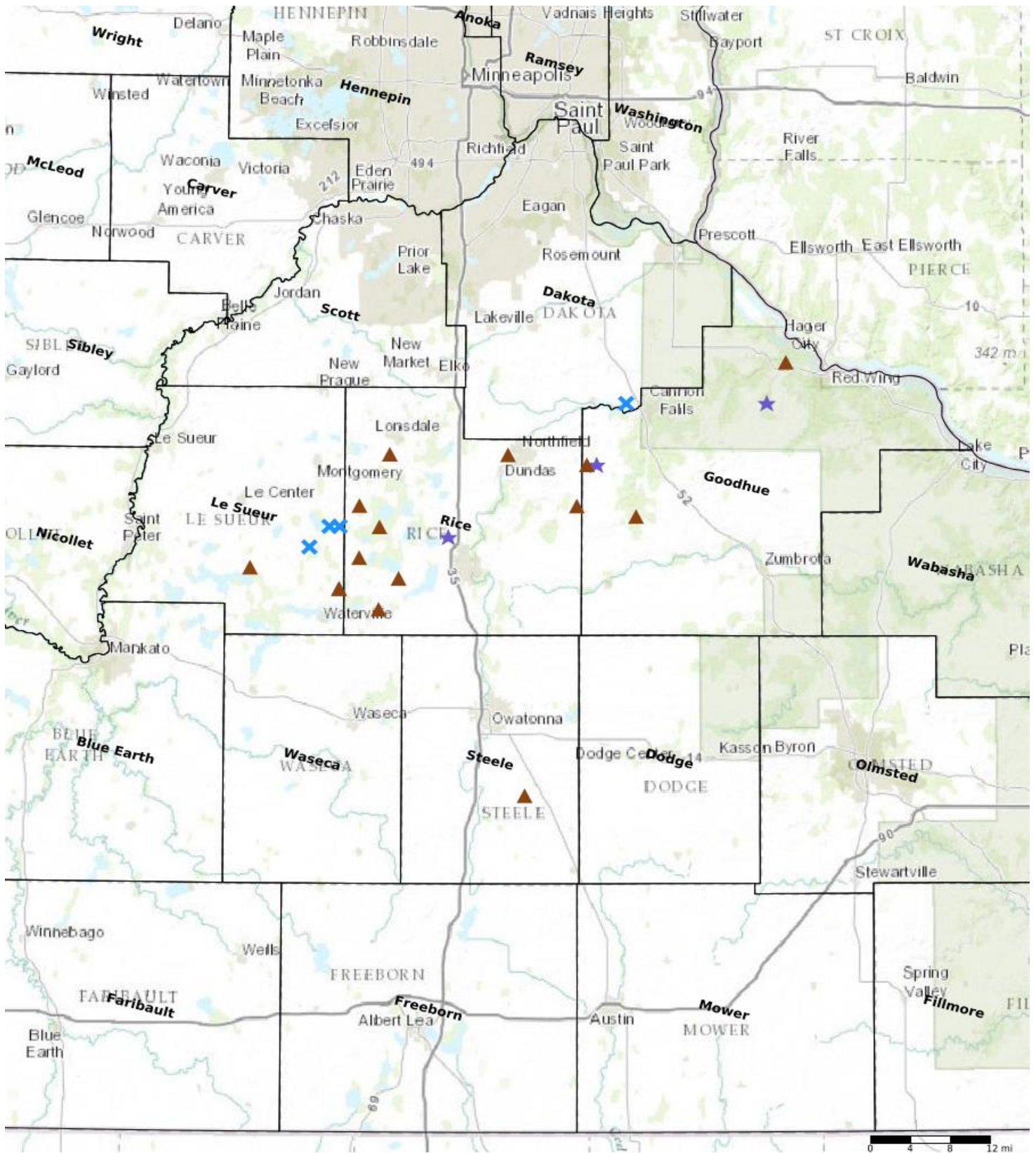
Restore / Enhance Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Lake Byllesby	Dakota	11218211	43	\$53,500	Yes
Warsaw WMA	Goodhue	11118208	0	\$1,700	Yes
John Peter Hoffman Spring Brook Valley	Goodhue	11215207	44	\$107,100	Yes
Diamond Lake WMA	Le Sueur	11023221	21	\$49,200	Yes
Edward Velishek WMA	Le Sueur	11023212	28	\$67,500	Yes
Dora Lake WMA	Le Sueur	11023211	17	\$27,600	Yes
Sunktokeca Creek WMA	Rice	11021214	44	\$93,400	Yes

Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Cannon River Turtle Preserve SNA	Goodhue	11315221	205	\$581,300	No
Warsaw WMA	Goodhue	11118207	120	\$480,000	No
Little Cannon AMA	Goodhue	11018201	78	\$300,000	No
Horseshoe Lake AMA (tracts 3-5)	Le Sueur	10923212	127	\$800,000	No
Schmidt WMA Addition	Le Sueur	11024233	160	\$600,000	No
Rice Creek WMA	Rice	11120202	360	\$2,000,000	No
Turkek Marsh WMA (tract 1)	Rice	11122232	83	\$375,000	No
Prairie Creek WMA Addition	Rice	11119236	135	\$810,000	No
Caron Lake AMA (tract 1)	Rice	11022229	80	\$480,000	No
Boyd Sartell WMA (tract 3)	Rice	11022210	75	\$255,000	No
Hands Marsh WMA	Rice	10923212	40	\$200,000	No
Weinberger Lake WMA	Rice	10922201	31	\$200,000	No
Sakatah WMA Addition	Rice	10922222	161	\$900,000	No
Shields Lake Overlook - Boyd Sartell WMA	Rice	11122202	14	\$79,134	No
Aurora WMA	Steele	10619219	23	\$106,393	No

Parcel Map



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