



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Protection Program Phase 14
ML 2027 Request for Funding

General Information

Date: 06/24/2026

Proposal Title: Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Protection Program Phase 14

Funds Requested: \$5,820,000

Confirmed Leverage Funds: -

Is this proposal Scalable?: Yes

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Shannon Wettstein

Title: District Manager

Organization: Morrison SWCD

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Location Information

County Location(s):

Eco regions in which work will take place:

Northern Forest

Forest / Prairie Transition

Activity types:

Protect in Easement

Priority resources addressed by activity:

Forest

Habitat

Wetlands

Prairie

Narrative**Abstract**

Phase 14 of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape (CRSL) Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) Protection Program will permanently protect 20 high-priority parcels through conservation easements, creating connected habitat corridors that sustain fish, game, and wildlife populations while reducing fragmentation and development pressure. The project will conserve approximately 1,400 acres of high-quality terrestrial and aquatic habitat. Protection efforts advance goals identified in the Minnesota State Wildlife Action Plan (MN SWAP), CRSL Strategic Plan, and local Landscape Stewardship Plans by safeguarding biodiversity, supporting Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), and enhancing public recreational opportunities including hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

Design and Scope of Work

This proposal will permanently protect high-quality habitat through acquisition of Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) conservation easements within the five-mile project area surrounding Camp Ripley Training Center, a 53,000-acre state game refuge located in the Brainerd Lakes Conservation Opportunity Area (COA). The project area ranks highly within the Minnesota Wildlife Action Network due to overlapping priorities identified in the MN SWAP and the CRSL Strategic Plan. The ACUB Protection Program is a collaborative partnership among Camp Ripley, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), and the Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

Easement acquisition will protect critical forest habitat corridors, wetlands, and aquatic resources that support fish, game, migratory birds, and other wildlife species. The project area lies within the Mississippi Flyway and contains regionally significant habitat complexes identified by the State of Minnesota and the Mississippi Headwaters Board as conservation priorities. Permanent protection of these lands will reduce habitat fragmentation, maintain water quality, and buffer nearby public lands from incompatible development.

The Minnesota National Guard's mission to provide trained and ready forces in support of federal, state, and community operations is reliant upon sustained multipurpose use of natural resources. The CRSL partnership developed a landscape resilience scoring framework that prioritizes parcel-level easement acquisition, supports habitat corridor planning, and identifies targeted restoration opportunities using transparent, science-based metrics. The methodology is repeatable and adaptable, providing a foundation for long-term planning across the CRSL. In addition, the partnership is developing geospatial tools to identify life cycle habitat requirements of mission sensitive bird species. The use of these new tools will further inform parcel selection for ecological benefits.

Parcels selected for protection are prioritized based on their ability to create connected habitat corridors and maximize landscape-scale conservation outcomes. Evaluation criteria include ecological value, wetland and marginal agricultural restoration potential, aquatic resource protection, wildlife movement connectivity, and

vulnerability to conversion from increasing residential and commercial development pressure.

Camp Ripley and strategically identified lands near the installation are designated as a Sentinel Landscape, one of nineteen in the nation. State and federal entities coordinate strategies to preserve and enhance relationships with willing landowners by creating incentives that encourage land management practices consistent with partner goals. Numerous agencies and non-governmental organizations have identified their scope of priorities within the CRSL.

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

The MN SWAP identifies 346 Species of Greatest Conservation Need, including 92 bird species. The project area, which includes the Camp Ripley–Pillsbury–Lake Alexander Important Bird Area, supports 101 threatened, endangered, and SGCN species, representing nearly 30% of all SGCN documented statewide.

The project area provides essential breeding, migratory stopover, and wintering habitat for numerous at-risk bird and wildlife species and contains high priority habitat identified within the Brainerd Lakes COA. Permanent conservation easements will protect key habitats that are critical for sustaining healthy wildlife populations and preserving ecological function across the landscape. Our program focuses on parcels with overlapping species priorities to maximize ecological benefits and improve long-term landscape resilience. Protecting connected habitat corridors allows wildlife movement, supports genetic diversity, and increases species' ability to adapt to changing environmental conditions.

