



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Upper Sioux Community Habitat Restoration Phase I

ML 2023 Request for Funding

General Information

Date: 05/31/2022

Proposal Title: Upper Sioux Community Habitat Restoration Phase I

Funds Requested: \$1,100,000

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Amanda Wold

Title: Environmental Director

Organization: Upper Sioux Community

Address: 5722 Travers Lane

City: Granite Falls, MN 56241

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Location Information

County Location(s): Yellow Medicine.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

Activity types:

- Enhance
- Restore

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Habitat
- Forest
- Prairie

Narrative

Abstract

The 2,165 acres of the Upper Sioux Indian Community are impacted by invasive species and are heavily infested with invasive buckthorn. The Tribe is requesting funds to restore and enhance 176 acres of oak savanna, floodplain forest, forested bluff lands, and granite outcroppings on tribal lands. Activities include buckthorn removal and installation and enhancement of native and culturally significant plants.

Design and Scope of Work

The Upper Sioux Community (USC) will focus removal, restoration, and enhancement activities on Tribal land where invasive species, with a special emphasis on buckthorn can be found in near-continuous stands throughout the understory of forest canopies dominated by native oaks, oak savanna, natural granite outcrops and springs. Locations along the river including where all the work proposed in this plan is located, are used by Tribal Members as a place to hold ceremonies and harvest cultural plants and wildlife.

If funded, the Tribe will utilize grant funds to focus on Phase I of a multi-phase project. Phase I includes the treatment and restoration of the Tribe's forested lands, primarily targeting common buckthorn as well as other invasive plant species such as honeysuckle and other established and pioneering invasive species, which have overtaken the forest's understory. Phase I will treat 50% of the Tribe's Community lands. Phase I of this project will be implemented over a 5-year period. During Phase I the Tribe will be treating invasive species utilizing cut/stump methods followed by subsequent years of spot spraying the restoration areas to target the regrowth of buckthorn and other target species.

Oak savanna has lost over 99% of its historic range in Minnesota, the Tribe would like to focus on restoring oak savanna, one of the most endangered habitats in the state. Oak savannas are dependent on a natural fire regiment and the Tribe would conduct prescribed burns to enhance and restore oak savanna and suppress re-growth of buckthorn. Buckthorn and other woody invasive species will be cut, treated with herbicide and where possible chipped or piled and burned by the BIA. Treated areas will also be seeded with Minnesota native and cultural significant plants to restore the natural habitat. Restoration and enhancement work is expected to be largely conducted by hand due to the sensitive habitat, significant native and cultural plant species present, and numerous cultural artifact sites present throughout the proposed treatment area. Phase I will be funded utilizing Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Funds (OHF funding) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) grant funding.

Phase II will consist of applying for an additional 5-years of OHF and BIA grant funding. The second phase will include similar planning and implementation activities within Phase I but will be conducted on the final 50% of Tribal lands impacted by invasive species. The tribe has spent 15+ years dedicated to invasive species removal, habitat restoration, and a special focus on oak savanna restoration, if Phase II is not funded by OHF funding the Tribe will utilize funding from the (BIA) to maintain the work completed under Phase I.

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 targeted area for invasive species treatment and habitat enhancement are oak savannas, prairies, and woodlands. Oak savanna is one of Minnesota's most endangered habitats with less than 2% remaining. The USC has been actively working on removing buckthorn and other invasive species to restore oak savanna areas over the past 10 years. By continuing invasive species removal, specifically, buckthorn removal, and enhancement activities in the oak savanna the USC will be preserving this highly endangered habitat.

Removing the dense invasive species/buckthorn stands and enhancing the native oak savanna and forest will create wildlife movement corridors and serve as an attractant for many of the native insects, wildlife, and plants such as the endangered Rusty Patched bumblebee, endangered burrowing owl, threatened Blanding's turtle,

endangered Dakota skipper butterfly, endangered and cultural significant Indian plantain, endangered and cultural significant slender leaf scurf pea, as well as other pollinators and wildlife. Removing invasive species from the woodlands will open the understory to allow seeding of both native and cultural and medicinal plants benefiting the entire ecosystem including wildlife, pollinators, and Tribal members. Plants that would be targeted for seeding would be Minnesota native and cultural significant plants including cottonwood trees, milkweed, sage, sweetgrass, prairie turnip, and yellow medicine.

