Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Minnesota River Watershed Habitat Conservation Program Phase 2

Laws of Minnesota 2027 Accomplishment Plan

General Information

Date: 10/19/2026

Project Title: Minnesota River Watershed Habitat Conservation Program Phase 2

Funds Recommended: $2,681,000

Legislative Citation:

Appropriation Language:

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Todd Rexine
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Location Information

County Location(s): Chippewa, Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Big Stone, Redwood, Nicollet and Brown.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

Prairie

Activity types:

Enhance

Protect in Easement

Restore

Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

Forest

Habitat

Prairie

Wetlands

Narrative

Abstract

Funding for conservation in the Minnesota River watershed has been applied unevenly to date, with some priorities receiving significant funding resulting in enormous conservation outcomes; others far less. The Minnesota River Watershed Habitat Conservation Program brings a holistic approach to conservation action within the watershed, targeting resources/actions where they are needed most – priorities insufficiently funded. Great River Greening and Minnesota Land Trust will target action within priority areas identified in Minnesota's Wildlife Action Network, emphasizing Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), protecting 169 acres through conservation easements and in fee, and restoring/enhancing 274 acres of priority habitat.

Design and Scope of Work

The Minnesota River watershed covers 20% of the state's land area, stretching from the South Dakota and Iowa borders to the Twin Cities Metro area. Historically, the watershed traversed a great variety of ecosystems ranging from grasslands and prairie pothole regions to Big Woods and oak savanna. Scattered throughout these major systems were over three million acres of wetlands and lakes.

That historic natural landscape has greatly diminished. While prairie once covered one-third of Minnesota, only 1% remains today. Over 90% of wetlands have been drained, 80-85% of the historic Big Woods are lost, and rock outcrops in the region were targeted for mineral extraction. This loss of habitat has had profound impacts on Minnesota's native species. More than 140 SGCN are known or expected to occur within the watershed.

Protecting these habitats, improving the condition of what remains, and rebuilding connectivity between remnants is key for ensuring the long-term viability of these systems and Minnesota's SGCN. This is the goal of our program.

To date, significant investment through the Outdoor Heritage Fund has been delivered to portions of the Minnesota River watershed. The Metro Big Rivers partnership has achieved significant outcomes in the lower reaches of the Minnesota River near the Twin Cities. A variety of funded programs – led by Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Minnesota Land Trust and others – have been successful in delivering conservation in the western portions of the watershed.

Building off momentum from Phase 1, program partners Great River Greening (GRG) and Minnesota Land Trust

(MLT) will bring their respective expertise to bear in elevating conservation impacts across the watershed with added focus in the central portion of the watershed where OHF and other sources of conservation investments have remained insufficient in comparison to needs. Greening will work with the MN DNR, county municipalities, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to undertake targeted habitat improvement projects. Greening will address the greatest present threats to protected lands within the watershed - cedar and invasive woody encroachment and lack of diversity to support SGCN. Greening will restore and enhance 274 acres on three state Wildlife Management Areas and one wildlife refuge across three counties.

The Land Trust will protect 169 acres of wetlands, rock outcrops, riparian forest, prairies, prairie streams and associated upland habitat through conservation easements and fee acquisition. Using MLT's uniquely flexible conservation easement, priority parcels within Minnesota's Wildlife Action Network or that build off prior conservation investments will be targeted. The Land Trust will use its market-based approach to conservation easements that incentivizes landowner contribution of easement value as leverage to funding through the OHF. MLT will collaborate with the DNR and other conservation partners to acquire lands in fee that add to existing habitat complexes. The goal with this program is to add needed capacity to the fee acquisition work already underway.

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

The Minnesota River Watershed Habitat Conservation Program directly benefits SGCN and other important game and non-game species by minimizing the potential threats to their habitat caused by agricultural practices, residential or commercial development, mining, and other land management activities. Habitat complexes targeted through this proposal will include prairies, wetlands, woodlands, and rock outcrops. Priority projects will include high- or outstanding-quality habitat as identified in Minnesota Biological Survey data or otherwise located within priority areas of Minnesota's Wildlife Action Network. We will seek to build off prior conservation investments, prioritizing projects located near other protected lands to create larger habitat complexes for the benefit of SGCN.

