



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Washington County Habitat Protection and Restoration Partnership - Phase 2  
ML 2026 Request for Funding

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### General Information

**Date:** 06/26/2025

**Proposal Title:** Washington County Habitat Protection and Restoration Partnership - Phase 2

**Funds Requested:** \$6,917,000

**Confirmed Leverage Funds:** \$264,000

**Is this proposal Scalable?:** Yes

### Manager Information

**Manager's Name:** Serena Rath

**Title:** Planner I

**Organization:** Washington County

**Address:** 14949 62nd St N

**City:** Stillwater, MN 55082

**Email:** serena.raths@washingtoncountymn.gov

**Office Number:** 651-430-6024

**Mobile Number:**

**Fax Number:**

**Website:**

### Location Information

**County Location(s):** Washington.

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

Metro / Urban

**Activity types:**

Enhance

Protect in Easement

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

Forest

Prairie

Wetlands

Habitat

## Narrative

### Abstract

Located at the convergence of the Mississippi and St. Croix rivers, Washington County contains a significant amount of high-quality natural habitat in the Metro Urbanizing Area. Washington County works collaboratively with its partners to protect and steward these critical resources through its Land and Water Legacy Program and regional parks system. The Washington County Habitat Protection and Enhancement Partnership seeks to expand upon these past successes and meet increasing demand, protecting 385 acres of high priority habitat through conservation easements, and enhancing 970 acres of natural lands.

### Design and Scope of Work

Washington County's prairies, savannas, forests and wetlands provide some of the best remaining wildlife habitat in the Metro Urbanizing Area. Located along both the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers, Washington County hosts a complex and unique system of sensitive habitat with an estimated 149 Species of Greatest Conservation Need according to the Minnesota Wildlife Action Plan.

Washington County prioritizes the permanent protection of these resources through its Land and Water Legacy Program (LWLP), which was initiated through a 2006 voter referendum. This referendum approved \$20 million in funding to protect the county's highest quality grasslands, woodlands, waterbodies and wetlands. To date, the county has completed a total of 50 projects, many of which leveraged Outdoor Heritage Funds. This work has protected over 1,600 acres of land, investing \$18 Million in LWLP funds and \$29 Million in leveraged partnership funds.

In the fiscal year 2023, Washington County and MLT were awarded funds by the LSOHC to continue these conservation efforts and steward the county's protected lands. This partnership has proved successful in protecting land throughout the county, focusing on Washington County's "Top 10" priority conservation areas as identified by the LWLP. This project has also served existing protection through collaboration with the City of Woodbury to restore and enhance Woodbury city parks protected through county-held conservation easements.

This proposal seeks a total of \$6,917,000 in funding for phase 2 of this work, including:

1. 385 acres of habitat protection through conservation easements held by MLT and the county.
2. 80 acres of habitat enhancement on county-held conservation easements over Woodbury city parks.
3. 890 acres of habitat enhancement on county-owned regional park land through the funding of 2 full time Natural Resource Land Stewards who will be hired to complete land stewardship tasks on land previously restored and enhanced using OHF funds.

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

Washington County's "Top 10" Priority Conservation Areas contain the highest levels of biodiversity, unique plant communities, rare and endangered plant and animal species, and proximity to ground and surface waters in the county. These areas were recently updated in 2022 to utilize the most up-to-date natural resource datasets to identify high protection priorities. Many of these areas overlay with the Minnesota Wildlife Action Plan, and every "Top 10" area contains high-quality plant communities as identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS).

These areas are shown in the proposal illustration attached. This proposal seeks to protect land within these key habitat complexes and their connecting corridors.

In addition to land protection throughout these priority areas, this proposal seeks to enhance protected lands and lands where Outdoor Heritage Funds have previously been used to provide needed high-quality habitat for rare, endangered and special species of concern.

