



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

2027 St. Croix Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Phase 8
ML 2027 Request for Funding

General Information

Date: 06/22/2026

Proposal Title: 2027 St. Croix Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Phase 8

Funds Requested: \$11,167,000

Confirmed Leverage Funds: \$126,000

Is this proposal Scalable?: Yes

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Marc White

Title: Natural Resources Manager

Organization: Wild Rivers Conservancy

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Location Information

County Location(s): Chisago, Kanabec, Washington and Pine.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

Northern Forest

Metro / Urban

Activity types:

Protect in Fee

Restore

Priority resources addressed by activity:

Forest

Habitat

Narrative**Abstract**

Under this phase of the program, Wild Rivers Conservancy of the St. Croix & Namekagon and Trust for Public Land will work in partnership to permanently protect approximately 950 acres of critical wildlife habitat through fee-title acquisition and restore 100 acres of degraded habitat on the Minnesota side of the St. Croix River watershed. The goals of the program are to protect high-quality wildlife habitat, improve conservation connectivity, and provide public access for outdoor recreation opportunities.

Design and Scope of Work

The St. Croix River watershed spans 7,760 square miles between Minnesota and Wisconsin with the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway flowing through its heart. The St. Croix River was the first designated Wild and Scenic Riverway in 1968. The landscape of the watershed contains large swaths of unique ecosystems, wildlife habitat and is home to 195 rare, threatened and endangered species. The Riverway is a regional attraction for upwards of one million visitors annually due to its many recreation opportunities including high-quality fishing, hunting, birding, hiking, and boating. Although the status of the St. Croix as a Wild and Scenic River comes with federal protections, those protections only apply to a thin ribbon of land adjacent to the Riverway. Beyond the Riverway boundary, more than 75% of the watershed's forest habitat remains unprotected, and the threat of development, fragmentation and conversion to agriculture is substantial.

The partnership, consisting of the Wild Rivers Conservancy (Conservancy), the Minnesota Land Trust (MLT), and Trust for Public Land (TPL), is working to increase the amount of land permanently protected on the Minnesota side of the St. Croix River watershed. The goals of the partnership are to protect large intact forests, sustain riparian forests, and restore and protect lands that are important to the 195 endangered, threatened and special concern species documented within the project area (Source: MN DNR Rare Species Guide).

Prior to the program's establishment, landowners had few, if any, options for permanent land protection. The program has proven how eager landowners are for permanent protection options throughout the watershed. Strategic landowner outreach has led to a queue of interested landowners wanting to protect their land for generations to come. To date, the St. Croix Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration program partnership has protected 6,328 acres. 3,613 acres through conservation easements, 2,715 acres through fee-title acquisition, resulting in 38.5 miles of shoreline protected.

The partnership is requesting funding for Phase 8 of the program to continue the important work of permanently protecting some of Minnesota's highest-quality habitat. Under this proposal, both WRC and TPL are seeking funds; MLT has sufficient existing funds from previous phases for conservation easement and restoration activities. Funding for Phase 8 of the St. Croix Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration program will support the following activities:

TPL will protect approximately 950 acres of high-quality habitat through fee-title acquisition and restore 100 acres of degraded habitat on public lands. TPL will convey acquired lands to the DNR, except when LGU ownership is appropriate, for permanent ownership, management, and stewardship.

The Conservancy will provide overall program administration, project management, landowner outreach, and community engagement.

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

Permanently protecting high priority habitat within the St. Croix River watershed is a cost-effective strategy to conserve fish, game & wildlife, including threatened or endangered species. Areas targeted by this proposal have been identified and prioritized through state, regional, and local natural resource plans due to their high biodiversity, connectivity, and ability to preserve habitat for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). The project area has a mixed representation of extensive forestland, brushland, prairie, oak savanna, wetlands, and riparian habitats. These habitats are home to 195 documented endangered, threatened and special concern species including: lake sturgeon, wood turtle, Blanding's turtle, gray wolf, bald eagle, osprey, sandhill crane, trumpeter swan, yellow rail, and sharp-tailed grouse. The St. Croix River watershed is also globally recognized for its mussel diversity with 41 documented native unionid mussel species, including 5 listed as Federally endangered, and 23 state-listed species. The project area also contains a significant amount of high-quality brushland and regenerating forestland habitat critical to the breeding success of the golden-winged warbler.

