

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2022 / ML 2021 Request for Funding



Date: May 28, 2020

Program or Project Title: Lower Otter Tail River Corridor Habitat Restoration - Request 1 (HA03)

Funds Requested: \$4,500,000

Manager's Name: Kathy Fenger
Organization: BRRWD
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County Locations: Wilkin

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Prairie

Abstract:

Channelization of the Lower Otter Tail River in the early 1950s converted 18 miles of sinuous river channel to 11 miles of straight channel and resulted in the loss of several thousand acres of wetland, and prairie habitat within the river's corridor. Through a partnership between the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District, the Wilkin Soil & Water Conservation District, and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, this proposal will permanently protect 850 acres of private lands in easements. This phase represents a model approach to river corridor acquisition and is critical to advancing this large river restoration project.

Design and scope of work:

The channelization of rivers and streams in the Red River basin has destroyed hundreds of miles of aquatic habitat and eliminated thousands of acres of riparian forest, wetland, and prairie. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) channelized the Lower Otter Tail River in the early 1950's to improve drainage and provide flood control. The channelized reach of the Otter Tail River currently provides little functional aquatic or riparian corridor habitat and reduces connectivity between the lower 10 miles of the river and the upper 13 miles. The vision for the project includes establishment of a 600-foot to 1/2-mile-wide protected corridor along the river channel, setting back existing spoil banks, reconnecting oxbows, construction of a natural meandering river channel, and restoration of riparian wetland and prairie plant communities. The project will restore degraded habitat and reestablish natural levels of connectivity between the river and its floodplain. The Otter Tail River is currently designated as a MN State Water Trail. Outdoor recreation will benefit from the restoration by expanding opportunities to enjoy wildlife through improved kayaking and canoeing along the river.

The Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD) began development of this project in 2015 by initiating conversations with other Local Government Units, and the MN Department of Natural Resources. In 2016, the BRRWD was the recipient of Section 319 grant funding through the MN Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), and Clean Water Fund grant funding through the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). These grant funds allowed for survey work and the development of a detailed concept plan for river restoration. Concurrent with those efforts, the BRRWD began discussions with the USACE. This led to partnering with the USACE on a Section 1135 feasibility evaluation, and further refinement of the river restoration and setback levees alignment proposed in future phases of the project. Potentially the USACE can bring \$10 million to restore portions of the Otter Tail River affected by their 1950's straightening work. The 1135 program leaves the responsibility for land rights to project proposers which is the reason for this application.

The partnership between the BRRWD and BWSR will use the Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM) Program to secure, maintain, and monitor easements within the corridor. Since this is a large project, the river has been divided into Reaches A to C (attached illustration). This funding request will target acquisition to Reach A of the corridor. While land acquisition will be targeted to Reach A, other opportunities to protect lands within or adjacent to the main corridor (A-C) will also be considered. A total of 850 acres of land is targeted for acquisition with this proposal. Once acquisition is complete, future channel rehabilitation/restoration phases of the project will be completed with the assistance of MN DNR and USACE. The BRRWD will be the local sponsor responsible for final design, engineering, and construction of the project. BRRWD has developed marketing materials to utilize in soliciting applications when the 2021 funds become available in July.

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:

This project is the land acquisition phase of a long-term project that will restore 18 miles of river and over 3,300 acres of habitat for associated fish and wildlife communities. In addition to the direct habitat benefits within the project area, fish and wildlife populations downstream of the project will benefit through water quality improvements. The Otter Tail River and associated prairie and forest lowland habitats were identified as key habitats for species of greatest conservation need in the Red River Prairie ecoregion. Key among aquatic species is the Lake Sturgeon, a species of special concern. The Otter Tail River provides critical sturgeon habitat and is a primary reintroduction waterbody where Lake Sturgeon have been stocked. Restoration of Otter Tail River habitat will help ensure successful reestablishment of Lake Sturgeon populations in the Red River basin.