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

Invasive species, specifically buckthorn, spread rapidly and even after treatment take a number of years of follow-up treatment and habitat enhancement work. The Tribe has dedicated many years of resources and time to address the threats of invasive species including treatment, follow-up treatment, and restoration activities in small, concentrated areas. OHF would allow the Tribe to aggressively and effectively treat lands impacted by invasive species immediately. The Tribe would implement habitat enhancement activities so native species can be re-introduced and established and keep re-infestation of invasive species from adjacent land parcels at bay. The USC is one of the remaining communities that utilizes native cultural and medicinal plants. The Tribe has been actively restoring cultural and medicinal plants and the activities conducted with the OHF would ensure the existence and restoration of those plants that the tribal members utilize.

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:

The tribe will follow the Integrated Invasive Species Management Plan (ISMP) it has developed to guide the treatment and enhancement activities. The plan includes buckthorn and other invasive species coverage data and GIS maps that will allow for effective and targeted treatment work including information on the most effective treatment methods for each invasive species identified within the proposed land parcels for Phase I. The ISMP also includes which areas to target with the greatest infestation to achieve continuous habitat corridors. USC Tribal land is within the Minnesota River Valley flyway and this continuous habitat corridor is significantly important as a resource for migrating species. Some endangered and threatened species will benefit from these restoration/enhancement activities according to the MN Biological Survey include the endangered Rusty Patched bumblebee, endangered burrowing owl, threatened Blanding's turtle, endangered Dakota skipper butterfly, endangered and cultural significant Indian plantain, and the endangered and cultural significant slender leaf scurf pea.

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

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H3 Improve connectivity and access to recreation

Which two other plans are addressed in this proposal?

- Other : Tribal Specific Plans: Upper Sioux Community Integrated Invasive Species Management Plan (2021) and USC BIA Forest Inventory Plan

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

Protect, enhance, and restore restored native prairie, forests, floodplain forests and remnant/restored oak savanna by removing competitive invasive plant species such as buckthorn, honeysuckle, and pioneering invasive species

that threaten native plant species significant both to the USC and to the state of Minnesota. This project will also seek to partner with neighboring individuals and organizations such as the DNR to remove invasive plant species and then restore and enhance habitat within the Minnesota River bluff corridor surround and within the Tribal boundaries.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal?

Prairie

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

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 restoration and enhancement described in this proposal will diversify existing habitats within Trust lands, enhance native habitat, enhance cultural/medicinal plants and pollinator plants, and improve wildlife habitat and habitat corridors for wildlife. Dense stands of invasive species, especially buckthorn, restrict the natural movement of wildlife species and makes it difficult for human movement for gathering/hunting and cultural important activities. Restoring and enhancing these habitats will provide Tribal members with native habitats, plants, and wildlife to harvest from which will provide a permanent legacy that was outlined by Trust agreements.

What other fund may contribute to this proposal?

- N/A

Does this proposal include leveraged funding?

Yes

Explain the leverage:

BIA Biofuels Reduction funding has been provided to the USC though a multi-year workplan from 2015-2021. These funds were utilized in 2015-2017 to remove buckthorn within a 7-acre oak savanna remnant site along the Minnesota River. The heavily infested 7-acres of oak savanna was first cleared all invasive species using cutting and burning to reduce chemical use in culturally significant locations. In 2018, the Tribe used goats to try to reduce invasive species pressure but the goat program was unsuccessful due to unforeseeable circumstances such as goats falling out of trees, getting attacked by eagles, and escaping their enclosed areas and roaming the country-side. In the fall of 2018 the Tribe determined that goats were not a good fit for our project work due to the time and expense of maintaining them. In 2019, the Tribe began mechanical and stump/cut and herbicide to clear all the understory of the oak savanna and begin a full restoration of the site. In 2020, several follow up herbicide treatments were conducted for any invasive re-growth and the sites were seeded in with winter wheat. In 2021, the 7-acres was seeded with a native oak savanna and pollinator seed mix to complete the restoration/enhancement process. In 2022, the USC planted additional culturally important plants including chokecherry, raspberry, and other fruiting trees/shrubs for both a native food forest as well as habitat enhancement. In 2021, the USC also targeted 20-acres of heavily infested forested area adjacent to the oak savanna, this area was also treated using the cut/stump and herbicide method to reduce re-introduction of buckthorn the bluff slope and oak savanna restoration site. Activities to continue to address these areas and additional lands have been proposed to the BIA for funding, the Tribe is waiting to learn if this proposal has been funded. The Tribe has conducted prescribed burns throughout the Community over many years in partnership