The vast majority of this landscape is in private ownership. For that reason, working with private landowners on land protection strategies is key to successful conservation in this region. We will work closely with conservation partners in the region to identify those habitat complexes where private land protection can make a significant contribution to existing conservation investments.

We will work to improve lower-quality habitats on federal, state, and county parcels, to the benefit of SGCN. Some examples:

- While protected, some public lands are in need of cedar or buckthorn control, and lack the diversity of vegetation needed for SGCNs, including skipper butterflies, grasshopper and Henslow's sparrow, western meadowlarks, and more.
- The Swan Lake wildlife management complex will receive invasive tree and shrub removal and understory enhancement of big woods habitat.
- Prairie-wetland specialist species are in rapid decline due to tree encroachment, invasive species, and habitat fragmentation. GRG will remove trees on 274 acres on Wildlife Management Areas in the Prairie Pothole Region.
- Acquisition of one parcel for addition to the Bergo WMA will permanently protect native prairie and add to the matrix of lands available to the public in the Minnesota River Valley.
- Acquisition of a conservation easement adjacent to the Picnic Rock WMA will expand on the public investment along the Blue Earth River by creating a large block of permanent habitat benefiting SGCN.

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

Land prices have skyrocketed in recent years, and along with that an increasing demand for agricultural land, mineral deposits, and housing sites. With natural habitat within the Minnesota River watershed already minimized through historic land uses, these demands are placing an inordinate pressure on those that remain. It is more important than ever to protect what remains of the prairies, wetlands, savannas, and forests in the Minnesota River watershed. A short window of opportunity exists to permanently protect previously unavailable parcels as current land ownership is transitioning from one generation to the next.

Insufficient financial investment into some priority areas for restoration and enhancement is also having an impact. Cedar coverage has increased by 200-300% in just ten years on many rock outcrops and prairies with costs to remove them correlating with the coverage; their expansion continues to reduce habitat quality for SGCNs.

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

This program is focused on procuring conservation easements and restoring prairie, woodland, rock outcrop, and wetland habitats within priority complexes of habitat as guided by Minnesota's State Wildlife Action Plan and Prairie Plan.

The Land Trust's protection work will build upon past conservation investments in the program area, expand the footprint of existing protected areas (WMAs, WPAs, etc.), facilitate the protection of habitat corridors, and reduce the potential for fragmentation of existing habitats by providing landowners with alternatives to land uses that degrade or destroy habitat. Specific parcels available for easement acquisition are evaluated relative to each other, with priorities given to those that are adjacent or in close proximity to existing protected lands (among other factors).

Many of the remaining native prairies, forests, and wetlands of the watershed where Greening will perform restoration and enhancement activities are concentrated around unique landforms and steep slopes in the river valleys such as on rock outcrops and ridges making these habitats priority protection and enhancement areas within an existing corridor. Fragmentation created by invasive and woody species like reed canary grass and red cedar further leads to an urgent need for enhancement and natural disturbance management to restore those corridors. Great River Greening also utilizes the Wildlife Action Network and Minnesota County Biological Survey data and proximity to known populations of SGCN to identify priorities for enhancement and restoration work. Within the watershed are 6 of the 36 Conservation Focus Areas identified by Minnesota's Wildlife Action Network in Minnesota, and 6 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) identified by Audubon. Activities on the prioritized sites will improve and expand high-value habitat.

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

Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan

Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan 2015-2025

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program?

Prairie

Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna

Outcomes

Programs in prairie region:

Protected, restored, and enhanced habitat for migratory and unique Minnesota species ~ *Parcels are prioritized relative to their benefit to SGCN (among other factors). Success will be determined based on the acreage of lands protected, restored, and enhanced.*

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

This request is not supplanting or substituting for any previous funding that was not from a legacy fund and was used for the same purpose.

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

Land protected through MLT conservation easements will be sustained through state-of-the-art standards and practices for conservation easement stewardship that includes annual property monitoring, effective records management, addressing inquiries and interpretations, tracking changes in ownership, investigating potential violations and defending the easement in case of a true violation. Funding for these easement stewardship activities is included in the project budget.

