



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

MN Prairie Recovery Program Phase 12
Laws of Minnesota 2022 Accomplishment Plan

General Information

Date: 01/05/2022

Project Title: MN Prairie Recovery Program Phase 12

Funds Recommended: \$4,400,000

Legislative Citation: ML 2022, Ch. XX, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd.

Appropriation Language:

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Neal Feeken

Title: Grassland Conservation Program Director

Organization: The Nature Conservancy

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Location Information

County Location(s): Norman, Becker, Big Stone, Chippewa, Clay, Cottonwood, Kandiyohi, Kittson, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Mahnommen, Murray, Nobles, Pennington, Pipestone, Polk, Pope, Red Lake, Rock, Roseau, Stearns, Swift, Traverse, Wilkin and Yellow Medicine.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee
- Restore
- Enhance

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Prairie

Narrative**Abstract**

The project will advance the protection, restoration and enhancement goals for prairie, grassland and wetland habitats as described in the 2018 MN Prairie Conservation Plan. It builds upon the highly successful model previously established in prior Prairie Recovery Phases and seeks to protect 500 acres in Fee without PILT obligations to be held by The Nature Conservancy, enhance 16,000 acres of permanently protected grasslands, and restore 200 acres of prairie and wetland habitat. Protection and restoration projects will contribute toward state climate goals by sequestering approximately 165,000 metric tons CO2 equivalent.

Design and Scope of Work

Protect - An estimated 500 acres of prairie, wetlands, grasslands, and savanna will be permanently protected through fee-title acquisition from willing sellers in priority prairie core/corridor landscapes as identified in the 2018 MN Prairie Conservation Plan. Acquired lands will be prioritized using LSOHC approved criteria that include: percentage of native prairie on the parcel, proximity to other permanently protected areas, quality of habitat and species diversity, and suitability for public recreation. Protected acres without PILT will be held by The Nature Conservancy subject to a recorded notice of funding restrictions.

Enhance - An estimated 16,000 acres of grassland/wetland complex will be enhanced on permanently protected lands, including lands purchased with OHF funds and held by the Conservancy, MN DNR Management Units, US Fish and Wildlife Service lands, and private lands subject to perpetual conservation easements. The primary objectives of the enhancement activities will be to increase native species diversity and improve critical wildlife habitat. A variety of practices and techniques will be implemented to accomplish the objectives such as: prescribed fire; removal of trees and woody species; invasive species control including mechanical, biological, and chemical control; over-seeding degraded grasslands with native seed; and conservation grazing, mowing, or haying. The work will be conducted primarily through contracts with local vendors, Conservation Corps of Minnesota or Student Conservation Association crews and by using Nature Conservancy seasonal and permanent staff. Prairie Recovery Biologists, stationed in four landscapes within the Prairie region are responsible for identifying and prioritizing projects in cooperation with agency partners; selecting and overseeing contracted work; and leading and directing seasonal staff. The Biologists are also responsible for participating in and leading Prairie Plan Local Technical Team efforts to increase efficiency and effectiveness of program delivery by multiple partners at the landscape scale.

Restore - Approximately 200 acres of cropland will be restored to diverse local-ecotype grassland and grassland/wetland complexes. Practices to be implemented include those listed as enhancements above and the restoration of original wetland hydrology.

Results to date - Through previous Phases of the Prairie Recovery Program we have protected 7,590 acres of prairies, wetlands, and grasslands, enhanced more than 150,000 acres of permanently protected grasslands and restored approximately 1,800 acres with locally-sourced native seed. All parcels protected were directly adjacent to, or contributed to, the functional integrity of existing habitat complexes. Average per acre cost for acquired properties has averaged around \$2,000 per acre. Our enhancement projects have focused on accelerating the implementation of prescribed fire, woody vegetation removal, building the infrastructure for conservation grazing systems and treatment of invasive species. Costs for enhancement and restoration work vary depending on the practices being implemented but have averaged around \$120 per acre.

