

# Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

## Fiscal Year 2022 / ML 2021 Request for Funding



**Date:** May 28, 2020

**Program or Project Title:** Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Phase IX (FA03)

**Funds Requested:** \$3,000,000

**Manager's Name:** Shannon Wettstein

**Title:** District Manager

**Organization:** Morrison SWCD

**Address:** 16776 Heron Rd

**Address 2:** USDA Service Center

**City:** Little Falls, MN 56345

**Office Number:** 320-631-3551

**Email:** shannon.wettstein@morrisonswcd.org

**Website:** www.morrisonswcd.org

**County Locations:** Not Listed

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

- Northern Forest
- Forest / Prairie Transition

**Activity types:**

- Protect in Easement

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

- Wetlands
- Forest

### Abstract:

Phase IX of the RIM Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Partnership will utilize permanent conservation easements to acquire 1,290-acres of high quality habitat along the Crow Wing, Long Prairie, Gull, Nokasippi, and Mississippi River corridors and lake watersheds. Approximately 22 easements will be secured within the project area. BWSR will utilize the RIM easement process in partnership with the Morrison SWCD to secure habitat corridor easements on sites within Crow Wing, Cass, and Morrison counties during the appropriation term. This proposal implements the goals and objectives of the Brainerd Lakes Conservation Focus Area within the Wildlife Action Plan.

### Design and scope of work:

Phase IX will protect approximately 1,290-acres of fish, game, migratory bird, and forest habitat along the Crow Wing, Long Prairie, Gull, Nokasippi, and Mississippi River corridors and lake watersheds within a 5-mile radius of Camp Ripley. This phase will secure approximately 22 permanent conservation Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) easements, utilizing partnerships with Camp Ripley, a State Game Refuge, the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and the Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). Easement acquisition will occur in portions of Morrison, Crow Wing, and Cass County that lie within this 5-mile radius.

Easement acquisition in this area will protect river and lake habitat corridors that are critical to the general public for fishing, hunting, and recreational opportunities. These riparian corridors are critical protection for the State of Minnesota, MN National Guard (MNNG) and National Guard Bureau (NGB) and its mission to sustain military training of soldiers, our local economy, the National Mississippi River Flyway, and Mississippi Headwaters Board mission.

Parcels are targeted that have quality existing habitat, protect corridors and large habitat complexes and reduce future fragmentation.

Evaluation criteria include ecological and habitat factors for resident and migratory wildlife species. The target area has been limited to ensure a concentration of easement acquisitions that provide landscape scale benefits and will allow for protection of large forested parcels that are in imminent threat of conversion.

The forested region of these three counties is where agriculture transitions to existing forested lands. Thousands of acres just outside of this work area are being converted from forest to annual cropping, primarily for potato/corn production. Forests not only provide critical wildlife habitat for game and non-game species, but forests lessen the impact of water quality contamination from land use practices. This region of the state, most specifically Morrison County, is the fastest growing county in the state for the loss of grazing land to annual cropping. The loss of forests would exacerbate problems associated with conversion. Drinking water standards in the area are also in jeopardy with the increase in irrigation and large scale livestock operations, so protecting the forested lands has become a critical issue.

In 2016 Camp Ripley was designated as a federal Sentinel Landscape, one of seven in the nation. This designation by both State and Federal entities coordinates strategies to protect this landscape. Many agencies have identified their scope of priorities within the Sentinel Landscape 10-mile boundary. The Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program has never had less than 250-interested landowners on the waiting list for participation. To date Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) support of \$14M has leveraged over \$42M in federal dollars and protected 30,000-acres.

### **How does the proposal address habitats that have significant value for wildlife species of greatest conservation need, and/or threatened or endangered species, and list targeted species:**

The forest habitat protected by this proposal falls within the Camp Ripley-Pillsbury-Lake Alexander Important Bird Area (IBA). The 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) identifies 346 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) 92 being birds. This project area supports the greatest concentration of nesting Red-shouldered Hawks in the state along with 65 other SGCN birds. Thirty six other non-avian SGCN have also been identified within this area totaling nearly 30% of all SGCN within the state. This project directly addresses two primary causes of SGCN declines, habitat fragmentation and climate change impacts.

Lands in this proposal are also occupied by two federally listed species, the gray wolf and the northern long-eared bat. Populations of these species rely on unbroken tracts of forest which are the focus of this proposal. Many studies have indicated that road density has direct, negative, impact on wolf habitat utilization especially during their breeding season. The project area is on the fringe of forest habitat that is under extreme pressure from development leading to habitat fragmentation. Permanent protection of these parcels is critical to the long term recovery of these species under the Endangered Species Act as well as many of the state listed SGCN neotropical migratory birds in the area.

### **What is the degree of timing/opportunistic urgency and why it is necessary to spend public money for this work as soon as possible:**

This program has built and established a parcel ranking and scoring methodology that is transparent and supported by local governments and private landowners. Approximately 250 landowners are on the waiting list, but urgency exists as we see transfer of ownership an localized pressure to convert the land to non-habitat uses. Our program lead by the Morrison SWCD has a proven track record of being able to deliver easements, monitor compliance and foster additional habitat enhancement through BMP program integration.

### **Describe how the proposal uses science-based targeting that leverages or expands corridors and complexes, reduces fragmentation or protects areas identified in the MN County Biological Survey:**

Parcels are targeted that have quality existing habitat, protect corridors and large habitat complexes and will reduce future fragmentation. Evaluation criteria include ecological and habitat factors for resident and migratory wildlife species. The target area has been limited to ensure a concentration of easement acquisitions that provide landscape scale benefits. The target work area also contains high value existing habitat and public access via existing Wildlife Management Areas that are being buffered with easements.

