



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

ML 2022 Request for Funding

General Information

Date: 06/04/2021

Proposal Title: 2022 Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Phase X

Funds Requested: \$8,450,000

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Shannon Wettstein

Title: District Manager

Organization: Morrison SWCD

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Location Information

County Location(s):

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Northern Forest
- Forest / Prairie Transition

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Forest

Narrative

Abstract

Phase X of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Partnership will utilize permanent conservation easements (BWSR RIM) to acquire 5,000-acres of high quality habitat in order to accomplish: PERMANENT PROTECTION of habitat corridors and buffers around public lands, PRESERVE open space within the CRSL, and conservation enhancement and restoration PRACTICES to protect soil and water quality and habitat corridor connectivity. This effort will be in coordination with the CRSL partnership and the Morrison SWCD to secure habitat corridor easements that will action the goals of the State Wildlife Action Plan, local Landscape Stewardship Plan and the CRSL Strategic Plan.

Design and Scope of Work

Phase X will permanently protect approximately 5,000-acres and fund restoration and enhancement activities that will benefit fish, game, migratory bird, and forest habitat around the Ereaux and Little Nokasippi WMA's, Crow Wing County Forest, Lake Alexander Woods SNA, Pillsbury State Forest and the Camp Ripley State Game Refuge; all within the 5-mile radius of Camp Ripley, a priority focus area within Sentinel Landscape program area. This phase will secure approximately 56 permanent conservation Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) easements, utilizing partnerships with Camp Ripley, a State Game Refuge, the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and the Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). Easement acquisition and habitat enhancement and restoration will occur in portions of Morrison, Crow Wing, and Cass County that lie within this 5-mile radius.

Easement acquisition in this area will protect and buffer river, lake, and forest habitat corridors that are critical to the general public for fishing, hunting, and recreational opportunities. These habitat corridors and complexes are critical protection priorities for the State of Minnesota, MN National Guard (MNNG) and National Guard Bureau (NGB) and its mission to sustain military training of soldiers, our local economy, the National Mississippi River Flyway, and Mississippi Headwaters Board mission.

Parcels are prioritized and targeted for high quality existing habitat, to protect corridors and large habitat complexes and to ensure reduced future fragmentation. Evaluation criteria include ecological and habitat factors for resident and migratory wildlife species. The target area has been limited to ensure a concentration of easement acquisitions that provide landscape scale benefits and will allow for protection of large forested parcels that are an imminent threat of conversion.

The forested region of these three counties is where agriculture transitions to existing forested lands. Thousands of acres within and around this work area are being converted from forest to annual cropping, primarily for potato/corn production. Forests not only provide critical wildlife habitat for game and non-game species, but forests lessen the impact of water quality contamination from land use practices. This region of the state, most specifically Morrison County, is the fastest growing county in the state for the loss of grazing land to annual cropping. The loss of forests would exacerbate problems associated with conversion. Drinking water standards in the area are also in jeopardy with the increase in irrigation and large scale livestock operations, so protecting the forested lands has become a local and agency priority.

In 2016, Camp Ripley was designated as a federal Sentinel Landscape one of seven in the nation. This designation by both State (2015) and Federal entities coordinates strategies to protect this landscape. Many agencies have identified their scope of priorities within the CRSL 10-mile boundary. The CRSL Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program has over 350 interested landowners on a waiting list for participation. To date OHF support of almost \$15M has leveraged over \$42.5M in federal dollars to protect over 30,000 acres.

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 forest habitat to be protected and enhanced by this proposal falls within the Camp Ripley-Pillsbury-Lake Alexander Important Bird Area (IBA). The 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) identifies 346 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) 92 being birds. This project area supports the greatest concentration of nesting Red-shouldered Hawks in the state along with 65 other SGCN birds. Thirty six other non-avian SGCN have also been identified within this area totaling nearly 30% of all SGCN within the state. This project directly addresses two primary causes of SGCN declines, habitat fragmentation and climate change impacts. In 2019 the State Wildlife Action Plan was amended to include the Brainerd Lakes Conservation Focus area, an area of habitat and species priorities that overlap with the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape

Lands in this proposal are also occupied by one federally listed species, the northern long-eared bat. Populations of this species rely on unbroken tracts of forest which are the focus of this proposal. Many studies have indicated that road density has direct, negative, impact on wolf habitat utilization especially during their breeding season. The project area is on the fringe of forest habitat that is under extreme pressure from development leading to habitat fragmentation. Permanent protection and enhancement of these parcels is critical to the long term recovery of these species under the Endangered Species Act as well as many of the state listed SGCN neotropical migratory birds in the area.

