



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Minnesota Heritage Forest - Transition to Public Ownership Program
ML 2024 Request for Funding

General Information

Date: 05/30/2023

Proposal Title: Minnesota Heritage Forest - Transition to Public Ownership Program

Funds Requested: \$22,647,000

Confirmed Leverage Funds: \$4,363,000

Is this proposal Scalable?: No

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Christine Ostern

Title: DNR Forest Legacy Program Coordinator

Organization: MN DNR Division of Forestry, Forest Legacy Program

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Location Information

County Location(s): Cass, Crow Wing, Becker, Wadena, Koochiching, Itasca, Hubbard, Carlton, Aitkin, St. Louis and Beltrami.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Northern Forest

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Forest
- Wetlands
- Habitat

Narrative

Abstract

The Minnesota's Heritage Forest – Transition to Public Ownership Program is focused on the protection of forest lands in northern Minnesota by purchasing land from The Conservation Fund (TCF) for permanent conservation, management and protection by MN DNR and northern MN Counties. In 2020 TCF purchased more than 72,000 acres of forest land Minnesota from the PotlatchDeltic Corp., securing these lands to provide time for conservation partners to permanently conserve these forest lands. DNR seeks to purchase 10,688 acres in fee and Northern Waters Land Trust (NWLTL) 7,680 acres to transfer to Counties.

Design and Scope of Work

TCF indicated that their purchase from the PotlatchDeltic Corp. is to provide time for permanent conservation with partners. DNR's goal is to protect water quality and wildlife habitat while also preserving working forestlands, safeguarding jobs, contributing to local economies, increasing climate resiliency, and public access. DNR's Heritage Forest Project focuses on forest and habitat protection located in the northern forest region. Working with partners, DNR has implemented a four-phase project plan: Phase 1 (2021-2022) – interdisciplinary team applies DNR's Strategic Land Asset Management metrics to all TCF-owned parcels; engagement with Tribes, Counties and conservation partners. Phase 2 (2022) – DNR staff worked directly with county leaders to apply local expertise & coordination. Phase 3 (2022-2023) – refined priority parcel lists; seek county and Tribal support; develop acquisition strategy including funding proposals; work with NWLTL to coordinate acquisitions with Counties and Tribes; complete appraisal for DNR proposed parcels. Phase 4 (2024-2028) – if funded, acquire parcels.

Many of the Heritage Forest lands are near DNR-managed lands, including existing State Forests. Some lands are suitable for DNR acquisition/management for various conservation purposes (State Forests, WMAs, & SNAs): working forests, protection of important, rare, or diminishing habitats and native plant communities and public access. DNR is working with Counties who have identified parcels for ownership and parcel lists are being refined with NWLTL coordination. This project systematically evaluates, prioritizes, and (if approved) will acquire parcels for DNR management with significant local and Tribal input. NWLTL is currently using OHF grants for wildlife habitat and tullibee watershed protection and has already completed "bargain sale" transactions, purchasing and transferring more than 1,600 acres from TCF to Hubbard County and DNR for permanent protection. With completion of DNR's Phase I, NWLTL has been coordinating with Counties and Tribes to identify parcels for acquisition. Lands of interest expand/connect core habitat, address access, support local timber/recreation based economies, protect waters, support climate adaptations/resiliency, and protect critical habitat. Counties selected parcels for strategic reasons including: (1) consolidation/adjacency to County lands (2) securing/improving public access (3) securing/improving forest management access. NWLTL will acquire parcels prioritized by Counties, then transfer parcels to each county for permanent ownership.

Parcels strategically identified for acquisition are large forest blocks threatened by conversion and/or parcelization. Nearly 7.5 million acres (44%) of MN's forests are privately-owned and at risk of fragmentation/conversion. MN has had some of the highest conversion rates in the U.S., with the highest in North Central MN. Protection work achieves multiple benefits by conserving critical habitat, maintaining forested land cover essential for high water quality/quantity and sustaining the forested landscape critical for local timber/tourism jobs. This work is critical to conserving wildlife that require large intact forests and provides permanent protection for wildlife that inhabit these landscapes. By protecting forests, we protect drinking water, recharge aquifers, reduce nutrients/sediments to lakes and streams, sustain fisheries and mitigate climate change. Protection of forested land is critical for local economies.

Explain how the proposal addresses habitat protection, restoration, and/or enhancement for fish, game & wildlife, including threatened or endangered species conservation

The predominant threat for wildlife Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and protected species is habitat degradation, loss and fragmentation. Maintaining intact and healthy forest habitat, especially large contiguous tracts, reduces stressors on these populations. Permanently protecting parcels in this proposal as public land maintains core forested areas and connectivity and increases the resilience of these areas to a changing climate, invasive species and other habitat threats. The proposed project uses science-based targeting methods to leverage and expand existing habitat corridors and complexes, reduce fragmentation and protect areas identified as priorities in several plans and conservation initiatives, including the MN County Biological Survey. DNR formed a statewide team with land acquisition/management experts from all DNR Divisions to apply and assess the DNR's GIS-based Strategic Land Asset Management metrics to all TCF-owned parcels to expand protection of large habitat blocks and corridors. The priority tracts of forest land and habitat targeted for protection have some, if not all, of the following traits: are currently unprotected inholdings; large tracts identified by the MN County Biological Survey (including 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 adjacent to other protected land so that complexes can be protected and management improved. In addition, we consult with local and regional watershed/landscape planning efforts: TNC's Multiple Benefit Analysis and Resilient Lands Mapping Tool, DNR's Forest Action Plan, PCA's watershed plans, One Watershed One Plans, MFRC's Regional Landscape Plans, SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan, and Landscape Stewardship Plans.

Targeted habitats of our proposal include: upland forests, forested wetlands, non-forested wetlands and stream and lake shoreline. Protection of these lands provides critical habitat for key forest game species including upland birds, white-tail deer, moose, black bear, fisher, pine marten and waterfowl as well as songbird and other non-game wildlife species. In total, this proposal supports habitat protection with significant value for nearly 200 Species in Greatest Conservation Need.

What are the elements of this proposal that are critical from a timing perspective?

TCF purchased lands in 2020 providing 10 yrs (2030) for permanent conservation; working with Tribes and public agencies first then shifting to private buyers. DNR will begin the fair-market appraisal summer 2023 (bonding funds), then complete one bulk purchase transaction. NWLT will begin their appraisal when funds are available. Both will be ready to utilize OHF when funds are available summer 2024 to complete acquisitions. DNR/NWLT will reduce the time TCF holds lands to acquire at the lowest cost and maximize use of State funds.

NWLT is currently using OHF grants to acquire and convey TCF lands for habitat/watershed protection through partnering with Crow Wing SWCD in 2021 & using NWLT's existing OHF. By May 2023 NWLT will have assisted/purchased 2,000 ac. from TCF in 4 separate transactions, all below fair market value. These "bargain sales" purchase price range from 25%-43% of appraised values.

Describe how the proposal expands habitat corridors or complexes and/or addresses habitat fragmentation:

A serious and significant threat to MN's northern forests is conversion for other uses: the MN Forest Resources Council has identified parcelization as "the single most important policy issue affecting the economic and ecological health of the state's forests". The OHF: 25 Year Framework cites that "forest land has been converted to other uses...at a rate of 3,600 acres per year". The MN Forest Vision recommends that the "forest land base is enlarged and protected through permanent conservation easements and fee title acquisition" & "contiguous forest complexes should be protected and enlarged...and there should be focus to protect areas with high game populations and high levels of biodiversity". The State Wildlife Action Plan reports that "activities that fragment or

degrade habitats can independently or in conjunction with invasive species reduce biological diversity” & “Habitat degradation, loss, and fragmentation are the predominant stressors impacting SGCN populations. Habitats with higher biological diversity and that are less fragmented are expected to have greater climate change resiliency than are systems with lower biological diversity and greater fragmentation.” Protection of proposed lands reduces habitat loss/fragmentation & maintains forest habitat complexes. This project would expand permanently protected habitat complexes & avoid habitat conversion/development/fragmentation/degradation. The MN Heritage Forest project provides enhanced connectivity between conservation lands. A key strategy for climate change mitigation is providing corridors/connectivity between different biomes/microclimates allowing species to migrate to find suitable habitats that replace former habitats lost as the climate changes. However, many species may not be able to migrate over developed/cultivated land; providing habitat corridors for species movement benefits their ability to relocate. The MN Statewide Conservation & Preservation Plan says “forest fragmentation reduces resiliency and habitat quality for wildlife including species such as bears and wolves which need large tracts of undeveloped land”. The Plan identifies the critical need “to increase forest ecosystem resilience through maintenance of large blocks of forested land and forest resource health. This requires protection of forestlands against conversion to other uses, and conservation of working forestland resources through sustainable management.”

Which Conservation Plans referenced in MS97A.056, subd. 3a are most applicable to this project?

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

Explain how this proposal will uniquely address habitat resilience to climate change and its anticipated effects on game, fish & wildlife species utilizing the protected or restored/enhanced habitat this proposal targets.

This project enhances habitat resiliency to climate change by incorporating resources & tools developed by the State, land conservation organizations, forest ecologists, aquatic biologists, environmental analysts, climate experts, & engaged community members. By prioritizing areas for conservation, identifying vulnerable species & incorporating best practices, this proposal protects & enhances habitats crucial to the resilience of game, fish, & wildlife species. The MN State Wildlife Action Plan uses SGCN population viability & richness, spatially prioritized MN Biological Survey Sites of Biodiversity Significance, Lakes of Biological Significance & Stream Indices of Biological Integrity to score areas. The project includes areas that score highly, indicating an elevated need for habitat protection. The permanent protection of forest land will contribute to the protection of habitat by expanding protected core areas & corridors of forested habitat directly benefiting the 198 SGCN in the project area & maintaining essential migratory habitat for species dependent on intact high biodiversity.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal?

Northern Forest

- Provide access to manage habitat on landlocked public properties or protect forest land from parcelization and fragmentation through fee acquisition, conservation or access easement

Describe how this project/program will produce and demonstrate a significant and permanent conservation legacy and/or outcomes for fish, game, and wildlife, and if not permanent outcomes, why it is important to undertake at this time:

We will acquire significant strategic priority forestland & habitat, permanently protecting lands through ownership & management by DNR & several northern Counties. This may be the last opportunity to conserve and protect

forest land & habitat at such a large scale in MN led by a coordinated effort of DNR, Counties & TCF as the NGO partner. Land protection at this large scale has a tremendous impact & addresses goals & priorities in several management plans & conservation initiatives, as described in this proposal.

Lands acquired by DNR will become part of three management systems: State Forest, Wildlife Management Area (WMA), & Scientific and Natural Area (SNA). Fee acquisition increases management efficiency through improved access for habitat management & consolidation of existing State lands. Funding for management of State Forests comes from the Forest Management Investment Account and General Fund. Funding for management of SNAs comes from OHF, ENRTF, RIM/critical habitat license plates, and infrequently from bonding, or other appropriations. SNA does not have a larger internal revenue-generating source such as park admission fees or hunting licenses. Funding for management of WMAs comes from a variety of sources.

Lands acquired for Counties will become part of County owned & managed forest land portfolios, increasing management efficiency, public access, habitat consolidation & connectivity. Funding for management of these lands comes from various County sources.

This project cannot be scaled without significantly increasing costs and jeopardizing land availability. These acquisitions are "shovel ready", there is a willing seller, & there will be significant savings if the lands are purchased as soon as possible.

Outcomes

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation ~ *This project will permanently protect 18,368 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 fragmentation and conversion. Forest protection activities will be assessed, management planning required/documented and properties monitored. Forest composition will be inventoried; wildlife populations will be monitored.*

What other dedicated funds may collaborate with or contribute to this proposal?

- Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund

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 funded and implemented without this appropriation. No funds would be supplanted.

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

Lands acquired by DNR will become part of the Minnesota State Forest system, Wildlife Management Area (WMA) system, and Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) system. Fee acquisition increases management efficiency through improved access for habitat management and consolidation of existing state lands. Funding for management comes from the Forest Management Investment Account and General Fund. Funding for management of SNAs comes from OHF, ENRTF, RIM/critical habitat license plates, and infrequently from bonding, or other appropriations. Funding for management of WMAs comes from a variety of sources.

Lands acquired by Counties will become part of their respectively owned and managed forest land portfolios, increasing management efficiency and public access. Funding for management of these lands comes from various County-identified sources.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2023	bonding	DNR conducts independent fair market appraisal for DNR proposed lands	-	-
2024	OHF	NWLT conducts appraisal for NWLT proposed lands	DNR and NWLT begin acquisitions	-
2025	OHF	DNR and NWLT complete acquisitions; NWLT transfers ownership of lands to respective Counties	-	-
annually/perpetually	various other sources	lands are managed by DNR and Counties	-	-

Provide an assessment of how your program may celebrate cultural diversity or reach diverse communities in Minnesota, including reaching low- and moderate-income households:

This project will benefit BIPOC communities throughout the entire state of Minnesota by permanently protecting ecosystem services that provide clean drinking water, productive habitat, clean air, climate change mitigation, sedimentation/erosion control, and public recreational opportunities. Specific project scoring and implementation efforts benefit BIPOC and diverse communities through recreational opportunities that are close-to-home, culturally responsive and accessible to Minnesotans of all abilities.

The Environmental Protection Agency has developed an environmental justice mapping and screening tool. This tool indicates several of the proposed parcels fall within areas identified as environmental justice areas of concern. Demographic indicators used are: percent low-income, percent people of color, less than high school education, linguistic isolation, age under 5 and over 64. Protecting these lands mitigates some of the environmental justice concerns for at-risk populations.

NWLT and DNR have prioritized building relations with the Sovereign Tribal Nations in Northern Minnesota. Establishing strong relationships and partnerships takes time and commitment. NWLT and DNR directly included Minnesota’s Sovereign Tribal Nations in the parcel prioritization process for this proposal. Project outreach and engagement with Minnesota’s Sovereign Tribal Nations will continue to be a priority as this project continues. The DNR has diversity, equity and inclusion strategies that benefit all Outdoor Heritage Fund 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. NWLT unites people from all backgrounds and cultures through water stewardship. NWLT does this by cultivating a conservation ethic and directly engaging all people in practical solutions through volunteer opportunities, informative workshops, and land conservation.

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)?**

Yes

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

Yes

Land Use

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

No

Will neonicotinoid pesticide products be used within any activities of this proposal?

No

Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing?

Yes

Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:

The land is privately owned and public access can be restricted by the landowner.

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

Yes

Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:

Land will be open for hunting and fishing.

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

- State of MN
- County

Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:

- WMA
- SNA
- State Forest
- County Forest

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 by previous industrial forest landowners for forest management practices. Historically these roads and trails have been open to the public. These roads and trails will be maintained to provide ongoing access for forestry, fisheries and wildlife management activities and public use on the properties. There are a few Counties where there are established snowmobile trails going through NWLT priority acquisition parcels or are bordering these parcels. These snowmobile trails have been identified on the NWLT-County maps - see attached NWLT-County maps.

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 access roads and trails will be the responsibility of the DNR on parcels proposed for DNR acquisition. Individual Counties will be responsible for maintenance of access roads on

parcels proposed for acquisition by Counties. DNR monitoring of roads and trails will be conducted on properties acquired by the DNR; 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. Counties will be responsible for monitoring and enforcement issues on properties owned by Counties.

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

Yes

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

New trails or roads will be developed only if necessary for forest/wildlife management activities. Any new road or trail will be developed and managed consistent with the public entity's land management practices and policies.

No new trails or roads are planned on State property. Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA) and Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) do not include motorized vehicle use unless allowed by pre-existing access easement. SNA and WMA will likely honor existing access easements, but new areas of motorized use are incompatible with SNA and WMA public uses.

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?

Maintenance of access roads and trails will be the responsibility of the DNR on parcels proposed for DNR acquisition. Individual Counties will be responsible for maintenance of access roads on parcels proposed for acquisition by Counties. DNR monitoring of roads and trails will be conducted on properties acquired by the DNR; 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. Counties will be responsible for monitoring and enforcement issues on properties owned by Counties.

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:

Initial cursory review of the proposed parcels indicates that the parcels are a condition which does not require restoration or enhancement. However, should further assessment reveal needs for restoration, OHF funds may be used for such purposes. Any future restoration or enhancement will be the responsibility of the landowner: DNR or County.

Other OHF Appropriation Awards

Have you received OHF dollars in the past through LSOHC that are current OPEN appropriations?

Yes

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
DNR completes appraisal on lands proposed for state acquisition	December 31, 2023
DNR acquires new State Forest, WMA, and SNA land	June 30, 2025
NWLT completes appraisals on lands proposed for County acquisition	December 31, 2024
NWLT acquires land and transfers ownership to Counties	December 31, 2025

Budget

Grand Totals Across All Partnerships

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$123,000	\$38,000	Federal, General Fund	\$161,000
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$9,800,000	\$4,200,000	variety private/public sources (see below)	\$14,000,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$11,100,000	-	-	\$11,100,000
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$2,000	-	-	\$2,000
Professional Services	\$1,135,000	\$125,000	-, bonding	\$1,260,000
Direct Support Services	\$63,000	-	-	\$63,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$4,000	-	-	\$4,000
DNR IDP	\$420,000	-	-	\$420,000
Grand Total	\$22,647,000	\$4,363,000	-	\$27,010,000

Partner: NWLT

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$123,000	-	-	\$123,000
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$11,100,000	-	-	\$11,100,000
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$2,000	-	-	\$2,000
Professional Services	\$445,000	-	-	\$445,000
Direct Support Services	\$63,000	-	-	\$63,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$4,000	-	-	\$4,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$11,737,000	-	-	\$11,737,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
NWLT Land Protection	0.6	4.0	\$123,000	-	-	\$123,000

Partner: DNR

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	-	\$38,000	Federal, General Fund	\$38,000
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$9,800,000	\$4,200,000	variety private/public sources (see below)	\$14,000,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	\$690,000	\$125,000	bonding	\$815,000
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	\$420,000	-	-	\$420,000
Grand Total	\$10,910,000	\$4,363,000	-	\$15,273,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
SNA Coordinator	0.1	2.0	-	\$18,000	General Fund	\$18,000
Forest Legacy Coordinator	0.25	2.0	-	\$20,000	Federal	\$20,000

Amount of Request: \$22,647,000

Amount of Leverage: \$4,363,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 19.27%

DSS + Personnel: \$186,000

As a % of the total request: 0.82%

Easement Stewardship: -

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: -

Total Leverage (from above)	Amount Confirmed	% of Total Leverage	Amount Anticipated	% of Total Leverage
\$4,363,000	\$4,363,000	100.0%	-	0.0%

Detail leverage sources and confirmation of funds:

1) \$3M RIM funding: mix of generated RIM (2x(purchase price - appraised value)) and utilizing existing RIM balance. Expected higher than estimated due to bargain sale; CONFIRMED.

2) \$1.2M ENRTF (SNA acres); CONFIRMED

3) Remaining \$163,000: \$125,000 bonding (DNR appraisal); General Fund & federal (DNR personnel)

Does this proposal have the ability to be scalable?

No

Please explain why this project can NOT be scaled:

Appraisal/purchase will be one transaction each for DNR & NWLT for efficiency & transparency; and minimizing costs & funds needed. TCF costs to hold lands include original purchase price + monthly costs (taxes, interest, admin) - income (leases). Projects cannot be scaled w/out adding time & costs. See attached proposal-illustrations for more information.

Personnel

Has funding for these positions been requested in the past?

No

Professional Services

What is included in the Professional Services line?

- Appraisals
- Other : closing costs, recording fees, property taxes
- Surveys
- Title Insurance and Legal Fees

Fee Acquisition

What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?

Total of two: one for DNR and one for NWLT.

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

It only includes traditional travel costs (mileage, food, and lodging) - none other.

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 (additive model).

NWLT: In a process approved by MN DNR Grants on March 20, 2023, NWLT used a simplified allocation methodology that resulted in MN DNR approving an indirect rate of allowable expenses. NWLT anticipates using a similar rate for this proposal.

Federal Funds

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

Yes

Are the funds confirmed?

Yes

- Cash : \$38,000

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	10,688	-	10,688
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	0	7,680	-	7,680
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	18,368	0	18,368

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$10,910,000	-	\$10,910,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	\$11,737,000	-	\$11,737,000
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	\$22,647,000	-	\$22,647,000

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	10,688	10,688
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	7,680	7,680
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	18,368	18,368

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	-	-	-	-	\$10,910,000	\$10,910,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	\$11,737,000	\$11,737,000
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	\$22,647,000	\$22,647,000

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$1,020	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	\$1,528	-
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	-	-	-	-	\$1,020

Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	\$1,528
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?

