



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

RIM Wetlands - Restoring the most productive habitat in Minnesota  
ML 2026 Request for Funding

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### General Information

**Date:** 06/26/2025

**Proposal Title:** RIM Wetlands - Restoring the most productive habitat in Minnesota

**Funds Requested:** \$14,000,000

**Confirmed Leverage Funds:** -

**Is this proposal Scalable?:** Yes

### Manager Information

**Manager's Name:** John Voz

**Title:** RIM Easement Program Coordinator

**Organization:** MNBWSR

**Address:** 1732 North Tower Road

**City:** Detroit Lakes, MN 56501

**Email:** john.voz@state.mn.us

**Office Number:** 218-850-4283

**Mobile Number:** 218-850-4283

**Fax Number:**

**Website:** www.bwsr.state.mn.us

### Location Information

**County Location(s):**

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

Forest / Prairie Transition

Prairie

Metro / Urban

**Activity types:**

Protect in Easement

Restore

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

Wetlands

Prairie

**Narrative****Abstract**

RIM Wetlands will protect and restore approximately 1,320 acres of previously drained wetlands and adjacent native grasslands on approximately 24 easements across the State to restore wetlands and associated uplands for habitat and associated benefits. The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) will utilize the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) easement program in partnership with local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCDs) to target, protect and restore high priority habitat. The program will utilize a ranking and selection process and be implemented locally by SWCD staff.

**Design and Scope of Work**

Wetlands are among the world's most productive environments with high biodiversity. Wetlands are home to many species of migratory and resident birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, insects, and plants. They also benefit society by storing floodwaters, filtering pollutants, serving as a carbon sink, and providing recreation sites. Minnesota has lost an estimated 42% of its original 16 million acres of wetlands to drainage or fill activities. The loss of wetlands is most severe in the prairie regions of the state (approximately 90% loss). Nearly 75 percent of all wetlands are privately owned.

Up to one-half of North American bird species nest or feed in wetlands and at least one third of all threatened and endangered species are found in wetlands. According to the North American Bird Conservation Initiatives "State of the Birds 2025," grassland birds are seeing the sharpest decline (down 43% since 1970) and are under serious pressure as federal support declines. "Birds strengthen American communities, and more than 100 million Americans who watch birds contribute \$279 billion to the nations economy every year." Moreover, wetlands are important nutrient sinks, store runoff that reduces flooding, sequester carbon, and provide other environmental and socioeconomic values.

The typical sites this program prioritizes and targets are privately drained and farmed wetlands and associated uplands that offer little habitat or ecological benefits in their current state. Through a combination of eligibility screening and a scoring and ranking process, the program evaluates and selects applications that provide the greatest habitat and environmental benefit after restoration and protection under a RIM easement.

RIM Wetlands is a local-state partnership delivered by SWCDs and BWSR. BWSR staff provide program oversight and manage the easement acquisition process and restoration design. Local staff promote RIM easements, assist with easement processing and provide technical assistance and project management services. RIM Wetlands will utilize funds to the greatest extent possible by leveraging federal funding through the Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (MN CREP) when possible. MN CREP is a partnership between the USDA and BWSR that provides voluntary conservation easement opportunities for landowners. MN CREP focuses on protecting environmentally sensitive land across 66 counties in Minnesota. Landowners enroll in the federally funded CRP for 14-15 years as well as a state-funded perpetual conservation easement through RIM.

RIM Wetlands will also secure conservation easements on lands not eligible for MN CREP and/or during periods when MN CREP enrollment is paused.

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

Tomorrow's Habitat for the Rare and Wild (MN DNR) states "A statewide look at the species-habitat relationships show that prairies, rivers, and wetlands are the three habitats used by the most Species of Greatest Conservation Need." This proposal targets wetlands and prairies, two of the three most important habitats used by the Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). An expansion of wetland and prairie habitat through this program will alleviate pressure on those species that are most sensitive to habitat changes occurring on the landscape.

