

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2022 / ML 2021 Request for Funding



Date: May 21, 2020

Program or Project Title: Accelerated Native Prairie Bank Protection-Phase VIII (PA06)

Funds Requested: \$1,500,000

Manager's Name: Judy Schulte

Organization: MN DNR

Address: 1241 E Bridge Street

City: Redwood Falls, MN 56283

Office Number: 507-637-6016

Email: judy.schulte@state.mn.us

County Locations: Not Listed

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Prairie

Abstract:

Native Prairie Bank will work with willing landowners to permanently protect 400 acres of native prairie and supporting habitat through perpetual conservation easements. Easement acquisition will focus on Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan identified landscapes and target Minnesota Biological Survey identified threatened and endangered plant and animal species, high quality plant communities, and key habitats for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and other wildlife species.

Design and scope of work:

The loss of native prairie and associated grassland habitat is arguably the greatest conservation challenge facing western and southern Minnesota. Through acquisition of Native Prairie Bank conservation easements, this proposal aims to permanently protect 400 acres of native prairie habitat.

Native prairie is a fragile, unique natural ecosystem that consists of thousands of different organisms, plants, animals, bacteria and soil fungi. Their complex interactions provide the food, water and shelter required by many of Minnesota's rare, threatened and endangered species. Native prairie provides a multitude of benefits to the citizens of the state, such as water filtration and recharge, pollinator and wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, soil health, erosion control, outdoor recreation, etc. High quality native prairies provide the best available habitat for grassland dependent pollinators, birds and animals. Restoration efforts aim to meet the standards set by these original native prairies.

The Minnesota Biological Survey has identified about 249,000 acres of remaining native prairie in Minnesota, approximately 1.3% of what once existed in the state. Of these 249,000 acres, approximately 118,000 acres still have no formal protection. Threats to native prairie continue to be widespread including cropland conversion, mining, development, invasive species, woody encroachment and non-prairie focused land use/management.

Recognizing that protecting grassland and wetland habitat is one of the most critical conservation challenges facing Minnesota, over a dozen leading conservation organizations developed the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan. Several outcomes are identified in the

plan, one being the protection of all remaining native prairie, largely through conservation easements. One of the primary easement tools for native prairie protection in Minnesota is the DNR administered Native Prairie Bank easement. Native Prairie Bank was established by the 1987 legislature as a tool to protect native prairie in a long-term “bank” by authorizing the state to acquire conservation easements from willing landowners. To date 155 Native Prairie Banks protect close to 14,000 acres. Native Prairie Bank targets the protection of native prairie tracts, but can also include adjoining lands as buffers and additional habitat.

Eligible tracts are prioritized based on several scientific factors including:

- 1) Size and quality of habitat, focusing on diverse native prairie communities identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey
- 2) Occurrence of threatened and endangered species or suitability of habitat for Species in Greatest Conservation Need
- 3) Lands that are part of a larger habitat complex

Native Prairie Bank easements provide enduring, long-term protection by placing restrictions on future land use and grant the DNR the right to monitor and manage the prairie.

Native Prairie Bank coordinates with Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan partners and utilizes the network of established Local Technical Teams (local staff from SWCDs, NRCS, DNR, USFWS, The Nature Conservancy, Pheasants Forever, etc.) to reach out to landowners and increase enrollment.

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:

Native Prairie Bank gives priority to sites identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey and targets, threatened, endangered, and other rare plant and animal species, high quality plant communities, and key habitats for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). According to Minnesota Biological Survey staff, based on information gathered during the updating of the Minnesota Wildlife Action Plan (formally known as Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare), there are 89 Species of Greatest Conservation Need that occur in the prairie region of the state.

Each native prairie being targeted and protected through this proposal will typically support several Species in Greatest Conservation Need. SGCNs found on native prairies include but are not limited to white-tailed jackrabbit, American badger, northern pintail, short-eared owl, Henslow's sparrow, upland sandpiper, sedge wren, marbled godwit, western meadowlark, greater-prairie chicken, Blanding's turtle, Great Plains toad, plains hog-nosed snake, gophersnake, common five-lined skink, and multiple spiders, dragonflies, butterflies, moths, beetles and bees.