This project will also likely benefit mussel and insect populations in the Otter Tail River. Two species of caddisfly and two species of mussels, Black Sandshell and Fluted-shell are listed as species of special concern and known to be present in the upstream reaches of the Otter Tail River. Acquisition and restoration of the stream and associated riparian wetlands will also improve habitat for gamefish and more than 75 other fish species present in other reaches of the Buffalo-Red River watershed.

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

Land acquisition is the critical first step in the restoration of over 3,300 acres of riparian habitat and converting 11 miles of ditch to over 18 miles of river channel. Once land acquisition is complete, USACE will be approached to contribute much of the channel restoration implementation under the Section 1135 program. Currently, many landowners along the corridor are very interested in implementing the proposed project. If funding for this corridor restoration is not secured, the opportunity to restore this reach of the Otter Tail River Corridor will be lost due to the uncertainty of future land and crop prices and continued landowner interest.

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:

Restoration of the Lower Otter Tail River Corridor is listed as a high priority project on the MN DNR state river restoration priority list. This list takes into account resource potential, critical habitat, and impacts regarding invasive species when scoring projects. The Minnesota Prairie Plan also lists restoration of channelized prairie river segments and reestablishment of riparian buffers on cultivated land immediately adjacent to streams and ditches as critical challenges. Markers for a number of federally- or state-listed animals including Greater Prairie Chicken and Lake Sturgeon have been identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey within the Lower Otter Tail River Corridor. Restoration will reduce fragmentation of Lake Sturgeon habitat within the Red River Basin. Reference stream reaches established by the MN DNR will be used to help set the geometry of the restored river. Reference stream reach data from the MN DNR is based on collected survey of streams all around Minnesota. The purpose of using local reference data for the restoration geometry is to reestablish a sustainable and healthy river ecosystem.

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

- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes
- H6 Protect and restore critical in-water habitat of lakes and streams

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan
- Red River of the North Fisheries Management Plan

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

Objective 1 of the Red River of the North Fisheries Management Plan is to "Establish and maintain stable stream channels." Additional information within this objective states that "These habitat losses continue today and have directly resulted in reduced fish and wildlife populations within channelized reaches of river corridors. Restoration and enhancement of channelized river segments is a top priority in the Red River basin."

From the Minnesota Prairie Plan: "Restoring the natural functioning of these channelized stream segments while allowing legal agricultural drainage will be a major challenge for the future. Another widespread concern about the streams and ditches in the Prairie Region is the cultivation of lands immediately adjacent to waterways." This project will restore the natural function of the Otter Tail River while protecting and restoring upland habitat along the corridor.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Prairie:

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

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:

This project will permanently protect and restore lands along the Otter Tail River corridor. Currently, none of the lands targeted in this proposal are protected. Within the primary reaches targeted in this proposal, 59% of the acres are classified as cultivated crops. Several sections of the river are farmed right up to the edge of the water. The other primary land classifications within these reaches are woody wetland, herbaceous wetland, grassland, and open water. Restoring connection to the floodplain and protecting the riparian corridor will strengthen biodiversity along the river and protect against invasive species. Improved aquatic and riparian habitat will prevent population decline of SGCN and threatened or endangered species.

Relationship to other funds:

- Not Listed

Describe the relationship of the funds:

Not Listed

Does this program include leverage in funds:

Yes

The BRRWD has agreed to contribute an amount up to 20% of the offered RIM payments to match the LSOHC funding. This amounts to an approximately 14% match to the LSOHC funds. In addition, the BRRWD recently agreed to continue the Section 1135 study with the USACE which will involve \$450,000 which will be split 50% BRRWD/50% USACE

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 funding request is not supplanting existing funding or a substitution for any previous funding.

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

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2016	BWSR Clean Water Fund	\$203,000
2016 - 2020	US Army Corps of Engineers	\$200,000
2016	MPCA EPA Section 319 Funding	\$242,000
2018-2020	BRRWD	\$100,000
2020-2021	US Army Corps of Engineers Section 1135	\$225,000
2020-2021	BRRWD (Section 1135 Match)	\$225,000

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 inspection of its conservation easements. Easements are inspected for the first five consecutive years beginning in the year after the easement is recorded. Thereafter, on-site inspections are 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 enforcement 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 cover costs of the SWCD regular monitoring, BWSR oversight, and any enforcement necessary.

