



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

ML 2022 Request for Funding

General Information

Date: 06/04/2021

Proposal Title: Minnesota Forests for the Future Phase IX

Funds Requested: \$3,919,900

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Christine Ostern

Title: Forest Legacy Program Coordinator

Organization: MN DNR Division of Forestry, Forest Legacy Program

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Location Information

County Location(s): Todd, Rice, Otter Tail, Morrison, Itasca and Hubbard.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie
- Northern Forest

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement
- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Forest
- Wetlands
- Habitat

Narrative

Abstract

The MN Forests for the Future Program Ph.IX will protect 4349 acres of forest, shoreline and wetland habitat in the Pineland Sands Aquifer and other areas of northern, forest/prairie transition and southeastern forest regions through permanent working forest conservation easements on private land and 1020 acres of strategic fee title acquisition of MN Heritage Forest property. Protecting forest lands provides habitat for wildlife and rare species, conserves water quality and quantity, supports local tourism and timber economies and provides recreation opportunities. This program works with partners to implement protection strategies from local and state plans and initiatives.

Design and Scope of Work

MN Forests for the Future Ph.IX focuses forest and riparian habitat protection located in the northern, forest/prairie and prairie regions; strategically targeting areas of large forest blocks threatened by conversion and parcelization. Forty-four percent of forests in Minnesota, or nearly 7.5 million acres, are privately-owned and at risk of fragmentation or conversion. Since 2008, Minnesota has experienced some of the highest conversion rates in the United States, with some of the highest in the state located in North Central MN. This program protects forests through permanent working forest conservation easements and strategic fee title acquisitions. Protection work achieves multiple benefits by conserving critical habitat, maintaining forested land cover essential for high water quality/quantity and by sustaining the forested landscape critical for local jobs in tourism and timber. This work is critical to conserving wildlife that require large intact forests and provides perpetual protection for fish, game and wildlife that inhabit these forested landscapes.

The program focuses work within the Pineland Sands Aquifer, Mississippi Headwaters, Forest/Prairie Transition and Big Woods remnants of the prairie areas building on existing protection and utilizing strong partnerships including local governments and citizen groups. Land cover and land use directly impacts water quality/quantity; by protecting forests in key areas, this program will also protect drinking water, recharge aquifers, reduce nutrient and sediment to lakes and streams, protect floodplains, sustain fisheries and mitigate climate change. Protection of forested land is critical for local economies including tourism, timber and for outdoor recreation opportunities. Acquisition of permanent working forest conservation easements will protect 3329 acres of intact forests of high conservation value and keep them in private ownership. Conservation easements are strategically focused to build on existing protection, address regional goals and meet private landowner demand. Guidelines developed and implemented for more than 15 years through the program are followed to ensure protection work is strategically located and stewardship is efficient and sound. A forest management plan is included with each conservation easement with updates required regularly. To ensure permanent protection, ongoing stewardship includes annual landowner meetings, on-site monitoring, landowner response and resolving violations. Communication with local units of government about these projects has occurred so that projects are supported.

Fee title acquisition is focused on purchasing 1020 acres of large strategic complexes of the MN Heritage Forest property, land previously owned by PotlatchDeltic and temporarily held by The Conservation Fund, located in the Pineland Sands Aquifer area. Discussions have occurred and are on-going with local county and town decision makers and resource management staff with preliminary approvals obtained. Discussions and partnership with conservation organizations and local citizen conservation groups are also on-going so that protection efforts are informed, efficient and an overall protection strategy is developed and can be followed. The parcels purchased will become part of the State Forest thereby protecting critical forest habitat, water quality/quantity and offering public recreation opportunities. Acquisition will increase forest management efficiency and improve habitat management.

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?

Targeted habitats of our proposal include: upland conifer forests, upland hardwood forests, forested wetlands, non-forested (shrub) wetlands, open peatlands and stream and lake shoreline. Protection of these forest lands and associated habitat will provide critical habitat for key forest game species including upland birds (turkey, woodcock, ruffed grouse, sharp-tailed grouse), white-tail deer, moose, black bear, fisher, pine marten and waterfowl as well as songbird and other non-game wildlife species. Forested and wetland habitat protection will occur in priority conservation areas as identified in several statewide planning efforts such as The Nature Conservancy's Multiple Benefit Analysis and Resilient Lands Mapping Tool and the state's Forest Action Plan and Assessment of Need.