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

This program has built and established a parcel ranking and scoring methodology that is transparent and supported by local governments and private landowners. Over 350 landowners are on the waiting list, but urgency exists as we see transfer of ownership and localized pressure to convert the land to non-habitat uses. This state funding leverages annual DOD funding 3:1 in addition to NRCS funding for practices and technical assistance. Our program lead by the Morrison SWCD has a proven track record of being able to deliver easements, monitor compliance and foster additional habitat enhancement through BMP program integration. This CRSL program protects the multiple benefits of wildlife and habitat protection, water quality protection and the training sustainability of Camp Ripley. All of these benefits roll up to a positive regional economic impact from outdoor recreation, tourism, employment and the local tax base.

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:

Parcels are prioritized and targeted that have quality existing habitat, protect corridors and large habitat complexes and will reduce future fragmentation. Evaluation criteria include ecological and habitat factors for resident and migratory wildlife species. The target area has been limited to ensure a concentration of easement acquisitions that provide landscape scale benefits. The target work area also contains high value existing habitat and public access via existing Wildlife Management Areas, State Forest and Scientific Natural Areas that are being buffered with easements.

The MN County Biological Survey has identified several native plant communities within this project area that are vulnerable to extirpation as well as sites with existing high biodiversity. Most of these identified areas lie within the northern extent of this 5-mile project boundary under high development pressure due to their proximity to the cities of Baxter & Brainerd. Protecting these parcels is a high priority for the ACUB Program.

DNR recently amended the State Wildlife Action Plan to include the Brainerd Lakes Conservation Focus Area. The

CRSL program is within this new CFA boundary. The largely forested 50-mile section of the Mississippi River, its associated major tributaries, wetland and lake systems all elevate the habitat significance of this program geography.

This three-pronged effort will ensure public lands with high bio-diversity are not negatively impacted by the pressures of development and continue to be viable habitat that also benefits public recreational opportunities. Supports Camp Ripley's mission to ensure unrestricted, quality training, and facilities for soldier readiness. And will allow for restoration opportunities to enhance and improve critical habitat corridors and complexes around public lands.

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

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes

Which two other plans are addressed in this proposal?

- Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan 2015-2025
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

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

This program permanently protects and enhances private lands ranked and scored to include connectivity to other protected lands and habitat corridors, riparian adjacency and forestalls potential fragmentation and creation of habitat "edge" impacts from roads or boundary construction. All of the protected lands have conservation management plans, regular inspections and an ongoing relationship with natural resource professionals within the program service area. All of the protection work implements the target habitat and species listed in the DNR Wildlife Action Plan Brainerd Lakes Conservation Focus Area.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal?

Forest / Prairie Transition

- Protect, enhance, and restore wild rice wetlands, shallow lakes, wetland/grassland complexes, aspen parklands, and shoreland that provide critical habitat for game and nongame wildlife

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:

Since this Camp Ripley Army Compatible Use Buffer program began in 2004; later to be expanded and designated as a federal Sentinel Landscape in 2016 more than 30,000 acres have been protected in RIM permanent conservation easement, DNR Wildlife Management Area developed, addition to Crow Wing State Park and addition to city of Baxter Mississippi River green space corridor. All of these past and anticipated efforts build habitat connectivity supporting multiple benefits for species therein.

What other fund may contribute to this proposal?

- Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund
- Clean Water Fund
- Other

Does this proposal include leveraged funding?

