Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Laws of Minnesota 2021 Accomplishment Plan

General Information

Date: 12/14/2020

Project Title: Anoka Sand Plain Habitat Conservation - Phase 7

Funds Recommended: $2,651,000

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

Appropriation Language:

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Wiley Buck
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Location Information

County Location(s): Chisago, Anoka, Morrison and Sherburne.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Northern Forest
- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Metro / Urban

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement
- Restore
- Enhance

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Prairie
- Forest
- Habitat

Narrative

Abstract

The Anoka Sand Plain (ASP) Partnership will protect 240 acres of habitat through conservation easement, and restore/enhance 452 acres of Prairie/Oak Savanna, Wetland, and fire-dependent Woodland/Forest habitats within the ASP Ecological Region program boundary, including rescue of 48,000 rare plants to protected areas. These actions will increase biodiversity, habitat connectivity, recreational opportunities, and landscape resilience, which align with the ASP Partnership's strategic plan, DNR Wildlife Action Plan and LSOHC Section priorities. GRG, ACD, MLT, and TNC are the four direct recipient organizations, with significant match from USFWS, Morrison County, and landowner donation of easement value.

Design and Scope of Work

The Anoka Sand Plain Ecoregion watershed, capturing portions of the Metropolitan Urbanizing, Forest/Prairie Transition, and Northern Forest sections, is a marvelously complex mosaic of habitats, home to quality prairie and savanna, wetlands, fire-dependent forests and woodlands, designated wild and scenic rivers, and a high concentration of rare species. The amount of high quality remnant habitat in the ASP is remarkable given its proximity to Twin Cities Metropolitan area. While the location of the ASP provides easy access for many Minnesotans, the associated stressors threaten the ASP's sustainability. The ecological diversity of the ASP is threatened by invasive species and development pressure.

The diversity in this rich and important mosaic, complemented by its close proximity to most Minnesotans, is reflected in the number and diversity of organizations that identify the area as a priority, combining our specific knowledge and stakeholder engagement to join forces for its conservation. The robust ASP Partnership is committed to protecting, restoring and enhancing this spectacular region so it can continue to provide vital habitat, invaluable ecological services, and high-quality recreational and engagement opportunities. Bringing clarity and focus to our Phase 7 and all of our work in this complex area is the ASP Partnership's 10-year strategic plan, which aligns with other important plans to identify priority habitats, opportunities, and centers of biodiversity, and a plan of action with measurable goals.

With this funding, Anoka Conservation District (ACD), Great River Greening (GRG), Minnesota Land Trust (MLT), and The Nature Conservancy (TNC), with support from other partners, will secure conservation easements on 240 acres to expand habitat cores and corridors, and complete restoration and enhancement (R/E) on 452 acres of public and protected private sites. Habitats including prairie/savanna grasslands, woodland, and non-forested peat wetlands .

Results will be achieved by restoring historic hydrology, conducting invasive species removal, prescribed burning, thinning, seeding, and planting including the launch of a Rare Plant Rescue program to transplant up to 48,000 rare plants that would otherwise be destroyed by development. Our program will create and improve critical habitat by increasing biodiversity and landscape resilience. It will also benefit water quality and quantity, improve community resiliency, and increase recreational opportunities.

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 Anoka Sand Plain serves as a refuge for many globally unique species and rare plant communities, including roughly one-third of Minnesota's listed rare plant and animals, and 97 known or predicted SGCN, and 131 federally or state endangered, threatened, or special concern. The MN County Biological Survey ranks 72,000 acres in the ASP as Outstanding or High Biodiversity. This proposal addresses LSOHC priorities by protecting and restoring/enhancing oak savanna, prairie, riparian, woodlands, and non-forested wetlands.

For ASP7, we are proposing R/E on following DNR Wildlife Action Plan Target Habitats and Target Species habitats in the Anoka Sand Plain: 151 acres of prairie/savanna grasslands; 248 acres of non-forested wetlands/peatlands; 51 acres of woodlands; 2 acres of habitat; and protection of 240 acres of habitat.

SGCN SPECIES ASSOCIATED WITH THESE ASP7 HABITATS ARE:

8 BIRD SPECIES:
Eastern meadowlark
Grasshopper sparrow
Brown Thrasher
Eastern towhee
Eastern whip-poor-will
Field sparrow
Lark sparrow
Red-headed woodpecker

2 MAMMAL SPECIES:
American badger
Plains pocket mouse

4 REPTILE SPECIES:
Blanding's turtle
Gophersnake
Plains hog-nosed snake
Smooth greensnake

5 INVERTEBRATE SPECIES:
Dusted skipper
Leonard's skipper
Uncas skipper
Pelegrina arizonsis (a jumping spider)
Northern barrens tiger beetle

STATE LISTED (T/E/SC) OR OTHERWISE RARE SPECIES DOCUMENTED AT ASP7 IDENTIFIED R/E PROJECT SITES:

8 BIRD SPECIES:
Red-shouldered Hawk
Hooded Warbler
American Bittern
Lark Sparrow
Golden winged warbler
Veery
Acadian flycatcher
Cerulean warbler

