



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project Phase 8

ML 2024 Request for Funding

General Information

Date: 05/30/2023

Proposal Title: Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project Phase 8

Funds Requested: \$9,267,000

Confirmed Leverage Funds: \$94,700

Is this proposal Scalable?: Yes

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Tim Terrill

Title: Executive Director

Organization: Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB)

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Location Information

County Location(s): Hubbard, Aitkin, Itasca and Crow Wing.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Northern Forest

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee
- Protect in Easement

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Forest
- Habitat

Narrative

Abstract

The Mississippi Headwaters Board in partnership with The Trust for Public Land and BWSR assisted by 8 County SWCDs will permanently protect an additional 2950 acres of critical fish and wildlife habitat along the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River, its major tributaries, 9 headwaters lakes and adjacent minor watersheds. Phases 1-7 have already protected 6,446 acres and 47 miles of shoreland using fee title acquisitions and conservation easements to create or expand permanently protected aquatic and upland wildlife habitat corridors/complexes. This on-going work benefits fish, game/non-game wildlife, migratory waterfowl, reduces forest fragmentation and enhances public recreation.

Design and Scope of Work

Phase 8 will continue to address current and anticipated aquatic and upland habitat protection opportunities along the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River, its major tributaries, Headwaters lakes and other high quality habitat complexes in the 8 Headwaters counties (Clearwater, Beltrami, Cass, Hubbard, Itasca, Crow Wing, Aitkin, and Morrison counties). To date, 6,446 acres and 47 miles of shoreland have been permanently protected to benefit aquatic habitat, provide food and shelter for migratory waterfowl along the Mississippi Flyway, and to create and enhance protected habitat corridors for game and non-game wildlife. Additionally, forest fragmentation detrimental to habitat protection has been reduced; public recreational opportunities for fishing, hunting, and passive recreation have been enhanced; and clean water protected for fish habitat and the drinking water of millions of Minnesotans downstream who depend on the river.

There is urgency to fund this phase because all previously funded phases are spent or committed to land conservation that will protect an additional 5,637 acres and 9 miles of shoreland.

The headwaters of the Mississippi River are home to a variety of game fish and its adjacent lands are home to 350+ species of animals and birds, including most of the endangered and threatened species in Minnesota. Migratory waterfowl depend on the river for food and shelter during migration along the Mississippi Flyway. Because quality privately owned lakeshores are already developed, pressure is building for development along the river corridor as people seek to live and recreate near water. This leads to fragmentation of forests that threatens wildlife habitat and water quality. Public lands adjacent to private property are in danger of losing habitat connectivity as private lands are increasingly developed resulting in destruction of wild rice beds, disruption of aquatic and upland habitat and fragmentation of forestlands, grasslands, and wetlands that dominate the Headwaters.

As a partnership, The Mississippi Headwaters Board administers and coordinates the project; The Trust for Public Land acquires fee-title to priority lands and conveys permanent ownership to a public entity (state or county) and BWSR in partnership with 8 Headwaters Soil and Water Conservation Districts completes RIM conservation easements. Parcels for land protection are identified and prioritized through a science-based prioritization process that identifies the highest priority land to enhance or create large habitat complexes. A Technical Team of project partners along with representatives from the DNR, The Nature Conservancy, and the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe review and approve all projects using a ranked evaluation of habitat and biodiversity, urgency and opportunity for protection, size of the parcel and amount of shoreland along with other factors. Strong local government involvement is unique to this project. For fee-title acquisitions, county boards are notified early to seek approval and before closing on an acquisition the County Board is again asked for final approval. Education sessions on easements have been conducted with county commissioners. This process has enhanced local government support and the resulting trust has contributed to this Project's ongoing success.

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

The Mississippi Headwaters is host to over 350 species of mammals and birds, including common game and non-game wildlife and most of the endangered and threatened species in Minnesota. Some of the more common threatened species include, but are not limited to: common loon, trumpeter swans, boreal owl, shortjaw cisco, long-eared bat, evening grosbeak and many others. Migratory waterfowl depend on the river for food and shelter during migration along the Mississippi Flyway. And, keeping forested lands from becoming fragmented protects clean water of the Mississippi River and adjacent lakes that support many species of game fish.

This Program uses a science-based targeting assessment tool that includes many state and national databases for identification of priority habitat for fish, game and non-game wildlife. These databases include the Minnesota County Biological Survey; DNR Biodiversity rankings, rare species and old growth forest data; the Minnesota Wildlife Action Network, and other habitat parameters to identify priority areas of significant value for fish and wildlife species of greatest conservation need and/or are threatened and endangered within the Mississippi Headwaters and along major tributaries. The targeting also considers specific areas of species richness and/or biodiversity importance and areas where aquatic and terrestrial habitats have been compromised. These identified areas are the priority focus in selecting parcels for land protection.