Several parcels have been identified in the Pine Moraines and Outwash Plains, Chippewa Plains and St. Louis Moraines ecological subsections. In just the Pine Moraines and Outwash Plains subsection, there are 89 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) with 29 of those being federal or state endangered, threatened or of special concern. Wildlife using this habitat include bald eagles, red-shouldered hawks, northern goshawks, gray wolves, sandhill cranes, common loons, black-throated blue warblers, wood turtles, four-toed salamanders and eastern hognose snakes. Several parcels have been identified in the Hardwood Hills and Big Woods ecological subsections. In just the Big Woods subsection, there are 121 SGCN with 55 of those being federal or state endangered, threatened or of special concern. Wildlife using this habitat include cerulean warbler, least weasel, Louisiana waterthrush, wood thrush and numerous species of migratory warblers. In total, this proposal supports protection of habitat with significant value for over 225 Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN).

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

Nearly forty-four percent of forest land in Minnesota, or 7.5 million acres, are privately-owned and at risk of fragmentation and/or conversion. The Pineland Sands and other portions of the Mississippi Headwaters Basin has seen some of the highest rates of fragmentation and conversion. Forests play a critical role in keeping water clean by absorbing and filtering water, preventing erosion and allowing for groundwater recharge. Maintaining working forests will protect habitat and provide clean water while supporting the forest products industry and local recreational-based economies. The proposed fee title lands are only temporarily held before large-scale divestment occurs and are located in areas with high conversion threat. The proposed conservation easements are located where external development pressure is high and are held by private landowners often struggling to keep properties intact. Public investment is needed to maintain these forests and all associated benefits before the opportunity is gone.

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:

MN Forests for the Future Program uses GIS analysis to expand protection of large habitat blocks and corridors. The tracts of forest land targeted for protection with this program have some, if not all, of the following traits: are currently unprotected inholdings; large tracts that have been identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey (including identified sites of high quality biodiversity significance); corridors and habitat identified by the State Wildlife Action Plan as significant; presence of rare species and Species in Conservation Need or the habitat that support those species; located in a strategic habitat complex and are adjacent to other protected land so that complexes can be protected and management improved. In addition we consult with local and regional watershed and landscape planning efforts such as The Nature Conservancy's Multiple Benefit Analysis and Resilient Lands Mapping Tool, DNR's Forest Action Plan and Assessment of Need, PCA's watershed planning efforts, BWSR's and

local SWCD's One Watershed One Plan efforts, the MFRC's Regional Landscape Plans, and the DNR/BWSR Landscape Stewardship Plans.

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

- LU10 Support and expand sustainable practices on working forested lands
- LU8 Protect large blocks of forest land

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:

Priority actions addressed - OHF 25-year Framework for the Northern, Forest/Prairie Transition and Southeast Forest Sections:

- Protect shoreland critical habitat on wild rice lakes, shallow lakes, wetlands, cold water lakes, streams and rivers and spawning areas;
- Enhance and restore coldwater fisheries;
- Protect habitat for wildlife in rivers, cold-water streams and associated upland;
- Protect forestland and forest habitat through acquisition or easement to prevent parcelization and fragmentation and to provide the ability to access and manage landlocked public properties

MN Forests for the Future targets conservation easements and state forest acquisition to protect large blocks of managed forest habitat, critical to water quality, maintaining connections between uplands and riparian areas that are essential for biodiversity and wildlife movement. This program protects habitat and water quality for fish, game and wildlife in perpetuity before it is lost, fragmented or degraded. This proposal supports protection of habitat for over 225 SGCN.

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

Prairie

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

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 Minnesota Forests for the Future Program targets conservation easements and state forest acquisition to protect large blocks of managed forest habitat. These strategies will provide perpetual protection for fish, game and wildlife by protecting intact forests for the benefit of both forest-dwelling species and by protecting water quality in lakes, river and streams for the benefit of all species that live in that watershed. To help reach this goal,

the program has identified projects with critical shoreline and strategies that match with local watershed plans. By protecting working forests critical to water quality, this program acknowledges and maintains the connections between upland forest, riparian forest and wetlands that are essential for biodiversity and wildlife movement. Most critically, this program protects habitat and water quality for fish, game and wildlife in perpetuity before it is lost, fragmented or degraded.