SGCN in the proposal areas include the Five-lined Skink, Two-spotted Skipper, Northern Pintail, American Black Duck, Grasshopper Sparrow, Upland Sandpiper, Sedge Wren, Dickcissel, and Western Grebe. In addition to the SGCN, the threatened or endangered species targeted in this proposal include the Blanding's Turtle, Dakota Skipper, Poweshiek Skipperling, and Rusty Patched Bumble Bee.

Prairie wetlands are particularly important for migratory waterfowl. Although the North American prairie pothole region contains only about 10% of the waterfowl nesting habitat on the continent, it produces 70% of all North American waterfowl. The extensive loss of Minnesota's prairie and wetland habitat has led to the decline of many wildlife and plant species. The RIM Wetlands program continues to restore this habitat and protect it through perpetual easements.

Diverse vegetation, access to water, and protection from pesticides are important to Minnesota's native pollinator species. BWSR's native vegetation guidelines and pollinator initiative demonstrate a commitment to protecting native pollinators. Complexes and corridors targeted through RIM Wetlands provide natural passageways and habitat for pollinators. Targeted pollinator species include the Monarch Butterfly and several solitary bee species.

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

In 2025 & 2026, throughout Minnesota, 138,700 acres of the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will expire in Minnesota. RIM Wetlands program scoring and ranking criteria prioritizes expiring CRP land as well as restoration and protection of wetlands in comprehensive water plans, including One Watershed One Plans. "We must, collectively, bend the curve of bird population declines by working together across the western hemisphere." - National Audubon Society.

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

Science-based considerations historically used by the RIM Wetlands program will continue to be used. Through a combination of targeted outreach, eligibility screening, and a scoring and ranking process, the RIM Wetlands program evaluates each application on its potential to restore wetland/upland functions and values to optimize wildlife habitat and provide other benefits, including water quality. Each site is evaluated on its benefits to the surrounding landscape, ability to build upon existing corridors and complexes, and site-specific features that highlight the benefits of selection for permanent protection and habitat and associated environmental benefits.

During the application process, a review of adjacent permanent habitat and easement size is conducted to determine a site's importance as a corridor or as an extension to existing habitat complexes. Other examples of the science-based targeting used include proximity to threatened and endangered species, contributing watershed area, proximity to DNR Protected Waters, and the USFWS Habitat and Population Evaluation Team's (HAPET)

Wildlife Habitat Potential Model. The HAPET model is a consolidation of models representing an array of migratory birds that use the Minnesota Prairie Pothole Region for breeding or migration.

**Which top 2 Conservation Plans referenced in MS97A.056, subd. 3a are most applicable to this project?**

Long Range Duck Recovery 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.**

This proposal directly relates to four priority actions in the MN Climate Action Framework: 1) accelerate forest, grassland and wetland restoration, 2) Store more carbon, 3) restore and expand habitat complexes and corridors, and 4) increase water storage and infiltration and manage drainage.

**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

**Metro / Urban**

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

**Prairie**

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

**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:**

The permanent protection and restoration of approximately 1320 acres of previously drained wetlands and adjacent native grasslands on approximately 24 permanent easements through this proposal advances the legacy outcomes listed below for each section.

Prairie - The loss of wetlands is most severe in the prairie regions of the state. The permanent protection and restoration of wetland habitat and associated uplands through RIM Wetlands will advance the Prairie Section outcome of a healthy and plentiful supply of habitat for fish, game, and wildlife, especially for waterfowl and upland birds. Another priority of the Prairie Section, expiring CRP contracts, will also be targeted through the RIM Wetlands program in order to permanently protect these acres.

Forest/Prairie Transition - The corridors and complexes this program targets and restores reflects the Forest/Prairie Transition Section outcome of diverse and productive grasslands and wetlands that are connected by corridors, providing multiple benefits in the face of climate change and other major stressors including keeping

water on the land.

