



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Cannon River Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Program - 15  
ML 2026 Request for Funding

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### General Information

**Date:** 06/26/2025

**Proposal Title:** Cannon River Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Program - 15

**Funds Requested:** \$11,769,800

**Confirmed Leverage Funds:** \$101,000

**Is this proposal Scalable?:** Yes

### Manager Information

**Manager's Name:** Jennifer Tonko

**Title:** Executive Director

**Organization:** Clean River Partners

**Address:** 205 Water Street S Suite 1

**City:** Northfield, MN 55057

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**Fax Number:**

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### Location Information

**County Location(s):** Goodhue, Le Sueur, Rice and Steele.

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

Prairie

Southeast Forest

Forest / Prairie Transition

**Activity types:**

Protect in Fee

Restore

Enhance

### **Priority resources addressed by activity:**

Wetlands

Prairie

Forest

Habitat

## **Narrative**

### **Abstract**

The Cannon River Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Program will protect approximately 846 acres in fee; and restore or enhance approximately 512 acres of high-priority wildlife habitat within the Cannon River Watershed, including wetlands, prairies, forests, and river/shallow lake shoreline.

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

The Cannon River Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Program continues to protect, create, and restore publicly accessible, high-quality habitat lands throughout the Cannon River Watershed (CRW), increasing restored habitat on public lands available for hunting, angling, and other recreation within an hour's drive for over half of Minnesota's population.

Located south of the Twin Cities, the 1,460 square mile CRW includes over 800 linear miles of streams and rivers that drain a diverse landscape. This area supports numerous habitats, including prairie, oak savanna, and Big Woods, though the watershed is now dominated by agricultural fields and urban development. Agricultural practices and shoreline development are major contributors to the impaired status of stretches of the Cannon River and its associated lakes and streams.

This multi-year, multi-partner program protects and restores targeted parcels of land that positively contribute to large complexes of forests, restored prairies, wetlands, lakeshore, and river shoreline. To date, this program has permanently protected 3,357 acres and restored or enhanced 498 acres in the CRW utilizing Outdoor Heritage Funds (918 acres of restoration are underway).

This partnership is committed to building on prior successes achieved through Outdoor Heritage Fund support, with the goal of establishing habitat corridors and restoring and enhancing natural habitats for the benefit of all Minnesotans. Through strategic outreach to private landowners, the partnership has generated a cascading conservation effect: the permanent protection of one property often inspires neighboring landowners to learn about the program and pursue permanent preservation of their own land. In Phases 11 and 12, Horseshoe Lake WMA was established through the addition of 152 acres of valuable forest, wetland, and grassland habitat. In Phase 15, Horseshoe WMA will be expanded even further through the acquisition of 127 acres. This is a crucial step in creating habitat blocks that connect to Horseshoe Lake, improving water quality and preserving habitat. The Horseshoe Lake WMA provides hunting, recreation, and fishing within a 10-minute drive of 20,000 people that reside in growing cities, like Faribault. There is current momentum to permanently protect, restore, and enhance land in the watershed. Phase 15 will protect approximately 846 acres in fee and restore or enhance 512 acres.

Clean River Partners (CRP) is the local expert in the watershed, connecting with landowners, land managers,

hunters, anglers, and others since 1990. CRP will coordinate this program, providing program administration and landowner outreach.

Trust for Public Land (TPL) will target large wetland/upland complexes, rare biomes (prairie, oak savanna, and Big Woods forest), shallow lakes, river shoreline, and lands adjacent to existing public land for fee-title acquisition. TPL will convey lands to the DNR except when local governmental unit ownership is appropriate.

Great River Greening (GRG) will evaluate parcels targeted for enhancement in collaboration with MN DNR, Municipalities, and USFWS personnel to determine existing and desired conditions. GRG works with the landowners to restore and enhance parcels through invasive species removal, seeding and native vegetation establishment.

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

The areas targeted by TPL have been identified and prioritized through state, regional, and local natural resource plans due to their high biodiversity qualities and connectivity to existing public lands. Protection will occur through fee title acquisition and will target Big Woods, oak savannas, wetlands, and sensitive shoreline communities within the CRW. GRG will conduct significant habitat restoration and enhancement work on protected conservation lands identified by DNR and local governments within the watershed. The aim is to improve habitat values for wildlife and Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), including birds using the Mississippi River migratory corridor, pollinators, amphibians, and reptiles. Work will restore and enhance riverine, forest, wetland, oak savanna, and prairie habitat at 7 conservation sites.