In addition, MLT will assist landowners in the development of comprehensive habitat management plans to help ensure that the land will be managed for its wildlife and water quality benefits. MLT (as easement holder) will work with landowners on an ongoing basis to provide habitat plans and technical expertise to undertake enhancement and ongoing management of these properties.

Lands acquired in fee will be transferred to the DNR and will be maintained as public lands.

For Restoration and Enhancement (R/E) on protected land, site-specific resource management plans will be developed/adopted to guide effective long-term management. All land managers benefiting from R/E must commit to the long-term maintenance of these sites. A principal goal for each site is to elevate its ecological condition so that on-going management is financially feasible after a grant closes.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2031 and in perpetuity	MLT Long-Term Stewardship and Enforcement Fund	Annual monitoring of easements in perpetuity	Enforcement as necessary	-
2031 and in perpetuity	MLT- OHF- DNR	MLT - Transfer to DNR DNR - Initial Development Plan	DNR - Monitoring and maintenance	DNR - Additional habitat restoration as needed
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
2028	GRG - OHF	Initiate R/E	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

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

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

Protecting, restoring, and enhancing diverse and resilient habitat 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.

Great River Greening involves, engages, and seeks to benefit diverse communities through focused events that leverage Outdoor Heritage Funds in their programs. Our partners actively encourage residents who live near habitat restoration sites and create programs specifically for people from diverse backgrounds opening up opportunities such as GRG's Engaging a Diverse Population Program.

One of the MLT's core public values is a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We have been engaged in a multi-year-long process to assess how the conservation community—and the Minnesota Land Trust in particular—can better address these issues. To date, we have demonstrated this commitment, when possible, given the funding parameters and our unique role in working with private landowners, including numerous projects to protect the camps and nature centers that serve a diversity of Minnesota youth and a long-term partnership with the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa on wild rice restoration.

Going forward, GRG and MLT intend to build on this engagement using diversity, equity, and inclusion as a lens to seek out new partnerships, listening to those partners, and collaborating on actions that advance the goals of conserving the best of Minnesota's remaining habitats. We are 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

If funded, this program will meet all applicable criteria set forth in MS 97A.056?
Yes

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

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

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

Who will manage the easement?
Minnesota Land Trust

Who will be the easement holder?
Minnesota Land Trust

What is the anticipated number of easements (range is fine) you plan to accomplish with this appropriation?
2-3

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

Permanently Protected Conservation Easements

Refuge Lands

County/Municipal

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. Food plots constitute a very small percent of our total land area protected through conservation easement. Our practice is to limit the area of food plots to no more than 3% of the total easement area of a property, 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.

State Wildlife Management Areas are part of the State's Outdoor Recreation System established by State Statute 86A. Subdivision 8 of that statute defines the purpose of use of WMA's as, " -A state wildlife management area shall be established to protect those lands and waters which have a high potential for wildlife production and to develop and manage these lands and waters for the production of wildlife, for public hunting, fishing, and trapping, and for other compatible outdoor recreational uses."

To fulfill those goals, the DNR may use limited farming on a small percentage of WMA's (<1%) specifically to enhance or benefit the management of state lands for wildlife, recreation or reduce crop depredation from neighboring properties in agriculture-dominated landscapes with limited winter food sources. Commonly planted crops include corn, soybeans, small grains and hay that can include alfalfa or a wildlife mix. Crops are chosen based on a particular wildlife or recreational need and follow crop rotations that adhere to soil health principles. Most food plots occupy a small portion of a particular tract and may include up to 5% of a particular parcel. Percentages are much lower considering the entire WMA system.

DNR does not have any plans to plant food plots on the parcels currently listed in this proposal. However, future management needs may change or additional parcels may be added later that may include food plots.

Will insecticides or fungicides (including neonicotinoid and fungicide treated seed) be used within any activities of this program 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:
No variation from state regulations.

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

State of MN

County

Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:

WMA

AMA

What is the anticipated number of closed acquisitions (range is fine) you plan to accomplish with this appropriation?
1-2

Will the eased land be open for public use?
No

Will new trails or roads be developed or improved, beyond those used for maintenance and management, as a result of the proposed acquisition?
No

Will the acquired parcels be restored or enhanced within this appropriation?
No

Initial restoration activities will be conducted by the MN DNR through DNR IDP. The Land Trust will assess the R/E needs of each parcel protected through this appropriation. Should R/E needs exist, funding for those projects will be built into a forthcoming proposal.