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

Washington County contains some of the best remaining habitats in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area; however, much of it is threatened by developmental pressure and population increase. Washington County's population was 267,568 in 2020 and is projected to grow 25% to 335,272 by 2050. If action is not taken now to meet the high demand from landowners, it is possible that significant portions of these ecosystems will be purchased for development and their habitat lost completely.

The county's protected areas and regional parklands also face threats in the form of habitat degradation and impacts of invasive species, which are likely to establish if unmanaged to create more associated costs in the future. By increasing funding and staff capacity for stewardship now, the county can create resiliency by increasing native species diversity.

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

Washington County's "Top 10" priority conservation areas were identified using data from the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System, the DNR's Regionally Significant Ecological Areas and the Minnesota Biological Survey. These datasets were analyzed to offer a weighted scoring of land based on its protection priority, resulting in the "Top 10" areas. These areas represent large corridors of open space throughout the county and are connected through half mile "buffer zones" surrounding each area and the Mississippi and St. Croix rivers to further address habitat connectivity and healthy bird flyways. The lands conserved through this proposal will focus specifically on these "Top 10" areas, creating permanent protection outcomes that expand these prioritized habitat complexes.

### **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.**

Healthy, robust, native habitats are known to be most resilient to climate change. The ecosystems which will be the focus of this proposal for both protection and enhancement will serve as high-quality open space buffers to mitigate the effects of climate change through the healthy cycling of carbon dioxide, nitrogen and phosphorus to increase climate resiliency. These effects can combat the rapid development surrounding these areas, creating spaces for habitat and species to thrive.

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

### **Metro / Urban**

Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna with an emphasis on areas with high biological diversity

### **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:**

Bordered on the east and south by the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers, Washington County contains interconnected river, stream, wetland, and upland habitats that provide key corridors for fish, game, and wildlife. This proposal seeks to continue the protection of these corridors to ensure healthy natural habitat for native species. Through the county and MLT's conservation easement process, this protection will be permanent, frequently monitored and stewarded to protect the investment made by partners and the LSOHC.

In addition to permanent protection, the enhancement of these areas will create long-term benefits for both native habitat and public enjoyment of these natural spaces. This work will prioritize areas which have previously been restored or enhanced using Outdoor Heritage Funds to perpetuate the investment made into their quality. These benefits will be both monitored and maintained by Washington County and City of Woodbury staff.

### **Outcomes**

#### **Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:**

Core areas protected with highly biologically diverse wetlands and plant communities, including native prairie, Big Woods, and oak savanna ~ *This program will be measured by the acres of diverse habitats and plant communities protected and enhanced, and will be evaluated based on the observed quality of the enhancement.*

#### **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.**

Funding procured from the Outdoor Heritage fund via this proposal will not supplant or substitute any previous funding from a non-Legacy fund used for the same purpose.

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

MLT and Washington County have worked together for over 20 years to co-hold conservation easements and are committed to protecting these investments through effective stewardship. MLT is a nationally accredited land trust with a very successful stewardship program, and is dedicated to leading the annual property monitoring, enforcement, records and ownership management of the properties protected through this proposal. These stewardship responsibilities are outlined within a memorandum of understanding between MLT and the county.

MLT and the County will assist landowners in the development of stewardship plans to ensure that the land will be properly managed for its wildlife and water quality benefits. MLT and the County will work with landowners in the long-term to provide habitat enhancement funding, technical expertise, project plans, and other resources to maintain the conservation values of the protected properties.

To maintain habitat enhancement in county parks, Washington County has existing dedicated positions which are fully funded by the county who will be available to maintain this work. The county anticipates additional applications in the future to continue the scope of work outlined in this proposal.

### Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2030 - onward	MLT Stewardship and Enforcement Fund	Annual monitoring of conservation easements in perpetuity	Enforcement as necessary	-
2031- onward	Washington County	Determine metric-based performance indicators which will measure the long-term quality of enhancement implementation	Review enhancement outcomes against performance standards	Determine and implement course corrections as needed to meet performance standards
2029-2031	Washington County	Review budget solutions for Natural Resource Land Steward positions to determine feasibility for continued work	Implement budget solutions, apply for future funding opportunities as 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:

Washington County and the Minnesota Land Trust share and maintain their commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. It is likely that several of the projects protected through this grant will be publicly owned and accessible. This accessibility will allow for diverse populations throughout the county to have the opportunity to experience and benefit from these open spaces.

MLT will continue to use diversity, equity, and inclusion as a lens in project, partner, and contractor selection. We will continue to listen and seek out potential, authentic partnerships that can advance our goals of conserving the best of Minnesota's remaining habitats and, at the same time, being a more inclusive organization. To that end, we intentionally build relationships and work collaboratively with diverse communities throughout the state, such as summer camps for youth, Tribal Nations, rural farmers, and multi-generational families.

Washington County and the City of Woodbury are committed to ensuring that all parklands are available to their diverse communities. Both organizations host dedicated outreach programs which are available to youth and BIPOC populations which seek to encourage the enjoyment of natural areas through education and connection opportunities. The work completed through this proposal will enhance these experiences and maintain the natural quality of the city and county's parkland for continued use.

### Activity Details

#### Requirements

**Is the land you plan to acquire (easement) 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?**

County/Municipal

Permanently Protected Conservation Easements

## 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?**

Yes

**Explain what will be planted and include the maximum percentage of any acquired parcel that would be planted into foodplots by the proposer or the end owner of the property:**

The purpose of the MLT's conservation easements is to protect existing high quality natural habitat and to preserve opportunities for future restoration. We restrict agricultural lands and use on the properties. In cases where there are agricultural lands associated with the larger property, we will either exclude the agricultural area from the conservation easement, or in some limited cases, we may include a small percentage of agricultural lands if it is not feasible to exclude those areas. In such cases, however, we will not use OHF funds to pay the landowners for that portion of the conservation easement. These lands will be available for traditional agriculture unless otherwise restricted by the easement.

As for food plots, although MLT prefers no food plots in our easements, we do recognize that these are important to some landowners; an outright restriction against them would greatly diminish our ability to protect quality habitat in some of our program areas. As such, we do allow a limited number of them over small areas when that's the case. Since January 1, 2020, MLT has completed 47 conservation easements containing food plots, representing 28.7% of the 162 conservation easements completed during this time. The total footprint of these food plots is 92 acres, a mere 0.47% of the total area protected. Our practice is to limit the area of food plots to no more than 3% of the total easement area, with a preference for less than more. Exceptions to this practice will be very limited. Per our stated policy, MLT will prohibit the use of neonicotinoid-treated seed in the planting of food plots, prohibit the planting of invasive species, and require the landowner to submit seed tags to MLT's Stewardship Team on an annual basis after the planting of food plots.

**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

**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:**

Most conservation easements are established on private lands, many of which have driveways, field roads and trails located on them. Often, these established trails and roads are permitted in the terms of the easement and can be maintained for personal use if their use does not significantly impact the conservation values of the property. Creation of new roads/trails or expansion of existing ones is typically not allowed.

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

Yes

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

Existing trails and roads are identified in the project baseline report and will be monitored annually as part of the MLT's stewardship and enforcement protocols. Maintenance of permitted roads/trails in accordance with the terms of the easement will be the responsibility of the landowner.

**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?**

No

**Explain how, when, and source of the R/E work:**

Our priority for land protection is intact natural habitats. If some portion of a protected property requires restoration, the property will be evaluated and funding sought after developing the restoration plan and detailed cost estimates.

