



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

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### Laws of Minnesota 2021 Accomplishment Plan

#### General Information

**Date:** 12/11/2020

**Project Title:** Accelerating the USFWS Habitat Conservation Easement Program - Phase III

**Funds Recommended:** \$4,752,000

**Legislative Citation:** ML 2021, Ch. XX, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd.

**Appropriation Language:**

#### Manager Information

**Manager's Name:** Jon Schneider

**Title:** Director - Minnesota Conservation Programs

**Organization:** Ducks Unlimited

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#### Location Information

**County Location(s):** Otter Tail, Kandiyohi, Meekeer, Grant, Pope, Big Stone, Swift and Douglas.

**Eco regions in which work will take place:**

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie

**Activity types:**

- Protect in Easement
- Restore

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

- Wetlands
- Prairie

## Narrative

### Abstract

This Phase 3 partnership will accelerate USFWS wildlife habitat easements to protect and restore 1,400 acres of private grasslands and pothole wetlands in west-central Minnesota, and restore an additional 140 prairie-wetland acres. These "working land" conservation easements allow delayed haying and grazing while protecting restored wetlands and prairie grasslands for nesting ducks, pheasants, and other wildlife. By restoring and protecting grassland and wetland habitat while allowing for continued landowner use of these working private lands, USFWS habitat easements fill an important prairie landscape conservation niche that complements other more restrictive easements and fee-title public lands, and buffers existing habitats.

### Design and Scope of Work

Ducks Unlimited (DU) and Pheasants Forever (PF) will purchase, record, and transfer wildlife habitat conservation easements to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) for long-term perpetual monitoring and enforcement in west-central Minnesota using federally-approved USFWS habitat conservation easement language and federal payment rates. DU and PF will restore drained wetlands and cropland back to prairie grassland. DU will purchase and hold easements through its Wetlands America Trust (WAT), DU's supporting land-holding fiduciary organization, of which DU is the sole corporate member. By purchasing easements and restoring grasslands and wetlands for USFWS with OHF support, DU and PF will effectively accelerate the rate at which USFWS can protect grassland and wetlands in key focus landscapes in which there are also many state and federal wildlife lands owned and managed in fee-title, and other lands protected by more restrictive conservation easements. These are some of the most productive landscapes in the state for breeding waterfowl and other prairie wildlife including pheasants, and these private working land conservation easements complement other federal, state, and private conservation easement options available to landowners.

USFWS habitat conservation easements not only include protection measures that prevent wetland/prairie conversion and land development/subdivision, but importantly, they also secure rights to restore wetlands and prairie grassland where feasible too - which is the primary purpose of this OHF easement program. DU/PF will help USFWS conduct landowner outreach, prioritize offers of federally-approved easement payments, and conduct landowner negotiations, boundary survey, environmental review, title review, and other legal tasks, and purchase the easement for USFWS. DU/PF will protect prairie and wetlands via easements we purchase (and restore where needed), record, and transfer to USFWS. DU/PF will also use OHF grant funds to restore additional prairie and wetland acres on land eased directly by USFWS as leverage. DU/PF will restore eased lands in partnership with the USFWS with technical guidance from their private lands biologists. DU engineers will survey/design larger complex wetland restorations, and manage restoration contracts to private earth-moving firms.

USFWS "Habitat Easements" have been used here for over two decades, and are designed to provide a habitat protection conservation tool to complement public lands habitat complexes such as federal Waterfowl Production Areas and state Wildlife Management Areas, by keeping privately owned restored grassland and wetland habitat intact and on county tax rolls while allowing for working use of the land. These easements provide landowners with the option of either delayed haying (after July 15) or both grazing and delayed haying, which results in adequate habitat for wetland and upland nesting birds and a working land use option that appeals to some private landowners. Importantly, these working land easements also help manage plant succession on their land, which is critical to preventing the encroachment of volunteer trees and invasive plant species. Well-managed grazing, delayed haying, and USFWS prescribed fire also benefits those grassland bird species that prefer more open prairie habitats, such as northern pintail, marbled godwit, snipe, and many other prairie species.