Collectively these projects have captured approximately 723,000 metric tons CO2 equivalent and will continue to hold that carbon in prairie soils perpetually.

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?

Temperate grasslands are the most endangered and least protected habitat type on earth, and Minnesota's prairies are no exception. Activities identified in this project directly reflect implementation strategies identified in the MN Prairie Conservation Plan. Properties targeted for acquisition are identified and prioritized using MN County Biological Survey Rare Element Occurrences and Biodiversity Significance. The geographies we work within, in addition to being Prairie Plan Core areas, reflect areas with the highest density and highest quality remaining prairie systems left in the state. By focusing our work in these particular landscapes we increase the functionality of the overall prairie/grassland systems, including increasing water retention, improving breeding and nesting habitat and augmenting migratory corridors. While our work focuses on increasing and maintaining system functionality a number of individual species and suites of SPGCN will directly benefit from this project including:

Insects - habitat management and protection specifically for the federally-threatened Dakota skipper butterfly, potential restoration of habitat for the endangered Poweshiek skipperling and the declining regal fritillary butterflies

Mammals - American badger (an indicator species requiring intact blocks of quality habitat), elk (for herd management in NW MN)

Reptiles - hognose snake (primarily in western MN counties of Lac qui Parle, Big Stone and Yellow Medicine), 5-lined skink (rock outcroppings in the upper MN River Valley)

Birds - Grassland dependent birds have experienced precipitous population decline across Minnesota and the northern Great Plains, largely due to habitat loss on the breeding grounds. This project will provide permanently protected and enhanced habitat for a suite of grassland and wetland nesting birds, most notably the Meadowlark, Bobolink, Dickcissel, Grasshopper sparrow, Henslow's sparrow, Upland sandpiper, Black tern, Northern pintail, Greater Prairie-chicken, Sharp-tail grouse, and many others.

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:

The project focuses activities on core/corridor complexes as described in the MN Prairie Conservation Plan. The Prairie plan was developed using the best available information for identifying the highest quality/highest density remaining prairie and grassland complexes in the state and is periodically revisited for accuracy and relevance by a core team of State, Federal and NGO prairie biologists.

Individual parcels are prioritized using the attached criteria. Important considerations include % of native prairie

on tract; adjacency to other native prairie; proximity to other protected lands; and uniqueness and diversity of species present. MN County Biological Survey data and biodiversity rankings are key tools used to measure these criteria.

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

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

Which two other plans are addressed in this program?

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

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program?

Forest / Prairie Transition

- Protect, enhance, and restore rare native remnant prairie

Prairie

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

Does this program include leveraged funding?

Yes

Explain the leverage:

We are leveraging state funds with private funds by depositing private donations amounting to 20% of the value of fee-title without PILT obligation acquisitions in a permanent stewardship account that guarantees our ability to maintain acquired properties over time. Further, we track any revenues generated from the properties in the form of lease or CRP payments in a separate restricted account that is used to pay property taxes or management costs on the acquired parcels. This account generates less than 50% of our annual property tax obligation, with the remaining taxes paid by the Conservancy using other private funds.

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.

All protection, enhancement and restoration work utilizing OHF allocations is supplemental to core work historically done by the Conservancy. OHF dollars allow us to increase the pace and scale of protection, restoration, and enhancement of native prairies and critical grasslands identified as priorities in the MN Prairie Conservation Plan.

