



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Martin County DNR WMA Acquisition Phase 4
Laws of Minnesota 2020 Accomplishment Plan

General Information

Date: 08/15/2024

Project Title: Martin County DNR WMA Acquisition Phase 4

Funds Recommended: \$2,387,000

Legislative Citation: ML 2020, Ch. 104, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd 2(f)

Appropriation Language: \$2,387,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire lands in fee and restore and enhance strategic prairie grassland, wetland, and other wildlife habitat in Martin County for wildlife management under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8. Of this amount, \$1,665,000 is to Fox Lake Conservation League Inc., \$618,000 is to Ducks Unlimited, and \$104,000 is to The Conservation Fund. A list of proposed acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Doug Hartke

Title:

Organization: Fox Lake Conservation League, Inc.

Address: PO Box 212

City: Sherburn, MN 56171

Email: dhartke@frontiernet.net

Office Number:

Mobile Number: 507-236-1700

Fax Number:

Website:

Location Information

County Location(s): Martin and Watonwan.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Prairie

Narrative

Abstract

This program will continue our conservation partnership into Phase 4. We will continue to restore diverse prairie and wetland habitat in areas that adjoin existing MN DNR WMAs. Parcels are identified with representatives of local government, Windom Area MN DNR, Ducks Unlimited (DU), The Conservation Fund (TCF), the Fox Lake Conservation League, Inc. (FLCL), and other local partners. Wetland restoration and additional grasslands are needed to make our WMAs sustainable. We will use the real estate expertise of TCF, wetland and grassland restoration expertise of DU, and the efforts of the Fox Lake Conservation League to ensure success.

Design and Scope of Work

Selective project sites will be targeted by the habitat needs and land availability in areas adjacent to exiting WMAs, existing habitat and land already protected from development or other land use change. Work is designed to provide the most habitat value. The landscape will be restored as close as possible to conditions that existed prior to its conversion to agricultural production. Wetlands will be restored without the disruption of the natural drainage system. Native vegetation will be restored with a diverse range of species suitable to the landscape.

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?

This project will protect threatened habitats in Martin and Watonwan Counties. Native prairie and high quality wetland will be protected, buffered and expanded upon. Restoration sites will provide the opportunity to expand populations of at-risk and threatened plant species that Martin SWCD has propagated and introduced into permanently protected sites. The FLCL is continuing the work Martin SWCD initiated, by selecting additional locally rare at-risk species for propagation and use in this and future habitat restoration projects. While hundreds of Sullivant's milkweed (*Asclepias sullivantii*) and Tuberous Indian Plantain (*Cacalia tuberosa*) have been introduced into WMAs and other protected land, Small white lady's slipper (*Cypripedium candidum*) and Rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*) will continue to be propagated using local source plant material for use in this project. Parcels selected for this proposal expand habitat protection for the threatened Blanding's Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*) Perch Creek population that has been studied by the MN DNR and featured in the "MN Volunteer".

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:

Our "Martin County Conservation Alliance" has grown into a planning group that includes wildlife group representatives, NGOs, local government, and state agencies. There is a wide range of knowledge and interest within the group. Historic information, the MN County Biologic Survey, and local knowledge help identify areas where habitat restoration will likely be most beneficial for multiple reasons. Expanding habitat adjacent to existing high quality native habitat and habitat already protected by public ownership or perpetual conservation easements are often targeted. Sites with threatened, endangered and species in decline are good targets to build upon, especially when these expansions can link sites to help extend corridors, expand blocks, and protect and enhance habitat buffers along water courses and lake chains.

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

- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds
- H7 Keep water on the landscape

Which two other plans are addressed in this program?

- Long Range Duck Recovery Plan
- Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition - The Next 50 Years

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program?

