



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

ML 2022 Request for Funding

General Information

Date: 06/02/2021

Proposal Title: Preventing Forest Fragmentation and Protecting Wildlife Habitat at the Edge of the Boundary Waters

Funds Requested: \$1,805,000

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Chris Knopf

Title: Executive Director

Organization: Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness

Address: 2550 University Ave W, Suite 180S

City: St. Paul, MN 55114

Email: chris@friends-bwca.org

Office Number: 651-999-9565

Mobile Number: 651-1999-9565

Fax Number:

Website: www.friends-bwca.org

Location Information

County Location(s): Lake.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Northern Forest

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Forest
- Habitat
- Wetlands

Narrative

Abstract

This project will prevent forest fragmentation and protect wildlife habitat at the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness for moose, gray wolf, Canada lynx, spruce grouse, northern goshawk, and other species of greatest conservation need through the fee acquisition of 686 acres of forestland, encompassing more than two miles of riparian shoreline and 3,500 feet of lakeshore.

Design and Scope of Work

I. Overview

Arizona has the Grand Canyon. Wyoming has Yellowstone. Minnesota has the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness (“Friends”) is pleased to submit this proposal to prevent forest fragmentation and protect wildlife habitat at the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness through the fee acquisition of 686 acres of forestland, encompassing more than two miles of riparian shoreline and 3,500 feet of lakeshore. The Project Area is adjacent to thousands of acres of public land, creating contiguous forestland and wildlife corridors.

The Friends would permanently own and manage the Project Area and open the lands to public hunting and fishing. The Friends would continue to pay property taxes.

There is great urgency to this project. The private landowners who own the Project Area have either listed their property for sale or were about to list their property for sale until the Friends intervened and presented a conservation option.

II. Habitat

The Project Area consists of undeveloped parcels at the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness on Snowbank Lake, in the forest corridor between Snowbank Lake and Lake One, and along the South Kawishiwi River. These parcels are east and south of Ely in Lake County.

The Project Area is a mixture of a Boreal Hardwood-Coniferous Forest and a Jack Pine Forest featuring jack pine, white pine, red pine, aspen, birch, balsam fir, white spruce, black spruce, and white cedar. The forest is primarily in the old-growth stage of succession, but with younger stages of succession represented, as well. The Project Area has 3,500 feet of undeveloped shoreline along Snowbank Lake and more than two miles of undeveloped shoreline along the South Kawishiwi River.

The Project Area is ideal habitat for several Species of Greatest Conservation Need, including moose, spruce grouse, northern long-eared bat, Canada lynx, northern goshawk, and boreal owl. The Project Area is also ideal habitat for other game and non-game species, including gray wolf, black bear, fisher, marten, ruffed grouse, trumpeter swan, and common merganser.

III. Goals and Management

Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a 45-year history of protecting, preserving, and restoring the wilderness character of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and

the Quetico-Superior ecosystem.

The Friends will permanently own and manage the Project Area to prevent forest fragmentation and to protect wildlife habitat for game and non-game species. These lands, which are currently closed to the public, will be open to public hunting and fishing.

The Friends has formed a Conservation Advisory Council to help develop management plans for the Project Area. The Conservation Advisory Council includes the Director of the University of Minnesota Center for Forest Ecology, a natural resources instructor at Vermilion Community College in Ely, and the chief ranger at the Superior National Forest Kawishiwi Ranger District.

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?

The Project has significant value for several Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). The Project Area's healthy Boreal Hardwood-Coniferous Forest and Jack Pine Forest and substantial shoreline along Snowbank Lake and the South Kawishiwi River provide outstanding habitat for SGCN, including moose, northern long-eared bat, and Canada lynx.

The Project Area is within the boundaries of the Superior National Forest, which is recognized as an Important Bird Area by the Audubon Society. The Project Area has habitat for several bird species that are SGCN, including spruce grouse, northern goshawk, boreal owl, bay-breasted warbler, and Cape May warbler. The Project Area also provides habitat for SGCN that, while not rare, their population or migrating population in Minnesota is a significant portion of the North American population, such as the common merganser and trumpeter swan.