with BIA for habitat management and will continue to conduct these prescribed burns to compliment the work conducted under OHF. BIA funds will continue to be utilized for buckthorn and invasive species removal in 2022 and throughout the proposed project period and the years that follow. The USC is also open to applying for supportive funding from other sources as listed above such as the Clean Water Fund and Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund. The USC would also be interested in partnering with the Upper Sioux Agency State Park to create a more contiguous corridor of restored bluff lands along the Minnesota River Corridor which would enhance habitat for flora and fauna to an even greater extent.

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 is for a new project and not a substitution of previous or existing funding. OHF will greatly accelerate the Tribe's ability to complete the proposed work and enhance activities that have been ongoing through the funding that the USC receives from the BIA.

Non-OHF Appropriations

Year	Source	Amount
2011	BIA Fuels-Hazardous Fuels Reduction: Buckthorn removal and prescribed burning of prairie and forested lands	8205
2012	BIA Fuels-Wildland Fire Preparedness: Prescribed burning of prairie and forested lands including	51,500
2013	BIA Fuels-Wildland Fire Preparedness: Prescribed burning of prairie and forested lands	18,000
2014	BIA Fuels-Hazardous Fuels Reduction: Buckthorn removal and prescribed burning of prairie and forested lands	15,000
2015	BIA Fuels-Hazardous Fuels Reduction: Buckthorn removal and prescribed burning of prairie and forested lands	25,600
2017	BIA Fuels-Hazardous Fuels Reduction: Buckthorn removal and prescribed burning of prairie and forested lands	25,600
2018	BIA Fuels-Hazardous Fuels Reduction: Buckthorn removal using goats, mechanical removal, and prescribed burning	25,600
2019	BIA Fuels-Hazardous Fuels Reduction: Buckthorn removal both by hand and mechanical means, stump cut treatment, prescribed burning and re-seeding areas with winter wheat cover crops	25,600
2020	BIA Fuels-Hazardous Fuels Reduction: Buckthorn removal both by hand and mechanical means, stump cut treatment, prescribed burning and re-seeding areas with winter wheat cover crops and native seed mixes	25,600
2021	BIA Fuels-Hazardous Fuels Reduction: Buckthorn removal both by hand along bluff slopes, stump cut treatment, revisit sites to spot treat from previous	9,800

	years, prescribed burning and re-seeding areas with native seed mixes	
2010	BIA Fuels-Hazardous Fuels Reduction: Buckthorn removal and prescribed burning of prairie and forested lands	8250
2009	BIA Fuels-Hazardous Fuels Reduction: Prescribed burning of prairie and forested lands	12,000

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

The Tribe is dedicated to continuing the restoration and enhancement of its Trust and Fee lands as it has been doing before the OHF funding. The Tribe will continue to utilize BIA funding as well as Tribal funding to continue this important habitat restoration work on Tribal lands. The Tribe has submitted for and is waiting on approval of a multi-year workplan proposal to the BIA to continue to maintain its native habitat through invasive plant species work. The BIA Biofuels Reduction funding will be utilized as a match for the OHF funding. This funding targets invasive plant species treatment and prescribed burns. The Tribe has submitted a \$150,000.00 multi-year proposal to the BIA and expects to learn the amount award when the federal budget for FY2022 is approved and provided to regional project managers.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2023-2026	BIA Fuels	Remove and treat invasive plants	Burn/chip woody materials	Enhance and restore treated areas

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

Habitat indicator species include oak savanna, prairie, and forest habitats. Plant and animal species include endangered Rusty Patched bumblebee, endangered burrowing owl, threatened blundings turtle, endangered Dakota skipper butterfly, endangered and cultural significant Indian plantain, endangered and cultural significant slender leaf scurf pea.

