



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program - Phase XIII
ML 2024 Request for Funding

General Information

Date: 06/23/2023

Proposal Title: Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program - Phase XIII

Funds Requested: \$5,780,800

Confirmed Leverage Funds: \$120,000

Is this proposal Scalable?: Yes

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Courtney Phillips

Title: Program and Project Manager

Organization: Shell Rock River Watershed District

Address: 305 S 1st Ave

City: Albert Lea, MN 56007

Email: courtney.phillips@co.freeborn.mn.us

Office Number: 507-379-8782

Mobile Number:

Fax Number:

Website: www.shellrock.org

Location Information

County Location(s): Freeborn.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

Activity types:

- Enhance
- Protect in Fee
- Restore

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Habitat

Narrative

Abstract

The Shell Rock River Watershed District (SRRWD) is seeking funding for the Habitat Restoration Program to restore, enhance, and protect 954 acres of essential prairie upland, wetland and streambank habitat across the watershed. As a result, key biological functioning parcels will be permanently protected, streambank habitat will be enhanced, vegetation and feeding sources will be restored for migratory fowl habitat, and wetlands will be restored from row crop agriculture. These projects are critical for the benefit of fish, waterfowl, and wildlife populations, reversing the trend of wetland loss and habitat degradation in the prairie ecoregion.

Design and Scope of Work

The SRRWD created the Habitat Restoration Program to restore, protect, and enhance degraded habitat conditions by implementing projects on a lake-shed basis. Specifically, Phase XIII will contribute to the District's goals by:

- Acquire 150 acres of agricultural ground, encompassed with 40 acres of a historic oak stand, to permanently protect the oak savanna landscape and provide prairie plantings.
- Habitat enhancements on 40 acres of streambanks to improve floodplain connectivity and over-winter open water conditions, to prevent further sedimentation into the watercourse and to improve public access and benefit BIPOC communities.
- Acquire 42 acres from a willing landowner to expand an adjacent WMA.
- Wetland enhancement on a 530-acre site in the Panicum Prairie WMA, an important flyway that is critical to waterfowl, upland game, and wading bird species that is currently dominated by a single species canary grass.
- Reestablish 150 acres of vegetation into upland prairie from agricultural use to improve pollinator species success with native plant diversity.
- Restore 42 acres of wetland basins, reversing the trend of wetland loss and habitat degradation while improving nesting habitat and waterfowl food sources.

This proposal uses a programmatic approach to achieve protection, restoration, and enhancement of lakes, wetlands, streams and native prairie landscapes. The program includes projects that are prioritized on the significance of the benefits to aquatic habitat, urgency of the work, availability of leveraged funds, location of projects and agreements with relevant planning documents. All projects listed above have landowner support, who are eager to get funding. The SRRWD has a proven track record with the LSOHC and implementing projects that protect, restore and enhance natural resources. The SRRWD continues to receive strong support for these projects from landowners, local governments and sporting organizations.

The program outcomes will also interconnect and reestablish important flyway habitats within Minnesota. Once completed, the program will increase waterfowl and fish populations, increase habitat for wetland dependent wildlife, and recreate the wildlife mecca in southern Minnesota. Finally, this program will preserve an outdoor legacy for Minnesotans to use and enjoy for generations.

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

When critical habitats are lost due to land use changes and other factors, restoring the habitat is imperative to the protection of species and their ecological processes. Important species are disappearing at an alarming rate and the SRRWD has the opportunity to protect their specific habitats. Many of the proposed projects are turning habitat dead zones, like row crop agricultural and vast reed canary areas, into multi-native species plantings that offer

food, shelter, and breeding habitat for a wide array of species.

Using the Minnesota DNR tool for species in greatest conservation need by habitat, the SRRWD has identified species of importance for the oak savanna landscape. Those species include the Marsh Wren and Common Moorhen for birds, mussels such as the Round Pigtoe, and amphibians including the Blanding's Turtle.

Citing the Minnesota Wildlife Action Plan, Blanding's turtles suffer from low reproductive rates and high nest predation, exacerbated by habitat loss and degradation. The proposal area has a known hotspot for Blanding's turtles identified in the Wildlife Action Network. Projects like the wetland enhancements and streambank restorations provide the needed wetland and upland habitats to complete the Blanding's turtle life cycle. The Common Moorhen is listed as special concern in the Oak Savanna habitat and can be attributed to the loss of well-vegetated ponds and wetlands. With the projects identified, wetland creation and vegetation enhancement can provide new habitat for both the Common Moorhen and March Wren.