2 MAMMAL SPECIES:
Northern Long-eared Bat
Plains Pocket Mouse

4 REPTILE SPECIES:
Eastern Hognose Snake
Gopher snake
Blanding's turtle
Plains Hognose Snake

1 INVERTEBRATE SPECIES:
A Jumping Spider

15 VASCULAR PLANT SPECIES:
Yellow Bartonia
Water-willow
Rhombic Evening Primrose
Bristle-berry
Ginseng
Tubercled rein-orchid
Cross-leaved Milkwort
Kitten-tails
Hill's Thistle
Blunt Sedge
Autumn Fimbristylis
Swamp Blackberry
Clinton's Bulrush
Cowbane
Small-leaved pussytoes

RARE PLANT RESCUE PROGRAM:

An estimated 48,000 specimens of the following 8 VASCULAR PLANT SPECIES are anticipated to be successfully translocated to protected habitats in this program:
Bristleberry
Cross-leaved Milkwort

Kitten-tails
Lance-leaf Violet
Swamp Blackberry
Toothcup
Tubercled Rein Orchid
Twisted Yellow-eyed Grass

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 ASP Partnership 10 - Year Strategic Conservation Action Plan utilizes multiple-criteria GIS analyses to identify and prioritize critical areas for habitat connectivity, SGCN, biodiversity, and native plant communities. Data layers include: 1. Top 95% of SGCN population composite 2. Good or excellent populations of state or federally endangered and threatened species 3. Richness hotspots falling outside the top 95 percent of populations 4. Marxan outputs from the Scientific and Natural Area strategic plan 5. Sites of Biodiversity Significance that intersect with Marxan outputs 6. Native plant communities: Minnesota Department of Nature Resources – Division of Ecological and Water Resources – Biological Survey. MNDNR Native Plant Communities. 2014.

The sites and actions included in this proposal will combat the threats of habitat fragmentation, degradation and invasive species. These were identified in Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan and LSOHC: 25-year framework as the priority actions needed to address significant challenges facing SGCN and landscape resilience in the ASP region. A total of 100 acres of R/E are on MCBS areas identified as High or Outstanding Biodiversity, and an estimated 50 additional acres protected.

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 Action Plan 2015-2025
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

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

Metro / Urban

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

Northern Forest

- Restore and enhance habitat on existing protected properties, with preference to habitat for rare, endangered, or threatened species identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey

Does this program include leveraged funding?

Yes

Explain the leverage:

USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program/Mississippi Headwaters initiative, $2,000 cash and $4,000 in-kind for wetland restoration.

$10,000 cash from Morrison County Parks for Belle Prairie II.

Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in-kind valued at $10,000 for Rare Plant Rescue program.

Through its market-based RFP process, the Minnesota Land Trust expects private landowners to donate at least $160,000 in easement value toward the program, which is shown as leverage.

Non-realized portion of DSS from ACD and GRG organizations, as in-kind.

Leverage from landowners and partner organizations underscores their shared interest and commitment. For example, the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum is a center for horticulture and plant research, and partner with the Center for Plant Conservation (CPC) to create a long-term genetically diverse seed bank of rare plant species as well as developing an understanding of how best to propagate and out-plant each species.

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 to LSOHC for Outdoor Heritage Fund support does not supplant any other sources of funds. In all cases, this proposal and the projects to be completed accelerate regional habitat work in the Anoka Sand Plain.

Non-OHF Appropriations

Year	Source	Amount
various	State of Minnesota General Fund, Bonding, Trust Fund, etc for WMA and SNA purchase, restoration, enhancement, and management.	-
2014	Morrison County - Belle Prairie Phase I match	24000
various	City of Blaine (Rare Plant Rescue recipient site) Tax Levy, Park Dedication Fees, Open Space Referendum, Blaine Wetland Sanctuary I and II match	9019000
2017	Trust Fund leverage for Blaine Wetland Sanctuary I and II match	25000

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

The ASP Partnership is committed to working with respective land management agencies and owners, and conservation organizations in an on-going basis to identify and procure financial resources for maintaining these improvements as needed.

Land protected through MLT conservation easements will be sustained through state-of-the-art standards and

practices for conservation easement stewardship that includes annual property monitoring, effective records management, addressing inquiries and interpretations, tracking changes in ownership, investigating potential violations and defending the easement in case of a true violation. Funding for these easement stewardship activities is included in the project budget.

For R/E on existing protected land, site specific resource management plans will be utilized (and developed, if not already in place) to guide effective long-term management of targeted habitats and species. All land managers associated with R/E and rare plant rescue sites imust commit to the long-term maintenance of these habitat improvements in line with prescribed actions. A principle management goal for each site is to bring them to a threshold where on-going management costs are diminished, before the end of the grant period. For the sites and programs that use volunteers, community stakeholder engagement is increased providing and additional layer of stakeholder monitoring.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2026	MLT Long Term Stewardship and Enforcement Fund	Annual Monitoring of Easements	Enforcement as Necessary	-
2028	GRG in-kind	Monitoring every 2-3 years	Landowner Engagement	-
2028	DNR in-kind	Rx Burning	Spot herbicide treatment	-
2028	Anoka Agriculture Preserves	Monitor every 2-3 years	Followup treatment	-
2029	Anoka County Parks	Prescribed burn	Spot herbicide treatment	-
2029	City of Blaine (Rare Plant Recipient Site)	Prescribed burn	Spot herbicide treatment	Spot herbicide treatments
2026	TNC, USFWS, SWCDs	Evaluate restoration based on initial restoration plan	Provide technical assistance to the landowner/operator as necessary	-

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?
Yes

Who will manage the easement?
MLT will manage the easement.

Who will be the easement holder?
MLT will be the easement holder.

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

MLT estimates that it will close on 3-6 conservation easements depending on size/cost and the amount of donated easement value provided by landowners.