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

Minnesota once held 18 million acres of prairie, today only 1.3% remains. The remaining native prairie acres, once were thought of as too rocky or wet for row crops, but with equipment and technological advancements, and growing competition for tillable acres, this is no longer the case. In addition to grassland-to-cropland conversion, significant degradation and loss of native prairie is also occurring due to, invasive species, development, mineral extraction, and lack of prairie-oriented management

Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan indicates that habitat-related stressors are a predominant stressor for 70% of Species in Greatest Conservation Need (241 of the 346 species), with habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation being top concerns. Multiple research studies show a direct correlation between declining grassland habitat and declining grassland wildlife populations further indicating that the current trajectory of grassland and prairie loss will increase the pressure and stress we are placing on grassland dependent wildlife

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:

Native Prairie Bank scores and selects easements based on criteria including, the diversity and quality of native prairie habitat as ranked by the Minnesota Biological Survey, size of the prairie, occurrence of or suitable habitat for threatened and endangered species and Species in Greatest Conservation Need, location relative to other native prairie or protected lands (includes Prairie Plan target landscapes), potential for long-term management and other factors that would insure long-term benefits and sustainability for Minnesota's critical wildlife species. Native Prairie Bank's numerical scoring and selection process prioritizes parcels that build on existing habitat complexes, avoids fragmentation and targets Minnesota Biological Survey priority plant communities and areas of biodiversity significance. Please see the Native Prairie Bank scoring criteria uploaded as part of this proposal.

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

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan
- Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan 2015-2025

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

The Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan identifies successful protection measures as the percent of native prairie, grassland and wetland acres protected, including all native prairies. The plan estimates that of the 191,050 native prairie acres within core areas, 83,320 acres still need protection. This proposal directly aims to protect these target native prairie areas and contributes to the plan's indicators for the health of individual species, habitat, economics, and water quality, specifically addressing many example indicators identified (stable grassland bird populations, butterfly/bee diversity, increased conservation grazing, etc.).

Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan indicates that habitat-related stressors are a predominant stressor for 70% of Species in Greatest Conservation Need, with habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation being top concerns. Performance measures focus on acres of protected/restored habitat within Conservation Focus Areas which in the prairie region directly correlate with the Prairie Plan Priority Areas targeted in this proposal.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Prairie:

- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna

Forest / Prairie Transition:

- Protect, enhance, and restore rare native remnant prairie

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 inception in 1987, Native Prairie Bank has been the best conservation easement option in Minnesota for the perpetual protection of high quality native prairie. In addition to prioritizing the acquisition of the 400 acres protected through this proposal within the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan identified landscapes and associated large habitat complexes, Native Prairie Bank gives priority to remnant prairie sites identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey and targets rare, threatened and endangered plant and animal species, high quality plant communities, and key habitats for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). The high quality prairie protected through this proposal is not only home to many Species in Greatest Conservation Need but also to other species such as pheasants, deer, grasshopper sparrows, bobolink, gray partridge, sharp-tailed grouse, etc.

For the past 30 years, Native Prairie Bank has proven it can protect these unique wildlife habitats and prides itself on the great working relationships maintained with the landowners of these parcels to manage and enhance them. A parcel enrolled in Native Prairie Bank is not just a number in a database or a folder in a filing cabinet. Native Prairie Bank is a legal state administered easement that includes an on-going working relationship between the landowner and the DNR manager, in which both parties know each other by first name.

Relationship to other funds:

- Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund

Describe the relationship of the funds:

Native Prairie Bank has a good track record of securing Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund (ENRTF) dollars for the stewardship of Native Prairie Bank easements. This includes funding for landowner stewardship plans, technical assistance, prescribed burning and invasive species control, as well as additional acquisition of easements. The program will continue to seek ENRTF funds for native prairie stewardship activities.

Does this program include leverage in funds:

No

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 request accelerates Native Prairie Bank protection to a level not attainable but for the appropriation. Prior to receiving OHF, Native Prairie Bank protected an average of 328 acres/year. Since receiving OHF, Native Prairie Bank protects an average of 607 acres/year, almost doubling the rate of acquisition.