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

The St. Croix watershed faces increasing development pressure from population growth. From 2020-2024, Minnesota counties within the St. Croix watershed experienced an average population increase of 4.3%, nearly triple the state average of 1.5% (Source: United States Census Bureau). Four of the top ten fastest-growing Minnesota counties from 2022-2023 lie within the project area. Five of the seven parcels for protection under this proposal fall within these counties. Based on current projections, these population growth trends are expected to accelerate. Increases in housing density and associated development on rural forest lands are linked to reductions in private forest services across watersheds, including reductions in native wildlife, forest health, water quality, carbon storage, timber production, and recreational benefits. Opportunities to protect these lands drastically diminish with the passage of time and change in ownership. Timing is critical while willing sellers of priority parcels are still in place.

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

This proposal uses a science-based multiple benefits approach for prioritizing and targeting areas of greatest conservation value. We use The Nature Conservancy's St. Croix Basin GIS-based Priority Protection Analysis which incorporates Minnesota Biological Survey Sites of Biodiversity Significance, Lakes of Biological Significance, habitat complexes and connectivity, along with other data sets to spatially prioritize the most important sites for protection. The intent of this model was to develop and score priorities where multiple benefits overlap – habitat, biodiversity, water quality, water quantity, and resiliency. Evaluation criteria include: 1) aquatic and terrestrial habitat protection priorities, 2) lands important to drinking water quality and groundwater recharge, and 3) resiliency of lands and waters to climate change and other anticipated future changes and disturbance.

More specifically, this approach includes data on habitat quality, target species and natural communities, and habitat complexes for terrestrial species with emphasis on expanding corridors adjacent to public lands. The most heavily weighted component of this approach uses data from the Minnesota Biological Survey focused on fish and wildlife that includes data on biodiversity, wetlands, native plant communities, Lakes of Biological Significance, wild rice catchments, cold water refuge for trout, proximity to protected lands, and ecological connections. Added

benefits for water quality are assessed using data on wellhead protected areas, groundwater contamination susceptibility, private well density, and groundwater recharge.

Using results of this multiple benefits approach, areas will be targeted down to the parcel level for landowner engagement and outreach for implementing permanent protection activities.

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?

Metro / Urban

Protect habitat corridors, with emphasis on the Minnesota, Mississippi, and St. Croix rivers (bluff to floodplain)

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:

The range, quality and diversity of habitats within the St. Croix watershed offer unparalleled opportunity to demonstrate a permanent wildlife conservation legacy. The St. Croix River watershed contains the best-preserved examples of pre-settlement natural communities in the Upper Mississippi drainage. Minnesota’s Wildlife Action Plan 2015-2025 has identified St. Croix River Watershed as a Conservation Focus Area (CFA). Permanent land protection parcels targeted by this proposal are identified and prioritized through the lens of this plan and due to their high biodiversity, connectivity, and ability to preserve habitat for SGCN. The diversity of river/stream, prairie/grassland and forested habitat within the St. Croix CFA supports 195 documented endangered, threatened and special concern species including: lake sturgeon, wood turtle, Blanding’s turtle, gray wolf, bald eagle, osprey, sandhill crane, trumpeter swan, yellow rail, and sharp-tailed grouse. The St. Croix River watershed is a globally recognized mussel diversity hot-spot with 41 documented native unionid mussel species, including 5 Federally endangered, and 23 state-listed species. The program area also contains high-quality brushland and regenerating forest habitat critical to the breeding success of the golden-winged warbler.