The MN County Biological Survey has identified several native plant communities within this project area that are vulnerable to extirpation as well as sites with existing high biodiversity. Most of these identified areas lie within the northern extent of this 5-mile project boundary under high development pressure due to their proximity to the cities of Baxter & Brainerd. Protecting these parcels is a high priority for the ACUB Program.

DNR recently amended the State Wildlife Action Plan to include the Brainerd Lakes Conservation Focus Area. The CRSL program is within this new CFA boundary. The largely forested 50-mile section of the Mississippi River, its associated major tributaries, wetland and lake systems all elevate the habitat significance of this program geography.

## Which sections of the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan are applicable to this project:

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes

## Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan 2015-2025
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

## Describe how your program will advance the indicators identified in the plans selected:

This program permanently protects private lands ranked and scored to include connectivity to other protected lands and habitat corridors, riparian adjacency and forestalls potential fragmentation and creation of habitat "edge" impacts from roads or boundary construction. All of the protected lands have recorded management plans, regular inspection and an ongoing relationship with natural resource professionals within the program service area. All of the protection work implements the target habitat and species listed in the DNR Wildlife Action Plan Brainerd Lakes Conservation Focus Area

## Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

### 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

### Northern Forest:

- Provide access to manage habitat on landlocked public properties or protect forest land from parcelization and fragmentation through fee acquisition, conservation or access easement

## Describe how your program will produce and demonstrate a significant and permanent conservation legacy and/or outcomes for fish, game, and wildlife as indicated in the LSOHC priorities:

Since this Camp Ripley Army Compatible Use Buffer program began in 2004; later to be expanded and designated as a federal Sentinel Landscape in 2016 more than 30,000 acres have been protected in RIM permanent conservation easement, DNR Wildlife Management Area developed, addition to Crow Wing State Park and addition to city of Baxter Mississippi River green space corridor. All of these past and anticipated efforts build habitat connectivity supporting multiple benefits for species therein.

## Relationship to other funds:

- Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund
- Clean Water Fund
- Department of Defense and National Guard Bureau

## Describe the relationship of the funds:

Due to the success of the Camp Ripley ACUB partnership, the MN Legislature passed the Sentinel Landscape Designation in 2015. This law (MS 190.33) formalized a process that we have used to enhance the implementation of the ACUB program that will complement the DOD's national Sentinel Landscape program. Establishing Sentinel Landscapes in state law enabled the federal Sentinel Landscape designation in 2016. This allows the program to better leverage federal funding from agencies beyond just the DOD. It also better aligns federal and state programs that could support private landowners in a Sentinel Landscape. Sentinel Landscape programs seek to preserve the working rural lands and natural values of private lands, which is important for both national defense and conservation priorities. Camp Ripley was the first such designation of a National Guard facility and only the 7th designated Sentinel Landscape in the country. The Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape partnership has secured \$2.8M federal funding through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for EQIP, CSP and Healthy Forest Reserve Program starting 2017. The Partnership will apply for RCPP funding Phase II in the summer of 2020.

The SWCD offices in Crow Wing and Morrison counties have applied for Clean Water Funds and the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) funds to assist landowners with forest stewardship planning, nutrient management planning, and most importantly drainage management. The counties utilize all resources available to enhance the easement properties. Our additional partners and efforts include USDA NRCS, MN Forest Resource Council, local water planning, county planning and zoning offices, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Farm Bill Assistance Partnership (FBAP) with BWSR, DNR, PF, NRCS, MASWCD, and SWCDs as primary partners, provides funding to SWCDs to utilize technicians to promote the conservation provisions of the Federal Farm Bill and other conservation program opportunities to private landowners. The Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) via LCCMR recommendations provided \$1.0M in FY10-11, \$625,000 in FY12-13, \$3.0M in FY14-15 and \$1.0M in FY16-17.

**Does this program include leverage in funds:**

Yes

The Department of Defense (DOD) Readiness Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program requires a 25% match to those federal funds. The OHF has been a critical piece in the ACUB now Sentinel Landscape partnership success. The Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape partnership with Morrison SWCD as the fiscal will apply for NRCS-Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) dollars (\$10 million) in the summer of 2020 to further leverage the total partnership funding. In addition, but not secured, year end funding is often appropriated from REPI. In the last fiscal year the program also received a private donation of land (120-acres) to support the program.

**Per MS 97A.056, Subd. 24, Any state agency or organization requesting a direct appropriation from the OHF must inform the LSOHC at the time of the request for funding is made, 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 is not supplanting or a substitution for any previous funding not from Legacy Fund sources or for the same purpose.

**Describe the source and amount of non-OHF money spent for this work in the past:**

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2007-Present	Department of Defense/National Guard Bureau	42480000
2010 -Present	LCCMR: Camp Ripley, CrowWing, Morrison SWCD and City of Baxter	5625000
2016-Present	NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)	2,800,000

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

Once a RIM easement is acquired, BWSR is responsible for monitoring and enforcement into perpetuity. The BWSR partners with local SWCDs to carry-out oversight, monitoring and enforcement of its conservation easements. Easements are monitored for the first five consecutive years beginning in the year after the easement is recorded. Thereafter, on-site monitoring is performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years. SWCDs report to BWSR on each site inspection conducted and partners' staff document findings. A non-compliance procedure is implemented when potential violations or problems are identified.

