



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Martin County DNR WMA Phase 6  
Laws of Minnesota 2022 Accomplishment Plan

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### General Information

**Date:** 03/05/2024

**Project Title:** Martin County DNR WMA Phase 6

**Funds Recommended:** \$1,978,000

**Legislative Citation:** ML 2022, Ch. 77, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd. 2(h)

**Appropriation Language:** \$1,978,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire land in fee and restore and enhance strategic prairie grassland, wetland, and other wildlife habitat in Martin and Watonwan Counties for wildlife management area purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8, as follows: \$1,512,000 to Fox Lake Conservation League, Inc.; \$417,000 to Ducks Unlimited; and \$49,000 to The Conservation Fund. A list of proposed acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

### Manager Information

**Manager's Name:** Doug Hartke

**Title:** Grant Coordinator

**Organization:** Fox Lake Conservation League, Inc.

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**Website:**

### Location Information

**County Location(s):** Martin.

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

- Prairie

**Activity types:**

- Protect in Fee
- Restore

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

- Prairie
- Wetlands
- Habitat

**Narrative****Abstract**

This program will continue our conservation partnership into Phase 6 and will continue to protect and restore diverse prairie and wetland habitat in areas that adjoin existing DNR WMAs. Parcels are identified with representatives of local government, Windom Area MN DNR, Ducks Unlimited (DU), The Conservation Fund (TCF), the Fox Lake Conservation League, Inc (FLCL), and other local partners. Wetland restoration and additional grasslands are needed to make our WMA habitats resilient. We will use the real estate expertise of TCF, wetland and grassland restoration expertise of DU, and the local conservation efforts of FLCL to ensure success.

**Design and Scope of Work**

Selected project sites will be targeted for protection and restoration by the habitat needs and availability in areas adjacent to existing protected habitat. Work is designed to provide the most habitat value. The landscape will be restored as close as possible to conditions that existed prior to its conversion to agricultural production. Wetlands will be restored without disruption of the natural drainage system. Native vegetation will be restored with a diverse range of species suitable to the landscape.

TCF will negotiate the acquisition and lead the real estate process for properties targeted in this proposal, FLCL will hold and monitor the properties during the restoration work, which will be completed by DU. The restored lands will then be conveyed to the MN DNR.

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

This project will protect threatened habitats in Martin and SE Watonwan Counties. Native prairie and high quality wetlands will be protected, buffered and expanded upon. Restoration sites will provide the opportunity to expand populations of at-risk and threatened plant species that Martin SWCD has propagated and introduced into permanent protected sites. The FLCL is continuing work initiated by Martin SWCD, by selecting locally rare, at-risk species for propagation and use on these and future habitat restoration projects to protect the local native seed source. While hundreds of Sullivant's milkweed (*Asclepia sullivantii*) and Tuberous Indian Plantain (*Cacalia tuberosa*) have been introduced into WMAs and other protected land, Small white lady's slipper (*Cypripedium candidum*) and Rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*) will continue to be propagated using local source plant material for use in this project. Parcels selected for this proposal expand habitat protection for the threatened Blanding's Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*) Perch Creek population that has been studied by the MN DNR and featured in the "MN Volunteer".

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

Our "Martin County Conservation Alliance" has grown into a planning group that includes wildlife group representatives, NGO's, local government, and state agencies. There is a wide range of knowledge and interest within the group. Historic information, the MN County Biologic Survey, GIS spatial data, and local knowledge help identify areas where habitat restoration will likely be most beneficial for multiple reasons. Expanding habitat adjacent to existing high quality native habitat and habitat already protected by public ownership or perpetual conservation easements are targeted. Sites with threatened, endangered and species-in-decline are good targets to build upon, especially when these expansions can link sites to help extend corridors, expand blocks, and protect and enhance habitat buffers along water courses and lake chains. On our parcel list, we have the following tracts that have areas of biodiversity significance as identified by the MN County Biological Survey:

Perch Creek WMA: high level of biodiversity significance. Perch Creek is also part of a DNR Pheasant Habitat Complex.