Through permanent land protection, the St. Croix Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Program will significantly advance wildlife conservation in the St. Croix watershed before opportunities to preserve these places are lost. This program will improve and increase the amount of available public land for hunting, angling and recreation within easy access from the Twin Cities Metro area.

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

N/A. This program does have permanent outcomes.

Outcomes

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

A network of natural land and riparian habitats will connect corridors for wildlife and species in greatest conservation need ~ *This project will be measured by the acres of wildlife corridors protected and evaluated based on the observed use by wildlife populations and evidence of SGCN.*

Programs in the northern forest region:

Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation ~ *This project will be measured by the acres of high quality forestlands that are permanently protected from development and fragmentation. Protected land will also be evaluated by its proximity to existing public lands as well as connectivity to other protected forestlands.*

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

Funding requested by the Partnership will not supplant or substitute for any previous non-legacy funding used for the same purpose.

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

TPL will convey all fee-title land to the DNR or LGUs for permanent stewardship. Once land has been conveyed, initial site development and restoration of these lands will begin. Estimated costs for initial restoration work are included in this proposal. TPL will work with DNR or LGUs to complete a restoration and management plan, and implementation of that plan will be completed in the following years. These properties will be managed and maintained by the respective government entities according to OHF standards.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2028	TPL - OHF and DNR	Post property	Develop restoration/management plan for property	-
2029	TPL - DNR	Develop restoration/management plan for property	Restore and steward property for habitat and public recreation	-
2030-2031	TPL - DNR	Restore and steward property for habitat and public recreation	-	-

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

All organizations under this program’s partnership hold a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as core values. Examples of that commitment include, but are not limited to: The Conservancy’s ongoing partnership with BIPOC communities to improve access to public resources through outdoor experiences; TPL’s work with diverse communities to put a park, trail, or natural area within a 10-minute walk of every Minnesotan living within a city; TPL’s mentored hunt and angling program, which in partnership with the MN Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers is facilitating hunting and angling opportunities for diverse communities on public lands and waters with a focus on lands protected with Outdoor Heritage funds.

This program provides significant benefits for all Minnesotans, including BIPOC and diverse communities, when

land is protected and otherwise restored (e.g., clean air and water, abatement of climate change, and other ecosystem services). Beyond that, public land provides an opportunity for all people, but particularly for those who do not have access or resources to connect with private natural lands, to directly connect with the outdoors through hunting, fishing, hiking, or other outdoor recreational pursuits.

Activity Details

Requirements

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

No

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

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

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

Yes

Will restoration and enhancement work follow best management practices including MS 84.973 Pollinator Habitat Program?

Yes

Is the restoration and enhancement activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, Subd 13(f), tribal lands, and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15 or on lands to be acquired in this program?

Yes

Where does the activity take place?

WMA

State Forests

Land Use

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

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:

TPL - Short-term use of agricultural crops is an accepted best practice for preparing a site for restoration. For example, short-term use of soybeans or rye may be used for restorations to control weed seedbeds prior to planting. In some cases this necessitates the use of GMO treated products to facilitate herbicide use in order to control weeds present in the seedbank, however neonicotinoids will not be used. Additionally, any agreements to procure seed will prohibit use of neonicotinoids, and require controls such as seed tags indicating any seed utilized in restoration is neonicotinoid-free. There are no immediate plans to use farming for winter food on any of the parcels in this proposal.

For lands acquired that are conveyed as WMAs to the DNR, the DNR has indicated the following: The primary purposes of WMAs are to develop and manage for the production of wildlife and for compatible

outdoor recreation. To fulfill those goals, the DNR may use limited farming specifically to enhance or benefit the management of state lands for wildlife. This is a standard practice across the Midwest.

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

No

Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing?

No

Will the land be open for hunting and fishing after completion?

Yes

Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:

N/A

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

State of MN

County

Local Unit of Government

Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:

WMA

AMA

SNA

State Forest

County Forest

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

Yes

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.

