

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2022 / ML 2021 Request for Funding

Date: May 26, 2020

Program or Project Title: Fisheries Habitat Protection on Strategic North Central Minnesota Lakes - Phase VII (HA04)

Funds Requested: \$7,942,600

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County Locations: Cass

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Northern Forest

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement
- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Forest
- Habitat

Abstract:

The Northern Waters Land Trust (NWLTL) and Minnesota Land Trust (MLT) will protect critical fish habitat within 48 tullibee "refuge" lakes and their minor watersheds by securing conservation easements and fee title acquisitions. These efforts are prioritized toward the 15 highest priority tullibee refuge lakes. Through this Fisheries Habitat Protection program, NWLTL and MLT are working to protect 75% of each targeted watershed, a measure that provides a high probability of maintaining clean water and healthy lake ecosystems. We will permanently protect approximately 1,555 acres and 12,070 feet of shoreline through this grant.

Design and scope of work:

Sustaining a strong angling heritage in North Central Minnesota (along with the local economy it drives) revolves largely around protecting fisheries habitat. Resurging shoreland development pressures and looming climate change are direct threats to the ecology of Minnesota's lakes. Fisheries research has shown that healthy watersheds with intact forests are fundamental to sustaining good fish habitat over the long term; achieving a 75% protection goal for a lake's watershed ensures a highly resilient and healthy lake ecosystem.

Our protection efforts are focused on tullibee (aka cisco), a preferred forage fish of walleye, northern pike, muskellunge and lake trout. They require cold, well oxygenated waters, a condition most common in lakes with deep water and healthy watersheds. Minnesota DNR Fisheries researchers studied tullibee lakes and designated 68 lakes in Minnesota as the primary "refuge lakes" for tullibee that need protection. Our four county area (Aitkin, Cass, Crow Wing, Hubbard) includes 48 of these tullibee refuges. We are prioritizing fifteen of these lakes and their minor watersheds. Many are Minnesota's premier recreational lakes.

The Clean Water Critical Habitat Technical Committee evaluated all tullibee lakes in our project area and prioritized 15 lakes and their minor watersheds for action. In assigning priorities, the committee considered: (1) ecological value of the lake, (2) percent of the minor watershed currently protected, (3) number of parcels in the watershed greater than 20 acres in size, (4) partner organizations available



for advising on outreach efforts, and (5) investment by other agencies and organizations to protect lands and watersheds.

Due to the high level of interest in the program and its great success to date, we are applying for a Phase VII of this effort. In this phase, we will protect 1,555 strategically important acres of land through conservation easements and fee title acquisitions. Program partners will include County Soil & Water Districts, MNDNR Fisheries, Minnesota Land Trust and NWLT. This team will conduct outreach to potential landowners and help evaluate the projects to assure we are prioritizing those projects with the greatest conservation outcomes. In addition, to ensure the best conservation return on the state's investment, landowner willingness to donate a portion of the easement value will be a key component of the parcel's evaluation. MLT will hold the easements.

The proposed fee-title acquisitions total 455 acres. This includes parcels on Wabedo Lake, Wabedo/Little Boy/Louise Lakes (which are targeted as a part of a complex to protect for this minor watershed), Washburn Lake, Girl/Woman Lake, and Roosevelt Lake all in Cass County. The parcels would be conveyed to either Cass County as managed forest lands or DNR as Aquatic Management Areas.

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:

Tullibee (aka cisco) is the preferred forage fish for walleye, northern pike, muskellunge and lake trout. They require cold, well oxygenated waters - a condition most common in lakes with deep water and healthy watersheds. Tullibee populations are the "canary in the coal mine" for three significant threats to Minnesota's sport fisheries: shoreland development, watershed health and climate warming. Deep, cold water lakes with high quality, well-oxygenated waters and natural, undisturbed land cover along the shorelines and within their watersheds will have the best chance to sustain tullibee populations in the face of these threats and will serve as a "refuge" for the tullibee if annual temperatures increase.