Protection, restoration and/or enhancement of these significant parcels will provide critical habitat for game species, including upland birds (dove, turkey, pheasant, and woodcock), white-tailed deer, migratory waterfowl (mallard, canvasback, wood duck, hooded merganser, pintail, and lesser scaup), and aquatic species (trout, northern pike, black crappie, bluegill, and walleye). Protection will also provide access to diverse recreational experiences including duck, pheasant, turkey, and deer hunting as well as river, stream, and lake fishing. Nongame wildlife, including SGCN, that also benefit from this effort includes bald eagle, Bell's vireo, cerulean warbler, loggerhead shrike, Sandhill crane, red-headed woodpecker, greater yellowlegs, buffbreasted sandpiper, rusty patched bumble bee, Blanding's turtle, wood turtle, and mudpuppies.

Working alongside the MN DNR and Fish and Wildlife, our partnership aims to create expanding habitat along streams and rivers where SGCN reptile and amphibian species have been located. Enhancing riparian corridors will increase nesting habitats for migrating waterfowl and reptile species. Restoration and conversion of tiled crop fields back to tallgrass prairie potholes will extend vital habitat for grassland bird species, which have seen a 40% decline in population since the 1960's.

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

Only 18% of the landscape in the CRW remains as forest, wetland, or prairie habitat, and many of these areas have been degraded by invasive species. Protection, restoration, and enhancement of the region's unimpaired waters and essential habitat are critically important before they become further degraded by invasive species or by residential development and agricultural pressures. Failing to protect, restore, or enhance these habitats now will result in increased costs in the future. Current OHF dollars appropriated to this program for acquisition are fully allocated to existing projects currently under contract, with additional funds needed to complete their acquisition. Many additional parcels with high quality habitat remain unprotected, with interested landowners willing to discuss protection opportunities for their land. Without additional funding, these lands are at risk to be sold on the

open market and we will have lost existing opportunities to create new public access and outdoor recreation experiences.

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

Southern Minnesota, and specifically the Cannon River Watershed has a rich agriculture presence due to the fertile soils found throughout the region. Large portions of corn and soybean fields limit forage for pollinators, habitat for migrating waterfowl, and can threaten water quality for aquatic species. This partnership aims to protect vulnerable waterways through adjacent land protection and the restoration of depleted wetlands and floodplains, conversion of agriculture fields to prairies or forests, along with enhancement of degraded public lands to establish and improve thriving ecosystems.

This program has demonstrated its ability to expand habitat corridors and limit habitat fragmentation, establishing 9 new WMAs and expanding 8 WMAs since its inception. The program uses information from the Wildlife Action Network, Minnesota County Biological Survey, and several analysis tools to identify priority lands for protection and restoration, creating and expanding conservation corridors and habitat complexes. In addition, we will consult several landscape-level planning efforts such as the Statewide Wildlife Action Plan, Cannon River Watershed Landscape Stewardship Plan, the Cannon River Watershed - Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS), and the Cannon River Watershed Comprehensive Management Plan approved by Minnesota's Board of Water and Soil Resources and ratified by the Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Board.

Landowner outreach will focus on landowners in the watershed that own priority habitat near existing public lands to further build habitat complexes. During this phase, the partnership is building off momentum in the watershed to expand five WMAs including Circle Lake WMA, Horseshoe Lake WMA, Medford WMA, Somerset WMA, and Faribault WMA. These projects will add a combined 558 acres of habitat, thus further building off existing public lands and limiting habitat degradation and fragmentation. The program is advancing the creation of habitat corridors, including a key area near the Straight River, Somerset WMA.

**Which top 2 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 program protects and enhances lands that provide the best opportunities for maintaining biodiversity and increasing connectivity, the foundations of a resilient landscape. Enhancement activities prioritize climate resiliency by sourcing seed, plugs, and seedlings with preference to southern Minnesota. This program integrates protection and restoration at a watershed scale, supporting landscape resiliency by protecting and buffering large areas and increasing connections that facilitate species movement and adaptation to stressors, including those accelerated by climate change. Increased connectivity and biodiversity at this large scale ensure parcels of habitat suitable for sustaining wildlife across the life cycle. Coordination by this partnership at a watershed level facilitates the alignment of shared goals and leverages conservation efforts, maximizing impacts and realizing efficiencies to

benefit resiliency. GRG will also continue to utilize its biochar kilns to dispose of woody debris on applicable sites to reduce carbon dioxide release and burn scar creation from brush piles.