**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
2023	\$4,288,000	\$1,661,224	\$2,626,776	38.74%
Totals	\$4,288,000	\$1,661,224	\$2,626,776	38.74%

**Timeline**

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Conservation easements acquired	June 30, 2030
Annual monitoring to be completed by MLT	June 30, 2030 - onwards
Hire two full-time Natural Resource Land Stewards, conduct initial training, and begin land stewardship activities within Washington County parks system	December 31, 2026
Implement county park land stewardship activities, and track progress of implementation acres, providing update in annual report	January 1, 2027 – June 30, 2031
Select and finalize a contract with a consultant for Stewardship Action Plan development and implementation for enhancement of Woodbury conservation easements	September 30, 2026
Collaborate with the City of Woodbury and the selected consultant to draft and finalize Stewardship Action Plans	October 1, 2026
Implement Stewardship Action Plans	October 1, 2026 – July 20th, 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	\$1,101,000	\$225,400	-, Washington County Levy	\$1,326,400
Contracts	\$734,000	\$47,000	City of Woodbury	\$781,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$4,200,000	\$420,000	-, Landowners	\$4,620,000
Easement Stewardship	\$448,000	-	-	\$448,000
Travel	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Professional Services	\$329,000	-	-	\$329,000
Direct Support Services	\$95,000	-	-	\$95,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$6,917,000</b>	<b>\$692,400</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$7,609,400</b>



**Partner: Minnesota Land Trust****Totals**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Funding Request</b>	<b>Total Leverage</b>	<b>Leverage Source</b>	<b>Total</b>
Personnel	\$350,000	-	-	\$350,000
Contracts	\$132,000	-	-	\$132,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$4,200,000	\$420,000	Landowners	\$4,620,000
Easement Stewardship	\$448,000	-	-	\$448,000
Travel	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Professional Services	\$329,000	-	-	\$329,000
Direct Support Services	\$95,000	-	-	\$95,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$5,564,000</b>	<b>\$420,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$5,984,000</b>

**Personnel**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Annual FTE</b>	<b>Years Working</b>	<b>Funding Request</b>	<b>Total Leverage</b>	<b>Leverage Source</b>	<b>Total</b>
MLT Land Protection Staff	0.88	4.0	\$350,000	-	-	\$350,000

**Partner: Washington County****Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$751,000	\$225,400	Washington County Levy	\$976,400
Contracts	\$602,000	\$47,000	City of Woodbury	\$649,000
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	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,353,000</b>	<b>\$272,400</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,625,400</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Natural Resource Land Stewards 2	0.9	5.0	\$375,500	\$112,700	Washington County Levy	\$488,200
Natural Resource Land Steward 1	0.9	5.0	\$375,500	\$112,700	Washington County Levy	\$488,200

**Amount of Request:** \$6,917,000**Amount of Leverage:** \$692,400**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 10.01%**DSS + Personnel:** \$1,196,000**As a % of the total request:** 17.29%**Easement Stewardship:** \$448,000**As a % of the Easement Acquisition:** 10.67%

Total Leverage (from above)	Amount Confirmed	% of Total Leverage	Amount Anticipated	% of Total Leverage
\$692,400	\$264,000	38.13%	\$428,400	61.87%

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

\$225,000 - in-kind county FTE contributions (\$75,400) and proportional costs for related positions (\$150,250).

\$47,000- in-kind costs from the City of Woodbury for independent vegetation management.

\$420,000 - MLT encourages landowners to donate easement value, this leverage is a conservative estimate of expected donations.

**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?**

Acres would be scaled back proportionally, and county personnel costs would be curtailed by 50%. Protection acres will be curtailed by 55-65%, as some activities are fixed and necessary for program success.

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

Personnel and DSS will be reduced, but moderately less than proportional. Some costs are fixed (landowner recruitment; grant management) and must occur regardless of grant amount. Projects can fail midstream after investing time. Donation of easement value (high in this program) can inflate the number of projects pursued/completed.

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

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

Acres would be scaled back proportionally, and county personnel costs would be curtailed by 50%. Protection acres will be curtailed by 75-80%, as some activities are fixed and necessary for program success.