Non-OHF Appropriations

Year	Source	Amount
2017	TNC Private Contributions	229,900
2018	TNC Private Contributions	198,865
2015	TNC Private Contributions	173,800
2012	TNC Private Contributions	851,000
2013	TNC Private Contributions	1,119,900

2014	TNC Private Contributions	467,400
2011	TNC Private Contributions	1,427,700
2010	TNC Private Contributions	1,228,100

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

Protection, restoration, and enhancement are all critical tools for the long-term viability of Minnesota's prairie/wetland systems. The prairie pothole landscape can only be sustained through the regular application of disturbance, including fire, grazing and haying. A primary purpose of this proposal is to continue a highly successful collaborative and coordinated partnership that accelerates the use of these practices across multiple landscapes. In many cases requested funds will develop infrastructure and enable completion of one-time large expenses such as woody species removal and installation of fencing for conservation grazing. Once the initial activities are completed we expect long-term maintenance costs to moderate. The Nature Conservancy will continue to seek mechanisms that derive revenue from grazing, haying and seed production consistent with our conservation goals. All resulting income will be placed in a dedicated account for future property tax payments and management of properties acquired with Outdoor Heritage Funds. Our past efforts show that revenue generation is insufficient to pay for all associated expenses, therefore we plan to seek future funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund along with private contributions for long-term stewardship needs.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
As appropriate	OHF/TNC private funds, lease payments	Conservation grazing	-	-
Annually	OHF/TNC private funds	Invasive search/treatment	-	-
Once every 4-5 years	OHF, TNC private funds	Prescribed Fire	-	-

How will the program directly involve, engage, and benefit BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and diverse communities:

In addition to the on-the-ground conservation benefits afforded by the work described above, the MN Prairie Recovery Program, through a robust seasonal employee hiring program, serves as a vehicle for training the next generation of conservation professionals. Our seasonal staff is largely comprised of young and aspiring conservationists looking to gain practical hands-on experience, either through short-term summer, or longer-term "1st job in the field", employment. Our recruitment practices are rooted in our Mission and guided by our Values, which includes a Commitment to Diversity and Respect for People, Communities, and Cultures. We know we'll only achieve our Mission by hiring and engaging a diverse workforce that reflects the communities in which we work. Hiring Teams must follow TNC's inclusive hiring practices for all positions. This includes: 1) reviewing position descriptions to ensure language is inclusive, non-gendered and only includes requirements necessary for the job. 2) advertising job openings widely, posting via the Professional Diversity Network among others, and for adequate duration to attract a diverse candidate pool 3) Extending the posting period or reopening a closed position in order to conduct additional outreach should candidate pools lack diversity. 4) Ensuring each interview is conducted with consistent conditions and questions. 5) Ensuring interview panels are diverse and gender balanced appropriately. All panelists receive training to avoid unconscious bias. We are beginning to see more diverse candidate pools resulting in a subsequent diversification of our workforce.

Further, the landscapes where the Prairie Recovery work occurs are in relative proximity to a number of cities with significant BIPOC communities (St. Cloud, Wilmar, Morris, Fargo/Moorhead). BIPOC and diverse communities experience disproportionate access to nature on private lands, meaning open and accessible public lands are even more crucial for recruiting and retaining a diverse next generation of hunters, anglers, nature photographers,

writers, artists and nature enthusiasts. Work proposed through the MN Prairie Recovery Program will add to the quantity and quality of public lands available to all Minnesotans, including BIPOC and diverse communities.

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)?**

No

Describe any measures to inform local governments of land acquisition under their jurisdiction:

We will follow the county/township board notification processes as directed by current statutory language.

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?

Yes

Where does the activity take place?

- WMA
- WPA
- Permanently Protected Conservation Easements
- Refuge Lands
- Other : TNC owned lands purchased with OHF dollars

Land Use

Will there be planting of any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program?

Yes

Explain what will be planted:

Short-term use of agricultural crops is an accepted Best Practice for preparing a site for prairie restoration. For example short-term use of soybeans or other commercial crops can be used for restorations in order to control weed seedbeds prior to prairie planting. In some cases this necessitates the use of GMO treated products to facilitate herbicide use in order to control weeds present in the seedbank. Neonicitinoide treated seed will not be used. We would not expect agricultural crop use to exceed 3 years on any given OHF acquired property. We continue to explore the viability of alternative restoration techniques to minimize the need to farm restoration sites, including expanded use of cover crops.