Parcels that are adjacent to already protected land (either county, state, tribal, or federal lands or lands already enrolled in easement programs) are selected for landowner outreach. Large, contiguous, and permanently protected habitat complexes provide the essential elements of good habitat continuity as defined by the National Wildlife Federation. This project focuses on creating and expanding protected wildlife habitat complexes/corridors through fee-title acquisition or easements on parcels adjacent to already protected lands to provide the highest opportunity for fish and wildlife habitat protection and continued forest integrity.

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

To date, all funds appropriated to the Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project (MHHCP) have been spent or are committed to fish and wildlife habitat protection projects on priority lands. This Program is one of the most successfully funded programs from the Outdoor Heritage Fund---continuously exceeding goals of land conservation by over 250%. With highly developed lakeshores in the Headwaters, there is increasing interest in developing along the river, its tributaries and Headwaters Lakes. Landowners are waiting to participate in the program while development pressures are threatening forest, shoreland and upland habitat. This Program has no further funds available for land protection (fee-title or conservation easements) unless the LSOHC Council chooses to recommend additional funding from the 2024 legislature. Hence, there is urgency to protect high priority lands for fish and wildlife habitat protection and to insure the continuation of this highly successful partnership between non-profits, state and local governments.

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

The MHHCP project focuses on creating and expanding protected wildlife habitat complexes/corridors through fee-title acquisition and RIM conservation easements on parcels adjacent to already protected lands to provide the highest opportunity for fish and wildlife habitat protection and continued forest integrity. Large, contiguous and permanently protected habitat corridors/complexes provide the essential elements of good habitat continuity which includes food, a place to raise their young, and different types of cover for various life stages along with clean water for fish and wildlife survival. They also provide mobility for wildlife in a changing climate. Creating or expanding habitat complexes prevents forest fragmentation by providing large undisturbed areas of habitat for

game and non-game wildlife and protected shorelands for fish and migratory waterfowl.

Using a science-based prioritization process, this program identifies high priority parcels next to already protected lands (county, state, tribal, federal or properties with easements) to enhance or create larger habitat protection complexes. Adding more public land adjacent to already protected public land combined with land permanently protected with a conservation easement is critical to the success of enhancing or expanding habitat corridors or complexes.

For example, In Crow Wing County, two fee-title acquisitions (adding more public land to a state forest and a county forest) and two adjacent easements created a large habitat complex of 1,672+ acres of contiguous protected upland and 9+ miles of protected Mississippi River shoreland. The Indian Jack habitat complex (highlighted in the project illustration) created a new 299 acre WMA through two fee-title acquisitions, which combined with two adjacent easements and other state and county land, created a protected habitat complex of 594 contiguous acres, 2.5 miles of Indian Jack lake shoreland, and 3 miles of Mississippi River. The DNR is now adding a new parking lot/public access on the WMA's Mississippi River shoreland to enhance public access to the river.

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

- Mississippi River Headwaters Comprehensive Plan
- 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.

The MHHCP focuses on protecting the headwaters of the most important river system in the United States. The Headwaters contains over 350 species of fish and animals, including many species of greatest concern in Minnesota. Landscapes with diverse and intact functional ecosystems are expected to have the greatest resilience in a changing climate. This program targets those lands for protection that provide the best opportunities for maintaining biodiversity and increasing connectivity of habitat. Protection at a watershed scale increases the resiliency of the landscape by protecting and buffering sensitive areas which support biological diversity and ecological function while increasing connections that will facilitate species movement across the headwaters range of 400 miles. Increased functional redundancy, connectivity, and biodiversity at this large scale insures there are enough connected blocks of habitat suitable for sustaining wildlife.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal?

Forest / Prairie Transition

- Protect, enhance, and restore wild rice wetlands, shallow lakes, wetland/grassland complexes, aspen parklands, and shoreland that provide critical habitat for game and nongame wildlife

Northern Forest

- Protect shoreland and restore or enhance critical habitat on wild rice lakes, shallow lakes, cold water lakes, streams and rivers, and spawning areas

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:

To date, this project has exceeded its projected goals by over 250% with each funded appropriation. This demonstrates that significant and permanent conservation has and will be accomplished with continued LSOHC support. Past and projected land conservation targets privately owned parcels adjacent to existing public lands to create and enhance large protected habitat complexes and helps to insure no net loss of forestland. This is permanent—into perpetuity- conservation of critical aquatic and upland habitats that helps build resilience into the Mississippi River Headwaters system to protect against fragmentation of forests and shorelines. It insures quality habitat (aquatic and terrestrial) and population sustainability for healthy fish, game and non-game wildlife, and migratory waterfowl along with enhanced recreational opportunities for all Minnesotans. The Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project's success to date is demonstrated by the completed protection of 6,446 acres of upland habitat and 49 miles of shoreland. When projects currently in process are completed another 5,637 acres and 9 miles of shoreland will be permanently protected. This requested Phase 8 will protect an additional 2,950 acres and 5+ miles of shoreland to add to Minnesota's conservation legacy.