Forest habitat comprises approximately 35% of the CRSL, yet less than 1% is publicly owned. Much of the remaining privately owned habitat faces increasing pressure from residential and commercial development. Without intervention, fragmentation and conversion will continue to degrade habitat quality and reduce connectivity between existing public lands and conservation areas. Protecting these forested corridors strengthens landscape-scale conservation efforts and preserves recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, birdwatching, and wildlife observation. These investments will sustain and enhance habitat necessary for the long-term recovery and viability of federally listed species and SGCN identified in the MN SWAP.

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

The ACUB Protection Program has an established parcel ranking methodology and maintains a waiting list of more than 250 interested landowners. Continued action is necessary as ownership transitions, subdivision activity, and increasing development pressure accelerate habitat conversion within the project area. Rising land values continue to increase conservation costs while reducing opportunities to permanently protect priority parcels.

Delaying investment risks permanent loss of high-quality habitat, reduced corridor connectivity, and diminished conservation outcomes. Protecting these lands now ensures lasting ecological benefits while supporting military readiness, outdoor recreation, tourism, local employment, and the long-term economic stability of the region.

Morrison SWCD has a longstanding record of successfully working with willing landowners to secure easements, implement habitat protection measures, and maintain long-term stewardship relationships.

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

This proposal is strategically designed to expand and connect habitat corridors that provide landscape-scale ecological resilience across the ACUB work area. Protecting these parcels directly advances priorities identified in both the ACUB Protection Program and the Minnesota State Wildlife Action Plan (MN SWAP).

The Minnesota Biological Survey has identified native plant communities within the project area that are vulnerable to extirpation, along with areas containing exceptional biodiversity and high-quality wildlife habitat. Many targeted parcels border or connect existing Wildlife Management Areas, State Forests, Scientific and Natural Areas, and other permanently protected lands. Conservation easements will strengthen these connections by buffering public lands from incompatible development and preserving intact movement corridors for fish, game, migratory birds, and other wildlife species.

The ACUB Protection Program has already demonstrated measurable success in building protective habitat buffers around Camp Ripley and surrounding public lands. Since program inception, ACUB easements have created a growing mosaic of connected habitats that improve wildlife movement and ecosystem function across the landscape. This proposal builds on that success by closing remaining connectivity gaps and protecting parcels under immediate threat of fragmentation and conversion.

More than 70% of Minnesota’s land is privately owned, making voluntary conservation easements an essential strategy for maintaining functional habitat corridors at scale, while allowing continued sustainable private land ownership and stewardship. This ensures that nearby public lands with high biodiversity value remain ecologically viable and accessible for outdoor recreation, including hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and nature-based tourism. Collectively, these outcomes create durable, landscape-scale conservation benefits for fish, game, and wildlife throughout central Minnesota.

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

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal?

Northern Forest

Provide access to manage habitat on landlocked public properties or protect forest land from parcelization and fragmentation through fee acquisition, conservation or access easement

Describe how this project/program will produce and demonstrate a significant and permanent conservation legacy and/or outcomes for fish, game, and wildlife:

Since its establishment in 2004 and expansion through federal Sentinel Landscape designation in 2016, the Camp Ripley ACUB program has permanently protected more than 39,000 acres through fee-title acquisition and conservation easements. These efforts have enhanced both private and public lands while creating lasting conservation benefits.

The program has contributed to the establishment and expansion of key public conservation areas, including the

Little Nokasippi Wildlife Management Areas, additions to Crow Wing State Park, and expansion of the City of Baxter Mississippi River green space corridor. Together, these protected lands create connected habitat systems that support biodiversity, improve wildlife movement, and increase public access for hunting, fishing, hiking, and wildlife observation.

This proposal builds on those proven outcomes by permanently protecting an additional 1,400 acres of high-priority habitat. Conservation easements secured through this project will ensure that forests, wetlands, and aquatic resources remain intact in perpetuity despite increasing pressure from development, and fragmentation.