Priority actions from the OHF A 25-year Framework for the Northern Forest, Forest/Prairie Transition and Southeast Forest Sections addressed by this proposal are:

- Protect shoreland and restore or enhance critical habitat on wild rice lakes, shallow lakes, wetlands, cold water lakes, stream and rivers and spawning areas;
- Enhance and restore coldwater fisheries systems;
- Protect, enhance and restore habitat for fish, game and nongame wildlife in rivers, cold-water streams and associated upland habitat;
- Protect forestland and forest habitat through acquisition or easement to prevent parcelization and fragmentation and to provide the ability to access and manage landlocked public properties.

What other fund may contribute to this proposal?

- N/A

Does this proposal include leveraged funding?

Yes

Explain the leverage:

A total of \$944,250 of leverage from a variety of public and private sources will be provided over the life of the program including purchase discounts, landowner donated value and RIM Critical Habitat Match credits generated by previous private donations to the program. In addition, \$13,000 of funds from a USFS administrative grant will be used as leverage.

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 request would fund new projects that would not be implemented but for the appropriation.

Non-OHF Appropriations

Year	Source	Amount
2012	The Nature Conservancy	\$1,437,900
2017-2019	US Forest Service	\$40,000
2012	Reinvest in Minnesota	\$229,100
2012	State Bonding - Minnesota Forests for the Future	\$231,551
2012	State Bonding - Reforestation	\$80,320
2013	State Bonding - Reforestation	\$187,687
2014	State Bonding - Reforestation	\$54,827
2014	Wild Turkey Federation, Minnesota Deer Hunters	\$10,000
2015	Wild Turkey Federation, Minnesota Deer Hunters	\$10,000
2016	Wild Turkey Federation, Minnesota Deer Hunters	\$10,000
2020	State Bonding - Minnesota Forests for the Future	\$1,000,000

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

All land protected through permanent conservation easements will be sustained through set guidelines for conservation easement stewardship that have been developed and implemented for more than 15 years through the Minnesota Forests for the Future Program. Easement stewardship incorporates annual landowner meetings, annual on-site monitoring of all properties, records management, responding to landowner inquiries, tracking ownership changes and addressing and resolving easement violations. Landowners of land in conservation easement are required to obtain and follow a certified Woodland Stewardship Plan. Funding for easement stewardship is included in this proposal.

Fee lands acquired will become part of the Minnesota State Forest system. In-holdings or parcels adjacent to state forest land have been targeted for fee acquisition. Acquisition of these lands will increase management efficiency, habitat management and public recreation opportunities through consolidation. Funding for state forest management comes from the Forest Management Investment Account.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2023-on going	Natural Resource Fund (FMIA)	Manage forests to maximize forest health and wildlife benefits consistent with guidance documentation	Monitoring public use and address issues that may arise	-
annually/perpetually	OHF - Easement Stewardship Account	Monitor easements annually and enforce easement terms through annual landowner contact and on-site monitoring	Annually review forest management activities and review and update Forest Stewardship Plans periodically	-

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

Ovenbird – proposal will permanently protect approximately 3200 acres of Ovenbird habitat potentially supporting approximately 1280 breeding pairs of Ovenbirds.

Golden-winged Warblers – proposal will permanently protect approximately 3000 acres of habitat suitable for Golden-winged Warblers supporting an estimated 5800 breeding pairs of Golden-winged Warblers.

White-tailed deer – proposal will permanently protect an estimated 3500 acres of White-tailed deer habitat translating to roughly 70 pre-fawning deer. This estimate is low since a higher average density would be projected within the Transition and Southeast areas and pre-fawn estimates are based on seasonal lows.

Black Bear - our proposal will permanently protect approximately 3200 acres of black bear habitat potentially supporting approximately 240 black bears.

Ruffed Grouse - proposal will permanently protect approximately 3200 acres of habitat suitable for ruffed grouse potentially supporting 6400 ruffed grouse.