One of the fastest declining populations in Minnesota has been the loss of native mussels. The District is focused on improving in-water features that will improve that quality of habitat for the threatened Round Pigtoe, and other endangered mussels.

All restoration and enhancement projects will have vegetation management in low grounds that include bulrush, smartweed, and marsh milkweed species to provide habitat and food sources for migratory birds. Upland prairie mix will be established to promote pollinator success. Enhancement efforts of this large scale provides habitat for both spring and fall migration of waterfowl, overall increase the use days by migratory birds, and provides nesting habitat.

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

For acquisition projects, landowner willingness is a large factor in determining the urgency to be completed. Securing these properties, while having a willing landowner, is imperative to its success. Landowners often get frustrated if funding isn't available when they want to sell. Other factors such as financial situations can change, resulting in properties no longer being available. If a landowner approaches the District expressing to sell, the District acts as fast as possible. All acquisitions in this proposal have eager landowners.

With the extent of wetland, streambank, and in-lake habitat loss in Minnesota, restoration efforts are an issue that needs immediate attention. Degraded habitat and impairments remain that require action to restore and enhance habitat for many species. Science and resource-based planning have been utilized to strategically select projects that will advance restoration goals specified in the SRRWD's Restoration Program.

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

This proposal is specifically requesting funds for the acquisition of 42 acres, known as the Sanderson property, to expand the adjacent Panicum Prairie WMA. The Panicum Prairie WMA is an 855-acre historic large marsh that was drained for farming. Over the years, conservation easements and acquisitions have secured lands to restore that historic marsh. The Sanderson property is currently agricultural ground surrounded by state ownership or conservation easements. Acquiring this property will directly expand habitat corridors.

Additionally, 4 of the 7 proposed projects are located within a 2-mile radius of each other. This reduces habitat fragmentation and improves the overall habitat carrying capacity of the corridor.

For parcels that are not directly adjacent to current protected areas, the SRRWD utilizes precision conservation modeling with monitoring to identify Property Management Zones (PMZs) on a sub-watershed basis. The PMZs were a watershed wide parcel review where habitat areas were ranked on a 1 to 3 scale. This scale incorporated a variety of measures including size of the habitat complex to be protected, proximity to existing protection, and distance to a water source. Remaining parcels either ranked as a 1 or 2, which are high value locations. Implementing site specific habitat restorations projects are progressively improving populations of native fish, waterfowl and wildlife habitat to once again create a wildlife mecca.

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

- Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition - The Next 50 Years
- North American Waterbird Conservation Plan

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.

In many plantings, five different species types including wildflowers, legumes, warm-season grasses, cool-season grasses and sedges/rushes are planted to mimic a native plant community. To address the anticipated warmer temperatures, hardy species resistant to pests and diseases that are found in southern regions are selected. Doing this ensures that habitat needs such nesting, shelter, and native food sources, including pollen and seeds, will be available in changing climate conditions.

For streambank restorations, natural channel design that includes restoring a floodplain bench to accommodate higher flows reduces the likelihood of scour, severe undercutting, and erosion along streambanks and allows base flow to be maintained in a primary channel when water is low. By doing so, fish, mussel, and invertebrate habitats are more able to withstand extreme variability in water flow. Additionally, creating riffles and pools provides areas of refuge and maintains critical oxygen levels.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal?

Prairie

- Restore or enhance habitat on public lands

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:

All proposed projects included in this proposal will lead to permanent conservation by being installed on public waters, existing WMAs, or involve acquisitions that will be permanent in public ownership. Permanent habitat will result from the numerous proposed projects and native plantings.

Habitat degradation of wetlands, streams, and shallow lakes is an issue of importance that requires accelerated investment in permanent projects to reverse this degradation. Protection and restoration of this critical habitat is the highest priority of the SRRWD and is directly affected by invasive aquatic vegetation, land use changes, increased water demands, populations of invasive fish species such as common carp, and artificial drainage. Degradation in habitat is influencing available food sources for game fish populations that include Northern Pike, Bluegill, Yellow Perch and Walleye, and duck populations including Northern Pintail, Redhead, Canvasback and Lesser Scaup.

