Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Southeast Forest Habitat Enhancement Phase II

Laws of Minnesota 2020 Final Report

General Information

Date: 05/15/2025

Project Title: Southeast Forest Habitat Enhancement Phase II

Funds Recommended: $1,000,000

Legislative Citation: ML 2020, Ch. 104, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd 3(e)

Appropriation Language: $1,000,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to restore and enhance forests in southeastern Minnesota. A list of proposed land enhancements must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Greg Hoch
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Organization: MN DNR Wildlife
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Location Information

County Location(s): Goodhue, Wabasha, Houston, Winona, Fillmore and Olmsted.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

Metro / Urban

Southeast Forest

Activity types:

Restore

Enhance

Priority resources addressed by activity:

Wetlands

Prairie

Forest

Habitat

Narrative

Summary of Accomplishments

We enhanced 4,650 of forested habitat in SE MN and restored 22 acres of fallow fields into forest habitat exceeding our initial project proposal acres by 1,622 acres. Projects included 710 acres of tree planting, 2,142 acres of prescribed burns, 75 acres of tree seedling release, and 1723 acres of invasive species removal. All projects were completed in cooperation with local staff from the Divisions of Forestry and Wildlife.

Process & Methods

Tree planting occurred using multiple tree contracting crews from SE MN with work overseen by DNR staff. Prescribed burns were conducted with DNR staff and CCMI crews with prep work installing fire breaks and mopping up post fire. Direct seeding was completed with a contract crew and the seedling release was conducted by contractors with manual cutting to ensure the tree species of preference is managed for. Invasive woody removal was removed by CCMI and contractors. The restoration work was done by a contractor with site preparation and seeding to convert old, fallow fields back into forested habitats.

How did the program address habitats of significant value for wildlife species of greatest conservation need, threatened or endangered species, and/or list targeted species?

Habitat for species such as Karner blue butterflies, timber rattlesnakes and other rare reptiles and amphibians where enhanced under these improvements. Habitat enhancements to dry oak communities, dry jack pine savannah, edge rock bluff prairies, dry barrens, mesic prairies, oak woodlands, savannahs, and fire dependent forests were enhanced providing corridors and expanded habitats for many species. There are dozens of species rare plants and animals that depend on these community types that were enhanced by the management actions in this grant.

How did the program use science-based targeting that leveraged or expanded corridors and complexes, reduced fragmentation, or protected areas in the MN County Biological Survey.

Much of the work for this grant was conducted in locations where prior work by multiple specialists had identified the presence of or need for enhancement of rare communities and species tied to those communities. Some examples include work conducted in Designated High conservation value forests, representative sample areas, high DNR Biodiversity sites. In addition, multiple Species identified as species of greatest conservation need were benefited by the activities conducted in this grant.

Explain Partners, Supporters, & Opposition

Partners include the two Divisions of Fish and Wildlife and the Division of Forestry in consultation with the Division of Ecological and Water Resources and the non game wildlife specialists. CCMI is a partner we use to help conduct the work along with multiple forest contractors.

Exceptional challenges, expectations, failures, opportunities, or unique aspects of program

The first year of the grant proved challenging due to COVID restrictions with staff and contractors ; yielding only 119 acres accomplished in 2021 . In 2022 we rebounded with 2406 acres accomplished. We went on to accomplish 993 acres in 2023 and 1154 acres in 2024. We also ran into some issues with drought conditions affecting tree planting efforts. In the end we were able to exceed our original grant acreage goal and finish the grant a year early . Contracting to CCM played a large part in the acres accomplished for such activities as RX burning and invasive species control

What other dedicated funds may collaborate with or contribute to this program?

N/A

What is the plan to sustain and/or maintain this work after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended?

Area Wildlife staff, will monitor completed projects to ensure effectiveness and longevity. Appropriate funds for maintenance will be provided through multiple sources using DNR staff.

Budget

Totals

Item	Requested	AP Amount	Spent	Leverage	Received Leverage	Leverage Source	Original Total	Final Total
Personnel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contracts	$918,600	$827,300	$918,600	-	-	-	$918,600	$918,600
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	$14,300	$14,300	$13,300	-	-	-	$14,300	$13,300
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	$67,100	$158,400	$65,100	-	-	-	$67,100	$65,100
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	**$1,000,000**	**$1,000,000**	**$997,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**$1,000,000**	**$997,000**

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 DNR's Direct and Necessary (D&N) calculator was used. It was created for LSOHC/OHF and LCCMR/ENRTF proposals.