Because easements are perpetual, conservation benefits will continue indefinitely beyond the grant period. Protected parcels will sustain critical habitat for Species of Greatest Conservation Need, migratory birds, pollinators, and other wildlife identified in the Minnesota State Wildlife Action Plan. The project also delivers enduring public benefits through enhanced ecosystem services, water quality protection, landscape resilience, and expanded recreational opportunities. This proposal represents a durable and measurable conservation investment with permanent outcomes for Minnesota’s fish, game, wildlife, and natural resources.

If this project/program does not have permanent outcomes, describe why it is important to undertake at this time:

Outcomes

Programs in the northern forest region:

Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation ~ A summary of the total acres of associated forest land secured under easement 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 maintained outcomes. Sustained habitat availability within a certain region is expected to maintain the carrying capacity of associated wildlife within that region. This would affect both game and non-game species. We expect sustained populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as these easements are secured.

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

This proposal is not supplanting or a substitution for any previous funding not from Legacy Fund sources or for the same purpose.

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

BWSR is responsible for perpetual monitoring and enforcement of RIM conservation easements. BWSR partners with local SWCDs, including Morrison SWCD, to conduct long-term oversight, landowner coordination, compliance monitoring, and enforcement activities.

Each easement is monitored annually for the first five years following recording to ensure compliance with easement terms and successful establishment of conservation objectives. After the initial monitoring period, on-site inspections occur every three years, with interim compliance reviews conducted during non-inspection years. SWCD staff document findings and report all inspections to BWSR. If potential violations are identified, established non-compliance procedures and enforcement authorities are implemented to restore compliance and protect conservation values.

Perpetual stewardship funding has been calculated at \$10,000 per easement to support ongoing compliance activities. This funding structure leverages existing SWCD staff expertise and BWSR administrative capacity to ensure cost-effective, long-term stewardship.

These established monitoring protocols and dedicated stewardship resources ensure that habitat protection and conservation outcomes achieved through this proposal will be maintained permanently.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2027-Ongoing	Landowner Responsibility	Maintain compliance with easement terms.	-	-
2027-Ongoing	Stewardship Account	Compliance checks first 5 years then every 3rd year.	Corrective actions of any violations.	Enforcement Action taken by MN Attorney Generals office.

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

The Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape (CRSL) partnership recognizes that successful conservation depends on meaningful collaboration with Tribal Nations, local communities, educators, and historically underserved populations. Conservation planning within the CRSL integrates cultural resource protection alongside habitat conservation to preserve both ecological and cultural heritage. Sylvan Township received a \$130,000 grant from the Minnesota Historical Society to conduct a Comprehensive Literature Assessment across the CRSL region, including Cass, Crow Wing, Todd, and Morrison Counties. The project supported implementation of the CRSL Strategic Plan by identifying culturally significant sites that also align with habitat protection priorities. Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs), Tribal members, historians, and agency representatives contributed to the assessment. Results were shared with THPO leadership, the Office of the State Archaeologist, and the State Historic Preservation Office, resulting in a geodatabase management tool that supports informed conservation and preservation planning throughout the CRSL.

The partnership among BWSR, Camp Ripley, and Morrison SWCD also supports cultural exchange and environmental education initiatives that engage diverse communities. Three cultural exchange events have brought together Tribal school students, agency staff, and National Guard personnel to participate in native plant restoration, harvesting activities, drumming ceremonies, educational programming about conservation stewardship, and information about opportunities with the National Guard. In addition, Camp Ripley annually hosts a Water Festival for all sixth-grade students in Morrison County. The program connects local youth from diverse backgrounds with hands-on learning opportunities focused on water quality, habitat conservation, environmental stewardship, and natural resource management.

Camp Ripley contributes approximately \$85 million annually to the regional economy and supports more than 800 jobs, creating broad economic benefits for surrounding communities, including low- and moderate-income households. The installation also provides public access to hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation opportunities for military members, veterans, and the general public. Through conservation, education, cultural collaboration, and public access, this partnership advances inclusive community engagement while delivering lasting environmental and economic benefits across central Minnesota.