No

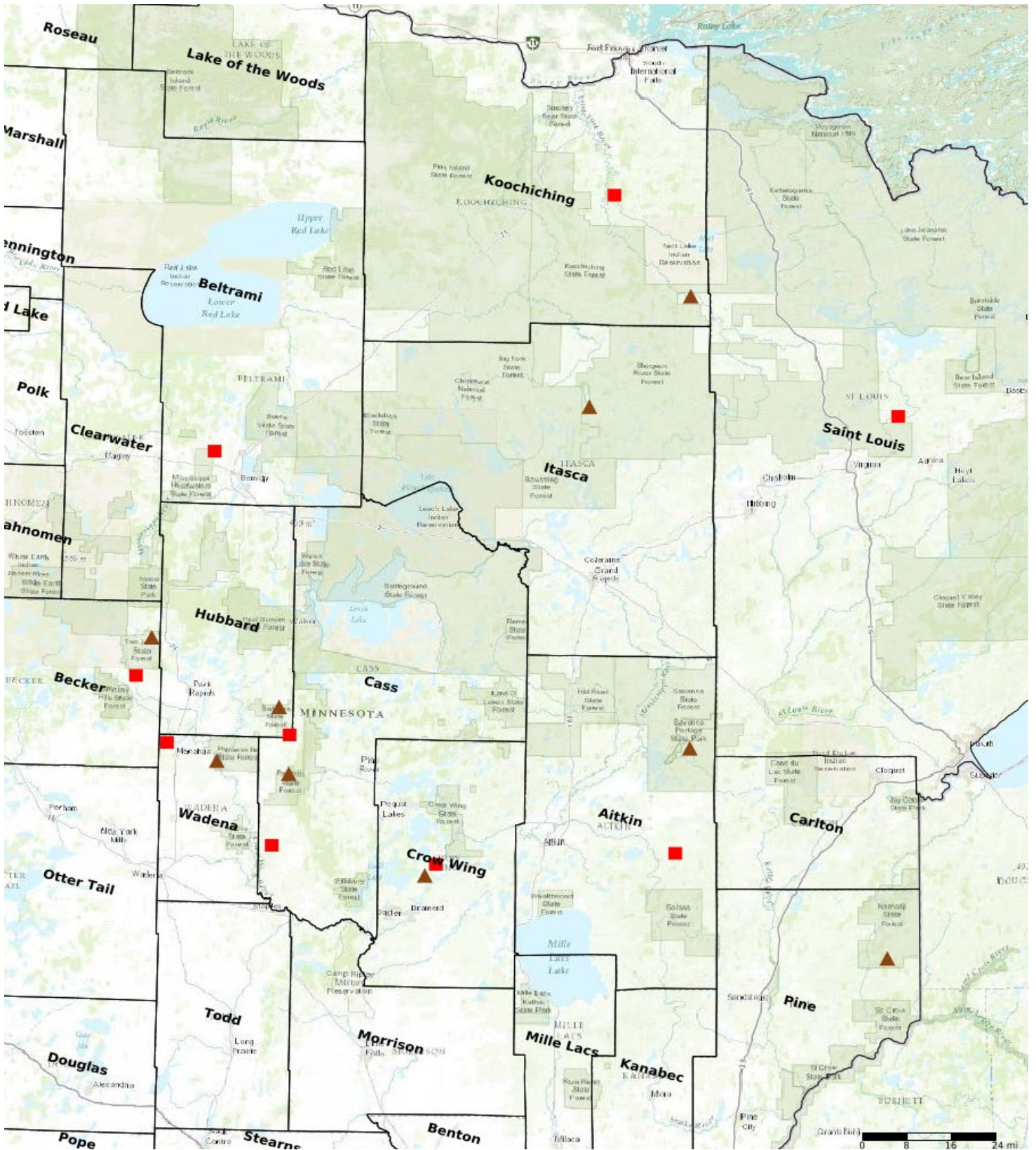
Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:

The proposed project uses several science-based targeting methods identified in several plans/conservation initiatives to identify, prioritize, and select parcels proposed for acquisition identified in several plans and conservation initiatives. DNR formed a statewide interdisciplinary team with land acquisition and management experts from all DNR Divisions (Ecological and Water Resources, Fish and Wildlife, Forestry, Lands and Minerals, Parks and Trails) to apply and assess the DNR’s GIS-based Strategic Land Asset Management metrics to all TCF-owned parcels to expand protection of large habitat blocks and corridors. The priority tracts of forest land and habitat 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 DNR consulted 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
NWLT - Aitkin	Aitkin	04723235	320	\$429,700	No
DNR - Aitkin	Aitkin	05022229	686	\$921,169	No
DNR - Becker	Becker	14136202	200	\$434,500	No
NWLT - Becker	Becker	14036208	80	\$173,800	No
NWLT - Beltrami	Beltrami	14734215	286	\$639,200	No
DNR - Carlton	Carlton	04316206	495	\$1,089,000	No
NWLT - Cass	Cass	13532209	120	\$213,800	No
DNR - Cass	Cass	13732201	2,974	\$5,298,676	No
NWLT - Crow Wing	Crow Wing	13527229	110	\$223,800	No
DNR - Crow Wing	Crow Wing	13428201	585	\$1,190,209	No
DNR - Hubbard	Hubbard	13932203	2,690	\$4,776,532	No
NWLT - Hubbard	Hubbard	13932236	1,849	\$3,283,200	No
DNR - Itasca	Itasca	06025217	1,330	\$2,652,000	No
DNR - Koochiching	Koochiching	06322204	1,608	\$1,105,650	No
NWLT - Koochiching	Koochiching	06624205	560	\$382,200	No
NWLT - St. Louis	St. Louis	06016227	1,000	\$2,360,000	No
NWLT - Wadena	Wadena	13835208	3,355	\$7,917,800	No
DNR - Wadena	Wadena	13834226	120	\$283,200	No

Parcel Map



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

MINNESOTA HERITAGE FOREST - TRANSITION TO PUBLIC OWNERSHIP PROGRAM



Northern Waters Land Trust and
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources,
A joint Outdoor Heritage Fund grant proposal

BACKGROUND

In 2020 The Conservation Fund (TCF) purchased more than 72,000 acres of forest land in northern Minnesota from the PotlatchDeltic Corporation, securing these lands to provide time for conservation partners to permanently conserve these forest lands.

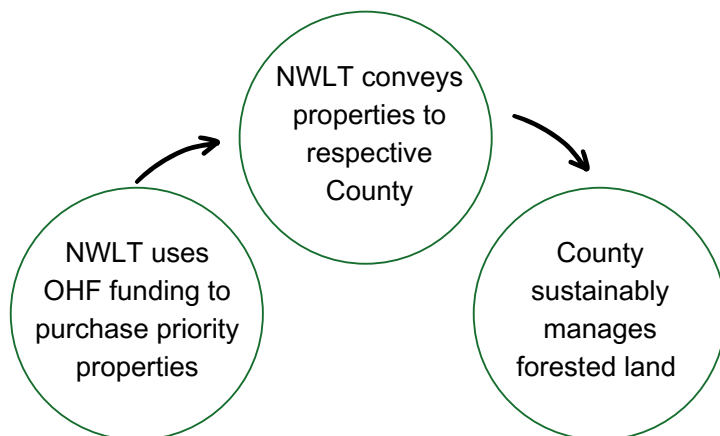
JOINT PROPOSAL

NWLT and MN DNR are working together to ensure this **forested land remains forested**. NWLT will acquire **7,680 acres** and transfer to Counties for permanent management. MN DNR will acquire **10,688 acres** and manage as State Forest, WMA, and SNA land.

NWLT & COUNTIES

NWLT has coordinated with 14 Counties and four Tribes to identify parcels of interest. **Nine Counties are collaborating** with NWLT to receive land as a part of this proposal. The Counties strategically selected parcels primarily to:

1. Consolidate, connect, and expand existing County lands
2. Secure and improve public access
3. Secure and improve forest management access



AT A GLANCE

Total Funding Request	18,368 acres	\$23,847,000
Northern Waters Land Trust Protect in Fee <i>without</i> State PILT	7,680 acres	\$11,737,000
MN DNR Protect in Fee <i>with</i> State PILT	10,688 acres	\$12,110,000

Habitat Benefits		
Intact Forest Habitat Maintained	Migratory Pathways Preserved	Species of Greatest Conservation Need Protected
Wildlife Habitat Safeguarded	Drinking Water Protected	Climate Change Mitigated
Soil Fertility and Nutrient Cycling Enhanced	Riparian Habitat Preserved	Water Quality & Quantity Improved

Participating Counties	
<i>NWLT acquiring and conveying to respective County</i>	
Aitkin	320 acres
Becker	80 acres
Beltrami	286 acres
Cass	120 acres
Crow Wing	110 acres
Hubbard	1,849 acres
Koochiching	560 acres
Saint Louis	1,000 acres
Wadena	3,355 acres
Total	7,680 acres



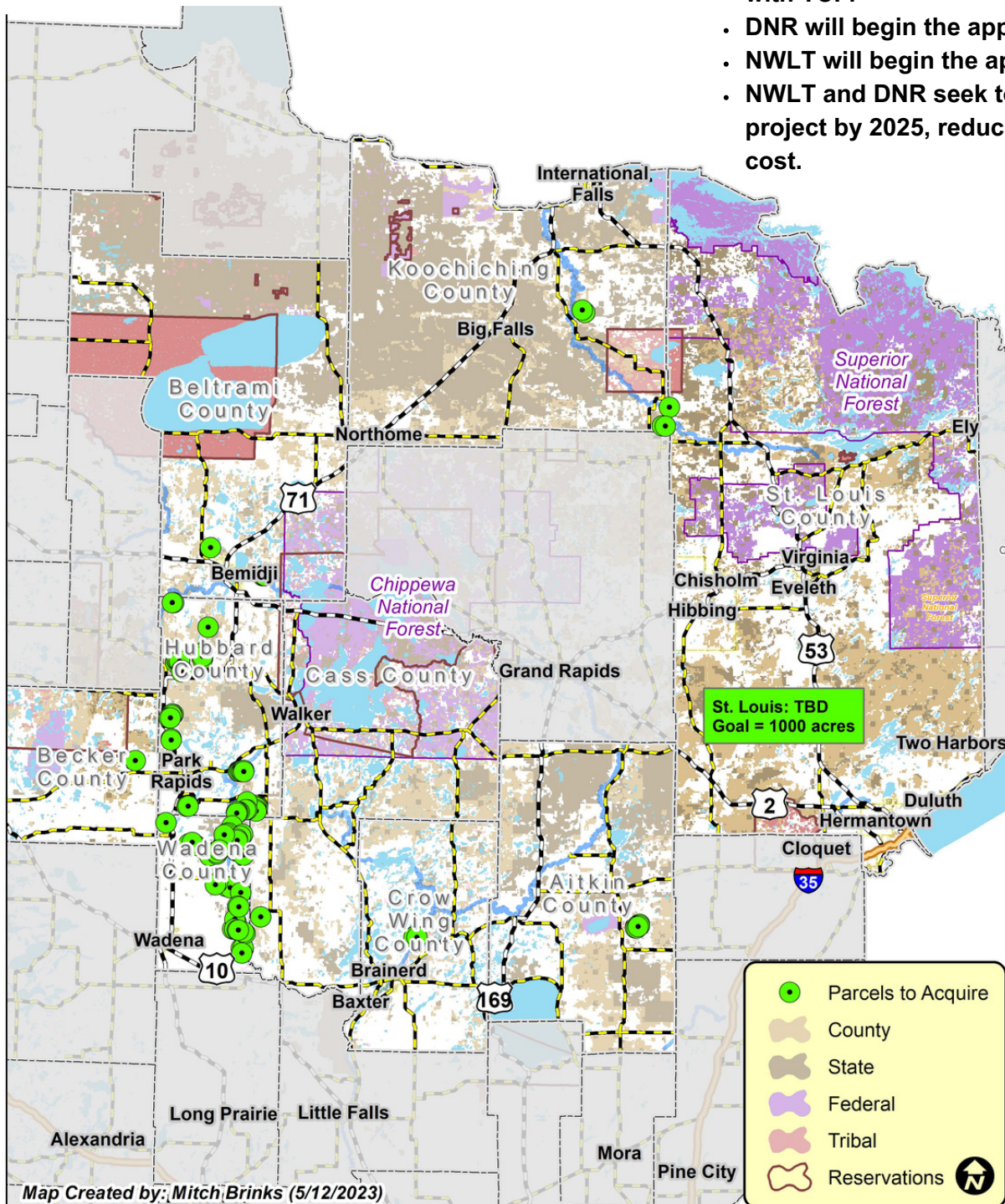
BARGAIN SALE

NWLT has successfully used existing OHF funding to purchase 1,600 acres of TCF/MN Heritage Forest land and transfer to Hubbard County and MN DNR for permanent protection. All three transactions have been **bargain sales**, resulting in **purchase prices 25%-43% below appraised values**. *TCF has confirmed bargain sale prices for these proposed acquisitions.*

SCALABILITY

Due to the time-sensitive nature of this project, there are disadvantages to scaling down. As TCF has explained to LSOHC and the public, the cost for purchasing and holding this land will continue to increase as TCF incurs monthly holding expenses. Reasons for funding this project in full:

- The Conservation Fund is a willing seller.
- NWLT is negotiating a purchase agreement with TCF.
- DNR will begin the appraisal summer 2023.
- NWLT will begin the appraisal summer 2024.
- NWLT and DNR seek to complete this project by 2025, reducing the purchase cost.



Northern Waters Land Trust

Mission

Preserve Land,
Protect Water

Contact Us

Kathy DonCarlos
Land Conservation
Coordinator
(218) 547-4510
KathyD@nwlt-mn.org



The assembly of this proposal was funded in part by the Initiative Foundation, a regional foundation.

MN HERITAGE FOREST

TRANSITION TO PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

A JOINT OUTDOOR HERITAGE FUND GRANT PROPOSAL



**DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES**

Total Joint Proposal Cost:
\$27,010,000

OHF Joint Request:
\$22,647,000

Total Joint Leverage:
\$4,363,000
(19.27% of request)

18,368 acres protected forever and for everyone:
wildlife habitat, working forests, water quality & quantity, climate change mitigation, drinking water protected, public access, timber and recreation jobs...
...public benefits!

DNR Project Lead:
Adam Munstenteiger
DNR Northwest Area
Forest Supervisor
adam.munstenteiger@state.mn.us
(218) 308-2377

DNR Program Manager:
Christine Ostern
DNR Forest Legacy
Program Coordinator
christine.ostern@state.mn.us
(218) 343-1790

BACKGROUND — In 2020, The Conservation Fund (TCF) purchased 72,000 acres of working forest lands from Potlatch Deltic which are scattered across 14 counties in northern and north-central Minnesota. DNR formed an interdisciplinary project team which analyzed the parcels, and through consultation with Tribes, Counties and conservation entities, strategically identified 10,688 acres of high-priority conservation lands proposed for state acquisition. DNR and Northern Waters Land Trust (NWLT) are working together to ensure this land is protected and managed through public ownership...keeping forested land forested. DNR will acquire 10,688 acres and NWLT will acquire 7,680 acres and transfer to nine Counties.

BENEFITS TO MINNESOTANS — Minnesota’s forests provide wildlife habitat, public recreation spaces, timber and wood fiber, as well as watershed health, carbon sequestration and storage and timber and recreation-based jobs. The Heritage Forest acquisition proposal — is a rare opportunity to conserve the best of these lands for a wide variety of public benefits for the future—in a cost-effective, efficient way.

A ONE PROJECT APPROACH: ONE APPRAISAL—ONE PURCHASE

To minimize transaction costs and ensure the lands are evaluated with the same set of decision-making metrics, DNR seeks to acquire the priority lands as a single purchase. The DNR must use taxpayer dollars efficiently and combining all of the parcels into a single appraisal and single purchase provides the most efficiency and lowest cost.

IS THIS PROJECT SCALABLE?

This project cannot be scaled without significantly increasing costs and jeopardizing availability of the land for purchase. The acquisitions are “shovel ready”: there is a willing seller, tremendous public support and cooperation, and there will be significant savings if the lands are purchased as soon as possible. Because the DNR’s approach is the “one appraisal— one purchase transaction” (see above), the DNR acquisition cannot be scaled over multiple transactions over time. TCF costs to hold lands include the original purchase price plus monthly costs (taxes, interest, administration) minus income (leases and timber sales). Adding time to the purchase reduces the discount that TCF can pass on to the purchaser, meaning less land will be able to be purchased for public ownership and protection over time. DNR will begin their appraisal summer 2023.

Proposed Designation and Acreages:

Designation	Acres
State Forest	6957
Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs)	2922
Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA)	809
Total DNR	10,688
NWLT - will transfer to 9 Counties	7,680
Grand Total	18,368

PROJECT TIMELINE — FOUR PHASES (2021 through 2025)

PHASE 1 Project Kick-Off (2021-2022): develop project framework, apply SLAM metrics, initial outreach to Tribes, Counties and conservation partners.

PHASE 2 County Team Review (2022): analyze parcels against strategic objectives in each County, apply local expertise and coordinate with Counties

PHASE 3 Statewide Team Review and Early Coordination (2022-2023): review county team analysis with program goals/objectives, finalize analysis and share results, seek Tribal feedback, seek local support, seek acquisition funding

PHASE 4 Complete Acquisition (2023-2025): complete appraisal, negotiate option agreement, confirm funding, complete title review, execute closing, take ownership of acquired parcels

HOW WE MADE OUR DECISIONS — Lands were evaluated and scored against DNR’s established inter-disciplinary Strategic Land Asset Management (SLAM) goals.

- Protect significant and/or rare natural resources
- Protect and restore water resources
- Mitigate and adapt to climate change
- Expand access to existing land holdings
- Consolidate land ownership

Lands within Tribal Nation boundaries were not considered. TCF is working directly with Tribes. DNR consulted with Tribes on potential acquisitions outside of Tribal Nation boundaries. DNR collaborated with township boards and county land commissioners and boards to identify their preferences

Project Leverage and Bargain Sales:

Project costs for DNR lands are:

\$15,273,000 total

\$10,910,000 OHF

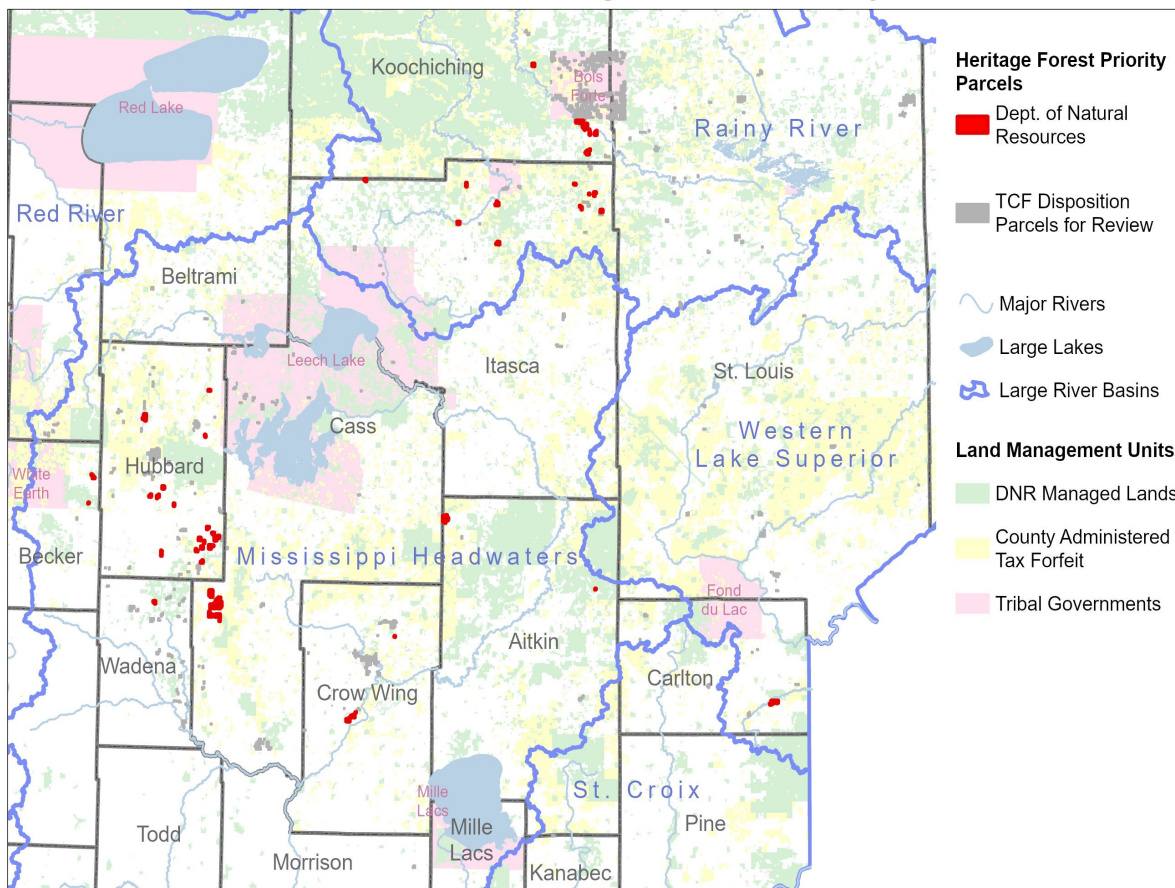
\$4,363,000 leverage

Leverage as a percent of the request = 40%

Most of the confirmed leverage (\$3M) is a mix of generated and existing RIM credits; and ENRTF (\$1.2M) for purchase of SNA acres. The remaining (\$163,000) is from bonding, general fund and federal sources.