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	Inspection every year for first 5-years; then every 3rd year	Corrective actions on any violations	Enforcement action taken by MN Attorney General Office
2021 - Ongoing	Landowner Responsibility	Maintain compliance with easement terms		

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

Restoration of the lower Otter Tail River will provide more than 200 acres of enhanced and restored aquatic habitat. Lake Sturgeon, Walleye, Northern Pike, and Channel Catfish are expected to benefit from the reconnected meanders that provide high-quality spawning, nursery and refuge habitat. Freshwater native mussels will benefit from improved water quality and natural stream habitat within the river after restoration. It is estimated that restored warmwater rivers will support 116 Channel Catfish per acre and 8000 native mussels (all species) per acre.

The breeding territory size of Bobolinks and Grasshopper Sparrows is 1.7 and 2.1 acres respectively in high quality habitat in Wisconsin. If all of the habitat was occupied, 100 acres of habitat could potentially hold approximately 60 and 48 pairs of Bobolinks and Grasshopper Sparrows respectively.

Research from the University of Minnesota has shown that it takes approximately 30 milkweed plants to result in one Monarch butterfly contributing to the overwintering Mexican population. Grasslands can have between 100-250 milkweed plants per acre. An acre of restored or enhanced grassland could potentially contribute 3 to 8 Monarchs to the population.

By looking at the ratios of CRP acres in Minnesota to pheasant harvest, we can estimate that every three acres of grassland habitat has the potential to produce one harvestable pheasant rooster.

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 - **Yes**

Explain

In certain circumstances food plots for wildlife are an allowable use on RIM easements and must be part of an approved Conservation Plan. Food plots on narrow buffers, steep slopes and wet areas are not allowed. RIM policy limits food plots to 10% of the total easement area or 5 acres whichever is smaller. There is no cost share for establishment of food plots and upon termination the landowners must reestablish the vegetation as prescribed in the Conservation Plan at their own expense. Food plots are a rarely selected option by landowners, to date only 2.2% of RIM easements have food plots.

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. Existing trails and roads are identified during the easement acquisition process. Some roads and trails, such as agricultural field accesses, are allowed to remain.

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 MN Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) RIM Reserve Program that has over 7,196 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 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), implement a stewardship process to track, monitor quality and assure compliance with easement terms.

Under the terms of the Reinvest In Minnesota (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:

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. Existing trails and roads are identified during the easement acquisition process. Some roads and trails, such as agricultural field accesses, are allowed to remain.

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished:

BRRWD and BWSR are in the process of approving a Memorandum of understanding which details responsibilities for easement acquisition. The easements secured under this project will be managed as part of the BWSR RIM Reserve Program that has over 7,196 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 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), implement a stewardship process to track, monitor quality and assure compliance with easement terms.

Under the terms of the Reinvest In Minnesota (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? - **Yes**

Land Use:

Have you received OHF dollars in the past through LSOHC? - **No**

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Obtain applications from eligible landowners	June 30, 2022
Allocation to specific parcels	June 30, 2023
Easements recorded	June 30, 2025
Restorations completed and final report submitted	June 30, 2029

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$4,500,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$306,900	\$0		\$306,900
Contracts	\$75,600	\$0		\$75,600
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$3,505,300	\$622,300	BRRWD	\$4,127,600
Easement Stewardship	\$234,000	\$0		\$234,000
Travel	\$7,900	\$0		\$7,900
Professional Services	\$315,000	\$0		\$315,000
Direct Support Services	\$40,600	\$0		\$40,600
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$11,300	\$0		\$11,300
Supplies/Materials	\$3,400	\$0		\$3,400
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$4,500,000	\$622,300	-	\$5,122,300

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Management	0.38	5.00	\$210,000	\$0		\$210,000
Easement Processing	0.46	3.00	\$96,900	\$0		\$96,900
Total	0.84	8.00	\$306,900	\$0	-	\$306,900