Two streambank restoration projects will create spawning habitat, cover, and refuge for fish, habitat for wildlife, and will restore the growth of healthy aquatic vegetation. Projects also demonstrate a permanent conservation legacy by restoring habitat on public lands, increasing public access to fishing, improving native fish reproduction and providing protection from long term endangerment from invasive plant species by incorporating vegetation management. Key targeted habitat acquisitions comprising of 192 acres will also be protected to provide long term habitat for wildlife.

Outcomes

Programs in prairie region:

- Remnant native prairies are part of large complexes of restored prairies, grasslands, and large and small wetlands ~ *Outcomes will be measured by evaluating the number of waterfowl use-day surveys, pheasant roadside surveys, and angler success. This will be measured against the MN Conservation Plan to track goals.*

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

- Clean Water 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 is not supplanting funding or substituting from any previous funding.

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

The SRRWD has multiple funding sources including a citizen driven local option sales tax, local levy, and multiple public and private funding sources including previously LSOHC phased projects to assist in the District’s restoration efforts. Following this LSOHC appropriation timeline, the District will use their general fund dollars for maintenance implementations.

Additionally, the SRRWD is authorized by Minnesota state statute 103D and operates under a series of 10 year Water Management Plans that are approved by the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR). These plans include a comprehensive list detailing natural resource restoration, enhancement, along with protection and management strategies that can be used for funding in the future.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2025-2028	Sales Tax and LSOHC Funds	Construction	Vegetation Maintenance	-
2029+	Sales Tax	Maintenance Inspections	Maintenance Implementations	-

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

The SRRWD annually utilizes the Understanding Environmental Justice in Minnesota tool developed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, to understand where BIPOC and underserved communities are present in the planning area. Projects identified in this proposal, specifically the Channel Restoration, are targeted to improve public lands that are located within, and heavily fished by, BIPOC and low-income communities.

Additionally the SRRWD has a digital option to view all completed work. Digital options give diverse community members an option to engage regardless of language, color, transportation, and gender.

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

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

Yes

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

Yes

Where does the activity take place?

- Public Waters
- WMA

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:

Public waters are open to state fishing regulations. Private lands are currently not open to public hunting but will be once acquired.

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

Yes

Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:

Restoration within City limits will be open to public fishing, but not hunting.

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

- State of MN

Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:

- WMA

Are there currently trails or roads on any of the proposed acquisitions?

No

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

No

Will the land that you acquire (fee or easement) be restored or enhanced within this proposal's funding and availability?

Yes

Other OHF Appropriation Awards

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

Yes

Approp Year	Funding Amount Received	Amount Spent to Date	Funding Remaining	% Spent to Date
2023	\$2,198,000	-	-	-
2022	\$1,242,000	\$9,591	\$1,232,409	0.77%
2021	\$1,547,000	\$47,124	\$1,499,876	3.05%
2020	\$1,918,000	\$752,298	\$1,165,702	39.22%
2019	\$2,046,000	\$668,275	\$1,377,725	32.66%
2018	\$1,421,000	\$1,336,475	\$84,525	94.05%
2017	\$1,779,000	\$1,778,999	\$1	100.0%
2016	\$1,200,000	\$1,157,200	\$42,800	96.43%
2015	\$2,414,000	\$2,405,200	\$8,800	99.64%
2013	\$1,827,000	\$1,827,000	-	100.0%
2011	\$2,577,000	\$2,577,000	-	100.0%
2010	\$655,000	\$655,000	-	100.0%
Totals	\$20,824,000	\$13,214,162	\$7,609,838	63.46%

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Begin project planning, design, and permitting work for restorations and enhancements. Complete survey and appraisals for acquisitions.	Late 2024
Begin restoration and enhancement projects during the 2024-2026 construction season following completion of design and permitting.	2024-2026 Construction Season
Finalize acquisitions and start seeding the sites for restoration.	May 2027
Vegetation enhancement on restoration projects, complete final project construction.	July 2028
Maintenance and monitoring of all restoration and habitat improvement projects.	Ongoing

Budget

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$80,000	\$20,000	Local Option Sales Tax	\$100,000
Contracts	\$2,871,200	-	-	\$2,871,200
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$1,755,200	-	-	\$1,755,200
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	\$1,027,600	\$100,000	City of Albert Lea/Local Option Sales Tax	\$1,127,600
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$40,000	-	-	\$40,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	\$6,800	-	-	\$6,800
Grand Total	\$5,780,800	\$120,000	-	\$5,900,800