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

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2018	ENRTF	\$1,070,692
2003	ENRTF	\$191,600
2017	ENRTF	\$1,479,999
2015	ENRTF	\$2,750,000
2013	ENRTF	\$472,000
2011	ENRTF	\$521,000
2010	ENRTF	\$94,500

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

DNR's Conservation Easement Stewardship policy is to protect both the conservation values of the protected property and the state's investment in those interests. Stewardship elements include baseline property report creation, enforcement protocols, regular compliance monitoring, effective record keeping and reporting, and maintaining good working relationships with the easement landowners. Native Prairie Bank implements this policy by following DNR Operational Order 128 "Conservation Easement Stewardship" along with the "Ecological and Water Resources Division Conservation Easement Stewardship Plan and Guidelines", which call for annual landowner contact as well as on-the-ground monitoring once every three years. If a violation is found, annual site visits (or more frequently) are conducted until the violation is rectified. Budgeted into this proposal is funding to deposit into an account dedicated to the perpetual monitoring and enforcement of Native Prairie Bank easements acquired under this proposal.

Native Prairie Bank staff in partnership with the landowner will actively seek funding to execute the best on-going prairie management activities. These management activities, such as prescribed burning, invasive species control, woody control, etc., will be completed when feasible through a variety of funding sources.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
FY22-24	OHF	Develop Baseline Property Report to be signed by both the landowner and DNR at time of closing.	Once easement closes, transfer funds to dedicated Conservation Easement Stewardship Account per OHF appropriation and accomplishment plan for long-term easement stewardship.	
Perpetually/Annually	Interest derived from dedicated Conservation Easement Stewardship Account established with this appropriation.	Ongoing landowner partnership, monitoring, reporting and easement stewardship as laid out in DNR Operational Order 128 and the Division of Ecological and Water Resources Conservation Easement Stewardship Division Guidelines.		
FY22-24 (or within 5 years post acquisition)	OHF	Restore any cropped acres present at time of acquisition to local-ecotype native prairie seed (estimated 30 acres).		
On-Going	Variety of Funding Sources (Landowner, ENRTF, OHF, Game & Fish, USDA Programs, etc.)	Native Prairie Bank staff in partnership with the landowner will actively seek funding to execute the best on-going prairie management activities. These management activities, such as prescribed burning, invasive species control, woody control, etc., will be completed when feasible.		

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

Wildlife species vary by prairie type and location, making it difficult to have indicator species represent the entire proposal. Dependent on the prairie/location, indicator species may include prairie chickens, pheasants, bobolinks, grasshopper sparrows, regal fritillary butterflies and monarch butterflies.

According to research literature and DNR wildlife staff observations, prairie chickens require 320 acres minimum of high-quality grasslands with no wildlife hostile habitat (woodlots, farmsteads, etc.) nearby. For every 320 acre patch in the northwest Minnesota prairie chicken range, we can expect there to be a lek or booming ground. The average Minnesota booming ground is roughly 11 males.

Looking at ratios of CRP acres in Minnesota to pheasant harvest, DNR wildlife staff estimate that every three acres of grassland habitat will typically support the harvest of one rooster.

Breeding territory size for bobolinks and grasshopper sparrows is 1.7 and 2.1 acres respectively in high-quality habitat in Wisconsin. If the entire habitat was occupied, 100 acres could potentially hold 60 pairs of bobolinks and 48 pairs of grasshopper sparrows.

Regal Fritillary, a Species in Greatest Conservation Need, has suffered recent catastrophic decline. Based on field observations, Minnesota Biological Survey staff created a reasonable hypothesis that suggests 40 acres of high-quality dry-mesic native prairie has the potential to support approximately 10 adult Regal Fritillary annually.

University of Minnesota research has shown it takes approximately 30 milkweeds to result in one monarch butterfly contributing to overwintering Mexican populations. Grasslands can have between 100-250 milkweed/acre, potentially contributing 3-8 monarchs/acre.

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

Native Prairie Bank may acquire a few acres of cropland in order to properly buffer the native prairie acres. Limited farming of these acres may occur until the area is restored into a diverse local-ecotype prairie. Restoration of all cropland acres will occur prior to the end of this appropriation.

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:

When necessary, Native Prairie Bank will allow the use of a field road for the landowner to access the site or adjacent land-locked parcel for land management activities. Often times, these non-public field roads are maintained in permanent vegetated cover with little to no trace of vehicle traffic.

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

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished:

Use of the allowed field road is limited to the landowner for necessary activities only. Field road is documented on the Exhibit A Map that is recorded along with the easement at the county in addition to being photographed and documented in the Baseline Property Report to insure the road does not increase in size or expand from existing necessary location. Through implementation of DNR Operational Order 128 "Conservation Easement Stewardship" along with the "Ecological and Water Resources Division Conservation Easement Stewardship Plan and Guidelines" Native Prairie Banks acquired with these funds will be monitored at least once every 3 years, at which time the field road will be checked for compliance.