Minnesota DNR Fisheries Research scientists studied tullibee lakes and designated 68 lakes in Minnesota as primary "refuge lakes" for tullibee that need protection. Forty-eight of these lakes and their minor watersheds are located in Crow Wing, Aitkin, Cass and Hubbard counties. These lakes are premier recreational and sport fishery lakes. Fisheries research has shown that healthy watersheds with intact forest are fundamental to good fish habitat. MN DNR Fisheries Habitat Plan, states near shore fish habitat affected by shoreland disturbance can impact fisheries. Maintaining good water quality is critical to sustaining tullibeas as determined by the water's oxygen level and nutrient content. Lakeshore development decreases a lakes ability to function as a healthy ecosystem for sport fish and their forage, due to increased runoff, but also through physical alternation by lakeshore owners.

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

The next ten years are a critical window of opportunity to protect some of the "best of the best" sport fishery lakes in Minnesota. While recent economic trends slowed shoreland development, realtors now report a resurgence of shoreland property sales. Growth will be driven by baby boomers and technology that allows landowners to live, work and play from the same location. With land values rising in the region now is the time to protect these tullibee "refugee" lakes and maximize the effectiveness of this fisheries habitat protection project. We are building considerable momentum with effective partnerships with The Nature Conservancy and North Central Conservation Roundtable. We believe these synergistic efforts will increase leveraging and maximize results.

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:

Timothy Cross and Peter Jacobson in their white paper, "Landscape factors influencing lake phosphorus concentrations across Minnesota" determined coldwater fish communities are especially vulnerable to eutrophication from increased phosphorus concentrations. Decreases in hypolimnetic oxygen concentrations have direct negative effects on fish such as tullibee that physiologically require oxygenated cold water to survive, grow and reproduce. Protection is viewed as the most cost-effective strategy when applied to watersheds where human activities have not already significantly elevated phosphorus levels.

Peter Jacobson and Mike Duval, in "Protecting Watershed of Minnesota Lakes with Private Forest Conservation Easements: A Suggested Strategy", stated that protecting the forests in these watersheds from development is critical for maintaining water quality in these lakes. While large areas of land in forested portions are under public ownership, a considerable amount is also owned by private individuals in some of our most critical lake watersheds. These parcels are increasingly being "split up" and sold. Modeling by MN DNR Fisheries research unit suggests that total phosphorus concentrations remain near natural background levels when less than 25% of a lake's watershed is disturbed. Tullibee "refuge" lakes have watersheds with less than 25% disturbed land uses and are good candidates for protection. Very deep lakes with exceptional water quality to support coldwater fish populations like tullibee were considered priorities by the report.

Minnesota DNR Fisheries researchers studied tullibee lakes and designated 68 lakes in Minnesota as the primary "refuge lakes" for tullibee. We focused our protection efforts of the highest quality tullibee lakes that will require modest to moderate levels of land

protection to achieve 75% protection levels. Protecting the habitats of tullibee "refuge" lakes along the shoreline and surrounding forest lands is essential to a sustained sport fishery.

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:

- Long Range Plan for Fisheries Management
- Leech Lake River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (LLRCWMP)

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

Protection of critical near-shore parcels, riparian areas and key forested parcels will be tracked by analyzing the land surface data of the watershed. If the tullibee "refuge" lake watershed is less than 25% disturbed by development or intensive land use and 75% of the land area of the watershed is permanently protected, these lakes can generally be assured to maintain high water quality that will support tullibee and resiliency against climate change. The LLRCWMP identifies priority lakes and watersheds which include a number tullibee refuge lake watersheds targeted within this program. A coordinated approach with LLRCWMP efforts will allow us to strategically work with area partners in achieving land protection goals within these priority watersheds. Additionally, the MN DNR AMA Plan identifies north central lakes as the priority focus for AMA's. Building on existing protected land complexes is an important criterion in prioritizing projects.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Northern Forest:

- Protect shoreland and restore or enhance critical habitat on wild rice lakes, shallow lakes, cold water lakes, streams and rivers, and spawning areas

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:

Priority private shoreline habitat and forested parcels totaling 1,555 acres will be permanently protected from development and fragmentation through conservation easements. Riparian forest lands under easement will maintain healthy habitat complexes for upland and aquatic species; forest cover will enhance water quality habitat for tullibee lakes. Greater public access for wildlife and outdoors-related recreation will be attained through fee title acquisition, with properties being open to public for hunting and fishing. Conservation easement properties will protect fish habitat to ensure high quality fishing opportunities.