Caron WMA: moderate level of biodiversity significance and also has a Priority Shallow Lake as identified by DNR Wildlife. Caron WMA is also part of a Pheasant Habitat Complex.

Gruven WMA: moderate biodiversity significance.

Additionally, some of the targeted parcels occur in landscapes that are estimated to hold 21-30 breeding ducks per square mile as per USFWS. Breeding pair accessibility will only increase with increased wetland restoration in these areas.

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

- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds
- H7 Keep water on the landscape

## Which two other plans are addressed in this program?

- Long Range Duck Recovery Plan
- Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition - The Next 50 Years

## Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program?

### Prairie

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

## Outcomes

### Programs in prairie region:

- Key core parcels are protected for fish, game and other wildlife ~ *By adding these important parcels to the Martin County WMA complexes we are adding valuable grasslands to the WMAs of Southern Minnesota. This additional diverse upland habitat will provide much needed habitat for many wildlife species. This project will also add valuable acres for public hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities with all of the fish, game, and rare species that will be found on this new public land. The measurable habitat value will be based on the diversity of habitat protected and restored and the volume of public use these new acres receive.*

**Does this program include leveraged funding?**

No

**Per MS 97A.056, Subd. 24, Please explain whether the request is supplanting or is a substitution for any previous funding that was not from a legacy fund and was used for the same purpose.**

This proposal does not supplant or substitute previous funding for the same purpose.

**Non-OHF Appropriations**

Year	Source	Amount
2014	LCCMR	\$400,000

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

Maintaining habitat after our restoration and donation to DNR is complete will be the responsibility of the MN DNR with support from project partner ECP CPL grants if and when available to continue to assist the MN DNR. Also, local groups within the "Martin County Conservation Alliance" will be there to assist the MN DNR with future dollars. Local partners will continue to install additional local source native plant species to enhance habitat to support more species, including pollinators. Local partner monitoring will assist in identifying invasive species threats and provide assistance with eradication or control when necessary.

**Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes**

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Ongoing	Local	Monitor and add local species	Monitor for invasive species	Treat and plant as needed
Ongoing	MN DNR Budget	Monitoring	Maintenance	Management

**Provide an assessment of how your program celebrates cultural diversity or reaches diverse communities in Minnesota, including reaching low- and moderate-income households:**

Martin County is not a racially-diverse county (96.6% White) and considered rural, approximately 150 miles southwest of St Paul. All our of DNR WMAs are open to public hunting and enjoyment. .

**Activity Details**

**Requirements**

**If funded, this program 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

**Will restoration and enhancement work follow best management practices including MS 84.973 Pollinator Habitat Program?**

Yes

**Is the restoration and enhancement activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, Subd 13(f), tribal lands, and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15 or on lands to be acquired in this program?**

Yes

**Where does the activity take place?**

- WMA

## Land Use

**Will there be planting of any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program, either by the proposer or the end owner of the property, outside of the initial restoration of the land?**

Yes

**Explain what will be planted and include the maximum percentage of any acquired parcel that would be planted into foodplots by the proposer or the end owner of the property:**

Food Plots could be utilized by the MN DNR as part of their WMA management plans. Also short term farming may be necessary in the time table to restore the uplands to native habitats.

**Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing?**

No

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

Yes

**Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:**

All of these lands will be part the DNR WMA system.

**Who will eventually own the fee title land?**

- State of MN

**Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:**

- WMA

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

We plan to accomplish 1-2 acquisitions with with appropriation.

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

No

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

No

**Will the acquired parcels be restored or enhanced within this appropriation?**

Yes

Ducks Unlimited will be restoring wetlands and prairies within this appropriation.