Metro Urbanizing - Targeting permanent conservation on acres that provide important connections and wildlife habitat advances the Metro Urbanizing Section outcome of complexes and corridors of biologically diverse habitat by providing multiple conservation benefits.

## Outcomes

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

Wetland and upland complexes will consist of native prairies, restored prairies, quality grasslands, and restored shallow lakes and wetlands ~ *A summary of wetland acres and associated native grasslands acquired through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure outcomes are maintained. An increase of wetland and associated grassland habitat are expected to increase the carrying capacity of wetland and grassland dependent wildlife. This has a positive impact on both game and non-game species. We expect more abundant populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as complexes are restored.*

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

Core areas protected with highly biologically diverse wetlands and plant communities, including native prairie, Big Woods, and oak savanna ~ *A summary of wetland acres and associated native grasslands acquired through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure outcomes are maintained. An increase of wetland and associated grassland habitat are expected to increase the carrying capacity of wetland and grassland dependent wildlife. This has a positive impact on both game and non-game species. We expect more abundant populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as complexes are restored.*

### **Programs in prairie region:**

Protected, restored, and enhanced shallow lakes and wetlands ~ *A summary of wetland acres and associated native grasslands acquired through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure outcomes are maintained. An increase of wetland and associated grassland habitat are expected to increase the carrying capacity of wetland and grassland dependent wildlife. This has a positive impact on both game and non-game species. We expect more abundant populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as complexes are restored.*

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

Clean Water Fund

### **Per MS 97A.056, Subd. 24, Please explain whether the request is supplanting or is a substitution for any previous funding that was not from a legacy fund and was used for the same purpose.**

This funding request is not supplanting existing funding or a substitution for any previous funding.

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

BWSR is responsible for monitoring and enforcement of RIM easements. BWSR partners with local SWCDs to carry out oversight, monitoring and inspection of conservation easements. Easements are inspected every year for the first five years beginning the year after the easement is recorded. Thereafter, on-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years. SWCDs document findings and

report to BWSR on each site inspection conducted. A non-compliance procedure is implemented when potential violations are identified.

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 existing enforcement authorities. The amount listed for Easement Stewardship includes costs of SWCD regular monitoring, BWSR oversight and any enforcement necessary.

### Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2021-Ongoing	Stewardship Account	Inspection every year for the first 5 years; then every 3rd year	Corrective actions on any violations	Enforcement action taken by MN Attorney General office
2021-Ongoing	Landowner Responsibility	Maintain compliance with easement terms	-	-

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

For our statewide programs, BWSR will pilot designating a percentage of the easement acquisition budget line for applicants who self-certify as emerging farmers or from underserved populations, including Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC). If funds remain at the end of a predetermined number of scoring/ranking periods and there are no additional applicants, the remaining funds would be added to the larger easement acquisition pool of funding. Being a statewide program, rural communities and areas of the state with lower annual income thresholds will benefit from this program in several ways, including financial benefits. RIM easements not only offer financial benefits for landowners, but they also require outreach, monitoring and maintenance which help maintain and grow rural jobs and economies.

### 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?**

Other : RIM Perpetual 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:**

In certain circumstances, wildlife food plots are an allowable use on RIM easements as part of an approved Conservation Plan. Food plots on narrow buffers, steep slopes and wet areas are not allowed. RIM policy limits food plot size and number. There is no cost share for establishment of food plots and upon termination the landowners must re-establish vegetation as prescribed in the Conservation Plan at their expense.

**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:**

Existing trails and roads are identified during the easement acquisition process and are often excluded from the easement area if they serve no purpose to easement maintenance, monitoring or enforcement. Some roads and trails, such as agricultural field accesses, are allowed to remain.

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

Yes

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

Under the terms of the RIM Easement, landowners are required to maintain compliance with the easement. Easements are monitored annually by SWCDs in cooperation with BWSR for the first five years and then every third year after easement acquisition to assure compliance with easement terms.