Relationship to other funds:

- Not Listed

Describe the relationship of the funds:

Not Listed

Does this program include leverage in funds:

Yes

This proposal includes the following funds as leverage to our OHF request:

- Landowner donation in the amount of \$450,000 in easement value is proposed based on results obtained in previous and current OHF-funded grants.
- Landowner, lake association and county donations in the amount of \$203,600 is proposed for fee acquisitions.

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:

Funding procured by NWLT and MLT through funding from this Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal will not supplant or substitute any previous funding from a non-Legacy fund used for the same purpose.

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

Not Listed

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

NWLT and MLT are long standing conservation organizations that do not depend on Outdoor Heritage Funds to sustain or maintain our work. The majority of financial support for both NWLT and MLT must be raised on an annual basis. The work in this proposal allows both organizations to enhance and accelerate ongoing conservation efforts in North Central Minnesota; these grant funds will not substitute for or supplant other funding sources.

The fee-title acquisitions will be owned and managed by either Cass County or the MN DNR. The Minnesota Land Trust will hold the conservation easements acquired, which will be sustained through the best standards and practices for conservation easement stewardship. The Minnesota Land Trust is a nationally-accredited land trust with a very successful stewardship program 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. In addition, MLT encourages landowners to undertake active ecological management of their properties, provides them with habitat management plans, and works with them over time to secure resources (expertise and funding) to undertake these activities over time.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2026 and in perpetuity	MLT Stewardship and Enforcement Fund	Annual monitoring of easements	Enforcement as necessary	

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

The information below provides general averages for tullibee in Minnesota. These averages are generated from available data and published sources, and do not capture the variability inherent in populations of fish. Natural populations, including healthy populations with good habitat, vary among locations and rise and fall within lakes and rivers. Most fish surveys conducted by MNDNR produce an index of abundance (catch per unit effort) rather than a population estimate. MNDNR provided the following detailed information -

Aquatic system: Tullibee lakes

Indicator: Tullibee

Ave. number or biomass: NA

Other criteria: Sampling does not provide a reliable number of individuals, but assessment netting provides an indicator of tullibee presence, and the presence of multiple year classes provides evidence that tullibee are continuing to reproduce.

Activity Details

Requirements:

If funded, this proposal will meet all applicable criteria set forth in MS 97A.056 - **Yes**

Will county board or other local government approval be formally sought prior to acquisition, per 97A.056 subd 13(j) - **Yes**

Is the land you plan to acquire (fee title) free of any other permanent protection - **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**

Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing - **No**

Will the land be open for hunting and fishing after completion - **Yes**

All fee title acquisitions conveyed to a public agency will be open to hunting and fishing.

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:

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:

Existing trails and roads on easement lands are identified in the project baseline report and will be monitored annually as part of the Land Trust's stewardship and enforcement protocols. Maintenance of permitted roads/trails in accordance with the terms of the easement will be the responsibility of the landowner.

Will new trails or roads be developed or improved as a result of the OHF acquisition - **No**

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:

MLT - We do not anticipate that R/E work will be necessary for the significant majority of lands protected through conservation easement associated with this program. If needs are evident, we will amend the accomplishment plan to accommodate for those needs.

NWLT does not anticipate that R/E funds through this grant will not be needed for fee title acquisitions.

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?
2014	2130000	1786200	798700	956000	505	765	Yes
2016	1425000	1244700	535000	530000	429	643	No
2017	1716000	1546400	300000	0	400	363	No
2018	2801000	467700	417500	265300	445	117	No
2019	2524000	84500	450000	0	520		No

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Landowner outreach, consultation, technical assistance and easement preparation	Ongoing through June 2025
Protection of 410 acres via fee acquisition; conveyance to Cass County and Department of Natural Resources	June 2025
Protection of 1,100 acres of targeted parcels via conservation easement.	June 2025