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

All of the activities in this plan will be conducted on the Upper Sioux Community's Tribal lands and will benefit the Tribal members residing on these lands. The Tribal members live among these habitats as well as utilize them for recreational purposes such as harvesting the cultural and medicinal plants and wildlife.

Activity Details

Requirements

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

Yes

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

Yes

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

Yes

Where does the activity take place?

- Other : Upper Sioux Community Tribal Lands

Land Use

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

No

Other OHF Appropriation Awards

Have you received OHF dollars in the past through LSOHC?

No

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
USC Parcel 1 Enhancement	Year 1 (December 2023)
USC Parcel 2 Enhancement	Year 2 (December 2024)
USC Parcel 3 Enhancement	Year 3 (December 2025)
USC Parcel 4 Enhancement	Year 4 (December 2026)
USC Parcel 5 Enhancement	Year 5 (December 2027)

Budget**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	-	-	-	-
Contracts	\$840,000	\$150,000	Bureau of Indian Affairs	\$990,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$260,000	-	-	\$260,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$1,100,000	\$150,000	-	\$1,250,000

Amount of Request: \$1,100,000**Amount of Leverage:** \$150,000**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 13.64%**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:**

Leverage source is BIA Fuels Reduction Funding that the Tribe has successfully applied for and received over the past 10+ years. The Tribe is waiting on confirmation of funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and expects to have approvals of funding applications by the summer of 2022.

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?**

Since the project is made up of multiple areas it is easy to adjust the number of areas and parcels targeted. For example, instead of targeting 3 parcels for buckthorn treatment/restoration/enhancement in a year only 2 parcels would be selected as funds allow.

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

No personnel and DSS expenses are 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?

Since the project is made up of multiple parcels it is easy to adjust the number of areas and parcels targeted. For example, instead of targeting 4 parcels for buckthorn treatment/restoration/enhancement only 2 parcels would be selected as funds allow.

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

No personnel and DSS expenses are in this proposal

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?

This line includes hiring contractors for treatment/restoration and enhancement work as well as funding for a contractor as a Project Coordinator. Contractor treatment/restoration and enhancement costs are based on past contracts averaging between \$2,000 to \$3,000 an acre.

Federal Funds

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

Yes

Are the funds confirmed?

No

What is the approximate date you anticipate receiving confirmation of the federal funds?

According to staff at the BIA, funding has been released at intervals to the Bureau and Project Officers will provide funding agreement information once project proposals are approved.

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	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	14	162	0	176
Total	0	14	162	0	176

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

Type	Native Prairie (acres)
Restore	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Easement	0
Enhance	14
Total	14

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	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	\$88,000	\$1,012,000	-	\$1,100,000
Total	-	\$88,000	\$1,012,000	-	\$1,100,000

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	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	176	0	176
Total	0	0	0	176	0	176

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	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	\$1,100,000	-	\$1,100,000
Total	-	-	-	\$1,100,000	-	\$1,100,000

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
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Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	\$6,285	\$6,246	-

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	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	\$6,250	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Outcomes

Programs in prairie region:

- Other ~ Enhance oak savanna, prairie, riparian, and forested areas which will be GIS mapped and tracked annually per acre enhanced and restored. These efforts will be tracked on an annual basis to effectively determine the success of the goals in this proposal. In addition, ongoing surveys and research on cultural and medicinal plants, invasive plants, and wildlife will allow the Tribe to track local responses to these restoration and enhancement efforts.

Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?

No

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

The USC Environmental Director utilized the Tribe's Invasive Species Management Plan to identify the areas for treatment. The most dense and mature stands are targeted first in order to reduce the seed distribution to non-infested lands. Parcels in the multi-year plan are selected adjacent to previously treated areas to reduce re-infestation to allow habitat restoration with native species to establish and to develop a corridor for wildlife.

