



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

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### Laws of Minnesota 2021 Accomplishment Plan

#### General Information

**Date:** 12/11/2020

**Project Title:** Enhanced Public Land – Grasslands - Phase V

**Funds Recommended:** \$1,951,000

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

**Appropriation Language:**

#### Manager Information

**Manager's Name:** Alexander Nelson

**Title:** MN Restoration Manager

**Organization:** Pheasants Forever, Inc.

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#### Location Information

**County Location(s):**

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

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie
- Metro / Urban

**Activity types:**

- Restore
- Enhance

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

- Wetlands

- Prairie

## Narrative

### Abstract

5000 acres of grassland and wetland habitat will be enhanced or restored through this proposal to benefit upland dependent species on Minnesota lands open to public hunting. These include Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA), and National Wildlife Refuges (NWR). We will accomplish this by working with our partners to follow best practices to conduct wetland restorations, conservation grazing, invasive tree removal, prescribed fire, and diversity seeding in the prairie, forest/prairie transition, and metro regions.

### Design and Scope of Work

Restoration and enhancement of prairie and wetland habitat remains as one of the core strategies of the MN Prairie Conservation Plan. Many native and restored prairies are degraded from lack of disturbance, low diversity and spread of invasive trees. There are wetlands in these landscapes that need be to restored and many previously restored basins that are in need of repair. This proposal aims to build on past investments to improve habitat on WPAs, WMAs, and NWRs so they can reach their full potential for wildlife production.

Activities include the following:

- 1) Wetlands will be restored/enhanced by removing drain tile, constructing/repairing earthen dams and/or water control structures, and invasive narrow leaf cattail control. Wetlands targeted for enhancement are vital to providing food, cover, and space required for breeding waterfowl and are essential to water quality and aquifer recharge.
- 2) A diverse mixture of native grasses and forbs is ideal for nesting and brood rearing of upland nesting birds and essential for pollinator species. Many WMAs, WPAs, or NWRs were purchased in sub-optimal habitat condition (e.g. monotype of brome grass). We will use a site-specific combination of techniques (e.g. cultivation, tree removal, herbicide, and prescribed fire) to bring back productivity to these public lands. In close collaboration with the land managers, we will seed a diverse mix of native grasses and forbs that are well adapted to site conditions. Mowing will be used as needed to manage annual weed pressure to ensure establishment.
- 3) Prescribed burning is the primary tool for managing grassland habitat. It increases vigor, sets back invasive woody species, and removes built up residue.
- 4) Conservation grazing is an important enhancement tool for sites that are difficult to conduct prescribed fires or need to target specific enhancement needs (e.g. cool season grass suppression, tree invasion, etc.). Permanent infrastructure with a lifespan of 30+ years will be installed to conduct conservation grazing plans written to benefit wildlife.
- 5) Research has shown that invasive trees are detrimental to prairie/grassland wildlife and thus will be removed with this proposal. These trees reduce nesting success and provide perches and dens for predators. These predators are highly effective at preying on both nests and nesting birds, especially in fragmented low quality habitat.

By creating the best possible habitat on WPAs, NWRs and WMAs, we will strive to help our public land

management entities by reducing future investments for management.

A RFP and ranking process has been developed in previous phases that allows us to identify, rank and deliver the projects that have the most impact for grassland and wetland wildlife.

### **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 directly addresses the loss of quality habitat on reconstructed and native prairies through restoration and enhancement best practices. By increasing the quality of existing remnant and reconstructed prairie habitat we benefit numerous species that are of special concern, threatened, or endangered. This proposal targets grassland species, including but not limited to, greater prairie chickens, ring-necked pheasants, monarch butterflies, honey bees and dakota skippers.

### **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:**

The science and strategy of habitat enhancement in this part of Minnesota is to build functional complexes of habitat where it once existed. The quantity and spatial arrangement of habitat is important; each project that falls into a conservation plan corridor or complex receives a higher score on the attached scoring sheet. Another important aspect relates to the quality of habitat found there. By enhancing and restoring grasslands and wetlands in key landscapes, we aim to make every acre as productive as possible to provide the most benefit to wildlife and the people of Minnesota. To maximize efficiency and effectiveness, projects will be developed in conjunction with MNDNR and USFWS land managers.

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

- H3 Improve connectivity and access to recreation
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds

### **Which two other plans are addressed in this program?**

- Long Range Plan for the Ring-Necked Pheasant in MN
- Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan

### **Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program?**

#### **Forest / Prairie Transition**

- Protect, enhance, and restore migratory habitat for waterfowl and related species, so as to increase migratory and breeding success

#### **Metro / Urban**

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

#### **Prairie**

- Restore or enhance habitat on public lands

## Does this program include leveraged funding?

Yes

## Explain the leverage:

\$125,000 is expected in leverage from multiple sources including but not limited to federal sources, contractor donations, and PF.