A conservation plan is developed with the landowner and maintained as part of each easement. Basic easement compliance costs are borne by the landowner, periodic enhancements may be cost shared from a variety of sources.

**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:**

Though uncommon, new trails could be developed if they contribute to easement maintenance or benefit the easement site (e.g. fire breaks, berm maintenance). Unauthorized trails are in violation of the easement.

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

The easements secured under this project will be managed as part of BWSR's RIM Reserve Program that has over 7,500 easements currently in place. Easements are monitored annually for each of the first five years and then every third year after that. BWSR, in cooperation with SWCDs, implement a stewardship process to track, monitor quality and assure compliance with easement terms.



Under the terms of the Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM) Easement Program, landowners are required to maintain compliance with the easement. A conservation plan is developed with the landowner and maintained as part of each easement. Basic easement compliance costs are borne by the landowner, periodic enhancements may be cost shared from a variety of sources.

**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
2025	\$4,291,000	-	-	-
2024	\$3,202,000	\$822,580	\$2,379,420	25.69%
2023	\$4,122,000	\$2,674,757	\$1,447,243	64.89%
2022	\$4,199,000	\$3,692,850	\$506,150	87.95%
2021	\$3,051,000	\$2,580,251	\$470,749	84.57%
Totals	\$18,865,000	\$9,770,438	\$9,094,562	51.79%

### Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Easements recorded	June 30, 2030
Restorations complete	June 30, 2034



**Budget****Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$716,500	-	-	\$716,500
Contracts	\$120,000	-	-	\$120,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$12,618,100	\$14,973,300	USDA-FSA CRP	\$27,591,400
Easement Stewardship	\$240,000	-	-	\$240,000
Travel	\$24,500	-	-	\$24,500
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$235,400	-	-	\$235,400
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$35,000	-	-	\$35,000
Supplies/Materials	\$10,500	-	-	\$10,500
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$14,000,000</b>	<b>\$14,973,300</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$28,973,300</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Engineering Staff	0.64	4.0	\$367,100	-	-	\$367,100
Easements Staff	0.56	4.0	\$349,400	-	-	\$349,400

**Amount of Request:** \$14,000,000**Amount of Leverage:** \$14,973,300**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 106.95%**DSS + Personnel:** \$951,900**As a % of the total request:** 6.8%**Easement Stewardship:** \$240,000**As a % of the Easement Acquisition:** 1.9%

Total Leverage (from above)	Amount Confirmed	% of Total Leverage	Amount Anticipated	% of Total Leverage
\$14,973,300	-	0.0%	\$14,973,300	100.0%

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

January 17, 2017, Governor Dayton signed a \$500 million MN CREP Agreement with the USDA, which consists of approximately \$350 million from USDA. Governor Walz extended the agreement on January 2, 2025. CRP soil rental rates on easements secured through MN CREP contribute to the amount of federal leverage achieved.

**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 50% reduction in funding would reduce outputs proportionally. Program management & oversight remain relatively consistent regardless of appropriation amount.

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

Personnel and DSS costs would be scaled accordingly. BWSR calculates direct support services costs that are directly related to and necessary for each request based on the type of work being done.

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

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

A 30% reduction in funding would reduce outputs proportionally. Program management & oversight remain relatively consistent regardless of appropriation amount.

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

Personnel and DSS costs would be scaled accordingly. BWSR calculates direct support services costs that are directly related to and necessary for each request based on the type of work being done.

### **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?**

This is Phase 16 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?**

The contract line amount will be used for payments to SWCD staff for easement implementation. Estimated restoration costs are included in the easements acquisition line.

### **Easement Stewardship**

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

Perpetual monitoring and enforcement costs have been calculated at \$10,000 per easement and 24 easements are anticipated to be completed. This value is based on using local SWCD staff for monitoring and existing enforcement authorities. The amount listed for Easement Stewardship covers costs of the SWCD regular monitoring, BWSR oversight, and enforcement.