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

Personnel and DSS will be reduced, but moderately less than proportional. Some costs are fixed (landowner recruitment; grant management) and must occur regardless of grant amount. Projects can fail midstream after investment of time. Donation of easement value (high in this program) can inflate the number of projects pursued/completed.

**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?**

MLT positions have positions have been requested in the past. Each allocation is operationalized, budgeted, and tracked independently. FTEs listed in the proposal are a coarse estimate of the personnel time required to produce the grant deliverables put forward in this proposal. An array of staff draws from these funds for legal work, negotiating with landowners, crafting of conservation easements, writing baseline reports and managing the grant. We use only those personnel funds necessary to achieve the goals of the grant. Washington county positions have not been funded in the past.

**Contracts**

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

Washington County: The development and implementation of Stewardship Actions Plans to guide the enhancement of Woodbury city parks protected by county-held conservation easements.

MLT: The writing of habitat management plans for protected easement properties and for conducting landowner outreach within the program area via qualified vendors.

## Professional Services

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

Appraisals

Other : Phase 1 Environmental Assessments, Minerals Reports, Mapping

Surveys

Title Insurance and Legal Fees

## Easement Stewardship

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

The Land Trust expects to close 7-12 conservation easements under this appropriation. The average cost per easement to fund the Minnesota Land Trust's perpetual monitoring and enforcement obligations is \$28,000, although in extraordinary circumstances additional funding may be warranted. This figure is derived from MLT's detailed stewardship funding "cost analysis" which is consistent with Land Trust Accreditation standards. MLT shares periodic updates to this cost analysis with LSOHC staff.

## 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**

Land Trust staff may rent vehicles for grant-related purposes, which can be a significant cost savings over use of personal vehicles.

**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?**

MLT - In a process that was approved by the DNR on March 17, 2017, Minnesota Land Trust determined our direct support services rate to include all of the allowable direct and necessary expenditures that are not captured in other line items in the budget, which is similar to the Land Trust's proposed federal indirect rate. We applied this DNR-approved rate only to personnel expenses to determine the total amount of direct support services requested through this grant.

## Federal Funds

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

No

Output Tables**Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	385	385
Enhance	27	365	498	80	970
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>1,355</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	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</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)	-	-	-	-
Non-DNR Lands (city, state, federal, etc.)	-	-	0	890
Easements	-	-	-	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>970</b>

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

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	\$5,564,000	\$5,564,000
Enhance	\$22,500	\$307,500	\$421,000	\$602,000	\$1,353,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$22,500</b>	<b>\$307,500</b>	<b>\$421,000</b>	<b>\$6,166,000</b>	<b>\$6,917,000</b>

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

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	385	0	0	0	0	385
Enhance	970	0	0	0	0	970
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,355</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,355</b>

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

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	\$5,564,000	-	-	-	-	\$5,564,000
Enhance	\$1,353,000	-	-	-	-	\$1,353,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,917,000</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>\$6,917,000</b>

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

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	\$14,451
Enhance	\$833	\$842	\$845	\$7,525

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

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	\$14,451	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$1,394	-	-	-	-