Outcomes

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Rivers and streams provide corridors of habitat including intact areas of forest cover in the east and large wetland/upland complexes in the west ~ *Conservation easements have been in past appropriations and those funded with an ML 24 appropriation will be placed on parcels on the main stem Mississippi River and along several major Mississippi tributaries. In this eastern portion of the region, parcels are mostly forested. Easement outcomes will be measured by the number of acres protected and shoreland feet and evaluated against set goals. Easements will be evaluated into perpetuity through yearly monitoring. Fee-title acquisitions will also be evaluated by acres protected and shoreland feet and against set appropriation goals.*

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Increased availability and improved condition of riparian forests and other habitat corridors ~ *With permanent land protection (either fee-title acquisition of conservation easements) forests will remain intact and thus less fragmented maintaining forest integrity. Placement of projects will be focused on those that can connect with other public lands to create or expand habitat corridors. The outcome will be measured by acres protected and shoreland miles protected and evaluated against the program goals. Permanent owners of fee-title acquisitions will monitor and evaluate the condition of the lands according to their policies and easement lands will be monitored annually into perpetuity by BWSR.*

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

- N/A

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 or a substitution for any previous Legacy funding used for the same purpose.

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

For conservation easements recorded through this Program, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) is responsible for maintenance, inspection and monitoring into perpetuity. They partner with the Soil and Water Conservation District in the county where the easement is recorded to carry-out the oversight and monitoring of the conservation easements. Easements are inspected annually for the first five years beginning in the year after the easement is recorded. Thereafter, on-site inspections and compliance checks are performed and reported to BWSR every three years. If a violation is noted, a non-compliance procedure is initiated. Stewardship money is appropriated to cover ongoing BWSR oversight, SWCD monitoring, and enforcement actions, if needed. Trust for Public Land is responsible for the fee-title acquisitions in this project. They acquire the land with Outdoor Heritage Funds and then transfer ownership to the applicable public entity—either the MN DNR or a local government--for permanent ownership and stewardship. The lands are then managed consistent with the public entity’s land management policies.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2024-2028	OHF	Work with project partners and landowners to determine RIM conservation easement interest and develop long-term fish and game habitat protection priorities.	Work with BWSR and County SWCDs to conduct landowner outreach and acquire conservation easements	BWSR and SWCDs will perform ongoing onsite inspections and monitoring and enforce conditions of the recorded easement into perpetuity.
2024-2028	OHF	Work with project partners and landowners to determine interest in a fee-title acquisition and seek state or local government permanent land ownership.	The Trust for Public Land will acquire parcels for fee-title acquisition (with or without PILT) and transfer to the appropriate public entity.	Permanent public entity owners of acquired lands (state or local government) will follow the monitoring and land management policies of their organization.
2024-2028	OHF	Work with project partners to determine fish and game habitat protection priorities; develop tools for prioritizing lands for acquisition (fee title or easement); and develop/ maintain trusting relationships with local government for program support	The Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB) provides project coordination among project partners and other supporting organizations, including responsibility for status reports, outreach assistance to SWCDs, developing prioritization tools for project selection, facilitation of regular meetings of the Project Technical Committee to review and approve participating landowner projects,	-

			<p>and project representation to regional conservation collaborative efforts. MHB also promotes ongoing relationships and training as needed for the 8 Headwaters County Boards.</p>	
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Provide an assessment of how your program may celebrate cultural diversity or reach diverse communities in Minnesota, including reaching low- and moderate-income households:

MHHCP partner organizations have other programs funded through different sources that focus primarily on engaging BIPOC, other diverse communities as well as all economic levels. Since land conservation is the primary objective of this program, a representative of the Leech Lake Band of Objibwe is invited to participate in the Technical Team meetings that review and approve all projects in an effort to be more inclusive in the program's land protection work.

There are significant benefits for all Minnesotans--regardless of ethnic background or income levels--when land is protected through fee-title acquisition and becomes managed as public land accessible to all. In particular, public land provides an opportunity for those who do not have access or financial resources to connect with private natural lands, whether that is for cultural purposes, hunting, fishing, hiking, or other outdoor recreational pursuits. Conservation easements also benefit all Minnesotans. They help to keep our air and water clean for fish habitat and drinking water downstream of the Headwaters, mitigate the impacts of climate change, and land conservation conserves the biological diversity that is important to all of Minnesotan's public natural resources. The project partners remain open to incorporating work that specifically focuses on BIPOC and other diverse communities.

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

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

No

Describe the expected public use:

Lands chosen for a conservation easement may be enrolled in the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA), but must be withdrawn from that program (without penalty) to enter into a conservation easement.