Budget and Cash Leverage by Partnership

BudgetName	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	BRRWD	\$0	\$0		\$0
Contracts	BRRWD	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	BRRWD	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	BRRWD	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	BRRWD	\$0	\$622,300	BRRWD	\$622,300
Easement Stewardship	BRRWD	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	BRRWD	\$0	\$0		\$0
Professional Services	BRRWD	\$315,000	\$0		\$315,000
Direct Support Services	BRRWD	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	BRRWD	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	BRRWD	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	BRRWD	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	BRRWD	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR IDP	BRRWD	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	-	\$315,000	\$622,300	-	\$937,300

BudgetName	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	BWSR	\$306,900	\$0		\$306,900
Contracts	BWSR	\$75,600	\$0		\$75,600
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	BWSR	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	BWSR	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	BWSR	\$3,505,300	\$0		\$3,505,300
Easement Stewardship	BWSR	\$234,000	\$0		\$234,000
Travel	BWSR	\$7,900	\$0		\$7,900
Professional Services	BWSR	\$0	\$0		\$0
Direct Support Services	BWSR	\$40,600	\$0		\$40,600
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	BWSR	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	BWSR	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	BWSR	\$11,300	\$0		\$11,300

Supplies/Materials	BWSR	\$3,400	\$0	\$3,400
DNR IDP	BWSR	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	-	\$4,185,000	\$0	\$4,185,000

Personnel - BWSR

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Management	0.38	5.00	\$210,000	\$0		\$210,000
Easement Processing	0.46	3.00	\$96,900	\$0		\$96,900
Total	0.84	8.00	\$306,900	\$0		\$306,900

Amount of Request: \$4,500,000
 Amount of Leverage: \$622,300
 Leverage as a percent of the Request: 13.83%
 DSS + Personnel: \$347,500
 As a % of the total request: 7.72%
 Easement Stewardship: \$234,000
 As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 6.68%

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

BWSR calculates and periodically reviews and updates direct support services costs that are directly related to and necessary for each request based on the type of work being done.

What is included in the contracts line?

The contracts line represents the allocation to the Wilkin Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to provide assistance to the landowners for this project.

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:

The BRRWD has agreed to contribute an amount equal to 20% of the offered RIM payments to match the LSOHC funding. This amounts to an approximately 14% match to the LSOHC funds.

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:

A reduction in funding would reduce outputs proportionally for the most part. Program management costs would be the exception, due to program development and oversight remaining somewhat consistent regardless of appropriation amount.

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

Perpetual monitoring and enforcement 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 cover costs for the SWCD regular monitoring, BWSR oversight, and any enforcement necessary.

Has funding for these positions been requested in the past? - No

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	850	0	0	850
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	850	0	0	850

Table 1b. How many of these Prairie acres are Native Prairie?

Type	Native Prairie
Restore	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Easement	0
Enhance	0
Total	0

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	\$4,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$4,500,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$4,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$4,500,000

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	0	0	850	0	850
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	850	0	850

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	\$0	\$0	\$4,500,000	\$0	\$4,500,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,500,000	\$0	\$4,500,000

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	\$5,294	\$0	\$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	\$0	\$0	\$5,294	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Automatic system calculation / not entered by managers

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

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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 prairie region:

- Key core parcels are protected for fish, game and other wildlife *The outcomes of the Lower Otter Tail River corridor project will be a stable stream with permanently protected and restored riparian corridor. This will significantly improve upland and aquatic habitat for fish and wildlife within the immediate corridor. Also, this project will improve water quality and provide substantial benefits extending to the entire watershed.*

Parcel List

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

The parcels listed include all parcels needed to complete the primary channel corridor of Reach A, B and C. Priority will be given to landowners voluntarily applying within the area of Reach A. Landowners within the other reaches would be considered as secondary priority on a first come basis if funding remains after all landowners in Reach A have been offered to enroll in the program.