Explain any budget challenges or successes:

Total Revenue: $0

Revenue Spent: $0

Revenue Balance: $0

Of the money disclosed above, what are the appropriate uses of the money:

D. This is not applicable because the recipient is a state agency or department.

Output Tables

Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland (AP)	Wetland (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	Forest (AP)	Forest (Final)	Habitat (AP)	Habitat (Final)	Total Acres (AP)	Total Acres (Final)
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	22	0	0	0	22
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	3,050	4,650	0	0	3,050	4,650
Total	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3,050**	**4,672**	**0**	**0**	**3,050**	**4,672**

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland (AP)	Wetland (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	Forest (AP)	Forest (Final)	Habitat (AP)	Habitat (Final)	Total Funding (AP)	Total Funding (Final)
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	$4,600	-	-	-	$4,600
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	$1,000,000	$992,400	-	-	$1,000,000	$992,400
Total	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**$1,000,000**	**$997,000**	**-**	**-**	**$1,000,000**	**$997,000**

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro / Urban (AP)	Metro / Urban (Final)	Forest / Prairie (AP)	Forest / Prairie (Final)	SE Forest (AP)	SE Forest (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	N. Forest (AP)	N. Forest (Final)	Total (AP)	Total (Final)
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	22
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	3,050	4,650	0	0	0	0	3,050	4,650
Total	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3,050**	**4,672**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3,050**	**4,672**

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro / Urban (AP)	Metro / Urban (Final)	Forest / Prairie (AP)	Forest / Prairie (Final)	SE Forest (AP)	SE Forest (Final)	Prairie (AP)	Prairie (Final)	N. Forest (AP)	N. Forest (Final)	Total (AP)	Total (Final)
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	$4,600	-	-	-	-	-	$4,600
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	$1,000,000	$992,400	-	-	-	-	$1,000,000	$992,400
Total	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**$1,000,000**	**$997,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**$1,000,000**	**$997,000**

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Explain the success/shortage of acre goals

We succeeded in completing and overachieving our acreage goal from our initial proposal acres pf 3050 by 1,622 acres. We enhanced 4,650 acre and restored 22 acres in Southeast MN. Projects were completed in cooperation multiple local staff from the Division of Forestry and Wildlife.

Outcomes

Programs in southeast forest region:

Healthier populations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species as well as more common species
~ We enhanced 4,650 acres of habitat for all species in SE MN. We controlled invasive species, removed invasive species, enhanced habitat through prescribed burning, planted trees, seeded tree seedlings, direct seeding and manual release of the tree seedling and generally providing better habitat for all species that use SE forests. Specific examples include bluff land burns that provide important habitat for timber rattlesnakes and fire dependent threatened and endangered plant species.
Twenty two acres were restored using site preparation and direct tree seeding to restore forests to fallow fields.