Black-throated Blue Warbler - our proposal permanently protects an estimated 3200 acres of habitat suitable for the Black-throated Blue Warbler potentially supporting 3200 individuals.

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

The Program has the following ties to BIPOC and diverse communities:

- Six of the ten proposed parcels are located in environmental justice areas of concern according to a MPCA analysis where at least 40% reported income less than 185% of the federal poverty level. Protecting these properties mitigates environmental justice concerns for this at-risk population.

- Several of the proposed parcels fall within areas identified by EPA in its environmental justice mapping and screening tool as above the state's average for environmental risk factors to at-risk demographic groups. Demographic indicators used are: percent low-income, percent people of color, less than high school education, linguistic isolation, age under 5 and over 64. Protection within these areas will help mitigate the environmental justice issues.
- Program outreach strategies to under-served landowners have begun and will continue including presentations and other outreach to under-served groups to provide more diverse participation opportunities; for example the MN Women's Woodland Network.
- Access for all members of the public will be secured on 1020 acres through acquisition. Multilingual and culturally specific hunting and fishing education programs take place on public lands.
- Protection of strategic parcels provide permanent ecosystem services for everyone such as clean drinking water, productive habitat, clean air, climate change mitigation, sedimentation/erosion control and recreation. The DNR has adopted advancing diversity, equity and inclusion as a key priority in its 2020-22 strategic plan; focusing on building partnerships with diverse communities. DNR's OHF projects aim to serve all Minnesotans. At the same time, we are bringing more focus in all our work to BIPOC and diverse communities. Project scoring and implementation benefit BIPOC and diverse communities through recreational opportunities that are close-to-home, culturally responsive and accessible to Minnesotans with disabilities. The DNR has diversity, equity and inclusion strategies that benefit all OHF projects including: public engagement that seeks out BIPOC voices and involves diverse communities, outreach and marketing of projects has this focus as well; and partnerships are at the center of all projects, Tribes in particular are consulted in all pertinent areas of the DNR's work

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)?**

No

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

Local government approval is not currently required for such acquisitions, however it is the policy of the DNR to notify county boards of all acquisitions prior to closing for their information and to solicit comments and concerns. In the case of the Hubbard County parcels included in our proposal, the county board and local towns are supportive of these parcels becoming managed State Forest land and have given letters and/or resolutions of support. For the conservation easement proposed in Otter Tail and Todd Counties, early communication has already taken place with the County Board Chair with no concerns identified.

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

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

Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing?

Yes

Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:

The Hubbard County fee-title parcels have been open with some restrictions under previous ownership.

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

Yes

Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:

All fee land acquisitions will be managed by the Division of Forestry consistent with State Forest policies and will be open for hunting and fishing following completion. Other applicants to the Minnesota Forests for the Future Program are private forest landowners seeking to protect their land with working forest conservation easements and are not interested in providing public access.

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:

Forest access roads and trails have been developed to aid in forest management practices. These roads will be maintained to provide ongoing access for forestry, fisheries and wildlife management activities on the properties. On fee lands, roads and trails will provide both public recreational access to state forest lands and access for management purposes.

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

Yes

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?

Maintenance of forest access roads and trails will be the responsibility of the landowner, either private landowners or the State Forest administrator. Monitoring of roads and trails will be conducted as part of the annual easement monitoring of the eased properties. The DNR has a monitoring and reporting plan in place that involves the Divisions of Forestry, Parks and Trails and Enforcement. This includes annual spring (and other wet season) closures, reporting issues and enforcement actions when necessary.

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:

Any future restoration or enhancement will be the responsibility of the landowner, either private landowners or the State Forest administrator.