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? - **Yes**

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?
2018	1490000	450	0	0	380		No
2017	2481000	70643	0	0	415		No
2016	2541000	747180	0	0	420	406	No
2015	3740000	2957700	0	0	760	1342	Yes
2014	3000000	2896600	0	0	600	980	Yes
2013	707600	707600	0	0	460	387	Yes
2011	347900	347900	0	0	150	194	Yes
2010	590700	590700	0	0	275	345	Yes

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Enroll 400 acres of Native Prairie Bank Easements	6/30/2025
Restore approximately 30 acres of prairie (inclusion cropped acres acquired with these funds)	6/30/2029

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$1,500,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$150,000	\$0		\$150,000
Contracts	\$6,000	\$0		\$6,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$900,000	\$0		\$900,000
Easement Stewardship	\$200,000	\$0		\$200,000
Travel	\$19,400	\$0		\$19,400
Professional Services	\$200,000	\$0		\$200,000
Direct Support Services	\$20,600	\$0		\$20,600
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$4,000	\$0		\$4,000
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$1,500,000	\$0	-	\$1,500,000

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Project/Acquisition Coordinator	0.06	4.00	\$20,000	\$0		\$20,000
Natural Resource Specialist/Technician	0.46	4.00	\$130,000	\$0		\$130,000
Total	0.52	8.00	\$150,000	\$0	-	\$150,000

Amount of Request: \$1,500,000
 Amount of Leverage: \$0
 Leverage as a percent of the Request: 0.00%
 DSS + Personnel: \$170,600
 As a % of the total request: 11.37%
 Easement Stewardship: \$200,000
 As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 22.22%

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

The DNR Direct & Necessary Cost Calculator was used to determine Direct Support Service costs. DNR's Direct & Necessary Costs (\$20,644) pay for activities that are directly related to and necessary for accomplishing appropriated projects and calculated based on the specific demands of this project. Direct and necessary costs cover HR support (~\$3,455), Safety Support (~\$642), Financial Support (~\$2,164), Communication support (~\$3,972), IT Support (~\$6,965) and Planning Support (~\$3,446).

What is included in the contracts line?

All contract dollars will be tied to restoration work. There may be circumstances where cropland acres (approximately 30 acres total) are included in the Native Prairie Bank easements acquired with these funds in order to provide a buffer to the native prairie. In these cases, the cropland acres would be restored as part of this proposal and some activities tied to these restorations may be contracted out to private vendors or the Conservation Corps of Minnesota.

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:

Most DNR activities tied to this proposal, such as boundary posting, seed harvest, planting, weed control, etc. will require the use of DNR fleet equipment which has standard costs tied to the amount of usage needed. An estimated 60% of the travel costs will go to necessary travel and 40% will go towards equipment 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:

Some NPB acquisition projects are funded with a combination of state appropriations (e.g. OHF and ENRTF). If any activities are split funded their accomplishment acres will be pro-rated.

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:

This project is scalable and can be proportionately cut in most circumstances. Essentially, less funding allocated would mean less native prairie acres protected. There are efficiencies that come with acquiring more acres at one time, especially if neighboring sites can be coordinated together for landowner meetings, site visits, survey activities, etc.

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

Budgeted into this work plan is funding to be deposited into the DNR’s Conservation Easement Stewardship Account dedicated to the perpetual monitoring and enforcement of conservation easements. The dedicated stewardship funds will provide the support needed for long-term, ongoing monitoring and minor enforcement activities of Native Prairie Bank easements acquired under this proposal. For each specific Native Prairie Bank easement, initial investment dollars are determined by using a DNR approved Conservation Easement Stewardship Calculator, which estimates the annual expenses and the investment needed to generate annual income sufficient to cover these expenses in perpetuity. Currently, the calculator averages \$18,000 to \$26,000 per easement.

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 funding will be used to pay project-associated costs for staff paid almost exclusively with special project funds. These positions would not exist, but for special project funding received through the OHF and other funds. Each year these staff code time working on OHF related acquisition activities using specific funding string codes.