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?

No

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

Yes

Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:

No variation from State regulations.

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

- State of MN
- Local Unit of Government

Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:

- WMA
- AMA
- County Forest
- State Forest
- City Owned : To be determined by a particular project
- SNA

Will the eased land be open for public use?

No

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

Yes

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

The Big Mantrap Lake parcel has existing hiking and two-track trails which the DNR would manage, if acquired, in accordance with current DNR land management practices.

No new trails are planned on prospective acquisitions, but if new trail segments or alignments are added, generally there would be a "no net gain of trails." In other words, if a new trail segment was created an equal amount of preexisting trail would be restored to natural habitat.

Will the trails or roads remain and uses continue to be allowed after OHF acquisition?

Yes

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?

The Big Mantrap Lake parcel has existing hiking and two-track trails which the DNR would manage, if acquired, in accordance with current DNR land management practices.

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:

No new trails are planned on prospective acquisitions, but if new trail segments or alignments are added, generally there would be a "no net gain of trails." In other words, if a new trail segment was created an equal amount of preexisting trail would be restored to natural habitat.

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?

Any new trails would be maintained and monitored in accordance with the permanent owner's (state or county) management policies.

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:

While no specific R/E work is anticipated for fee-title acquisition; after land is acquired and conveyed to the MN DNR, initial restoration activities may occur as part of the DNR IDP plan.

For conservation easements, a small number of easements, primarily in the Prairie/Northern Forest transition zone, may have limited restoration, primarily reforestation, in their conservation plan. A small amount of money (\$50,000) would be spent on this activity.

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
2022	\$5,329,000	\$3,549,000	\$1,780,000	66.6%
2021	\$2,901,000	\$1,612,578	\$1,288,422	55.59%
2020	\$3,695,000	\$2,957,165	\$737,835	80.03%
2018	\$2,998,000	\$2,960,790	\$37,210	98.76%
2017	\$2,396,000	\$2,365,800	\$30,200	98.74%
2016	\$3,150,000	\$3,077,100	\$72,900	97.69%
Totals	\$20,469,000	\$16,522,433	\$3,946,567	80.72%

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
TPL does landowner outreach, negotiates with committed landowners, seeks final ownership (state or local government), see approval from local government, conducts due diligence on the property, acquires property, conveys to final landowner.	2028
SWCDs do landowner outreach according to established parcel priorities, works with landowner to submit easement application and complete the easement, records the final easement.	2028
BWSR approves and processes landowner applications that have been approved by the Project Technical Committee, responsible for ongoing monitoring of completed easements. diligence,	2028; stewardship ongoing
MHB provides project administration and coordination,	2028

<p>assists with development of parcel prioritization tools and outreach, convenes the Technical Review Committee, and does project reporting</p>	
<p>Under contract to BWSR, SWCDs do annual monitoring of acquired easements</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Final owners (state or LGU) of acquired fee-title lands do ongoing maintenance and monitoring of lands according to their respect management policies.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Budget

Grand Totals Across All Partnerships

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$507,100	-	-	\$507,100
Contracts	\$160,000	-	-	\$160,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$5,325,000	-	-	\$5,325,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$100,000	-	-	\$100,000
Easement Acquisition	\$2,372,400	-	-	\$2,372,400
Easement Stewardship	\$300,000	-	-	\$300,000
Travel	\$5,300	\$3,700	Private	\$9,000
Professional Services	\$170,000	-	-	\$170,000
Direct Support Services	\$131,400	\$91,000	-, Private	\$222,400
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$109,000	-	-	\$109,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$7,500	-	-	\$7,500
Supplies/Materials	\$4,300	-	-	\$4,300
DNR IDP	\$75,000	-	-	\$75,000
Grand Total	\$9,267,000	\$94,700	-	\$9,361,700

Partner: TPL

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$290,000	-	-	\$290,000
Contracts	\$50,000	-	-	\$50,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$5,325,000	-	-	\$5,325,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$100,000	-	-	\$100,000
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	\$3,700	Private	\$3,700
Professional Services	\$170,000	-	-	\$170,000
Direct Support Services	\$91,000	\$91,000	Private	\$182,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$109,000	-	-	\$109,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	\$75,000	-	-	\$75,000
Grand Total	\$6,210,000	\$94,700	-	\$6,304,700

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Protection & Legal Staff	0.55	3.0	\$290,000	-	-	\$290,000

Partner: BWSR

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$197,100	-	-	\$197,100
Contracts	\$75,000	-	-	\$75,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$2,372,400	-	-	\$2,372,400
Easement Stewardship	\$300,000	-	-	\$300,000
Travel	\$5,300	-	-	\$5,300
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$40,400	-	-	\$40,400
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$7,500	-	-	\$7,500
Supplies/Materials	\$2,300	-	-	\$2,300
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$3,000,000	-	-	\$3,000,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Management	0.59	4.0	\$197,100	-	-	\$197,100