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?
2021	\$2,971,000	-	\$120,000	-	1,966	0	No
2019	\$4,573,000	\$311,200	\$305,000	-	2,400	240	No
2018	\$1,473,000	\$757,700	\$150,000	\$153,250	1,220	472	No
2017	\$2,291,000	\$985,500	\$1,130,000	\$20,000	4,000	178	Yes
2016	\$1,840,000	\$1,839,000	-	-	3,200	3,293	Yes
2016	\$1,000,000	-	-	-	379	0	No
2015	\$2,180,000	\$2,178,400	\$5,000	\$5,000	1,500	1,306	Yes
2011	\$5,409,000	\$5,408,100	\$2,250,000	\$2,477,400	30,700	19,439	Yes
2009	\$36,000,000	\$35,880,200	-	\$10,533,200	190,000	190,621	Yes

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Acquire working forest conservation easements	June 30, 2025
Develop conservation easement monitoring plans, forest stewardship plans, dedicate easement stewardship	June 30, 2025
Acquire new state forest land	June 30, 2025

Budget

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$75,000	\$13,000	-	\$88,000
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$1,734,000	-	-	\$1,734,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$1,652,500	\$944,300	variety of private/public sources	\$2,596,800
Easement Stewardship	\$160,000	-	-	\$160,000
Travel	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	\$290,000	-	-	\$290,000
Direct Support Services	\$7,400	-	-	\$7,400
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$3,919,900	\$957,300	-	\$4,877,200

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Forest Legacy Coordinator	0.25	3.0	75000	\$13,000	USFS	\$88,000

Amount of Request: \$3,919,900

Amount of Leverage: \$957,300

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 24.42%

DSS + Personnel: \$82,400

As a % of the total request: 2.1%

Easement Stewardship: \$160,000

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 9.68%

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

Leverage is from a variety of public and private sources provided over the life of the program including USFS administrative grant funds, purchase discounts, landowner donation and RIM Critical Habitat Match credits generated by previous private donations to the program.

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?

Three conservation easement acquisitions would be removed reducing the protected acres by 900 acres and reducing the leverage by approximately \$60,000.

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

Personnel expenses would not be adjusted since there is only 0.25 of a position supported by this proposal and the workload would not drop significantly enough to affect such a small portion of one position.

If the project received 50% of the requested funding

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

All eight conservation easement acquisitions would be removed reducing the protected acres by 3329 acres and eliminating virtually all of the leverage.

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

A fifty percent reduction would leave fee title acquisition of 1020 acres which still requires substantial personnel and other expense - there is only 0.25 of a position supported by this proposal and so that would remain in order to complete the work of the remaining acquisitions.

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?

There has been a past gap and reduction in staff and so there is no overlap. Time codes specific to appropriations and projects are utilized in order to track staff time for each project and appropriation.

Fee Acquisition

What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?

It is anticipated there will be two fee title acquisition transactions.

Easement Stewardship

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

There are eight conservation easements anticipated. The DNR easement stewardship calculator is used to estimate stewardship costs with a range of \$20,000-\$25,000 per easement.

Direct Support Services

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

DNR Direct and Necessary Cost Calculator.

Federal Funds

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

Yes

Are the funds confirmed?

Yes

- Cash : \$13,000

Is Confirmation Document attached?

[Yes](#)

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	1,020	-	1,020
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	0	-	-	0
Protect in Easement	-	0	3,329	-	3,329
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	4,349	0	4,349

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$1,803,000	-	\$1,803,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	\$2,116,900	-	\$2,116,900
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	\$3,919,900	-	\$3,919,900

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	-	1,020	1,020
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	-	0	-	-	0
Protect in Easement	0	900	0	97	2,332	3,329
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	900	0	97	3,352	4,349

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	\$1,803,000	\$1,803,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	\$1,024,000	-	\$320,000	\$772,900	\$2,116,900
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	\$1,024,000	-	\$320,000	\$2,575,900	\$3,919,900

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$1,767	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	\$635	-
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	-	-	-	-	\$1,767
Protect in Fee w/o State	-	-	-	-	-

PILT Liability					
Protect in Easement	-	\$1,137	-	\$3,298	\$331
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Outcomes

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced aspen parklands and riparian areas ~ *This project will permanently protect 900 acres through acquisition of conservation easement of forest and riparian areas including many wetlands, shallow lakes, ponds, shoreline and other types of riparian areas. This proposal will protect land which provides biologically diverse wildlife habitat for desirable game species and endangered, threatened, special concern species and SGCN; providing multiple conservation benefits to help mitigate the effects of climate change, invasive species and other major stressors. Forest Protection activities will be assessed, management planning required and documented and properties monitored. Forest composition will be inventoried. Wildlife populations will be monitored.*

