



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Restoration Evaluations - ML 2023

ML 2023 Request for Funding

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### General Information

**Date:** 06/24/2022

**Proposal Title:** Restoration Evaluations - ML 2023

**Funds Requested:** \$200,000

### **Manager Information**

**Manager's Name:** Wade Johnson

**Title:** Restoration Evaluations Program Coordinator

**Organization:** MN DNR

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**Website:** <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/legacy/restoration-evaluation.html>

### **Location Information**

**County Location(s):**

**Eco regions in which work will take place:**

**Activity types:**

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

### Narrative

#### **Abstract**

This program annually evaluates a sample of up to twenty-five Outdoor Heritage Fund habitat restoration and enhancement projects, provides a report on the evaluations in accordance with state law and delivers communications on project outcomes and lessons learned in restoration practice.

#### **Design and Scope of Work**

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) are jointly responsible for convening a Restoration Evaluation Panel (Panel) of technical experts to annually evaluate a

sample of habitat restoration projects completed with Outdoor Heritage funding, as provided in M.S. 97A.056, Subd. 10. Primary goals of the restoration evaluation program are to provide on the ground accountability for the use of Legacy funds and to improve future habitat restorations in the State. Per statute, the Panel will evaluate the selected habitat restoration projects relative to the law, current science, and the stated goals in the restoration plan. Program staff will identify projects to be evaluated, coordinate field assessments and provide a report to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) and the legislature determining if the restorations are meeting planned goals, any problems with implementation, and, if necessary, recommendations on improving restorations. The anticipated long-term outcomes of this program are increased success of habitat restorations, increased awareness among practitioners and decision-makers of common challenges associated with restorations and recommended management options to improve future projects.

Up to twenty-five initial Outdoor Heritage Fund project evaluations will be reported in the 2023 annual report, an additional three to five follow up evaluations of previously assessed sites will also be reported. Follow up assessments will provide valuable insight in tracking progress and estimating trajectory towards planned goals. This request supports a portion of the inter-agency Legacy Fund Restoration Evaluations Program, which provides for the evaluation of habitat restoration projects completed with funds from the Parks and Trails Fund (M.S. 85.53 Subd. 5), Outdoor Heritage Fund (M.S.97A.056 Subd.10), and Clean Water Fund (M.S. 114D.50 Subd. 6) as required by state law.

Current Restoration Evaluation Reports, appendix of project evaluations and selected project stories are available on the MN DNR website <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/legacy/restoration-evaluation.html>

A permanent record of all Legacy Fund Restoration Evaluation reports beginning in 2012 are available from the Legislative Library: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/edocs/edocs.aspx?oclcnumber=823766285>

**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?**

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

**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:**

**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:**

**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:**

**What other fund may contribute to this proposal?**

- Clean Water Fund
- Parks and Trails Fund

**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 program is entirely dedicated to Legacy Fund work and does not supplant or substitute for previous funding.

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

It is anticipated that the evaluation program outputs will help to create a framework for continuous improvement in restoration practice. Direct work of the Legacy Fund Restoration Evaluation Program will be sustained for the period of funding.

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

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

**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	Amount Spent to	Leverage Reported in	Leverage Realized to	Acres Affected in	Acres Affected to	Complete/Final Report
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	Received	Date	AP	Date	AP	Date	Approved?
2020	\$150,000	\$140,000	-	-	0	0	No
2019	\$150,000	\$150,000	-	-	0	0	No
2015	\$100,000	\$100,000	-	-	0	0	Yes
2016	\$125,000	\$125,000	-	-	0	0	Yes
2018	\$150,000	\$150,000	-	-	0	0	Yes
2017	\$150,000	\$150,000	-	-	0	0	Yes
2014	\$100,000	\$100,000	-	-	0	0	Yes
2013	\$45,000	\$45,000	-	-	0	0	Yes
2012	\$45,000	\$45,000	-	-	0	0	Yes
2011	\$42,000	\$42,000	-	-	0	0	Yes

### Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Evaluation Panel establishes annual priorities	July 1, 2023
Site assessors (State staff and contractors) conduct field surveys of selected sites	August 30, 2024
Program staff select up to twenty-five project sites for evaluation	July 1, 2023
2020 Restoration Evaluation report submitted to Legislature and LSOHC	April 28, 2025

Budget**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$163,000	-	-	\$163,000
Contracts	\$18,500	-	-	\$18,500
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$2,000	-	-	\$2,000
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$12,500	-	-	\$12,500
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$4,000	-	-	\$4,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Evaluation Specialist	0.67	1.0	\$75,000	-	-	\$75,000
Site Assessors (State Agency Staff)	0.08	1.0	\$8,000	-	-	\$8,000
Program Coordinator	0.67	1.0	\$80,000	-	-	\$80,000

**Amount of Request:** \$200,000**Amount of Leverage:** -**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 0.0%**DSS + Personnel:** \$175,500**As a % of the total request:** 87.75%**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:**

## 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?**

Program staff positions, Coordinator and Specialist, have have remained the same for the past five appropriations.

## Contracts

**What is included in the contracts line?**

Technical evaluation of completed restorations and enhancements.

## 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**

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

Yes

## 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 Calculator

## 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
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**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	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

**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
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**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	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

**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



## Parcels

**Sign-up Criteria?**

No

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

# Evaluating Restorations - Promoting Success - Improving Minnesota's Legacy

## *Lessons from the Legacy Fund Restoration Evaluation Program*



We identify what's working and ongoing challenges.

We work with site assessors and project managers to evaluate restorations.

We collaborate with teams of experts in different habitat types.

### What We Have Seen

Restorations are largely using good science, and on track to meet their goals. But, ***we can do better for Minnesotans!*** After reviewing 187 Parks and Trails, Clean Water and Outdoor Heritage Fund projects, we have identified opportunities for improvement.

### Recommendations for Future Projects

- ***Prioritize documentation*** of project planning and implementation.
- ***Multidisciplinary project teams*** can improve ecological outcomes.
- Practitioners need ***comprehensive science based training***.
- ***Minimum design criteria*** can ensure projects benefit habitat.
- ***Consistent planning*** and ***native vegetation*** are critical for stream projects.

### 2022 Focus

Annually we update our project pool to include all completed OHF restoration and enhancement projects.

2022 project evaluations will include prairie, forest and stream projects throughout the state.



# Program Activities 2012 -2021 - Improving Future Restorations

## EVALUATING PROJECTS

In 2020, we visited 35 projects. Combining these evaluations with previously completed site visits provides a broader view of the implementation of Legacy Funds, the benefits they are providing, and opportunities to maximize the benefits of the funds for Minnesotans.



## ENGAGING EXPERTS

We conducted a survey asking what people need to do their best work. Practitioners wanted more opportunities to learn from experts. One way our program meets this need is by coordinating a special session on stream restorations at the Minnesota Water Resources Conference in 2019, 2020 and 2021.



## COMMUNICATING RESULTS

For panel recommendations to make a difference, they need to be communicated. For example in 2021 program staff coordinated with the University of Minnesota to host a series of eight webinars focused on improving future restorations that reaches hundreds of stakeholders across Minnesota.