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
- Permanently Protected Conservation Easements
- County/Municipal
- Other : U of M, Cedar Creek Conservation Area
- Public Waters
- State Recreation Areas

Land Use

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

Explain what will be planted:
Easement Acquisition:

The purpose of the Minnesota Land Trust's conservation easements is to protect existing high quality natural habitat and to

preserve opportunities for future restoration. As such, we restrict any agricultural lands and use on the properties. In cases in

which there are agricultural lands associated with the larger property, we will either carve the agricultural area out of the

conservation easement, or in some limited cases, we may include a small percentage of agricultural lands if it is not feasible to carve

those areas out. In such cases, however, we will not use OHF funds to pay the landowners for that portion of the conservation

easement.

Restoration:

Short-term use of agricultural crops is an accepted best practice for preparing a site for prairie restoration,

in order to reduce weed

seedbeds prior to prairie planting. In some cases this necessitates the use of GMO treated products to facilitate herbicide use in

order to control weeds present in the seedbank.

Will the eased land be open for public use?
No

Are there currently trails or roads on any of the proposed acquisitions?
Yes

Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:
Most conservation easements are established on private lands, many of which have driveways, field roads and trails located on them. Often, the conservation easement permits the continued usage of established trails and roads so long as their use does not significantly impact the conservation values of the property. Creation of new roads/trails or expansion of existing ones is typically not allowed.

Will the trails or roads remain and uses continue to be allowed after OHF acquisition?
Yes

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?
The land protected through conservation easements will be sustained through state-of-the-art standards and practices for conservation easement stewardship that includes annual property monitoring, effective records management, addressing inquiries and interpretations, tracking changes in ownership, investigating potential violations and defending the easement in case of a true violation. Funding for these easement stewardship activities is included in the project budget.

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?
No

If the need for R/E on eased lands exists, MLT will budget to address this need in future proposals to LSOHC or through other sources.

Will the land that you acquire (fee or easement) be restored or enhanced within this program's funding and availability?
No

Explain how, when, and source of the R/E work:
If the need for R/E on eased lands exists, MLT will budget to address this need in future proposals to LSOHC or through other sources.

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
ACD: R&E Project planning, prairie herbicide treatment	12/31/2021
ACD: Initial tree and shrub harvest/removal, reed canary grass treatment, prairie prescribed burn, native seeding; Rare plant rescue: Identify rare plant populations to rescue	12/31/2022

and transplant into ecologically suitable host sites.	
ACD: Woody invasive treatment, reed canary grass treatment, 3 ditch plugs and wetland scrape, seed wetland and prairie; Rare plant rescue: Identify rare plant populations to rescue and transplant into ecologically suitable host sites, develop and implement monitoring protocol	12/31/2023
ACD: Woody invasive treatment, reed canary grass treatment, establishment mow, prairie establishment mow and spot treatment, followup herbicide spot treatment, wetland seeding; Rare plant rescue: Identify rare plant populations to rescue and transplant into ecologically suitable host sites, monitor sites with transplants	12/31/2024
ACD: R&E monitoring and followup treatments; Rare plant rescue: Identify rare plant populations to rescue and transplant into ecologically suitable host sites, monitor sites with transplants, analyze rare plant rescue results	12/31/2025
ACD: Finalize and distribute MN DNR approved rare species specific rescue and conservation plans for 6 - 10 rare species; Final Report	12/31/2026
ACD: R&E followup treatments, prepare host sites and transplant harvested rare plants	6/30/2025
ACD: Final Report (including documenation on rare plant rescue project)	6/30/2026
GRG: Project planning, secure landowner agreements	12/31/2021
GRG: Site prep, initial brushing, initial wave of buckthorn control	6/30/2022
GRG: Site prep	11/1/2023
GRG: Follow up brushing, follow up buckthorn control; old field seeding, planting	6/30/2024
GRG: Follow up brushing,supplemental forb planting, prescribed burns	6/302025
GRG: Savanna establishment, Monitoring, follow-up treatments	6/30/2026
MLT: Protection of 240 acres of land through conservation easement	6/30/2025
TNC: Identify potential sites	6/30/2023
TNC: Landowner Outreach - SWCD Contract	6/30/2024
TNC: Prioritize and select projects and complete designs	6/30/2025
TNC: Complete wetland restorations and enhancements	6/30/2026

Date of Final Report Submission: 11/01/2026

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	$375,000	$5,000	-	$380,000
Contracts	$981,200	$14,500	USFWS in-kind, UMLA, CCES	$995,700
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	$800,000	$160,000	-, Landowner donation of easement value	$960,000
Easement Stewardship	$168,000	-	-	$168,000
Travel	$12,000	-	-	$12,000
Professional Services	$172,000	-	-	$172,000
Direct Support Services	$100,100	$82,800	ACD, Great River Greening	$182,900
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	$1,100	-	-	$1,100
Supplies/Materials	$41,600	$8,000	ACD, USFWS, Morrison County	$49,600
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	**$2,651,000**	**$270,300**	**-**	**$2,921,300**

Partner: The Nature Conservancy

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	$38,500	-	-	$38,500
Contracts	$152,500	$4,000	USFWS in-kind	$156,500
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	$23,000	-	-	$23,000
Direct Support Services	$16,300	-	-	$16,300
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	$200	-	-	$200
Supplies/Materials	$2,500	$2,000	USFWS	$4,500
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	**$233,000**	**$6,000**	**-**	**$239,000**