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Manager	0.43	5.0	\$45,000	\$10,000	Local Option Sales Tax	\$55,000
Program Assistant	0.43	5.0	\$35,000	\$10,000	Local Option Sales Tax	\$45,000

Amount of Request: \$5,780,800

Amount of Leverage: \$120,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 2.08%

DSS + Personnel: \$80,000

As a % of the total request: 1.38%

Easement Stewardship: -

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: -

Total Leverage (from above)	Amount Confirmed	% of Total Leverage	Amount Anticipated	% of Total Leverage
\$120,000	\$120,000	100.0%	-	0.0%

Detail leverage sources and confirmation of funds:

Leverage sources include the City of Albert Lea and the local option sales tax. Funds are confirmed, and may increase depending on final budgets.

Does this proposal have the ability to be scalable?

Yes

If the project received 50% of the requested funding

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

The District submits this proposal with the capability and intentions to complete all projects if fully funded. A 50% reduction means one acquisition would be removed, as well as 3 restoration and enhancement projects.

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

The District does not use DSS. Personnel would be reduced from \$100,000 down to \$60,000 similar to a proportionate reduction.

If the project received 30% of the requested funding

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

Although not ideal, funding would be centered on acquiring one key parcel to expand a current DNR WMA. The remaining funds would be centered on the Channel Restoration Project and phasing the Panicum Prairie Project, which could lead to higher costs later on.

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

The District does not use DSS. The grant funded personnel costs would be reduced to \$45,000 but the in-kind staff dollar amounts would be moved from personnel to professional expenses, creating a near proportionate reduction.

Personnel

Has funding for these positions been requested in the past?

Yes

Please explain the overlap of past and future staffing and position levels previously received and how that is coordinated over multiple years?

The SRRWD has an extensive time-tracking system that allows staff members to track time for each project within each grant. Each year this system is updated to reflect current active grants.

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?

All the work in the contracts line is centered on enhancement and restoration construction costs, minus professional services and staff time.

Professional Services

What is included in the Professional Services line?

- Appraisals
- Design/Engineering
- Surveys
- Title Insurance and Legal Fees

Fee Acquisition

What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?

There are two fee-title acquisitions.

Federal Funds

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

No

Output Tables

Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	42	0	0	170	212
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	42	0	0	150	192
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	550	0	0	0	550
Total	634	0	0	320	954

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	\$28,000	-	-	\$2,220,000	\$2,248,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$464,500	-	-	\$1,673,300	\$2,137,800
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$1,395,000	-	-	-	\$1,395,000
Total	\$1,887,500	-	-	\$3,893,300	\$5,780,800

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	212	0	212
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	192	0	192
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	-	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	550	0	550
Total	0	0	0	954	0	954

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	\$2,248,000	-	\$2,248,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$2,137,800	-	\$2,137,800
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	\$1,395,000	-	\$1,395,000
Total	-	-	-	\$5,780,800	-	\$5,780,800

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	\$666	-	-	\$13,058
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$11,059	-	-	\$11,155
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$2,536	-	-	-

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	-	-	\$10,603	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$11,134	-

Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	\$2,536	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

37,050 Feet

Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?

No

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

Parcels are selected using the Property Management Zones (PMZs). The PMZs are identified using precision conservation modeling, along with monitoring, and science-based targeting. Parcels are then prioritized and ranked based on the degree of habitat degradation, restoration potential, and landowner interest and support. All parcels listed below have willing landowners ready to initiate the projects if funding allows.

Restore / Enhance Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Olson Restoration	Freeborn	10221232	150	\$75,000	No
Houg Streambank	Freeborn	10120232	20	\$132,000	No
Channel Restoration	Freeborn	10221209	20	\$2,125,000	Yes
Panicum Prairie	Freeborn	10121235	400	\$1,236,000	Yes
Sanderson Restoration	Freeborn	10121234	42	\$21,000	No

Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Sanderson Property Purchase	Freeborn	10121234	42	\$440,000	No
Olson Property Purchase	Freeborn	10221232	150	\$1,625,000	No