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation ~ *This project will permanently protect 3,352 acres of northern forest and riparian areas including wetlands, streams, shoreland, small lakes and ponds. All northern forest parcels included in this proposal are at high risk of conversion from working forests. 1,020 acres of State Forest will be added so that large blocks of working forests are maintained and in-holdings are reduced creating public access opportunities and improving the ability to implement landscape level forest management. Forest protection activities will be assessed, management planning required/documented and properties monitored. Forest composition will be inventoried; wildlife populations will be monitored.*

Programs in prairie region:

- Protected, enhanced and restored remnants of big woods and oak savanna ~ *This project will permanently protect 97 acres of Big Woods remnants in the prairie region including >½ mile of shoreline along the Cannon R. adjacent to a WMA and a parcel <1mile from Nerstrand Big Woods S.P. and adjacent to other protected areas. This is an area of extreme development pressure due to proximity to large cities and conversion to ag. This project will contribute to connections maintained between forests and riparian areas across private and public ownerships. Forest protection activities will be assessed, management planning required/documented and properties monitored; forests will be inventoried; wildlife populations will be monitored.*

Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?

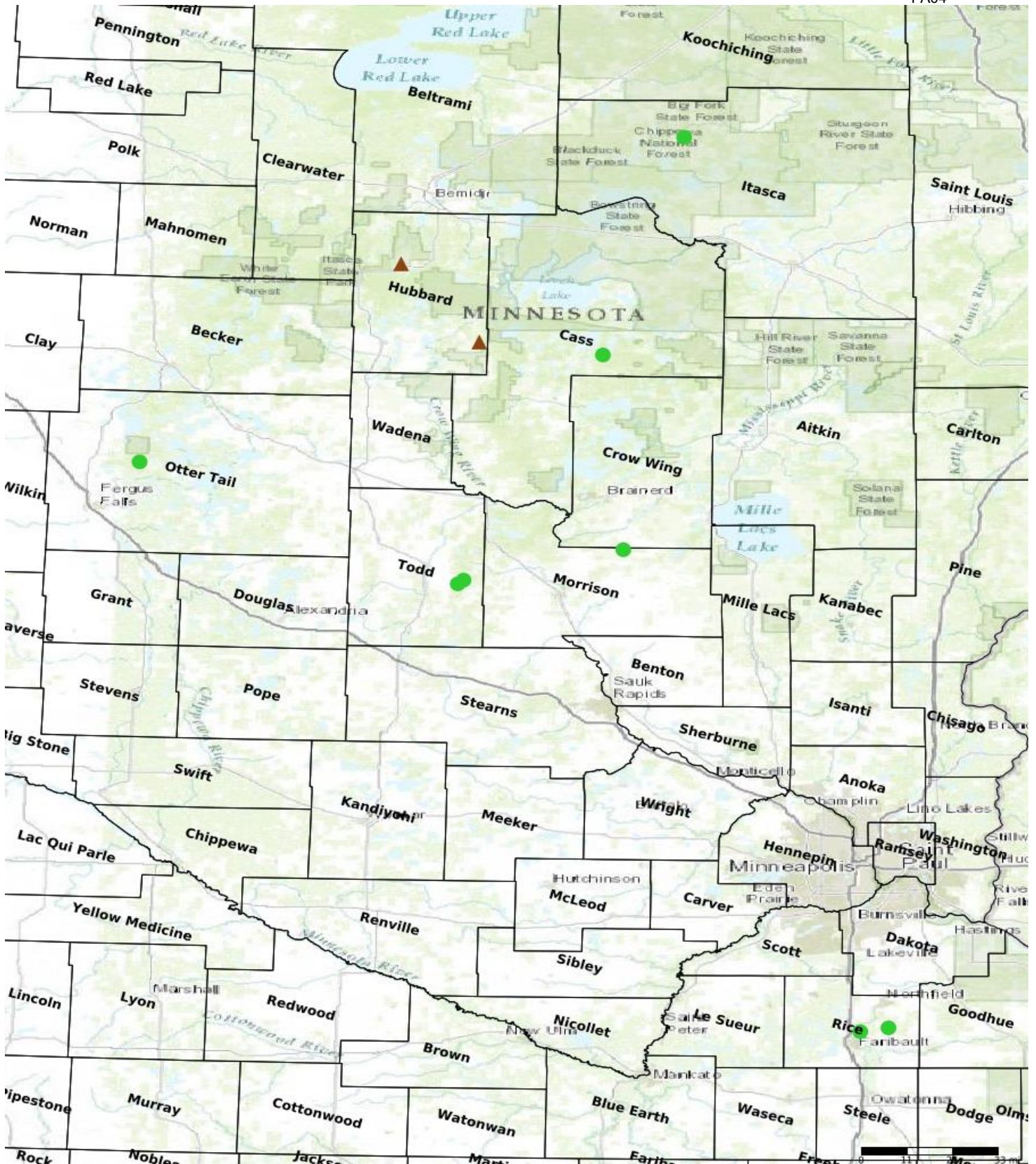
No

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

Applications to the MN Forests for the Future Program are made by interested willing landowners. The Program uses GIS analysis to expand protection of large habitat blocks and corridors. The tracts of forest land targeted for protection with this program have some, if not all, of the following traits: are currently unprotected inholdings; large tracts that have been identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey (including identified sites of high quality biodiversity significance); corridors and habitat identified by the State Wildlife Action Plan as significant; presence of rare species and Species in Conservation Need or the habitat that support those species; are located in a strategic habitat complex and are adjacent to other protected land so that complexes can be protected and management improved. In addition we consult with local and regional watershed and landscape planning efforts such as The Nature Conservancy's Multiple Benefit Analysis and Resilient Lands Mapping Tool, DNR's Forest Action Plan and Assessment of Need, PCA's watershed planning efforts, BWSR's and local SWCD's One Watershed One Plan efforts, the MFRC's Regional Landscape Plans, and the DNR/BWSR Landscape Stewardship Plans.

Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Lake George Complex	Hubbard	14334209	380	\$676,000	No
White Oak Complex	Hubbard	14032223	640	\$1,118,000	No