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:

No variation anticipated

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

- NGO

Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:

- Other
- National Wildlife Refuge

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

3-4

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

Initial restoration will be completed with this appropriation. Additional enhancement may be completed with future appropriations.

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
16,000 acres enhanced	June 2026
500 acres protected in Fee w/out PILT	June 2025
200 acres restored to native prairie/wetland	June 2027

Date of Final Report Submission: 08/15/2027

Budget

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

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$1,102,500	-	-	\$1,102,500
Contracts	\$1,151,200	-	-	\$1,151,200
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$1,500,000	\$300,000	TNC private funds	\$1,800,000
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$60,700	-	-	\$60,700
Professional Services	\$98,600	-	-	\$98,600
Direct Support Services	\$202,200	-	-	\$202,200
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	\$35,000	-	-	\$35,000
Other Equipment/Tools	\$114,800	-	-	\$114,800
Supplies/Materials	\$135,000	-	-	\$135,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$4,400,000	\$300,000	-	\$4,700,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Project Management	0.5	2.0	\$57,000	-	-	\$57,000
Grant Administration	0.12	2.0	\$28,600	-	-	\$28,600
Habitat Crews	6.0	2.0	\$507,600	-	-	\$507,600
Protection Specialist	1.25	2.0	\$243,300	-	-	\$243,300
Prairie Recovery Biologists	2.0	2.0	\$266,000	-	-	\$266,000

Capital Equipment

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Tracked UTV	\$35,000	-	-	\$35,000

Amount of Request: \$4,400,000

Amount of Leverage: \$300,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 6.82%

DSS + Personnel: \$1,304,700

As a % of the total request: 29.65%

Easement Stewardship: -

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: -

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

The reduced allocation is reflected in approximately proportionally reduced line items in the budget. A 60% reduction in funds from proposal will result in approximately 60% less outcomes than originally proposed.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

The leverage offered represents private contributions equal to 20% of acquisition costs for Fee w/out PILT acquisitions. These funds will be placed in an endowment account that will be used to help ensure long-term management and property tax obligations are met.

Personnel

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?

Phase 12 is a component of the larger MN Prairie Recovery Program. Continuity of funding across multiple Phases allows us flexibility when prioritizing parcels for protection or enhancement. Further, it ensures stability in our staffing model and provides the ability to plan and prioritize projects over multiple years. The flexibility provided by stable funding is critically important to achieving conservation goals given the uncertainty and variability of field season weather conditions.

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?

The entire contract line item is dedicated to enhancement and restoration work. Typical contractors include private vendors and Conservation Corps of MN/IA.

Fee Acquisition

What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?

3-4 individual acquisitions

Travel

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

Travel line item includes funds for short term vehicle rentals, primarily for Project coordinator and Protection Specialists.

Long term truck lease costs for the Prairie Recovery Biologists are reflected in the Other Equipment line item

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?

DSS is based on The Nature Conservancy's Federal Negotiated Rate (FNR) as proposed and approved by the US Dept. of Interior on an annual basis. In this proposal we are requesting reimbursement of 7.5% of eligible base costs as determined by our annual FNR and based on suggestions from the Council in prior years' hearings. The amount requested for reimbursement represents less than one-third of the total reimbursable costs allowed under the FNR. Examples of expenses included in the FNR include services from in-house legal counsel; finance, human resources; and information technology support, all of which contribute directly to the implementation of the project. The FNR is not applied to capital equipment over \$50,000 or land acquisition.

Other Equipment/Tools

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

Equipment and tools run the gamut of necessary field supplies ranging from power tools to hand tools. Examples may include chain saws, brush saws, trailers, ATV's, personal protection equipment for prescribed fire, and fencing/watering materials for conservation grazing. The equipment line item also includes herbicide and related application equipment, which are important tools for controlling invasive and noxious weeds in grasslands.