## **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 proposal will purchase habitat easements to restore to prairie grasslands and wetland complexes. USFWS easements can be grazed and delay hayed, land uses which are compatible with grassland nesting birds as per scientific research. Prairies and emergent marshes are identified as critical habitats for many “Species of Greatest Conservation Need” listed in Minnesota’s “Tomorrow’s Habitat for the Wild & Rare: An Action Plan for Minnesota Wildlife”. Grassland nesting birds have shown the largest population decline of any of the bird species. Specific species listed in the Action Plan as requiring prairie (page 255) include seven species of butterflies and three bird species that are native prairie specialists: chestnut-collared longspur, Sprague’s pipit, and Baird’s sparrow. Specific species listed in the Action Plan as requiring emergent marshes (page 267) include least bittern, American bittern, marsh wren, and Virginia rail. The Prairie Parkland has 139 species listed on the SGCN with 13 of these species being unique to the section. Grasslands are also critical to a diverse suite of declining pollinator species.

In addition to these specific wildlife species listed as SGCN in the Action Plan, restored prairie and wetlands in the Prairie Parkland will provide habitat of significant value for other species listed in Appendix B of the Action Plan. Restored and protected prairie will provide habitat of significant value for other SGCN including bird species: upland sandpiper, bobolink, burrowing owl, Le Conte’s sparrow, grasshopper sparrow, eastern meadowlark, swamp sparrow, sharp-tailed grouse, short-eared owl, northern harrier, dickcissel, Henslow’s sparrow, and Nelson’s sharp-tailed sparrow. Upland nesting waterfowl will also benefit including waterfowl listed as SGCN; northern pintail and lesser scaup, which have both seen declines in continental populations. Wetland associated birds such as trumpeter swan, black tern, American bittern, Wilson’s phalarope, and marbled godwit will benefit from wetlands restored and buffered in the prairie landscape through the habitat easements. Mammals including northern grasshopper mouse and Richardson’s ground squirrels, reptiles such as lined snake and Blanding’s turtle, and amphibians such as northern cricket frog and common mudpuppy are SGCN in the Prairie Parkland.

## **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:**

USFWS biologists score and rank each grassland habitat easement proposal based on ecological site attributes and landscape juxtaposition of protected lands. This ranking process was designed to be relatively simple and evaluate the capability of the proposed easement to provide biological benefits for wetland and grassland dependent wildlife species by considering the habitat on the easement tract as well as its contribution and benefits to other protected lands in the surrounding area. Periodically, the USFWS Minnesota Wetland Acquisition Office in Fergus Falls uses these rankings to re-prioritize the proposals to assure that the USFWS is working on and purchasing the highest ranking proposals throughout the year. DU and PF will rely on the high level of science-based expertise of the USFWS to ensure that easement opportunities are prioritized, and will work closely as a partnership to share the workload and accelerate the easement program in west-central Minnesota. Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, and USFWS will work together to use science-based targeting to focus promotion of this accelerated habitat conservation easement program, with focus on tracts near existing federal WPAs, state WMAs, and other permanent private land easements. High priority tracts will be those with restorable drained wetlands and converted prairie or expiring CRP that, once fully restored, will build and expand prairie-wetland complexes for ducks, pheasants, and migratory birds in landscapes with a high density of other protected habitats. Science-based models such as the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) “Thunderstorm Maps” and “Restorable Wetlands Inventory” will help us determine landscape importance to breeding waterfowl, as will the state Pheasant Plan and Minnesota’s Prairie Conservation Plan that helps guide prairie conservation efforts within Complexes, Core, and Corridor areas of western Minnesota. Finally, parcels near sites with relatively high biological diversity and

significance based on the Minnesota DNR County Biological Survey (MCBS) will be a priority, and parcels with unique ecological values will be shared with other conservation easement program partners to ensure collaboration, avoid duplication of effort, and that the best conservation easement program option is offered to private landowners.

### **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?**

- Long Range Duck Recovery Plan
- Long Range Plan for the Ring-Necked Pheasant in MN

### **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

#### **Prairie**

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

### **Does this program include leveraged funding?**

Yes

### **Explain the leverage:**

To help leverage this state request, the USFWS pledges to spend at least \$400,000 federal Migratory Bird Conservation Funds (federal "duck stamp") to directly purchase additional easements, and \$40,000 in in-kind federal staff time to assist DU and PF in the purchase, restoration, and transfer of easements to USFWS. DU and PF strive to use our non-federal private and state OHF grant expense as often as possible as match to leverage federal NAWCA grant funds to further our conservation missions. NAWCA is highly competitive and complex, and proposal success is uncertain. Therefore, DU and PF will work closely with Minnesota DNR, USFWS, and other NGO partners such as TNC to use state OHF grant expense as non-federal match to leverage federal NAWCA funds to help fund similar land restoration and protection work in the same landscapes where USFWS habitat conservation easements are being purchased and restored. This approach may include using OHF grant expense to leverage NAWCA funds to pay for more habitat easements, or to purchase lands in fee-title for DNR or FWS, or for restoration costs of lands purchased or protected by easements.