Activity Details

Requirements

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

Yes

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. Annual or perennial food plots may be allowed at the owner's expense. Food plots must be maintained annually. If a food plot is discontinued, it must be immediately replanted to appropriate high-quality, permanent native vegetative cover and the associated establishment cost is the responsibility of the landowner(s). Food plot size and the number of food plots allowed are based on the size of the easement. Food plots will not exceed more than 10% of the easement area or will not exceed a maximum acreage depending on the size of the easement.

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?

Yes

Describe the expected public use:

RIM easements do not require that private land is open to the public; however, this question is also evaluated on public benefit and RIM easements do provide a significant public benefit; often expand wildlife habitat near public lands; and do not limit the potential for the land to be open to the public through other programs such as the DNR Walk-In Access (WIA) program. Every interested landowner is informed about the WIA program during the application process. BWSR's Conservation Easement Application includes a question for a landowner to indicate if they are interested in enrolling in WIA if eligible.

If RIM also required public access, the landowner would be retaining almost no private rights to the land and still paying property taxes. RIM easement land is still in private ownership and the landowner still pays property taxes and is still consistent with the statutory goals of the Outdoor Heritage Fund of protection and restoration of habitat. Minnesota Statute 97A.056 states "...the fund must be expended to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife." and "The council shall make recommendations . . . that directly relate to the restoration, protection, and enhancement of wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife, and that prevent forest fragmentation, encourage forest consolidation, and expand restored native prairie."

Criteria in all RIM program scoresheets used to evaluate and prioritize parcels funded include proximity of the easement land to lands that are in public ownership and/or open to public hunting. Parcels

immediately adjacent to public land or that would connect or expand larger existing habitat areas receive additional points in the scoring and ranking process than a parcel that does not provide that benefit. Wildlife do not follow property lines; therefore protected private lands adjacent to and near public lands create complexes of public and private land that provide high quality habitat supporting wildlife, including recreationally hunted species, allowing them to thrive on and off public lands. Protected private lands also add visual and noise buffers that allow users of public land to better enjoy their experiences. Additionally, easement lands allow for an interim step before public ownership, likely making public purchase more affordable in the future.

Though this proposal does not include public access, the ACUB protection program has completed acquisitions in the past, as described the narrative. We would be open to requesting acquisition funding in the future, but there are currently no opportunities our partnership is aware of for such work.

Will new trails or roads be developed or improved, beyond those used for maintenance and management, as a result of the proposed acquisition?

Yes

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

Though uncommon, there could be a potential for new trails to be developed, if they contribute to easement maintenance or benefit the easement site (e.g. firebreaks, berm maintenance, etc) and are noted on the conservation plan. Narrow mowed trails for personal use are allowed for landowner access on RIM easements. Unauthorized trails are a violation of the easement.

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?

Under the terms of the easement, a conservation plan is developed with the landowner and maintained as part of each easement. Landowners are required to maintain compliance with the easement and the conservation plan. BWSR, in cooperation with SWCDs, implements a stewardship process to track, monitor quality and assure compliance with easement terms and the conservation plan.

Will the land that you acquire (fee or easement) be restored or enhanced within this proposal's funding and availability?

No

Explain how and when the restoration/enhancement work will be completed and identify the source of funding:

Previous OHF Appropriations

Have you received OHF dollars through LSOHC for this program or project in the past?

Yes

Are there any of these past appropriations still OPEN?

Yes

If needed, please include any explanation of unspent funds.

Much of the funding is currently encumbered or committed to active projects but cannot yet be reported as spent until projects are fully completed. Because conservation easements often take a year or more to process and finalize, grant progress can be difficult to accurately reflect in real time. At this time, ML23 funds are 100% encumbered, ML24 funds are ~48% encumbered/committed, and ML25 funds are ~10%

encumbered/committed.

Additionally, we will continue processing current and new applications, which will draw these funds down before the next appropriation date.