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

There is great urgency to this Project. The Project Area is owned by two separate owners. The owner of approximately 600 acres of the Project Area was about to put the property up for sale until Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness presented the option of a conservation sale. This landowner has agreed not to list the property for sale at the present time to allow the Friends to apply for funding through the LSOHC to achieve a conservation outcome. The second landowner, which owns 80 acres of the Project Area, has already listed its parcels for sale with a real estate agent. In May 2021, this landowner sold an adjacent 80 acres for development that the Friends had hoped to include as part of this Project for LSOHC funding. Time is clearly of the essence.

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:

Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness used the following criteria to identify the parcels that are in the Project Area: (1) proximity to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, (2) connectivity to other public lands, (3) high diversity of native species, and (4) threat of development. All of the Project Area parcels are adjacent to public lands and, if protected, will prevent forest fragmentation and maintain wildlife corridors.

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

- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes
- LU8 Protect large blocks of forest land

Which two other plans are addressed in this proposal?

- Minnesota Forest Resource Council Landscape Plans
- Superior National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan

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

The goals of the Superior National Forest Land Management Plan include promoting ecosystem health, providing for biodiversity, and protecting land and water resources. This Project achieves these goals by protecting 686 acres within the boundaries of the Superior National Forest. The Project Area has a healthy forest, providing habitat for numerous game and non-game wildlife. The chief ranger for the SNF Kawishiwi Ranger District will serve on the Friends' Conservation Advisory Council and ensure that this Project is consistent with the goals of the SNF Management Plan.

The MFRC Northeast Landscape Plan establishes the goals of retaining forestland to protect wildlife corridors and protect aquatic habitat. This Project achieves the first goal by preventing the fragmentation of forestland at the edge of the BWCA and maintaining existing wildlife corridors. This Project achieves the second goal by preserving over two miles of riparian shoreline and 3,500 feet of lakeshore.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal?

Northern Forest

- Provide access to manage habitat on landlocked public properties or protect forest land from parcelization and fragmentation through fee acquisition, conservation or access easement

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:

The LSOHC Northern Forest Section prioritizes protecting forestland from fragmentation, especially where significant blocks of habitat border public land. This Project significantly advances this priority by protecting 686 acres adjacent to vast blocks of public land, specifically, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

What other fund may contribute to this proposal?

- N/A

Does this proposal 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.

Not applicable.

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

Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness has a 45-year track record of protecting, preserving, and restoring the wilderness character of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and the greater Quetico-Superior ecosystem. We have approximately 5,000 individual donors who provide sustained financial support for our operations. In addition, we have an Edge of the Wilderness Fund with a balance of over \$550,000 that we will use for management and monitoring expenses relating to the Project Area.

In addition, the Friends has formed a Conservation Advisory Council that provides us with the expertise to ensure that we manage the Project Area to achieve optimal wildlife habitat value. The Conservation Advisory Council includes the Director of the University of Minnesota Center for Forest Ecology, a natural resources instructor at Vermilion Community College, and the chief ranger at the Superior National Forest Kawishiwi Ranger District.

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

Ovenbird

Ovenbirds are common in Minnesota's coniferous, coniferous-deciduous, and upland deciduous forests, including the Boreal Hardwood-Coniferous Forest and Jack Pine Forest on the Project Area. An average territory for an ovenbird is approximately 1 pair for every 2.5 acres. This Project will protect the habitat for up to 272 pairs.

Ruffed Grouse

The Project Area is prime territory for ruffed grouse. The territory of a hen is 5 to 35 acres, depending upon natural population cycles. This Project will protect the habitat for up to 130 hens, each of which lays an average of 7 eggs per year.