Parcels

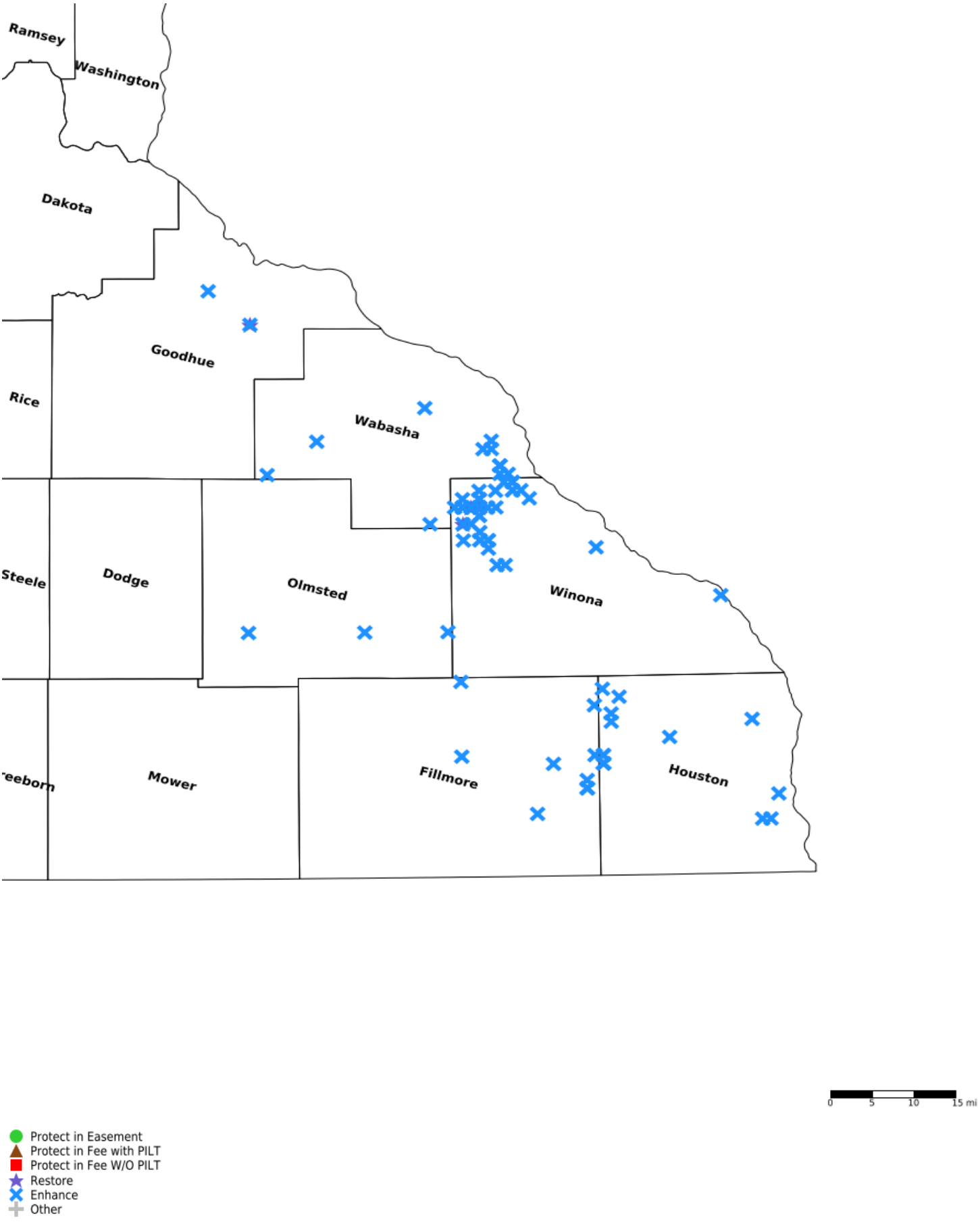
Sign-up Criteria?
No

Restore / Enhance Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Description
Choice WMA	Fillmore	10208211	28	$5,966	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Choice WMA	Fillmore	10208211	12	$2,557	Yes	Direct Seeding Release
Choice WMA	Fillmore	10208202	121	$25,789	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Choice WMA	Fillmore	10208211	161	$34,306	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Hvoslef WMA	Fillmore	10209226	10	$2,131	Yes	Tree Planting
Isinours State Forest	Fillmore	10310220	6	$1,278	Yes	RX Burn
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Fillmore	10306209	2	$490	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Fillmore	10810220	5	$1,065	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Fillmore	10408224	144	$30,684	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Rush Creek WMA	Fillmore	10407207	11	$2,557	Yes	Direct Seeding Release
Yucatan WMA - South Tract	Fillmore	10307230	141	$30,044	Yes	Invasive woody removal
John Murtaugh Memorial WMA	Goodhue	11215236	7	$1,449	Yes	Invasive woody removal
John Peter Hoffman Spring Brook Valley WMA	Goodhue	11215207	34	$7,138	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Rochester Site Prep & Direct Seeding FY23	Goodhue	11215236	5	$1,065	Yes	Site Prep & Direct Seeding
Ferndale WMA	Houston	10407229	51	$10,867	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Ferndale WMA	Houston	10407232	79	$16,833	Yes	Invasive woody removal
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Houston	10204215	27	$5,573	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Houston	10407216	24	$5,114	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Houston	10204232	16	$3,409	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Houston	10204233	50	$10,654	Yes	Tree Planting
Root River WMA	Houston	10404231	47	$10,015	Yes	Direct Seeding Release
Yucatan WMA	Houston	10308230	281	$59,875	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Yucatan WMA	Houston	10307230	40	$8,523	Yes	Tree Planting
Yucatan WMA North Tract	Houston	10307219	131	$27,913	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Yucatan WMA - East Tract	Houston	10307230	47	$10,015	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Yucatan WMA - North Tract	Houston	10307219	61	$12,998	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Yucatan WMA - West Tract	Houston	10308224	32	$6,819	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Yucatan WMA South Tract	Houston	10307230	50	$10,654	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Keller WMA	Olmsted	10515201	36	$7,692	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Vermilya WMA	Olmsted	10511201	19	$4,049	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Izaak Walton League WMA	Wabasha	10914232	29	$6,158	Yes	Invasive woody removal
McCarthy WMA	Wabasha	10910211	35	$7,458	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Wabasha	11011221	19	$4,070	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Wabasha	10809208	31	$6,605	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Wabasha	10809215	34	$7,245	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Wabasha	10910215	4	$852	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Wabasha	10910225	15	$3,196	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA Wishow Rd Tract	Wabasha	10809205	13	$2,706	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Wabasha	10910225	18	$3,857	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Whitewater WMA	Wabasha	10909231	260	$55,401	Yes	Prescribed Burn