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
TNC Staff	0.09	5.0	$38,500	-	-	$38,500

Partner: Minnesota Land Trust

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	$100,000	-	-	$100,000
Contracts	$46,000	-	-	$46,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	$800,000	$160,000	Landowner donation of easement value	$960,000
Easement Stewardship	$168,000	-	-	$168,000
Travel	$9,000	-	-	$9,000
Professional Services	$149,000	-	-	$149,000
Direct Support Services	$27,000	-	-	$27,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	$1,000	-	-	$1,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	**$1,300,000**	**$160,000**	**-**	**$1,460,000**

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
MLT Staff	0.25	4.0	$100,000	-	-	$100,000

Partner: Anoka Conservation District

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	$172,000	-	-	$172,000
Contracts	$195,900	$10,500	UMLA, CCES	$206,400
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	$14,600	$31,300	ACD	$45,900
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	$35,500	$1,000	ACD	$36,500
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	**$418,000**	**$42,800**	**-**	**$460,800**

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
ACD Staff	0.6	5.0	$172,000	-	-	$172,000

Partner: Great River Greening

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	$64,500	$5,000	-	$69,500
Contracts	$586,800	-	-	$586,800
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	$3,000	-	-	$3,000
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	$42,200	$51,500	Great River Greening	$93,700
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	$900	-	-	$900
Supplies/Materials	$2,600	$5,000	Morrison County	$7,600
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	**$700,000**	**$61,500**	**-**	**$761,500**

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
GRG Staff	0.15	5.0	$64,500	$5,000	Morrison County Parks	$69,500

Amount of Request: $2,651,000
Amount of Leverage: $270,300
Leverage as a percent of the Request: 10.2%
DSS + Personnel: $475,100
As a % of the total request: 17.92%
Easement Stewardship: $168,000
As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 21.0%

How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount?
Recipieints have largely taken proportional cuts. Programs have been reduced in scale, parcels dropped and other parcels scaled. Outputs have been reduced accordingly, with modest loss of economy of scale. NWTF has opted out and will return when economy of scale can be recaptured; NWTF remains active in ASP4&6.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:
Morrison County and USFWS have confirmed their leverage in writing.

U of MN Landscape Arboretum has verbally confirmed their in-kind match.

The MLT landowner leverage amount is a conservative estimate of value we expect donated by landowners

ACD and GRG have counted the unrealized portion of DSS as in-kind

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?
ACD tracks personnel/ staff time with an hours log, where we record our time for each unique project and then uses pivot tables to sum staff hours each Quarter x their rate.

GRG: Each allocation is operationalized, budgeted, and tracked independently. Projects under each allocation are unique, and only actual personnel time is charged to these unique projects and allocations.

MLT: FTEs listed in the proposal are a coarse estimate of the personnel time required to produce the grant deliverables put forward in this proposal. An array of staff draw from these funds for legal work, negotiating with landowners, crafting of conservation easements, writing baseline reports and managing the grant. We use only those personnel funds necessary to achieve the goals of the grant.

NWTF tracks personnel time specific to an allocation via an internal Mission Management System. Projects are differentiated with unique project numbers and separately tracked.

This is TNC's first time as a direct recipient in the Anoka Sand Plain partnership proposal; there is no overlap of staffing with previous allocations.

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?
The bulk of R/E contracts are for CCM and/or for-profit firms to implement field activities. Other R/E contracts include SWCD outreach contracts for wetland program, and rare plant monitoring.

For easement protection, contract amounts are for the writing of habitat management plans

Easement Stewardship

What is the number of easements anticipated, cost per easement for stewardship, and explain how that amount is calculated?
MLT estimates that it will close on 3-6 conservation easements depending on size/cost and the amount of donated easement value provided by landowners. The average cost per easement to fund the Minnesota Land Trust's perpetual monitoring and enforcement obligations is $24,000. This figure is derived from MLT's detailed stewardship funding "cost analysis" which is consistent with Land Trust Accreditation standards. MLT shares periodic updates to this cost analysis with LSOHC staff.

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
Car rental may be used to contain travel costs, on occasion.

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?
ACD: ACD is requesting 10% DSS and listing the remaining 20.25% as match. ACD calculated their rate following USDA guidelines and has submitted their methodology to DNR for review. DNR has no objections to their rate in their preliminary analysis.

GRG: In a process approved by DNR in September 2019, GRG's direct support services rate includes all allowable direct and necessary expenditures not captured in other line items in the budget. Our DSS request to LSOHC is less than half the amount allowed by the DNR approved rate, and less than or equal to 10% of the total allocation request.

MLT: In a process approved by DNR on March 17, 2017, Minnesota Land Trust determined our direct support services rate to include all of the allowable direct and necessary expenditures that are not captured in other line items in the budget, which is similar to the Land Trust's proposed federal indirect rate. We will apply this DNR-approved rate only to personnel expenses to determine the total amount of direct support services.

TNC: DSS is based on The Nature Conservancy's Federal Negotiated Rate (FNR) as proposed and approved by the US Dept. of Interior on an annual basis. In this proposal we are requesting reimbursement of 7.5% of eligible base costs as determined by our annual FNR and based on suggestions from the Council in prior years' hearings. The amount requested for reimbursement represents less than one-third of the total reimbursable costs allowed under the FNR. Examples of expenses included in the FNR include services from in-house legal counsel; finance, human resources; and information technology support, all of which contribute directly to the implementation of the project.