Will the land that you acquire (fee or easement) be restored or enhanced within this program's funding and availability?
No

Explain how and when the restoration/enhancement work will be completed and identify the source of funding:
The Land Trust will assess the R/E needs of each parcel protected through this appropriation. Should R/E needs exist, funding for those projects will be built into a forthcoming proposal.

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Restoration and enhancement completed	June 30, 2032
Acquisitions in fee completed	June 30, 2031
Conservation easements completed	June 30, 2031
Finalize restoration and enhancement plans	June 30, 2027

Date of Final Report Submission: 10/01/2032

Availability of Appropriation: Subd. 7. Availability of Appropriation
(a) Money appropriated in this section may not be spent on activities unless they are directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation and are specified in the accomplishment plan approved by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. Money appropriated in this section must not be spent on indirect costs or other institutional overhead charges that are not directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation. Money appropriated for fee title acquisition of land may be used to restore, enhance, and provide for public use of the land acquired with the appropriation. Public-use facilities must have a minimal impact on habitat in acquired lands.
(b) Money appropriated in this section is available as follows:
(1) money appropriated for acquiring real property is available until June 30, 2031;
(2) money appropriated for restoring and enhancing land acquired with an appropriation in this section is available for four years after the acquisition date with a maximum end date of June 30, 2035;
(3) money appropriated for restoring or enhancing other land is available until June 30, 2032;
(4) notwithstanding clauses (1) to (3), money appropriated for a project that receives at least 15 percent of its funding from federal funds is available until a date sufficient to match the availability of federal funding to a maximum of six years if the federal funding was confirmed and included in the original approved draft accomplishment plan; and
(5) money appropriated for other projects is available until the end of the fiscal year in which it is appropriated.

Budget

Budget reallocations up to 10% do not require an amendment to the Accomplishment Plan.

Grand Totals Across All Partnerships

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	$340,000	$12,500	Private	$352,500
Contracts	$913,000	-	-	$913,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	$500,000	-	-	$500,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	$454,000	$45,000	-, Landowners	$499,000
Easement Stewardship	$112,000	-	-	$112,000
Travel	$27,000	-	-	$27,000
Professional Services	$88,000	-	-	$88,000
Direct Support Services	$107,000	$65,000	Private	$172,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	$15,000	-	-	$15,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	$6,000	-	-	$6,000
Supplies/Materials	$98,000	-	-	$98,000
DNR IDP	$21,000	-	-	$21,000
Grand Total	**$2,681,000**	**$122,500**	**-**	**$2,803,500**

Partner: Great River Greening

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	$165,000	$12,500	Private	$177,500
Contracts	$899,000	-	-	$899,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	$21,000	-	-	$21,000
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	$59,000	$65,000	Private	$124,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	$5,000	-	-	$5,000
Supplies/Materials	$58,000	-	-	$58,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	**$1,207,000**	**$77,500**	**-**	**$1,284,500**

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
GRG Personnel	0.43	5.0	$165,000	$12,500	Private	$177,500

Partner: Minnesota Land Trust

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	$175,000	-	-	$175,000
Contracts	$14,000	-	-	$14,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	$500,000	-	-	$500,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	$454,000	$45,000	Landowners	$499,000
Easement Stewardship	$112,000	-	-	$112,000
Travel	$6,000	-	-	$6,000
Professional Services	$88,000	-	-	$88,000
Direct Support Services	$48,000	-	-	$48,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	$15,000	-	-	$15,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	$1,000	-	-	$1,000
Supplies/Materials	$40,000	-	-	$40,000
DNR IDP	$21,000	-	-	$21,000
Grand Total	**$1,474,000**	**$45,000**	**-**	**$1,519,000**

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
MLT Staff, including CEO; Directors of Land Protection, Development & Communications, Finance & Operations, and Stewardship; General Counsel; and various Sr. Managers, Managers, and others	0.4	4.0	$175,000	-	-	$175,000

Amount of Request: $2,681,000
Amount of Leverage: $122,500
Leverage as a percent of the Request: 4.57%
DSS + Personnel: $447,000
As a % of the total request: 16.67%
Easement Stewardship: $112,000
As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 24.67%

How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount?
MLT and GRG funding and project outputs were reduced by 72%, resulting in 2-3 proposed easement acquisitions

delivering ~ 99 acres and 1-2 fee acquisitions delivering ~ 70 acres. Landowning partners have assisted in identifying 274 acres across 4 parcels of highest priority R/E needs.