Parcel Map



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



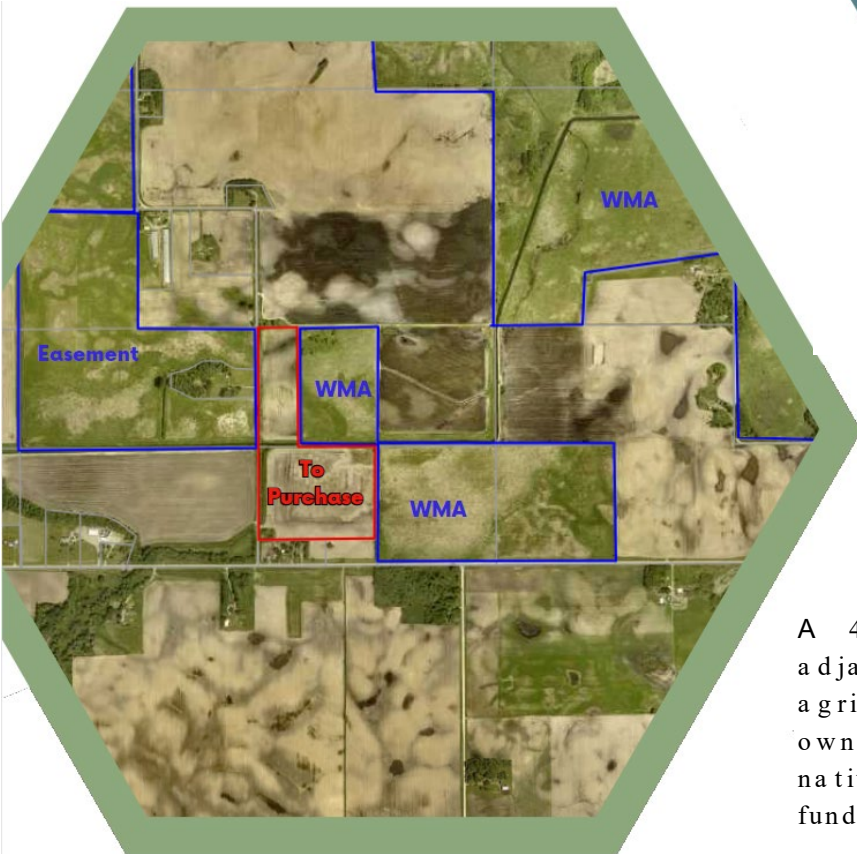
Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program, Phase XIII

Funding Request: \$5,780,800



Olson Property

This 150 -acre property, with historic oak woodlands, will be permanently protected. Restoration plans for this property include seeding with native prairie plants to benefit songbirds and pollinators. If funding allows, the District intends to create wetlands in low areas.



Sanderson Property

A 42-acre acquisition that would expand an adjacent WMA. Currently this property is in agricultural use and is mostly surrounded by DNR ownership or easement. Wetland restoration and native prairie plantings would be established if funding allows.



RESTORE. PROTECT. ENHANCE.



Houg Streambank

A streambank enhancement project to connect the Shell Rock River to its historic floodplain while reducing sedimentation. This project will also incorporate habitat features for fish and amphibians that includes toe wood installation.



Channel Restoration

A streambank restoration project in an open - water winter refuge location for waterfowl and a popular fishing spot. This improves fishing access to BIPOC communities while restoring degraded shorelines.



Panicum Prairie

A wetland enhancement on 530- acres of public property. This site is currently dominated by reed canary grass. Wetland enhancements would open up food sources for dabbling ducks and increase nesting habitat.



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Albert Lea, MN 56007



Environmental Services Department - Courthouse
411 So. Broadway, P.O. Box 1147 507/377-5186
Albert Lea, MN 56007-1147 Fax 507/377-4688

May 11, 2023

David Hartwell
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Rev. Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
St Paul, MN 55155

Re: Shell Rock River Watershed District Habitat Restoration Program

Mr. Hartwell:

Freeborn County Environmental Services is pleased to write this letter in support of the Shell Rock River Watershed District's Habitat Restoration Program. This program aligns with the goals within the Freeborn County Comprehensive Water Plan, as well as the Shell Rock-Winnebago Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

The Shell Rock River Watershed District continues to complete projects that show measureable and lasting results, offering improvements to our natural resources and water quality. Freeborn County Environmental Services strongly supports these endeavors and we kindly request the support of the continued habitat restoration projects within the watershed.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Goskeson". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Mark Goskeson
Freeborn County Environmental Services



221 East Clark Street

Albert Lea, Minnesota 56007-2496

507-377-4300

May 22, 2023

David Hartwell
Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, Chairman
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Mr. Hartwell

The City of Albert Lea is pleased to write this letter in support of the Shell Rock River Watershed Districts proposal, Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program – Phase XIII, to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council.