Yes

Explain the leverage:

There are several pools of funding which will be leveraged as part of this effort. The largest and most consistent are the funds from the Department of Defense (DOD) Readiness Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program. The REPI program requires a 25% match to their federal funds and the OHF has been a critical piece in the ACUB, now Sentinel Landscape, partnership success. Currently these programs have been able to leverage 42.5 million and although not yet secured, year end funding is often appropriated from REPI which could add to this figure if we can continue to show state support through OHF funds. The other two new developments in the landscape include a direct agreement with NRCS to leverage \$400,000 over three years to provide capacity to deliver outreach to landowners, technical assistance and develop additional funding for forest habitat practices on private lands, specifically in this area. This position will be a forestry professional and will be the technical expert to address forest management on this landscape, with a special emphasis on engaging landowners to participate in federally funded programs. The second new development includes a new agreement with the National Association of Conservation Districts for \$75,000 to provide outreach to landowners within the CRSL. These funds are shared between Crow Wing SWCD and Morrison SWCD and will allow us to reach out and engage with landowners our offices have not traditionally worked with before. Finally, as part of the calculation on the payment to landowners, we always recognize the difference between the amount of payment a landowner receives for selling their developmental rights, and the taxable value of their land because a landowner can always make more money selling developable acres vs non-developable acres. With the proposed project this is a significant donation of over \$2.8 million dollars.

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 is not supplanting or a substitution for any previous funding not from Legacy Fund sources or for the same purpose.

Non-OHF Appropriations

Year	Source	Amount
2007-Present	Department of Defense/National Guard Bureau	42,480,000
2010-Present	LCCMR: Camp Ripley, Crow Wing, Morrison SWCD and City of Baxter	5,625,000
2016-Present	NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP)	2,800,000
2021-2023	NACD Agreement with Morrison SWCD	75,000
2021-2023	NRCS Direct Agreement with Morrison SWCD	400,000

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

Once a RIM easement is acquired, BWSR is responsible for monitoring and enforcement into perpetuity. The BWSR partners with local SWCDs to carry-out oversight, monitoring and enforcement of its conservation easements. Easements are monitored for the first five consecutive years beginning in the year after the easement is recorded.

Thereafter, on-site monitoring is performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years. SWCDs report to BWSR on each site inspection conducted and partners’ staff document findings. A non-compliance procedure is implemented when potential violations or problems are identified.

Perpetual monitoring and stewardship costs have been calculated at \$6,500 per easement. This value is based on using local SWCD staff for monitoring and landowner relations and existing enforcement authorities. The amount listed for Easement Stewardship covers costs of the SWCD regular monitoring, BWSR oversight, and enforcement.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2021-Ongoing	Stewardship Account	Compliance checks first 5 years then every 3rd year.	Corrective actions of any violations.	Enforcement Action taken by MN Attorney Generals office.
2021-Ongoing	Landowner Responsibility	Maintain compliance with easement terms.	-	-

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

Species identified in the Wildlife Action Plan: Brainerd Lakes CFA include: Blanding's Turtle, Red-shouldered Hawk, red-headed woodpecker, Northern Long-eared bat, eastern hog-nosed snake and SGCN fish and amphibians. Active monitoring of several species occurs on Camp Ripley and associated state owned parcels within the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape program area.

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

As a Greater Minnesota area program there is less direct benefit to BIPOC communities engagement. At a high level, keeping land and water systems intact that protect Mississippi River quality and quantity do have long-term cost benefits related to water treatment and future treatment costs in downstream communities. The sustainability of Camp Ripley as a training facility ensures permanent employment opportunities and year round training to state agencies, law enforcement and other branches of military service which do not exclude on the basis of race, sex or national origin.

Activity Details

Requirements

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

Yes

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

Yes

Land Use

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

No

Will the eased land be open for public use?

No

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

Yes

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

This appropriation is funding a program that will have a parcel list identified at a later time. Roads or trails are typically excluded from the easement area if they serve no beneficial purpose to easement maintenance, monitoring, or enforcement. This question is being answered with utmost flexibility in absence of a LSOHC definition of trails and specified trail types (permanent or temporary, beneficial for maintenance, animal trails, etc.).

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

Yes

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?

The easements secured under this project will be managed as part of the BWSR RIM Reserve Program that has over 6,500 easements currently in place. Easements are monitored annually for each of the first 5-years and then every 3rd year after that. BWSR, in cooperation with SWCDs, implement a stewardship process to track, monitor quality and assure compliance with easement terms.

Under the terms of the RIM Easement Program, landowners are required to maintain compliance with the easement. A conservation plan is developed with the landowner and maintained as part of each easement. Basic easement compliance costs are borne by the landowner, periodic enhancements may be cost shared from a variety of sources.