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

The acquisition of the Project Area will not directly involve BIPOC communities. However, indirectly this Project will involve, engage, and benefit BIPOC communities and diverse communities through our No Boundaries to the Boundary Waters Program, which connects middle-school and high-school students from diverse backgrounds to the Boundary Waters through classroom and online education, learn-to-paddle programs at local waterways, and scholarships for wilderness canoe trips into the Boundary Waters. Using non-LSOHC funds, for the last 15 years, we have provided scholarships for wilderness canoe trips for approximately 30-50 students from BIPOC communities each year.

It is our intention to incorporate the Project Area into our No Boundaries to the Boundary Waters Program. In consultation with our Conservation Advisory Council and contingent upon LSOHC approval, we intend to establish 2-3 primitive campsites on the Project Area that would be destinations for students from BIPOC communities on canoe trips. After paddling to and camping on the Project Area, these students would then be able to go on longer wilderness canoe trips into the adjacent Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Activity Details

Requirements

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

Yes

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

Yes

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

Yes

Land Use

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

No

Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing?

No

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

Yes

Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:

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

Yes

Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:

An approximately 1,000-foot segment of the Kekekabic Trail, a hiking trail that extends across the entirety of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, crosses a portion of the Project Area between Snowbank Lake and Lake One. The North Country Trail Association will continue to maintain this trail for pedestrian use.

An approximately 900-foot segment of a primitive, minimally maintained road crosses the Project Area, providing access to adjacent public land. The Friends will maintain the road in its current condition, providing for hunter access and other pedestrian uses. The Friends would permit motorized use of this primitive road for maintenance and emergency vehicles.

There are three portage trails ranging from 100 to 400 feet on the South Kawishiwi River parcel of the Project Area that provide for canoe access around rapids in the river. These portage trails will be maintained.

In consultation with our Conservation Advisory Council and contingent upon LSOHC approval, the Friends intends to establish 2-3 primitive campsites on the Project Area, most likely along the shoreline of Snowbank Lake and the South Kawishiwi River. These primitive campsites will conform to the standards established by the Superior National Forest for primitive campsites in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. The primitive campsites on the Project Area will be used for day and overnight camping.

Will the trails or roads remain and uses continue to be allowed after OHF acquisition?

Yes

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?

The Friends will incorporate maintenance and monitoring of the primitive road, primitive campsite, and trails on the Project Area into our existing wilderness volunteer program, consulting with our Conservation Advisory Council. The North Country Trail Association will continue to maintain the 1,000-foot segment of the Kekekabic Trail across the Project Area.

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 proposal's funding and availability?

No

Explain how, when, and source of the R/E work:

Other OHF Appropriation Awards

Have you received OHF dollars in the past through LSOHC?

No

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Negotiate with landowners and enter into purchase agreements	August 2022
Conduct due diligence for acquisition of properties (appraisals, title work, etc.)	December 2022
Acquire fee title to properties	March 2023

Budget

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	-	\$30,000	-	\$30,000
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$1,785,000	-	-	\$1,785,000
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	\$1,500	Private donations	\$1,500
Professional Services	\$20,000	\$10,000	Private donations	\$30,000
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$1,805,000	\$41,500	-	\$1,846,500

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Ely Community Coordinator	0.2	1.0	0	\$15,000	Private donations	\$15,000
Executive Director	0.1	1.0	0	\$15,000	Private donations	\$15,000

Amount of Request: \$1,805,000

Amount of Leverage: \$41,500

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 2.3%

DSS + Personnel: -

As a % of the total request: 0.0%

Easement Stewardship: -

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: -

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

Private donations from our 5,000 paying members will provide the source of leveraged funds. In addition, we have an Edge of the Wilderness Fund with a balance of over \$550,000 that we can use as a source of funds and for paying future management and monitoring expenses.

Does this proposal have the ability to be scalable?

Yes

If the project received 70% of the requested funding

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

The acreage would not be proportionately reduced because the parcels with shoreline are more expensive

and are also a higher priority from a habitat perspective. Receiving 70% of the requested funding would likely result in 60% of the targeted acreage being acquired.

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

This proposal does not include a request for reimbursement for personnel or DSS expenses, so this question does not apply to the proposal.