Perpetual monitoring and stewardship costs have been calculated at \$6,500 per easement. This value is based on using local SWCD staff for monitoring and landowner relations and existing enforcement authorities. The amount listed for Easement Stewardship covers costs of the SWCD regular monitoring, BWSR oversight, and enforcement.

**Explain the things you will do in the future to maintain project outcomes:**

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2021-Ongoing	Stewardship Account	Compliance checks first 5 years then every 3rd year.	Corrective actions of any violations.	Enforcement Action taken by MN Attorney Generals office.
2021-Ongoing	Landowner Responsibility	Maintain compliance with easement terms.		

**Identify indicator species and associated quantities this habitat will typically support:**

Species identified in the Wildlife Action Plan: Brainerd Lakes CFA include: Blanding's Turtle, Red-shouldered Hawk, red-headed woodpecker, Northern Long-eared bat, eastern hog-nosed snake and SGCN fish and amphibians. Active monitoring of several species occurs on Camp Ripley and associated state owned parcels within the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape program area.

**Activity Details**

## Requirements:

If funded, this proposal 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**

Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program - **No**

## Land Use:

Will there be planting of corn or any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program - **No**

Will the eased land be open for public use - **No**

Are there currently trails or roads on any of the acquisitions on the parcel list - **Yes**

Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:

This appropriation is funding a program that will have a parcel list identified at a later time. Roads or trails are typically excluded from the easement area if they serve no beneficial purpose to easement maintenance, monitoring, or enforcement. This question is being answered with utmost flexibility in absence of a LSOHC definition of trails and specified trail types (permanent or temporary, beneficial for maintenance, animal trails, etc.).

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

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished:

The easements secured under this project will be managed as part of the BWSR RIM Reserve Program that has over 6,500 easements currently in place. Easements are monitored annually for each of the first 5-years and then every 3rd year after that. BWSR, in cooperation with SWCDs, implement a stewardship process to track, monitor quality and assure compliance with easement terms.

Under the terms of the RIM Easement Program, landowners are required to maintain compliance with the easement. A conservation plan is developed with the landowner and maintained as part of each easement. Basic easement compliance costs are borne by the landowner, periodic enhancements may be cost shared from a variety of sources.

Will new trails or roads be developed or improved as a result of the OHF acquisition - **Yes**

Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:

Though uncommon, there could be a potential for new trails to be developed, if they contribute to easement maintenance or benefit the easement site (e.g. firebreaks, berm maintenance, etc). This question is being answered with utmost flexibility in absence of a LSOHC definition of trails and specified trail types (permanent or temporary, beneficial for maintenance, animal trails, etc.).

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished:

The easements secured under this project will be managed as part of the BWSR RIM Reserve Program that has over 6,500 easements currently in place. Easements are monitored annually for each of the first 5-years and then every 3rd year after that. BWSR, in cooperation with SWCDs, implement a stewardship process to track, monitor quality and assure compliance with easement terms.

Under the terms of the RIM Easement Program, landowners are required to maintain compliance with the easement. A conservation plan is developed with the landowner and maintained as part of each easement. Basic easement compliance costs are borne by the landowner, periodic enhancements may be cost shared from a variety of sources.

Will the land that you acquire (fee or easement) be restored or enhanced within this proposals funding and availability? - **No**

Explain how, when, and source of the R/E work:

Not Listed

## Land Use:

Have you received OHF dollars in the past through LSOHC? - **Yes**

Past appropriations and spending to date:

Apprp Year	Approp Amount Received	Approp Amount Spent to Date	Leverage as Reported in AP/th>	Leverage Realized to Date	Total Acres Affected in AP	Total Acres Affected to Date	Program Complete and Final Report Approved?
2020	2712000	0	0	0	1325	0	No
2018	1229000	919700	412500	305000	565	598	No
2015	1500000	1462300	0	0	660	1089	No
2016	1500000	1471300	1957900	1920000	660	1068	No
2014	1200000	1165100	0	1000000	720	946	Yes
2013	1450000	1156700	1000000	4088000	990	766	Yes
2012	480000	480000	0	0	488	494	Yes
2010	843000	723000	3500000	935000	886	1120	Yes

## Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Obtain applications from eligible landowners	June 30, 2024
Allocations to specific parcels	June 30, 2024
Easements recorded	June 30, 2024
Final report submitted	November 1, 2024

# Budget Spreadsheet

**Total Amount of Request: \$3,000,000**

## Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$227,200	\$0		\$227,200
Contracts	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$2,392,500	\$0		\$2,392,500
Easement Stewardship	\$143,000	\$0		\$143,000
Travel	\$5,300	\$0		\$5,300
Professional Services	\$195,000	\$0		\$195,000
Direct Support Services	\$27,200	\$0		\$27,200
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$7,500	\$0		\$7,500
Supplies/Materials	\$2,300	\$0		\$2,300
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$3,000,000	\$0	-	\$3,000,000

## Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Management	0.35	4.00	\$168,000	\$0		\$168,000
Easement Processing	0.28	3.00	\$59,200	\$0		\$59,200
Total	0.63	7.00	\$227,200	\$0	-	\$227,200

Amount of Request: \$3,000,000  
 Amount of Leverage: \$0  
 Leverage as a percent of the Request: 0.00%  
 DSS + Personnel: \$254,400  
 As a % of the total request: 8.48%  
 Easement Stewardship: \$143,000  
 As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 5.98%

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

BWSR calculates direct support services costs that are directly related to and necessary for each request based on the type that is done.