### **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 OHF funding request does not supplant or substitute for any previous funding. This new OHF funding will be used for new conservation work to accelerate USFWS conservation easement delivery in Minnesota to accelerate protection and restoration of wetlands and prairie, and provide "working land" conservation easements options for landowners.

## Non-OHF Appropriations

Year	Source	Amount
2010-2019	U.S. Migratory Bird Conservation Fund (federal Duck Stamp)	Over \$6 million

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

Easements purchased by DU and PF will be recorded by DU and PF, but then transferred to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for long-term annual monitoring and enforcement. The terms of the easement allow limited delayed haying after July 15 or delayed haying and grazing, but require wetlands and grasslands to be maintained by the private landowner. The easements also allow DU and PF, and subsequently the the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service after transfer, to restore and help enhance wetland restorations or improve grasslands in the future when determined by the Service to be necessary for wildlife habitat management purposes.

### Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2025	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	Annually Monitor Easements	Identify Problems, if any	Work with Private Landowners to Resolve

### Activity Details

#### Requirements

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

Yes

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

No

#### Describe the expected public use:

Some tracts to be eased may already have USFWS wetland easements on them that protect intact and restored wetlands from being drained, burned, or filled, but otherwise allows for their agricultural use (haying and farming thru them during dry years). The federal payment for these new habitat easements will take into account the value of the land with those wetlands permanently protected. These new USFWS Habitat easements will overlay, and protect and restore uplands in addition to previously protected wetlands.

#### Who will manage the easement?

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service will assume long-term management of all easements purchased by DU and PF and transferred to the U.S. government.

#### Who will be the easement holder?

DU and PF will initially record the easement, and will be the initial interim easement holder for 1-2 years during transfer to U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. However, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service will be the long-term conservation easement holder.

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

DU and PF anticipate accomplishing 8-12 conservation easements through this appropriation, depending on size of lands offered for easements.

**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?**

- Permanently Protected Conservation Easements

**Land Use**

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

Yes

**Explain what will be planted:**

Some very limited duration crop planting may be required as site preparation for prairie restoration on parcels where herbicides with long (18+ month) residual carryover have been used, where conversion of old fields infested with invasive plants such as smooth brome and reed canary grass may require a year of cropping with herbicides for restoration purposes. No food plots are planned through this program or allowed on USFWS easements.

**Will the eased land be open for public use?**

No

**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

Yes, our budget for this appropriation includes OHF grant funds for complete restoration of wetlands and prairie, including tree removal from prairie areas and intact wetlands. Our budget includes the cost of engineering for more complex wetland restorations too.

**Will the land that you acquire (fee or easement) be restored or enhanced within this program's funding and availability?**

Yes

**Timeline**

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Easement offers made to private landowners for parcels prioritized by USFWS and using payments calculated by USFWS	December 2022
Easement boundary surveys, consulted phase 1 environmental reviews, and legal title clearance completed by DU and PF	June 2023
Easements purchased and recorded by DU and PF	June 2024

Easements transferred from DU and PF to USFWS	June 2025
Easement wetlands and prairie grasslands restored by DU and PF	June 2029

**Date of Final Report Submission:** 11/01/2029

## 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	\$279,000	\$46,400	-	\$325,400
Contracts	\$770,000	-	-	\$770,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$3,485,000	\$464,000	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	\$3,949,000
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$30,000	-	-	\$30,000
Professional Services	\$90,000	-	-	\$90,000
Direct Support Services	\$30,000	-	-	\$30,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Supplies/Materials	\$58,000	-	-	\$58,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$4,752,000</b>	<b>\$510,400</b>	-	<b>\$5,262,400</b>



**Partner: Pheasants Forever**

**Totals**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Funding Request</b>	<b>Antic. Leverage</b>	<b>Leverage Source</b>	<b>Total</b>
Personnel	\$49,000	-	-	\$49,000
Contracts	\$270,000	-	-	\$270,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$1,185,000	-	-	\$1,185,000
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$5,000	-	-	\$5,000
Professional Services	\$42,000	-	-	\$42,000
Direct Support Services	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$38,000	-	-	\$38,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,599,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,599,000</b>