Whitewater WMA Dorman Tract	Wabasha	10811234	21	$4,475	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater Wildlife Management Area	Wabasha	10910225	9	$1,918	Yes	Direct Seeding Release
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Winona	10512205	17	$3,516	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Winona	10605216	12	$2,450	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Winona	10708213	14	$2,983	Yes	Tree Planting

RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Winona	10410205	19	$4,049	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Winona	10913208	32	$6,819	Yes	Tree Planting
RJ Dorer Memorial Forest	Winona	10809209	4	$938	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater	Winona	10810212	1,250	$266,350	Yes	RX Burn
Whitewater Bedtke track	Winona	10810217	17	$3,622	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10710203	30	$6,392	Yes	Prescribed Burn
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10809206	6	$1,278	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10710225	12	$2,557	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10809208	16	$3,409	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10810222	30	$6,392	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10810215	9	$1,918	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10810223	7	$1,492	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10810221	5	$1,065	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10810220	9	$1,918	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10810227	5	$1,065	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10809205	2	$469	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10810220	4	$852	Yes	Direct Seeding Release
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10710208	30	$6,392	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10710211	16	$3,495	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10810232	5	$1,065	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10710214	7	$1,534	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10710210	4	$852	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10810224	7	$1,492	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10810222	35	$7,458	Yes	Tree planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10709230	7	$1,492	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10809205	6	$1,278	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10710211	250	$53,270	Yes	Prescribed Burn
Whitewater WMA	Winona	10810227	325	$69,251	Yes	Prescribed Burn
Whitewater WMA Reilly's Tract	Winona	10910236	5	$959	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Whitewater WMA - Beaver Corner Tract	Winona	10810222	15	$3,196	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA - Beaver Corner Tract	Winona	10810215	7	$1,492	Yes	Tree Planting
Whitewater WMA - Doramn Refuge Woods Tract	Winona	10810210	11	$2,344	Yes	RX burn
Whitewater WMA - Fire Tower Tract	Winona	10710210	10	$2,131	Yes	RX burn
Whitewater WMA - Miller Ridge Tract	Winona	10810222	5	$1,065	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Whitewater WMA Beaver Valley Tract	Winona	10810219	10	$2,131	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Whitewater WMA Heaser Tract	Winona	10810232	5	$1,065	Yes	Site Prep & Direct Seeding
Whitewater WMA Marnach Tract	Winona	10810233	57	$12,146	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Whitewater WMA Reillys Bench Tract	Winona	10910214	177	$37,715	Yes	Invasive woody removal
Whitewater WMA Simon Tract	Winona	10810222	7	$1,492	Yes	Site Prep & Direct Seeding
Whitewater WMA Verthein Tract	Winona	10810221	5	$1,065	Yes	Site Prep & Direct Seeding

Parcel Map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