Prairie

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

Outcomes

Programs in prairie region:

- Key core parcels are protected for fish, game and other wildlife ~ *By adding these important parcels to the Martin County and Watonwan County WMA complexes we are adding valuable grasslands to the WMAs of Southern Minnesota. This additional diverse upland will provide much needed nesting habitat for our many wildlife species. This project will also add valuable acres for public hunting, fishing and other outdoor opportunities with all of the fish, game, and rare species that will be found on this new public land. The measurable habitat value will be based on the diversity of habitat protected and restored and the volume of public use these new acres receive.*

Does this program include leveraged funding?

No

Per MS 97A.056, Subd. 24, Please explain whether the request is supplanting or is a substitution for any previous funding that was not from a legacy fund and was used for the same purpose.

This proposal does not supplant or substitute previous funding for the same purpose.

Non-OHF Appropriations

Year	Source	Amount
2014	LCCMR	\$400,000

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

Maintaining and improving this work after our restoration plans will be the responsibility of the MN DNR with support from project partner CPL grants if and when appropriate. Local Partners will continue to install additional local source native plant species to enhance habitat to support more species, including pollinators. Local Partner monitoring will assist with identifying invasive species threats and provide assistance with eradication or control when necessary.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
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Ongoing	Local	Monitor to add local species	Monitor for invasive species	Treat and Plant as needed
Ongoing	Game and Fish Budget	Monitoring	Maintenance	Management

Activity Details

Requirements

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

Yes

Will county board or other local government approval be formally sought prior to acquisition, per 97A.056 subd 13(j)?**

Yes

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

Yes

Land Use

Will there be planting of any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program, either by the proposer or the end owner of the property, outside of the initial restoration of the land?

Yes

Explain what will be planted and include the maximum percentage of any acquired parcel that would be planted into foodplots by the proposer or the end owner of the property:

Soybeans or Oats may be planted in order to reduce fertilizer build-up and herbicide carry over from previous crop years. This will only be done to improve soil condition and provide a more suitable seedbed prior to restoring grasslands and wetland acres.

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:

All acquisitions will be part of the MN DNR WMA program and public hunting will be part of the process.

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

- State of MN

Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:

- WMA

What is the anticipated number of closed acquisitions (range is fine) you plan to accomplish with this appropriation?

We plan to close 2 to 3 acquisitions.

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

Will the acquired parcels be restored or enhanced within this appropriation?

Yes

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Begin acquisition negotiation	October 2020
Acquire properties	March 2021-March 2022
Begin restoration of properties	Fall 2021
Transfer properties to MN DNR	Fall 2021
Complete restorations	2022
Follow-up/maintenance/weed control	2023

Date of Final Report Submission: 12/20/2023

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, 2023. For acquisition of real property, the amounts in this section are available until June 30, 2024, if a binding agreement with a landowner or purchase agreement is entered into by June 30, 2023, and closed no later than June 30, 2024. Funds for restoration or enhancement are available until June 30, 2025, 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 the federal funding was confirmed and included in the original approved 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	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$87,000	-	-	\$87,000
Contracts	\$447,000	-	-	\$447,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$1,569,000	-	-	\$1,569,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$7,000	-	-	\$7,000
Professional Services	\$45,000	-	-	\$45,000
Direct Support Services	\$11,000	-	-	\$11,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$25,000	-	-	\$25,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000
Supplies/Materials	\$185,000	-	-	\$185,000
DNR IDP	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Grand Total	\$2,387,000	-	-	\$2,387,000

Partner: Ducks Unlimited**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$37,000	-	-	\$37,000
Contracts	\$387,000	-	-	\$387,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$4,000	-	-	\$4,000
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$4,000	-	-	\$4,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000
Supplies/Materials	\$185,000	-	-	\$185,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$618,000	-	-	\$618,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Ducks Unlimited Conservation Staff - Biologist & Engineer	0.4	3.0	\$37,000	-	-	\$37,000

Partner: Fox Lake Conservation League, Inc**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	-	-	-	-
Contracts	\$60,000	-	-	\$60,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$1,569,000	-	-	\$1,569,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$25,000	-	-	\$25,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Grand Total	\$1,665,000	-	-	\$1,665,000