**Personnel**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Annual FTE</b>	<b>Years Working</b>	<b>Funding Request</b>	<b>Antic. Leverage</b>	<b>Leverage Source</b>	<b>Total</b>
Grants Staff	0.06	3.0	\$14,500	-	-	\$14,500
Field Staff	0.06	3.0	\$14,500	-	-	\$14,500
State Coordinator	0.07	3.0	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000

**Partner: Ducks Unlimited**

**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$230,000	\$46,400	-	\$276,400
Contracts	\$500,000	-	-	\$500,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$2,300,000	\$464,000	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	\$2,764,000
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$25,000	-	-	\$25,000
Professional Services	\$48,000	-	-	\$48,000
Direct Support Services	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Supplies/Materials	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$3,153,000</b>	<b>\$510,400</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$3,663,400</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
DU Regional Land Manager	0.08	3.0	\$25,000	\$46,400	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	\$71,400
DU Biologist	0.6	3.0	\$180,000	-	-	\$180,000
DU Program Manager	0.08	3.0	\$25,000	-	-	\$25,000

**Amount of Request:** \$4,752,000

**Amount of Leverage:** \$510,400

**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 10.74%

**DSS + Personnel:** \$309,000

**As a % of the total request:** 6.5%

**Easement Stewardship:** -

**As a % of the Easement Acquisition:** -

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

This program is very scalable, and thus both budgets and accomplishments were reduced accordingly and proportionately to the OHF grant funds allocated.

**Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:**

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has pledged a proportionately reduced amount of federal migratory bird funds to purchase habitat conservation easements and staff time.

## Personnel

### Has funding for these positions been requested in the past?

Yes

#### **Please explain the overlap of past and future staffing and position levels previously received and how that is coordinated over multiple years?**

DU and PF code staff time to specific projects, and specific projects are only invoiced to one OHF grant. Each easement is a unique project, and thus staff costs are easement specific and allocated to only one OHF grant for cost recovery.

## Contracts

### What is included in the contracts line?

Contracts include restoration costs associated with prairie and wetlands, such as tree removal, grassland seeding, and earth-moving and drain tile removal.

## Travel

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

No

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

None; nearly all travel expense is for in-state mileage to work on securing and restoring easements.

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

Yes

## Direct Support Services

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

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 8-10% 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.

PF utilizes the Total Modified Direct Cost method. This methodology is annually approved by the U.S. Department of Interior's National Business Center as the basis for the organization's Indirect Cost Rate agreement. PF's allowable direct support services cost is 4.12% . In this proposal, PF has discounted its rate to 2% of the sum of personnel, contracts, professional services, and travel, and will donate the difference in-kind.

## **Other Equipment/Tools**

### **Give examples of the types of Equipment and Tools that will be purchased?**

Small hand tools to clear woody plants from prairie and wetland areas. Engineering GPS survey equipment rent/lease charges during restoration site survey. Tablet computer and attachments for field restoration planning.

## **Federal Funds**

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

Yes

#### **Are the funds confirmed?**

Yes

#### **Is Confirmation Document attached?**

[Yes](#)

- Cash : \$464,000
- In Kind : \$46,400

## Output Tables

### Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	30	110	-	-	140
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	400	1,000	-	-	1,400
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>1,110</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,540</b>

### How many of these Prairie acres are Native Prairie? (Table 1b)

Type	Native Prairie (acres)
Restore	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-
Protect in Easement	10
Enhance	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

### Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	\$177,000	\$75,000	-	-	\$252,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	\$1,160,000	\$3,340,000	-	-	\$4,500,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,337,000</b>	<b>\$3,415,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$4,752,000</b>

### Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	-	50	-	90	-	140
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	600	-	800	-	1,400
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,540</b>

### Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	\$72,000	-	\$180,000	-	\$252,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	\$1,500,000	-	\$3,000,000	-	\$4,500,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,572,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$3,180,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$4,752,000</b>

### Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	\$5,900	\$681	-	-

Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	\$2,900	\$3,340	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-

### Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	\$1,440	-	\$2,000	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	\$2,500	-	\$3,750	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

### Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

## Outcomes

### Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Wetland and upland complexes will consist of native prairies, restored prairies, quality grasslands, and restored shallow lakes and wetlands ~ *USFWS habitat easements will add restored and protected grassland and small wetland acres to augment existing public lands and other permanent easements to create prairie-wetland complexes with a more diverse mix of habitats and conservation options for private landowners. The measure of success will be the number of functioning prairie wetland complexes that provide adequate wetland and grassland acres within a landscape. This is a long-term, programmatic landscape conservation effort that will take time to achieve.*