Hubbard Tract 3	Hubbard	13928204	500	\$20,000	No
Appel Habitat	Itasca	14926223	157	\$145,000	No
Morrison Tract 1	Morrison	04230204	1,675	\$582,500	No
Maplewood	Otter Tail	13442202	180	\$255,000	No
Cannon River Big Woods 4	Rice	11020217	69	\$200,000	No
Nerstrand Woods 8	Rice	11019207	28	\$95,000	No
Little Elk 2	Todd	12932205	400	\$415,000	No
Little Elk 1	Todd	13032233	320	\$330,000	No



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

Parcel Map
Minnesota Forests for the Future Phase IX
 (Data Generated From Parcel List)

FORESTS FOR THE FUTURE

PHASE 9



DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Funding Requested: \$3,919,900

Minnesota Forests for the Future is a voluntary conservation easement program administered by the DNR Division of Forestry to protect and conserve private working forest lands throughout Minnesota for environmental, economic & recreational benefits.

Accomplishments:

- 360,000+ acres in easement
- 9,000+ acres fee land acquired

Threats:

44 percent of MN forests (or 7.5 million acres) are at risk of fragmentation or conversion to non-forest uses

Protection Proposed:

- 3,329 acres working forest conservation easement
- 1,020 acres fee title to add to State Forests for the public

Economic Impacts:

- MN lakes support an \$11 billion tourism industry
- Small game hunting generates \$1.3 billion+ annually
- The state's wood products industry generates \$9.5 billion and employs 62,000.
- Over \$80 million is received by landowners for timber stumpage annually.

Public Benefits | Critical forest lands identified for the program ensure forests of significance are preserved permanently. Lands enrolled in the program protect watershed health, provide habitat for wildlife and rare species, ensure a consistent source of timber and other forest products, and can continue to be used for outdoor recreation.

How it Works | Lands protected by these voluntary easements stay in private ownership. To be eligible for the program, the private land enrolled must provide at least **one** of the following public benefits:



Protection of large forest blocks or tracts of adjacent forest land



Fish & wildlife habitat, water quality or other environmental benefits



Opportunities for traditional forest uses including management through timber harvest



Public recreational opportunities like public access or public recreation trails



Easement Landowner





St. Louis County Easement



Itasca County Easement (Sugar Hills)

Program Requirements | Easements are customized to the property, but permitted uses allows forest management including timber harvesting and firewood cutting, hunting and fishing, outdoor recreation, maple syrup production, nature observation, and other traditional forest uses. Landowners work with DNR to establish a Forest Stewardship Plan and schedule annual monitoring visits. Easements prohibit forest conversion to industrial, commercial or residential uses or development/subdivision. The easements stay with the property if it is transferred or sold to another landowner.