Restore / Enhance Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
USC Parcel 0.5	Yellow Medicine	11538219	27	\$165,000	Yes
USC Parcel 4	Yellow Medicine	11539224	36	\$231,000	Yes
USC Parcel 5	Yellow Medicine	11539224	18	\$110,000	Yes
USC Parcel 3	Yellow Medicine	11539224	20	\$132,000	Yes
USC Parcel 2	Yellow Medicine	11538219	34	\$209,000	Yes
USC Parcel 1	Yellow Medicine	11538219	41	\$253,000	Yes

Parcel Map



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

Upper Sioux Community Proposal Illustration

History of the Upper Sioux Indian Community

Understanding the history of the Upper Sioux Community is important to understanding the cultural and historical importance of their lands. The Community is located in Yellow Medicine County, Minnesota (Figure 1). The Federally-recognized tribe is located 115 miles west of Minneapolis, MN and three miles southeast of Granite Falls, MN. These lands are named the Pezihutazizi Kapi (the place where they dig for yellow medicine) in Dakota.

Although People of the Community are known as Dakota, they come from several different bands of what is known as the Oceti Sakowin, the “Seven Council Fires”. Upper Sioux is made up of primarily Wahpetonwan "Dwellers in the Leaves" Dakota and a smaller population of Sissetonwan “Dwellers of the Fish Ground”, Bdewakanton "Dwellers by Mystic Lake" and Yankton “Dwellers at the End”.

The traditional homelands of Oceti Sakowin span many US States and part of Canada, from the Great Lakes to the Rocky Mountains. Archaeological records show their ancestors having been here for thousands of years but Dakota Creation stories place Minnesota as the location of their first existence on this Earth. At the time of first contact with Euro-Americans other Tribal Nations had moved into the territory, the first Euro-Americans recorded Dakota primarily in what would become Southern Minnesota, western Wisconsin, Iowa, North and South Dakota (Figure 2). In the early 1800's the United States negotiated treaties with the Dakota Bands with the goal of removal of indigenous persons to allow for greater European Settlement. In 1851, due to starvation, disease, and crop failure, and with deception on the part of the United States, the Dakota chiefs signed over a significant swath of Dakota lands. The Dakota reserved land on either side of the Minnesota River which then became their reservation. Starvation and disease remained rampant in the interceding years and Dakota persons revolted against the United States.

Following the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862, the State of Minnesota proclaimed all Dakota persons illegal within the State boundaries. Many Dakota persons fled to Canada and smaller number remained in hiding on ceded lands. The remaining Dakota were forcibly marched to a concentration camp at Ft. Snelling in St. Paul, Minnesota. The Dakota that survived the march and camps were then sent to reservations in South Dakota.



Figure 1. Traditional Dakota Homelands

In 1938, 746 acres of Dakota lands were returned by the U.S. Government to the Upper Sioux. An additional 1,419 acres of land has been acquired by the Community in recent past decades.

The reservation consists of approximately 1,470 acres held in trust, with an additional 695 acres owned by the Tribe, but not in trust. The land consists of floodplain, hardwood, brush, wetlands, Minnesota River escarpment, and flat agricultural land.

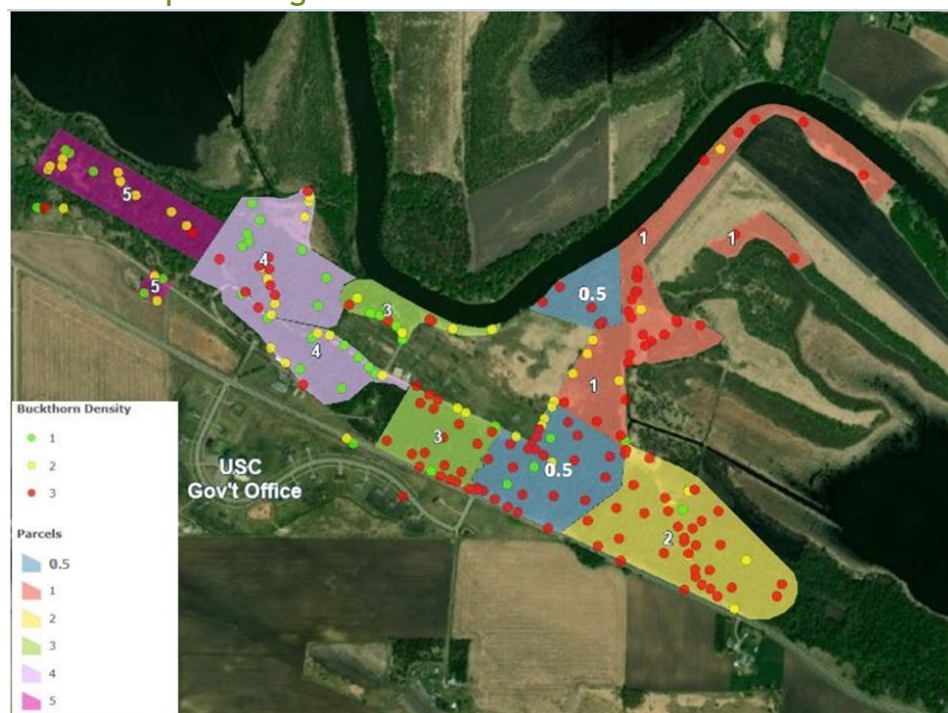
As of March 2021, Tribal membership includes a total of 535 individuals with approximately 230 individuals living within the Tribal Trust lands. The USC landscape and its adjacent areas have experienced significant changes overtime, extensive lush native prairies once covered southwestern Minnesota. The landscape is now dominated by the agricultural industry and ancillary businesses.