Partner: MHB

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000
Contracts	\$35,000	-	-	\$35,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$2,000	-	-	\$2,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$57,000	-	-	\$57,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Project Administrator	0.1	4.0	\$20,000	-	-	\$20,000

Amount of Request: \$9,267,000

Amount of Leverage: \$94,700

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 1.02%

DSS + Personnel: \$638,500

As a % of the total request: 6.89%

Easement Stewardship: \$300,000

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 12.65%

Total Leverage (from above)	Amount Confirmed	% of Total Leverage	Amount Anticipated	% of Total Leverage
\$94,700	\$94,700	100.0%	-	0.0%

Detail leverage sources and confirmation of funds:

The Trust for Public Land is providing a private match of half of their direct support services costs and all travel costs. RIM acquisition credits and private cash (secured) will only be used if applicable to a specific fee-title acquisition project.

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?

A reduction in funding would reduce outputs (acres/activities) proportionately.

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

Program management costs (personnel and DSS expenses) will be reduced as well. However, not exactly proportionately as program administration, coordination, development and oversight costs remain consistent regardless of the appropriation amount.

If the project received 30% of the requested funding

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

A reduction in funding would reduce outputs (acres/activities) proportionately.

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

Program management costs (personnel and DSS expenses) will be reduced as well. However, not exactly proportionately as program administration, coordination, development and oversight costs remain consistent regardless of the appropriation amount.

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?

For MHB, the FTE listed for project administration is consistent with funds spent in the appropriations completed and those in process; contract project coordination is provided by the same contractor and is consistent with what has been spent in the past. Only funds needed to ensure program success are spent. For TPL the FTEs listed in the proposal are an estimate of the personnel time required to produce the grant deliverables put forward in this proposal. An array of staff draw from these funds for legal work, negotiating with landowners, crafting of acquisition documents, coordinating with agency partners, and managing the grant. We use only those personnel funds necessary to achieve the goals of the grant. For BWSR, this is Phase 8 of an ongoing program; these funds will pay for staff time spent on new easements associated with this phase.

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?

MHB contract funding is for a Project Coordinator and Outreach Assistant. BWSR contract is for SWCD assistance. TPL contract funds are for potential site clean-up and initial restoration activities.

Professional Services

What is included in the Professional Services line?

- Appraisals

- Other : Payments to SWCDs for easement acquisition assistance; environmental site assessments (aka Phase 1 environmental review)
- Surveys
- Title Insurance and Legal Fees

Fee Acquisition

What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?

2 acquisitions completed and investigation of 2-3 prospects.

Easement Stewardship

What is the number of easements anticipated, cost per easement for stewardship, and explain how that amount is calculated?

An estimated 30 easements (1200 acres) will be completed with this funding as requested. Easement stewardship has been calculated per 30 easements. Perpetual monitoring and enforcement costs have been calculated at \$10,000 per easement. This value is based on using local SWCD staff for monitoring and landowner relations and existing enforcement authorities. The amount listed for Easement Stewardship covers costs of the SWCD's regular monitoring, BWSR oversight, and any enforcement necessary.

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

None

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?

BWSR calculates direct support services costs that are directly related to and necessary for each request based on the type of work being done. DSS requested by The Trust for Public Land is based upon their federal rate, which has been approved by the DNR; 50% of TPL's DSS costs are requested from the OHF grant, 50% is contributed as leverage.

Other Equipment/Tools

Give examples of the types of Equipment and Tools that will be purchased?

Signage for completed projects,

Federal Funds

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

No

Output Tables

Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	1,722	0	1,722
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	28	0	28
Protect in Easement	0	0	1,200	0	1,200
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	2,950	0	2,950

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$6,123,500	-	\$6,123,500
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	\$115,000	-	\$115,000
Protect in Easement	-	-	\$3,028,500	-	\$3,028,500
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	\$9,267,000	-	\$9,267,000

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	1,722	1,722
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	28	28
Protect in Easement	0	100	0	0	1,100	1,200
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	100	0	0	2,850	2,950

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	-	-	-	-	\$6,123,500	\$6,123,500
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	\$115,000	\$115,000
Protect in Easement	-	\$273,000	-	-	\$2,755,500	\$3,028,500
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	\$273,000	-	-	\$8,994,000	\$9,267,000

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$3,556	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	\$4,107	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	\$2,523	-
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	-	-	-	-	\$3,556

Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	\$4,107
Protect in Easement	-	\$2,730	-	-	\$2,505
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

5 miles

Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?