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

Yes

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

Though uncommon, there could be a potential for new trails to be developed, if they contribute to easement maintenance or benefit the easement site (e.g. firebreaks, berm maintenance, etc). This question is being answered with utmost flexibility in absence of a LSOHC definition of trails and specified trail types (permanent or temporary, beneficial for maintenance, animal trails, etc.).

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?

The easements secured under this project will be managed as part of the BWSR RIM Reserve Program that has over 6,500 easements currently in place. Easements are monitored annually for each of the first 5-years and then every 3rd year after that. BWSR, in cooperation with SWCDs, implement a stewardship process to track, monitor quality and assure compliance with easement terms.

Under the terms of the RIM Easement Program, landowners are required to maintain compliance with the easement. A conservation plan is developed with the landowner and maintained as part of each easement. Basic easement compliance costs are borne by the landowner, periodic enhancements may be cost shared from a variety of sources.

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

Yes

Other OHF Appropriation Awards

Have you received OHF dollars in the past through LSOHC?

Yes

Approp Year	Approp Amount Received	Amount Spent to Date	Leverage Reported in AP	Leverage Realized to Date	Acres Affected in AP	Acres Affected to Date	Complete/Final Report Approved?
2010	\$843,000	\$723,000	\$3,500,000	\$935,000	886	1,120	Yes
2012	\$480,000	\$480,000	-	-	488	494	Yes
2013	\$1,450,000	\$1,156,700	\$1,000,000	\$4,088,000	990	766	Yes
2014	\$1,200,000	\$1,165,100	-	\$1,000,000	720	946	Yes
2016	\$1,500,000	\$1,471,300	\$1,957,900	\$1,920,000	660	1,068	Yes
2018	\$1,450,000	\$1,156,700	\$1,000,000	\$4,088,000	990	766	No
2020	\$2,712,000	-	-	-	1,325	0	No
2021	\$1,043,000	-	-	-	540	0	No

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Obtain applications from eligible landowners	June 30, 2025
Allocations to specific parcels	June 30, 2025
Easements recorded	June 30, 2025
Final report submitted	November 1, 2025

Budget

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$414,300	-	-	\$414,300
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$7,137,100	-	-	\$7,137,100
Easement Stewardship	\$539,500	-	-	\$539,500
Travel	\$14,800	-	-	\$14,800
Professional Services	\$316,900	-	-	\$316,900
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$21,100	-	-	\$21,100
Supplies/Materials	\$6,300	-	-	\$6,300
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$8,450,000	-	-	\$8,450,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Easement Processing	0.62	3.0	186400	-	-	\$186,400
Program Management	0.75	4.0	227900	-	-	\$227,900

Amount of Request: \$8,450,000

Amount of Leverage: -

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 0.0%

DSS + Personnel: \$414,300

As a % of the total request: 4.9%

Easement Stewardship: \$539,500

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 7.56%

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 number of easements could be scaled back depending on appropriation. All associated personnel/equipment/stewardship would be proportionate

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

DSS not included in this proposal

If the project received 50% of the requested funding

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

Same as above

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

DSS not included in this proposal

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?

This is Phase X of an ongoing program. These funds will pay for staff time spent on new easements associated with this phase.

Easement Stewardship

What is the number of easements anticipated, cost per easement for stewardship, and explain how that amount is calculated?

Perpetual monitoring and stewardship costs have been calculated at \$6,500 per easement. This value is based on using local SWCD staff for monitoring and landowner relations and existing enforcement authorities. The amount listed for Easement Stewardship covers costs of the SWCD regular monitoring, BWSR oversight, and enforcement.

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

The travel line will only be used for traditional travel costs.

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

Yes

Other Equipment/Tools

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

Sign posts, signs and hardware will be purchased to properly sign easement boundaries.