Across all open appropriations, only 16% of funds remain that are not already contractually obligated or

committed to an active acquisition project. Remaining unspent funds are largely dedicated to ongoing personnel and professional service costs necessary to close acquisitions in 2026 and 2027. Of particular note, for fee-acquisition, only 2% of funds remain that are not contractually obligated, which includes all of TPL’s ML26 proposed acquisition funding.

Open OHF Appropriations - Data from Most Recent Status Update

Project	Funding Amount Received	Amount Spent to Date	Funding Remaining	% Spent to Date
ML 2026 - St. Croix Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Phase 7	\$3,807,000	-	\$3,807,000	0.0%
ML 2025 - St. Croix Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Phase 6	\$3,184,000	\$3,200	\$3,180,800	0.1%
ML 2024 - St. Croix Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Phase 5	\$4,711,000	\$128,000	\$4,583,000	2.72%
ML 2023 - St. Croix Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Phase 4	\$13,306,000	\$11,515,100	\$1,790,900	86.54%
ML 2022 - St. Croix Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Phase 3	\$3,704,000	\$3,009,500	\$694,500	81.25%
Totals	\$28,712,000	\$14,655,800	\$14,056,200	51.04%

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
TPL - Landowner negotiations, agreements, and due diligence	June 30, 2031
TPL - Initial site development/restoration	Fall 2033
TPL - Land acquired	June 30, 2031

Budget

Grand Totals Across All Partnerships

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$645,000	-	-	\$645,000
Contracts	\$341,000	-	-	\$341,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$9,500,000	-	-	\$9,500,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$2,000	\$3,000	Private	\$5,000
Professional Services	\$101,000	-	-	\$101,000
Direct Support Services	\$123,000	\$123,000	Private	\$246,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$285,000	-	-	\$285,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$3,000	-	-	\$3,000
DNR IDP	\$167,000	-	-	\$167,000
Grand Total	\$11,167,000	\$126,000	-	\$11,293,000

Partner: TPL

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$550,000	-	-	\$550,000
Contracts	\$325,000	-	-	\$325,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$9,500,000	-	-	\$9,500,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	\$3,000	Private	\$3,000
Professional Services	\$101,000	-	-	\$101,000
Direct Support Services	\$123,000	\$123,000	Private	\$246,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$285,000	-	-	\$285,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	\$167,000	-	-	\$167,000
Grand Total	\$11,051,000	\$126,000	-	\$11,177,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Protection and Legal Staff	0.75	4.0	\$550,000	-	-	\$550,000

Partner: WRC

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$95,000	-	-	\$95,000
Contracts	\$16,000	-	-	\$16,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$2,000	-	-	\$2,000
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$3,000	-	-	\$3,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$116,000	-	-	\$116,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Conservancy Staff	0.5	3.0	\$95,000	-	-	\$95,000

Amount of Request: \$11,167,000

Amount of Leverage: \$126,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 1.13%

DSS + Personnel: \$768,000

As a % of the total request: 6.88%

Easement Stewardship: -

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: -

Leverage Funding Table

	Leverage Amount Committed	Leverage Amount Confirmed (of Committed Funds)	Leverage Amount Anticipated	Total Leverage
Amount:	\$126,000	\$126,000	-	\$126,000
% of Total Leverage:	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	

Detail leverage sources and confirmation of funds:

One-half of TPL's DSS costs and all of TPL's travel costs are provided as privately sourced. These funds are confirmed and in hand.

Does this proposal have the ability to be scalable?

Yes

If the project received 50% of the requested funding

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

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

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

Program management costs (personnel and DSS expenses) will be reduced as well; however, these reductions will be less than proportional, since program development and grant management costs remain consistent regardless of appropriation amount. These are gross estimates of personnel time.

If the project received 30% of the requested funding

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

A reduction in funding would reduce outputs (acres/activities) disproportionately. Some costs related to program development, oversight, and real estate due diligence remain constant regardless of appropriation amount, forcing a larger reduction in acres/activities. A reduction this large would significantly jeopardize several of the parcels listed for acquisition.