In addition to leverage, we anticipate a large savings in **bargain sales** of the lands (for both DNR and NWLT), which we estimate will result in **purchase prices well below appraised values (25%-43%)**. *TCF has confirmed bargain sale prices for the proposed acquisitions.*

Minnesota Heritage Forest Project



Maps

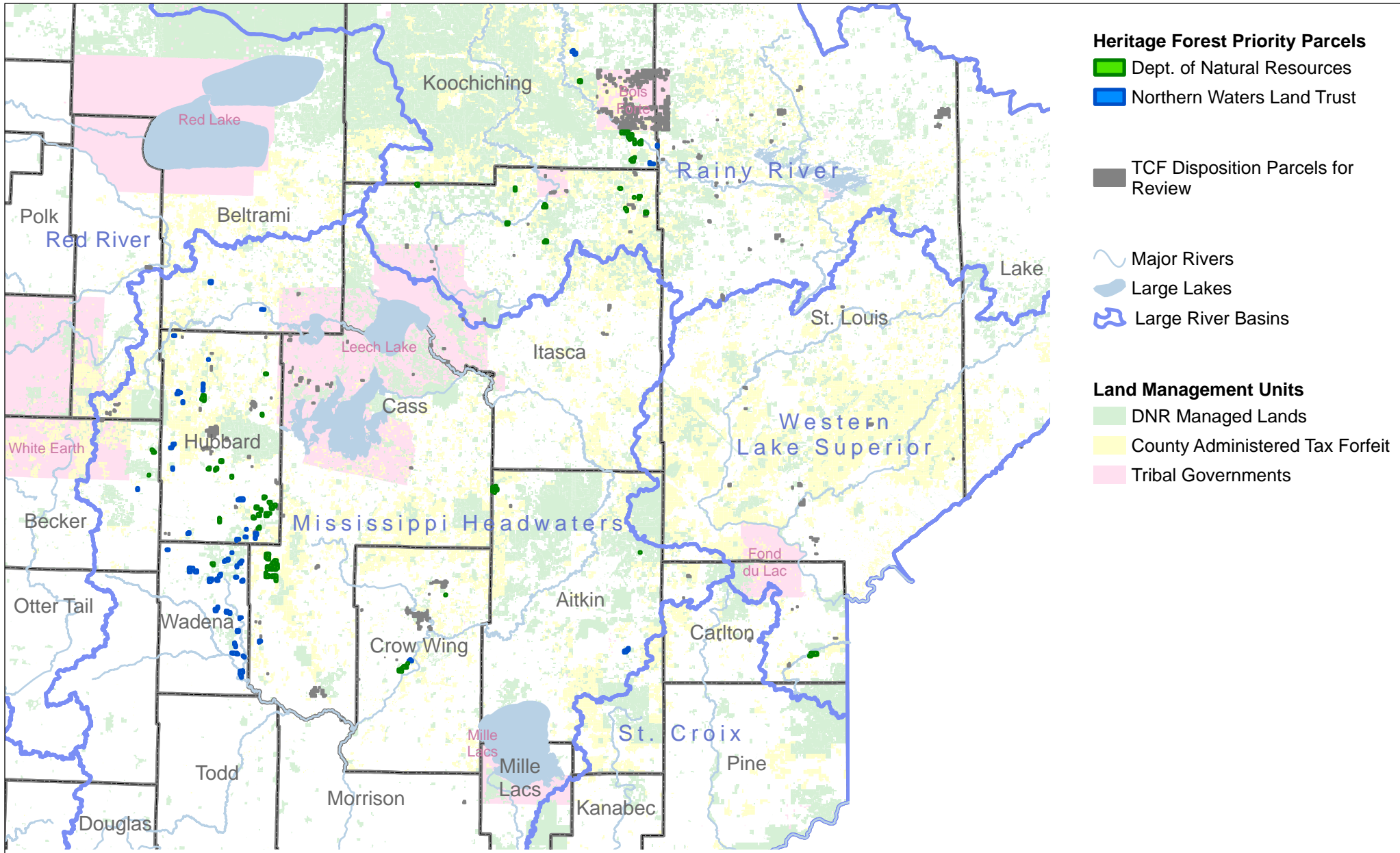
Minnesota Heritage Forest – Transition
to Public Ownership Program



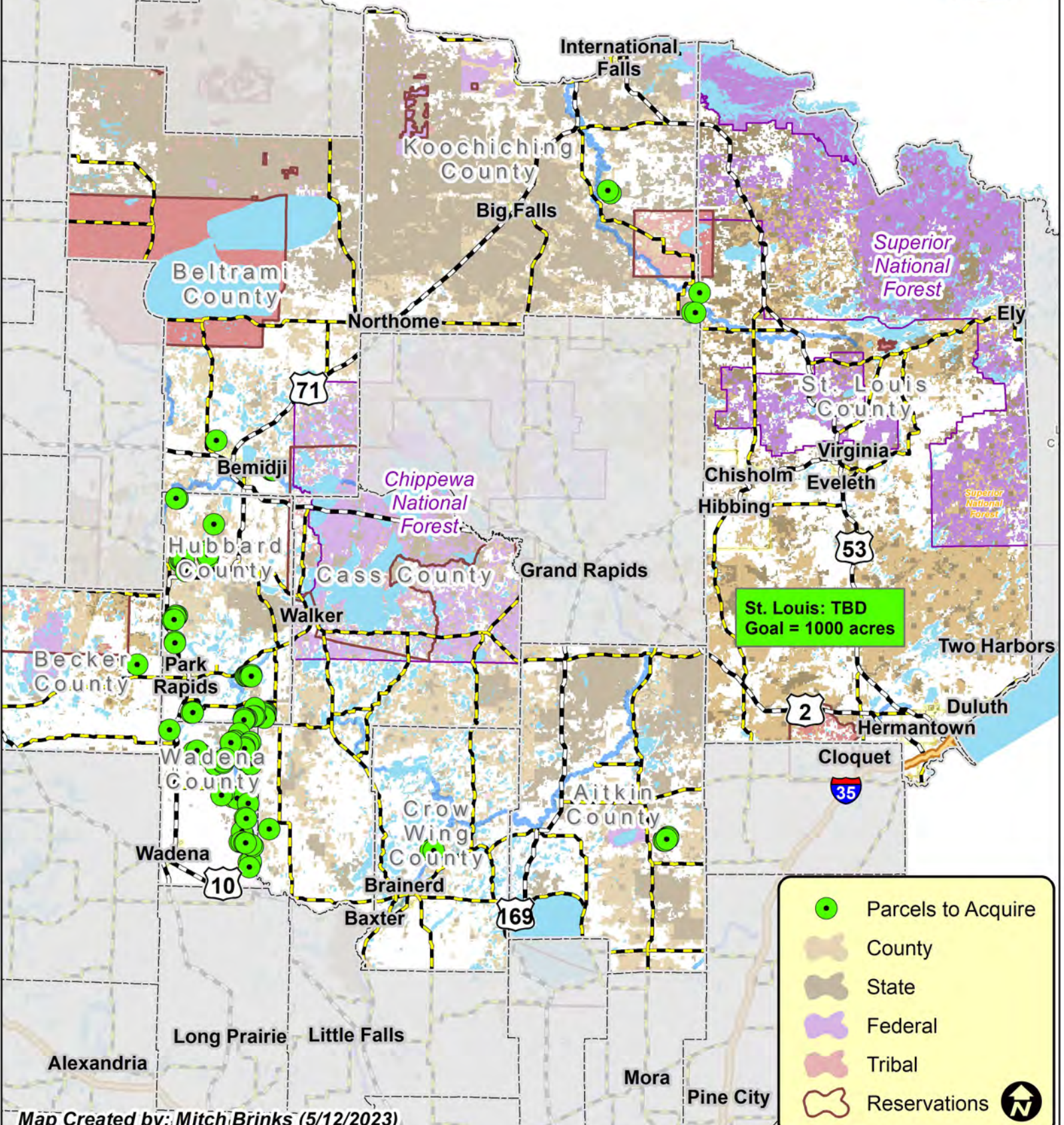
[*Click on the item or page number below to jump to that specific map.](#)

Map Name	Page Number
Master Map, DNR and NWLT	2
Master Map, NWLT Counties	3
Aitkin County, NWLT	4
Becker County, DNR	5
Becker County, NWLT	6
Beltrami County, DNR	7
Beltrami County, NWLT	8
Carlton County, DNR	9
Cass County, DNR	10
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Crow Wing County, NWLT	13
Hubbard County, DNR	14
Hubbard County, NWLT	15
Itasca County, DNR	16
Koochiching County, DNR	17
Koochiching County, NWLT	18
Wadena County, DNR	19
Wadena County, NWLT	20

Minnesota Heritage Forest Project



MN Heritage Forests – Transition to Public Ownership Program

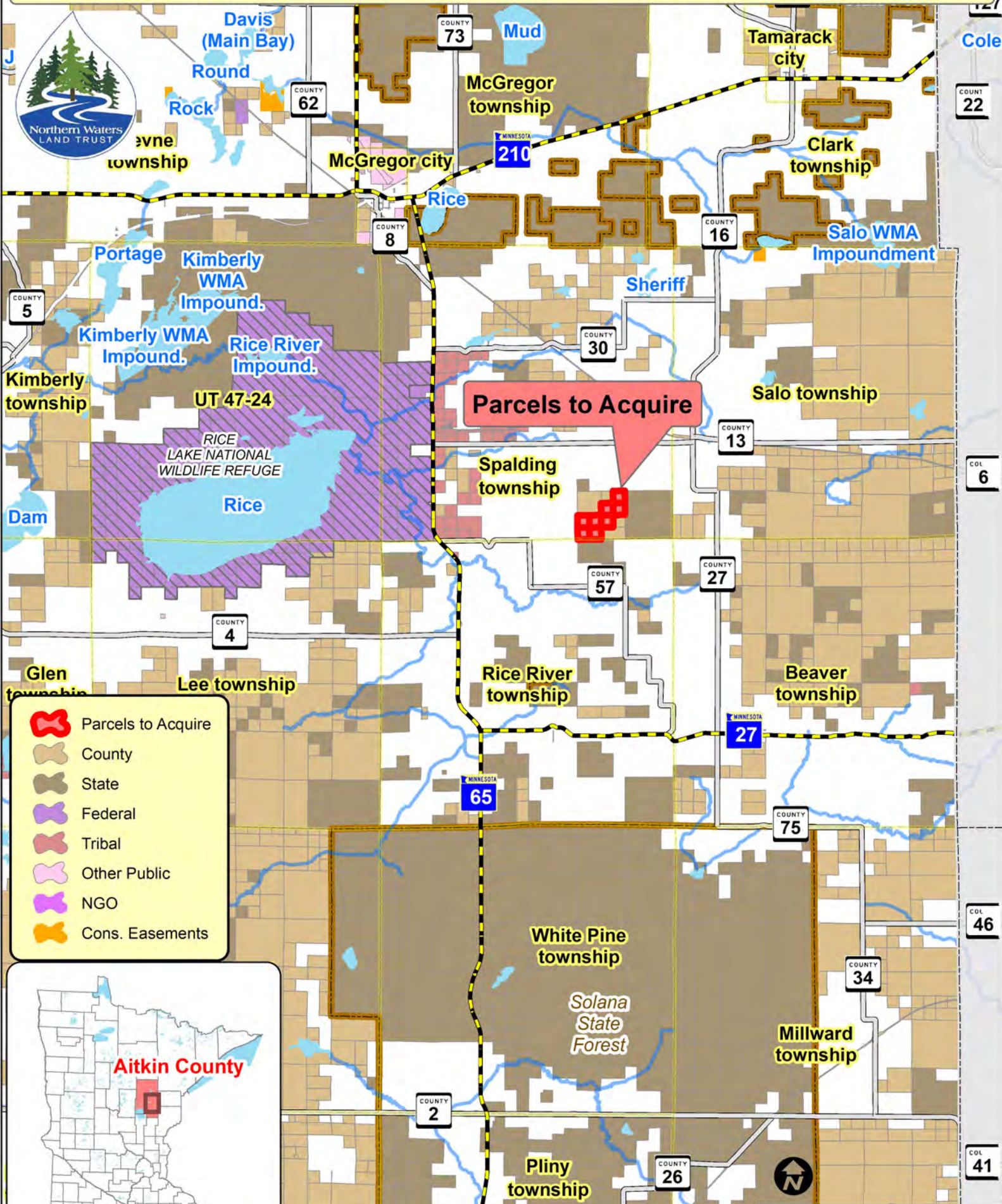


St. Louis: TBD
Goal = 1000 acres

- Parcels to Acquire
- County
- State
- Federal
- Tribal
- Reservations



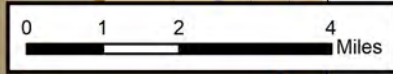
MN Heritage Forests – Transition to Public Ownership Program: Aitkin County



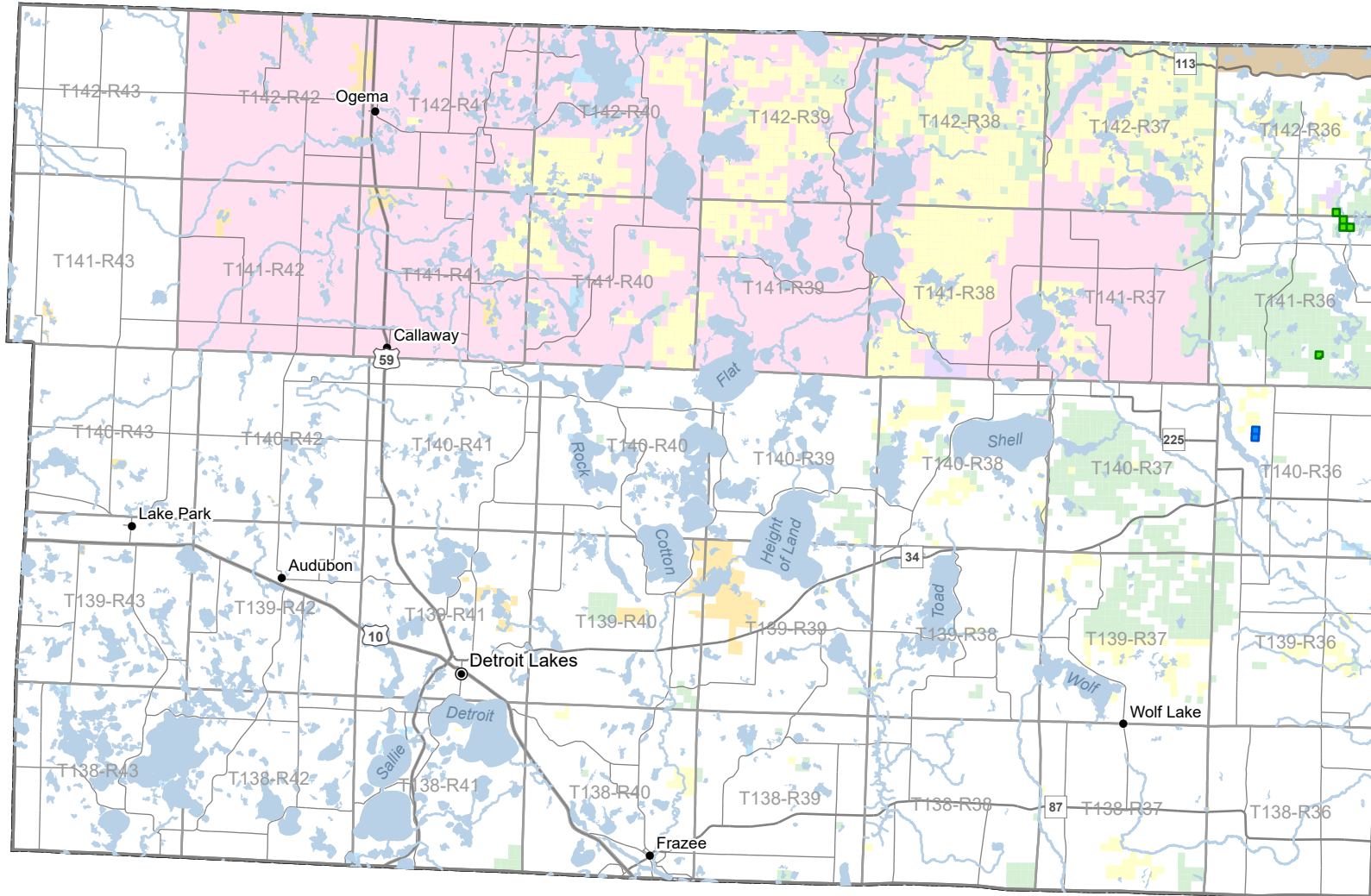
- Parcels to Acquire
- County
- State
- Federal
- Tribal
- Other Public
- NGO
- Cons. Easements



Map Created by Mitch Brinks on 4/4/2023



Heritage Forest Priority Parcels - Becker

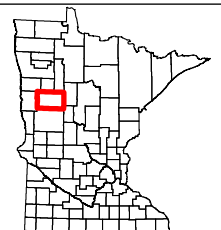


Heritage Forest Priority Parcels

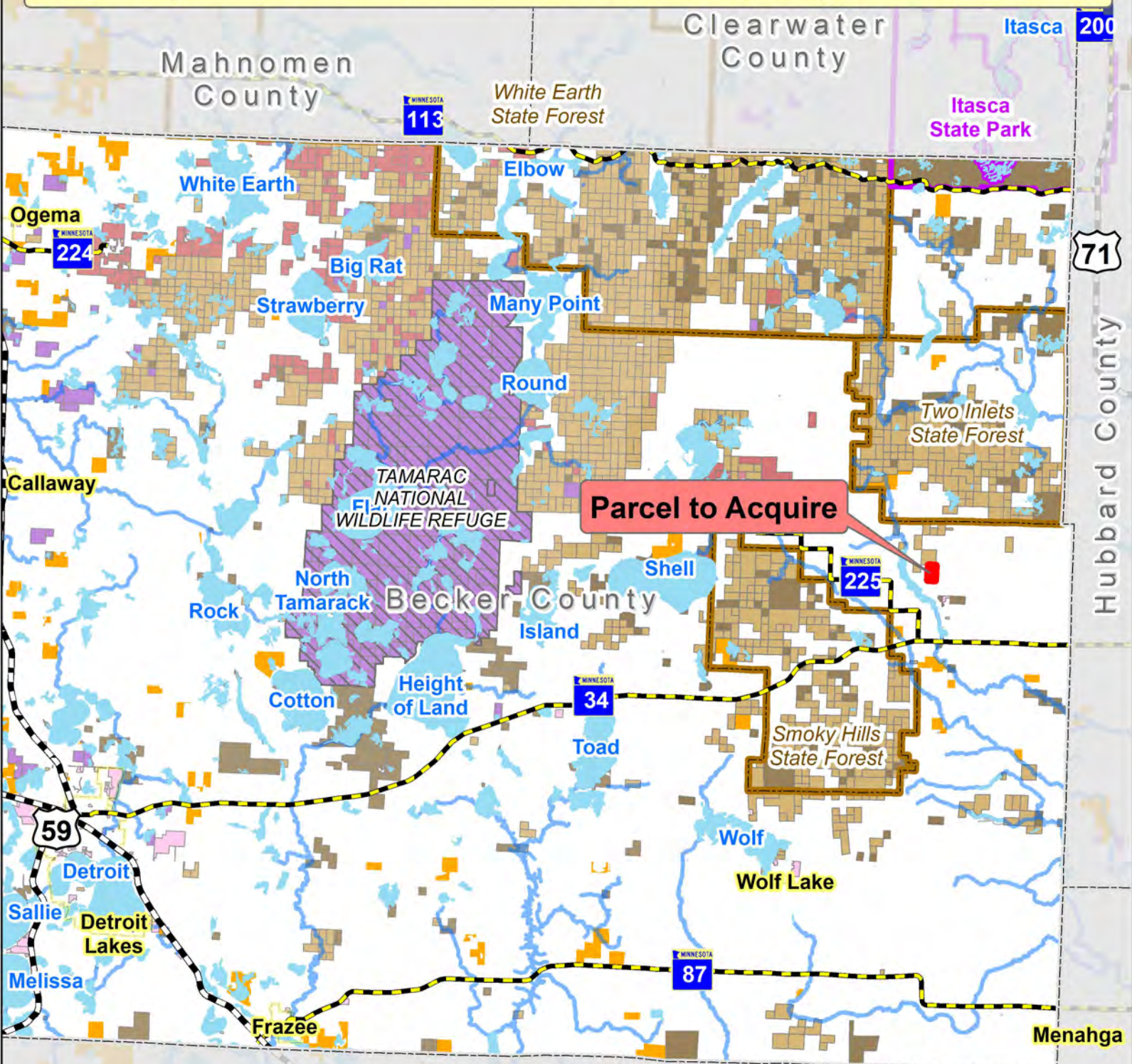
- State Forest
- Northern Waters Land Trust
- Lakes and Rivers
- Highways
- Townships