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Wilkin

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
04-004-0200	13145204	0	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
04-004-0300	13145204	9	\$0	No	Limited	Full
04-004-0310	13145204	23	\$0	No	Limited	Full
04-004-0700	13145204	6	\$0	No	Limited	Full
04-005-0100	13145205	12	\$0	No	Limited	Full
04-005-0300	13145205	0	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-027-0500	13245227	0	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-027-0510	13245227	0	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-030-0400	13245230	25	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-030-0600	13245230	17	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-030-0700	13245230	1	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-031-0100	13245231	10	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-031-0105	13245231	64	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-031-0110	13245231	3	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-031-0200	13245231	2	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-031-0300	13245231	80	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-031-0400	13245231	13	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-031-0500	13245231	17	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-031-0600	13245231	47	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-031-0700	13245231	0	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-031-0800	13245231	0	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-032-0500	13245232	30	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-032-0600	13245232	0	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-032-0610	13245232	1	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-032-0700	13245232	13	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-032-0800	13245232	1	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-032-0900	13245232	19	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-033-0100	13245233	41	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-033-0200	13245233	34	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-033-0300	13245233	26	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-033-0310	13245233	26	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-033-0500	13245233	1	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-033-0700	13245233	1	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-033-0710	13245233	1	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-033-0720	13245233	1	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-033-0730	13245233	1	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-033-0740	13245233	1	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-033-0800	13245233	0	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-033-0900	13245233	0	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-033-1000	13245233	7	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-033-1100	13245233	7	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-034-0200	13245234	0	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-034-0210	13245234	0	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-034-0300	13245234	45	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-034-0400	13245234	20	\$0	No	Limited	Full
11-034-0500	13245234	5	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-034-0600	13245234	1	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-034-0610	13245234	1	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-034-0620	13245234	1	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-034-0630	13245234	1	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
11-034-0640	13245234	1	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-016-0300	13246216	95	\$430,500	No	Limited	Full
20-016-0500	13246216	5	\$72,300	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-016-0600	13246216	3	\$59,500	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-017-0100	13246217	51	\$265,000	No	Limited	Full
20-017-0110	13246217	13	\$94,000	No	Limited	Full
20-017-0120	13246217	3	\$58,500	No	Limited	Full
20-017-0200	13246217	41	\$200,800	No	Limited	Full
20-017-0300	13246217	4	\$67,800	No	Limited	Not Applicable

20-017-0400	13246217	40	\$186,200	No	Limited	Full
20-017-0500	13246217	48	\$242,800	No	Limited	Full
20-017-0600	13246217	3	\$57,200	No	Limited	Full
20-018-0100	13246218	0	\$50,600	No	Limited	Full
20-018-0105	13246218	0	\$49,800	No	Limited	Full
20-018-0200	13246218	1	\$51,000	No	Limited	Full
20-018-0300	13246218	1	\$52,700	No	Limited	Full
20-018-0510	13246218	0	\$49,500	No	Limited	Full
20-018-0520	13246218	1	\$53,200	No	Limited	Full
20-018-0530	13246218	3	\$57,900	No	Limited	Full
20-018-0600	13246218	2	\$56,200	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-018-0720	13246218	3	\$60,600	No	Limited	Full
20-020-0100	13246220	2	\$55,700	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-021-0100	13246221	11	\$82,900	No	Limited	Full
20-021-0105	13246221	1	\$50,700	No	Limited	Full
20-021-0110	13246221	98	\$421,700	No	Limited	Full
20-021-0120	13246221	72	\$337,200	No	Limited	Full
20-021-0200	13246221	0	\$51,000	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-021-0300	13246221	99	\$381,700	No	Limited	Full
20-022-0100	13246222	20	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-022-0200	13246222	28	\$161,800	No	Limited	Full
20-022-0210	13246222	28	\$161,900	No	Limited	Full
20-022-0220	13246220	28	\$161,800	No	Limited	Full
20-022-0230	13246222	28	\$161,800	No	Limited	Full
20-022-0300	13246222	37	\$206,800	No	Limited	Full
20-022-0310	13246222	15	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-022-0400	13246222	1	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-022-0500	13246222	26	\$167,800	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-022-0510	13246222	26	\$167,800	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-022-0520	13246222	26	\$167,800	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-022-0530	13246222	26	\$167,800	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-022-0600	13246222	24	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-023-0300	13246223	12	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-023-0400	13246223	0	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-025-0100	13246225	2	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-025-0110	13246225	2	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-025-0200	13246225	85	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-025-0210	13246225	85	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-025-0300	13246225	2	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-025-0400	13246225	47	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-025-0500	13246225	21	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-025-0510	13246225	11	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-025-0600	13246225	18	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-025-0700	13246225	19	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-025-0900	13246225	26	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-025-0910	13246225	26	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-026-0100	13246226	33	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-026-0200	13246226	31	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-026-0300	13246226	41	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-026-0400	13246226	31	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-026-0500	13246226	34	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-026-0600	13246226	37	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-026-0700	13246226	15	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-026-0800	13246226	32	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-026-0900	13246226	23	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-026-1000	13246226	69	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-027-0100	13246227	4	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-027-0200	13246227	0	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-027-0210	13246227	33	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-027-0300	13246227	20	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-027-0500	13246227	9	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable
20-036-0100	13246236	7	\$0	No	Limited	Full