Partner: The Conservation Fund**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$50,000	-	-	\$50,000
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$2,000	-	-	\$2,000
Professional Services	\$45,000	-	-	\$45,000
Direct Support Services	\$7,000	-	-	\$7,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$104,000	-	-	\$104,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
MN Acquisition Associate	0.25	2.0	\$50,000	-	-	\$50,000

Amount of Request: \$2,387,000**Amount of Leverage:** -**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 0.0%**DSS + Personnel:** \$98,000**As a % of the total request:** 4.11%**Easement Stewardship:** -**As a % of the Easement Acquisition:** -

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

All budget items and acres were reduced proportionally to accommodate the recommended appropriation.

Contracts**What is included in the contracts line?**

Fox Lake contracts line includes expense for tree removal, potential building demolition, and parking lot construction. Ducks Unlimited contracts line includes expense for both wetland and prairie restoration.

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

Yes

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

None

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?

Fox Lake Conservation will not add for Direct Support Services.

TCF -Our real estate support staff keeps hourly time sheets to track direct time spent on projects by grant source. We have used those past metrics to estimate the costs for this grant.

DU - Minnesota DNR grants staff previously reviewed and approved DU accounting methodology for Direct Support Services, which are calculated and included in DU staff costs. DU Direct Support Services constitute approximately 10% of DU overall staff costs on average among DU conservation staff billing categories. DU breaks out and invoices for Direct Support Service expenses approved by DNR for reimbursement separately from Personnel expenses. In accordance with 2 CFR 200, DU uses the direct allocation method of allocating costs to programs and final cost objectives. This process of allocating costs is accomplished through the use of hourly rates. The direct cost of activities, including direct support expenses, is included in these hourly rates. The rates are comprised of costs for salaries, benefits, office space, general insurance, support staff, office supplies, and other various direct expenses incurred at the regional

offices and conservation department at the home office. All costs are assigned to conservation projects (net of applicable personnel and other costs that are non-conservation related.) Hourly charges represent the amount that DU charges conservation projects per hour for each staff member working on the project. These costs represent expenses that directly support the labor cost necessary for the development of a specific water/wetlands conservation project.

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	240	0	0	240
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	240	0	0	240

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	\$2,387,000	-	-	\$2,387,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	\$2,387,000	-	-	\$2,387,000

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	240	0	240
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	240	0	240

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	-	-	-	\$2,387,000	-	\$2,387,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	\$2,387,000	-	\$2,387,000

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	\$9,945	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
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	-	-	-	\$9,945	-

Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Parcels

Parcel Information

Sign-up Criteria?

No

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

We work with the MN DNR to determine if parcel is an acceptable acquisition.