## 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 supplements past investments and is aimed at accelerating the existing enhancement and restoration of strategic public lands.

## Non-OHF Appropriations

Year	Source	Amount
2002-2010	Heritage Enhancement Grants	\$145,000 HE / \$14,500 PF
2015-2019	NAWCA	\$450,000 HE

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

The portions of enhancement work that will be completed by this proposal will generally allow the unit to be managed more effectively by the resource manager, whether that be the USFWS or the MNDNR. However, with limited funds and constant pressure to our public land grasslands/wetlands from volunteer invasive trees, water quality decline, aging grasslands, etc., we also expect continued opportunity to supplement local agency efforts. While it's difficult for a third party like us to provide an analysis of future costs on existing public land, according to the Long-Range Budget Analysis of Land Management Needs, the cost of long-term management ranges from \$11-16/acre annually. We expect that average need to be the same for the parcels we worked on.

## Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Post Project Completion - WMA	MN DNR - Game and Fish Funds	Monitoring	Maintenance	-
Post Project Completion - WPA	USFWS - Federal	Monitoring	Maintenance	-
Post Project Completion -NWR	USFWS-Federal	Monitoring	Maintenance	-

## Activity Details

### Requirements

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

Yes

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

Yes

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

Yes

#### Where does the activity take place?

- WMA
- WPA
- Refuge Lands

## Land Use

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

No

## Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Distribute Project Request for Proposals to Area Land Managers	Fall 2021
Review Project RFPs with project selection committee	Winter 2021-22
Select Projects for completion and hire contractors to complete habitat work	Winter 2021-22
Enhancement / Restoration work begins	Spring 2022
Re-evaluate project status/budget and solicit additional projects as needed	Winter 2022
Enhancement / Restoration work completed	Summer 2026

**Date of Final Report Submission:** 11/01/2026

## Budget

Budget reallocations up to 10% do not require an amendment to the Accomplishment Plan.

### Totals

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$124,400	-	-	\$124,400
Contracts	\$1,769,000	\$125,000	Federal, Private, PF	\$1,894,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$47,600	-	-	\$47,600
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,951,000</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>	-	<b>\$2,076,000</b>

### Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
PF Grants Staff	0.11	3.0	\$29,400	-	-	\$29,400
PF Field Staff	0.33	3.0	\$90,000	-	-	\$90,000
PF State Coordinator	0.01	3.0	\$5,000	-	-	\$5,000

**Amount of Request:** \$1,951,000

**Amount of Leverage:** \$125,000

**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 6.41%

**DSS + Personnel:** \$172,000

**As a % of the total request:** 8.82%

**Easement Stewardship:** -

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

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

We have reduced accomplishments/costs proportionately across the overall program to accommodate the reduced appropriation. As a result of the reduction, we will be able to enhance fewer acres. As in past appropriations, we will focus on the most strategic, highest priority projects.

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

Leverage is expected from multiple sources including but not limited to federal sources, land value donations, contractor donations, and PF. Not every source is 100% confirmed at this point. However, PF has an exemplary track record of delivery and over-achievement of match commitments that further stretch OHF funding.

## 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?**

In general PF staffing is existing and only partially funded by OHF and specifically this request. Billing to any appropriation would only be for time spent on direct and necessary costs incurred as outlined in an Accomplishment Plan.

## Contracts

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

We anticipate that all of the contract funding will be used for enhancement activities.

## 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**

n/a

**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?**

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 5.09%. In this proposal, PF has discounted its rate to 2.5% of the sum of personnel, contracts, professional services, and travel. We are donating the difference-in-kind.

## Federal Funds

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

Yes

**Are the funds confirmed?**

No

**What is the approximate date you anticipate receiving confirmation of the federal funds?**

07/01/2021

## Output Tables

### Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	25	75	-	-	100
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	25	4,875	-	-	4,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>4,950</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,000</b>

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

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	\$75,000	\$37,500	-	-	\$112,500
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$25,000	\$1,813,500	-	-	\$1,838,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>\$1,851,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,951,000</b>

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

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	13	18	-	69	-	100
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	125	700	-	4,075	-	4,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,144</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,000</b>

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

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	\$14,000	\$20,000	-	\$78,500	-	\$112,500
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$47,000	\$263,000	-	\$1,528,500	-	\$1,838,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$61,000</b>	<b>\$283,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,607,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,951,000</b>