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	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	500	0	4,500	0	5,000
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	500	0	4,500	0	5,000

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	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	\$845,000	-	\$7,605,000	-	\$8,450,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$845,000	-	\$7,605,000	-	\$8,450,000

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	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	5,000	0	0	0	5,000
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	5,000	0	0	0	5,000

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	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	\$8,450,000	-	-	-	\$8,450,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	\$8,450,000	-	-	-	\$8,450,000

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	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	\$1,690	-	\$1,690	-
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	-	-	-	-	-

PILT Liability					
Protect in Easement	-	\$1,690	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

2.6 miles

Outcomes

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Rivers and streams provide corridors of habitat including intact areas of forest cover in the east and large wetland/upland complexes in the west ~ *A summary of the total of wetland acres and associated forest land secured under easement through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure maintained outcomes. Sustained habitat availability within a certain region is expected to maintain the carrying capacity of associated wildlife within that region. This would affect both game and non-game species. We expect sustained populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as these easements are secured.*

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation ~ *A summary of the total of wetland acres and associated forest land secured under easement through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure maintained outcomes. Sustained habitat availability within a certain region is expected to maintain the carrying capacity of associated wildlife within that region. This would affect both game and non-game species. We expect sustained populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as these easements are secured.*

Parcels

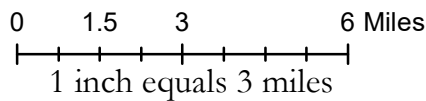
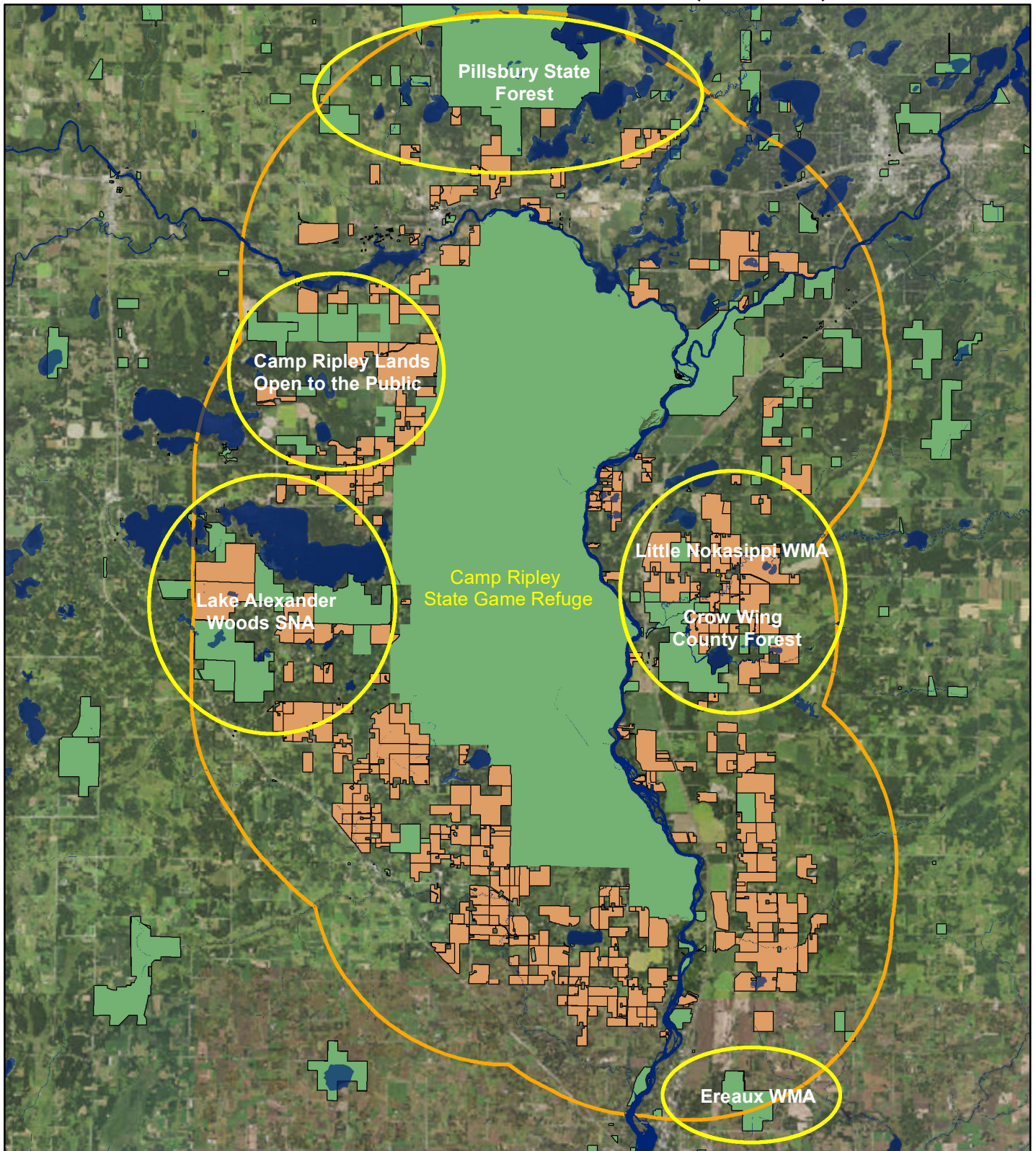
Sign-up Criteria?