20-036-0200	13246236	17	\$0	No	Limited	Full
20-036-0210	13246236	15	\$0	No	Limited	Not Applicable

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

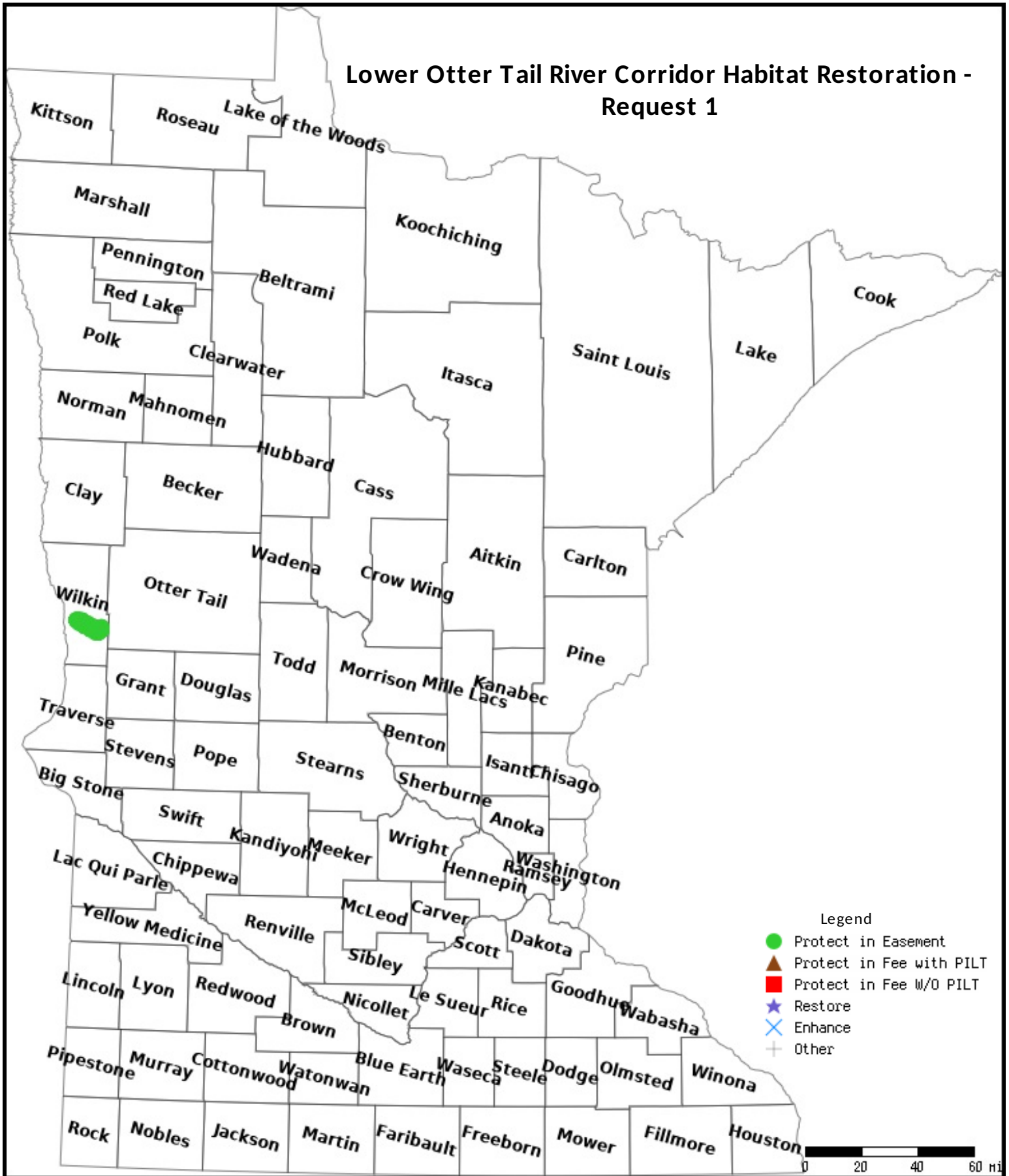
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map