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$7,942,600

Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$386,600	\$0		\$386,600
Contracts	\$140,800	\$0		\$140,800
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$2,036,200	\$203,600	County, lake associations, landowners	\$2,239,800
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$4,500,000	\$450,000	Landowner donation of easement value.	\$4,950,000
Easement Stewardship	\$240,000	\$0		\$240,000
Travel	\$27,000	\$0		\$27,000
Professional Services	\$415,000	\$0		\$415,000
Direct Support Services	\$135,500	\$0		\$135,500
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$40,000	\$0		\$40,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$11,500	\$0		\$11,500
DNR IDP	\$10,000	\$0		\$10,000
Total	\$7,942,600	\$653,600		\$8,596,200

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
NWLT Land Protection Staff	1.02	4.00	\$158,600	\$0		\$158,600
MLT Land Protection Staff	0.60	4.00	\$228,000	\$0		\$228,000
Total	1.62	8.00	\$386,600	\$0		\$386,600

Budget and Cash Leverage by Partnership

BudgetName	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$158,600	\$0		\$158,600
Contracts	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$58,800	\$0		\$58,800
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$2,036,200	\$203,600	County, lake associations, landowners	\$2,239,800
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$12,000	\$0		\$12,000
Professional Services	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$123,000	\$0		\$123,000
Direct Support Services	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$73,500	\$0		\$73,500
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$40,000	\$0		\$40,000
Capital Equipment	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$8,500	\$0		\$8,500
DNR IDP	Northern Waters Land Trust	\$10,000	\$0		\$10,000
Total		\$2,520,600	\$203,600		\$2,724,200

Personnel - Northern Waters Land Trust

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
NWLT Land Protection Staff	1.02	4.00	\$158,600	\$0		\$158,600
Total	1.02	4.00	\$158,600	\$0		\$158,600

BudgetName	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	Minnesota Land Trust	\$228,000	\$0		\$228,000
Contracts	Minnesota Land Trust	\$82,000	\$0		\$82,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	Minnesota Land Trust	\$4,500,000	\$450,000	Landowner donation of easement value.	\$4,950,000

Easement Stewardship	Minnesota Land Trust	\$240,000	\$0	\$240,000
Travel	Minnesota Land Trust	\$15,000	\$0	\$15,000
Professional Services	Minnesota Land Trust	\$292,000	\$0	\$292,000
Direct Support Services	Minnesota Land Trust	\$62,000	\$0	\$62,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0	\$0
Capital Equipment	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0	\$0
Supplies/Materials	Minnesota Land Trust	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
DNR IDP	Minnesota Land Trust	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total		\$5,422,000	\$450,000	\$5,872,000

Personnel - Minnesota Land Trust

Position	FTE	Over # of years	ISOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
MLT Land Protection Staff	0.60	4.00	\$228,000	\$0		\$228,000
Total	0.60	4.00	\$228,000	\$0		\$228,000

Amount of Request: \$7,942,600
Amount of Leverage: \$653,600
Leverage as a percent of the Request: 8.23%
DSS + Personnel: \$522,100
As a % of the total request: 6.57%
Easement Stewardship: \$240,000
As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 5.33%

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

NWLT and MLT have individual, pre-determined percentages.

MLT - In a process that was approved by the 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.

What is included in the contracts line?

NWLT - One sole source provider contractor.
MLT - Writing of habitat management plans by vendors, posting of easement boundaries.

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:

Minnesota Land Trust staff regularly rents vehicles for grant-related purposes, which is a significant cost savings over use of personal vehicles.

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:

NWLT plans to cover any expenses not covered by this grant through general operating income. MLT encourages landowners to fully or partially donate the value of conservation easements to the program; the leverage amount is a conservative estimate of value we expect to see donated by landowners.

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:

Outputs would be reduced proportionately to the funding that was allocated. Calculations would ensure NWLT would secure one priority parcel in fee title acquisition and conduct effective landowner outreach. MLT's budget would enable a proportionate amount of conservation easement acres.

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

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.

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?

NWLT estimates the personnel costs for fee title acquisition, conservation easement outreach and grant administration activities to accomplish the specific outcomes for each grant.

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.

What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?

NWLT expects to complete 5 fee title acquisitions through this proposal.