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

Program management costs (personnel and DSS expenses) will be reduced as well; however, these reductions will be less than proportional, since program development and grant management costs remain consistent regardless of appropriation amount. These are gross estimates of personnel time.

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

Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund

Clean Water Fund

Personnel

Has funding for these positions been requested in the past?

Yes

Please explain the overlap of past and future staffing and position levels previously received and how that is coordinated over multiple years?

FTEs listed in the proposal are an estimate of the personnel time required to produce the grant deliverables put forward in this proposal. Personnel funds are only used when necessary to achieve the goals of the grant.

An array of staff draw from these funds for legal work and acquisition documentation, negotiating with landowners, coordinating with partners, outreach to landowners, and project management and coordination.

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?

TPL - Potential site clean-up and initial restoration activities.

WRC - Outreach and community engagement within the project area.

Professional Services

What is included in the Professional Services line?

Appraisals

Design/Engineering

Other : Environmental Assessments; Mineral Assessments; Mapping

Surveys

Fee Acquisition

What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?

We anticipate that we will close 3 to 4 transactions and investigate 2 others.

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

N/A

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?

TPL: DSS request is based upon our federal rate which has been approved by the DNR. 50% of these costs are requested from the grant, 50% is contributed as leverage.

Federal Funds

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

No

Output Tables

Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	100	100
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	475	475	950
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	-	-	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	475	575	1,050

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	-	100	100	-	-	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	100	100	-	-	-

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.)	100	-	-	-
Non-DNR Lands (city, state, federal, etc.)	-	-	-	-
Easements	-	-	-	-
Total	100	-	-	-

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	\$200,000	\$200,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$5,583,500	\$5,383,500	\$10,967,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	\$5,583,500	\$5,583,500	\$11,167,000

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	8	0	0	0	92	100
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	475	0	0	0	475	950
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	0	0	0	-	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	483	0	0	0	567	1,050

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	\$20,000	-	-	-	\$180,000	\$200,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$7,989,000	-	-	-	\$2,978,000	\$10,967,000
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$8,009,000	-	-	-	\$3,158,000	\$11,167,000

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	\$2,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	\$11,754	\$11,333
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	\$2,500	-	-	-	\$1,956
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$16,818	-	-	-	\$6,269
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

1 shoreline mile

Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?

No

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

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

Restore / Enhance Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Description
Janet Johnson WMA Addition	Chisago	03521134	8	\$20,000	Yes	Restore cultivated land to native prairie habitat & oak savanna
Dalbo WMA Addition	Kanabec	03825233	52	\$120,000	Yes	Restore cultivated land to native prairie habitat
Kroschel WMA Addition I	Kanabec	04122205	40	\$60,000	Yes	Restore cultivated land to native prairie habitat