**Will the land that you acquire (fee or easement) be restored or enhanced within this program's funding and availability?**

Yes

**Timeline**

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Follow-up/Maintenance/Weed Control	2024 and Beyond
Transfer to MN DNR	2024
Complete Restoration	2024-2026
Plan Restoration	Winter 2022 and Winter 2023
Acquire Parcel (s)	Fall 2022-Fall 2023
Begin Parcel qualification and review	Spring 2022

**Date of Final Report Submission:** 12/31/2026**Availability of Appropriation:** Subd. 7. Availability of Appropriation

(a) Money appropriated in this section may not be spent on activities unless they are directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation and are specified in the accomplishment plan approved by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. Money appropriated in this section must not be spent on indirect costs or other institutional overhead charges that are not directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation. Money appropriated to acquire land in fee may be used to restore, enhance, and provide for public use of the land acquired with the appropriation. Public-use facilities must have a minimal impact on habitat in acquired lands.

(b) Money appropriated in this section is available as follows:

(1) money appropriated for acquiring real property is available until June 30, 2026;

(2) money appropriated for restoring and enhancing land acquired with an appropriation in this act is available for four years after the acquisition date with a maximum end date of June 30, 2030;

(3) money appropriated for restoring or enhancing other land is available until June 30, 2027;

(4) notwithstanding clauses (1) to (3), money appropriated for a project that receives at least 15 percent of its funding from federal funds is available until a date sufficient to match the availability of federal funding to a maximum of six years if the federal funding was confirmed and included in the original approved draft accomplishment plan; and

(5) money appropriated for other projects is available until the end of the fiscal year in which it is appropriated.

**Budget**

*Budget reallocations up to 10% do not require an amendment to the Accomplishment Plan.*

**Grand Totals Across All Partnerships**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Funding Request</b>	<b>Leverage</b>	<b>Leverage Source</b>	<b>Total</b>
Personnel	\$55,000	-	-	\$55,000
Contracts	\$235,500	-	-	\$235,500
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$1,461,500	-	-	\$1,461,500
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$3,000	-	-	\$3,000
Professional Services	\$37,000	-	-	\$37,000
Direct Support Services	\$4,300	-	-	\$4,300
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$40,000	-	-	\$40,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$1,300	-	-	\$1,300
Supplies/Materials	\$130,400	-	-	\$130,400
DNR IDP	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,978,000</b>	-	-	<b>\$1,978,000</b>

**Partner: The Conservation Fund**

**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$500	-	-	\$500
Professional Services	\$37,000	-	-	\$37,000
Direct Support Services	\$1,500	-	-	\$1,500
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$49,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$49,000</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
TCF Representative	0.2	3.0	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000



**Partner: Ducks Unlimited****Totals**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Funding Request</b>	<b>Leverage</b>	<b>Leverage Source</b>	<b>Total</b>
Personnel	\$35,000	-	-	\$35,000
Contracts	\$235,500	-	-	\$235,500
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$2,000	-	-	\$2,000
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$2,800	-	-	\$2,800
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$1,300	-	-	\$1,300
Supplies/Materials	\$130,400	-	-	\$130,400
DNR IDP	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$417,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$417,000</b>

**Personnel**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Annual FTE</b>	<b>Years Working</b>	<b>Funding Request</b>	<b>Leverage</b>	<b>Leverage Source</b>	<b>Total</b>
DU Staff	0.25	3.0	\$35,000	-	-	\$35,000

**Partner: Fox Lake Conservation League, Inc.****Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$1,461,500	-	-	\$1,461,500
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$500	-	-	\$500
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$40,000	-	-	\$40,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,512,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,512,000</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Grant Administration	0.15	4.0	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000

**Amount of Request:** \$1,978,000

**Amount of Leverage:** -

**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 0.0%

**DSS + Personnel:** \$59,300

**As a % of the total request:** 3.0%

**Easement Stewardship:** -

**As a % of the Easement Acquisition:** -

**How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount?**

Our budgets are scalable. This budget anticipates completing 1-2 fee title acquisitions and subsequent restorations.

**Does this project have the ability to be scalable?**

Yes

**If the project received 50% of the requested funding**

**Describe how the scaling would affect acres/activities and if not proportionately reduced, why?**

The number of projects and acres would be reduced proportionately. Sometimes multiple parcels can be grouped for professional services, such as appraisals, surveys, and an economy of scale can be achieved for project savings.

**Describe how personnel and DSS expenses would be adjusted and if not proportionately reduced, why?**

Personnel would be reduced, nearly proportionally. Personnel and DSS are budgeted by number of projects in this program.