**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:**

The travel line will only be used for traditional travel costs.

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

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

There is no direct leverage for this project. However, to date, the Federal Government has contributed over \$42,000,000 to other protection projects within the Sentinel Landscapes area. This project would contribute to the goals of the Sentinel Landscapes initiative.

**Does this proposal have the ability to be scalable? - Yes**

**Tell us how this project would be scaled and how administrative costs are affected, describe the "economy of scale" and how**

**outputs would change with reduced funding, if applicable:**

The program would accommodate a reduction or increase in appropriations by limiting or increasing the number of easements. All of the costs associated with administering the program would also be reduced or increased accordingly and are based off of the number of easements the program will execute.

**What is the cost per easement for stewardship and explain how that amount is calculated?**

Perpetual monitoring and stewardship costs have been calculated at \$6,500 per easement. This value is based on using local SWCD staff for monitoring and landowner relations and existing enforcement authorities. The amount listed for Easement Stewardship covers costs of the SWCD regular monitoring, BWSR oversight, and enforcement.

**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?**

This is Phase 9 of an ongoing program. These funds will pay for staff time spent on new easements associated with this phase.



## Output Tables

**Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	1,290	0	1,290
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	1,290	0	1,290

**Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$3,000,000	\$0	\$3,000,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$3,000,000	\$0	\$3,000,000

**Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	1,290	0	0	0	1,290
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	1,290	0	0	0	1,290

**Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$3,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,000,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$3,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,000,000

**Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$2,326	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**Table 6. Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$2,326	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

*Automatic system calculation / not entered by managers*

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

2.6

I have read and understand Section 15 of the Constitution of the State of Minnesota, Minnesota Statute 97A.056, and the Call for Funding Request. I certify I am authorized to submit this proposal and to the best of my knowledge the information provided is true and accurate.

# Outcomes

## **Programs in the northern forest region:**

- Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation *A summary of the total of wetland acres and associated forest land secured under easement through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure maintained outcomes. Sustained habitat availability within a certain region is expected to maintain the carrying capacity of associated wildlife within that region. This would affect both game and non-game species. We expect sustained populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as these easements are secured.*

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

- Rivers and streams provide corridors of habitat including intact areas of forest cover in the east and large wetland/upland complexes in the west *A summary of the total of wetland acres and associated forest land secured under easement through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure maintained outcomes. Sustained habitat availability within a certain region is expected to maintain the carrying capacity of associated wildlife within that region. This would affect both game and non-game species. We expect sustained populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as these easements are secured.*

# Parcel List

## Explain the process used to select, rank and prioritize the parcels:

Landowners interested in participating in the program complete and submit an interest form to the Morrison SWCD, then it is sent on to Camp Ripley for ranking. Camp Ripley ranks parcels of land to be considered for possible funding through the ACUB program based on a number of criteria which considers encroachment threat and highest ecological benefits. Highest ranked landowners are provided back to the SWCD. The SWCD approaches prioritized landowners for possible participation in the program.

## Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

## Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type protect.

## Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

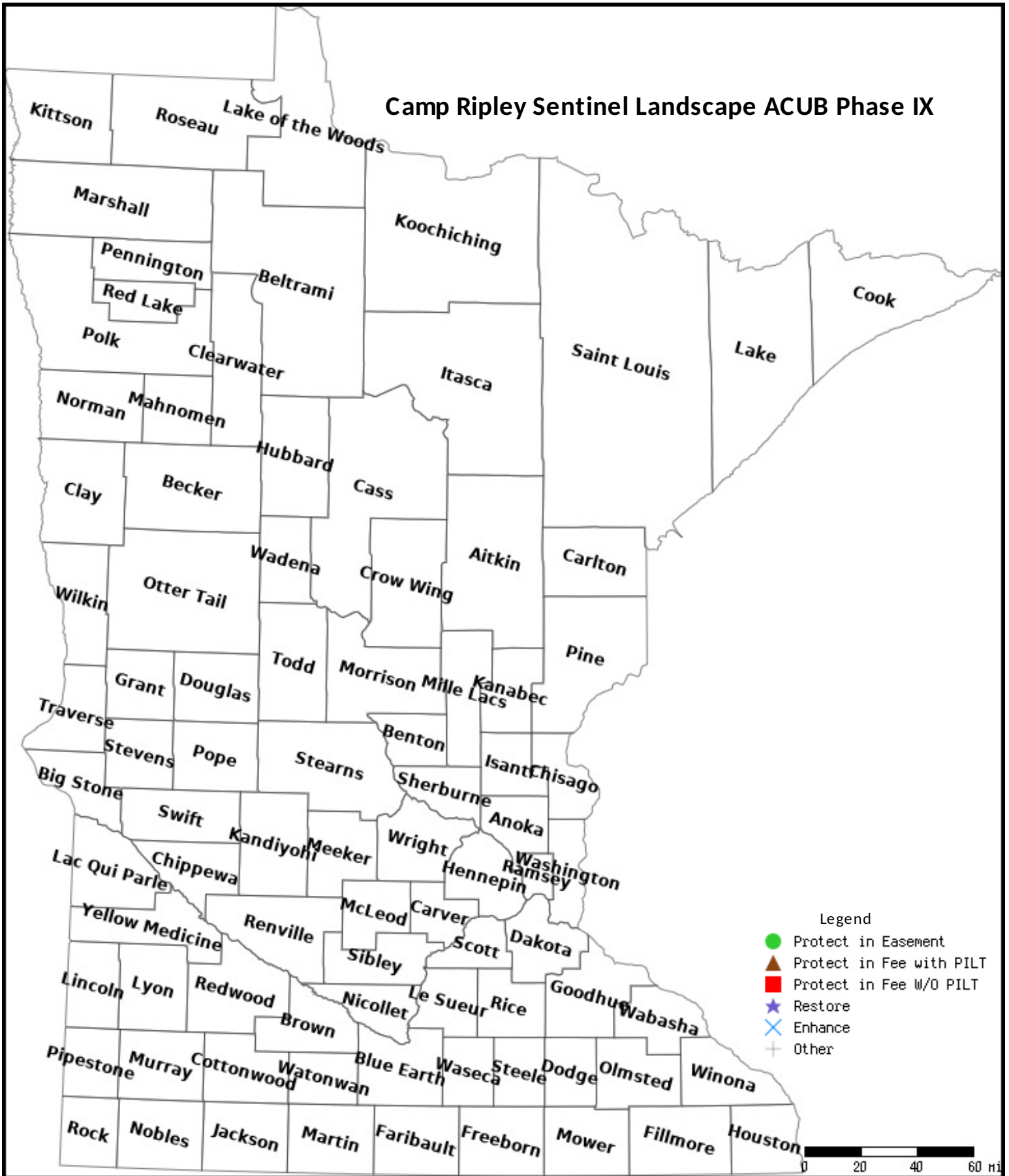
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

## Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

# Parcel Map

## Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Phase IX



Data Generated From Parcel List



## Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Partnership: ACUB Phase 9

May 2020

CAMP RIPLEY  
SENTINEL LANDSCAPE



mi BOARD OF WATER  
AND SOIL RESOURCES



### Phase 9 Request

- \$3,000,000 request
- Protects 1,290 targeted acres of habitat within 5-mile radius of Camp Ripley with RIM easements
- Permanently protects resources while private ownership continues
- Target area includes Crow Wing, Gull, Nokasippi, Long Prairie and Mississippi River corridors
- Parcels are targeted that have/or serve to:
  - quality existing habitat
  - protect corridors and large habitat complexes
  - reduce future fragmentation
  - buffer or add to public land assets



*ACUB allows for protection of large forested parcels that are in imminent threat of conversion to cropland.*

### A Piece of the Sentinel Landscape Mosaic

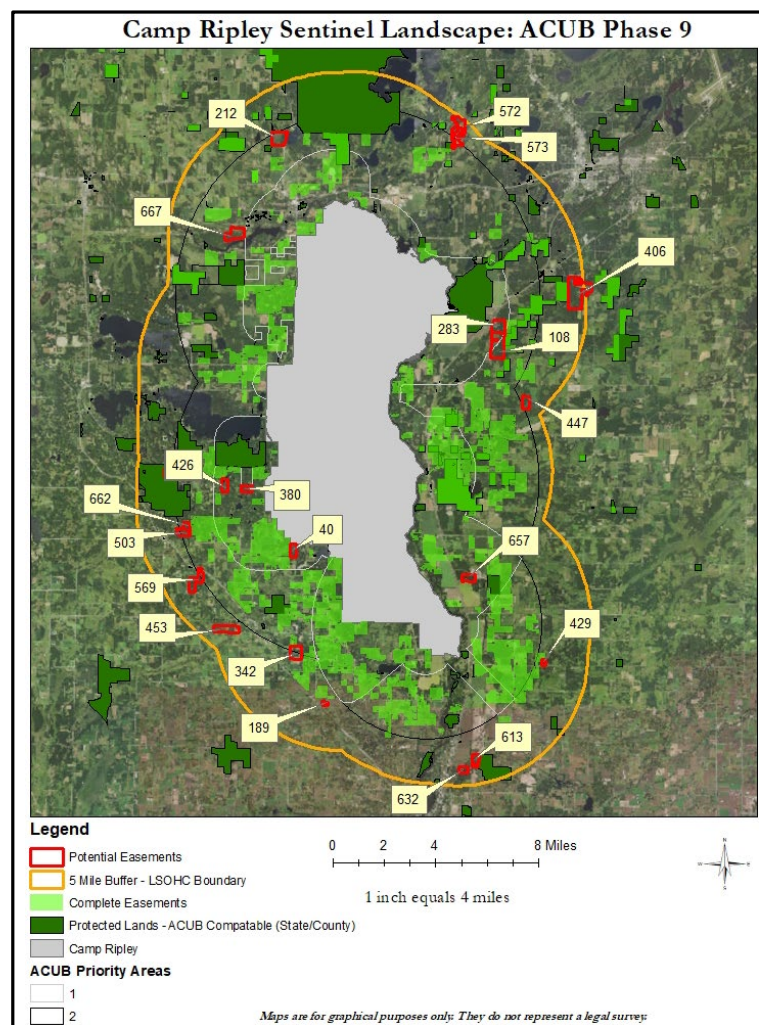
- In 2016 Camp Ripley was federally designated as a Sentinel Landscape; one of only seven in the nation
- Coordinates all Federal, State, and local efforts to protect this area
- LSOHC Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) appropriations are focused on a 3-mile radius, but program eligibility extends to a 5-mile radius
  - Federal REPI/State leverage of funds coordination
  - extends habitat along existing river corridors
  - protects native plant communities identified in the MN Biological Survey