### Programs in prairie region:

- Expiring CRP lands are permanently protected ~ *This outcome will be measured by the sheer number of expiring CRP acres that will be protected through USFWS easements, and the protected grassland and wetland habitat that will not be subject to future conversion to intensive row crop agriculture. By offering private landowners a working lands conservation easement option, landowners in need of an annual income stream from their land will be incentivized to keep grasslands intact and restore wetlands.*

## 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:

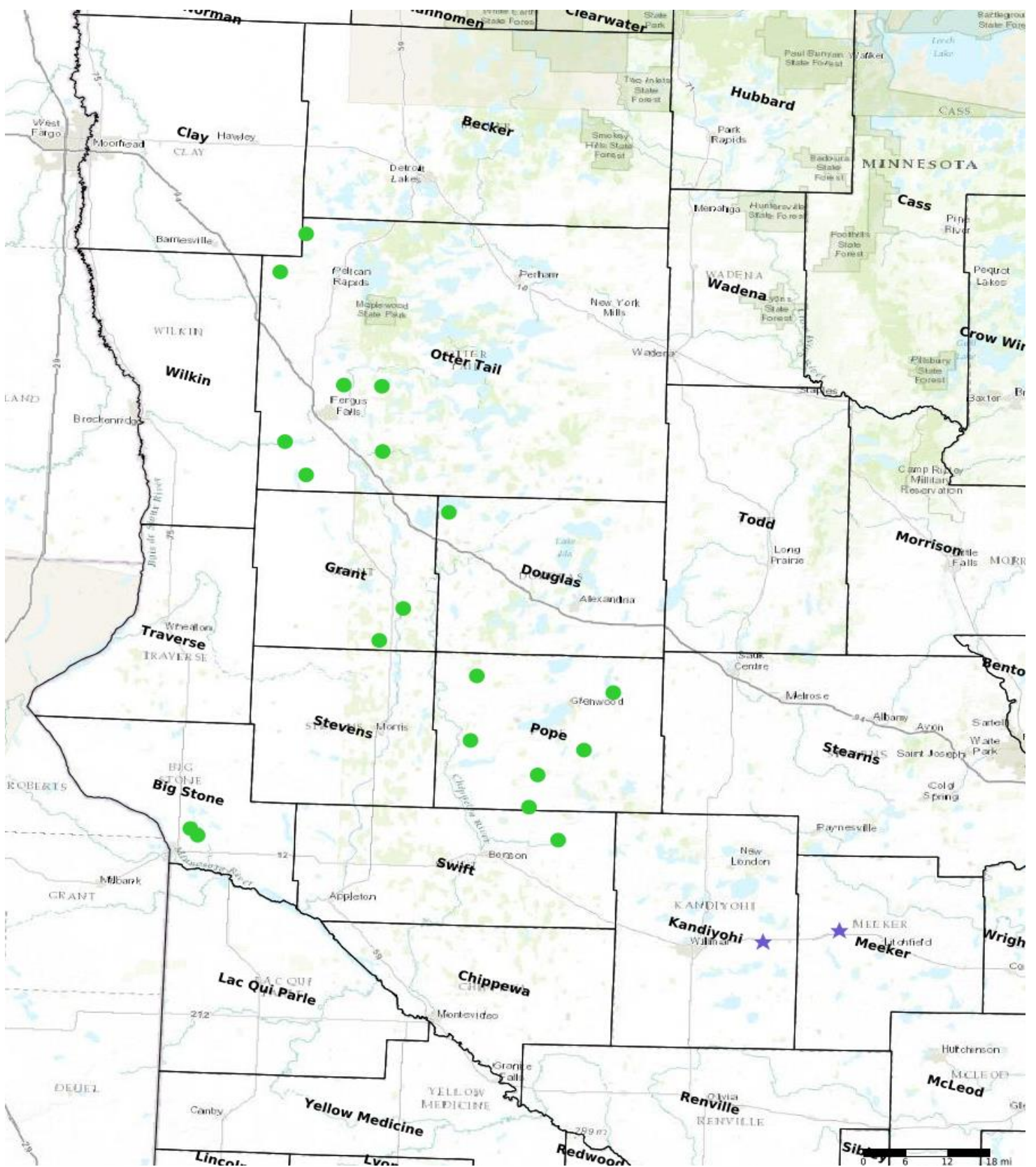
USFWS biologists score and rank each grassland habitat easement proposal based on ecological site attributes and landscape juxtaposition using a scoring process that is developed internally with science-based guidance from their Habitat & Population Evaluation Team science staff in Fergus Falls. This ranking process was designed to be relatively simple and evaluate the capability of the proposed easement to provide biological benefits for wetland and grassland dependent wildlife species by considering the habitat on the easement tract as well as its contribution and benefits to other protected lands in the surrounding area. Periodically through out the year, the USFWS Minnesota Wetland Acquisition Office in Fergus Falls uses these rankings to re-prioritize the proposals to assure that the USFWS is working on and purchasing the highest ranking proposals throughout the year. DU and PF will rely on the high level of science-based conservation expertise of the USFWS to ensure that easement opportunities are prioritized appropriately.