## Personnel

**Has funding for these positions been requested in the past?**

Yes

## Contracts

**What is included in the contracts line?**

Wetland restoration Work is in the contract line

## Fee Acquisition

**What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?**

1-2 projects. Each fee acquisition requires \$10,000 - \$15,000 in professional services costs prior to acquisition and subsequent donation to DNR.

## Travel

**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**

just used the federal reimbursement rate

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

Yes

## Direct Support Services

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

Fox Lake Conservation will not add for Direct Support Services.

TCF -Our real estate support staff keeps hourly time sheets to track direct time spent on projects by grant source. We have used those past metrics to estimate the costs for this grant.

DU - Minnesota DNR grants staff previously reviewed and approved DU accounting methodology for Direct Support Services, which are calculated and included in DU staff costs. DU Direct Support Services constitute approximately 10% of DU overall staff costs on average among DU conservation staff billing categories. DU breaks out and invoices for Direct Support Service expenses approved by DNR for reimbursement separately from Personnel expenses. In accordance with 2 CFR 200, DU uses the direct allocation method of allocating costs to programs and final cost objectives. This process of allocating costs is accomplished through the use of hourly rates. The direct cost of activities, including direct support expenses, is included in these hourly rates. The rates are comprised of costs for salaries, benefits, office space, general insurance, support staff, office supplies, and other various direct expenses incurred at the regional offices and conservation department at the home office. All costs are assigned to conservation projects (net of

applicable personnel and other costs that are non-conservation related.) Hourly charges represent the amount that DU charges conservation projects per hour for each staff member working on the project. These costs represent expenses that directly support the labor cost necessary for the development of a specific water/wetlands conservation project.

### **Other Equipment/Tools**

**Give examples of the types of Equipment and Tools that will be purchased?**

Hand tools to remove trees, restore wetlands, seed prairie, and GPS survey equipment lease or rental.

### **Federal Funds**

**Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program?**

No

Output Tables**Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	15	85	-	-	100
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100</b>

**Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$1,978,000	-	-	-	\$1,978,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,978,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,978,000</b>

**Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	100	-	100
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100</b>

**Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$1,978,000	-	\$1,978,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,978,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,978,000</b>

**Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$131,866	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-

**Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$19,780	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

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

0

## Parcels

*For restoration and enhancement programs ONLY: Managers may add, delete, and substitute projects on this parcel list based upon need, readiness, cost, opportunity, and/or urgency so long as the substitute parcel/project forwards the constitutional objectives of this program in the Project Scope table of this accomplishment plan. The final accomplishment plan report will include the final parcel list.*

### Parcel Information

#### Sign-up Criteria?

No

#### Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:

Fox Lake Conservation is a leader in public lands acquisitions in Martin County and is continually working with the MN DNR to best qualify parcels that need to be acquired to improve the state WMA holdings in Martin County.