If the project received 50% of the requested funding

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

The acreage would not be proportionately reduced because the parcels with shoreline are more expensive and are also a higher priority from a habitat perspective. Receiving 50% of the requested funding would likely result in 40% of the targeted acreage being acquired.

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

This proposal does not include a request for reimbursement for personnel or DSS expenses, so this question does not apply to the proposal.

Fee Acquisition

What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?

Four.

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	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	0	-	-	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	0	686	-	686
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	686	0	686

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	\$1,805,000	-	\$1,805,000
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	\$1,805,000	-	\$1,805,000

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	0	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	686	686
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	686	686

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	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	\$1,805,000	\$1,805,000
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	\$1,805,000	\$1,805,000

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	\$2,631	-
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	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State	-	-	-	-	\$2,631

PILT Liability					
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

15,558 feet

Outcomes

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation ~ *The outcome will be measured by the number of acres of forestland protected from development and fragmentation: 686. This outcome will be evaluated by: (1) the continued presence and population levels of Species of Greatest Conservation Need, such as moose, spruce grouse, northern long-eared bat, Canada lynx, northern goshawk, and boreal owl; (2) the population levels of other game and non-game species, such as gray wolf, black bear, fisher, marten, ruffed grouse, trumpeter swan, and common merganser; and (3) the health of the jack pine, white pine, red pine, aspen, birch, and other tree species.*

Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?

No

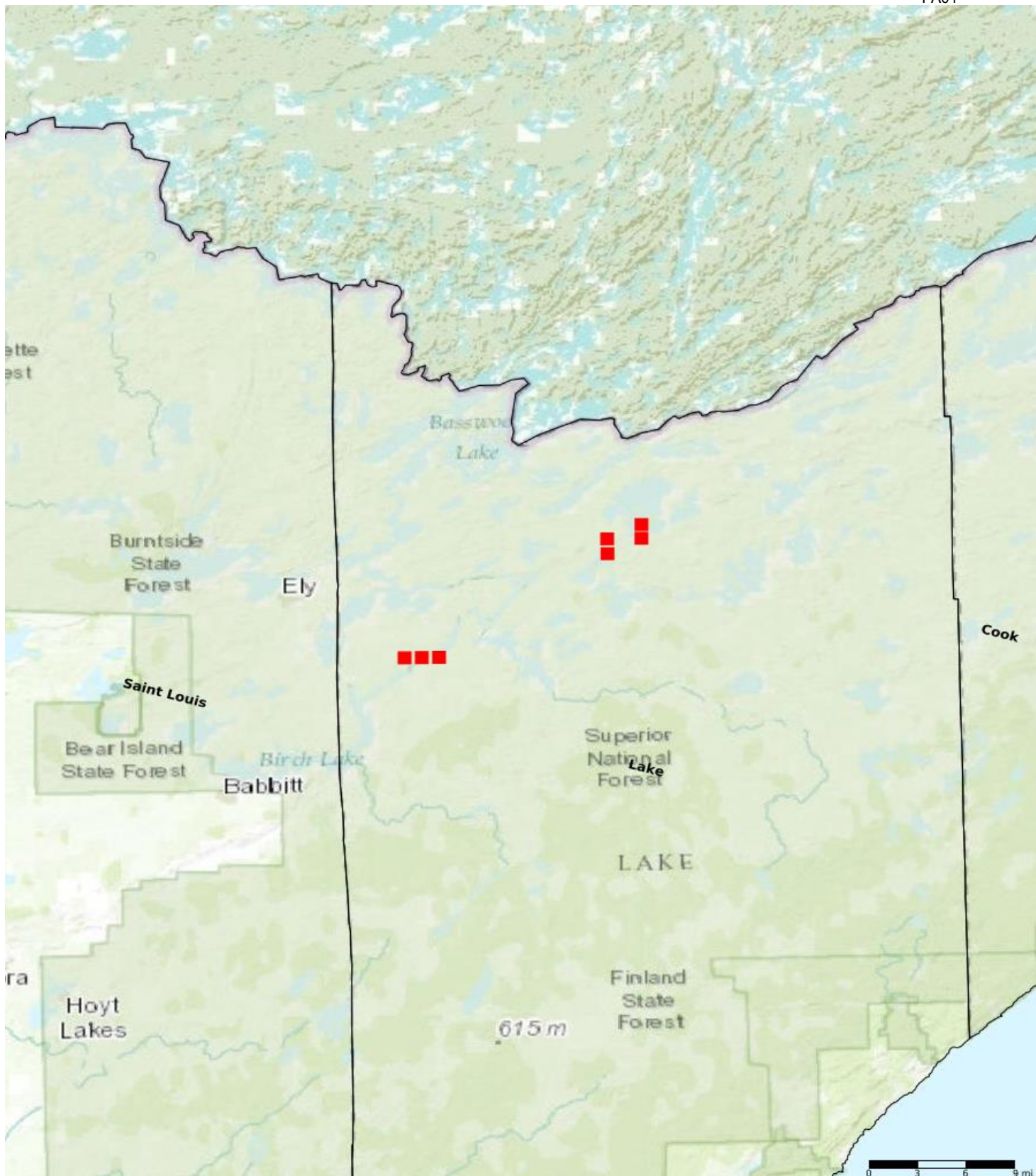
Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:

Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Snowbank Lake - South Parcel	Lake	06309212	29	\$225,000	No
South Kawishiwi River Property	Lake	06211224	80	\$168,000	No
South Kawishiwi River Property	Lake	06211223	252	\$531,000	No
South Kawishiwi River Property	Lake	06211222	29	\$61,000	No
Snowbank Lake-Lake One Forest Corridor Property	Lake	06309215	160	\$250,000	No
Snowbank Lake-Lake One Forest Corridor Property	Lake	06309210	80	\$150,000	No

Protect Parcels with Buildings

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Buildings	Value of Buildings
Snowbank Lake - North Property	Lake	06309201	56	\$400,000	No	1	\$0



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

Parcel Map
Preventing Forest Fragmentation and Protecting
Wildlife Habitat at the Edge of the Boundary
Waters
 (Data Generated From Parcel List)

Preventing Forest Fragmentation and Protecting Wildlife Habitat at the Edge of the Boundary Waters



CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITY

Arizona has the Grand Canyon. Wyoming has Yellowstone. Minnesota has the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

This Project will permanently protect 686 acres of forestland at the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, encompass over two miles of riparian shoreline and 3,500 feet of lakeshore. Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness will purchase the Project Area in fee title, permanently own and manage the property for wildlife habitat, and continue to pay property taxes to Lake County and other local governments.

This is superb forest habitat for moose, gray wolf, Canada lynx, black bear, fisher, marten, bald eagle, ruffed and spruce grouse, northern goshawk, and other species of greatest concern.

Funding Request and Outcomes

- Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness requests \$1,805,000 to purchase in fee title 686 acres of forest with more than two miles of riparian shoreline and 3,500 feet of lakeshore
- Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness will permanently own and manage the Project Area and pay property taxes
- Prevents forest fragmentation, protects shoreline habitat and maintains wildlife corridors connected to thousands of acres of public land
- Provides wildlife habitat for moose, gray wolf, Canada lynx, fisher, marten, bald eagle, ruffed and spruce grouse, northern goshawk, and other species of greatest concern
- Opens new lands to public hunting and fishing