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	455	455
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	1,100	1,100
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	1,555	1,555

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	\$2,269,900	\$2,269,900
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,672,700	\$5,672,700
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,942,600	\$7,942,600

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	455	455
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	1,100	1,100
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	1,555	1,555

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	\$2,269,900	\$2,269,900
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,672,700	\$5,672,700
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,942,600	\$7,942,600

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	\$4,989
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,157
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	\$4,989
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,157
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Automatic system calculation / not entered by managers

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Fee title acquisition 12,070 shoreline feet.

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 Private shoreline habitat and forested parcels totaling 1,527 acres will be permanently protected from development and fragmentation through conservation easements. Riparian forest lands under easement will maintain healthy habitat complexes for upland and aquatic species; forest cover will enhance water quality habitat for tullibee lakes. Conservation easement properties will protect fish habitat to ensure high quality fishing opportunities. Greater public access for wildlife and outdoors-related recreation will be attained through Fee-Title acquisition of properties to be conveyed to either Cass County as forest management lands or to the DNR as AMA's and open to public for hunting.*

Parcel List

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

Criteria based scoring systems provide a standardized set of data from which multiple projects can be compared relative to each other and individual projects can be compared against a baseline. Scoring systems are a set of data, not a final, complete decision making tool. Local expertise and experience, programmatic goals, timelines, available resources, capacity, and other more subjective factors might also come into play in project selection and decision making.

MLT and LLAWF accept proposals via an RFP process from targeted landowners with properties on prioritized tullibee lakes. A technical team of experts scores and ranks each project proposal and identifies priorities from those submitted.

The attached scoresheet provides an approach to criteria based scoring that considers: 1) Ecological Integrity/Viability as current status; 2) Threat/Urgency as a future scenario if protection is not afforded; and 3) Cost reflecting the overall value realized through the acquisition of a conservation easement (including a reflection of donative value). Ecological Integrity weights property size, condition, and context equally (at least as an initial starting point). The three primary factors, when taken together, provide a good estimate of long-term viability for biodiversity at the site: 1) Size of the parcel to be protected, 2) Condition of the habitat on the parcel, and 3) its Landscape context (both from a protection and ecological standpoint).

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Cass

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
NWLT - Girl/Woman	140 30 235	241	\$610,500	No	Full	Full
NWLT - Roosevelt	13926223	28	\$750,000	No	Full	Full
NWLT - Wabedo/Louise Complex	140 28222	148	\$565,600	No	Limited	Full
NWLT - Washburn	1392720 1	18	\$70,600	No	Full	Full