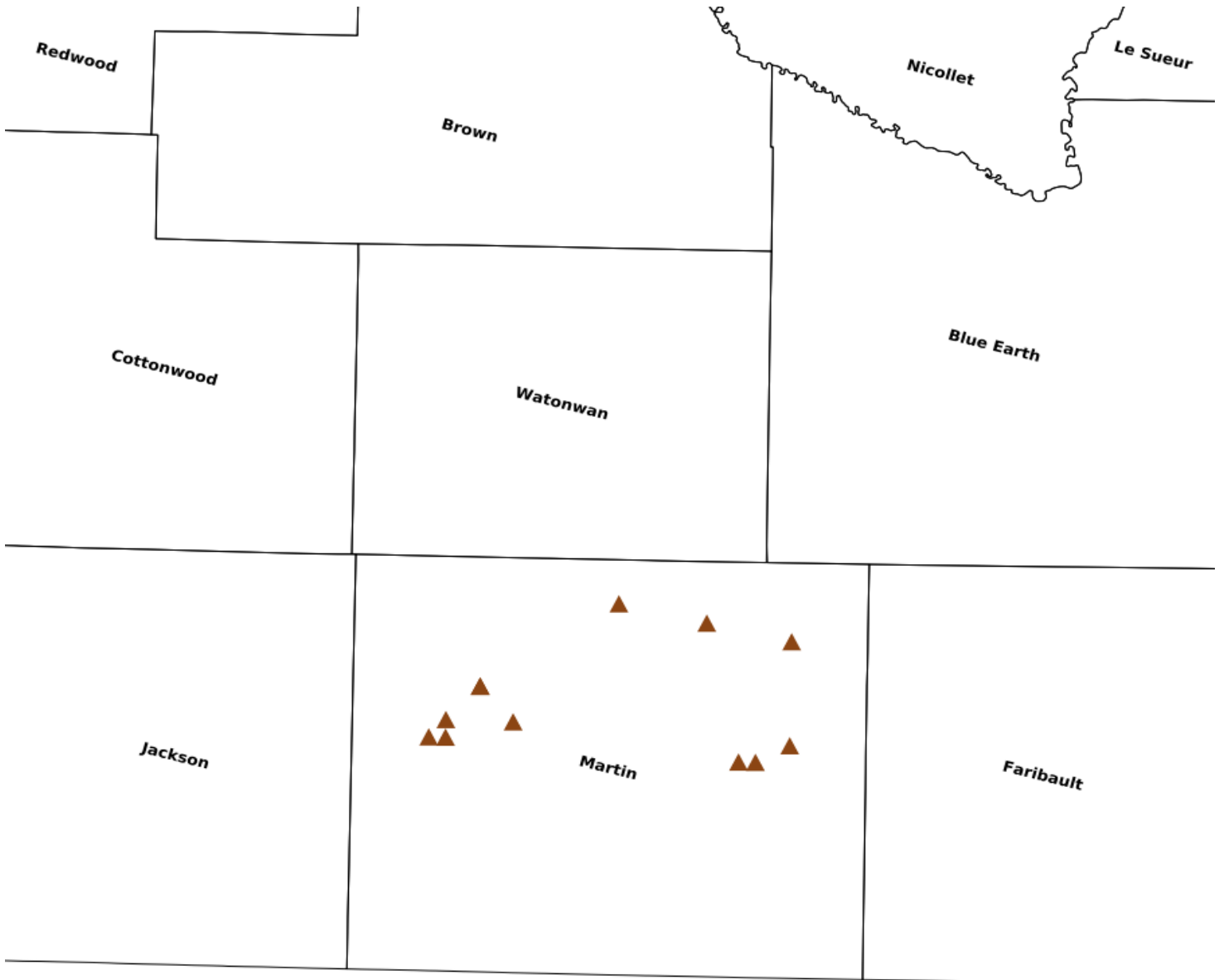
### Fee Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Armbrust WMA Tract #4	Martin	10430221	145	\$1,607,000	No
Gleam WMA Tract 13	Martin	10431215	35	\$450,000	No
Gruven WMA Tract #6	Martin	10330235	181	\$750,000	No
Center Creek WMA Tract #13	Martin	10329229	108	\$850,000	No
Rooney Run WMA Parcel 4	Martin	10332222	160	\$1,000,000	No
East Fork WMA Parcel 2A	Martin	10332208	110	\$500,000	No
East Fork WMA Parcel 1A	Martin	10332208	120	\$800,000	No
Gruven WMA Parcel #6	Martin	10330236	181	\$750,000	No
Caron WMA Parcel 13B	Martin	10333226	209	\$1,600,000	No
Caron WMA Parcel 14	Martin	10333224	80	\$580,000	No
Caron WMA Parcel 15	Martin	10333225	50	\$335,000	No

### Fee Parcels with Buildings

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Buildings	Value of Buildings
Excedar WMA Waldon Tract	Martin	10429229	120	\$1,100,000	No	1	\$3,500
East Fork WMA Parcel 1B	Martin	10332208	10	\$75,000	No	3	\$0

Parcel Map



- Protect in Easement
- ▲ Protect in Fee with PILT
- Protect in Fee W/O PILT
- ★ Restore
- ✕ Enhance
- ⊕ Other