Tribal Significance

The Office of the Environment (OE) applies the Community's traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) to their programming in a way that is reflective of historical and modern Dakota values and teachings. TEK is preserved

within the Community through oral tradition passed on to Community members and staff at appropriate times by those with knowledge of the Dakota history, the surrounding habitat, values, and information about changes in the ecosystems (flora and fauna). TEK is a complex and interconnected understanding of the natural systems that provides the Community with a critical understanding of the different components and interactions of the environment around us (peoples). The Dakota peoples have a unique understanding of the natural world and emphasize the symbiotic character of humans and nature. Realizing that people have co-evolved with the environment and value the relationship with the habitats of species and their surrounding environment. The OE recognizes and respects the human-animal-plant-soil-water-world relationship and how these relationships influence the obligations the OE has towards the Community, its members, and management practices. The OE further recognizes that indigenous knowledge can sustain the environment, yet it can be sacred knowledge. Therefore, we must be respectful of Dakota traditions and their rights. The OE believes that it is vital that partnerships with outside organizations are equitable to restore social injustices and this has proven to be successful when Indigenous Peoples lead ecological restoration projects. The OE seeks to utilize both TEK, Community knowledge in addition to well-established scientific methodology to address the inequality of invasive buckthorn.

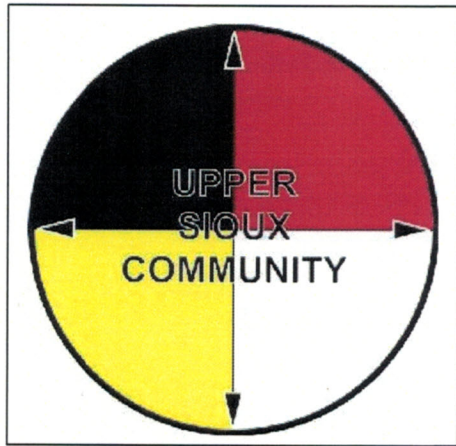
Map of Targeted Habitat Enhancement Parcels



2021 BUCKTHORN RESTORATION







184

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 5722 TRAVERS LANE
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 320.564.3853
 320.564.4482 - FAX

Board of Trustees Action Form

DATE: 5/23/2022 Submitted By: Amanda Wold

SUPERVISOR APPROVAL: _____

BOARD CONSENSUS OR APPROVAL FOR:

Submit completed Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
 Funding Request for Habitat Restoration Phase I (5-year plan).
 \$1,100,000 for invasive species, such as buckthorn, removal and
 prairie, oak savanna, and forest habitat restoration and
 enhancement activities on 176 acres.

Expense Amount:\$_____ BOT Expense:\$_____ Department Expense:\$_____

CONTRACTOR/CONSULTANT: _____

PROGRAM: Office of the Environment

APPROVED BY: [Signature]

(Please note if approval has been given by phone and initial)

DISAPPROVED BY: _____

(Please note if approval has been given by phone and initial)

NOTED IN BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING ON: Jan 25, 2022; Mar 10, 2022

(Original must go to Executive Office Manager)

CC: -Amanda
-Tina