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	75	125	-	-	200
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	120	425	-	-	545
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	6,000	11,500	-	-	17,500
Total	6,195	12,050	-	-	18,245

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

Type	Native Prairie (acres)
Restore	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	300
Protect in Easement	-
Enhance	16,000
Total	16,300

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	\$75,000	\$125,000	-	-	\$200,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	\$319,200	\$1,180,800	-	-	\$1,500,000
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$886,900	\$1,813,100	-	-	\$2,700,000
Total	\$1,281,100	\$3,118,900	-	-	\$4,400,000

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	-	100	-	100	-	200
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	250	-	295	-	545
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	8,750	-	8,750	-	17,500
Total	-	9,100	-	9,145	-	18,245

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	\$100,000	-	\$100,000	-	\$200,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	\$750,000	-	\$750,000	-	\$1,500,000
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	\$1,350,000	-	\$1,350,000	-	\$2,700,000
Total	-	\$2,200,000	-	\$2,200,000	-	\$4,400,000

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
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Restore	\$1,000	\$1,000	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	\$2,660	\$2,778	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$147	\$157	-	-

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	\$1,000	-	\$1,000	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	\$3,000	-	\$2,542	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	\$154	-	\$154	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Outcomes

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Remnant native prairies are part of large complexes of restored prairies, grasslands, and large and small wetlands ~ *Protection results will be measured against MN Prairie Conservation Plan goals for protected acres of native prairie and associated grassland for each geography.*

Enhancement results will be measured using protocols developed for the multi-agency Grassland Monitoring Network.

Programs in prairie region:

- Remnant native prairies and wetlands are perpetually protected and adequately buffered ~ *Protection results will be measured against MN Prairie Conservation Plan goals for protected acres of native prairie and associated grassland for each geography.*

Enhancement results will be measured using protocols developed for the multi-agency Grassland Monitoring Network.

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?

[Yes](#)

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

Parcel selection for Protection projects without PILT obligations are prioritized according to the goals found within the MN Prairie Plan and specifically using the attached criteria. Parcels that the Conservancy will own and manage are located within core portfolio sites. Enhancement parcels consist of permanently protected grasslands primarily, USFWS WPAs and MN DNR WMAs, and are selected for funding in close consultation with the partner responsible for ultimate management. Parcels proposed on the parcel list do not reflect actual parcels, rather are illustrative of the areas in which our work is to be conducted. Maintaining anonymity of parcels is an important consideration for the organization in order to protect landowner privacy rights and to maintain the integrity of good faith negotiations. All actual protection parcels will be submitted to the LSOHC for approval prior to acquiring through an Accomplishment Plan amendment request. All completed restoration and enhancement projects will be reported to the Council on the Status Updates and the Final Report.