Land Management Units

- Aquatic Management Area (AMA)
- Scientific and Natural Area (SNA)
- State Parks, Recreation Areas and Waysides
- Wildlife Management Area (WMA)
- State Forest Land
- County Administered Tax Forfeit
- Tribal Governments



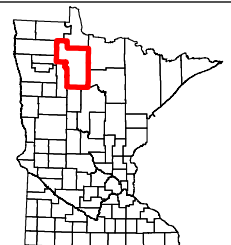
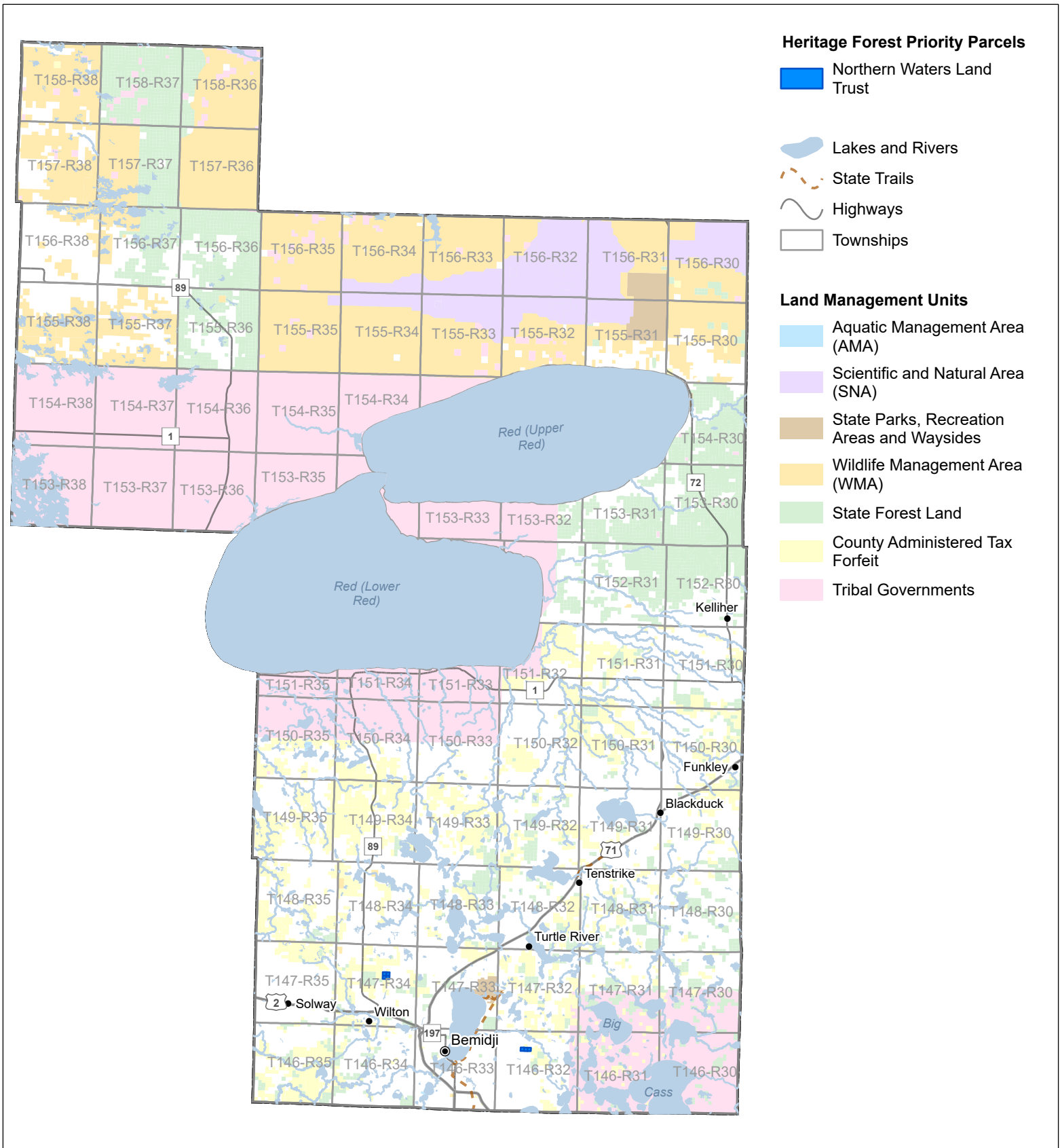
MN Heritage Forests – Transition to Public Ownership Program: Becker County



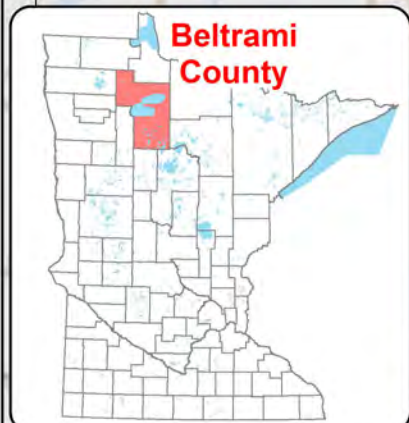
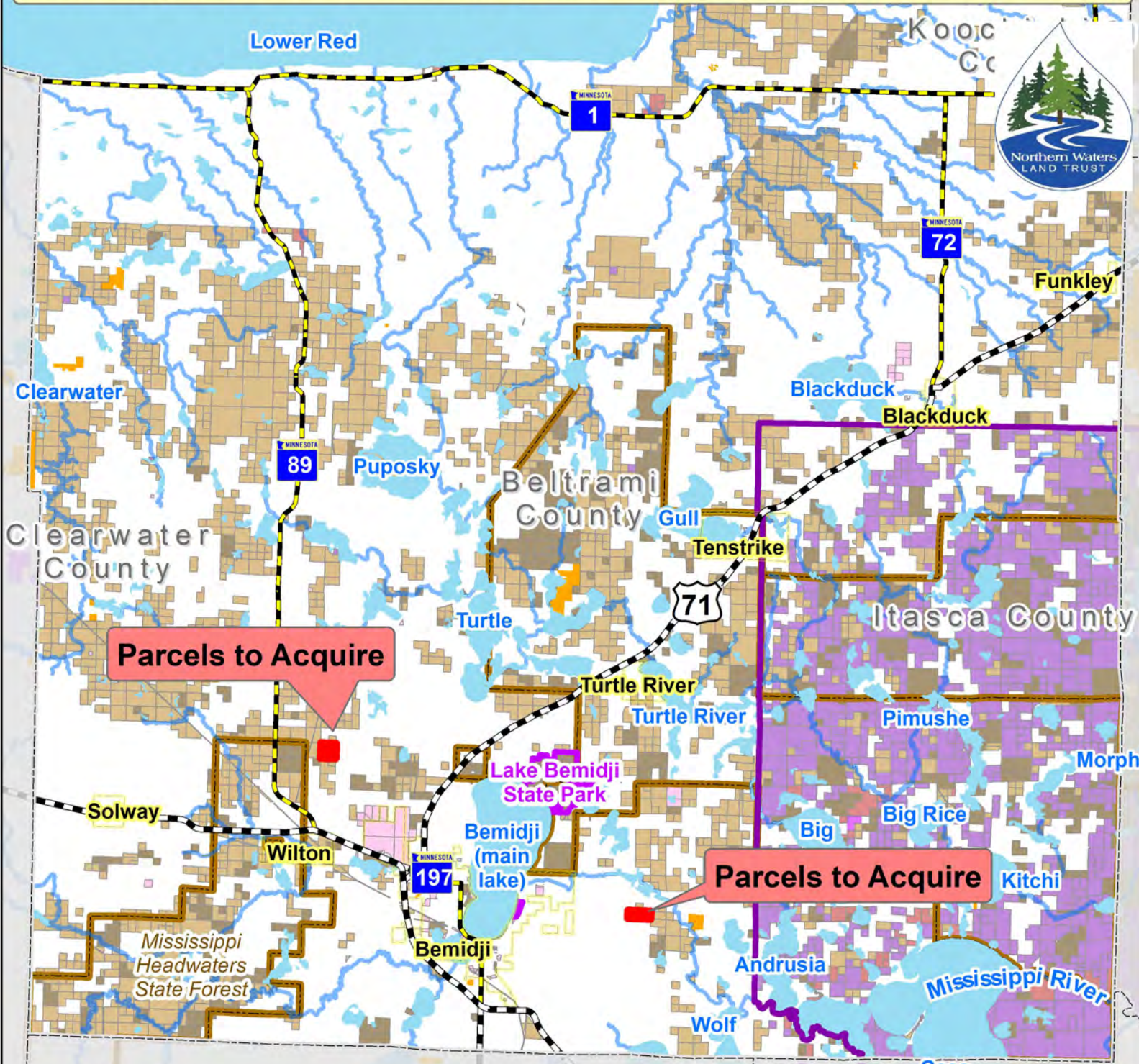
	Parcels to Acquire
	County
	State
	Federal
	Tribal
	Other Public
	NGO
	Cons. Easements



Heritage Forest Priority Parcels - Beltrami



MN Heritage Forests – Transition to Public Ownership Program: Beltrami County

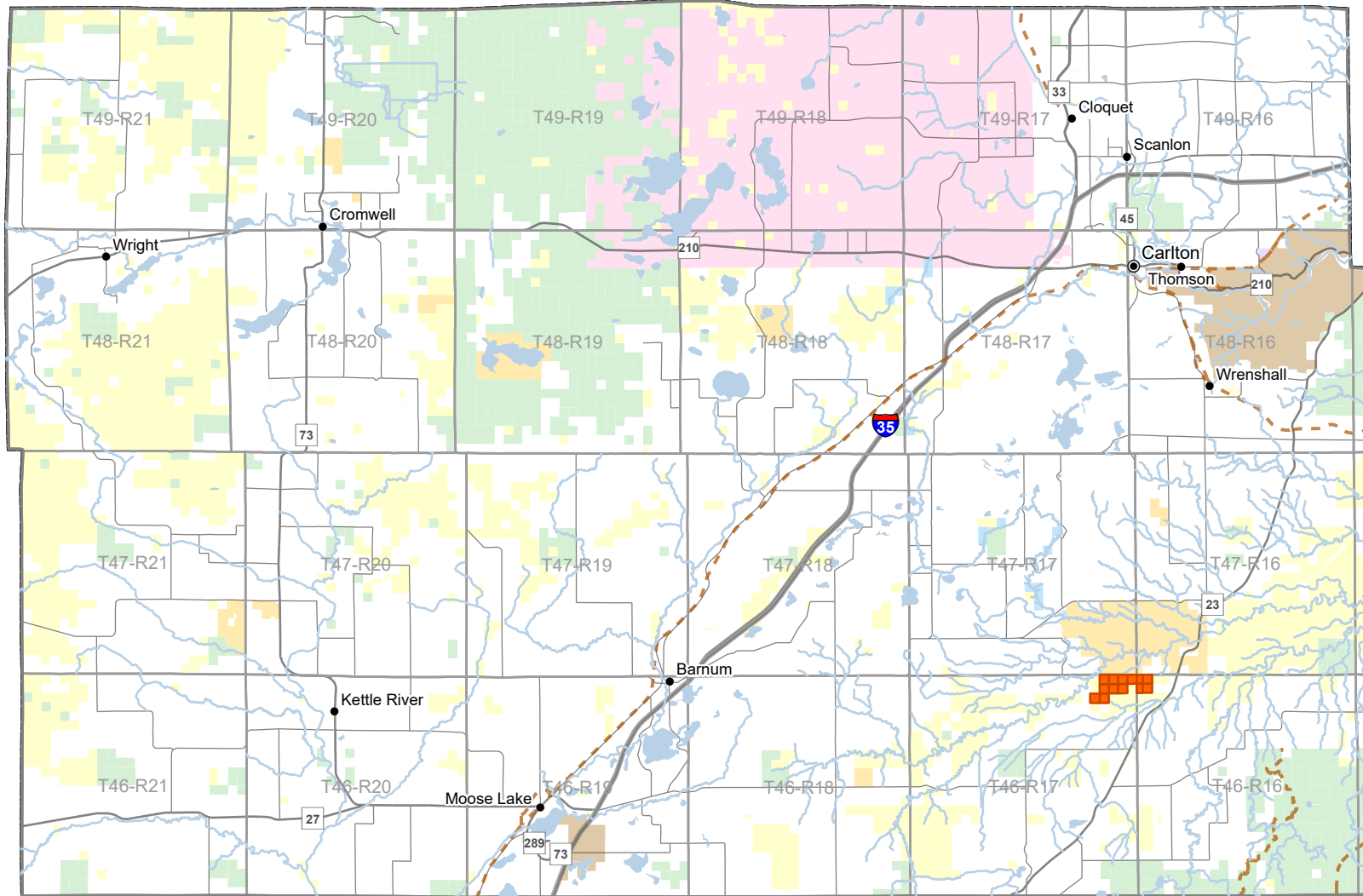


	Parcels to Acquire
	County
	State
	Federal
	Tribal
	Other Public
	NGO
	Cons. Easements



Map Created by: Mitch Brinks, 4/16/2023

Heritage Forest Priority Parcels - Carlton



Heritage Forest Priority Parcels

Wildlife Management Area

Lakes and Rivers

State Trails

Highways

Townships

Land Management Units

Aquatic Management Area (AMA)

Scientific and Natural Area (SNA)

State Parks, Recreation Areas and Waysides

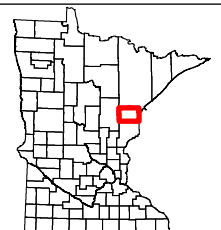
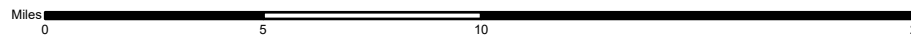
Wildlife Management Area (WMA)

State Forest Land

County Administered Tax Forfeit

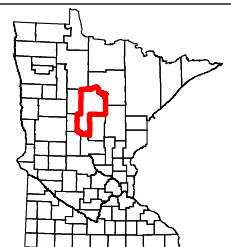
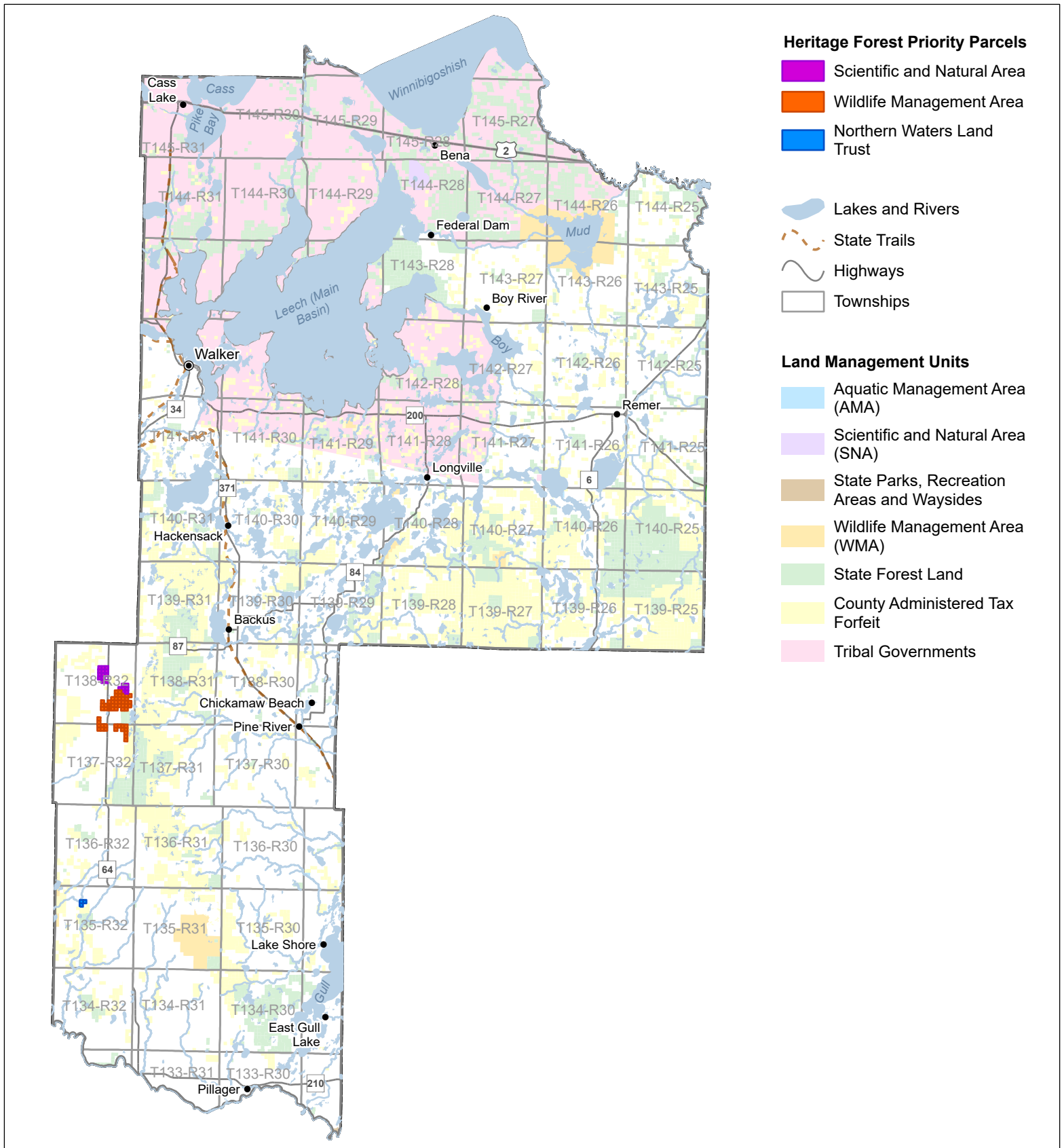
Tribal Governments