Open OHF Appropriations - Data from Most Recent Status Update

Project	Funding Amount Received	Amount Spent to Date	Funding Remaining	% Spent to Date
ML 2025 - Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Protection Program Phase 13	\$2,183,000	\$36,100	\$2,146,900	1.65%
ML 2024 - Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Protection Program - Phase 12	\$2,068,000	\$34,100	\$2,033,900	1.65%
ML 2023 - Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Protection Program ACUB, Phase XI	\$2,133,000	\$1,687,400	\$445,600	79.11%
Totals	\$6,384,000	\$1,757,600	\$4,626,400	27.53%

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Final report submitted	November 1, 2031
Easements recorded	June 30, 2031
Allocations to specific parcels	June 30, 2029
Obtain applications from eligible landowners	June 30, 2029

Budget

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$336,400	-	0	\$336,400
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$4,940,200	-	-	\$4,940,200
Easement Stewardship	\$200,000	-	-	\$200,000
Travel	\$9,800	-	-	\$9,800
Professional Services	\$220,000	-	-	\$220,000
Direct Support Services	\$95,400	-	-	\$95,400
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$14,000	-	-	\$14,000
Supplies/Materials	\$4,200	-	-	\$4,200
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$5,820,000	-	-	\$5,820,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Management	0.62	4.0	\$336,400	-	-	\$336,400

Amount of Request: \$5,820,000

Amount of Leverage: -

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 0.0%

DSS + Personnel: \$431,800

As a % of the total request: 7.42%

Easement Stewardship: \$200,000

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 4.05%

N/A

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?

The number of easements could be scaled back depending on appropriation. All associated personnel/equipment/stewardship would be proportionate.

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

They would be proportionately reduced.

If the project received 30% of the requested funding

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

Same as above.

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

They would be proportionately reduced.

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

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?

These funds will be managed by BWSR and pay for BWSR staff time spent on new easements associated with this phase.

Professional Services

What is included in the Professional Services line?

Other : BWSR will contract with Morrison SWCD staff to determine eligibility, facilitate ranking, develop conservation plan, reviewing terms of documents, working with local title agents, supporting ongoing discussions with landowners to work through the easement process.

Easement Stewardship

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

20 easements at \$10,000 per easement. The total stewardship amount will ultimately be dependent on the cost of easements and if the proposed easement number is reached. Perpetual monitoring and enforcement costs are \$10,000 per easement. This value is based on using SWCD staff for monitoring and preliminary enforcement. The amount includes costs of BWSR and local government unit staff time as well as costs for encouraging voluntary compliance, addressing potential violations and legal 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 will only be used for traditional travel costs.

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 and the program staff time involved.

Other Equipment/Tools

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

Sign posts, signs and hardware will be purchased to properly sign easement boundaries.

Federal Funds

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

Yes

Are the funds confirmed?

Yes

Other : The federal funds our partnership receives for this program are considered leverage and not direct match. It is very difficult to convey the funding relationship within the budget due to this definition. At the request of the council to include our programmatic leverage outside of cash match, we have attached a table reflecting the four federal funding modifications allocated since our last proposal. These allocations total \$4,665,435.77 in competitive federal funds.

Is Confirmation Document attached?

Yes, on file

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	70	140	1,120	70	1,400
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	70	140	1,120	70	1,400

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

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

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

	RESTORE: Lands acquired with OHF	RESTORE: Lands NOT acquired with OHF	ENHANCE: Lands acquired with OHF	ENHANCE: Lands NOT acquired with OHF
DNR Lands (WMA, State Forests, etc.)	-	-	-	-
Non-DNR Lands (city, state, federal, etc.)	-	-	-	-
Easements	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-

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

Type	Native Prairie (acres)
Restore	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Easement	140
Enhance	0
Total	140

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	\$291,000	\$582,000	\$4,656,000	\$291,000	\$5,820,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$291,000	\$582,000	\$4,656,000	\$291,000	\$5,820,000

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	700	0	0	700	1,400
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	700	0	0	700	1,400

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	-	\$2,910,000	-	-	\$2,910,000	\$5,820,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	\$2,910,000	-	-	\$2,910,000	\$5,820,000

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	\$4,157	\$4,157	\$4,157	\$4,157
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	-	\$4,157	-	-	\$4,157
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

1.5 miles

Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?