Snowbank Lake parcel



South Kawishiwi River parcel

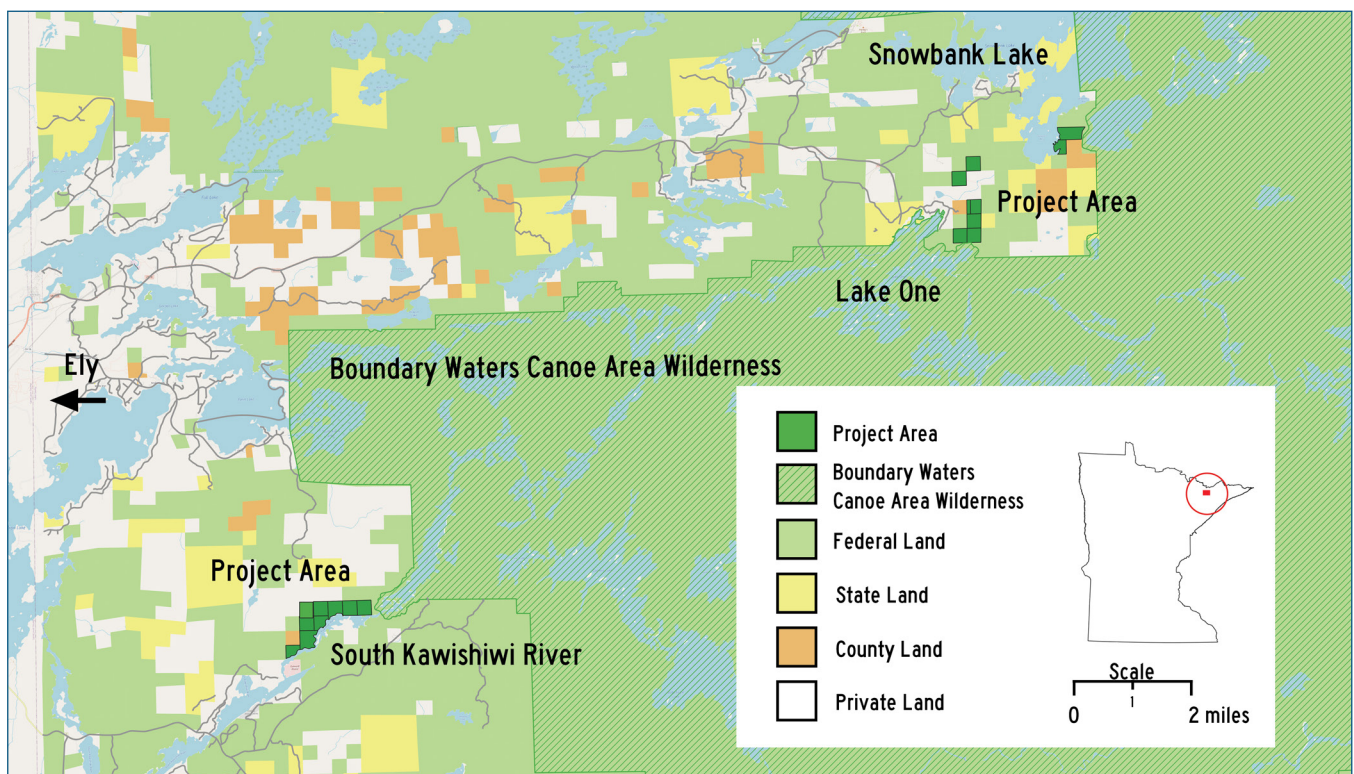
CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT AND STEWARDSHIP

Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with over 5,000 members. Friends has assisted in conservation land acquisitions since the 1980s. In 2019, Friends' volunteers worked 3,320 hours with National Forest rangers on conservation projects.

To develop wildlife management plans for the Project Area, the Friends has formed an advisory council that includes the Director of the University of Minnesota Center for Forest Ecology, a natural resources professor at Vermilion Community College, and the chief ranger at the Superior National Forest Kawishiwi Ranger District.