## **Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal?**

### **Forest / Prairie Transition**

Protect, restore, and enhance habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need

### **Prairie**

Protect, enhance, or restore existing wetland/upland complexes, or convert agricultural lands to new wetland/upland habitat complexes

### **Southeast Forest**

Protect, enhance, and restore habitat for fish, game, and nongame wildlife in rivers, cold-water streams, and associated upland habitat

## **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:**

According to a spatial driveshed analysis conducted by TPL, over 3.4 million people live within an hour's drive of the lands protected through the Cannon River Watershed program. Land protected through this program is open for hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and recreation. This work prioritizes the creation of complexes of restored prairies, oak savannas, wetlands, and riparian habitat. Parcels targeted for prairie restoration convert agricultural lands into quality habitat, benefiting several species, including SGCN like the monarch butterfly, rusty patched bumblebee, and eastern meadowlark. Game species like deer, pheasants, turkey, and doves thrive in these ecosystems and benefit from having intact habitat complexes for forage, cover, and nesting sites.

With approximately 99% of southern Minnesota's wetlands being lost to agriculture, it is crucial to permanently protect and restore these habitats. Wetlands are vital for improving water quality and provide fish nursery and spawning habitat benefiting species like walleye, northern pike, and bluegill. Reptile species like the wood turtle and Blanding's Turtle are especially vulnerable to habitat loss and degradation and depend on quality, intact habitat corridors for survival.

This program has addressed these challenges through the permanent protection of 3,357 acres and restored or enhanced 498 acres utilizing OHF Funds. Ongoing outreach to landowners and public agencies indicates significant continued interest in permanently protecting and restoring land with high biological significance. This partnership has a proven track record of success, and there is high demand for this critical conservation work.

## **Outcomes**

### **Programs in forest-prairie transition region:**

Protected, restored, and enhanced nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need ~ *Core parcels are identified in partnership with the DNR, counties, and the partners of the Cannon River Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Program. Success will be determined based on the acreage of lands protected, restored, and enhanced and the percentage of protected lands in the watershed.*

### Programs in prairie region:

Key core parcels are protected for fish, game and other wildlife ~ *Core parcels are identified in partnership with the DNR, counties, and the partners of the Cannon River Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Program. Success will be determined based on the acreage of lands protected, restored, and enhanced and the percentage of protected lands in the watershed.*

### Programs in southeast forest region:

High priority riparian lands, forestlands, and savannas are protected from parcelization and fragmentation ~ *Core parcels are identified in partnership with the DNR as well as the partners of the Cannon River Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Program. Success will be determined based on the acreage of lands protected, restored, and enhanced and the percentage of protected lands in the watershed.*

### 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 proposal does not substitute or supplant previous funding that was not from a Legacy fund.

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

Once land has been acquired and conveyed to the DNR, initial site development and restoration of these lands will begin. Estimated costs for initial restoration or enhancement work are included in this proposal. TPL will work with DNR to complete a restoration or enhancement management plan, and implementation of that plan will be completed in the following years. These properties will be managed and maintained by the DNR according to their guidelines.

In collaboration with DNR, County, and USFWS personnel, parcels targeted for restoration will be evaluated by GRG to determine existing and desired conditions for each site. Information gathered will be used to develop site-specific scope of work plans for restoring ecologically desired habitats. Project management plans will detail the methods and practices to be used and a timeline for the successful completion of each site/project along with management guidelines and maintenance outline for the future. After funds are expended, sites will be in a condition that the landowner will be able to maintain.

### Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2027	TPL - OHF & DNR	Post property	Development restoration/management plan for property	-
2028	TPL - DNR	Develop restoration/management plan for property	Restore and steward property for habitat and public recreation	-
2029	TPL - DNR	Restore and steward property for habitat and public recreation	-	-
2027	GRG - OHF	Perform site evaluation and assessment in collaboration with DNR	Develop R/E plan for property. Begin monitoring	Initiate site preparation from R/E work. Continue monitoring

2028	GRG - OHF	Initiate R/E work	Continue R/E depending on appropriate methods and time of year	Continue R/E and begin stewardship as needed using appropriate methods and dependent on time of year
2029	GRG - OHF	Continue R/E and begin stewardship. Target actions to maintain habitat.	Restorative action to correct damage as needed	Evaluate progress and determine if additional actions are needed

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

Protecting, restoring, and enhancing diverse and resilient habitats benefits all Minnesotans. It keeps our air and water cleaner, mitigates the impacts of climate change, and conserves the biological diversity that belongs to everyone. Public land provides an opportunity for recreation and health to those who do not have access to private natural lands, whether that be for hunting, fishing, hiking, or other outdoor pursuits.