Restore / Enhance Parcels

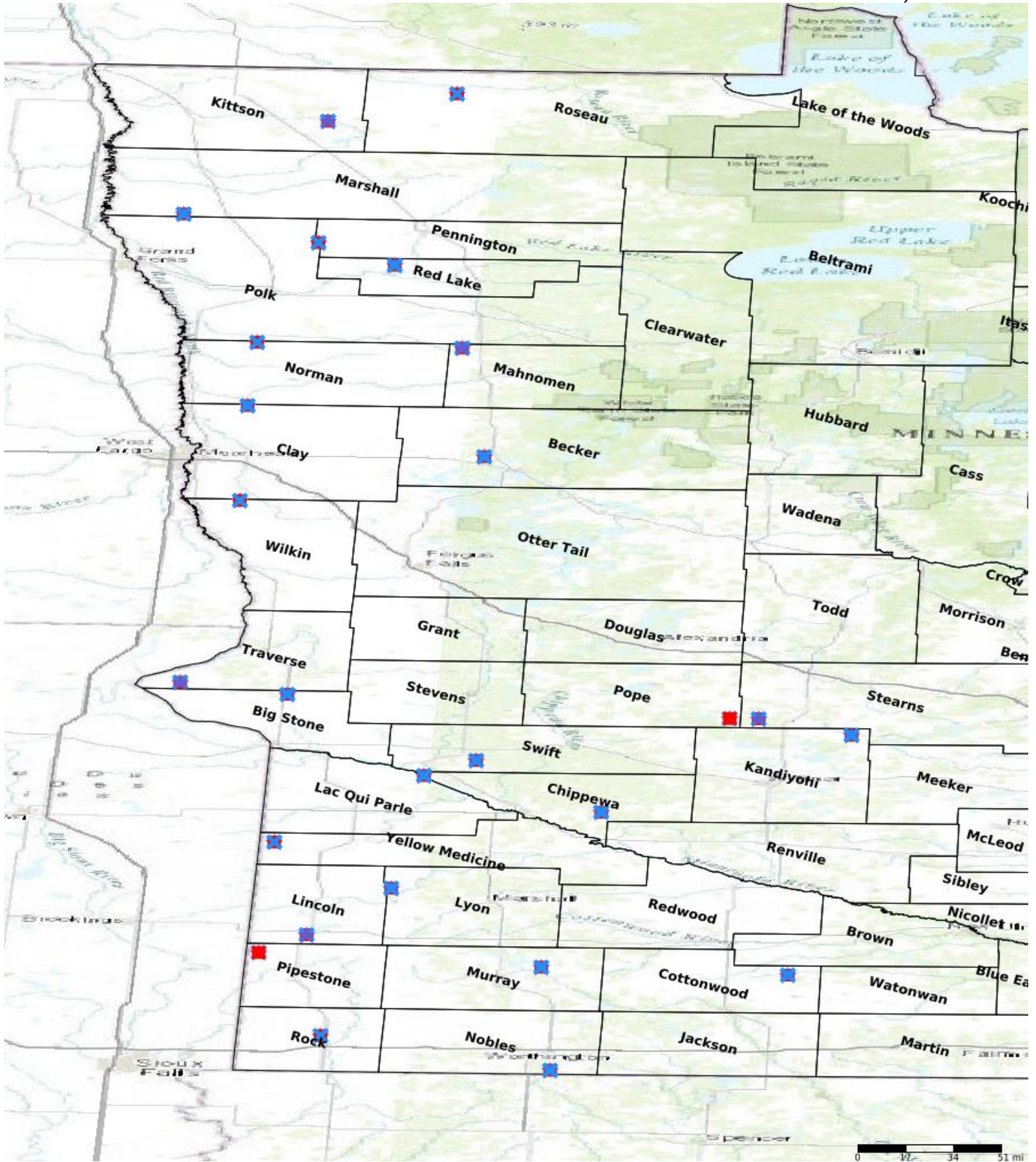
Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
NA	Becker	13942201	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Becker	13942201	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Big Stone	12446210	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Big Stone	12446210	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Chippewa	11739213	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Chippewa	11739213	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Clay	14247204	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Clay	14247204	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Cottonwood	10734220	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Cottonwood	10734220	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Kandiyohi	12233215	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Kandiyohi	12233215	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Kittson	16045206	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Kittson	16045206	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Lac qui Parle	11943211	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Lac qui Parle	11943211	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Lincoln	10945217	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Lincoln	10945217	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Lyon	11243218	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Lyon	11243218	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Mahnomen	14642208	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Mahnomen	14642208	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Murray	10740210	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Murray	10740210	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Nobles	10140225	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Nobles	10140225	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Norman	14647203	99	\$1,000	Yes

