



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Contract Management
ML 2023 Request for Funding

General Information

Date: 06/24/2022

Proposal Title: Contract Management

Funds Requested: \$336,000

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Katherine Sherman-Hoehn

Title: OMBS Grants Manager

Organization: MN DNR

Address: 500 Lafayette Road

City: Saint Paul, MN 55155

Email: katherine.sherman-hoehn@state.mn.us

Office Number: 6512595533

Mobile Number:

Fax Number:

Website:

Location Information

County Location(s):

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Metro / Urban

Activity types:

- Other : Contract Management

Priority resources addressed by activity:

Narrative

Abstract

Provide contract management and customer service to OHF pass-through appropriation recipients for approximately 245 open grants. Ensure funds are expended in compliance with appropriation law, state statute, grants policies, and approved accomplishment plans.

Design and Scope of Work

This appropriation will be used to continue and enhance contract management services to pass-through recipients of Outdoor Heritage Fund appropriations to the Commissioner of Natural Resources. The goal of contract management is to ensure that grantees are properly reimbursed and that organizations operate in compliance with OHF pass-through appropriation procedures, policies from the Department of Administration's Grants Management, OHF statute, and the recommendations of the Legislative Auditor. Contract management includes: grant agreements and amendments, training, technical assistance, reporting, fiscal monitoring, reimbursement request processing, and close-out of grants.

The DNR is currently the administrative agent for this program. The DNR's Office of Management and Budget (OMBS) Grants Unit is applying to continue to provide contract management services to pass-through grant recipients. The OMBS Grants Unit's goal is to provide pass-through recipients with the contract management, technical assistance, and grant monitoring they need to successfully complete their conservation work. The Grants Unit provides grantees with one consistent point of contact for their agreements and delivers timely, responsive, customer service.

This proposal includes a funding request of \$336,000, an increase from the \$300,000 ML 2022 appropriation. The DNR proposes adding an FTE to this work to: adjust contract management capacity to meet increasing grant numbers, enhance coordination of our monitoring and compliance activities, and enable the unit to meet increasing requests for technical assistance from LSOHC/LCCMR staff and individual grantees. Increased costs are in line with an additional FTE and annual adjustments in salary costs. The Grants Unit last added a staff member in FY19. That staff member now has a full caseload. The new FTE will also provide subject matter expertise in monitoring, audits, and compliance to provide timely, coordinated service internally, to LSOHC staff, and to grantees.

Contract management services are billed using a professional services rate. In FY22, 4.53 FTE will be dedicated to contract management. The professional services hourly rate includes salary and fringe for grants management staff, supervisory time, travel costs, supplies, and allocated administrative costs including rent and printing as well as other related costs necessary to carry out the pass-through grant management program. Multiple staff with a variety of grants, financial or other responsibilities provide contract management services to OHF as well as the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF). The Grants Unit consults with Lands and Minerals and Fish and Wildlife staff as necessary on technical issues. Cost coding is used to record and differentiate time spent on ENRTF and OHF pass-through grant management. Services not received or provided will not be billed. The rate for FY22 is \$72.00/hr and is re-calculated at least biennially. If the rate changes, LSOHC staff will be informed immediately.

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?

N/A

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

Contract management provides oversight of reimbursement for project deliverables and ensures that pass-through recipients are compliant with the Department of Administration's Office of Grants Management procedures as well as the recommendations of the Legislative Auditor.

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:

N/A

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

Which two other plans are addressed in this proposal?

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

N/A

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal?

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:

OHF funds will be spent appropriately and reimbursed expediently so that project work continues.

What other fund may contribute to this proposal?

- N/A

Does this proposal include leveraged funding?

No

Per MS 97A.056, Subd. 24, Please explain whether the request is supplanting or is a substitution for any previous funding that was not from a legacy fund and was used for the same purpose.

This request is for work related to Outdoor Heritage Fund appropriations. It would not be implemented but for the appropriation. No outside funding has been used for this purpose.

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

The Grants Unit is bringing more focus to BIPOC and diverse communities in our grant management work. The Minnesota DNR has adopted advancing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) as a key priority in its 2020-22 strategic plan. The plan focuses on increasing the cultural competence of our staff, creating a workforce that is reflective of Minnesota, continuing to strengthen tribal consultation and building partnerships with diverse communities. The DNR has DEI strategies that benefit all OHF projects:

- Multilingual and culturally specific hunting and fishing education programs take place on public lands.
- All hiring is equal opportunity, affirmative action, and veteran-friendly. Contracting seeks out Targeted

Group, Economically Disadvantaged and Veteran-Owned businesses. Subcontracting requirements for pass-through organizations also follow these guidelines.