This program involves, engages, and benefits BIPOC and diverse communities through focused events that leverage Outdoor Heritage Funds. For example, recent efforts, funded through other sources, have focused on increasing the engagement of BIPOC and diverse communities across the watershed in volunteer events at sites protected and restored using past OHF appropriations. Additionally, also through different funding sources, some of this program's recent acquisition and restoration projects focus on protection of the environment and water quality while creating much-needed recreational opportunities targeting disadvantaged areas (based upon housing, income and wastewater thresholds) with significant BIPOC communities. Our partners actively encourage residents who live near habitat restoration sites and create programs specifically for people from diverse backgrounds, opening up opportunities to pursue environmental careers such as GRG's Future Stewards Program.

TPL's mentored hunting and angling program is a great example of this. In partnership with the MN Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, TPL is hosting and facilitating mentored hunting, foraging, and angling opportunities for diverse communities on public lands and waters across MN with a focus on lands protected with Outdoor Heritage Funds. Our target audience for mentees are diverse and historically marginalized communities, with a particular outreach focus on BIPOC communities. Our program mentors are individuals from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds as well, helping to reinforce and foster a sense of representation, belonging, and inclusion in outdoor spaces.

Moving forward, we will continue our outreach to BIPOC communities and remain eager to expand this important work in a way that more directly, and authentically, engages diverse communities and partners in an equitable and just manner.

### Activity Details

#### Requirements

**Will county board or other local government approval be formally sought\*\* prior to acquisition, per 97A.056 subd 13(j)?**

No

**Describe any measures to inform local governments of land acquisition under their jurisdiction:**

We will follow the County/Township Board notification processes as directed by the current statutory language.



**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?**

WMA

SNA

AMA

County/Municipal

State Forests

## Land Use

**Will there be planting of any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program, either by the proposer or the end owner of the property, outside of the initial restoration of the land?**

No

**Will insecticides or fungicides (including neonicotinoid and fungicide treated seed) be used within any activities of this proposal either in the process of restoration or use as food plots?**

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:**

NA

**Who will eventually own the fee title land?**

State of MN

County

Other : Municipality

Local Unit of Government



**Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:**

AMA

State Forest

County Forest

Other : Municipal Natural Areas

WMA

SNA

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

Yes

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

TPL is not aware of any trails or roads on any of the acquisitions on the parcel list. If any trails are discovered TPL will consult with LSOHC staff to determine appropriate actions and resolution.

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

Yes

**How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?**

TPL is not aware of any trails or roads on any of the acquisitions. If any are discovered on lands to be managed by the DNR, they will be managed per DNR policy for WMAs, AMAs, SNAs or State Forests. If they are discovered on lands to be managed by local units of government, they will be managed per a maintenance and monitoring plan developed in consultation with LSOHC staff.

**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 through LSOHC in the past?**

Yes

**Are any of these past appropriations still OPEN?**

Yes

Approp Year	Funding Amount Received	Amount Spent to Date	Funding Remaining	% Spent to Date
25	\$2,724,000	-	-	-
24	\$2,555,000	\$531,845	\$2,023,155	20.82%
23	\$2,981,000	\$2,010,458	\$970,542	67.44%
22	\$2,636,000	\$1,965,382	\$670,618	74.56%
21	\$2,623,000	\$2,257,995	\$365,005	86.08%
20	\$1,148,000	\$1,118,478	\$29,522	97.43%
18	\$1,345,000	\$1,345,000	-	100.0%
Totals	\$16,012,000	\$9,229,158	\$6,782,842	57.64%

## Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Finalize restoration and enhancement plans	June 30, 2027
Landowner negotiations, agreements and due diligence	June 30, 2028
Land acquired	June 30, 2030
Initial site development	Fall 2031
Restoration and enhancement	June 30, 2031

Budget**Grand Totals Across All Partnerships**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Funding Request</b>	<b>Total Leverage</b>	<b>Leverage Source</b>	<b>Total</b>
Personnel	\$990,000	-	Federal Sourced	\$990,000
Contracts	\$3,569,000	-	-	\$3,569,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$6,100,000	-	-	\$6,100,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$30,000	\$3,000	Private Sourced, Private Sourced	\$33,000
Professional Services	\$100,000	-	-	\$100,000
Direct Support Services	\$273,800	\$323,000	-, Private Sourced, Private Sourced	\$596,800
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$144,000	-	-	\$144,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$12,000	-	-	\$12,000
Supplies/Materials	\$446,000	-	-	\$446,000
DNR IDP	\$105,000	-	-	\$105,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$11,769,800</b>	<b>\$326,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$12,095,800</b>