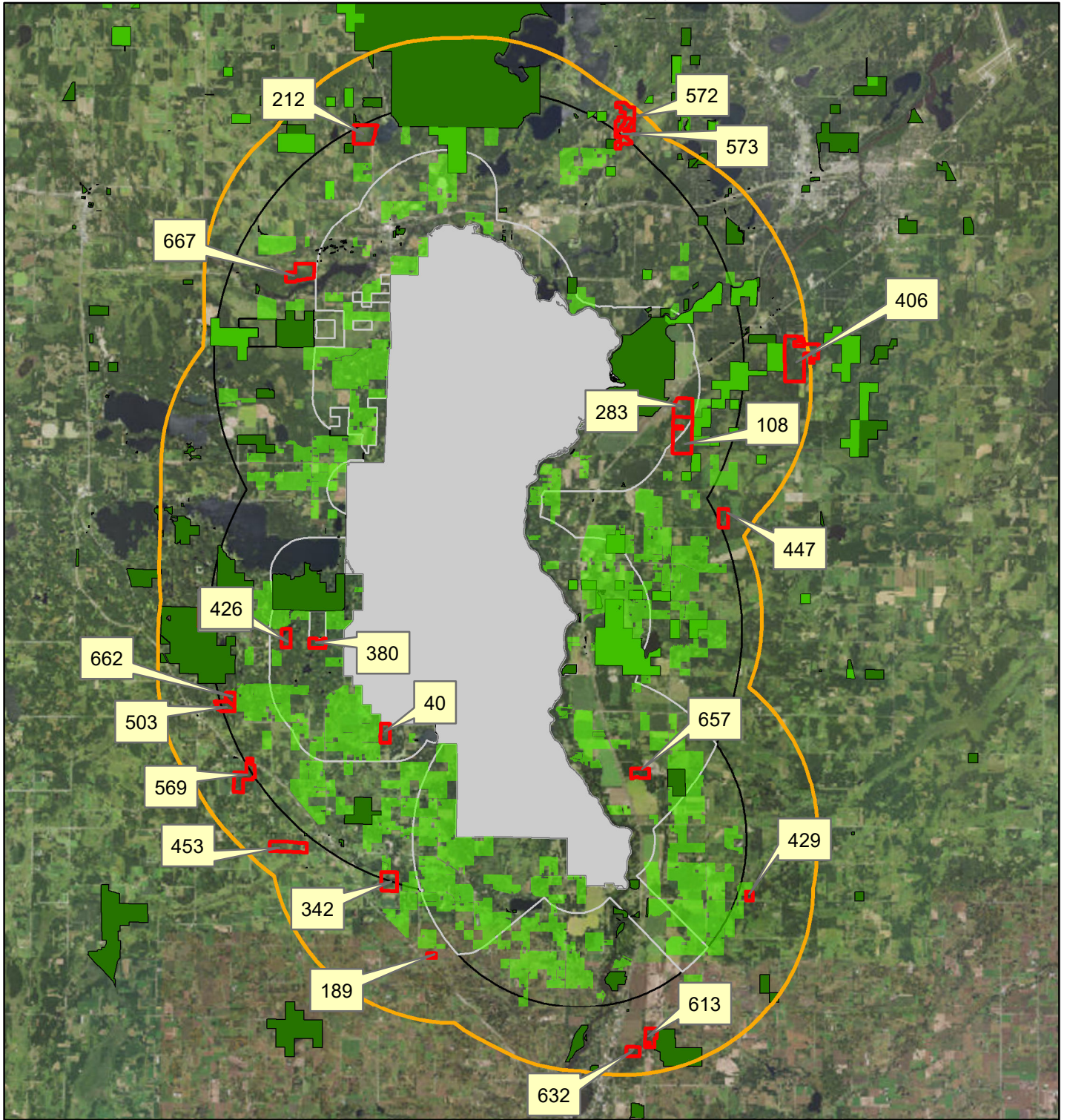
*This proposal targets 1,290 acres of habitat along the Crow Wing, Gull, Nokasippi, Long Prairie and Mississippi River Corridors.*

## Benefits of an Easement

- **Land Protection:** Conservation easements are a cost-effective way to protect the natural resource values of the land and protect environmentally sensitive areas. They also provide habitats that have significant value for wildlife species of greatest conservation need.
- **Living Legacy:** The land you enroll in an easement will never be developed, so your special place will remain an enduring legacy for your family and community.
- **The Common Good:** Land protection through an easement enhances soil and water quality, minimizes damage to flood-prone areas, sequesters carbon, and supports native plant, fish and wildlife habitat for the benefit of current and future generations.

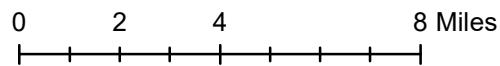


# Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape: ACUB Phase 9



## Legend

- Potential Easements
- 5 Mile Buffer - LSOHC Boundary
- Complete Easements
- Protected Lands - ACUB Compatible (State/County)
- Camp Ripley



1 inch equals 4 miles



## ACUB Priority Areas

- 1
- 2

Maps are for graphical purposes only. They do not represent a legal survey.