[Yes - Sign up criteria is attached](#)

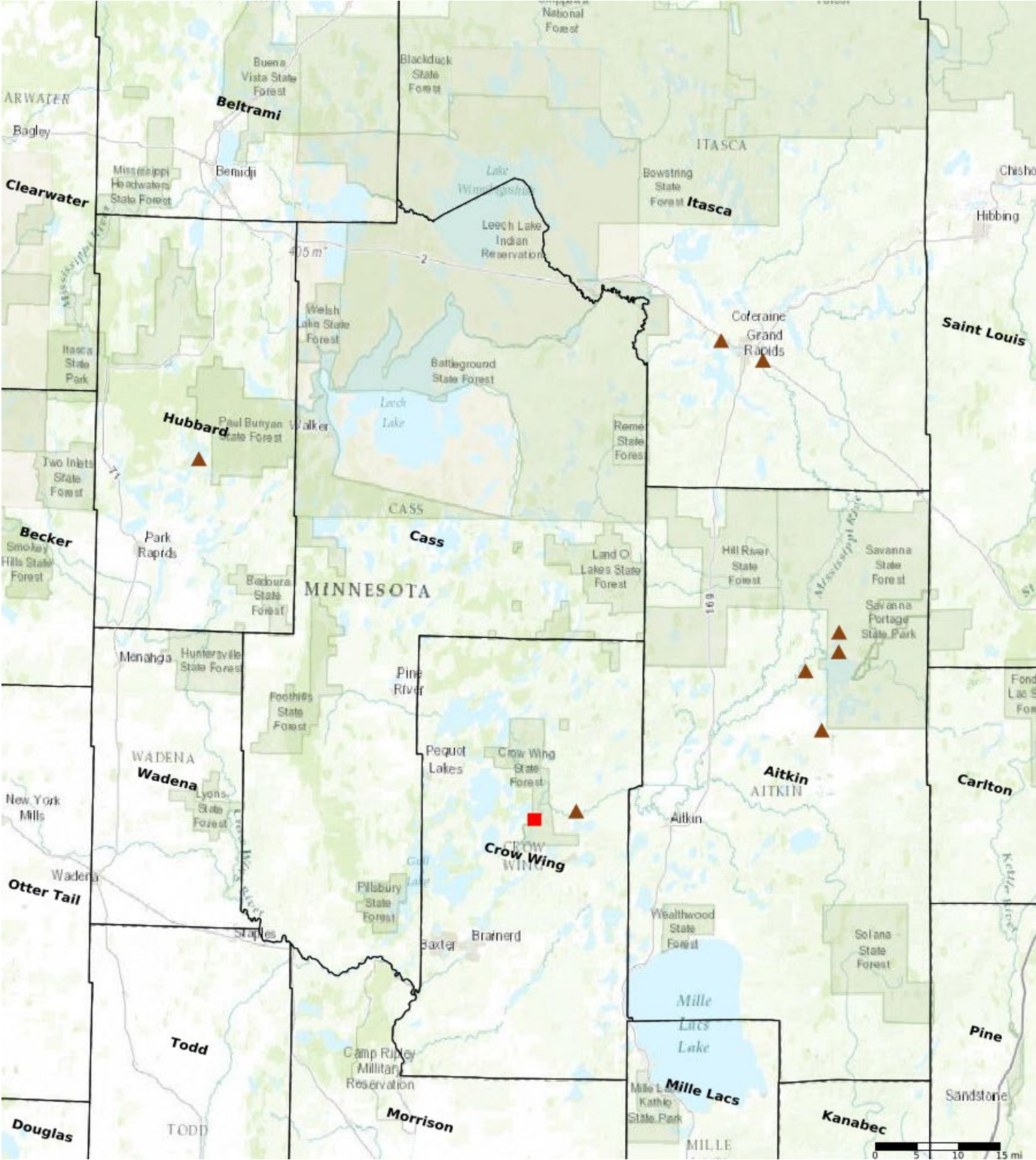
Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:

A science-based prioritization process is first used to narrow the field of potential outreach candidates that meet program criteria. The RAQ process, as detailed earlier, includes assessing the riparian nature of the parcel (R), its adjacency to other public land (A) and its habitat quality (Q) using a variety of state and federal databases and natural resource data. Parcels scoring in the top third are the priority outreach targets for both fee-title acquisitions and easements. When a landowner is interested in the program the parcel(s) are assessed using a specific ranking sheets that looks at the RAQ scoring but also other factors such as size of the parcel, amount of shoreland, urgency for protection, specific forest and other land conditions, and the professional judgement of the presenter of the project (TPL or one of the 8 SWCDs). A Technical Team is convened at least twice a year to review the proposed parcels and their ranking and approve or disapprove proceeding with the acquisition or easement. The Technical Team is comprised of program partners, the 8 headwaters SWCD representatives, and representatives from the Nature Conservancy and DNR, How much money is available for the project is also a major consideration in terms of ranking projects in priority order. The completed 1W1Ps in several of the major watersheds in the Headwaters region that a have similar scoring of parcels is also used to identify other potential landowners for outreach.

Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Big Sandy River	Aitkin	04824201	189	\$380,000	No
Big Sandy	Aitkin	05023229	283	\$900,000	No
Wold WMA Addition	Aitkin	04924203	391	\$860,000	No
Aitkin Lake	Aitkin	05023217	151	\$850,000	No
Indian Jack III	Crow Wing	13626234	32	\$160,000	No
Crow Wing County Forest Addition	Crow Wing	04729219	22	\$75,000	No
Big Mantrap Lake	Hubbard	14133206	397	\$5,389,400	No
Bass Brook WMA Addition	Itasca	05526213	46	\$184,000	No
La Prairie	Itasca	05525226	115	\$460,000	No

Parcel Map



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



Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project– Phase 8 Request: \$ 9,267,000

Program Goals/Focus:

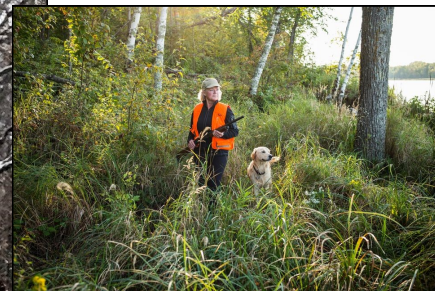
- This Phase will permanently protect more than **5 miles** of critical aquatic habitat and **2,950 acres** of high quality forested wildlife habitat along the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River, its major tributaries and headwaters lakes/reservoirs for the benefit of fish, game and non-game wildlife, and migratory waterfowl along the Mississippi Flyway.
- Achieve permanent land conservation via fee title acquisition and RIM conservation easements to create and expand habitat protection corridors and complexes, protect critical fish habitat, and reduce forest fragmentation.
- Enhance public recreational opportunities—fishing, hunting, trapping, and passive recreation—along the project corridor.
- Focus on priority parcels identified using a GIS science-based

Accomplishments To Date Through Phase 7:

- ⇒ Permanent habitat protection completed on 6,446 acres and 47 miles of shoreline.
- ⇒ Three additions to a state forest, 5 additions to a county forest, creation of a new 300+ acre WMA and one addition to the new WMA; 1 addition to an existing AMA; and 45 RIM conservation easements.
- ⇒ Projects that are in process or committed will protect an additional 5,637 acres and 9 miles of shoreline.
- ⇒ The Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project has consistently exceeded AP acreage goals by over 250%.

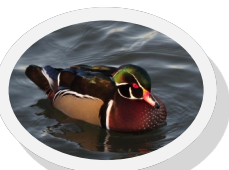
Partners

- Mississippi Headwaters Board
- The Trust for Public Land
- BWSR and 8 Headwaters SWCDs
- With stakeholder support from:
The MN DNR
The Nature Conservancy

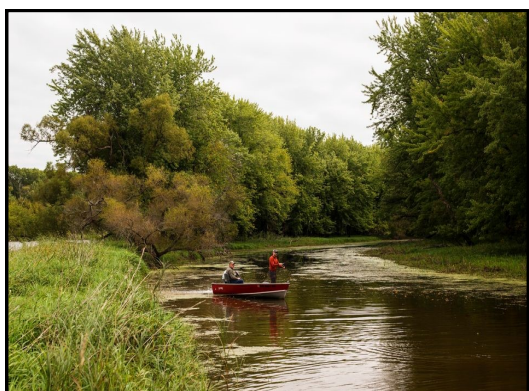
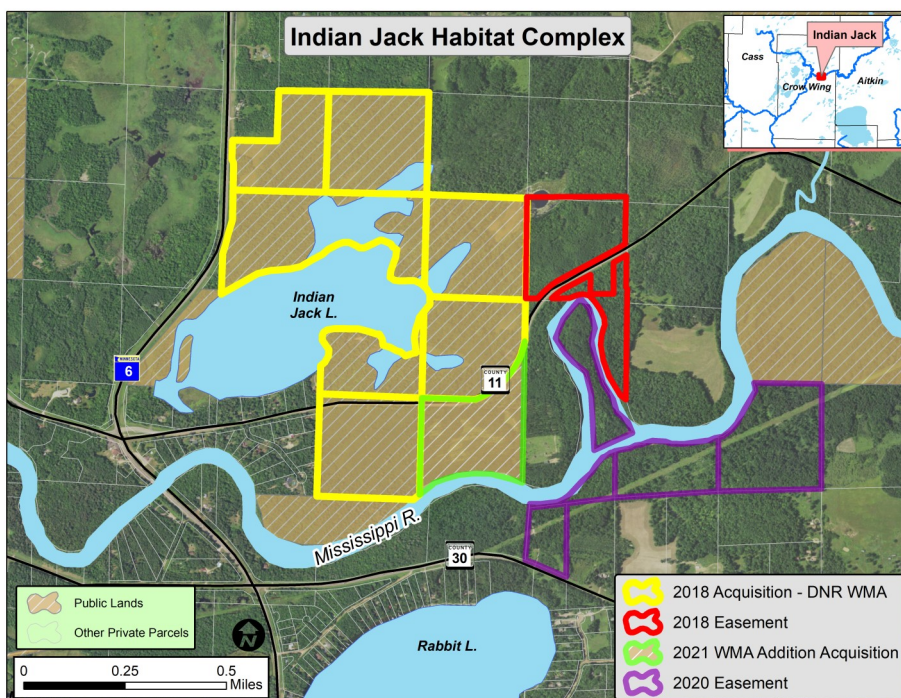