Detail leverage sources and confirmation of funds:
MLT encourages landowners to fully or partially donate the value of conservation easements. The leverage amount is a conservative anticipated estimate we expect to see donated by landowners.

Greening has $77,500 of committed leverage. Ongoing discussions with various regional conservation groups is raising awareness and Greening anticipates additional leverage.

Does this project 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?
Acre scaling will be reduced moderately greater than proportional due to fixed costs and other factors. Activities will be curtailed, but greater than proportional, 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 scaled, 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

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?
Greening's contract line includes restoration/enhancement contracts by service providers.

MLT - Habitat management plan preparation, landowner outreach, etc.

Professional Services

What is included in the Professional Services line?

Appraisals

Other : Phase 2 Environmental Assessments, Mapping, Mineral Reports, etc.

Surveys

Title Insurance and Legal Fees

Fee Acquisition

What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?
1-2

Easement Stewardship

What is the number of easements anticipated, cost per easement for stewardship, and explain how that amount is calculated?
2 -3 easements anticipated. $28,000 per easement for stewardship. Land protected through MLT conservation easements will be sustained through state-of-the-art standards and practices for conservation easement stewardship that includes annual property monitoring, effective records management, addressing inquiries and interpretations, tracking changes in ownership, investigating potential violations and defending the easement in case of a true violation. Funding for these easement stewardship activities is included in the project budget.

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?
Greening - DSS rate has been approved by the DNR in September 2019, 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.

MLT - In a process approved by the DNR on March 17, 2017, MLT's DSS rate includes the allowable direct and necessary expenditures that are not captured in other line items in the budget. This is similar to the MLT's proposed federal indirect rate. MLT will apply this DNR-approved rate only to personnel expenses.

Other Equipment/Tools

Give examples of the types of Equipment and Tools that will be purchased?
Hand tools, saws, brush cutters, GPS devices, safety gear 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	12	34	-	-	46
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	70	70
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	99	99
Enhance	-	228	-	-	228
Total	**12**	**262**	**-**	**169**	**443**

How many of these Prairie acres are Native Prairie? (Table 1b)

Type	Native Prairie (acres)
Restore	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-
Protect in Easement	20
Enhance	-
Total	**20**

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	$50,000	$100,000	-	-	$150,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	$675,000	$675,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	$799,000	$799,000
Enhance	-	$737,000	$320,000	-	$1,057,000
Total	**$50,000**	**$837,000**	**$320,000**	**$1,474,000**	**$2,681,000**

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	-	-	-	46	-	46
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	70	-	70
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	99	-	99
Enhance	-	-	-	228	-	228
Total	**-**	**-**	**-**	**443**	**-**	**443**

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	$150,000	-	$150,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	$675,000	-	$675,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	$799,000	-	$799,000
Enhance	-	-	-	$1,057,000	-	$1,057,000
Total	**-**	**-**	**-**	**$2,681,000**	**-**	**$2,681,000**

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	$4,166	$2,941	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	$9,642
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	$8,070
Enhance	-	$3,232	-	-

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	-	-	$3,260	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	$9,642	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	$8,070	-
Enhance	-	-	-	$4,635	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Parcels

Parcel Information

Sign-up Criteria?
Yes - Sign up criteria is attached

Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:
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, SGCN, size, and location), congruence with existing plans and priority areas, willing and committed landowners (demonstrated through leveraged match), and leveraging opportunities. The following table includes state WMA, county, and easement parcels.