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

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

The Morrison SWCD conducts ongoing outreach to landowners with large parcels that have high ecological valued properties within the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape. Landowners interested in participating in the program complete and submit an interest form to the Morrison SWCD, then it is sent on to Camp Ripley for ranking. Camp Ripley ranks parcels of land to be considered for possible funding through the ACUB program based on a number of criteria which considers encroachment threat and highest ecological benefits. Highest ranked landowners are provided back to the SWCD. The SWCD approaches prioritized landowners for possible participation in the program. While federal and LSOHC funded easements share many ranking factors, LSOHC funded easements have additional criteria to ensure parcels selected prioritize habitat and maximize wildlife benefits.

CAMP RIPLEY

SENTINEL LANDSCAPE

MINNESOTA | Est. 2016



Camp Ripley is a 53,000-acre regional collective training center with a mission to provide superior customer service, facilities, and resources to all military branches, as well as international partners, first responders, and civilian agencies. As the third busiest National Guard training site in the Nation, units from Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin rely on Camp Ripley to successfully accomplish their warfighter training missions.¹ Camp Ripley fosters positive community relations, delivering an annual economic impact of \$125,000,000 to local communities and employs over 800 people working to support the Minnesota National Guard.

Camp Ripley is located within a largely unfragmented landscape in Central Minnesota along the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River's headwaters and four of its major tributaries. Rural and working lands surrounding the installation enable Camp Ripley to fulfill its mission by providing a critical buffer from increasing encroachment. Residential development of farms, ranches, and forests may limit the timing, location, duration, and use of spectrum for military operations, reducing Camp Ripley's capability to provide a realistic training environment. Development also threatens one of the Midwest's richest ecological regions that provides habitat for wildlife protected under the Endangered Species Act and over 100 species of greatest conservation need.²

Intact rural and working lands provide important public benefits that bolster the local economy such as source and surface water protection, shoreline protection, open space, recreational opportunities for hunting and fishing, and commodity production. In 2015, the Minnesota legislature passed state statute [190.33](#) establishing the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape. Governor Mark Dayton signed the legislation to help identify and protect important national defense lands and their military missions. In 2016, Camp Ripley was designated as a federal Sentinel Landscape representing the formal partnership agreement between the U.S. Departments of War, Agriculture and Interior.



Soldiers conduct training exercises with a Chinook helicopter at Camp Ripley.

Landscape Goals



Protect lands for the military mission of Camp Ripley while also protecting and enhancing working lands, natural resources, and habitat.



Restore and enhance private, public, and protected lands within the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape.



Coordinate targeted outreach of partnership programs available to private landowners.