**Partner: The Trust For Public Land****Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$450,000	-	-	\$450,000
Contracts	\$50,000	-	-	\$50,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$6,100,000	-	-	\$6,100,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	\$2,000	Private Sourced	\$2,000
Professional Services	\$100,000	-	-	\$100,000
Direct Support Services	\$98,000	\$98,000	Private Sourced	\$196,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$144,000	-	-	\$144,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	\$105,000	-	-	\$105,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$7,047,000</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	-	<b>\$7,147,000</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Protection and Legal Staff	0.87	3.0	\$450,000	-	-	\$450,000

**Partner: Great River Greening****Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$475,000	-	-	\$475,000
Contracts	\$3,515,000	-	-	\$3,515,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$30,000	-	-	\$30,000
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$155,000	\$225,000	Private Sourced	\$380,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$12,000	-	-	\$12,000
Supplies/Materials	\$443,000	-	-	\$443,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$4,630,000</b>	<b>\$225,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$4,855,000</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Great River Greening Personnel	0.91	5.0	\$475,000	-	-	\$475,000

**Partner: Clean River Partners****Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$65,000	-	Federal Sourced	\$65,000
Contracts	\$4,000	-	-	\$4,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	\$1,000	Private Sourced	\$1,000
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$20,800	-	-	\$20,800
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$3,000	-	-	\$3,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$92,800</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$93,800</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Clean River Partners Staff	0.4	3.0	\$65,000	-	-	\$65,000

**Amount of Request:** \$11,769,800**Amount of Leverage:** \$326,000**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 2.77%**DSS + Personnel:** \$1,263,800**As a % of the total request:** 10.74%**Easement Stewardship:** -**As a % of the Easement Acquisition:** -

Total Leverage (from above)	Amount Confirmed	% of Total Leverage	Amount Anticipated	% of Total Leverage
\$326,000	\$101,000	30.98%	\$225,000	69.02%

**Detail leverage sources and confirmation of funds:**

The partnership provides privately sourced leverage for 54% of DSS and 9% of travel costs. The partnership also seeks various state, local and private funds to acquire property and conduct enhancements/restorations.

**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?**

Since some costs are fixed, a somewhat greater than proportionate reduction in activities and acres would

occur. Restoration and enhancement acres and budgets would be reduced in a way that meets the needs of the remaining parcels.

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

Program management costs (personnel, travel, and DSS expenses) will be reduced, but not proportionately, because program coordination and oversight costs remain consistent regardless of appropriation amount. CRP's program administration is consistent regardless of acres protected or restored in order to manage the program and maintain partner and community relationships.

**If the project received 30% of the requested funding**

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

Since some costs are fixed, a somewhat greater than proportionate reduction in activities and acres would occur. Restoration and enhancement acres and budgets would be reduced in a way that meets the needs of the remaining parcels.

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

Program management costs (personnel, travel, and DSS expenses) will be reduced, but not proportionately because program coordination and oversight costs remain consistent regardless of appropriation amount. CRP's program administration is consistent regardless of acres protected or restored in order to manage the program and maintain partner and community.

**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?**

FTEs listed 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, working with contractors, restoration and enhancement activities, conducting landowner outreach, and managing the grant. We use only those personnel funds necessary to achieve the goals of the program.

**Contracts**

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

Clean River Partners contract line for OHF funds includes accounting service cost.

TPL's contract line includes potential site clean-up and initial restoration activities.

GRG's contract line includes restoration/enhancement contracts by service providers.



## Professional Services

### What is included in the Professional Services line?

Appraisals

Other : Environmental site assessments

Surveys

Title Insurance and Legal Fees

## Fee Acquisition

### What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?

We anticipate we will close 2 to 3 transactions and investigate one other.

## Travel

### Does the amount in the travel line include equipment/vehicle rental?

Yes

### Explain the amount in the travel line outside of traditional travel costs of mileage, food, and lodging

NA

### 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?

Clean River Partners' DSS rate has been approved by the DNR in 2024.

TPL's DSS request is based upon its federal rate which has been approved by the MN DNR and 50% of these costs are requested from the OHF grant while 50% is contributed as privately sourced leverage.

DSS rate approved by the DNR in 2024, GRG's DSS rate includes the allowable direct and necessary expenditures that are not captured in other line items in the budget. A portion not exceeding 50% of these costs are requested from the grant and the balance is contributed as leverage.