[Yes](#)

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

The Morrison SWCD conducts ongoing outreach to landowners with large parcels that have high ecological valued properties within the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape. Landowners interested in participating in the program complete and submit an interest form to the Morrison SWCD, then it is sent on to Camp Ripley for ranking. Camp Ripley ranks parcels of land to be considered for possible funding through the ACUB program based on a number of criteria which considers encroachment threat and highest ecological benefits. Highest ranked landowners are provided back to the SWCD. The SWCD approaches prioritized landowners for possible participation in the program.

Public Lands Protection - Creating and Enhancing Wildlife Corridors Within the CRSL (LSOHC)



-  Public Lands (State/County)
-  Prioritized & Targeted Areas to Buffer
-  Protected Lands Completed Easements
-  5-Mile Boundary

Camp Ripley

Located along the northern stretch of the Mississippi River, Camp Ripley is the primary National Guard Training Center for units from Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Ohio, and Illinois. The agricultural and forested lands surrounding Camp Ripley have enabled the installation to conduct aircraft, live fire, artillery, IED, and winter training with limited restrictions. The large unfragmented landscape protects water quality of the upper Mississippi River and its four major tributaries. However, the rural character of the area is threatened by development that could significantly affect Camp Ripley's ability to fulfill its mission; convert historic farms, ranches, and forested lands into other uses; and adversely affect one of the most ecologically rich environments and important source water areas in the Midwest.

Recognizing the need to protect this landscape, the Minnesota legislature passed state law 190.33, which was signed into law by Governor Mark Dayton in May 2015. Under the law, the adjutant general convened a Sentinel Landscape Coordinating Committee to identify the boundaries of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape and develop a suite of tools and programs that could provide technical and financial assistance to interested landowners within the Sentinel Landscape. With input from local government, stakeholders, and Federal agency partners, the Coordinating Committee identified the desired outcomes of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape partnership: protecting the installation's military training mission and the landscape's wildlife management areas, watersheds, and agricultural resources.



Over 50 miles of the Mississippi River headwaters flow through the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape, and are fed by 34 minor watersheds in a 10-mile radius of the installation. (Photo courtesy of Camp Ripley)

BENEFITING WORKING LANDS

Restoring, managing, and protecting the viability of historic agricultural and forest lands within the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape is a top priority for the local community, with 180 landowners already expressing interest in enrolling over 16,000 acres of private working ranches, croplands, and timberlands into established assistance tools and programs. This enthusiastic participation will more than double the number of private landowners already participating in efforts buffering Camp Ripley and managing natural resources within the Sentinel Landscape.

Local partners like the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources and the Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District will work with willing landowners to provide technical assistance that will strengthen prime working lands, using programs such as the Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP), Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Landowners will have the opportunity to access conservation education and enhance their land management practices while maintaining their right to continue agricultural production and protect their lands from development as appropriate within the Sentinel Landscape.

CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

The Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape includes 34 minor watersheds grouped into 7 sub-watersheds, 50 miles of the Mississippi River, and the Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. Thousands of acres of public and private conservation lands converge on the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape, which is also one of the state's most important source water protection areas for drinking water.

While coordination across county and city boundaries has long been necessary to protect the quality of cross-border watersheds, the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Partnership is leveraging broader support to protect and improve the quality of the region's soil and water resources. The Minnesota Forest Resource Council is working with landowners to implement forest stewardship plans within the Sentinel Landscape, while Partners for Fish and Wildlife will work with private landowners to restore and enhance fish and wildlife habitat, wetlands, and pollinator habitat.

These efforts are also resulting in additional opportunities for the community, including expanded trail, water, and natural area access for hunting, fishing, and recreation.