# Brainerd Lakes

## Targets, Conservation Issues, Approaches

### Target Habitats (with NPC class/type):

**Lakes:** Cisco Lakes, Sentinel Lakes, Shallow Lakes, wild rice lakes

### **River/Stream**

### **Old Growth Forest**

**Fire-Dependent Forest:** FDc23 - Central Dry Pine Woodland, FDc24 - Central Rich Dry Pine Woodland, FDc25b - Oak - Aspen Woodland, FDc34 - Central Dry-Mesic Pine-Hardwood Forest, FDs37b - Pin Oak - Bur Oak Woodland

**Floodplain Forest:** FFn57 - Northern Terrace Forest, FFn67 - Northern Floodplain Forest, FFs59a - Silver Maple - Green Ash - Cottonwood Terrace Forest, FPn72 - Northern Rich Tamarack Swamp (Eastern Basin), FPn73 - Northern Rich Alder Swamp, FPn82 - Northern Rich Tamarack Swamp (Western Basin), FPs63a - Tamarack Swamp (Southern), PDMW\_MF\_CX - Poor Dry-Mesic Woodland\_Mesic Forest Complex

**Mesic Hardwood Forest:** MHc26 - Central Dry-Mesic Oak-Aspen Forest, MHc36 - Central Mesic Hardwood Forest (Eastern), MHc47 - Central Wet-Mesic Hardwood Forest, MHn35 - Northern Mesic Hardwood Forest, MHn44a - Aspen - Birch - Red Maple Forest, MHn46 - Northern Wet-Mesic Hardwood Forest, MMS\_CX - Meadow - Marsh - Fen -Swamp Complex, MMWF\_CX - Mesic Mix/Wet Forest Complex

**Wet Forest:** WMn82 - Northern Wet Meadow/Carr

**Acid Peatland & Open Peatland:** APn81 - Northern Poor Conifer Swamp, APn90 - Northern Open Bog, APn91 - Northern Poor Fen

**Marsh:** MRn83 - Northern Mixed Cattail Marsh, FWMM\_CX - Fen/Wet Meadow/Marsh Complex, MSM\_CX - Meadow - Shrub Swamp - Marsh - Wet-Mesic Hardwood Complex

**Upland Prairie:** UPs13 - Southern Dry Prairie, UPs14 - Southern Dry Savanna

### Target Species:

**Insects/pollinators:** yellowbanded bumble bee, golden northern bumble bee, American bumble bee

### **SGCN fish**

### **SGCN amphibians**

**Reptiles:** Blanding's turtle, smooth softshell turtle, smooth greensnake, eastern hog-nosed snake

**Birds:** red-headed woodpecker, lark sparrow, golden-winged warbler, hooded warbler, red-shouldered hawk, northern goshawk, black tern, purple martin, red-necked grebe, common loon, and colonial waterbirds

**Mammals:** northern long-eared bats, big brown bat, little brown bat, white-tailed jackrabbit

### Example conservation issues

**Loss of connectivity between old growth forests**

**Cisco lake protection (climate and lakeshore)**

**Wet forest habitat**

**Fire dependent forest management**

**Loss of native prairie and grassland**

**Wild rice Habitat—shallow lakes**

### Example conservation approaches

Work across ownerships to manage for complexes of mature forest around old growth stands.

Ecosystem approach to management focused on maintaining niches in lakes for a diversity of cisco fish.

Include a 50-foot no-cut buffer zone around forested wetlands to create connectivity corridors

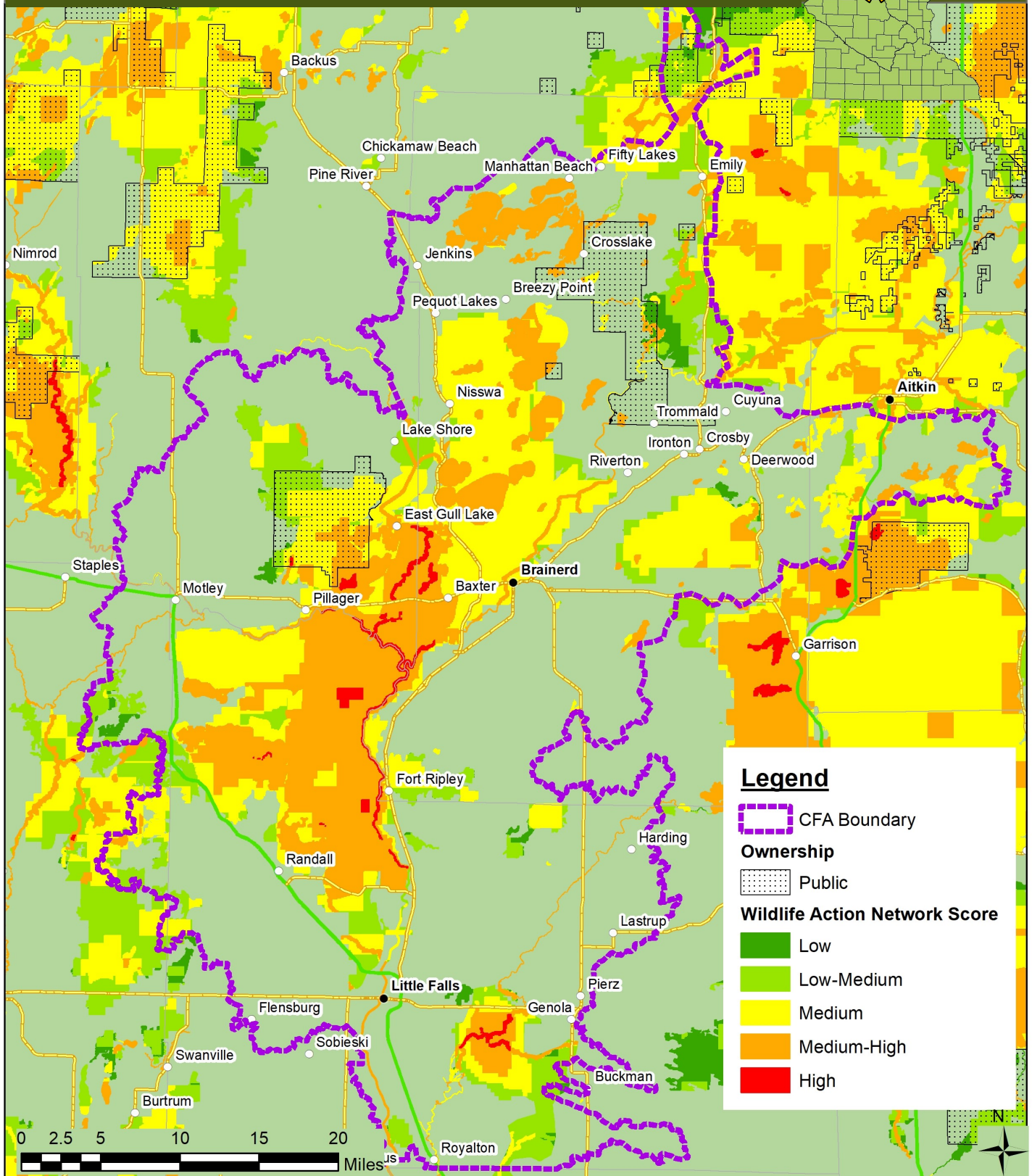
Seek out opportunities to conduct prescribed burns on both public and private forested lands.