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	400	0	0	400
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	400	0	0	400

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	320
Enhance	0
Total	320

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	\$1,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,500,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$1,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,500,000

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	80	0	320	0	400
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	80	0	320	0	400

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	\$300,000	\$0	\$1,200,000	\$0	\$1,500,000
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$300,000	\$0	\$1,200,000	\$0	\$1,500,000

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	\$3,750	\$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	\$3,750	\$0	\$3,750	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Automatic system calculation / not entered by managers

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

0

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 forest-prairie transition region:

- Remnant native prairies are part of large complexes of restored prairies, grasslands, and large and small wetlands -*Acres of native prairie protected insuring grassland habitat for upland birds*
 - Acres protected within Prairie Plan Core and Corridor Areas*
 - Average size of protected complex*

Programs in prairie region:

- Remnant native prairies are part of large complexes of restored prairies, grasslands, and large and small wetlands -*Acres of native prairie protected insuring grassland habitat for upland birds*
 - Acres protected within Prairie Plan Core and Corridor Areas*
 - Average size of protected complex*

Parcel List

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

Native Prairie Bank easements acquired through this proposal will be targeted within Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan identified landscapes in addition to being ranked and prioritized through the Native Prairie Bank acquisition evaluation process. The Native Prairie Bank acquisition evaluation process requires that each potential site be scored and selected based on criteria including, the diversity and quality of native prairie habitat as ranked by the Minnesota Biological Survey, size of the prairie, occurrence of or suitable habitat for threatened and endangered species and Species in Greatest Conservation Need, location relative to other native prairie or protected lands (includes Prairie Plan target landscapes), potential for long-term management and other factors that would insure long-term benefits and sustainability for Minnesota’s critical wildlife species. Native Prairie Bank’s numerical scoring and prioritization process insures that only the top ranked prairie parcels are acquired. Please see the Native Prairie Bank scoring criteria uploaded as part of this proposal for detailed scoring information.

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Conservation easement acquisition will target protection of the LAST of Minnesotas high quality remnant prairies within MN Prairie Conservation Plan priority areas (please see attached map for more details). Specific parcels will be added to the parcel list as selected through the evaluation and ranking process described above.	2	400	\$0	No	No	No

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

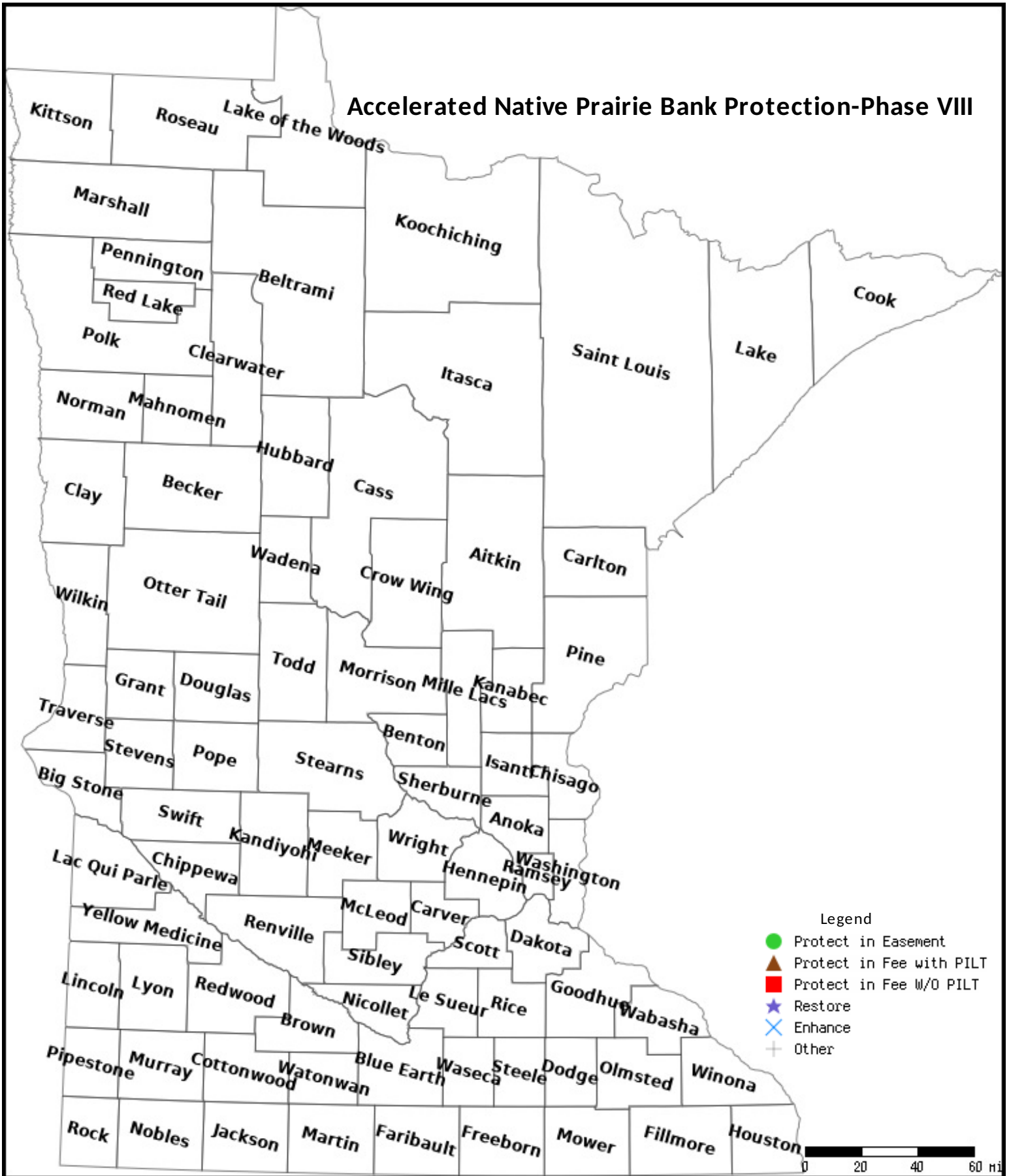
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Parcel Map