Lower Otter Tail River Corridor Habitat Restoration - Request 1



Data Generated From Parcel List

Lower Otter Tail River Corridor Habitat Restoration Program

What is the Program

The Lower Otter Tail River Corridor Habitat Restoration Program (LOTRCHRP) is a voluntary effort with the long-term goal of restoring a natural riparian corridor along the Lower Reach of the Otter Tail River. This project will improve fish and wildlife habitat, reestablish natural levels of connectivity between the river and its floodplain, enhance water quality, strengthen biodiversity and reduce the risks of flood damages to agricultural land. This is a cooperative project between the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), Board of Water and Soil Resource (BWSR), Wilkin Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), MN Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR), and other local LGUs as illustrated in the Implementation Process diagram on the following page. Landowners will have the opportunity to receive financial incentives by enrolling their land in the program if it lies within the proposed corridor. Landowners enrolling land in the program will be required to follow the conservation requirements of the *Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve - Outside Request Program* and a *Supplemental BRRWD Easement* to allow for Phase 2-4 modifications described below.

Phased Implementation

The project will be executed in multiple phases over the next decades. The phases allow both for orderly implementation of the project and to ensure wildlife and habitat benefits. The following describes the anticipated phases and major work items under each phase.



- **Phase 1 – Land**

Acquisition/Restoration – This phase will involve acquisition of Conservation Easements. Two companion easements would be executed, RIM and a Supplemental BRRWD Easement. As part of this phase, the production of agricultural crops within the parcel would cease and the area would be restored to a permanent vegetative cover by the landowner as set forth in the Conservation Easement conservation plan under the requirements of the RIM program. Since the lands would still be in private ownership, management/maintenance activities identified within the easement area will be the responsibility of the landowner. In addition, the landowner will grant the



Watershed District rights to install and maintain future phases of implementation. Future RIM easement monitoring and stewardship will be provided by the BWSR and Wilkin SWCD.

- **Phase 2 – Detailed Design and Setback Levee Construction** – Once a significant reach of property has been enrolled as part of Phase 1 and detailed design for the corridor restoration has been completed, the existing spoil banks from the 1950’s channelization project would be removed and replaced with new levees setback further from the river. The alignment of these levees would be established to allow for future implementation of Channel Restoration under Phase 3. Work under this phase would be completed by the BRRWD. Future maintenance of the setback levees and directly adjacent features would also be completed by the BRRWD. All other areas would continue to be maintained by the underlying property owner under the terms of the Conservation Easement conservation plan established in Phase 1.