## Other Equipment/Tools

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

Hand tools, saws, brush cutters, personal protective equipment, burn equipment, seed collection equipment, repairs and other necessary equipment to complete restoration and enhancement activities.

## 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	17	100	0	0	117
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	610	610
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	1	119	275	0	395
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>1,122</b>

**Restoration/Enhancement Acres of OHF Acquired Lands (Table 1a.1)**

	RESTORE		Total	ENHANCE		Total
	Lands acquired in this proposal	Lands acquired with previous OHF appropriations (<5yrs old)		Lands acquired in this proposal	Lands acquired with previous OHF appropriations (<5yrs old)	
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	61	115	176	-	10	10
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>

**Restoration/Enhancement Acres Breakdown of Existing Protected Lands (Table 1a.2)**

	RESTORE		ENHANCE	
	Lands acquired with OHF	Lands NOT acquired with OHF	Lands acquired with OHF	Lands NOT acquired with OHF
DNR Lands (WMA, State Forests, etc)	117	-	163	81
Non-DNR Lands (city, state, federal, etc.)	-	-	-	151
Easements	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>232</b>

**Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	\$56,100	\$313,100	-	-	\$369,200
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$7,093,400	\$7,093,400
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$15,100	\$484,100	\$3,808,000	-	\$4,307,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$71,200</b>	<b>\$797,200</b>	<b>\$3,808,000</b>	<b>\$7,093,400</b>	<b>\$11,769,800</b>

**Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	117	0	117
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	610	0	610
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0

Enhance	0	0	118	277	0	395
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>1,004</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,122</b>

**Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	\$369,200	-	\$369,200
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$7,093,400	-	\$7,093,400
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	\$1,006,200	\$3,301,000	-	\$4,307,200
<b>Total</b>	-	-	<b>\$1,006,200</b>	<b>\$10,763,600</b>	-	<b>\$11,769,800</b>

**Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	\$3,300	\$3,131	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$11,628
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$15,100	\$4,068	\$13,847	-

**Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	-	-	\$3,155	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$11,628	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	\$8,527	\$11,916	-

**Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles**

1 mile

## Parcels

### Sign-up Criteria?

No

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

Trust for Public Land works with its public partners to identify and prioritize projects that meet their objectives and are on their priority lists. Criteria includes whether the land provides critical habitat for game and non-game species and quality public recreational opportunities, presence of unique plants and animals species (including SGCN), goals of conservation plans, adjacency to other public land or habitat complexes, existence of local support, immediacy of threats, landowner willingness and time frame.

Great River Greening works with land owning entities (public and protected private) and interested stakeholders to identify parcels where there is a need for restoration or enhancement of lands and water resources. Parcels are selected using the following criteria: permanently protected status (WMA, AMA, SNA, Forestry, County Conservation, etc.), ecological and habitat value and potential (biodiversity, size and location), congruence with existing plans and priority areas, willing and committed landowners (demonstrated through leveraged match), and leveraging opportunities.