Accelerated Native Prairie Bank Protection-Phase VIII



Data Generated From Parcel List

Accelerated Native Prairie Bank Protection-Phase VIII

Since inception in 1987, the state's leading prairie experts have driven high expectations and tight standards to make Native Prairie Bank a top choice for native prairie conservation.

Threats to Native Prairie

The loss of native prairie and associated grassland habitat is arguably the greatest conservation challenge facing western and southern Minnesota. Prairies are lost and degraded due to wide variety of factors. Below are a few examples, however the threats do not end there. Additional threats include cropland conversion, property development, mineral extraction, harsh use, etc.



Rock Removal



Broadcast Spray



Invasive Species



Woody Encroachment

This Proposal Aims to Strategically Protect High Quality Native Prairie through:

Targeted protection of Minnesota's best remaining native prairie through permanent conservation easements

Selection based on size, quality and diversity of native prairie habitat, as well as occurrences of threatened/endangered species and suitable habitat for Species in Greatest Conservation Need

Focus on Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan priority areas and building onto larger habitat complexes

Partner with network of Prairie Plan Local Technical Teams and prairie landowners to protect and improve native prairie management and long-term habitat health.

OHF Accomplishments To-Date for Native Prairie Bank

Funding Year	Acres Proposed	Acres Completed	Acres Under Active Negotiation
ML 10	275	345	CLOSED
ML 11	150	194	CLOSED
ML 13	460	387	CLOSED
ML 14	600	980	CLOSED
ML 15	760	1,342	CLOSED
ML 16	420	406	SOON TO CLOSE
ML 17	415		441
ML 18	380		298+