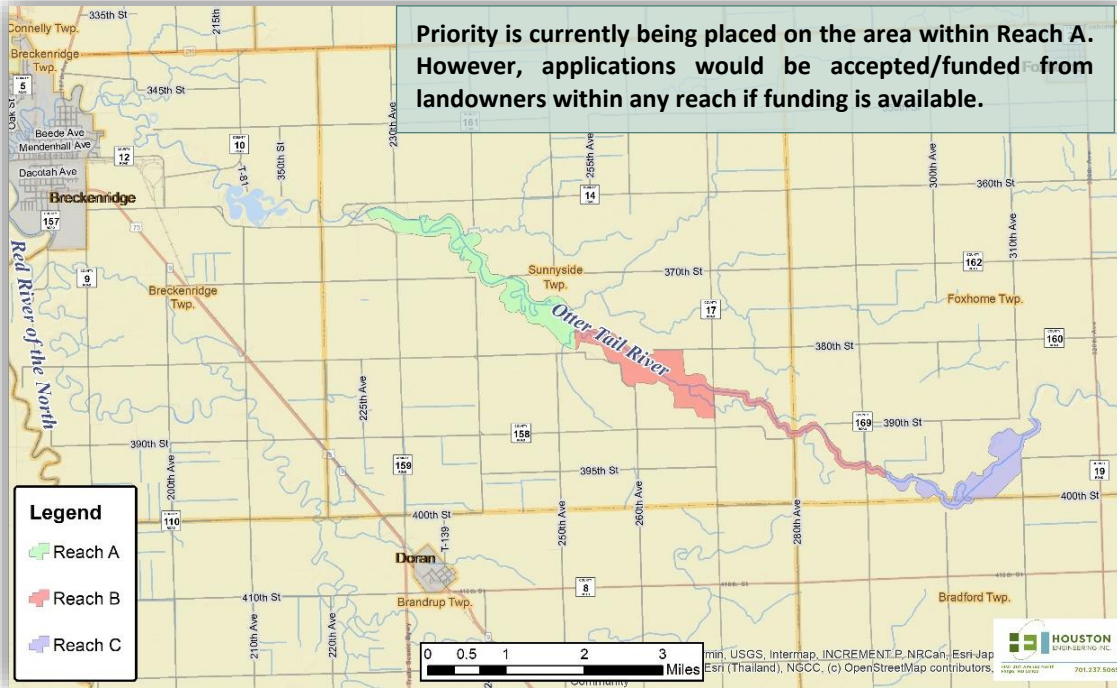


- **Phase 3 – Channel Restoration** – Phase 3 will involve restoration of the channel along an approximately 18-mile segment of river. This restoration will reconnect oxbows of the natural river that were cut off by channelization. Reconnecting the floodplain will also benefit adjacent prairie and wetlands. The timing of this channel restoration will depend on available funding and completion of Phase 2. Modifications under this phase as well as future maintenance of the channel areas would be completed by the BRRWD. Other areas would continue to be maintained by the underlying property owner under the terms of the Conservation Easement conservation plan established in Phase 1, except for the setback levee corridors defined in Phase 2.



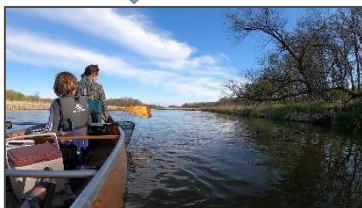
Phase 4 – Operation and Maintenance – Once Phases 1-3 are completed, the operation and maintenance of the setback levee and channel corridors (including adjacent drainage features) would be completed by the BRRWD. Other areas would continue to be maintained by the underlying property owner under the terms of the Conservation Easement.

Eligible Project Area



Lower Otter Tail River Corridor Habitat Restoration Project (LOTRCHRP)

Landowner Enrollment Process



Outcomes/ Benefits

- **850 acres** will be acquired through the implementation of approximately **36 easements**.
- Permanent riparian corridor protection for a **600-foot to ½ mile wide buffer**.
- Restored wetland and prairie plant communities along **18 miles** of the Otter Tail River.
- Enhanced opportunities for outdoor recreation, fishing and wildlife viewing.