Date: May 16, 2023

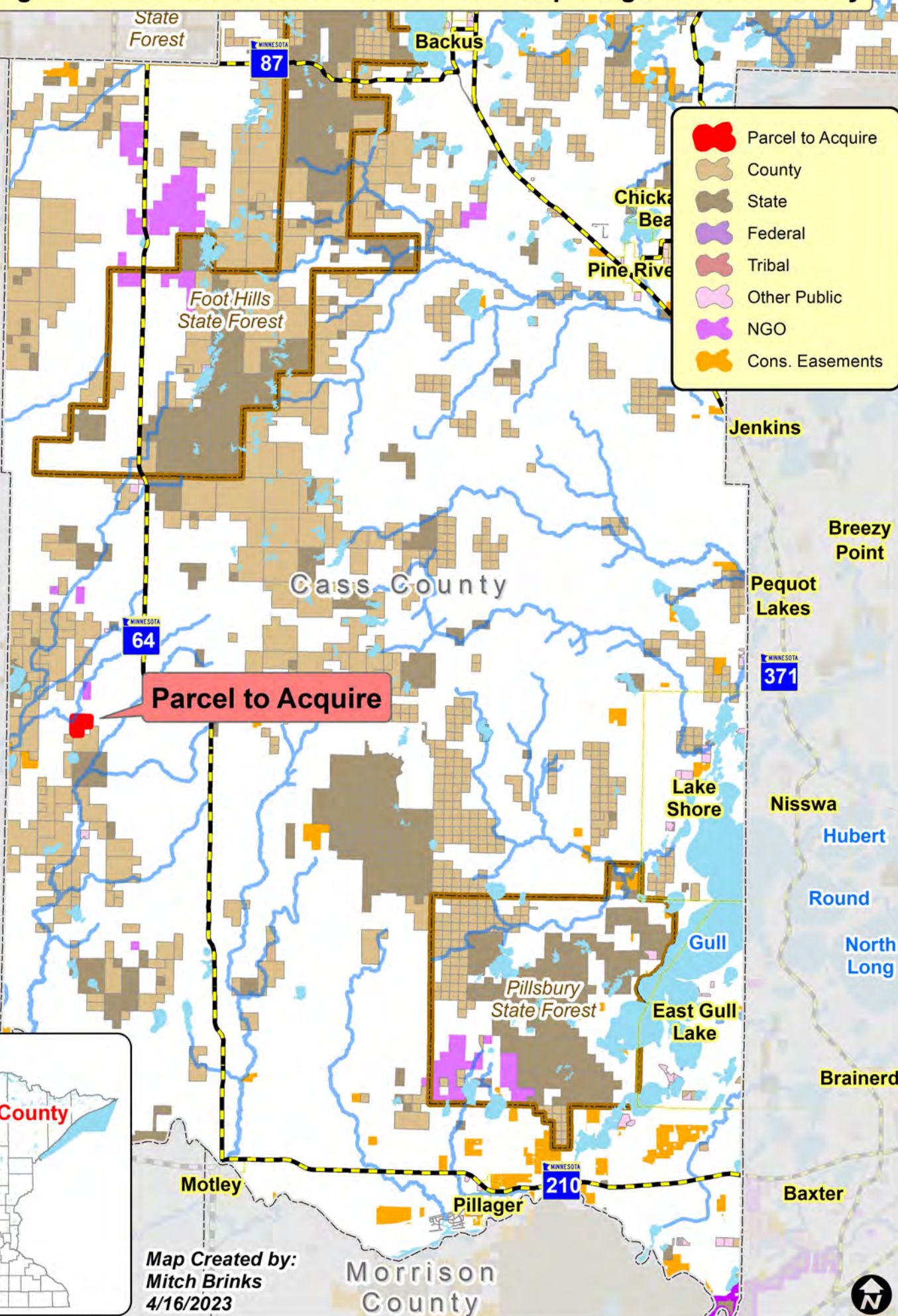







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Heritage Forest Priority Parcels - Cass

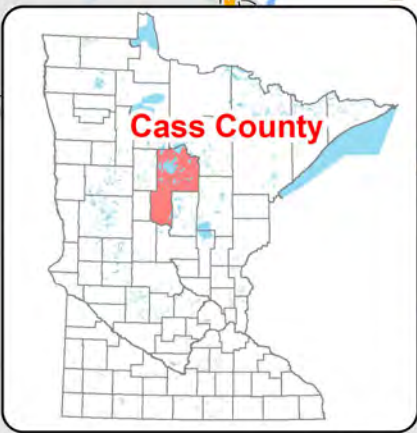


MN Heritage Forests – Transition to Public Ownership Program: Cass County



	Parcel to Acquire
	County
	State
	Federal
	Tribal
	Other Public
	NGO
	Cons. Easements

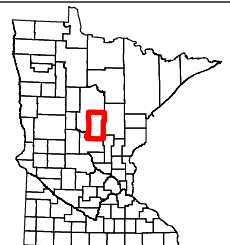
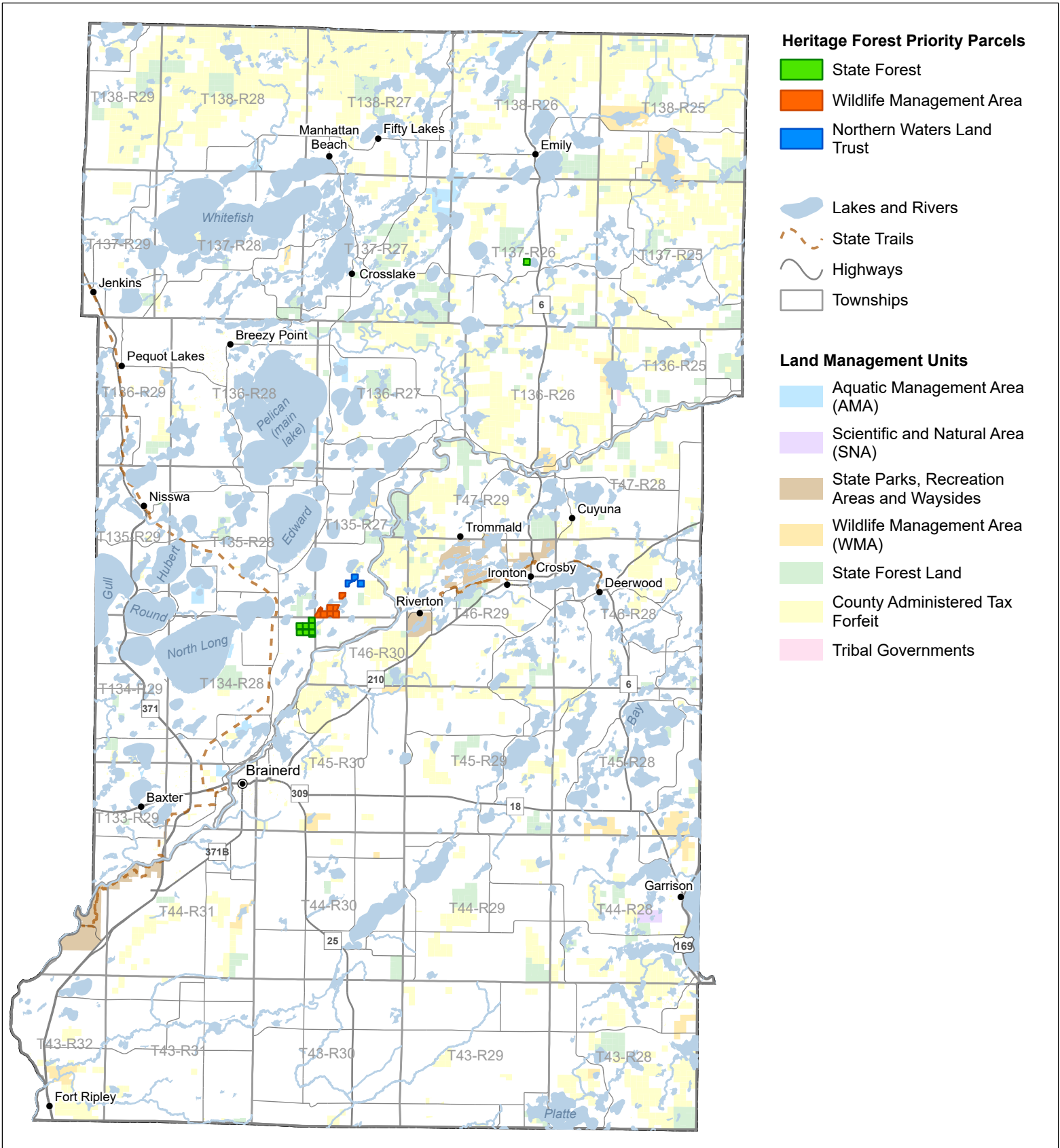
Parcel to Acquire



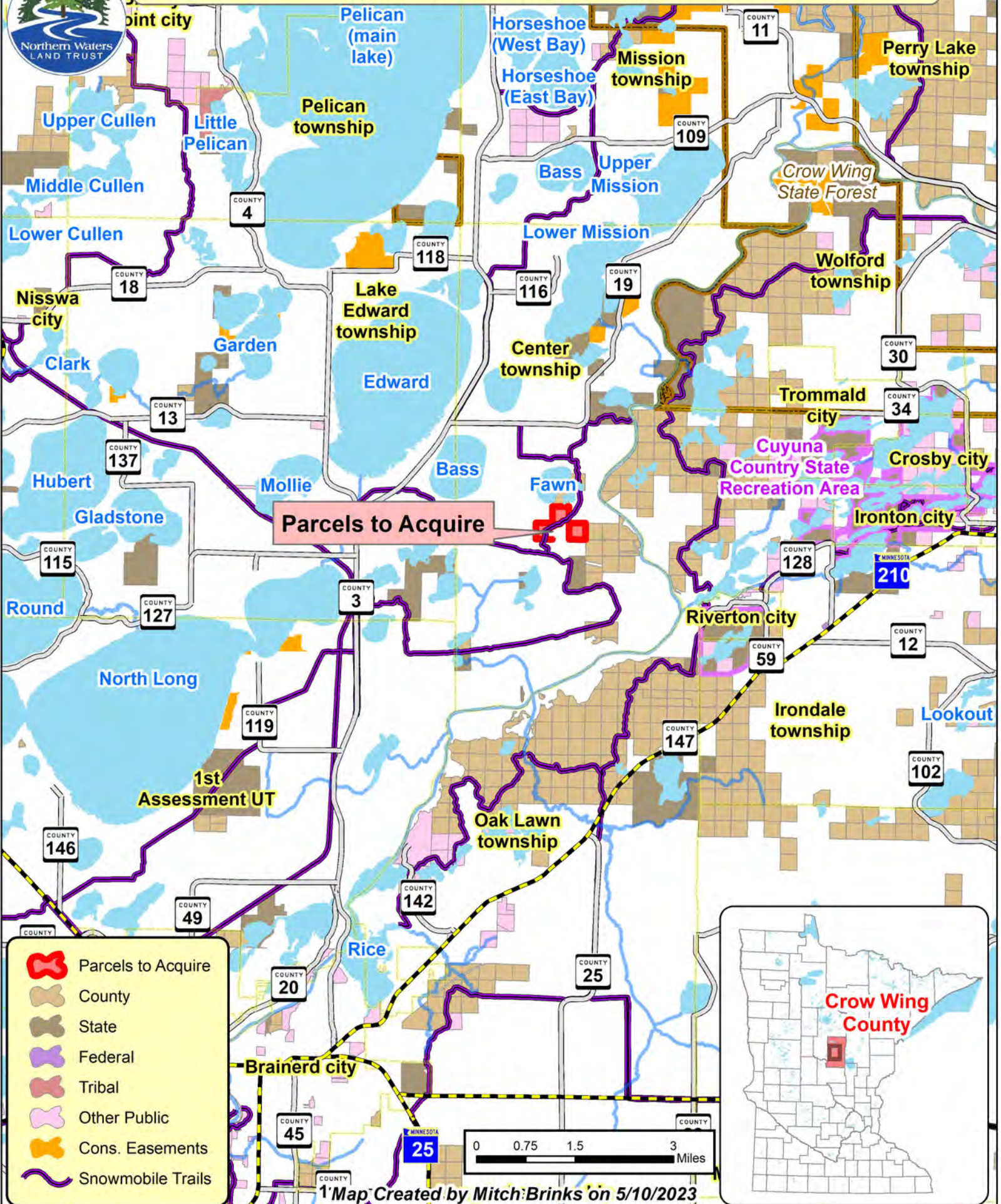
Map Created by:
Mitch Brinks
4/16/2023



Heritage Forest Priority Parcels - Crow Wing

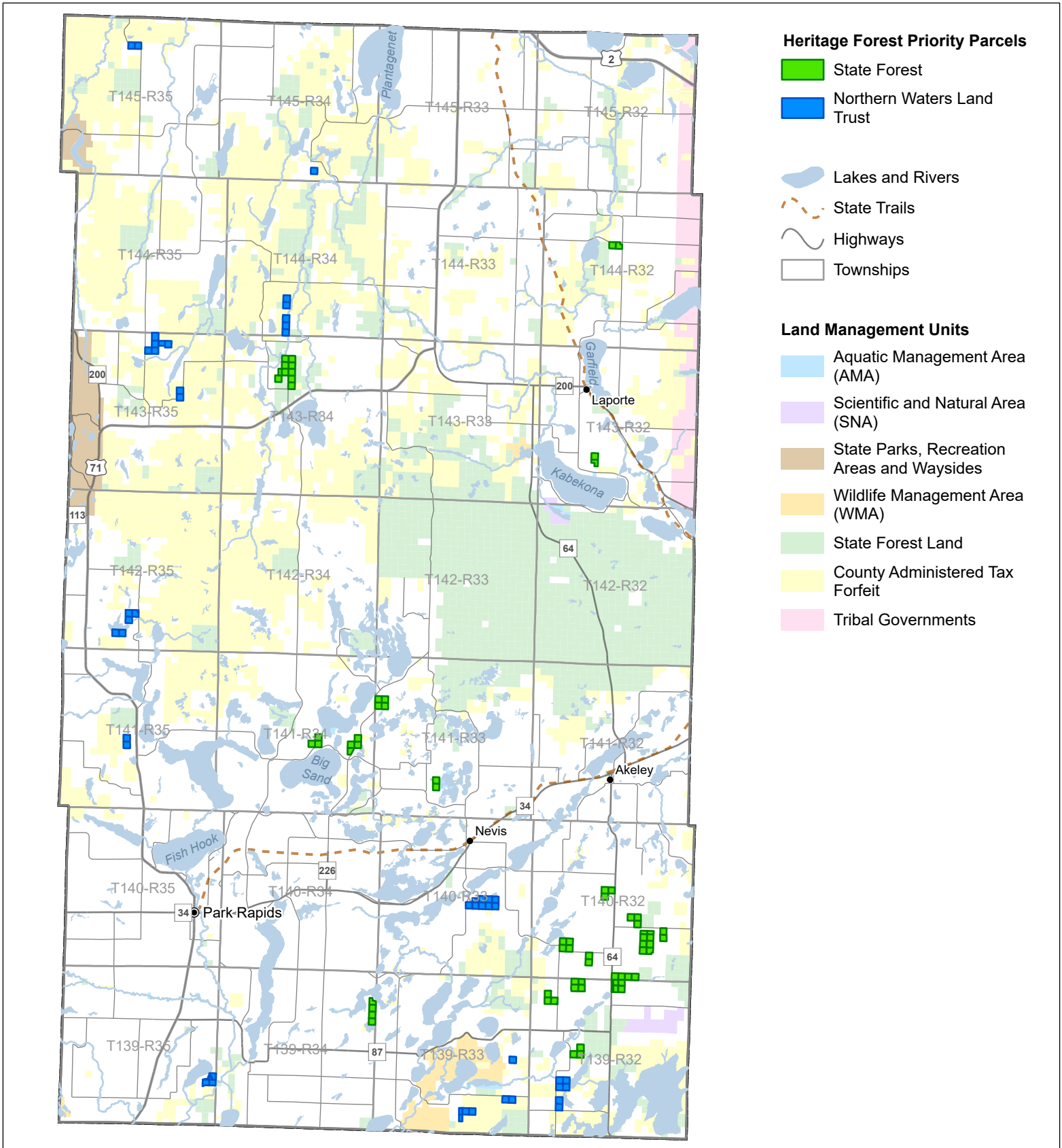


MN Heritage Forests – Transition to Public Ownership Program: Crow Wing County

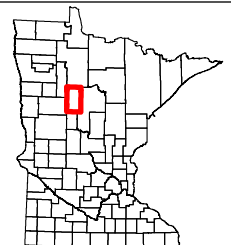


Parcels to Acquire

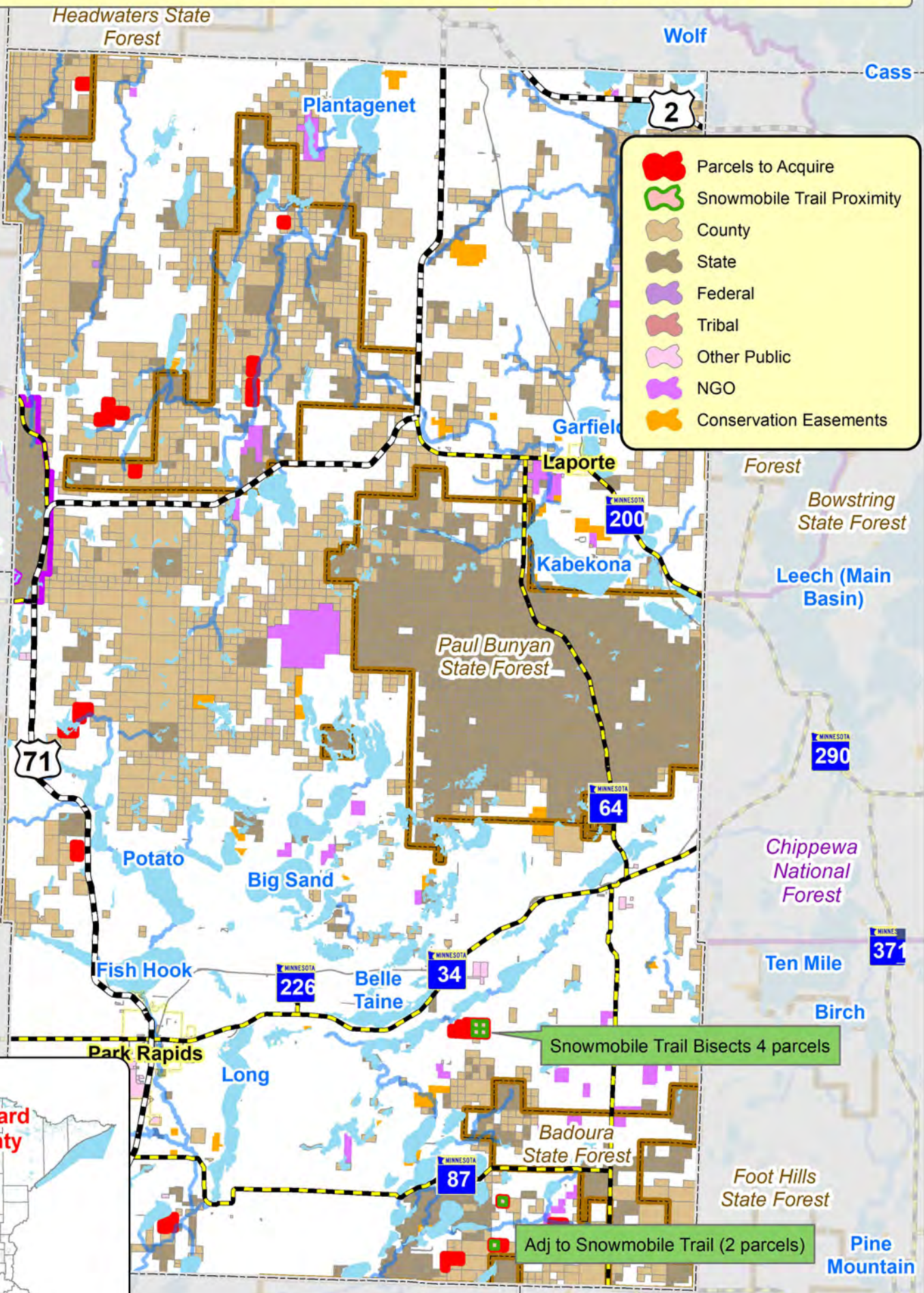
Heritage Forest Priority Parcels - Hubbard



- Heritage Forest Priority Parcels**
- State Forest
 - Northern Waters Land Trust
- Land Management Units**
- Aquatic Management Area (AMA)
 - Scientific and Natural Area (SNA)
 - State Parks, Recreation Areas and Waysides
 - Wildlife Management Area (WMA)
 - State Forest Land
 - County Administered Tax Forfeit
 - Tribal Governments