MISSION:

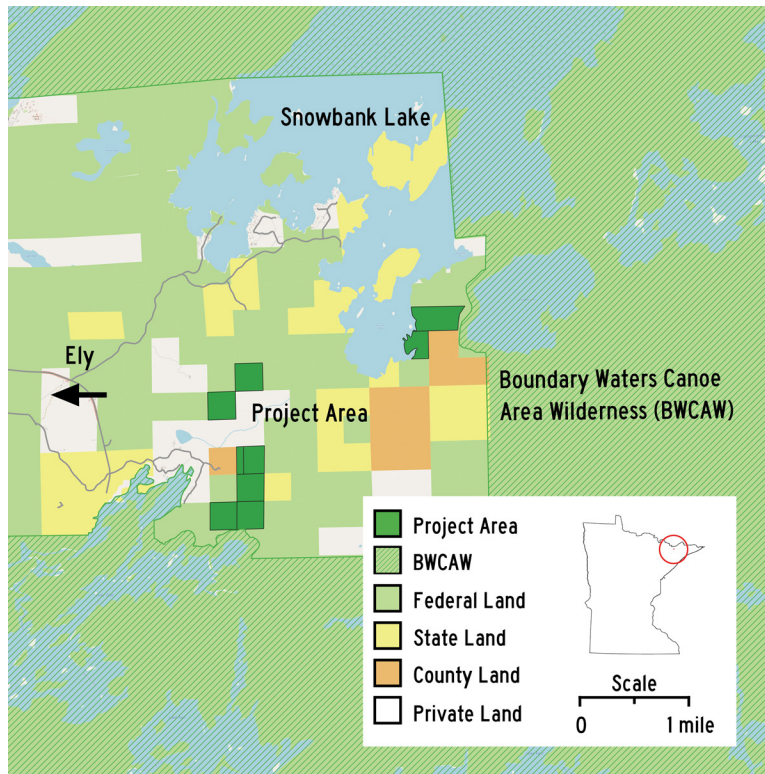
To protect, preserve and restore the wilderness character of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and Quetico-Superior ecosystem.



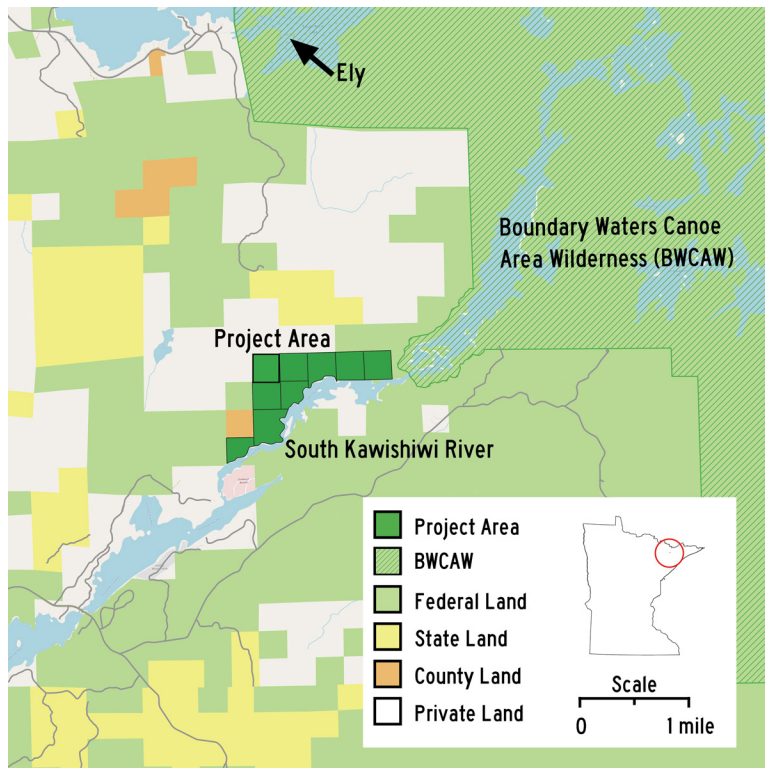
DETAILED MAPS OF PROJECT AREA



SNOWBANK LAKE AND LAKE ONE FOREST CORRIDOR



SOUTH KAWISHIWI RIVER FOREST CORRIDOR



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

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College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences*

*115 Green Hall
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St. Paul, MN 55108-6112
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www.forestry.umn.edu/*

May 20, 2021

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Members of the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council:

My name is Lee Frelich and I am the Director of the University of Minnesota Center for Forest Ecology and a Fellow at the Institute on the Environment. I have authored or co-authored more than 150 papers relating to forest ecology, covering such research areas as the conservation of biodiversity in fragmented forest landscapes, large-scale wind and fire impacts on forests, and the effects of climate change and invasive species on forests. Since 1991 I have conducted research in Minnesota's Northwoods, particularly the boreal forest of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and the surrounding landscape.