The 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
GRG - Big Stone NWR	Big Stone	12145201	24	$320,000	Yes	Locust removal, Siberian elm removal
GRG - Williams Nature Center	Blue Earth	10827216	0	$0	Yes	0
GRG - Rosenau-Lambrecht WMA	Brown	11031217	97	$295,000	Yes	prairie and wetland enhancement. woody invasive removal, RX burn and seeding
GRG - Vogel WMA	Brown	10835203	56	$146,000	Yes	Tree removal on grassland and around wetlands
GRG - Lake Washington Regional Park	Le Sueur	10926212	0	$0	Yes	-
GRG - Ney Nature Center	Le Sueur	10926201	0	$0	Yes	0
GRG - Swan Lake WMA Complex	Nicollet	10928228	97	$446,000	Yes	Tree, shrub, and invasives removal across 97 acres of forest/oak savanna including cedar and Siberian elm removal
GRG - Delhi WMA	Redwood	11336225	0	$0	Yes	-
GRG - Two Rivers WMA	Redwood	10938202	0	$0	Yes	-

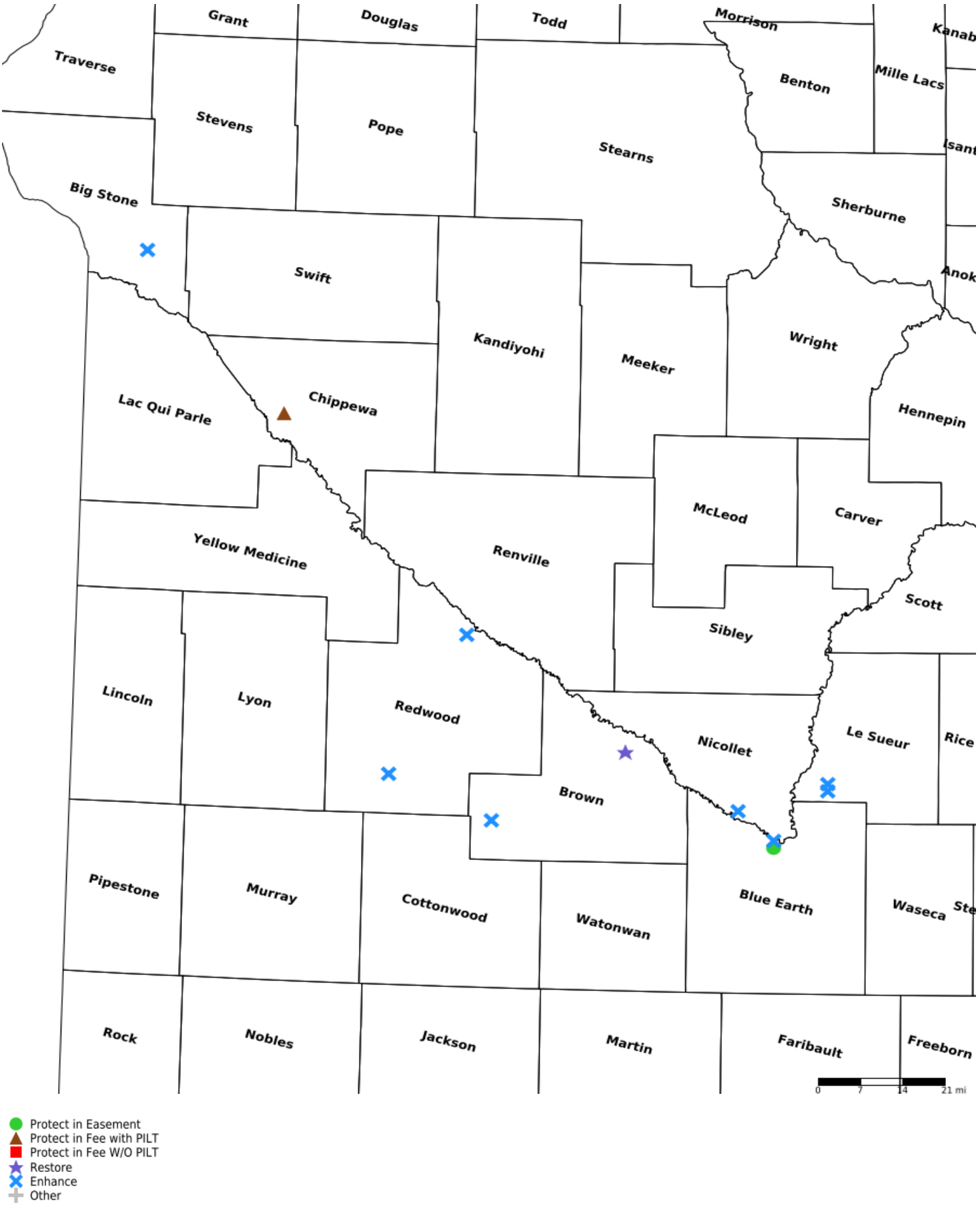
Fee Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
MLT - Bergo WMA	Chippewa	11841226	58	$200,000	No