Past Project Highlights



ML 13 – Appleton 19-1 NPB
Lac qui Parle Prairie Plan Core Area



ML 16 – Gentilly 27-1 NPB
Glacial Ridge Prairie Plan Core Area



ML 14 –
Swedes Forest 22-2 NPB
Upper Minnesota River
Prairie Plan Core Area



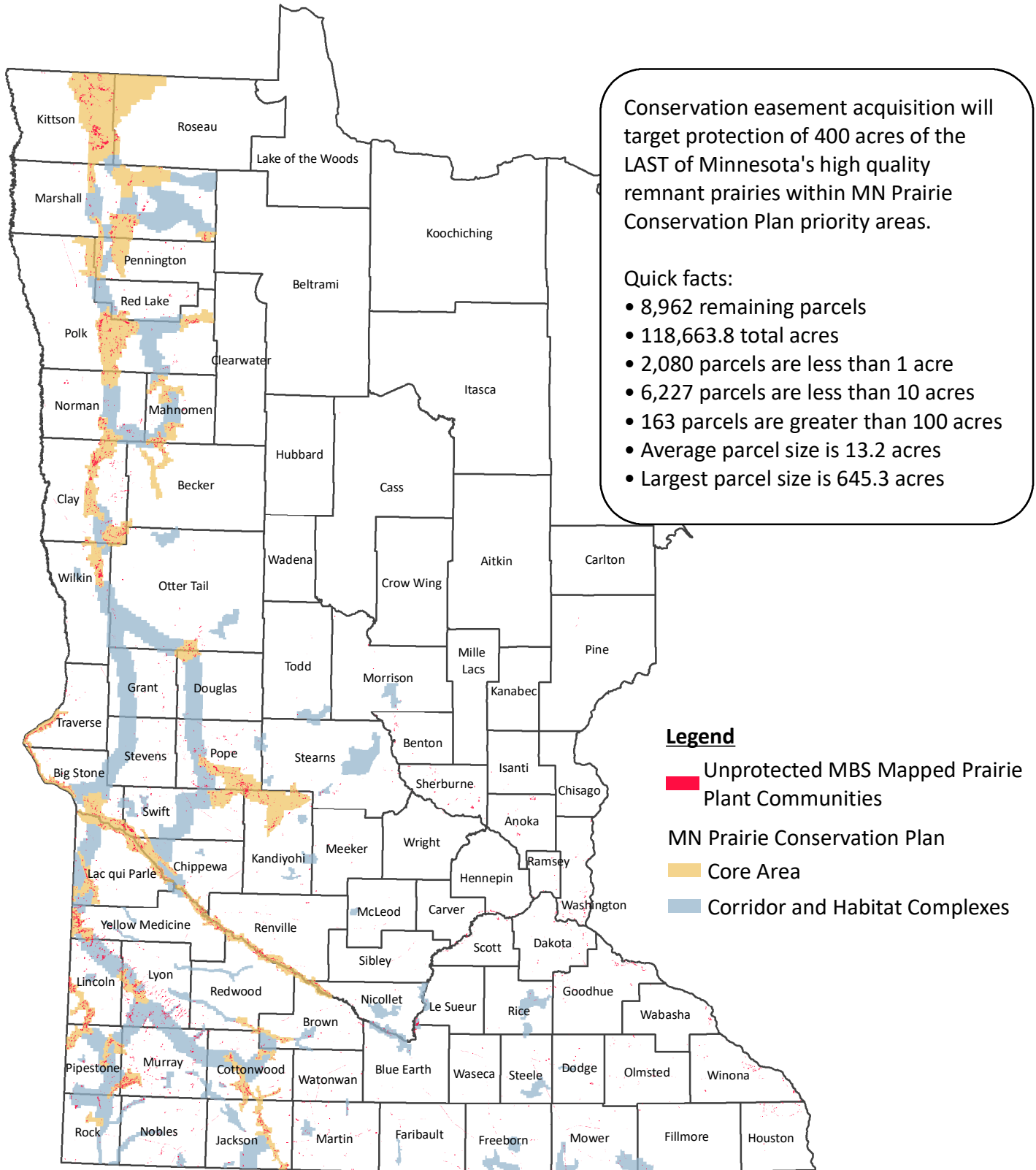
ML 15 – Godfrey 7-1 NPB
Glacial Ridge Prairie Plan Core Area



ML 15 – Swedes Forest 21-2 NPB
Upper Minnesota River Prairie Plan Core Area

ML21 Outdoor Heritage Fund Proposal

Accelerated Native Prairie Bank Protection - Phase VIII



This map highlights Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) mapped native prairie and prairie complexes that are unprotected, in red, as of 3/27/2020.





Native Prairie Bank Evaluation Form

Date _____

Site Name _____ County _____
 Township _____ Range _____ Section(s) _____
 Acres _____ Landowner Name(s) _____ SNA Evaluator _____

EVALUATION FACTORS	NOTES	POINTS
<i>Diversity and quality of native prairie habitat</i>		
<i>Size of prairie</i>		
<i>Occurrence of, or suitable habitat for, rare species</i>		
<i>Location relative to other native prairie and/or public lands</i>		
<i>Potential for long-term management and enhancement</i>		
<i>Additional factors (include as appropriate)</i>		
OVERALL SITE EVALUATION		TOTAL 0