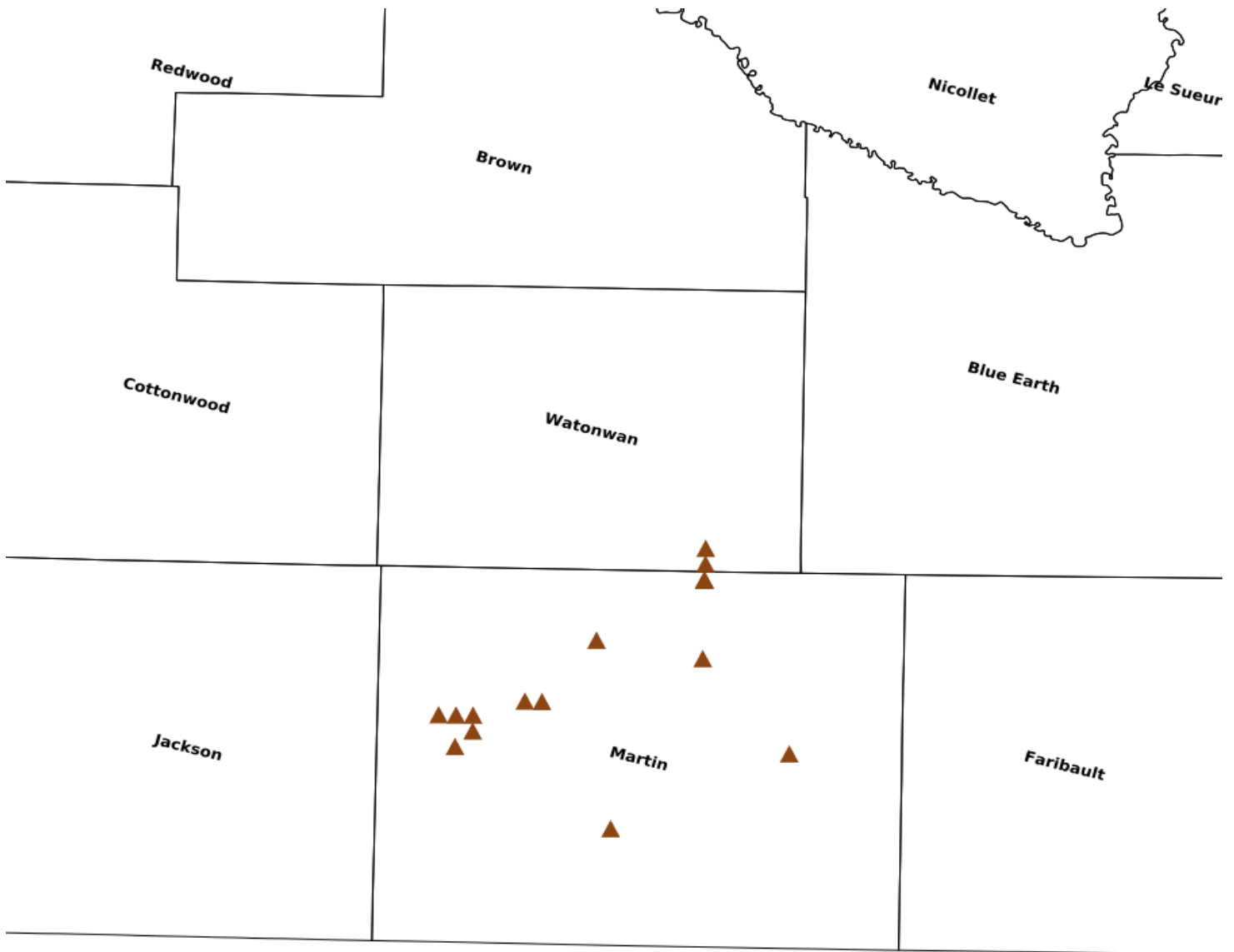
Fee Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Caron WMA Parcel 22	Martin	10333222	80	\$750,000	No
Perch Creek WMA Parcel 5A	Martin	10430206	24	\$1,950,000	No
Perch Creek Parcel 5	Martin	10430206	110	\$550,000	No
Perch Creek Parcel 26	Martin	10431230	83	\$750,000	No
Caron WMA Parcel 15	Martin	10333225	50	\$335,000	No
Armburst WMA	Martin	10430231	160	\$750,000	No
Perch Creek Parcel 13	Martin	10430206	48	\$450,000	No
Rooney Run Stusse Parcel	Martin	10332216	148	\$1,000,000	No
Caron WMA Parcel 14	Martin	10333224	80	\$580,000	No
Caron WMA Parcel 21A & 21B	Martin	10333223	110	\$775,000	No
Gruven WMA Parcel 6	Martin	10330236	181	\$750,000	No
Rooney Run Loe Parcel	Martin	10332215	160	\$550,000	No
Perch Creek Parcel 14	Watsonwan	10530231	155	\$1,500,000	No
Perch Creek Parcel 17	Watsonwan	10530230	150	\$1,250,000	No

Fee Parcels with Buildings

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Buildings	Value of Buildings
Island WMA Parcel 7	Martin	10231229	200	\$2,000,000	No	1	\$20,000
Four Corners WMA Parcel 12	Martin	10333235	154	\$1,300,000	No	1	\$0

Parcel Map



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

0 3 6 9 mi