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

10,000 feet

## Parcels

### Sign-up Criteria?

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

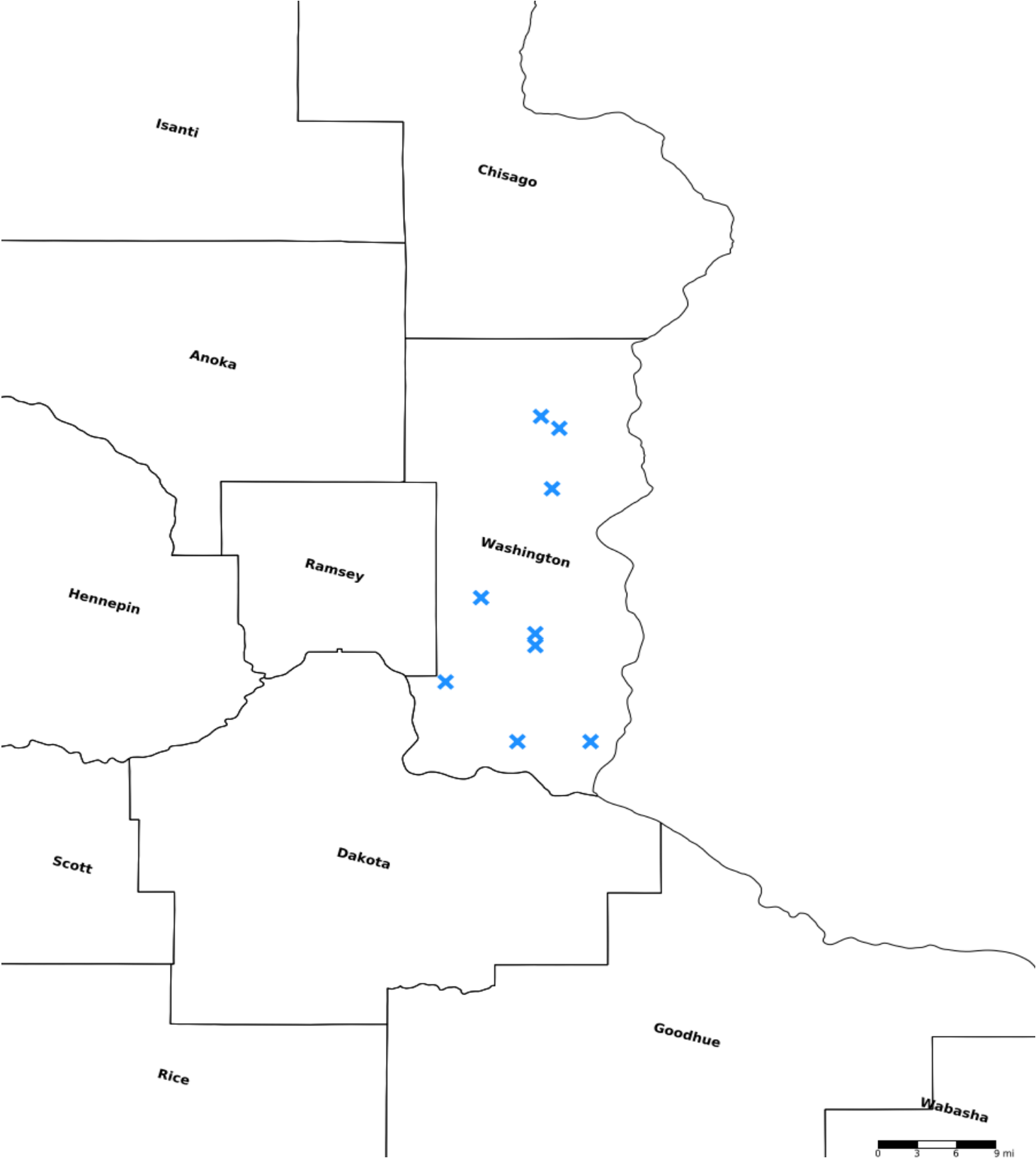
### Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:

Minnesota Land Trust uses a competitive, market-based approach through an RFP process to identify interested landowners and prioritize parcels for conservation easement acquisition. All proposals submitted by landowners are evaluated and ranked relative to their ecological significance based on three primary factors: 1) size of habitat on the parcel; 2) condition of habitat on the parcel; and 3) the context (both in terms of amount/quality of remaining habitat and protected areas) within which the parcel lies. We also ask the landowner to consider contributing all or a portion of fair market value to enable our funds to make a larger conservation impact (see attached sign-up criteria).

