



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Cannon River Watershed Habitat Complex - Phase IX Laws of Minnesota 2020 Accomplishment Plan

General Information

Date: 07/03/2024

Project Title: Cannon River Watershed Habitat Complex - Phase IX

Funds Recommended: \$1,148,000

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

Appropriation Language: \$1,148,000 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 aquatic management areas under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 14; to acquire lands in fee for 86A.05, subdivision 5; to acquire lands in fee section 86A.05, subdivision 7; and to restore and enhance lands in the Cannon River watershed. Of this amount, \$887,000 is to The Trust for Public Land and \$261,000 is to Great River Greening. Subject to evaluation criteria in Minnesota Rules, part 6136.0900, priority 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 Banks

Title: Project Manager

Organization: The Trust for Public Land

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Location Information

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

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

- 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 IX program will protect approximately 150 acres in fee, and restore and enhance approximately 93 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 IX of the Cannon River Watershed Habitat Complex program will continue to prevent degradation and loss of quality habitat in 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 1,460 square mile Cannon River Watershed includes over 800 linear miles of streams and rivers that drain a diverse landscape. This area has seen increased development pressure due to the transportation ease of the I-35 corridor and the attraction of 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 large complexes 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. Ongoing partnerships with the MN DNR, The Nature Conservancy, and the Cannon River Watershed Partnership are critical in further identifying priority conservation opportunities and protection

strategies for the existing 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 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 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 4 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 several watershed wide landscape planning efforts such as the Cannon River Watershed Landscape Stewardship Plan 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?

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

Outcomes

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:

- High priority riparian lands, forestlands, and savannas are protected from parcelization and fragmentation ~ *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.*

Does this program include leveraged funding?

Yes

Explain the leverage:

One-half of TPL's DSS costs and all travel costs are provided as privately sourced leverage for this proposal. TPL will attempt to bring various state, local and private funds to acquire additional property and leverage the OHF grant, and will attempt to leverage fee-acquisition with partial donations of the appraised value of parcels. GRG will provide privately sourced leverage for DSS costs.

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 substitute or supplant previous funding that was not from a Legacy fund.

Non-OHF Appropriations

Year	Source	Amount
2011	ENRTF	\$350,000
2012	ENRTF	\$200,000
2012	RIM	\$105,000
2013	RIM	\$200,000

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
2021	TPL - OHF and DNR	Post property	Develop restoration/management plan for property	-
2022	TPL - DNR	Develop restoration/management plan for property	Restore and steward property for habitat and public recreation	-
2023	TPL - DNR	Restore and steward property for habitat and public recreation	-	-
2021	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
2022	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
2023	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 county board or other local government approval be formally sought prior to acquisition, per 97A.056 subd 13(j)?**

No

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

We will follow the County/Township Board notification processes as directed by the current statutory language.

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 or on lands to be acquired in this program?

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, 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:

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. In some cases this necessitates the use of GMO treated products to facilitate herbicide use in order to control weeds present in the seedbank, however, neonicotinoids will not be used.

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:

Lands acquired by The Trust for Public Land will be open for fishing and hunting.

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

- State of MN

Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:

- WMA
- SNA
- AMA
- State Forest

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

TPL expects to close on one to three fee acquisitions with this appropriation.

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

TPL - Initial restoration activities will occur on parcels acquired with this appropriation.

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Landowner negotiations, agreements and due diligence	June 30, 2023
Land acquired	June 30, 2023

Initial site development/restoration	Fall 2023
Finalize restoration and enhancement plans	June 30, 2021
Restoration and enhancement	June 30, 2025

Date of Final Report Submission: 11/01/2025

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	\$90,500	-	-	\$90,500
Contracts	\$211,300	-	-	\$211,300
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$703,000	-	-	\$703,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$1,400	\$2,500	-, Private TPL Funds	\$3,900
Professional Services	\$40,000	-	-	\$40,000
Direct Support Services	\$39,700	\$73,300	GRG, Private TPL Funds	\$113,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$2,100	-	-	\$2,100
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	\$40,000	-	-	\$40,000
Grand Total	\$1,148,000	\$75,800	-	\$1,223,800

Partner: Great River Greening**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$30,500	-	-	\$30,500
Contracts	\$208,800	-	-	\$208,800
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$1,400	-	-	\$1,400
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$18,200	\$51,800	GRG	\$70,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$2,100	-	-	\$2,100
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$261,000	\$51,800	-	\$312,800