Native Prairie Bank Evaluation Guidelines

EVALUATION FACTORS	NOTES	POINTS
<p><i>Diversity and quality of native prairie habitat</i></p>	<p><i>30 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of a native plant community with A, B, or B/C element occurrence (EO) ranking based on DNR Natural Heritage Database and Minnesota Biological Survey protocols; <i>and/or</i> • At least 75% of the project site's native prairie communities are C rank or higher based on DNR Natural Heritage Database, Minnesota Biological Survey protocols; <i>and/or</i> • Site identified as Minnesota Biological Survey site of Outstanding Biodiversity Significance; <i>and/or</i> • Presence of regionally significant prairie community type (e.g. wet prairie communities in predominately drained regions of the state); <i>and/or</i> • Locally documented high biodiversity despite a previous low Minnesota Biological Survey ranking - must be confirmed by DNR staff using Minnesota Biological Survey protocols. <p><i>25 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 50% of the project site's native prairie communities are C rank or higher based on DNR Natural Heritage Database, Minnesota Biological Survey protocols; <i>and/or</i> • Site identified as Minnesota Biological Survey site of High Biodiversity Significance. <p><i>15 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 25% of the project site's native prairie communities are C rank or higher based on DNR Natural Heritage Database, Minnesota Biological Survey protocols; <i>and/or</i> • Site identified as Minnesota Biological Survey site of Moderate Biodiversity Significance. <p><i>5 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only native prairie present on site has a D ranking based on DNR Natural Heritage Database, Minnesota Biological Survey protocols. 	<p><i>5-30</i></p>

Native Prairie Bank Evaluation Guidelines

EVALUATION FACTORS	NOTES	POINTS
<i>Size of prairie</i>	<p><i>15 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prairie is regionally significant in size. Example: a 20-acre bluffland prairie in Southeastern or along the Minnesota River is regionally significant, but a 20-acre site in the Agassiz Beach Ridge is not regionally significant. <p><i>10 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate sized prairie remnant relative to other prairies in the area. <p><i>0-3 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small prairie remnant relative to other prairies in the area. 	<i>0-15</i>
<i>Occurrence of, or suitable habitat for, rare species</i>	<p><i>20 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of, or habitat for, a federally listed rare species; and/or • Presence of one or more state endangered or threatened species with an A, B or B/C element occurrence (EO) rank. <p><i>15 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable habitat for rare species; species found within ½ mile. • Five or more Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) as determined by Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare: Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. • An unranked occurrence of a state endangered or threatened species. <p><i>10 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of one or more special concern species with a C/D or D element occurrence (EO) rank. <p><i>0 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No rare species on site or within 2 miles. 	<i>0-20</i>

Native Prairie Bank Evaluation Guidelines

EVALUATION FACTORS	NOTES	POINTS
<p><i>Location relative to other native prairie and/or public lands</i></p>	<p><i>15 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a Core Area of the Prairie Plan or within a relatively high concentration of native prairie remnants and rare species occurrences; <i>and/or</i> Near or adjacent to other permanently protected conservation lands; particularly units with prairie/grassland habitat. <p><i>10 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a Prairie Plan Corridor. <p><i>0-5 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolated parcel. Other prairie habitat or conservation lands within 2 miles = 5 points; greater than 10 miles = 0 points. 	<p><i>0-15</i></p>
<p><i>Potential for long-term management and enhancement</i></p>	<p><i>10 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves management options for larger, contiguous area (e.g. prescribed fire, invasive species control). Direct access from a public road (property borders road). <p><i>8 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No major limitations to management Access route from a public road to the property that landowner is willing to designate as legal access. <p><i>0-3 Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant limitations to management (e.g. surrounding residential development, invasive species control issues). Poor or non-existent access. May include needing permission from neighboring parcel to access, or crossing other privately-owned parcel(s) to access. 	<p><i>0-10</i></p>

Native Prairie Bank Evaluation Guidelines

EVALUATION FACTORS	NOTES	POINTS
<p><i>Additional factors (include as appropriate)</i></p>	<p>10 Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeopardy of losing prairie because site is in an area experiencing development pressure due to gravel mining, cropland conversion, housing, or other imminent threats. • Landowner is willing to donate significant acreage and donation would contribute to prairie conservation goals. <p>5 Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation and a recommendation for protection by local staff familiar with the site. May be staff from DNR, USFWS, NRCS, SWCD, or researchers. 	<p>5-10</p>
<p>OVERALL SITE EVALUATION</p>	<p>Overall summary for enrollment based on evaluation criteria. Write a succinct statement describing your evaluation of the site. This is very helpful for developing the fact sheet and for future reports.</p>	<p>Total Points</p>