Other Equipment/Tools

Give examples of the types of Equipment and Tools that will be purchased?
Power and hand tools; burn equipment; GPS systems; Personal Protective Equipment.

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 : $2,000
- In Kind : $4,000

Output Tables

Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	25	-	-	-	25
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	240	240
Enhance	223	151	51	2	427
Total	**248**	**151**	**51**	**242**	**692**

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	$100,000	-	-	-	$100,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	$1,300,000	$1,300,000
Enhance	$576,000	$290,300	$135,000	$249,700	$1,251,000
Total	**$676,000**	**$290,300**	**$135,000**	**$1,549,700**	**$2,651,000**

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	15	10	-	-	-	25
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	120	120	-	-	-	240
Enhance	248	64	-	-	115	427
Total	**383**	**194**	**-**	**-**	**115**	**692**

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	$67,000	$33,000	-	-	-	$100,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	$650,000	$650,000	-	-	-	$1,300,000
Enhance	$703,100	$280,000	-	-	$267,900	$1,251,000
Total	**$1,420,100**	**$963,000**	**-**	**-**	**$267,900**	**$2,651,000**

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	$4,000	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	$5,416
Enhance	$2,582	$1,922	$2,647	$124,850

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	$4,466	$3,300	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State	-	-	-	-	-

PILT Liability					
Protect in Easement	$5,416	$5,416	-	-	-
Enhance	$2,835	$4,375	-	-	$2,329

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Outcomes

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need ~ *Perform*

  ecological monitoring using DNR protocol and evaluate data; adapt management when and where needed.Record number

  of acres protected of high quality habitat on private lands, which buffer public lands and expand habitat cores and corridors; and number of

  acres of key habitat successfully restored / enhanced. Map project sites and periodically perform GIS analysis to help quantify impact on habitat

  complexes.

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- Core areas protected with highly biologically diverse wetlands and plant communities, including native prairie, Big Woods, and oak savanna ~ *Perform*

  ecological monitoring using DNR protocol and evaluate data; adapt management when and where needed. Record number of acres protected

  of high quality habitat on private lands, which buffer public lands and expand habitat cores and corridors; and number of acres of key habitat

  successfully restored / enhanced. Map project sites and periodically perform GIS analysis to help quantify impact on habitat cores and corridors.

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Healthy populations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species as well as more common species ~ *Perform*

  ecological monitoring using DNR protocol and evaluate data; adapt management when and where needed.Record number

  of acres protected of high quality habitat on private lands, which buffer public lands and expand habitat cores and corridors; and number of

  acres of key habitat successfully restored / enhanced. Map project sites and periodically perform GIS analysis to help quantify impact on habitat

complexes.

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:

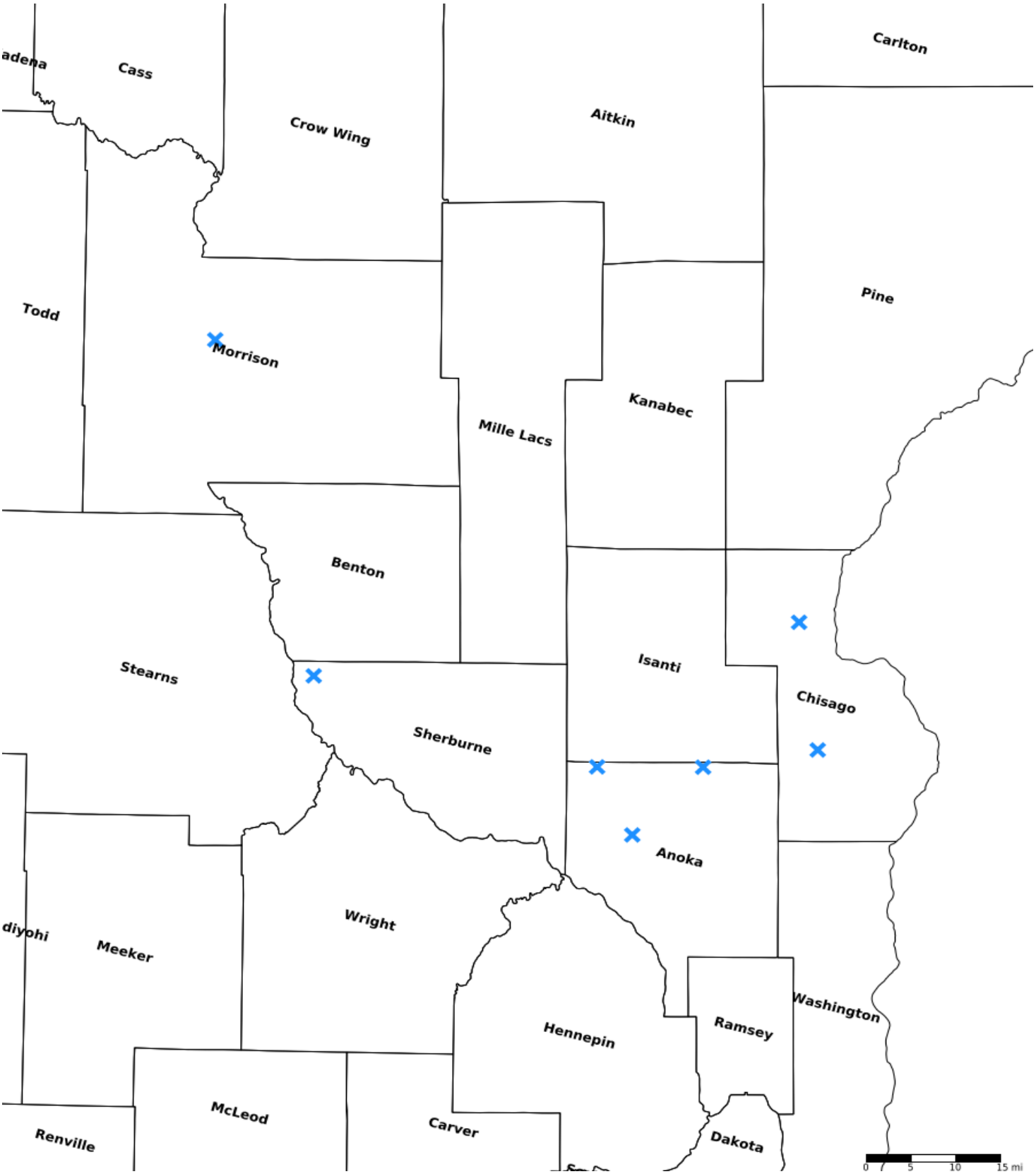
The ASP Partnership 10 - Year Strategic Conservation Action Plan utilizes multiple-criteria GIS analyses to identify and prioritize critical areas for habitat connectivity, SGCN, biodiversity, and native plant communities. For the ASP partnership's strategic plan, multiple-criteria decision analyses in GIS were performed to identify and prioritize critical areas for habitat using data sources layers that capture habitat connectivity, habitats that support species in greatest conservation need, terrestrial and aquatic sites of biodiversity, potential locations of groundwater influenced shallow wetlands, and native plant communities.