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
GRG Personnel	0.13	5.0	\$30,500	-	-	\$30,500

Partner: Trust for Public Land**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$60,000	-	-	\$60,000
Contracts	\$2,500	-	-	\$2,500
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$703,000	-	-	\$703,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	\$2,500	Private TPL Funds	\$2,500
Professional Services	\$40,000	-	-	\$40,000
Direct Support Services	\$21,500	\$21,500	Private TPL Funds	\$43,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	\$40,000	-	-	\$40,000
Grand Total	\$887,000	\$24,000	-	\$911,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Protection and Legal Staff	0.12	3.0	\$60,000	-	-	\$60,000

Amount of Request: \$1,148,000**Amount of Leverage:** \$75,800**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 6.6%**DSS + Personnel:** \$130,200**As a % of the total request:** 11.34%**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 title acquisition, restoration, and enhancement activities.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

TPL: One-half of DSS costs and all travel costs are provided as privately sourced leverage for this proposal. TPL will attempt to leverage fee-acquisition with partial donations of the appraised value of parcels. GRG will provide privately sourced leverage for DSS costs.

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?

TPL's contract line includes potential site clean-up, initial restoration activities, and outreach through local entities.

GRG's contract line includes restoration/enhancement contracts by service providers and outreach by local entities.

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

TPL is not seeking travel costs from the OHF grant. There are no travel costs in GRG's proposal which lie outside of normal and traditional travel costs.

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. This rate does not include costs that are included in other budget lines. 50% of these costs are requested from the grant and 50% is contributed as leverage. GRG's DSS rate was approved by the DNR in September 2019 and includes direct and necessary expenditures that are not captured in other line items in the budget.

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	14	0	14
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	32	32	32	32	128
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	34	26	0	60
Total	32	66	72	32	202

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	\$64,000	-	\$64,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$221,500	\$222,000	\$222,000	\$221,500	\$887,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	\$105,800	\$91,200	-	\$197,000
Total	\$221,500	\$327,800	\$377,200	\$221,500	\$1,148,000

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	14	0	14
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	64	64	0	128
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	60	0	60
Total	0	0	64	138	0	202

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	\$64,000	-	\$64,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$443,000	\$444,000	-	\$887,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	\$197,000	-	\$197,000
Total	-	-	\$443,000	\$705,000	-	\$1,148,000

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	\$4,571	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$6,921	\$6,937	\$6,937	\$6,921
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	\$3,111	\$3,507	-

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	-	-	\$4,571	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$6,921	\$6,937	-

Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	\$3,283	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

.5 miles

Parcels

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	Description
Murphy WMA	Le Sueur	10923205	3	\$21,000	Yes	Enhancement of 3 areas of prairie habitat
Dora Lake WMA Phase II	Le Sueur	11023211	31	\$112,000	Yes	Enhancement of 31 acres through invasive species management and removal.
Trout Lily WMA	Rice	11020217	14	\$15,000	Yes	Reforestation
Sunktokeca Creek WMA - Forest Restoration PH II	Rice	11021211	26	\$113,000	Yes	Woody Invasive and tree removal in Forest

Fee Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Little Cannon River AMA	Goodhue	11018201	160	\$700,000	No
Cannon River Turtle Preserve SNA Addition	Goodhue	11316227	200	\$615,000	No
Horseshoe Lake WMA/AMA Addition	Le Sueur	10923212	127	\$800,000	No
Dora Lake WMA Addition	Le Sueur	11023214	172	\$650,000	No
Dove Lake WMA Addition	Le Sueur	10924221	66	\$290,000	No
Earl Swain WMA Addition	Le Sueur	10924222	75	\$330,000	No
Caron Lake WMA/AMA Addition	Rice	11022229	80	\$450,000	No
Sakatah WMA Addition	Rice	10922222	5	\$23,983	No
Prairie Creek WMA Addition	Rice	11119236	135	\$810,000	No
Boyd Sartell WMA Addition	Rice	11122233	123	\$674,866	No
Sakatah WMA Addition 2	Rice	10922216	80	\$210,000	No
Robert Lick WMA Addition	Rice	11122210	80	\$450,000	No
Aurora WMA Addition	Steele	10619219	50	\$230,000	No
Faribault WMA Addition	Steele	10820204	161	\$1,170,000	No
Moonan Marsh WMA Addition	Waseca	10822225	75	\$316,000	No

Parcel Map