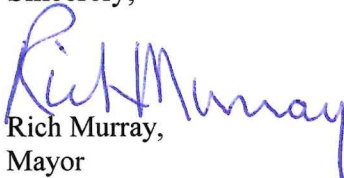
The Shell Rock River Watershed District is a small, local agency that has and continues to accomplish measurable and lasting results with the installation of successful projects. The District has a history of collaboration with many partners, including the City of Albert Lea.

With this proposal, the Shell Rock River Watershed District is proposing restoration to the Channel between Fountain Lake and Albert Lea Lake. This project is critical to the City of Albert Lea, it would help reduce erosion and improve accessibility. This proposal builds upon past funding to transform our lakes and wildlife habitat.

We look forward to seeing the progress made by the Shell Rock River Watershed District because it aligns with the goals and priorities of the City of Albert Lea. One of the largest assets in Albert Lea is its lakes. The opportunity to restore, enhance and protect the channel is a welcomed project. This project is highly prioritized by the City of Albert Lea.

In closing, the City of Albert Lea asks for the Council's support of the continued habitat restoration projects within the Shell Rock River Watershed.

Sincerely,


Rich Murray,
Mayor

cc: Ian Rigg, City Manager
Steven Jahnke, City Engineer and Director of Public Works



May 17, 2023

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Council Members,

The Shell Rock River Watershed District has a strong history of success and cooperation with many partners, including the Albert Lea Lakes Foundation; with this I am pleased to write this letter of support for the Habitat Restoration Program.

We appreciate the effort the SRRWD has put into developing this multi-year program to transform our lake and wildlife habitat. This proposal includes projects for protecting key biological functioning parcels, restoring lakeshore and streambank habitat, and restoring vegetation for migratory fowl. All of these things the Lakes Foundation deems important.

Residents and visitors are continuously commenting on the water quality changes that have been increasingly noticeable in the last several years. We strongly believe that a continued commitment to completing these projects will present the best possible outcomes for all creatures that wish to call our waterways home.

We appreciate your consideration of this proposal and ask for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laura Cunningham".

Laura Cunningham
Albert Lea Lakes Foundation - President

Resolution 2023-02
Shell Rock River Watershed District
L-SOHC Grant Application

BE IT RESOLVED that the Shell Rock River Watershed District, hereinafter referred to as “Applicant” acts as legal sponsor for the Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program - Phase XIII contained in the **Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (L-SOHC) Application** to be submitted on May 26, 2023, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Applicant is hereby authorized to apply to the LSOHC, hereinafter referred to as “State,” for funding of intended projects on behalf of the Applicant.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Applicant has the legal authority to apply for financial assistance, and the institutional, managerial and financial capability to ensure adequate acquisition, maintenance and protection of the intended projects.

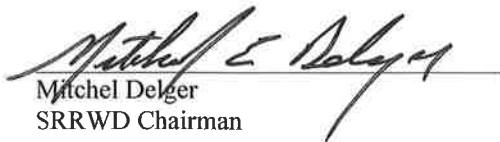
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Applicant has not incurred any construction costs or has not entered into any written agreements to purchase property for intended projects.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Applicant has not violated any Federal, State, or local laws pertaining to fraud bribery, graft, kickbacks, collusion, conflict of interest or other unlawful or corrupt practice.

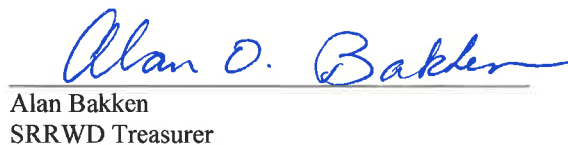
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon approval of the application by the State, the Applicant may enter into an agreement with the State for the above-referenced projects, and that the Applicant certifies that it will comply with all applicable laws and regulations as stated in the contract agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Andy Henschel, District Administrator for the Shell Rock River Watershed District, is hereby authorized to execute such Agreements as are necessary to implement the intended projects on behalf of the Applicant.

Date: May 9, 2023



Mitchel Delger
SRRWD Chairman



Alan Bakken
SRRWD Treasurer