### Restore / Enhance Parcels

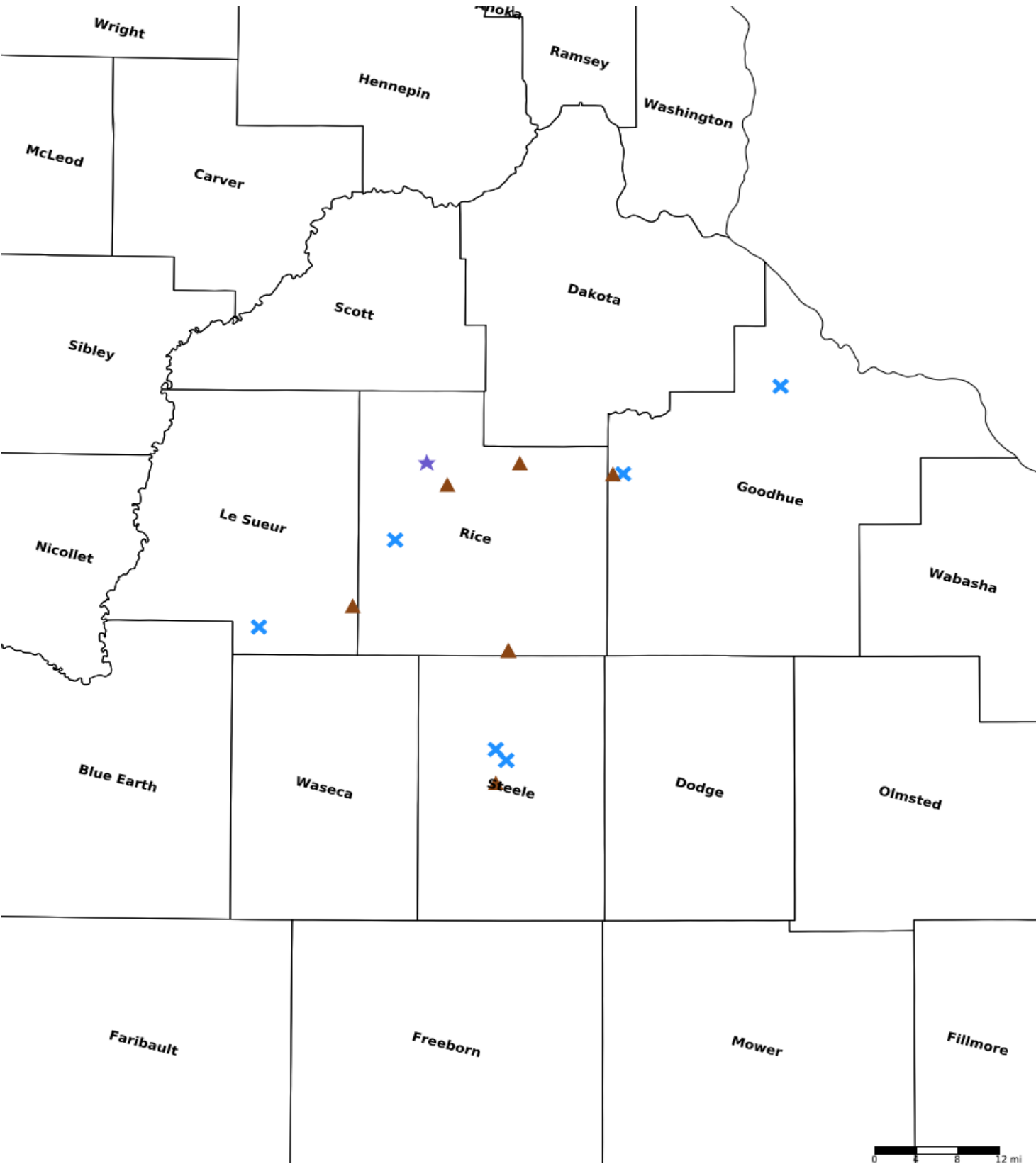
Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Description
Cannon River Turtle Preserve SNA	Goodhue	11316235	15	\$211,000	Yes	15 acres of forest enhancement via Invasive woody removal
Warsaw WMA	Goodhue	11118208	115	\$880,000	Yes	Enhance 50 acres of prairie and 35 acres forest through invasive species management and native seeding.
Dove Lake WMA	Le Sueur	10924221	40	\$880,000	Yes	40 acres forest enhancement through removal of invasive red cedar, honeysuckle and buckthorn
Boyd Sartell WMA	Rice	11022210	66	\$945,000	Yes	66 acres forest enhancement via invasive buckthorn and honeysuckle removal in mesic hardwood forest
Sungina WMA	Rice	11121206	125	\$444,000	Yes	17 acres wetland restoration and 98 acres cropland to prairie restoration, 10 acres woody enhancement
City of Owatonna - Kaplan Woods Park	Steele	10720217	110	\$1,144,000	Yes	100 acres of forest enhancement throughout mesic hardwood and floodplain forest via invasive species removal

City of Owatonna - Leo Rudolph Park	Steele	10720221	41	\$126,000	Yes	30 acres prairie and 1 acre wetland enhancement via biodiversity seeding and 10 acres forest enhancement via invasive woody removal.
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## Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Warsaw WMA	Goodhue	11118207	70	\$500,000	No
Horseshoe Lake WMA	Le Sueur	10923212	127	\$1,500,000	No
Circle Lake WMA Addition	Rice	11121216	101	\$1,300,000	No
Faribault WMA II	Rice	10920233	37	\$185,000	No
Medford WMA II	Rice	10920233	113	\$1,500,000	No
Spring Brook WMA	Rice	11120203	218	\$2,180,000	No
Somerset WMA	Steele	10720232	180	\$1,200,000	No

Parcel Map



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



# CANNON RIVER WATERSHED

## *Habitat Protection & Restoration Program*

### Program Overview

The Cannon River is one of Minnesota's Wild and Scenic Rivers. It covers a 1,460-square-mile area and features over 800 miles of streams and rivers. Historically rich in forests, prairies, and wetlands, this landscape has been significantly altered due to agriculture and urban development. Currently, only 18% of the terrain remains as forest, wetland, or prairie habitats. Protecting and enhancing these vital resources is crucial to maintaining the region's water quality and biodiversity.