- Public engagement seeks out BIPOC voices and involves diverse communities. Outreach and marketing of projects has this focus as well.

The Grants Unit participates in all trainings and have been leaders in developing the grants guidance, and members of our team helped launch the OGM's DEI community of practice. The Grants Unit only provides contract management activities to organizations who receive pass-through appropriations, so our scope for some activities is limited. In OHF contract management work, we concentrate on identifying and improving elements in our processes that may fall more heavily on or become barriers to participation by organizations from communities that have experienced disparities, and increasing our capacity for technical assistance. In FY21 we made several revisions to our reimbursement processes to:

- reduce the administrative burden on partners and provide flexibility in our process, while maintaining our high levels of risk mitigation
- focus on reaching out proactively to new organizations to set new projects up for success.

Our goal is to continue and increase these efforts, so that OHF contract management work is responsive to and supports the success of organizations and projects from BIPOC and diverse communities, as well as all pass-through organizations.

Activity Details

Requirements

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

Yes

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?

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?
2020	\$210,000	\$210,000	-	-	0	0	No
2021	\$210,000	\$131,853	-	-	0	0	No
2022	\$300,000	-	-	-	0	0	No

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Pass-through grant agreements prepared and provided to recipients	August 2023
Contract management for Pass-through grant recipients	June 2025
Submit first annual status report	August 2024
submit final report	August 2025

Budget**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	-	-	-	-
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	\$336,000	-	-	\$336,000
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$336,000	-	-	\$336,000

Amount of Request: \$336,000**Amount of Leverage:** -**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 0.0%**DSS + Personnel:** -**As a % of the total request:** 0.0%**Easement Stewardship:** -**As a % of the Easement Acquisition:** -**Does this proposal have the ability to be scalable?**

No

Please explain why this project can NOT be scaled:

Expenses are based on hours worked, which is dependent on the number of pass-through appropriations open in a given fiscal year. A reduction in appropriation would result in insufficient funding for work required.

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	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0

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	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	-

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	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0

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	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-

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	-	-	-	-
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	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Outcomes

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- Other ~ *Pass-through grants are managed appropriately and grantee expenditures are reimbursed efficiently and correctly.*

Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?

No

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

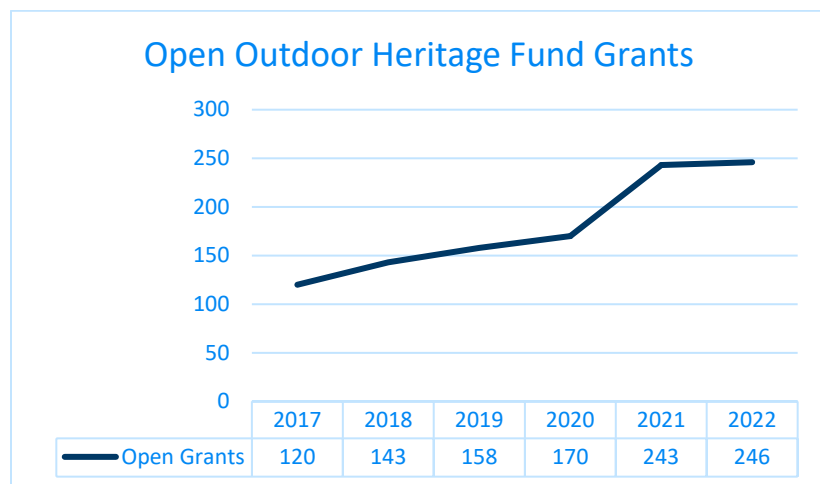
N/A

Outdoor Heritage Fund Contract Management Measures

The OMBS Grants Unit tracks several basic metrics to judge trends in contract management work and set strategic and staffing goals for the year.

Open Grants Per Year

The number of open Outdoor Heritage Fund grants per year has continued to increase over the last five years, with a sharp increase in FY21 due in part to COVID extensions. While some of the COVID extensions lapsed in FY22 the overall number of grants continues to increase. Grants currently last an average of 4.4 years.



Payments to Grantees

In FY21, grant specialists processed over 587 payments a year, continuing the sharp rise from FY20. The rate of requests did not fluctuate with COVID shutdowns. Land acquisitions per year remains steady. The DNR reimbursed \$58.8 million in eligible expenses in FY21.