LOOKING FORWARD

The Sentinel Landscape Partnership at Camp Ripley will continue to coordinate and leverage the resources of the Department of Defense Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Forest Service with state and local partners to advance the goals of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape. Together, these actions will sustain area agriculture, protect the Mississippi River headwaters, and preserve a unique landscape that will allow Camp Ripley to continue to effectively train National Guard members for decades to come.

PARTNERS

FEDERAL

- U.S. Department of Agriculture
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Department of Defense
 - Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) Program
 - Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program
- U.S. Department of the Interior
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 - National Park Service

STATE

- Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources
- Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- Minnesota Department of Military Affairs
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Minnesota Forest Resources Council

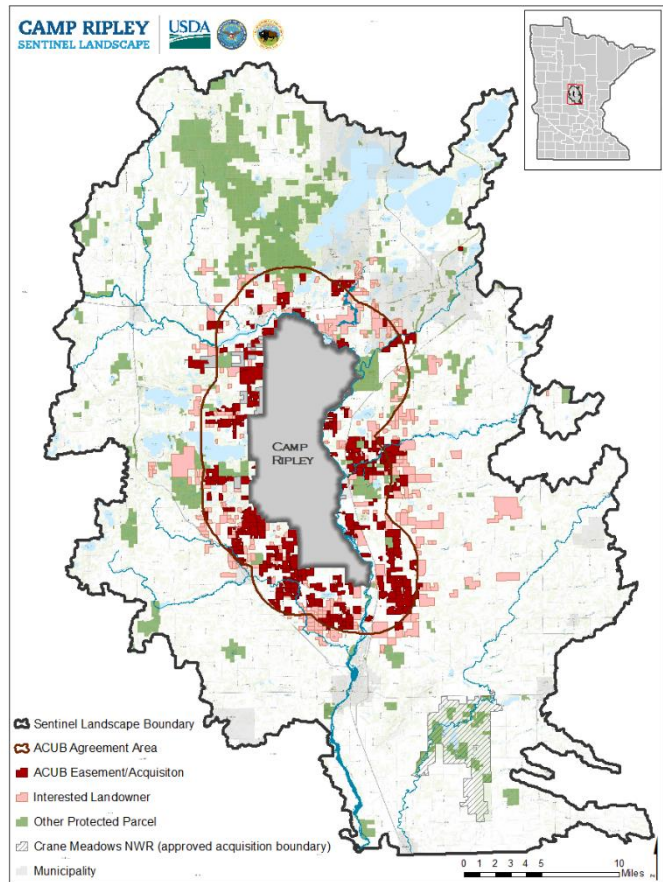
LOCAL

- Mississippi Headwaters Board
- Cass County
- City of Baxter
- Crow Wing County
- Morrison County
- Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District