***Our funding request is \$11,769,800 to protect 846 acres and restore or enhance 512 acres of high-priority wildlife habitat.***

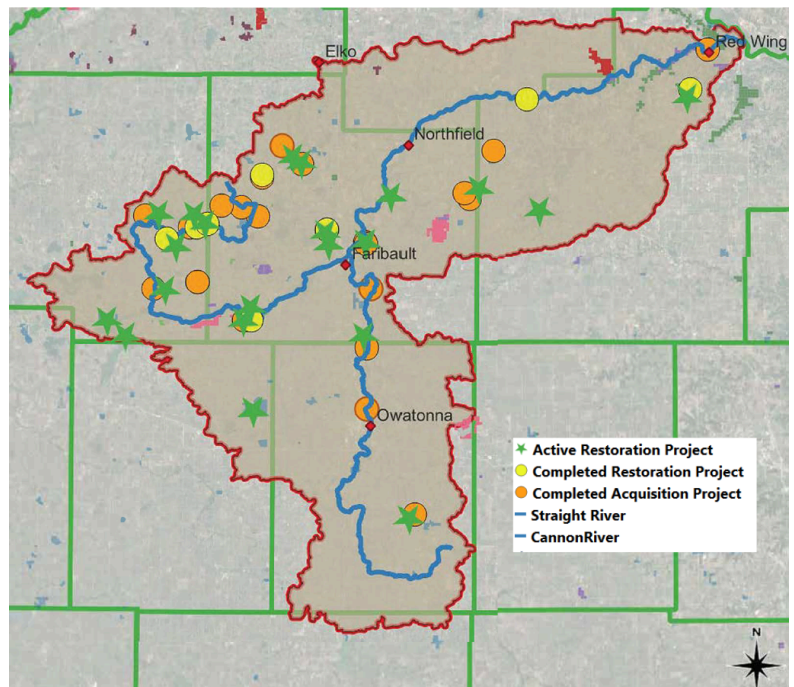


Goats clearing invasives at Sunktokeca WMA (Photo Credit: Lawrence Cosslett)

### Program Results

As of 2025, this program has achieved remarkable milestones:

- Nine new Wildlife Management Areas have been created, and eight existing ones have been expanded. Additionally, a new Aquatic Management Area (AMA) has been established.
- In total, 3,357 acres of land have been permanently protected and are now accessible to the public.
- Furthermore, 498 acres of habitat have been restored or enhanced across four WMAs and a county park, and 918 acres of restoration are underway on 13 WMAs, one AMA, and two county parks.



## Funding History

### Phases 1-7 (Complete) - \$9,902,000

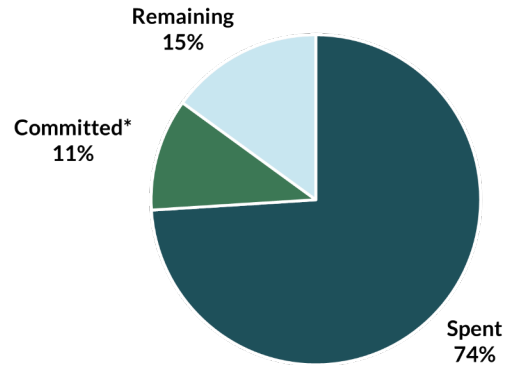
2,128 acres protected (100% of stated goal)  
with \$1.3M in leveraged funds (203% of  
stated goal)

### Phases 8-13 (In Progress) - \$13,288,000

280 acres and 2 miles of shoreline are set to  
be protected through additions to existing  
WMAs, with 237 acres of enhancement and  
restoration completed and 918 acres  
underway.

### Phase 14 (Pending) - \$2,724,000

610 acres and 1 mile of shoreline are set to  
be protected with enhancement work  
planned at two WMAs.



*\*All remaining funds for acquisition capital is  
under contract for existing projects.*



Medford WMA Dedication Event (Photo Credit:  
Hannah Robb)

## Our Partnership

- **Clean River Partners** administers and coordinates the program while conducting outreach to landowners in the watershed. Learn more at [www.cleanriverpartners.org](http://www.cleanriverpartners.org)
- **Trust for Public Land** specializes in facilitating land acquisition and managing real estate transactions. Learn more at [www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org)
- **Great River Greening** is responsible for restoration activities and engages local volunteers in the process. Learn more at [www.greatrivergreening.org](http://www.greatrivergreening.org)



## For More Information

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