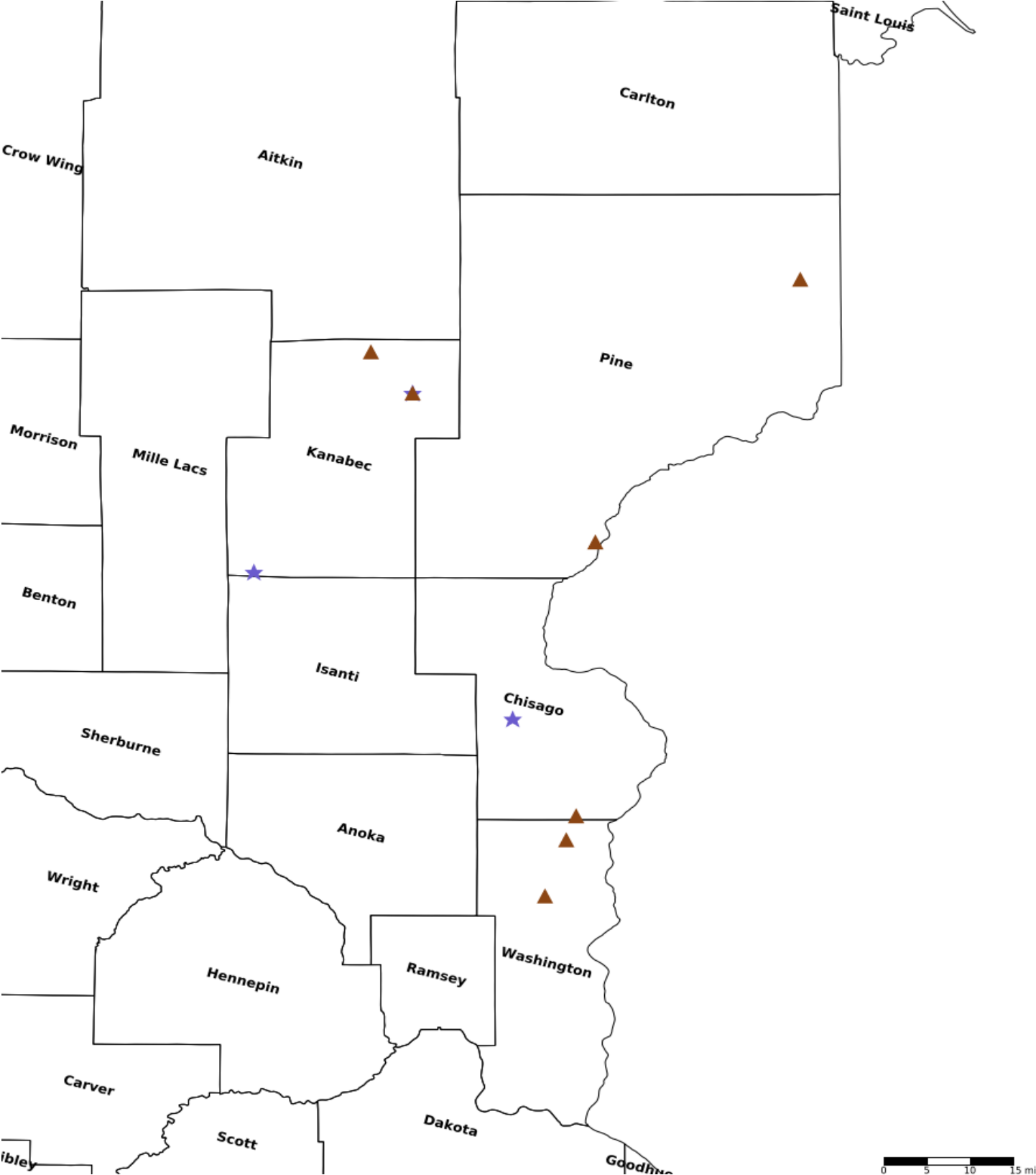
Protect in Fee Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Kroschel WMA Addition II	Kanabec	04122205	440	\$1,800,000	No
Snake River State Forest Addition	Kanabec	04223210	840	\$2,250,000	No
Chengwatana State Forest Addition IV	Pine	03820212	80	\$260,000	No
Bone Lake WMA	Washington	03220216	117	\$2,000,000	No
Keystone Woods WMA Addition	Washington	03120219	120	\$2,000,000	No

Protect Parcels with Buildings

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Buildings	Value of Buildings
First Lake WMA	Chisago	03320234	160	\$1,200,000	No	3	-
Nemadji State Forest Addition IV	Pine	04416228	80	\$250,000	No	2	\$20,000

Parcel Map

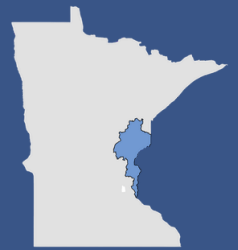


- Protect in Easement
- ▲ Protect in Fee with PILT
- Protect in Fee W/O PILT
- ★ Restore
- ✕ Enhance
- ⊕ Other

ST. CROIX WATERSHED

HABITAT PROTECTION AND RESTORATION

PHASE 8



OUTDOOR HERITAGE FUND REQUEST

\$11,167,000 to **protect 950 acres**
through fee-title acquisition & **restore**
100 acres of degraded habitat.