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

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	\$3,000	\$500	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$1,000	\$372	-	-

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

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	\$1,076	\$1,111	-	\$1,137	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State	-	-	-	-	-



PILT Liability					
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$376	\$375	-	\$375	-

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

**Outcomes**

**Programs in forest-prairie transition region:**

- Increased waterfowl and upland bird migratory and breeding success ~ *Outcomes will be measured by resource professionals and evaluated by using the best science available to land managers.*

**Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:**

- Other ~ *Outcomes will be measured by resource professionals and evaluated by using the best science available to land managers.*

**Programs in prairie region:**

- Improved condition of habitat on public lands ~ *Outcomes will be measured by resource professionals and evaluated by using the best science available to land managers.*

## 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?

[Yes](#)

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

A request for proposals will be sent to all land managers within the prairie, prairie/forest transition, and metro regions. Submitted projects will be reviewed for eligibility, scored on attached scoring sheet and ranked by a committee that will consist of staff from USFWS, MN DNR, and PF.



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

### Comparison Report

**Program Title:** ML 2021 - Enhanced Public Land – Grasslands - Phase V

**Organization:** Pheasants Forever, Inc.

**Manager:** Alexander Nelson

### Budget

**Requested Amount:** \$3,915,500

**Appropriated Amount:** \$1,951,000

**Percentage:** 49.83%

Item	Total Requested		Total Appropriated		Percentage of Request	
	Requested	Leverage	Appropriated	Leverage	Percent of Request	Percent of Leverage
Personnel	\$250,000	-	\$124,400	-	49.76%	-
Contracts	\$3,550,000	\$250,000	\$1,769,000	\$125,000	49.83%	50.0%
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$20,000	-	\$10,000	-	50.0%	-
Professional Services	-	-	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$95,500	-	\$47,600	-	49.84%	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$3,915,500</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$1,951,000</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>	<b>49.83%</b>	<b>50.0%</b>

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

We have reduced accomplishments/costs proportionately across the overall program to accommodate the reduced appropriation. As a result of the reduction, we will be able to enhance fewer acres. As in past appropriations, we will focus on the most strategic, highest priority projects.

## Output

### Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	200	100	50.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Easement	0	-	-
Enhance	9,800	4,900	50.0%

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

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	\$225,000	\$112,500	50.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-
Enhance	\$3,690,500	\$1,838,500	49.82%

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

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	200	100	50.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Easement	0	-	-
Enhance	9,800	4,900	50.0%

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

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	\$225,000	\$112,500	50.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-
Enhance	\$3,690,500	\$1,838,500	49.82%

**DRAFT-Enhanced Public Grasslands Phase V Scoring Sheet-DRAFT**

Updated 5/28/2020

<b>WMA/WPA/NWR Project Name</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Township/Range/Section</b>	<b>Date:</b>

**Project Type- Select all that apply**

**Tree Removal**  
  **Prescribed Fire**  
  **Diversity Seeding**  
  **Conservation Grazing**  
  **Wetland Restoration**

**Must meet all these requirements to be eligible**

- 1  Project is located in an eligible priority region (Prairie, Forest/Prairie Transition, Metro)
- 2  Project will occur on existing WMA, NWR, or WPA
- 3  Project is approved by appropriate public land manager
- 4  Project is open to public hunting
- 5  Without these funds, project would not be completed
- 6  Project can be completed by private contractor

<b>Are you Eligible</b>	<b>NO</b>
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<b>Factors</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Score</b>
1 <input type="checkbox"/> Will project affect increase wildlife productivity of upland and wetland habitat	5 pts	0
2 <input type="checkbox"/> Will project benefit any T&E or SGCN species?	10 pts	0
3 <input type="checkbox"/> How large is existing contiguous public lands habitat complex? <input type="checkbox"/> >240 acres <input type="checkbox"/> 81 - 240 acres <input type="checkbox"/> < 80 acres	25 pts 15 pts 5 pts	0
4 <input type="checkbox"/> Will project help reduce future management costs?	10 pts	0
6 <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Vegetative Diversity (existing or to be planted)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> >20 native species exist or planted <input type="checkbox"/> 11-19 native species exist or planted <input type="checkbox"/> <10 native species exist or planted	15 pts 10 pts 0 pts	0
7 <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other Factors</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Prairie Conservation Plan core area <input type="checkbox"/> Prairie Conservation Plan corridor or complex area <input type="checkbox"/> Pheasant Plan Complex <input type="checkbox"/> Site contains native prairie	15 pts 10 pts 15 pts 10 pts	0

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>
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