Conservation easements, restorations and/or enhancements, education

Protect wild rice resources

# Brainerd Lakes

## Conservation Focus Area



## Camp Ripley

Located along the northern stretch of the Mississippi River, Camp Ripley is the primary National Guard Training Center for units from Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Ohio, and Illinois. The agricultural and forested lands surrounding Camp Ripley have enabled the installation to conduct aircraft, live fire, artillery, IED, and winter training with limited restrictions. The large unfragmented landscape protects water quality of the upper Mississippi River and its four major tributaries. However, the rural character of the area is threatened by development that could significantly affect Camp Ripley's ability to fulfill its mission; convert historic farms, ranches, and forested lands into other uses; and adversely affect one of the most ecologically rich environments and important source water areas in the Midwest.

Recognizing the need to protect this landscape, the Minnesota legislature passed state law 190.33, which was signed into law by Governor Mark Dayton in May 2015. Under the law, the adjutant general convened a Sentinel Landscape Coordinating Committee to identify the boundaries of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape and develop a suite of tools and programs that could provide technical and financial assistance to interested landowners within the Sentinel Landscape. With input from local government, stakeholders, and Federal agency partners, the Coordinating Committee identified the desired outcomes of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape partnership: protecting the installation's military training mission and the landscape's wildlife management areas, watersheds, and agricultural resources.



*Over 50 miles of the Mississippi River headwaters flow through the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape, and are fed by 34 minor watersheds in a 10-mile radius of the installation. (Photo courtesy of Camp Ripley)*

### BENEFITING WORKING LANDS

Restoring, managing, and protecting the viability of historic agricultural and forest lands within the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape is a top priority for the local community, with 180 landowners already expressing interest in enrolling over 16,000 acres of private working ranches, croplands, and timberlands into established assistance tools and programs. This enthusiastic participation will more than double the number of private landowners already participating in efforts buffering Camp Ripley and managing natural resources within the Sentinel Landscape.

Local partners like the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources and the Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District will work with willing landowners to provide technical assistance that will strengthen prime working lands, using programs such as the Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP), Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Landowners will have the opportunity to access conservation education and enhance their land management practices while maintaining their right to continue agricultural production and protect their lands from development as appropriate within the Sentinel Landscape.

## CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

The Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape includes 34 minor watersheds grouped into 7 sub-watersheds, 50 miles of the Mississippi River, and the Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. Thousands of acres of public and private conservation lands converge on the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape, which is also one of the state's most important source water protection areas for drinking water.

While coordination across county and city boundaries has long been necessary to protect the quality of cross-border watersheds, the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Partnership is leveraging broader support to protect and improve the quality of the region's soil and water resources. The Minnesota Forest Resource Council is working with landowners to implement forest stewardship plans within the Sentinel Landscape, while Partners for Fish and Wildlife will work with private landowners to restore and enhance fish and wildlife habitat, wetlands, and pollinator habitat.

These efforts are also resulting in additional opportunities for the community, including expanded trail, water, and natural area access for hunting, fishing, and recreation.

## LOOKING FORWARD

The Sentinel Landscape Partnership at Camp Ripley will continue to coordinate and leverage the resources of the Department of Defense Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Forest Service with state and local partners to advance the goals of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape. Together, these actions will sustain area agriculture, protect the Mississippi River headwaters, and preserve a unique landscape that will allow Camp Ripley to continue to effectively train National Guard members for decades to come.

## PARTNERS

### FEDERAL

- U.S. Department of Agriculture
  - Natural Resources Conservation Service
  - U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Department of Defense
  - Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) Program
  - Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program
- U.S. Department of the Interior
  - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
  - National Park Service

### STATE

- Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources
- Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- Minnesota Department of Military Affairs
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Minnesota Forest Resources Council

### LOCAL

- Mississippi Headwaters Board
- Cass County
- City of Baxter
- Crow Wing County
- Morrison County
- Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District

### NGOS

- The Nature Conservancy
- The Conservation Fund

## Camp Ripley