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

Cass

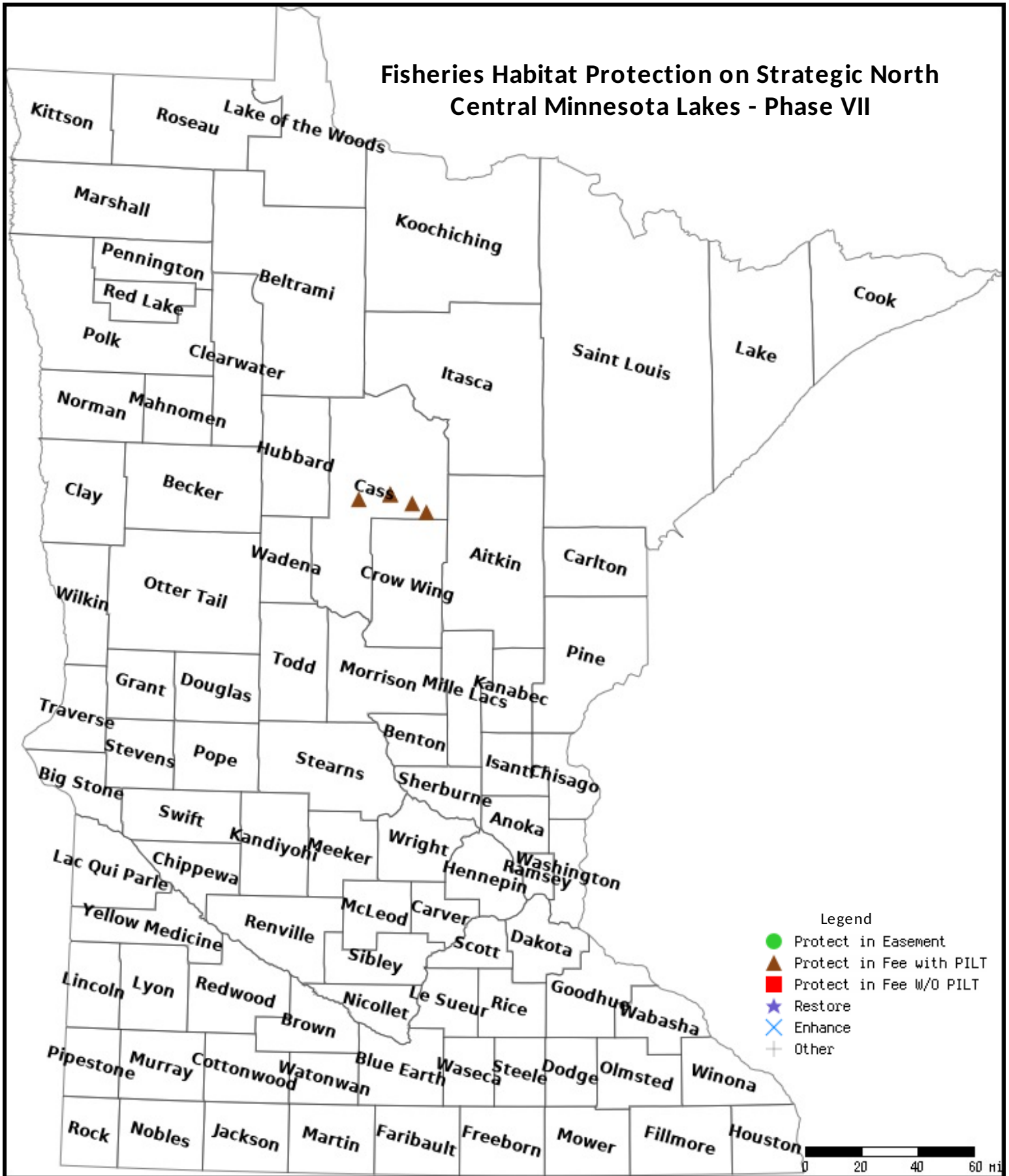
Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	# Bldgs?	Bldg Improve Desc	Value of Bldg	Disposition of Improvements
NWLT - Wabedo	140 28222	20	\$248,500	1	Utility building	\$500	Remove

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map

Fisheries Habitat Protection on Strategic North Central Minnesota Lakes - Phase VII



Data Generated From Parcel List



Fisheries Habitat Protection on Strategic North Central Minnesota Lakes

Phase 7

The Northern Waters Land Trust and the Minnesota Land Trust are requesting **\$7,942,600** for the seventh phase of the Fisheries Habitat Protection on Strategic North Central Minnesota Lakes Program.

During the seventh phase of this program, Northern Waters Land Trust and Minnesota Land Trust will protect 1,555 acres (1,100 acres of permanent conservation easement and 455 acres fee title acquisition) of high priority habitat and over 2 miles of shoreline.

Our efforts will be focused on 15 tullibee refuge lakes and their watersheds. Applications to our easement program will be evaluated and ranked to maximize conservation benefit, leveraging \$653,620 in landowner, lake association, and supporting agency contributions.

How Does the Program Support State Goals?

This program prioritizes critical near-shore habitats, riparian areas, and key forested parcels on 15 priority tullibee “refuge” lakes identified by Minnesota DNR Fisheries researchers. This work is in line with the goals set out in the *Long Range Plan for Fisheries Management*, the *Leech Lake River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan*, and the *Pine River One Watershed One Plan*.