MN Heritage Forests – Transition to Public Ownership Program: Hubbard County

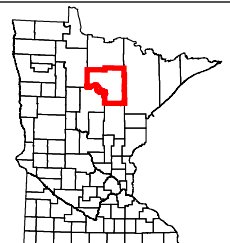
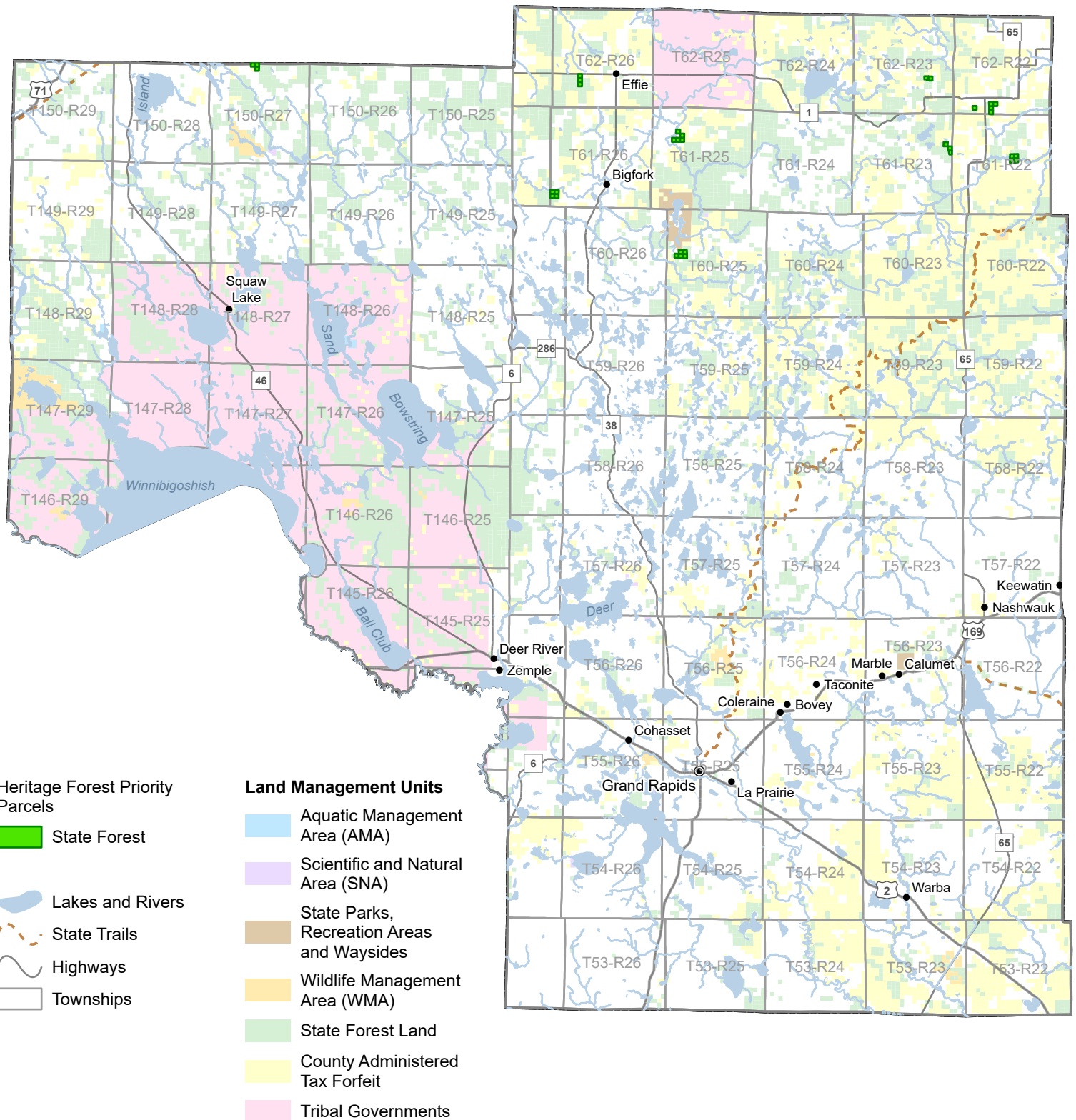


Snowmobile Trail Bisects 4 parcels

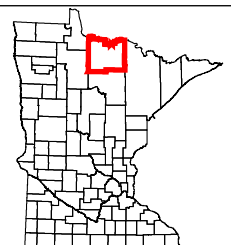
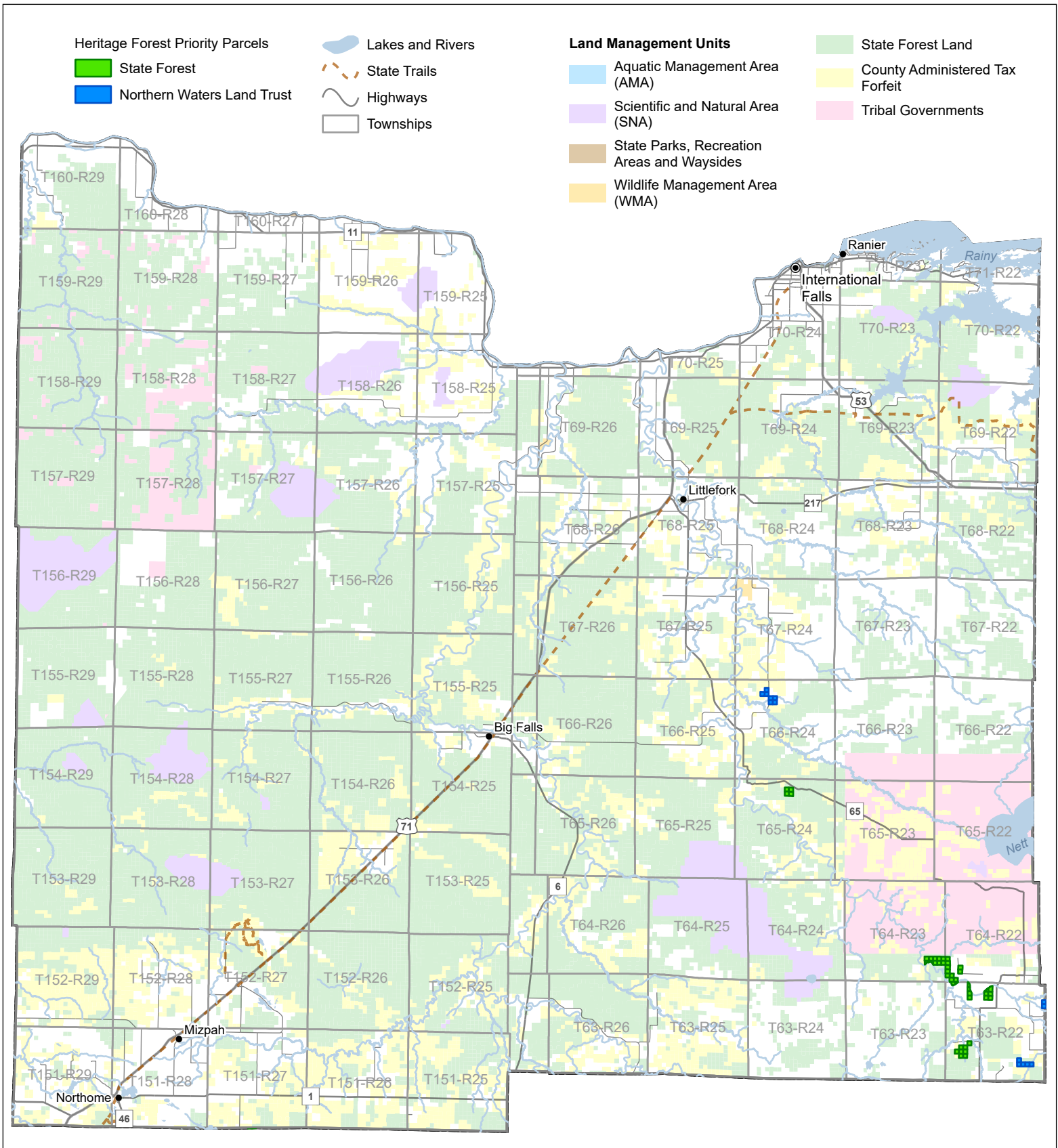
Adj to Snowmobile Trail (2 parcels)



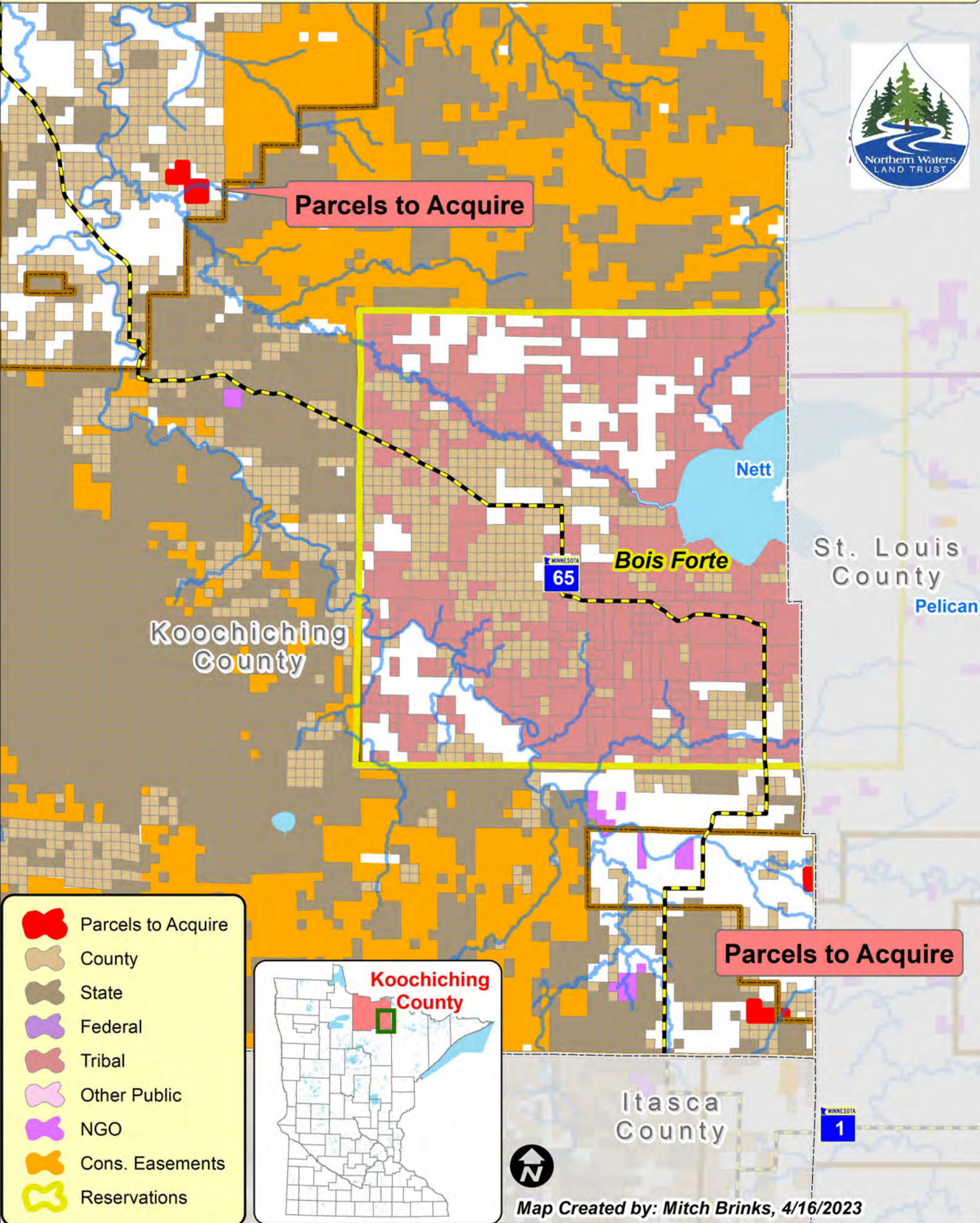
Heritage Forest Priority Parcels - Itasca



Heritage Forest Priority Parcels - Koochiching



MN Heritage Forests – Transition to Public Ownership Program: Koochiching County



Parcels to Acquire

Parcels to Acquire

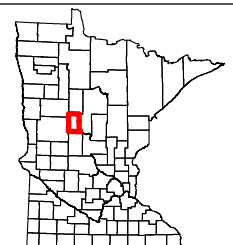
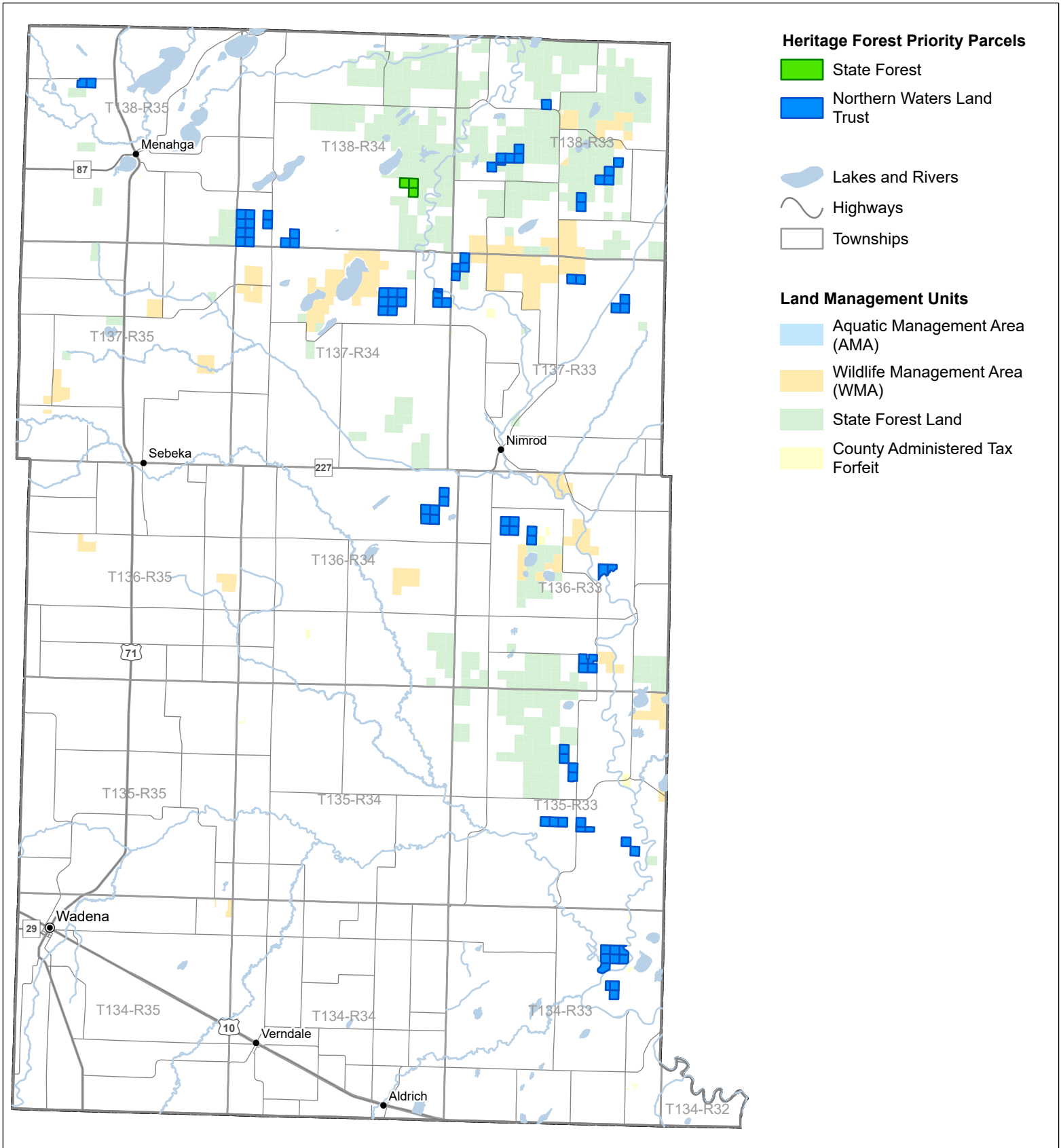
- Parcels to Acquire
- County
- State
- Federal
- Tribal
- Other Public
- NGO
- Cons. Easements
- Reservations



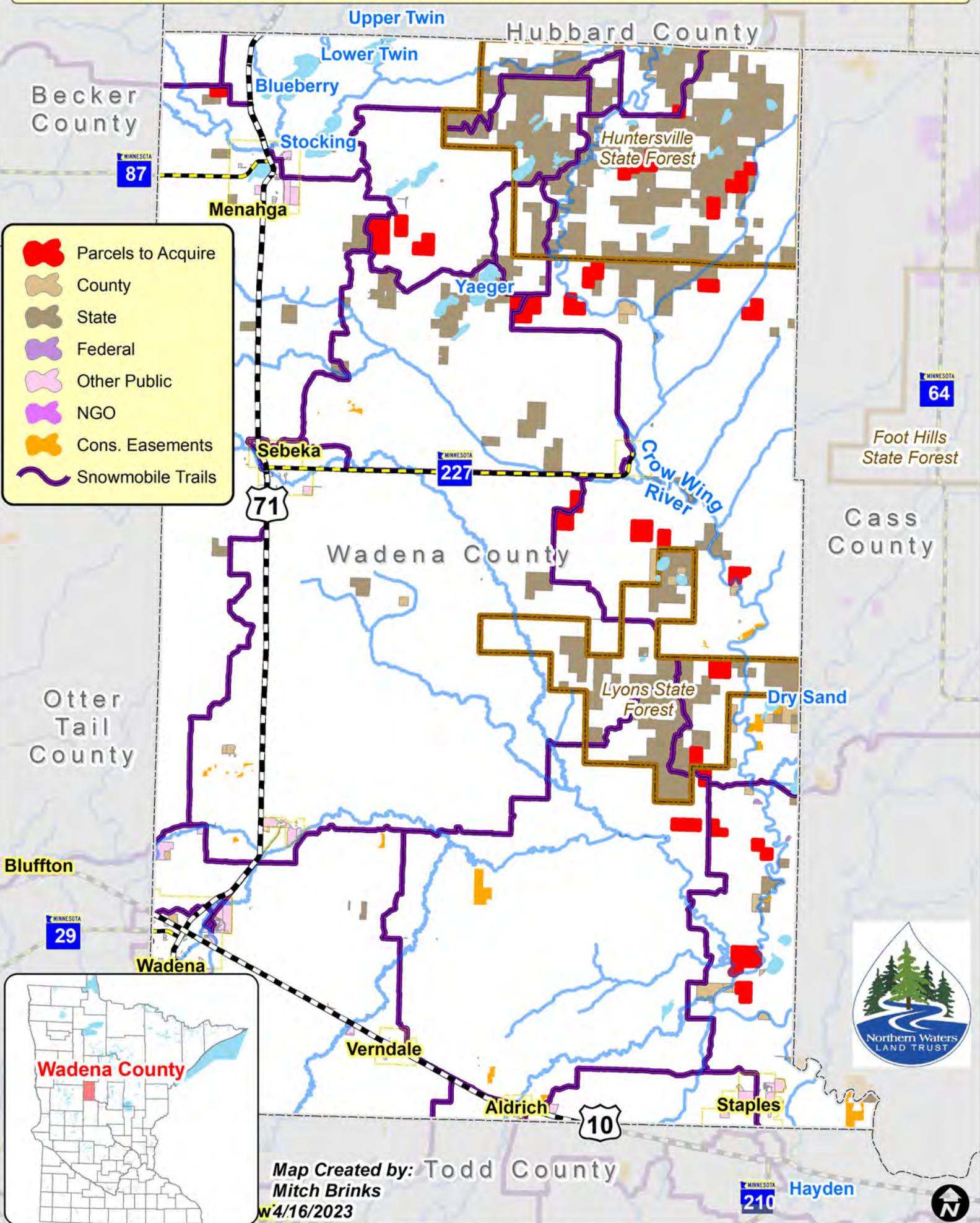
Map Created by: Mitch Brinks, 4/16/2023

MINNESOTA
1

Heritage Forest Priority Parcels - Wadena



MN Heritage Forests – Transition to Public Ownership Program: Wadena County



Letters of Support

Minnesota Heritage Forest –
Transition to Public Ownership Program



***Click on the item or page number below to jump to that specific letter.**

County and Township Support	Page Number
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Bearville Township, Supporting DNR	4
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Becker County, Supporting NWLT	8
Beltrami County, Supporting NWLT	9
Bigfork Township, Supporting DNR	10
Carlton County, Supporting DNR	11
Carpenter Township, Supporting DNR	12
Cass County, Supporting DNR	13
Center Township, Supporting DNR	14-15
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Crow Wing County, Supporting NWLT	17
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Minnesota Deer Hunters Association	34
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Whitefish Area Property Owners Association	36-37



AITKIN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

Aitkin County Government Center
307 2nd Street NW, Room 310
Aitkin, MN 56431

jessica.seibert@co.aitkin.mn.us
Phone: 218-927-3093
Fax: 218-927-7374

December 20, 2022

MN Department of Natural Resources
Adam Munstenteiger
MN Heritage Forest Project Manager
2115 Birchmont Beach Road NE
Bemidji, MN. 56601

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger

This is to confirm Aitkin County Board of Commissioners supports the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) work to acquire some, or all the properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Aitkin County as reflected on the attached map.

It is understood between Aitkin County and the MN DNR that formal County Board approval may or may not be required depending upon the Outdoor Recreation Unit designation and/or the funding source. The Aitkin County Board understands that a representative from MN DNR will notify us once a formal option agreement has been signed and request a formal County Board resolution if required by law.