Partners used their local expertise, knowledge, and landowner contacts to identify parcels and scope out the activities. DNR parcels were submitted to DNR for review. At multiples points in the process, the direct recipients reviewed the parcel list collectively and culled parcels that did not rank highly on the Strategic Plan criteria.

Note that in addition the parcels below, we have 3 programs included in this proposal: Rare Plant Rescue led by ACD, MLT Easements, and Wetland Restoration led by TNC. The criteria for parcel selection under these programs are included as attachments. At multiples points in the process, the direct recipients reviewed the program criteria collectively.

Restore / Enhance Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve Phase 2 (ACD)	Anoka	03423227	30	$96,300	Yes
Carlos Avery WMA (GRG)	Anoka	03421214	38	$89,800	-
Carl E. Bonnell WMA (ACD)	Anoka	03425227	28	$52,000	Yes
Cedar Creek Conservation Area (ACD)	Anoka	03324232	6	$20,000	Yes
Wild Rose WMA (GRG)	Chisago	03621209	115	$267,900	Yes
Belle Prairie County Park Phase 2 (GRG)	Morrison	04132214	43	$148,300	Yes
Sand Prairie WMEAA (GRG)	Sherburne	03530208	130	$194,000	Yes



Parcel Map
Anoka Sand Plain Habitat Conservation - Phase 7
(Data Generated From Parcel List)

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Comparison Report

Program Title: ML 2021 - Anoka Sand Plain Habitat Conservation - Phase 7
Organization: Great River Greening
Manager: Wiley Buck

Budget

Requested Amount: $5,838,200
Appropriated Amount: $2,651,000
Percentage: 45.41%

	Total Requested		Total Appropriated		Percentage of Request	
Item	**Requested**	**Leverage**	**Appropriated**	**Leverage**	**Percent of Request**	**Percent of Leverage**
Personnel	$846,200	$5,000	$375,000	$5,000	44.32%	100.0%
Contracts	$1,863,700	$34,300	$981,200	$14,500	52.65%	42.27%
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	$1,800,000	$360,000	$800,000	$160,000	44.44%	44.44%
Easement Stewardship	$288,000	-	$168,000	-	58.33%	-
Travel	$21,000	-	$12,000	-	57.14%	-
Professional Services	$328,000	-	$172,000	-	52.44%	-
Direct Support Services	$231,600	$182,600	$100,100	$82,800	43.22%	45.35%
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	$2,000	-	$1,100	-	55.0%	-
Supplies/Materials	$168,900	$11,000	$41,600	$8,000	24.63%	72.73%
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	**$5,549,400**	**$592,900**	**$2,651,000**	**$270,300**	**47.77%**	**45.59%**

How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount?
Recipieints have largely taken proportional cuts. Programs have been reduced in scale, parcels dropped and other parcels scaled. Outputs have been reduced accordingly, with modest loss of economy of scale. NWTF has opted out and will return when economy of scale can be recaptured; NWTF remains active in ASP4&6.

Output

Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	75	25	33.33%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Easement	540	240	44.44%
Enhance	1,182	427	36.13%

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	$250,000	$100,000	40.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	$2,858,000	$1,300,000	45.49%
Enhance	$2,730,200	$1,251,000	45.82%

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	75	25	33.33%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Easement	540	240	44.44%
Enhance	1,182	427	36.13%

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	$250,000	$100,000	40.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	$2,858,000	$1,300,000	45.49%
Enhance	$2,730,200	$1,251,000	45.82%

Wetland Restoration and Enhancement Program

Anoka Sand Plain Partnership

This program will restore or enhance historic wetlands and associated upland habitat in the Anoka Sand Plain. Restored wetlands will be on permanently protected land within priority complexes. Selected projects will create and improve critical wetland habitat by restoring or enhancing wetlands to their historic type and hydrologic function. This will create excellent habitat for hundreds of migratory waterfowl who will use these basins to refuel and rest. Many species require wetland basins with open water areas and emergent aquatic vegetation to provide nesting habitat and many more use wetlands during some part of their life cycle, including many of Minnesota's Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). The Minnesota Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy identifies the importance of protecting and restoring wetlands for SGCN and notes the significant wetland loss seen in Minnesota. It identifies the Anoka Sand Plain specifically as an ecological classification subsection that has seen a huge loss of wetlands.
In addition to habitat benefits, restored and enhanced wetlands also provide other ecosystem services such as groundwater recharge, carbon sequestration, and nutrient uptake. Wetland add water storage, which will benefit water quality, reduce flooding and increase resiliency of downstream communities.