NA	Norman	14647203	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Pennington	15345230	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Pennington	15345230	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Pipestone	10846219	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Pipestone	10846219	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Polk	15449201	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Polk	15449201	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Pope	12336214	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Pope	12336214	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Red Lake	15144202	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Red Lake	15144202	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Rock	10345227	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Rock	10345227	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Roseau	16242207	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Roseau	16242207	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Stearns	12335216	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Stearns	12335216	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Swift	12042212	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Swift	12042212	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Traverse	12548220	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Traverse	12548220	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Wilkin	13647205	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Wilkin	13647205	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Yellow Medicine	11546221	99	\$1,000	Yes
NA	Yellow Medicine	11546221	99	\$1,000	Yes

Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
NA	Becker	13942201	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Big Stone	12446210	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Chippewa	11739213	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Clay	14247204	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Cottonwood	10734220	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Kandiyohi	12233215	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Kittson	16045206	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Lac qui Parle	11943211	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Lincoln	10945217	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Lyon	11243218	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Mahnomen	14642208	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Murray	10740210	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Nobles	10140225	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Norman	14647203	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Pennington	15345230	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Pipestone	10846219	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Polk	15449201	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Pope	12336214	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Red Lake	15144202	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Rock	10345227	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Roseau	16242207	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Stearns	12335216	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Swift	12042212	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Traverse	12548220	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Wilkin	13647205	99	\$1,000	No
NA	Yellow	11546221	99	\$1,000	No

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

Parcel Map
MN Prairie Recovery Program Phase 12
(Data Generated From Parcel List)



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Comparison Report

Program Title: ML 2022 - MN Prairie Recovery Program Phase 12

Organization: The Nature Conservancy

Manager: Neal Feeken

Budget

Requested Amount: \$10,100,000

Appropriated Amount: \$4,400,000

Percentage: 43.56%

Item	Total Requested		Total Appropriated		Percentage of Request	
	Requested	Leverage	Appropriated	Leverage	Percent of Request	Percent of Leverage
Personnel	\$1,957,100	-	\$1,102,500	-	56.33%	-
Contracts	\$3,200,000	-	\$1,151,200	-	35.98%	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$3,500,000	\$700,000	\$1,500,000	\$300,000	42.86%	42.86%
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$151,800	-	\$60,700	-	39.99%	-
Professional Services	\$220,000	-	\$98,600	-	44.82%	-
Direct Support Services	\$460,800	-	\$202,200	-	43.88%	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	\$100,000	-	\$35,000	-	35.0%	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$161,600	-	\$114,800	-	71.04%	-
Supplies/Materials	\$348,700	-	\$135,000	-	38.72%	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$10,100,000	\$700,000	\$4,400,000	\$300,000	43.56%	42.86%

If the project received 70% of the requested funding

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

Reduced funding would be reflected proportionally across line-item budget categories. We would anticipate delivering roughly 30% less acres across the Protection, Enhancement, and Restoration categories respectively.

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

Reduced funding would result in decreased hiring of a full complement of short term seasonal crews. To

ensure consistency in programmatic delivery full-time staff including project management and PR Biologists would be kept at approximately the same levels as in a full-funding model. DSS would remain at 7.5%.

If the project received 50% of the requested funding

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

Reduced funding would be reflected proportionally across line-item budget categories. We would anticipate delivering roughly 50% less acres across the Protection, Enhancement, and Restoration categories respectively.

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

Reduced funding would result in decreased hiring of a full complement of short term seasonal crews. To ensure consistency in programmatic delivery full-time staff including project management and PR Biologists would be kept at approximately the same levels as in a full-funding model. DSS would remain at 7.5%.