LANDSCAPE DETAIL

Total Sentinel Landscape Area: **804,557** acres

Total Protected
Acres:
26,499

From year established
through fiscal year 2024

Total Enrolled
Acres:
9,735

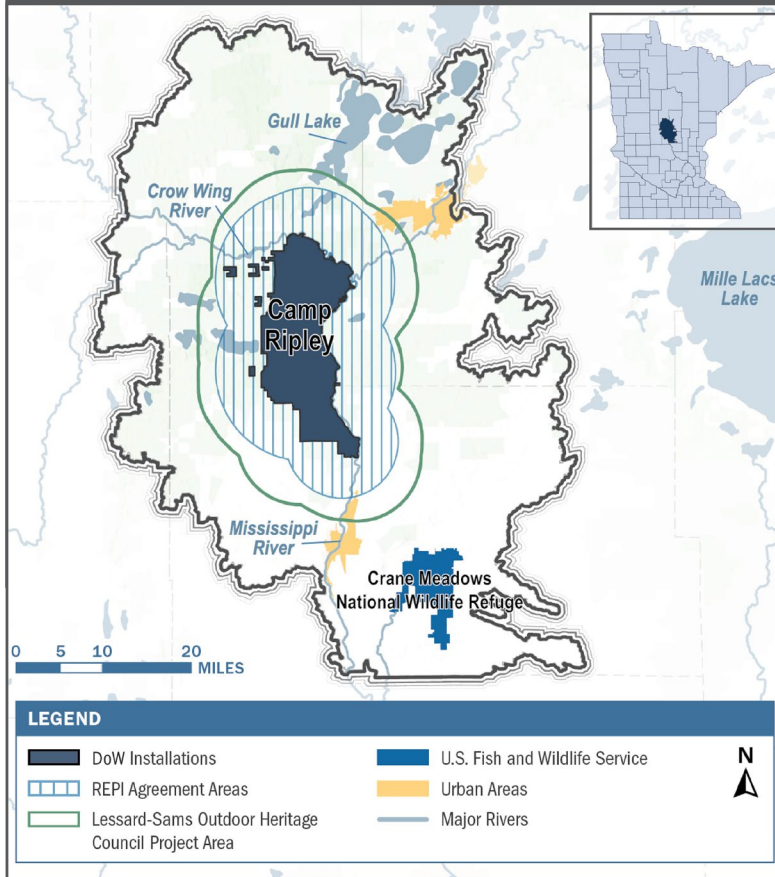
For fiscal year 2024

Active Base
Area Acres:
52,758

¹ https://minnesotanationalguard.ng.mil/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2024-2025_MNNG_Annual_Report_web.pdf

² <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/eb42e98753e741f99957c61ccd56cc0d>

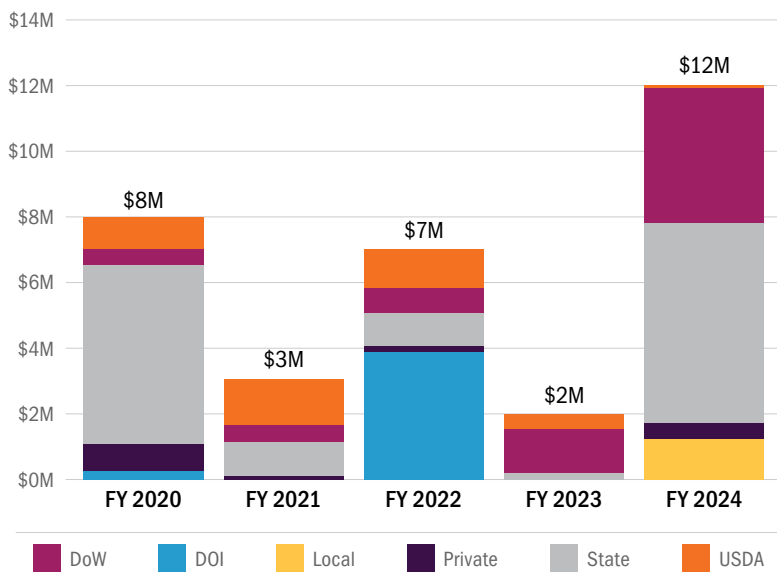
Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Map



Key Partners

- ▶ City of Baxter
- ▶ Crow Wing County
- ▶ Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District
- ▶ Great River Greening
- ▶ Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources
- ▶ Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- ▶ Minnesota Department of Military Affairs
- ▶ Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- ▶ Minnesota Forest Resources Council
- ▶ Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- ▶ Mississippi Headwaters Board
- ▶ Morrison County
- ▶ Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District
- ▶ Sylvan Township (Cass County)
- ▶ The Conservation Fund
- ▶ The Nature Conservancy
- ▶ U.S. Army National Guard
- ▶ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency
- ▶ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
- ▶ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service
- ▶ U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
- ▶ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service
- ▶ U.S. Department of War, Army Compatible Use Buffer Program
- ▶ U.S. Department of War, Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration

Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Total Funding by Partner



Soldiers with the 200th Engineer Company in the 153rd Engineer Battalion from the South Dakota Army National Guard conduct Wet-Gap crossing training in joint with the 1st General Support Aviation Battalion, 171st Aviation Regiment with the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade, Minnesota Army National Guard, across the Mississippi River at Camp Ripley Training Center. (Minnesota National Guard Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Jorden Newbanks)



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