Sincerely,

J. Mark Wedel
County Board Chair



AITKIN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

Aitkin County Government Center
307 2nd Street NW, Room 310
Aitkin, MN 56431

jessica.seibert@co.aitkin.mn.us
Phone: 218-927-3093
Fax: 218-927-7374

April 11, 2023

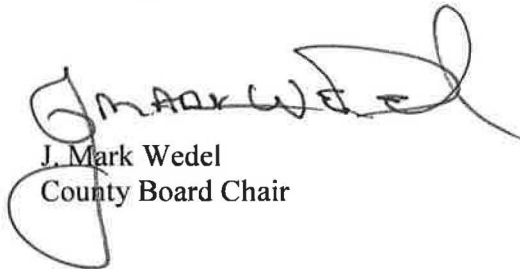
Northern Waters Land Trust
Kathy DonCarlos
Land Conservation Coordinator
P.O. Box 124
800 Minnesota Ave. W
Walker, MN. 56484

Dear Ms. DonCarlos,

This is to confirm Aitkin County Board of Commissioners supports the Northern Waters Land Trust (NWLT) work to acquire eight (8) parcels of land currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Spalding Township, Aitkin County.

NWLT will be submitting a grant proposal to the Outdoor Heritage Fund on behalf of counties and tribal governments for this purchase. It is understood between Aitkin County and the NWLT that once acquired, these lands will be transferred to the county for permanent conservation management and protection.

Sincerely,



J. Mark Wedel
County Board Chair

62949 Co Rd 557
Cook, MN 55723

January 10, 2023

MN Department of Natural Resources
Adam Munstenteiger
MN Heritage Forest Project Manager
2115 Birchmont Beach Road NE
Bemidji, MN 56601

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger,

This is to confirm **Bearville Township Board of Supervisors** (the Board) supports the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) work to acquire some, or all the properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Bearville Township as reflected on the attached map.

Sincerely,

Name Cene Baker

Title Chair person

Name Janelle Driscoll *Janelle Driscoll*

Title Supervisor

Name Mites J.P.

Title Supervisor



COUNTY OF BECKER

Natural Resources Management

200 East State Street, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501

218-847-0099

Becker County Natural Resources Management
Detroit Lakes, MN 56501

March 16th, 2023

MN Department of Natural Resources
Adam Munstenteiger
MN Heritage Forest Project Manager
2115 Birchmont Beach Road NE
Bemidji, MN 56601

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger,

This is to confirm that the Becker County supports the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) work to acquire properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Becker County. Becker County has an interest in acquiring parcels (210044000 & 120041010) from The Conservation Fund that will meet the Becker County strategic land asset management goals of improving access to other County owned lands and consolidating the Becker County Tax Forfeited land base.

It is understood between Becker County and the DNR that formal county board approval may or may not be required depending upon the Outdoor Recreation Unit designation and/or funding source. The Board understands that a representative from the DNR will notify Becker County once a formal option agreement has been signed and they may request a formal County Board Resolution if it is required by law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Swanson".

Becker County Land Commissioner/ Natural Resource Management

BOARD MEETING AS POSTED

BECKER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

DATE: TUESDAY, December 20, 2022, at 8:15 am

LOCATION: Board Room, Courthouse

Agenda/Minutes:

1. Meeting was brought to order by Board Chair Knutson. Commissioners in attendance: Knutson, Okeson, Vareberg, Nelson, and Grimsley, County Administrator Pat Oman and minute taker Amanda Pachel.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Agenda Confirmation – Motion and second to approve agenda no additions. (Grimsley, Okeson) carried.
4. Minutes – Moved and seconded to approve minutes of December 13, 2022, with the requested changes (Grimsley, Okeson) carried.
5. Minutes- Moved and seconded to approve minutes of December 15, 2022, with no changes. (Okeson, Vareberg) carried.

Commissioners:

1. Open Forum: None
2. Reports and Correspondence: Reports were provided on the following meetings:
 - Commissioner Grimsley: DAC
 - Commissioner Okeson: NW Comm Board, Otter Tail, Watershed District 1W1P, Heartland Trail
 - Commissioner Nelson: Construction Hwy Meeting, Lakeland Mental Health
 - Commissioner Knutson: Both meetings cancelled, EDA PLMSV, Weise Family-Property sale
 - Commissioner Vareberg: None
3. Appointments: Ben Grimsley to Sunnyside (Nelson, Okeson) carried. Ben Grimsley-abstained.

County Administrator: presented by Pat Oman

1. Report: Closed Highway Building Sale, asked for guidance for who will start the business meeting on January 3, 2023, Nelson -Auditor-Treasurer has in the past, Okeson- Auditor-Treasurer or Administrator.
2. Motion and second to approve Resolution 12-22-2A - Commissioners Salaries (Okeson, Vareberg) carried.
3. Motion and second to approve Resolution 12-22-2B - Elected Officials Salaries (Okeson, Vareberg) carried.
4. Motion and second to approve Resolution 12-22-2M - County Board of Commissioners 2023 Meetings (Nelson, Okeson) carried.

5. Consider Advanced Correctional Healthcare, Inc Proposal-motion to move forward with negotiating contract with ACH. (Okeson, Nelson)
6. Sell iPad to Commissioner- \$180 (Okeson, Vareberg) carried.
7. Minnesota Heritage Forest – Kent Wolf, DNR-Assistant Area Forest Supervisor-Letter of Opinion from Becker County. Motion to do a letter of support for purchase of 2 parcels and previous 2 parcels. (Nelson, Okeson)

Finance Committee Minutes: presented by Mary Hendrickson

1. Regular Claims and Auditor Warrants:

12/13/2022 in the amount of \$153,496.96

12/15/2022 in the amount of \$ 389,363.76

Total of \$ 542,860.72

Motion and second to approve payment of regular claims, auditor warrants, (Okeson, Vareberg) carried.

Auditor – Treasurer: presented by Mary Hendrickson

1. Licenses: None
2. Motion and second to approve October Cash and Investment Report. (Grimsley, Okeson)
3. Motion and second to approve Resolution 12-22-2C - Certify Levy (Okeson, Vareberg) carried.
4. Motion and second to approve Human Services Claims – Human Services, Transit, and Public Health. (Okeson, Vareberg) carried.

Human Resources – Presented by Carrie Smith.

1. Report and Follow Up on Previous Agenda Items
2. Motion and second to approve Resolution 12-22-2N - Economic Development Specialist (Okeson, Vareberg) carried.
3. Motion and second to RFP for a Class and Compensation Study-advertise. (Nelson, Okeson)

Highway: presented by Jim Olson

1. Motion and second to approve Resolution 12-22-2D - Reaffirmation of Transit (SMART) (Nelson, Okeson) carried.
2. Motion and second to approve Resolution 12-22-2E - 2023-2027 Five Year Plan Acceptance (Okeson, Nelson) carried.
3. Motion and second to approve Resolution 12-22-2F – Final Payment Acceptance – 003-070-015 (Okeson, Nelson) carried.
4. Motion and second to approve Resolution 12-22-2G – MnDot DCP Agreement (Nelson, Okeson) carried.

Sheriff's Office: presented by Todd Glander



COUNTY OF BECKER

Natural Resources Management

200 East State Street, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501

218-847-0099

Becker County Natural Resources Management
Detroit Lakes, MN 56501

May 17th, 2023

Northern Waters Land Trust
Kathy DonCarlos
Land Conservation Coordinator
800 Minnesota Ave. W
Walker, MN 56484

Dear Northern Waters Land Trust,

This is to confirm that Becker County supports the Northern Waters Land Trust (NWLTL) work to acquire properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Becker County. Becker County has an interest in acquiring through donation parcel # 210044000 from NWLTL that will meet the Becker County strategic land asset management goals of improving access to other County owned lands and consolidating the Becker County Tax Forfeited land base.

Becker County understands that a representative from the NWLTL will notify Becker County once a formal option agreement has been signed and they may request a formal County Board Resolution if it is required by law. Becker County looks forward to working with NWLTL on this grant proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials "ML" or similar, written in a cursive style.

Becker County Land Commissioner/ Natural Resource Management



BELTRAMI COUNTY
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION
701 Minnesota Ave NW Suite 200, Bemidji, MN 56601
Thomas H. Barry, County Administrator
tom.barry@co.beltrami.mn.us
Telephone: 218-333-4109

April 4, 2023

Ms. Kathy DonCarlos
Northern Waters Land Trust
P.O. Box 214
800 Minnesota Ave. W
Walker, MN 56484

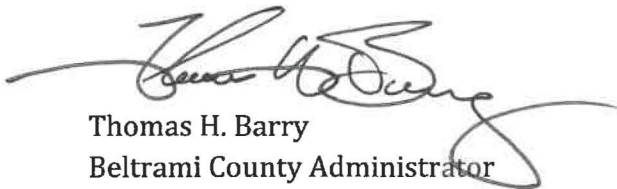
Dear Ms. DonCarlos,

The Beltrami County Board of Commissioners, by action taken on April 4, 2023, supports the Northern Waters Land Trust Outdoor Heritage Fund Grant proposal to pursue grant monies to purchase The Conservation Fund (TCF) lands within Beltrami County and donating these lands to the County. As a public agency partner, we are looking forward to potentially gaining title to the 286-acres of TCF land for permanent conservation management and public access.

Acquiring these lands would help greatly in gaining access to other County managed lands and also help to consolidate our ownership to provide for more efficient management of these lands.

Please contact me if you have any questions, need additional information, or if the County can help in any way.

Sincerely,



Thomas H. Barry
Beltrami County Administrator

PO Box 183
Bigfork, MN 56628

December 21, 2022

MN Department of Natural Resources
Adam Munstenteiger
MN Heritage Forest Project Manager
2115 Birchmont Beach Road NE
Bemidji, MN 56601

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger,

This is to confirm **Bigfork Township Board of Supervisors** (the Board) supports the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) work to acquire some, or all the properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Bigfork Township as reflected on the attached map.

Sincerely,

Name *Dann Alby*
Title *Bigfork Township Chair*
CC:



CARLTON COUNTY

Land Department

1630 County Road 61 • Carlton, MN 55718
218-384-9179

Gregory J. Bernu, *Land Commissioner* • Mark P. Westphal, *Forester*

November 8, 2022

MN Department of Natural Resources
Adam Munstenteiger
MN Heritage Forest Project Manager
2115 Birchmont Beach Road NE
Bemidji, MN 56601

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger,

This is to confirm Carlton County Board of Commissioners (the Board) supports the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) work to acquire some, or all the properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Carlton County as reflected on the attached map.

It is understood between Carlton County and the MN DNR that formal county board approval may or may not be required depending upon the Outdoor Recreation Unit designation and/or the funding source. The Board understands that a representative from MN DNR will notify us once a formal option agreement has been signed and request a formal County Board Resolution if required by law.

Sincerely,

Gary Peterson
Chair, Carlton County Board of Commissioners

CC: Kevin DeVriendt, County Auditor/Treasurer
Gregory Bernu, County Land Commissioner
Kyle Holmes, County Assessor

MN Department of Natural Resources
Adam Munstenteiger
MN Heritage Forest Project Manager
2115 Birchmont Beach Road NE
Bemidji, MN 56601

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger,

This is to confirm **Carpenter Township Board of Supervisors** (the Board) supports the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) work to acquire some, or all the properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Carpenter Township as reflected on the attached map.

Sincerely,

Name *Larry C Salmela* (LARRY C SALMELA)
Title SUPERVISOR AND BOARD CHAIR
CC:

10 JAN 2023

Cass County Commissioners

Our mission is to deliver quality public services to the citizens in an effective, professional, and efficient manner.

PO Box 3000, 303 Minnesota Avenue, Walker, MN 56484-3000

Phone: 218-547-7204 Facsimile: 218-547-7455 TDD: 218-547-1424

E-Mail: josh.stevenson@casscountymn.gov Web site: www.casscountymn.gov



January 17, 2023

MN Department of Natural Resources
Adam Munstenteiger
MN Heritage Forest Project Manager
2115 Birchmont Beach Road NE
Bemidji, MN 56601

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger,

This is to confirm that the Cass County Board of Commissioners (the Board) supports the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) work to acquire some, or all the properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Cass County as reflected on the attached map.

It is understood between Cass County and the MN DNR that formal county board approval may or may not be required depending upon the Outdoor Recreation Unit designation and/or the funding source. The Board understands that a representative from MN DNR will notify us once a formal option agreement has been signed and request a formal County Board Resolution if required by law.

As discussed during our County Board meeting, we request that the MNDNR conduct additional public meetings with Townships, where land is proposed to be acquired, to discuss how the land will be managed. We also request Wildlife Management Area designation on the lands currently proposed to be acquired as designated State Forest lands based on the feedback provided to the Cass County Board from Townships.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Bruns".

Scott Bruns, Chair
Cass County Board of Commissioners

CC: Cass County Board of Commissioners

Center Township

24491 County Rd. 19

Merrifield, MN 56465

January 13, 2023

MN Department of Natural Resources

Adam Munstenteiger

MN Heritage Forest Project Manager

2115 Birchmont Beach Road NE

Bemidji, MN 56601

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger,

This is to confirm Center Township Board of Supervisors supports the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources work to acquire some, or all the properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Center Township as reflected on the attached map.

Sincerely,

Coralea Borden

Clerk

CENTER TOWNSHIP, CROW WING COUNTY
MONTHLY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
January 10, 2022

The monthly meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm and pledge led by chairman Yeager. Also in attendance is supervisors Steve Gilbert & Erik Lunemann ; clerk, Coralea Borden. & Treasurer, Melonie Flaws. Lunemann makes motion to approve meeting minutes from December 13, 2022; Gilbert seconds; all aye; motion carried.

Constituent concerns

Old Business .

Lunemann makes motion to support the DNR to purchase acreage in township; Gilbert seconds; all aye; motion carried. Clerk to send letter to DNR in support of.

New Business:

Lunemann makes motion to approve contract between CWC & township for March township election. Gilbert seconds; all aye; motion carried. Annual Board of Audit meeting scheduled for February 14, at 6:00pm. Monthly meeting to follow at 7:00pm.

Road Report:

Crow Wing County Highway dept will be putting up a caution sign by the bump on Executive Acres rd. and billing township for it.

Cemetery:

. Planning & Zoning:

No new permits.

Treasurers Report/ Check Approval . .

Yeager makes motion to approve check numbers 13443-13459 in the amount of \$82,206.77 Lunemann seconds; all aye; motion carried. Lunemann makes motion to approve treasurer report; Gilbert seconds; all aye; motion carried. Lunemann moves to adjourn; Gilbert seconds; all aye: meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

DRAFT-SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL



March 14, 2023

MN Department of Natural Resources
Adam Munstenteiger
MN Heritage Forest Project Manager
2115 Birchmont Beach Road NE
Bemidji, MN 56601

RE: DNR's Priority Parcels related to MN Heritage Forest Project

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger,

This is to confirm that the Crow Wing County Board of Commissioners (the Board) supports the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) work to acquire some or all of the properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Crow Wing County as reflected on the attached map.

It is understood between Crow Wing County and the MN DNR that formal county board approval may or may not be required depending upon the Outdoor Recreation Unit designation and/or the funding source. The Board understands that a representative from MN DNR will notify us once a formal option agreement has been signed and request a formal County Board Resolution if required by law.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Franzen, Chair
Crow Wing County Board of Commissioners

RF:tn
Attachment: Map

County Commissioners
Paul Koering – District 1
Jon Lubke – District 2
Steve Barrows – District 3
Rosemary Franzen – District 4
Doug Houge – District 5

Historic Courthouse
326 Laurel Street, Suite 13
Brainerd, MN 56401

Office: (218) 824-1067
Toll Free: (888) 829-6680
Fax: (218) 824-1054
www.crowwing.us

Our Vision: Being Minnesota's favorite place.
Our Mission: Serve well. Deliver value. Drive results.
Our Values: Be responsible. Treat people right. Build a better future.



May 10, 2023

Northern Waters Land Trust
800 Minnesota Ave West
Walker, MN 56484

Dear Northern Waters Land Trust:

On behalf of the Crow Wing County Board of Commissioners, I am writing to support the Northern Waters Land Trust's efforts to acquire Conservation Fund Lands located in Crow Wing County.

Included in the Northern Waters Land Trust's proposal are three parcels that are of interest for acquisition and donation to Crow Wing County. These parcels align with our Land Asset Management Policy, improve our Forest Management efforts and are critical recreation corridors in Crow Wing County.

The three parcels are all located in Center Township, Section 29 and the Property Identification Numbers are as follows: 53290518, 53290520 and 53290527.

Crow Wing County looks forward to working with the Northern Waters Land Trust on this grant proposal.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Franzen, Chair
Crow Wing County Board of Commissioners

RF:tn

County Commissioners
Paul Koering – District 1
Jon Lubke – District 2
Steve Barrows – District 3
Rosemary Franzen – District 4
Doug Houge – District 5

Historic Courthouse
326 Laurel Street, Suite 13
Brainerd, MN 56401

Office: (218) 824-1067
Toll Free: (888) 829-6680
Fax: (218) 824-1054
www.crowwing.us

Our Vision: Being Minnesota's favorite place.
Our Mission: Serve well. Deliver value. Drive results.
Our Values: Be responsible. Treat people right. Build a better future.

Holyoke Township

Clerk: Rosanne Haynes
Carlton County

Supervisors: George Haynes John Magnuson Paula Siltberg

Treasurer: Mary Munn
Holyoke, Minnesota 55749

December 14, 2022

Holyoke Town Board
985 Healy Road
Holyoke, MN 55749

MN Department of Natural Resources
Adam Munstenteiger
MN Heritage Forest Project Manager
2115 Birchmont Beach Road
Bemidji, MN 56601

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger,

This letter is to confirm that the Holyoke Town Board supports the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) work to acquire some, or all the properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Holyoke Township to establish a Heritage Forest, as reflected on the attached map. It is understood that approximately 129 acres of the tract of interest is located in Holyoke Township. The Board understands that they will receive a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) as a result of the MN DNR acquisition.

Sincerely,



George Haynes, Supervisor

Paula A. Siltberg

Holyoke Town Board
rh



Hubbard County Board of Commissioners

301 Court Avenue
Park Rapids, MN 56470

Email: jeff.cadwell@co.hubbard.mn.us
Phone: 218.732.2336 • Fax: 218.732.2321

December 20, 2022

MN Department of Natural Resources
Adam Munstenteiger
MN Heritage Forest Project Manager
2115 Birchmont Beach Road NE
Bemidji, MN 56601

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger,

This is to confirm Hubbard County Board of Commissioners supports the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) work to acquire some, or all the properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Hubbard County as reflected on the attached map.

It is understood between Hubbard County and the MN DNR that formal county board approval may or may not be required depending upon the Outdoor Recreation Unit designation and/or the funding source. The Hubbard County Board of Commissioners understands that a representative from MN DNR will notify us once a formal option agreement has been signed and request a formal County Board Resolution if required by law.

Sincerely,

Ted Van Kempen
Board of Commissioners - Chair



Natural Resource Management

101 Crocus Hill Street
Park Rapids, MN 56470

Email: mark.lohmeier@co.hubbard.mn.us
Phone: (218) 732-4270 • Fax: (218) 732-7640

April 4, 2023

Northern Waters Land Trust
c/o Kathy DonCarlos
800 Minnesota Ave. W.
PO Box 124
Walker, MN 56484

Dear Kathy,

This letter is to confirm Hubbard County Board of Commissioners support of the Northern Waters Land Trust's (NWLTL) endeavors to acquire approximately 1849 acres of rural vacant land within Hubbard County currently owned by The Conservation Trust (TCF) provided that existing grant-in-aid recreation trails will not be prohibited or restricted.

NWLTL will be submitting a grant proposal to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) on behalf of counties and tribal governments for this purchase. It is understood between Hubbard County and the NWLTL that once acquired, these lands will be transferred to the county for permanent conservation management and protection.

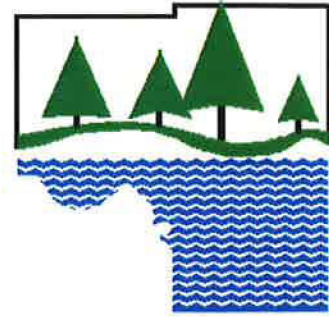
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Krueger", is positioned above the printed name.

Tom Krueger
Chairman, Hubbard County Board of Commissioners

ITASCA COUNTY

Courthouse
Administrative Services
123 NE 4th Street
Grand Rapids, MN 55744-2600
Office (218) 327-7363 Fax (218) 327-2848



February 28, 2023

MN Department of Natural Resources
Adam Munstenteiger
MN Heritage Forest Project Manager
2115 Birchmont Beach Road NE
Bemidji, MN 56601

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger,

The Itasca County Board of Commissioners supports the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) work to acquire some of the properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Itasca County, but also has a couple concerns regarding the potential acquisition.