Output

Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	500	200	40.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	1,250	545	43.6%
Protect in Easement	0	-	-
Enhance	40,000	17,500	43.75%

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	\$500,000	\$200,000	40.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	\$3,500,000	\$1,500,000	42.86%
Protect in Easement	-	-	-
Enhance	\$6,100,000	\$2,700,000	44.26%

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	500	200	40.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	1,250	545	43.6%
Protect in Easement	0	-	-
Enhance	40,000	17,500	43.75%

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	\$500,000	\$200,000	40.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	\$3,500,000	\$1,500,000	42.86%
Protect in Easement	-	-	-
Enhance	\$6,100,000	\$2,700,000	44.26%

**Parcel Selection Criteria used by The Nature Conservancy for
the Minnesota Prairie Recovery project funded by the Outdoor Heritage Fund**

The purpose of the Minnesota Prairie Recovery Project is to accelerate and coordinate conservation activities in the prairie regions of Minnesota, and to ensure that the remaining 200,000 acres of remnant native prairie are protected, that restorations complement these remnants and provide critical buffers and corridors, and that all remnant habitats are effectively enhanced with proper use of prescribed fire and control of undesirable species.

To accomplish this purpose, The Nature Conservancy proposes to acquire in fee key tracts of prairies and associated lands to provide maximum protection and opportunity for restoration and enhancement. In looking at restoring prairie functions at a landscape scale, the following criteria will be considered in our identification of appropriate parcels for acquisition:

1. **Native prairie on all or most of tract, or adjacency to existing native prairie.** Emphasis of the project is protecting and enhancing native prairie, as identified by DNR County Biological Survey or site inspection by trained biologist. Protecting native prairie includes the need to buffer and connect native remnants via restoration of non-native lands. We will identify and work with private landowners to acquire tracts that further our goal of native prairie conservation, and in particular, those that meet the other criteria listed below.
2. **Within core area boundary or in critical corridors between core areas.** The project will attempt to build "functioning landscapes" by concentrating in areas with a good core of existing native prairie. We are using the DNR County Biological Survey as a starting point for identifying these core areas. While CBS has identified 38 possible core areas, we will focus within or adjacent to one of 5 areas including: Tallgrass Aspen Parkland, northern Agassiz Beach Ridge, upper Minnesota River Valley, Ordway-Glacial Lakes area, or the Prairie Coteau. Priority will be given to those parcels that are within core areas or that help form critical corridors to maintain landscape function. Selection of tracts will also be guided by the strategies and objectives outlined in TNC's ecoregional conservation action plans.
3. **Near existing protected lands.** Building larger protected complexes is preferred to simplify and reduce overall management costs. In general, larger protected blocks are more effective at conserving the full array of wildlife species and biological diversity. Tracts near existing protected lands will be prioritized higher than those that are isolated.
4. **Greater habitat and species diversity, or host to unique species.** Parcels that host a rare habitat or a continuum of habitats, such as interconnected upland, wetland, riparian, and stream features, will be recognized as having added ecological value and given greater priority. Tracts with underrepresented, small-scale features (e.g., threatened species), will also be prioritized.
5. **Suitability for ultimate assumption by DNR (WMA or SNA).** The Conservancy is proposing to hold these lands for an indefinite period of time. However, we recognize that public ownership of some or all of the acquired properties may be preferable in the future. In order to facilitate this, we will consult with the DNR prior to acquisition regarding the suitability of proposed acquisition tracts for future consideration as a Wildlife Management Area or Scientific and Natural Area.
6. **No buildings or CRP issues.** Existing buildings pose a challenge because they may not be eligible for Outdoor Heritage Fund use and they require additional effort to demolish or sell. Similarly, lands enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program can complicate the appraisal and

acquisition process. We will give priority to those parcels that have neither buildings nor existing long term CRP leases.

7. **Suitable for grazing.** A principal element of this proposal is to use conservation grazing as a way to meet ecological objectives and to generate income. Lands that are suitable for grazing, or that have recently been used for grazing, will be prioritized.
8. **Willing seller.** We will only work with willing sellers, and those that can abide by the statutory process laid out for use of public funds.
9. **Suitability for public recreation.** Constitutional language requires that these lands be open to public taking of fish and game. We will prioritize those parcels that can foster those public uses.
10. **Additional restrictions or conditions** as specified by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, public laws and rules, and program policies that direct acquisition priorities.