Projects will be prioritized and coordinated by The Nature Conservancy. We will partner closely with Minnesota Land Trust, Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These partners will provide support with securing conservation easements where applicable, conducting landowner outreach, and providing technical assistance in all aspects of the habitat restoration process.

We will ensure that applicable conservation plans are being followed when selecting project sites. Projects will be identified and prioritized using this scoring system:

The Nature Conservancy Anoka Sandplain Partnership Wetland Restoration Selection Worksheet	
Alignment	10 pts
Aligns with Anoka Sand Plain Partnership priorities	___/10
Habitat Benefit	50 pts
Restorable wetland > 5 acres	___/10
Site and adjacent properties have minimal invasive species present	___/10
In Wildlife Action Network/has ability to benefit a SGCN	___/10
Rare wetland type	___/10
In or adjacent to an identified habitat core or corridor	___/10
Feasibility	15 pts
Minimal or no infrastructure will be impacted	___/5
Community supportive of project	___/5
High likelihood of obtaining all necessary permits	___/5
Water Quality Benefit	15 pts
Storage capacity is substantial	___/2.5
Within 100 m of surface water body	___/2.5
Within 100 m surface drinking water source	___/2.5
Within DWSMA	___/2.5
Drainage area > 10 acres	___/2.5
Land use within drainage area is developed/altered	___/2.5
Cost-effectiveness	10 pts
Cost < $3,000/acre	___/5
Long term maintenance needs are minimal	___/5
Total score	***___/100***

Developing a Rare Plant Rescue Program for Minnesota

- Launching a new conservation and rescue program for rare plants throughout the Anoka Sand Plain Ecoregion of east-central Minnesota (1.1 million acres)
- Conducting outreach and sharing program materials to expand the program's impact

Photos from 2019 rescue pilot project.

Identify 5-10 recipient sites using habitat assessments and modeling

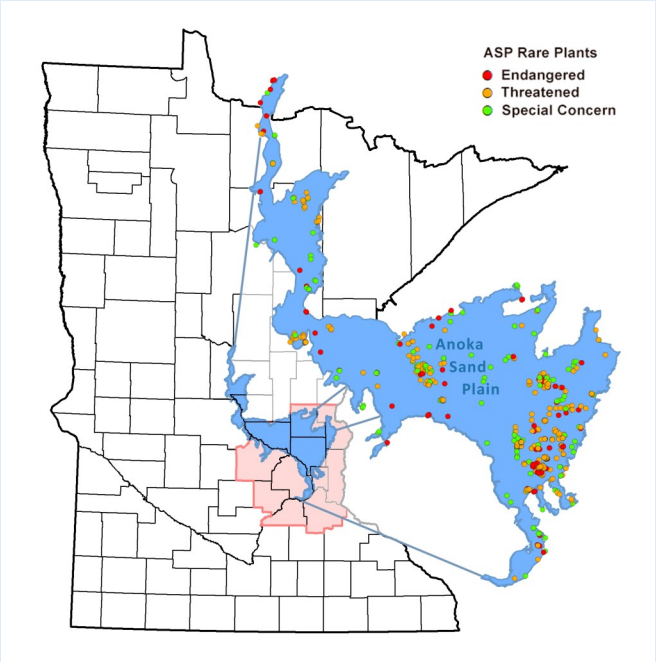
Rescue up to 48,000 individual rare plants and/or seed and relocate to suitable recipient sites

Seed bank, propagate, and grow at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

Develop and implement monitoring program to evaluate relocation efforts

60 species of rare plants in the ASP

While the Anoka Sand Plain comprises only 2.2% of the lands in Minnesota, this region supports 18% of all Threatened and Endangered plants species in the state.




Viola lanceolata


Hudsonia tomentosa


Xyris torta


Polygala cruciata

Critical Connections Ecological Services, Inc.

Minnesota Landscape ARBORETUM

ANOKA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The Anoka Sand Plain Partnership

MINNESOTA LAND TRUST

A Decision Support Tool for Prioritizing Conservation Easement Opportunities

The Minnesota Land Trust often employs within its conservation program areas an RFP (Request for Proposals) model to both identify high-quality projects and introduce a level of competition into the easement acquisition process. Below, we briefly discuss how the system works and the framework put in place to sort the varied opportunities that come before us.

How the Ranking System Works

The parcel ranking framework employed through the Minnesota Land Trust's RFP process is intended as a ***decision support tool*** to aid in identifying, among the slate of landowners submitting bids for conservation easements, the most ecologically significant opportunities for the price. Using this framework, the Land Trust and its partners use an array of weighted data sets tailored to the specific circumstances inherent in a program area to identify those worthy of consideration.