NGOS

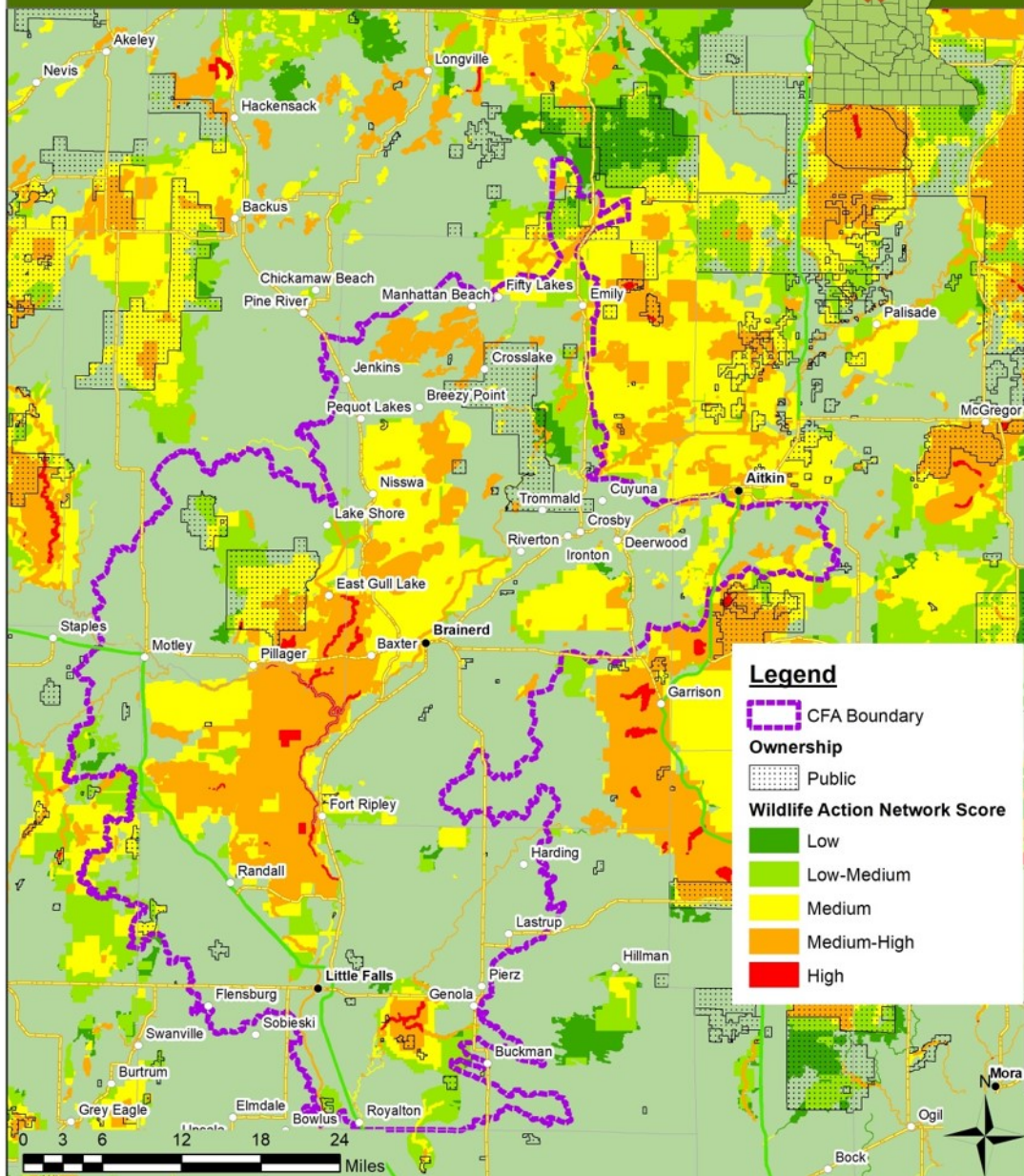
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Conservation Fund

Camp Ripley



Brainerd Lakes

Conservation Focus Area



Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Protection Ranking sheet

<u>Score</u>	<u>Max Score</u>	<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Guidelines:</u>
	30	# Feet of Shoreline	5 points for minimal river frontage on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries. (<500ft) 10 points for at least 500 - 999 feet of shoreland on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries. 15 points for 1,000 - 2,000 feet of shoreland on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries. 20 points for 2,000 - 3,000 feet of shoreline on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries. 30 points for more than 3,000 feet of shoreland on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries.
	15	% of Tract Developable	1-15 points base on the proportion of the tract that is developable (10%=1.5pts)
	10	Wetland fringe width	1-10 points based on the distance between upland & the bank/water (0'=10pts, 300'=0pts, -1pt/30' wet)
	20	Urgency	Property opportunity is likely to be lost if we do not act quickly
	25	Professional Judgement	0-25 Points based on Landowner actively managing their land & Riparian/Streamshore Needs
	15	Adjoining Applications	15 points for land adjoining another application
	20	Adjoining Public Land	up to 20 points for land adjoining public land on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, and tributaries.
	10	Habitat Value	1-10 points based on the habitat value of the property, uniqueness, and lack of existing development and shoreline alterations. County biological survey, Zonation
	10	% of Parcel/Tract	1-10 points based on the proportion of the parcel enrolled (10% = 1 pt)
	10	% Forest of the parcels	1-10 points based on the proportion of parcel that is forest and/or perennial grass (10% = 1 pt)
	15	Minor Watershed Risk Classification of MHB or County Waterplan	1-15 Points for Classification Enhancement and Protection. Less points for Villigance. Additional points for moving that needle.
	20	Bargain Sale/Leverage	1-20 Points based on percent discount or other funds leveraged

200 TOTAL GROSS SCORE

*Other factors may raise or lower the priority of a parcel