## Restore / Enhance Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Helgeson Easement	Kandiyohi	11933208	60	\$70,000	Yes
Trebil Easement	Meeker	12032236	250	\$60,000	Yes

## Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Dillan Roggenbuck Habitat Easement	Big Stone	12246236	75	\$120,000	No
Jim Nelson Habitat Easement	Big Stone	12246226	197	\$390,000	No
Hanson Trust Habitat Easement	Douglas	13040217	67	\$150,000	No
Terry Giese Habitat Easement	Grant	12841232	100	\$425,000	No
Todd and Mitch Ronhovde Habitat Easement	Grant	12742226	240	\$800,000	No
Andy Lacey Habitat Easement	Otter Tail	13242235	83	\$100,000	No
Roger and Kay Evenson Habitat Easement	Otter Tail	13743218	59	\$100,000	Yes
Lori Krog Habitat Easement	Otter Tail	13343212	120	\$380,000	No
Dave Lindig Habitat Easement	Otter Tail	13244227	160	\$490,000	No
Arlene Delp Habitat Easement	Otter Tail	13644216	80	\$220,000	No
Bluebill Research Habitat Easement	Otter Tail	13143219	150	\$340,000	No
Bruce and Leslie Lindblom	Otter Tail	13342211	37	\$60,000	No
Mark Anderson Habitat Easement	Pope	12640224	45	\$180,000	No
Charles Schwartz Habitat Easement	Pope	12637236	41	\$125,000	No
Nelson Brothers Habitat Easement	Pope	12338231	120	\$280,000	No
Holzheimer Habitat Easement	Pope	12440211	80	\$75,000	No
Dale Pederson Habitat Easement	Pope	12338205	96	\$220,000	No
Myrom Habitat Easement	Pope	12437217	79	\$160,000	No
Gerald Thompson Habitat Easement	Swift	12238226	295	\$380,000	No



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

**Parcel Map**  
**Accelerating the USFWS Habitat Conservation**  
**Easement Program - Phase III**  
**(Data Generated From Parcel List)**





## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

### Comparison Report

**Program Title:** ML 2021 - Accelerating the USFWS Habitat Conservation Easement Program - Phase III

**Organization:** Ducks Unlimited

**Manager:** Jon Schneider

### Budget

**Requested Amount:** \$9,996,000

**Appropriated Amount:** \$4,752,000

**Percentage:** 47.54%

Item	Total Requested		Total Appropriated		Percentage of Request	
	Requested	Leverage	Appropriated	Leverage	Percent of Request	Percent of Leverage
Personnel	\$600,000	\$100,000	\$279,000	\$46,400	46.5%	46.4%
Contracts	\$1,375,000	-	\$770,000	-	56.0%	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$7,500,000	\$1,000,000	\$3,485,000	\$464,000	46.47%	46.4%
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$62,000	-	\$30,000	-	48.39%	-
Professional Services	\$225,000	-	\$90,000	-	40.0%	-
Direct Support Services	\$69,000	-	\$30,000	-	43.48%	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$5,000	-	\$10,000	-	200.0%	-
Supplies/Materials	\$160,000	-	\$58,000	-	36.25%	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$9,996,000</b>	<b>\$1,100,000</b>	<b>\$4,752,000</b>	<b>\$510,400</b>	<b>47.54%</b>	<b>46.4%</b>

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

This program is very scalable, and thus both budgets and accomplishments were reduced accordingly and proportionately to the OHF grant funds allocated.

## Output

### Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	300	140	46.67%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Easement	3,000	1,400	46.67%
Enhance	0	-	-

### Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	\$500,000	\$252,000	50.4%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	\$9,496,000	\$4,500,000	47.39%
Enhance	-	-	-

### Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	300	140	46.67%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Easement	3,000	1,400	46.67%
Enhance	0	-	-

### Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	\$500,000	\$252,000	50.4%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	\$9,496,000	\$4,500,000	47.39%
Enhance	-	-	-