It is important to note that this parcel ranking framework enables the Land Trust to rank projects *relative* to one another. That's important to do, but it's also important to understand how a project (or suite of projects) relates to the ideal situation (i.e., a project that is of exceptional size, condition and superb landscape context). If, for example, an RFP generated 20 proposals in a program area, the framework would effectively sift among them and identify the relatively good from those relatively bad. However, this information alone would not determine whether any of those parcels were of sufficient quality to pursue for protection (all may be of insufficient quality to warrant expenditure of funds). To solve this problem and make sure ranked projects are high priorities for conservation, we step back and evaluate them relative to the ideal - i.e., is each project among the best opportunities for conservation we can expect to find in the program area?

As part of its proposals to LSOHC, the Land Trust included easement sign-up criteria that laid out at a general level the framework utilized by the organization. Below is a more detailed description of the process the Land Trust utilizes in ranking potential parcels relative to one another, and identifying those with which a conservation easement will be pursued. We also include a ranking form illustrating the representative weighting applied to each criteria. These weightings will be refined as we move forward in applying this approach in each program area.

The Framework

We evaluate potential projects based on two primary factors: ecological significance and cost. Both are assessed independent of one another.

Factor 1: Ecological Significance

The Ecological Significance score is determined by looking at 3 subfactors, each weighted equally (as a default). Each of these constitutes 1/3 of the total ecological significance score.

Subfactors:

- **Size or Quantity** – the area of the parcel to be protected (how big is it?), length of shoreline, etc. The bigger the better.
- **Condition or Quality** – the condition of the natural communities and/or target species found on a parcel. The higher quality the better.
- **Landscape Context** – what's around the parcel, both ecologically and from a protected status standpoint. The more ecologically intact the surrounding landscape the better; the extent to which a parcel builds off of other protected lands to form complexes or corridors, the better.

Note that we have the ability to emphasize one subfactor over another if the specific circumstances warrant it, but we begin with a default standard at the onset. At present, all of our geographies are using the default standard.

Indicators:

A suite of weighted indicators is used to score each parcel relative to each of the above subfactors. Indicators are selected based on their ability to effectively inform the scoring of parcels relative to each of the respective subfactors. Weightings for each criterion are assessed and vetted to ensure that a set of indicators for each subfactor produces meaningful results, then applied across each of the proposed parcels. Finally, we vet and make improvements to the scoring matrix when we identify issues or circumstances where results seem erroneous.

Data sets used for this purpose must offer wall-to-wall coverage across the program area to ensure that bias for or against parcels does not creep into the equation. Where gaps in such coverages exist, we attempt to fill them in to the extent feasible (via field inventory, etc.). Finally, we vet and make improvements to the scoring matrix when we identify issues or circumstances where results seem erroneous.

Factor 2: Cost

Cost is a second major factor used in our consideration of parcels. Although ecological significance is *the* primary factor in determining the merits of a project, our RFP programs also strive to make the greatest conservation impact with the most efficient use of State funds. As such, we look at the overall cost of each project relative to its ecological significance; we also ask landowners to consider donating all or some of their easement value to the cause and to better position their proposals. Many landowners participate in that fashion.

Cost, as a primary factor, is assessed independently of the ecological factors. Given equal ecological significance, a project of lower cost will be elevated over those of higher cost in the ranking. That said, exceptionally high quality projects are likely to be pursued even if no or modest landowner donation is put forward. Alternatively, there are projects offered as full donations that are not moved forward because their ecological significance is not acceptable. The degree to which cost factors into the ranking of parcels relative to one another is made on a case-by-case basis.

MINNESOTA LAND TRUST ANOKA SANDPLAIN PROTECTION PROGRAM Conservation Easement Selection Worksheet		SITE 1	SITE 2	SITE 3	SITE 4	SITE 5	SITE 6	SITE 7	SITE 8	SITE 9	SITE 10	SITE 11	SITE 12	Notes
	COUNTY													
100 Pts	ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE													
Weighting Factor	**Size/Abundance of Habitat (33 points)**													
	a) Size (33 pts): Acres of Habitat to be Protected by an Easement **SUBTOTAL:**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Weighting Factor	**Quality of Natural Resources to be Protected by the Easement (33 points)**													
	a) Habitat Quality (28 pts): Quality of Existing Ecological Systems (Terrestrial & Aquatic) **b) Imperiled Species (5 pts):** Occurrence of Documented Rare Species on Parcel **SUBTOTAL:**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Weighting Factor	**Landscape Context (34 points)**													
	Current Status (30 points) **a) Protection Context (15 points)** i. Size of Contiguous Protected Lands (8 pts) ii. Amount of Protected Lands within 3 miles of Property : Protected Land within 0.5 miles of Property (4 pts) : Protected Land 0.5-3 miles from Property (3 pts) **b) Ecological Context (15 points)** i. Size of Contiguous Ecological Habitat (8 pts) ii. Amount of Ecological Habitat within 3 miles of Property : Ecological Habitat within 0.5 miles of Property (4 pts) : Ecological Habitat 0.5-3 miles from Property (3 pts) **Future Potential (4 points)** **a) Conservation Plan Context (2 pts)** **b) Amount of Existing Activity (2 pts)** **SUBTOTAL:**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	TOTAL ECOLOGICAL VALUE POINTS	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	
	COST													
	i. Bid amount ($)/acre	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	ii. Estimated donative value ($)/acre	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	TOTAL ACQUISITION COST ($)	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	

KEY	
	Priority
	Possible
	Out