### Restore / Enhance Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Description
Big Marine Park Reserve	Washington	03120205	50	\$30,000	Yes	Enhancement of forest, grasslands and wetlands
Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park	Washington	02721223	183	\$180,000	Yes	Enhancement of forest and grassland
La Lake Park	Washington	02821230	3	\$7,000	Yes	Invasive species control and enrichment seeding
Lake Elmo Park Reserve	Washington	02921221	527	\$246,000	Yes	Enhancement of forest, grasslands and wetlands
Long Lake Conservation Area	Washington	03120209	20	\$18,000	Yes	Enhancement of forest and wetland
Pine Point Regional Park	Washington	03020206	11	\$6,000	Yes	Enhancement of forest
Prairie Ridge Park	Washington	02821201	65	\$440,360	Yes	Invasive species control, native seeding, prescribed burning, tree removal and wetland redesign
St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park	Washington	02720221	102	\$120,000	Yes	Enhancement of forest and grassland
Valley Creek Park	Washington	02821212	13	\$144,830	Yes	-

Parcel Map



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



# Habitat Protection and Enhancement Partnership

## PHASE 2

The Washington County Habitat Protection and Enhancement Partnership is requesting a total of \$6,917,000 to protect 385 acres and enhance 970 acres of high-quality wildlife habitat

Washington County's prairies, savannas, forests and wetlands provide some of the best remaining wildlife habitat in the Metro Urbanizing Area. Located along both the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers, the county contains a unique complex of sensitive ground and surface waters. The county prioritizes the protection of these areas through its Land and Water Legacy Program (LWLP), which acquires land or interests in land via conservation easements. County land protection is focused within the LWLP's "Top Ten" Priority Conservation Areas, which contain the highest levels of biodiversity, rare and sensitive species, and quality water features in the county. These areas also overlay with Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan to support state goals.

Proposal Totals	
Request	\$6,917,000
Deliverables	Acres protected - 385 Acres enhanced - 970
Leverage	\$692,350

Habitat Protection	
Lead Partners	Washington County, Minnesota Land Trust
Request	\$5,564,000
Acres protected	385
Leverage	\$420,000 - Landowners

Habitat Enhancement - Conservation Easements	
Lead Partners	Washington County, City of Woodbury
Request	\$602,000
Acres enhanced	80
Leverage	\$47,000 - City of Woodbury

Habitat Enhancement - Washington County Parks	
Request	\$751,000
Acres enhanced	890
Leverage	\$225,350 - Washington County

In 2023, the LSOHC awarded funds for a *Washington County Habitat Protection and Restoration Partnership* to further the county's conservation and stewardship efforts. This proposal seeks funding for phase 2 to expand upon the benefits of this investment, including the following components:

- Habitat protection through co-owned conservation easements with the Minnesota Land Trust
- Habitat enhancement on county-owned conservation easements over Woodbury city parks
- Funding for two FTE's for Washington County Parks frontline positions dedicated to implementing enhancement activities

Map of Washington County, Oregon, showing city parks and watersheds. The map includes labels for various cities and towns such as Forest Lake, German Lake, Rice Lake, and New Port. It also shows the locations of several city parks, including Rice Lake Wetlands/Hardwood Swamps, Silver-Twin Corridor, and Valley Creek Corridor. A legend in the bottom right corner indicates that orange dots represent city parks and yellow dots represent watersheds. A north arrow is located in the bottom right corner.

The first phase of the *Washington County Habitat Protection and Restoration Partnership* has successfully protected high-quality natural land throughout the county. Most recently, a total of 39 acres in the City of Afton was permanently protected by an OHF-funded county/MLT co-held conservation easement. This easement facilitated the purchase of the property by the City of Afton, with plans to open the land to the public in 2026 as a new natural city park.



Map Prepared By: Washington County GIS Support Unit 05/22/2021



Serena Raths, Planner I, Washington County Office of Administration (612) 430-6024 | [serena.raths@washingtoncountymn.gov](mailto:serena.raths@washingtoncountymn.gov)