Why permanently protect critical shorelands and create contiguous habitat complexes?

- Game and non-game wildlife have four basic habitat needs that are provided through permanently protected habitat complexes: 1) cover against predators; 2) water; 3) places to raise their young; and 4) adequate space to move around during varied life stages.
- Migratory waterfowl need food and cover along the Mississippi Flyway.
- Fish populations need healthy shorelines and high quality water along with safe spawning areas.
- As lakes have become increasingly developed, there is more development pressure on or near the river, its tributaries, and headwaters lakes/reservoirs, which can cause fragmentation of critical habitats such as forests, shorelands, grasslands, and wetlands.
- Shoreland and upland conservation reduce habitat fragmentation and ensures critical aquatic and upland habitat for healthy fish and wildlife populations.



This map is one example of fee-title acquisitions and conservation easements working together with already existing public land to create a large, contiguous and permanently protected habitat complex in Crow Wing County.



The Indian Jack Habitat Complex was created with a new WMA (264 acres), a WMA addition (35 acres), and 2 conservation easements (104 acres) combined with adjacent public land (190 acres) to form a permanently protected habitat complex spanning 594 acres, 2.5 miles of lake shoreland, and 3 miles of river shoreland.

Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project Easement Ranking

Landowner Name:				
Parcel Number (s):				
County:				
Score	Max	Criteria	Guidelines	Field Comments
Habitat Biodiversity				
	25	General Biodiversity	Habitat biodiversity significance (MCBS ranking); rare, endangered, or species of greatest concern (MN Wildlife Action Network); uniqueness of resources on the property and lack of shoreland disturbance.	
	15	Migratory Waterfowl Habitat	Wild rice present, floodplains, riparian wetlands, river ox bows, shallow wetlands and other habitat suitable to migrating waterfowl.	
	15	Forest Land Cover	1-15 points based on the proportion of parcel that is undisturbed forest; priority forest type and/or perennial grasses.	
Parcel Size & Suitability				
	10	Parcel Size	4 pts 20-49 acres, 6 points= 50-99acres; 8 pts 100-175 acres; 10 points > 175 acres.	
	30	# ft shoreline	10 points for at least 500 - 999 feet of shoreland on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries.	
			15 points for 1,000 - 2,000 feet of shoreland on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries.	
			20 points for 2,000 - 3,000 feet of shoreline on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries.	
			30 points for more than 3,000 feet of shoreland on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, tributaries.	
	10	% of parcel/tract	1-10 points based on the proportion of the parcel enrolled in easement (10% = 1 pt; 100%= 10 points)	
Habitat Corridor Connectivity & Continuity				
	20	Adjoining Public Land	Up to 20 points for land adjoining other public land on the Mississippi River, headwaters Lakes/resevoirs, and tributaries to create enhanced habitat protection corridors and continuity of habit features.	
	15	Adjoining Privately Protected Land	15 points for land adjoining privately protected land (easement, SFIA) or another easement application.	
Potential for Habitat Fragmentation (Urgency) & Opportunity for Protection				
	10	% Tract Developable	1-10 points base on the proportion of the tract that is developable (10%=1 pt, >80%=10 pts)	
	10	Threat	Important habitat that, because of its location or surrounding land use/practices, will be lost to development if not protected.	
	10	Opportunity for Protection	1-10 Points for Parcel's Minor Watershed Classification by MHB or County Water Plan. More points for Enhancement and Protection; less points for vigilance (already largely protected and thus less urgency). Consistency with other County water plan priorities and/or 1W1P.	
	10	Wetland Fringe	1-10 points based on the distance between upland & the bank/water (0'=10pts, 300' or greater=0pts)	
Professional Judgement				
	15	Professional Judgement	1-10 points based on the distance between upland & the bank/water (0'=10pts, 300' or greater=0pts)	
Financial Leverage				
	5	Bargain Sale/Leverage	5 points based on % discount or other leveraged funds	
	Total	200 Maximum		