The main purpose of this letter is to urge you to support the grant request from Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness to purchase and protect approximately 670 acres at the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. From my research, I recognize the importance of maintaining contiguous, large-scale forest habitat. Funding this project will have multiple benefits, including preventing forest fragmentation, preserving shoreline habitat, and protecting wildlife corridors connected to thousands of acres of public land. This area is home to moose, gray wolf, and Canada lynx. This area also supports diverse bird populations, including the bald eagle, ruffed grouse, northern goshawk, common merganser, and many other species.

I have served on the Board of Directors of Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness and look forward to serving on the Friends' Conservation Advisory Council to help manage the protected properties. Thank you for your service on the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, and please support the Friends' grant application to prevent forest fragmentation and protect wildlife habitat at the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Sincerely,



Lee E. Frelich,
Director, The University of Minnesota Center for Forest Ecology
1530 Cleveland Avenue N.
Saint Paul, MN 55108
Email: freli001@umn.edu, phone: 612-991-1359

Professor Ryan Miller
Vermilion Community College
1900 E. Camp Street
Ely, MN 55731

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Members of the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council:

I am a Natural Resources Instructor at Vermilion Community College in Ely, Minnesota. I am pleased to write this letter of support for the grant application submitted by Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council to conserve land at the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

The acquisition of these properties by the Friends would be a huge win for conservation efforts in the area. These properties provide ideal habitat for moose, gray wolf, Canada lynx, fisher, marten, bald eagle, ruffed grouse, northern goshawk, common merganser, and other species of greatest concern. The adjacency of these properties to thousands of acres of public land will maintain important contiguous forest and wildlife habitat corridors.

Vermilion Community College boasts nationally-recognized natural resources programs, specializing in hands-on instruction and class projects. We look forward to a mutually beneficial relationship with the Friends. Several of our courses at Vermilion Community College are well-suited to assisting in the forestry and wildlife management of the properties the Friends intends to acquire. I will serve on the Friends' Conservation Advisory Council and look forward to furthering the educational opportunities of students passionate about protecting crucial habitat, while implementing best practices in forestry and wildlife management.

In conclusion, the Friends' project is important to furthering the protection of forest and wildlife habitat in Minnesota. I urge the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council to support the Friends' grant application.

Sincerely,



Ryan Miller



WICOLA

White Iron Chain of Lakes Association
P.O. Box 493
Ely Minnesota 55731
www.wicola.org

May 14, 2021

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Members of the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council:

On behalf of the White Iron Chain of Lakes Association (WICOLA), I am writing this letter of support for the grant application submitted by Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council to conserve land at the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

WICOLA was founded in 1993 by homeowners and lake users who want to ensure that the White Iron Chain of Lakes remains clean and pure forever. Located near Ely, the White Iron Chain of Lakes includes Birch, White Iron, Farm, and Garden Lakes. Our lakes are in the Rainy River Headwaters Watershed which also includes the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and the lands along the South Kawishiwi River being considered for conservation. We are advocates of clean water. We regularly perform water monitoring capturing water statistics which is stored on the MPCA website. WICOLA has a continually active aquatic invasive species program. Additionally, we provide member information on topics such as septic system maintenance, shoreline management, and reduction of fire risk.

One of the properties the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness is trying to conserve has over a mile of shoreline on the South Kawishiwi River, which is directly upstream in our watershed and feeds the White Iron Chain of Lakes that we are working so hard to preserve and maintain. Having the Friends acquire this land for conservation would be of great benefit in helping to maintain our water quality.

The Friends is a perfect candidate for funding through the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council and we urge the Council to support the Friends' grant application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Pike".

Jeff Pike, WICOLA President