### **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**

The travel line only includes traditional travel costs of mileage, food and lodging.

**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 annually reviews and updates direct support services costs that are directly related to and necessary for each request based on the type of work being done.

**Other Equipment/Tools**

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

None anticipated at this time but we keep a small amount in this budget line for contingencies. Examples may be signs, posts, hand held field equipment, etc.

**Federal Funds**

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

Yes

**Are the funds confirmed?**

Yes

Cash : \$14,973,300

**Is Confirmation Document attached?**

[Yes](#)

## Output Tables

### Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	528	792	0	0	1,320
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,320</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	1,320	0	1,320	-	-	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,320</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,320</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.)	-	-	-	-
Easements	0	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</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	\$5,600,000	\$8,400,000	-	-	\$14,000,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,600,000</b>	<b>\$8,400,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$14,000,000</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	45	483	0	792	0	1,320
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,320</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	\$300,000	\$5,300,000	-	\$8,400,000	-	\$14,000,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>	<b>\$5,300,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$8,400,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$14,000,000</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	\$10,606	\$10,606	-	-
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	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	\$6,666	\$10,973	-	\$10,606	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

### Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or 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:**

Through a combination of targeted outreach and eligibility screening followed by a scoring and ranking process, the RIM Wetlands program evaluates each application on the potential to restore wetland/upland functions and values; optimizing wildlife habitat benefits and providing other benefits including water quality. Each site is evaluated on its benefits to the surrounding landscape, ability to build upon existing corridors and complexes, and site-specific features that highlight the benefits of permanent protection and habitat.

During the application process, a review of adjacent permanent habitat and easement size is conducted to indicate a site's usefulness as a corridor or extension to an existing habitat complex. Other examples of the science-based targeting used include proximity to threatened and endangered species, contributing watershed area, proximity to DNR Protected Waters, and use of the USFWS Habitat and Population Evaluation Team's (HAPET) Wildlife Habitat Potential Model for environmental evaluation.

BWSR will continue to utilize similar science-based considerations that have been historically used by the RIM Wetlands program. The current scoring and ranking criteria for wetland practices is attached as an example of the score sheet and criteria that is used.

May 23, 2025

## RIM Wetlands: Restoring the most productive habitat in Minnesota

### ML26 Request

The Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Wetlands program is Minnesota's primary private lands easement program that focuses on restoring wetlands and associated uplands. RIM Wetlands will secure conservation easements on lands eligible for MN CREP when appropriate to capitalize on significant leverage.

#### This request:

- Will permanently protect, restore, and manage resources while private ownership continues
- 1,320 acres
- \$14 million



### Benefits to Minnesotans

- Restores and permanently protects wildlife habitat that supports healthy populations
- Benefits society by storing floodwaters, filtering pollutants, serving as a carbon sink, and providing fishing and boating recreation sites
- Creates and sustains Minnesota jobs



### For more information

**John Voz**, Easement Program Coordinator  
Board of Water and Soil Resources  
(218) 850-4283, [John.Voz@state.mn.us](mailto:John.Voz@state.mn.us)

### Demand

- Landowner interest in wetland easements and restorations is consistently high
- Each year, the program spends approximately \$12 million in OHF and \$21 million in CWF for easements and restoration
- Provides an opportunity to protect expiring Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands



## Funding history & accomplishments

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### RIM Wetland Reserve Partnership (WRP)

- \$65,863,000 received
- 239 easements
- 23,800 acres

### Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) 2016-18

- \$34,206,000 received
- 137 easements
- 9,400 acres
- Leveraged federal Farm Service Agency funds

### RIM Wetlands

- \$14,574,000 received
- 32 easements completed and in-process
- 1,600 acres
- Leverages Minnesota Clean Water Funds

## Landowner easement payments

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