Hansi Johnson

Outdoor Heritage Fund Request:

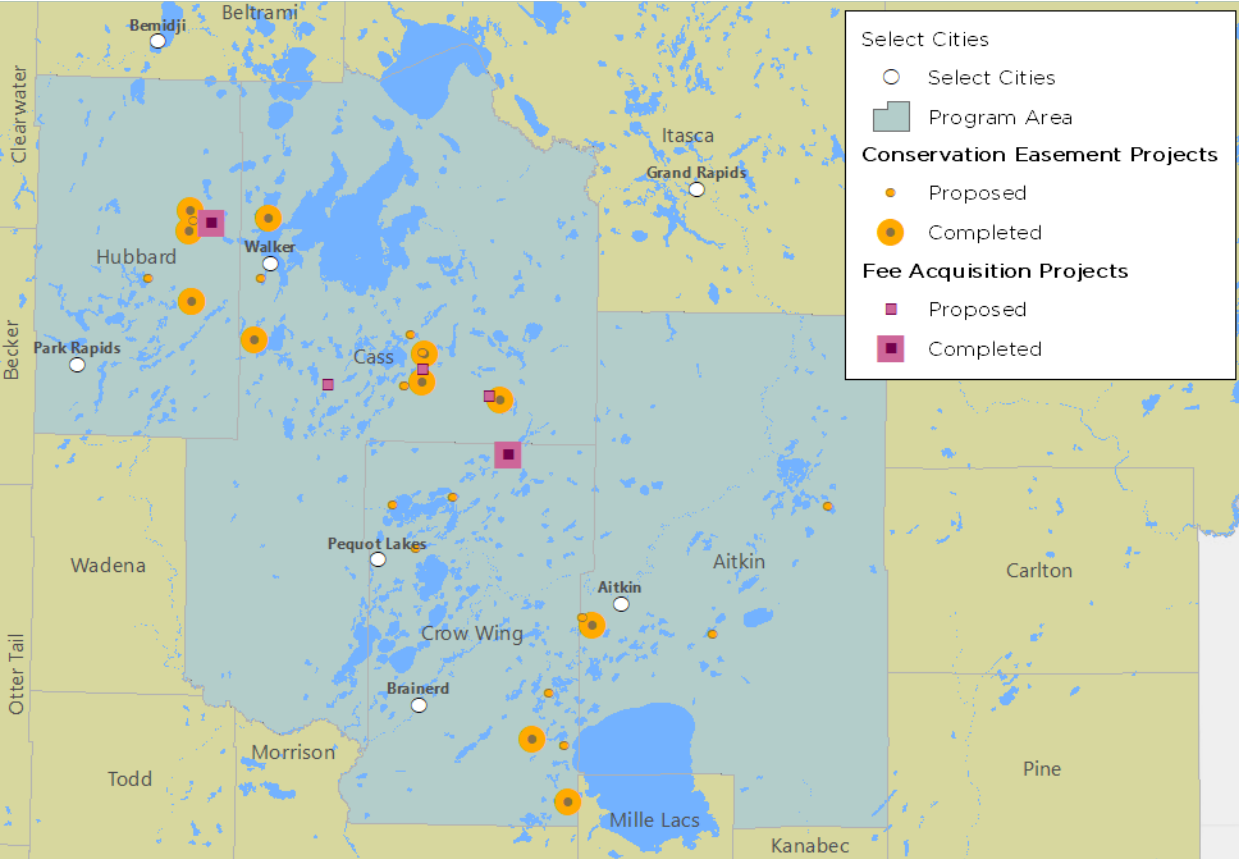
\$7,942,600 for:

- 1,100 acres of perpetual conservation easements.
- 455 acres of fee land acquisition.

For more information about this proposal, please contact Kathy DonCarlos, Northern Waters Land Trust at (218)-547-4510 or kathyd@northernwaterslandtrust.org

What Are the Outcomes?

- Healthy, resilient tullibee lakes that sustain vibrant fish populations in the face of a changing climate.
- Increased public access for wildlife- and outdoors-related recreation.
- Elevated private landowner participation in lakeshore conservation.



MINNESOTA LAND TRUST

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What has Been Accomplished to Date in the Program?

Complete (Phase I):

Completed 6 projects protecting 765 acres (662 acres conservation easements / 103 acres fee) of habitat and 7.9 miles of shoreline. Leverage in the amount of \$956,000 was realized.