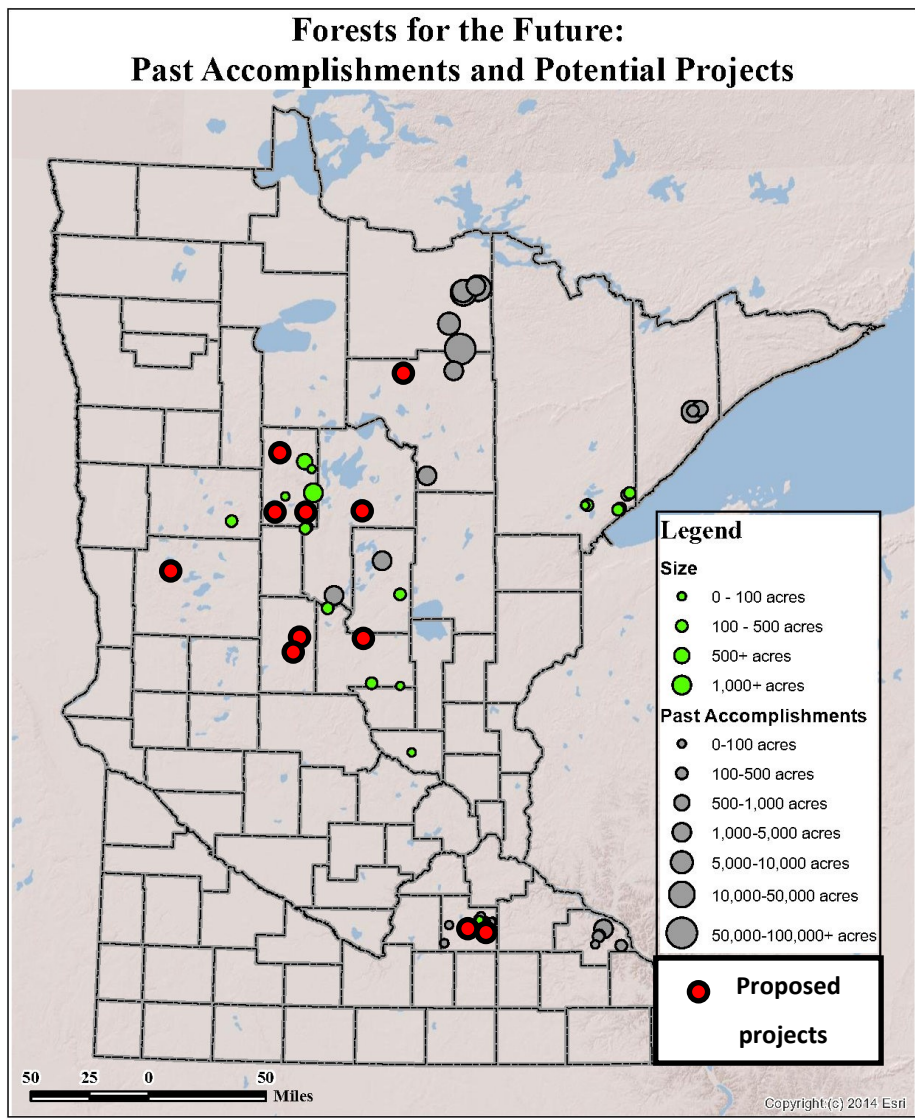
Matching Investments:

Forests for the Future pairs with funding from the **Federal Forest Legacy Program** to leverage State investments that advance working forest land protection.

Non-profit organizations have helped leverage funds in key geographies by matching State investments.

Multiple external partners provide support with landowner outreach and partnership coordination including **The Nature Conservancy, Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape, NGOs, County SWCDs and BWSR staff.**

**Forests for the Future:
Past Accomplishments and Potential Projects**



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