Depending on the funding sources used for the acquisition, Itasca County is concerned that the acquired lands will not be open to motorized recreational trail uses. The availability of recreational trails as a multiple use on public lands plays an important role in the county's tourism economy. Itasca County is also concerned about how this project fits into the MN DNR's strategic land asset management and whether this state program will take a balanced approach by including both land acquisition and divestment. State land asset practices that reduce the tax capacity within a county increases the burden on other county taxpayers which in turn reduces the economic vitality of the region. These types of potential long-term impacts on our local citizens and economy are important issues for the MN DNR to address when planning these land acquisition projects.

It is understood these lands will become acquired natural resources lands, managed as state forests, and will provide multiple land use benefits to the public. These benefits would include being open to all the public uses currently allowed on state forest lands as well as being managed as working forests in support of our region's forest products industry. It is also understood that formal county board approval may or may not be required depending upon the ultimate land designation and/or the funding source.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Burl Ives', written over a light blue horizontal line.

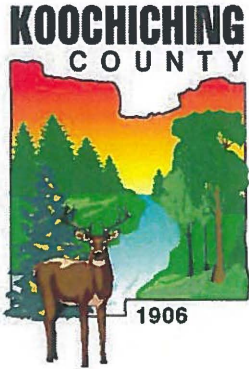
Burl Ives
Chair, Itasca County Board of Commissioners

Equal Opportunity Employer

KOOCHICHING COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
715 4th Street
INTERNATIONAL FALLS, MN 56649

January 27, 2023

MN Department of Natural Resources
Adam Munstenteiger
MN Heritage Forest Project Manager
115 Birchmont Beach Road NE
Bemidji, MN 56601



District 1
Destry Hell
4900 North River Drive
Littlefork, MN 56653
218-283-5729

District 2
Ricky Roche
371 County Road 24
Intl Falls, MN 56649
218-240-7576

District 3
Open

District 4
Jason Sjoblom
115 Park Avenue
Intl Falls, MN 56649
218-283-5729

District 5
Wayne Skoe
P.O. Box 107
Northome, MN 56661
218-244-5748

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger,

This is to confirm that the Koochiching County Board of Commissioners (the Board) supports the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) work to acquire some of the properties currently owned by The Conservation Fund in Koochiching County as reflected on the attached map.

It is understood between Koochiching County and the MN DNR that formal county board approval may or may not be required depending upon the Outdoor Recreation Unit designation and/or the funding source. The Board understands that a representative from MN DNR will notify us once a formal option agreement has been signed and request a formal County Board Resolution if required by law.

We are also respectfully requesting that the MN DNR seriously consider including Koochiching County in as a partner and collaborator for any funding sources for acquisition of these lands so that the County may also acquire those lands that were identified between MN DNR and County staff as better suited in title of Koochiching County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Sjoblom".

Jason Sjoblom
Koochiching County Board Chair

Koochiching County

Land & Forestry
Department

Nathan Heibel, Land Commissioner
218-283-1126 Fax: 218-283-1129
Danae Schafer, Assist. Land Commissioner
218-283-1128 Fax: 218-283-1129
Char Tomczak, Deputy Administrator
218-283-1127 Fax: 218-283-1129
Littlefork District Office:
218-278-6643 Fax: 218-278-6249
Big Falls District Office:
218-276-2441 Fax: 218-276-2494
Northome District Office:
218-897-5535 Fax: 218-897-5283

***715 4th Street – Courthouse
International Falls, Minnesota 56649-2438***

Kathy DonCarlos
Northern Waters Land Trust
P.O. Box 124
800 Minnesota Avenue W.
Walker, MN 56484

March 22, 2023

Dear Ms. DonCarlos,

This letter is to inform you that on behalf of the Koochiching County Board of Commissioners action taken on March 21, 2023, Koochiching County is supportive of the Northern Waters Land Trust's (NWLTL) endeavor to seek Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Funds to purchase certain identified The Conservation Fund (TCF) lands within Koochiching County and transferring title to the County. The prospect of potentially gaining title to these lands for permanent conservation management, public access, and protection is exciting!

Acquiring TCF parcels that make up approximately 560 acres in our County and bringing them under County management will provide for more efficient management of these lands and the lands we currently manage in their vicinity.

We appreciate NWLTL willingness to include Koochiching County in this proposal.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is any additional information that you need from us or if we can assist as this project takes shape.

Sincerely,



Nathan Heibel
Koochiching County Land Commissioner
(218) 283-1126
nathan.heibel@co.koochiching.mn.us



Saint Louis County

Land and Minerals Dept. • www.stlouiscountymn.gov • landdept@stlouiscountymn.gov

Julie Marinucci
Land Commissioner

May 16, 2023

Northern Waters Land Trust
Kathy DonCarlos
Land Conservation Coordinator
P.O. Box 124
800 Minnesota Ave. W
Walker, MN 56484

Ms. DonCarlos,

The St. Louis County Land and Minerals Department supports the grant application submitted by Northern Waters Land Trust (NWLTT) in their efforts to acquire forest lands currently owned by The Conservation Fund. We understand the goal of the grant would be for NWLT to convey the forest lands purchased to government and tribal entities to be managed in perpetuity for wildlife habitat, sustainable forest products, and public access.

The Conservation Fund currently has significant acreage in St. Louis County being considered for various land transactions. Much of this land would be highly desirable for our department to acquire as part of the land base we currently sustainably manage for forest resources, wildlife habitat, and public access. It is appreciated that this grant is available for the purchase of up to 1000 acres of lands to be conveyed to St. Louis County in the event they are made available for purchase by The Conservation Fund within the grant period.

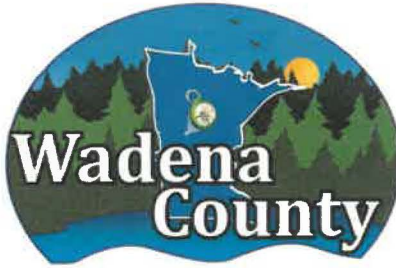
Sincerely,

Jason Meyer
Deputy Director

Duluth Government Services Center
320 West 2nd Street, Ste 302
Duluth, MN 55802
(218) 726-2606
Fax: (218) 726-2600

Pike Lake Area Office
5713 Old Miller Trunk Hwy
Duluth, MN 55811
(218) 625-3700
Fax: (218) 625-3733

Virginia Area Office
7820 Highway 135
Virginia, MN 55792
(218) 742-9898
Fax: (218) 742-9870



Board of Commissioners

*Wadena County Courthouse, 415 Jefferson Street South, Wadena, MN 56482
Phone: (218) 631-7779 Fax: (218) 631-7652*

April 18, 2023

Northern Waters Land Trust
Kathy DonCarlos
Land Conservation Coordinator
P.O. Box 124
800 Minnesota Avenue West
Walker, MN

**RE: Outdoor Heritage Fund
The Conservation Fund Parcels in Wadena County**

Dear Ms. DonCarlos:

This is a letter in support of the work Northern Waters Land Trust (NWLTL) is doing to acquire parcels in Wadena County currently owned by The Conservation Fund.

We understand that NWLTL is submitting a grant proposal to the Outdoor Heritage Fund on behalf of several counties and tribal governments for this purchase. We also understand that, once NWLTL has acquired these parcels, they will be transferred to Wadena County for permanent forest and conservation management.

Sincerely,

Michael Weyer
County Board Chair



Adam Munstenteiger
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry - Northwest Region Manager
2115 Birchmont Beach Rd NE
Bemidji, MN 56601

May 19, 2023

RE: Support for Minnesota's Heritage Forest Project – Transition to Public Ownership

Dear Mr. Munstenteiger,

I write in support of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Northern Waters Land Trust grant request to protect forestland in northern Minnesota by purchasing land from The Conservation Fund (TCF) and transferring these lands into public ownership. This is directly related to TCF's Minnesota's Heritage Forest Program, when they purchased more than 72,000 acres of forestland in northern and central Minnesota from the PotlatchDeltic Corporation in 2020. TCF has indicated that the intended purpose of their purchase was to provide 10 years of time for the development and implementation of permanent conservation strategies and maintaining intact working forests with partners. Conserving and permanently protecting such significant acreages of forestland and habitat is a one-time opportunity.

On behalf of the Bemidji Area Forestry Affairs Council, we support NWLT and DNR submitting an Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal to conserve these lands. Protecting these large tracts of land addresses goals and priorities of local landowners, businesses, timber and logging operations, Tribal nations, hunters, hikers, townships, counties, the state, and the nation.

Intact working forests are critical to our local economy and businesses. Preserving these forestlands have significant economic benefits for our local communities. Healthy forests, clean water and air, and abundant wildlife all contribute to a high quality of life, which advances northern Minnesotan business and encourages economic growth. By investing in the preservation and protection of our natural resources, this project will create a vibrant and sustainable local economy that benefits everyone in our communities.

In addition to the economic benefits, this work is critical to conserving wildlife habitat that require large intact forests. The predominant threat for wildlife species of greatest conservation need and protected species is habitat degradation, loss and especially fragmentation of these forests. Maintaining intact and

healthy forest habitat, especially large contiguous tracts, reduces stressors on these populations. Land cover and land use directly impacts water quality and quantity. By protecting forests in key areas, this program will protect drinking water, recharge aquifers, reduce nutrient and sediment runoff to lakes and streams, protect floodplains, sustain fisheries, and mitigate climate change. This effort clearly aligns with the local, regional, and statewide watershed and landscape planning efforts.

We strongly believe that the work proposed by DNR and the NWLT will have a positive impact on the environment and local economies, and we urge you to support their grant proposal. By preserving these important forestlands, we can ensure that they continue to provide essential ecological services and economic benefits for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Hengel', is written over the typed name and title.

David Hengel
Executive Director



CROW WING COUNTY LAKES AND RIVERS ALLIANCE (LARA)

May 18, 2023

Lessard-Sam's Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Minnesota Heritage Forest – Transition to Public Ownership, Outdoor Heritage Grant Proposal

Dear Council Members,

I write in support of the Northern Waters Land Trust and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources grant request to protect forest land in northern Minnesota by purchasing land from The Conservation Fund (TCF) and transferring these lands into public ownership. This is directly related to TCF's [Minnesota's Heritage Forest Program](#), when they purchased more than 72,000 acres of forest land in northern and central Minnesota from the PotlatchDeltic Corporation in 2020. TCF has indicated that the intended purpose of their purchase was to provide 10 years of time for the development and implementation of permanent conservation strategies and maintaining intact working forests with partners. Conserving and permanently protecting such significant acreages of forest land and habitat is a one-time opportunity.

The Crow Wing County Lakes and Rivers Alliance (LARA) Board of Directors supports the NWLT and DNR submitting an Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal to conserve these lands. Protecting these large tracts of land addresses goals and priorities of local landowners, businesses, timber and logging operations, hunters, hikers, townships, counties, the state, and the nation.

Preserving and maintaining healthy working forests are critical to our local economy and businesses. Healthy forests, clean water and air, and abundant wildlife all contribute to a high quality of life, which advances northern Minnesotan business and encourages economic growth. By investing in the preservation and protection of our natural resources, this project will create a vibrant and sustainable local economy that benefits everyone in our communities.

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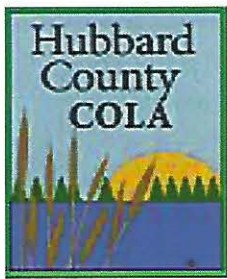
We strongly believe that the work proposed by NWLT and the DNR will have a positive impact on the environment and local economies, and we urge you to support their grant proposal. By preserving these important forest lands, we can ensure that they continue to provide essential ecological services and economic benefits for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Anthony E Coffey

Anthony E. Coffey, President
Crow Wing County Lakes and Rivers Alliance (LARA)



Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Associations (HC COLA)

P.O. BOX 746

PARK RAPIDS, MN 56470

www.HubbardCOLAmn.org HCCOLAmn@gmail.com

May 16, 2023

Lessard-Sam's Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Minnesota Heritage Forest – Transition to Public Ownership, Outdoor Heritage Grant Proposal

Dear Council Members,

We are writing in support of the Northern Waters Land Trust and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources grant request to protect forest land in northern Minnesota by purchasing land from The Conservation Fund (TCF) and transferring these lands into public ownership. This is directly related to TCF's Minnesota's Heritage Forest Program, when they purchased more than 72,000 acres of forest land in northern and central Minnesota from the PotlatchDeltic Corporation in 2020. TCF has indicated that the intended purpose of their purchase was to provide 10 years of time for the development and implementation of permanent conservation strategies and maintaining intact working forests with partners. Conserving and permanently protecting such significant acreages of forest land and habitat is a one-time opportunity.

On behalf of the Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Associations, we support NWLT and DNR submitting an Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal to conserve these lands. Protecting these large tracts of land addresses goals and priorities of local landowners, businesses, timber and logging operations, hunters, hikers, townships, counties, the state, and the nation.

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We strongly believe that the work proposed by NWLT and the DNR will have a positive impact on the environment and local economies, and we urge you to support their grant proposal. By preserving these important forest lands, we can ensure that they continue to provide essential ecological services and economic benefits for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sharon M. Natzel and the HC COLA Board of Directors

Sharon Natzel, President, Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Associations and our HC COLA Board of Directors

Hubbard County COLA is the leader in protecting Hubbard County Lakes and Rivers. Formed in 1988, HC COLA now has 31 lake associations representing 43 lakes with over 2,776 members. Our mission is to protect and enhance the quality of our lakes and rivers, preserve the economic, recreational & natural environmental values of our shorelands and promote the responsible use of our waters & related habitats.

May 11, 2023

Lessard-Sam's Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Minnesota Heritage Forest – Transition to Public Ownership, Outdoor Heritage Grant Proposal

Dear Council Members,

I write in support of the Northern Waters Land Trust and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources grant request to protect forest land in northern Minnesota by purchasing land from The Conservation Fund (TCF) and transferring these lands into public ownership. This is directly related to TCF's Minnesota's Heritage Forest Program, when they purchased more than 72,000 acres of forest land in northern and central Minnesota from the PotlatchDeltic Corporation in 2020. TCF has indicated that the intended purpose of their purchase was to provide 10 years of time for the development and implementation of permanent conservation strategies and maintaining intact working forests with partners. Conserving and permanently protecting such significant acreages of forest land and habitat is a one-time opportunity.

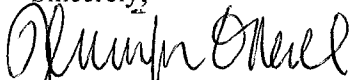
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I strongly believe that the work proposed by NWLT and the DNR will have a positive impact on the environment and local economies, and urge you to support their grant proposal. By preserving these important forest lands, we can ensure that they continue to provide essential ecological services and economic benefits for years to come. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jennifer O'Neill

6191 Villa Lane N.W.
Walker, MN 56484



Leech Lake ASSOCIATION INC



PO Box 1613, Walker, Minnesota 56484

May 16, 2023

Lessard-Sam's Outdoor Heritage Council

100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Minnesota Heritage Forest – Transition to Public Ownership, Outdoor Heritage Grant Proposal

Dear Council Members,

I write in support of the Northern Waters Land Trust and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources grant request to protect forest land in northern Minnesota by purchasing land from The Conservation Fund (TCF) and transferring these lands into public ownership. This is directly related to TCF's [Minnesota's Heritage Forest Program](#), when they purchased more than 72,000 acres of forest land in northern and central Minnesota from the PotlatchDeltic Corporation in 2020. TCF has indicated that the intended purpose of their purchase was to provide 10 years of time for the development and implementation of permanent conservation strategies and maintaining intact working forests with partners. Conserving and permanently protecting such significant acreages of forest land and habitat is a one-time opportunity.

On behalf of the Leech Lake Association, we support NWLT and DNR submitting an Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal to conserve these lands. Protecting these large tracts of land addresses goals and priorities of local landowners, businesses, timber and logging operations, hunters, hikers, townships, counties, the state, and the nation.

Preserving and maintaining healthy working forests are critical to our local economy and businesses. Healthy forests, clean water and air, and abundant wildlife all contribute to a high quality of life, which advances northern Minnesotan business and encourages economic growth. By investing in the preservation and protection of our natural resources, this project will create a vibrant and sustainable local economy that benefits everyone in our communities.

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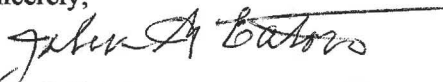
We strongly believe that the work proposed by NWLT and the DNR will have a positive impact on the environment and local economies, and we urge you to support their grant proposal. By preserving these

Yours for a better and cleaner Leech Lake and environment!

important forest lands, we can ensure that they continue to provide essential ecological services and economic benefits for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John G. Eaton", with a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

John G Eaton
Director, Leech Lake Association



MINNESOTA DEER HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

460 Peterson Road, Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Fax: 218-327-1349 / Phone: 1-800-450-DEER

www.mndeerhunters.com



BUILDING OUR HUNTING AND CONSERVATION LEGACY THROUGH HABITAT, EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

May 15, 2023

Lessard-Sam's Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Minnesota Heritage Forest – Transition to Public Ownership, Outdoor Heritage Grant Proposal

Dear Council Members,

I write in support of the Northern Waters Land Trust and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources grant request to protect forest land in northern Minnesota by purchasing land from The Conservation Fund (TCF) and transferring these lands into public ownership. This is directly related to TCF's [Minnesota's Heritage Forest Program](#), when they purchased more than 72,000 acres of forest land in northern and central Minnesota from the PotlatchDeltic Corporation in 2020. TCF has indicated that the intended purpose of their purchase was to provide 10 years of time for the development and implementation of permanent conservation strategies and maintaining intact working forests with partners. Conserving and permanently protecting such significant acreages of forest land and habitat is a one-time opportunity.

On behalf of the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, we support NWLT and DNR submitting an Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal to conserve these lands. Protecting these large tracts of land addresses goals and priorities of local landowners, businesses, timber and logging operations, hunters, hikers, townships, counties, the state, and the nation.

Preserving and maintaining healthy working forests are critical to our local economy and businesses. Healthy forests, clean water and air, and abundant wildlife all contribute to a high quality of life, which advances northern Minnesotan business and encourages economic growth. By investing in the preservation and protection of our natural resources, this project will create a vibrant and sustainable local economy that benefits everyone in our communities.

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We strongly believe that the work proposed by NWLT and the DNR will have a positive impact on the environment and local economies, and we urge you to support their grant proposal. By preserving these important forest lands, we can ensure that they continue to provide essential ecological services and economic benefits for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jared J. Mazurek
MDHA Executive Director



May 10, 2023

Lessard-Sam's Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Minnesota Heritage Forest – Transition to Public Ownership, Outdoor Heritage Grant Proposal

Dear Council Members,

The Minnesota State Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation writes in support of the Northern Waters Land Trust and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources grant request to protect forest land in northern Minnesota by purchasing land from The Conservation Fund (TCF) and transferring these lands into public ownership. This is directly related to TCF's [Minnesota's Heritage Forest Program](#), when they purchased more than 72,000 acres of forest land in northern and central Minnesota from the PotlatchDeltic Corporation in 2020. Conserving and permanently protecting such significant acreages of forest land and habitat is a one-time opportunity.

On behalf of the Minnesota State Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, we support NWLT and DNR submitting an Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal to conserve these lands. Protecting these large tracts of land addresses goals and priorities of local landowners, businesses, timber and logging operations, hunters, hikers, townships, counties, the state, and the nation.

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We strongly believe that the work proposed by NWLT and the DNR will have a positive impact on the environment and local economies, and we urge you to support their grant proposal. By conserving these important forest lands, we can ensure that they continue to provide essential ecological services and economic benefits for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linden Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Linden Anderson
Minnesota State Chapter President
National Wild Turkey Federation



May 18, 2023

Lessard-Sam's Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Minnesota Heritage Forest – Transition to Public Ownership, Outdoor Heritage Grant Proposal

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The Whitefish Area Property Owners Association (WAPOA) Board of Directors supports the NWLT and DNR submitting an Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal to conserve these lands. Protecting these large tracts of land addresses goals and priorities of local landowners, businesses, timber and logging operations, hunters, hikers, townships, counties, the state, and the nation.

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Anthony E Coffey

Anthony E. Coffey, President
Whitefish Area Property Owners Association (WAPOA)

the WAPOA Mission: Stewardship of the natural world throughout the Whitefish Area and the Pine River Watershed. We shall lead and work with citizens, groups, associations, and government units to conserve and improve the quality of our waters, shoreland, fishery, wildlife resources, and general welfare for the benefit of present and future generations.