In Progress (Phases II, III, IV, & V):

Completed 9 projects protecting 1,123 acres of habitat. We have fully subscribed phases II - IV related to conservation easements and are on track to meet or exceed our goals. Fee title acquisition projects are on target and lands will be conveyed to the DNR for new AMAs.

Phases VI & VII (Planned):

Starting in July, we will begin using Phase VI of the program to protect 520 acres and 1,000 ft of shoreline.

The Fisheries Habitat Protection on Strategic North Central Minnesota Lakes Program has generated considerable interest among landowners in protecting these places. **Collectively these landowners have contributed over \$2.8 million in easement value as leverage to the \$6.4 million investment by the Outdoor Heritage Fund.**



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Clean Water Critical Habitat Project Scoresheet

Program Requirements	
In a tullibee lake watershed?	Yes or No
In Aitkin, Cass, Crow Wing or Hubbard County?	Yes or No
At least 20 acres protected in Conservation Easement?	Yes or No
Others?	Yes or No

1. ECOLOGICAL FACTORS

Size/Abundance of Habitat (1/3 of Overall Ecological Score)

Criteria	Score	Max Points	Draft Guidelines -
Feet of Shoreline	0	30	10 points for 0 - 2,000 feet
			15 points for 2,001 - 5,000 feet
			20 points for 5,001 - 10,000 feet
			25 points for 10,001 - 20,000 feet
			30 points for ≥ 20,000 feet
Parcel Acres to be Protected by Easement	0	60	10 points for 10 - 30 acres
			20 points for 31 - 80 acres
			30 points for 81 - 160 acres
			40 points for 161 - 300 acres
			50 points for 301 - 400 acres
			60 points for ≥ 401 acres
	0	Size/Abundance Subtotal Score	

Quality/Condition of Resource (1/3 of Overall Ecological Score)

Criteria	Score	Max Points	Draft Guidelines -
Designated Sensitive Shoreland	0	30	10 point for ≤ 33%
			20 points for 34 - 66%
			30 points for 67 - 100%
% Property Developed (more development, less value)	0	30	0 points for ≥ 31% developed
			10 points for 21 - 30% developed
			20 points for 11 - 20% developed
			30 points for 0 - 10% developed
Site visit/Aerial evaluation	0	30	Quality habitat on property
			0 points - Highly impacted (trails, logging, structures etc.)
			10 points - Moderately impacted (significant number of trails, land disturbance)
			20 points - Mostly in natural state (limited natural foot trails, good forest management, no structures etc.)
			30 points - Undisturbed natural state
	0	Quality/Condition of Resource Score	

Landscape Context (1/3 of Overall Ecological Score)

Criteria	Score	Max Points	Draft Guidelines -
Adjoining protected land	0	30	All sides=30, One side=10, No=0 Public land would include tribal land.
Near, but not adjoining, protected land within 3 miles of the property	0	30	10 point for 500 - 6,000 acres
			20 points for 6,001 - 12,000 acres
			30 points for 12,001 - 18,000 acres
Wildlife Action Network	0	30	0 points for not in WAN
			10 points Low
			15 points Low-Medium
			20 points Medium
			25 points Medium High
			30 points High
	0	Landscape Context subtotal score	
	0	Ecological Total = (Size + Quality + Landscape)/3.	

2. Threat/Urgency			
Criteria	Score	Max Points	Draft Guidelines -
Urgency - Disturbance in Minor Watershed (more disturbance, higher score)	0	45	45 points for ≥ 31% developed
			30 points for 21 - 30% developed
			20 points for 11 - 20% developed
			10 points for 0 - 10% developed
Risk Classification from Water Plans (more risk, higher score)	0	45	10 = Vigilance
			20 = Protection
			30 = Risk
			45 = High Risk
	0	Threat Urgency Total	

3. Cost - Consider after initial application screening and landowner knowledge			
Criteria	Score	Max Points	Draft Guidelines -
Cost/donative value (Bang for the buck)	0	90	90 = 90 - 100% donation
			70 = 51 - 89% donation
			50 = 26 - 50% donation
			30 = 5 - 25% donation
			0 = 0 - 4% donation

Landscape Context	0
Threat/Urgency	0
Cost/Donative Value	0
TOTAL SCORE	0