Easement Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
MLT - Blue Earth River - Picnic Rock	Blue Earth	10827221	155	$1,300,000	No

Parcel Map


Grant
Douglas
Todd
Morrison
Traverse
Stevens
Pope
Stearns
Benton
Mille Lacs
Big Stone
Swift
Kandiyohi
Meeker
Sherburne
Wright
Lac Qui Parle
Chippewa
Hennepin
McLeod
Carver
Yellow Medicine
Renville
Sibley
Scott
Lincoln
Lyon
Redwood
Nicollet
Le Sueur
Rice
Brown
Pipestone
Murray
Cottonwood
Watonwan
Blue Earth
Waseca
Rock
Nobles
Jackson
Martin
Faribault
Freeborn
0
7
14
21 mi
Protect in Easement
Protect in Fee with PILT
Protect in Fee W/O PILT
Restore
Enhance
Other

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Minnesota River Watershed Habitat Conservation Program Phase 2

Comparison Report

Program Title: ML 2027 - Minnesota River Watershed Habitat Conservation Program Phase 2
Organization: Great River Greening
Manager: Todd Rexine

Budget

Requested Amount: $9,680,000
Appropriated Amount: $2,681,000
Percentage: 27.7%

Item	Requested Proposal	Leverage Proposal	Appropriated AP	Leverage AP	Percent of Request	Percent of Leverage
Personnel	$879,000	$12,500	$340,000	$12,500	38.68%	100.0%
Contracts	$3,493,000	-	$913,000	-	26.14%	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	$1,500,000	-	$500,000	-	33.33%	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	$2,500,000	$250,000	$454,000	$45,000	18.16%	18.0%
Easement Stewardship	$224,000	-	$112,000	-	50.0%	-
Travel	$84,000	-	$27,000	-	32.14%	-
Professional Services	$366,000	-	$88,000	-	24.04%	-
Direct Support Services	$275,000	$170,000	$107,000	$65,000	38.91%	38.24%
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	$45,000	-	$15,000	-	33.33%	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	$16,000	-	$6,000	-	37.5%	-
Supplies/Materials	$277,000	-	$98,000	-	35.38%	-
DNR IDP	$21,000	-	$21,000	-	100.0%	-
Grand Total	**$9,680,000**	**$432,500**	**$2,681,000**	**$122,500**	**27.7%**	**28.32%**

If the project received 70% of the requested funding

Describe how the scaling would affect acres/activities and if not proportionately reduced, why?
Acre scaling will be reduced moderately greater than proportional due to fixed costs and other factors. Activities will be curtailed, but greater than proportional, 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 scaled, 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.

If the project received 50% of the requested funding

Describe how the scaling would affect acres/activities and if not proportionately reduced, why?
Acre scaling will be moderately greater than proportional due to fixed costs and other factors. Activities will be curtailed, but greater than proportional, 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 scaled, 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.

Output

Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	60	46	76.67%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	120	70	58.33%
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Easement	550	99	18.0%
Enhance	1,031	228	22.11%

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	$256,000	$150,000	58.59%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	$1,766,000	$675,000	38.22%
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	$3,519,000	$799,000	22.71%
Enhance	$4,139,000	$1,057,000	25.54%

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	60	46	76.67%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	120	70	58.33%
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Easement	550	99	18.0%
Enhance	1,031	228	22.11%

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	$256,000	$150,000	58.59%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	$1,766,000	$675,000	38.22%
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	$3,519,000	$799,000	22.71%
Enhance	$4,139,000	$1,057,000	25.54%