ASK: \$11,167,000

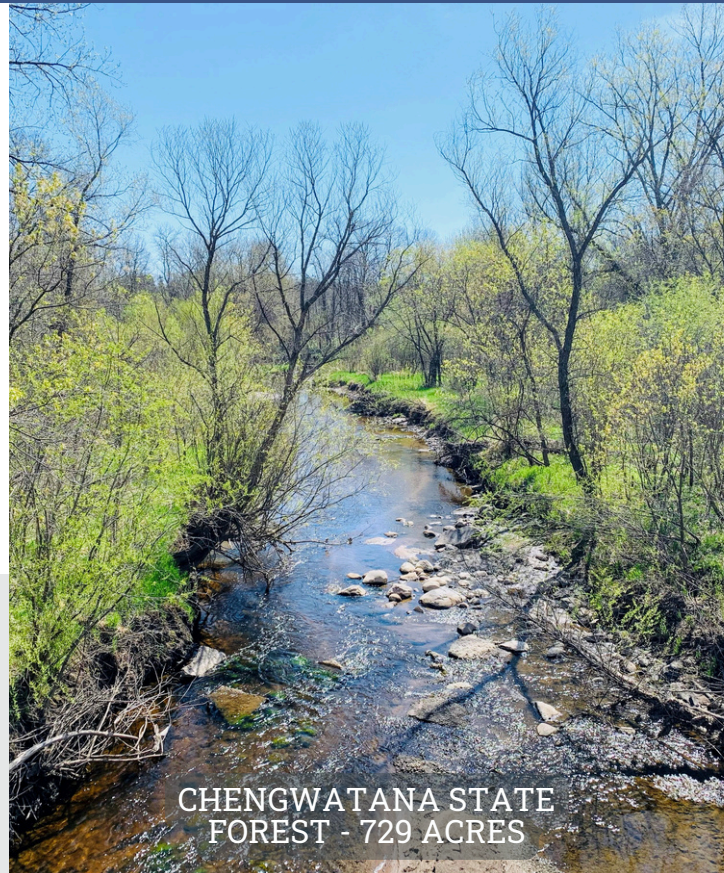
PROPOSED OUTCOMES: 1,050 Acres

LAND FOR WILDLIFE

Our proven program invests in targeted land protection and restoration across the Minnesota side of the St. Croix River Watershed. Under this proposal, our partnership will continue to work to permanently protect approximately **950 acres** of critical wildlife habitat and restore **100 acres** of degraded lands within the St. Croix basin. The goals of the program are **to protect high quality wildlife habitat, improve conservation connectivity, and provide public access for outdoor recreation opportunities.**

LONG LASTING IMPACT

Twenty three projects have been completed to date - **protecting 6,328 acres and 38.5 miles of shoreline.** These projects are vital to providing habitat and water quality benefits to the St. Croix Watershed, which is at high risk from development & fragmentation.



CHENGWATANA STATE
FOREST - 729 ACRES



KEYSTONE WOODS WMA - 1,833 ACRES

FUNDING NEED

Additional funding is needed to continue our pace of conservation wins. Within the past 6 months 4 acquisitions totaling 483 acres have been protected. **Another 1,034 acres across 5 acquisitions will be protected before the end of 2026.**

There is high demand for permanent land protection within the St. Croix Watershed. TPL and WRC, as applicants in this proposal, have cultured a strong and growing landowner interest in both land protection and restoration. **TPL has developed a pipeline of active acquisition projects which currently exceeds all remaining funds across all its open grants.** The need and opportunity is now.



PHASE 8 PROJECT GOALS

- Protect & Restore **1,050 acres** of **new public land**.
- Support the **195 Species in Greatest Conservation Need** (SGCN) that call the program area home.

Parcels targeted by this proposal are identified and prioritized through the lens of Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan and scored on biodiversity, connectivity, and ability to preserve habitat.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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