



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

DNR Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Phase 10  
ML 2027 Request for Funding

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### General Information

**Date:** 06/22/2026

**Proposal Title:** DNR Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Phase 10

**Funds Requested:** \$16,328,300

**Confirmed Leverage Funds:** \$20,000

**Is this proposal Scalable?:** Yes

### Manager Information

**Manager's Name:** Dean Paron

**Title:** Section of Fisheries Habitat Program Manager

**Organization:** Department of Natural Resources

**Address:** 525 Lake Ave South Suite 415

**City:** Duluth, MN 55802

**Email:** dean.paron@state.mn.us

**Office Number:** 6512595205

**Mobile Number:**

**Fax Number:**

**Website:**

### Location Information

**County Location(s):** Hubbard, Red Lake, Lake, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Otter Tail, Redwood, Marshall, Pine, St. Louis, Carlton, Aitkin, Becker, Le Sueur, Dakota, Meeker, Wabasha, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Scott, Washington, Faribault, Big Stone, Stearns, , Wadena, Cass, Wright and Jackson.

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

Forest / Prairie Transition

Northern Forest

Southeast Forest

Metro / Urban

Prairie

**Activity types:**

Enhance

Restore

Other : Feasibility studies are proposed for two projects.

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

Habitat

**Narrative****Abstract**

The MNDNR is proposing to complete nine different river projects including six fish-passage projects, three channel-restoration projects, and two feasibility studies that restore habitat for fish and other aquatic life, creating over two miles of diverse habitat. The funds will also be used to enhance 872 acres of riparian and terrestrial habitat on Aquatic Management Areas. The footprint of fish passage project is small, but projects will reconnect miles of lake and river habitat. Stream projects were selected from a statewide list, prioritized by factors such as ecological benefit, scale of impact, urgency of completion, and local support.

**Design and Scope of Work**

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) annually updates a statewide list of stream habitat projects. Submissions come both from MNDNR staff and from partner organizations. Projects are prioritized based on scale-of-impact, urgency, local support, and critical habitat for rare species. Based on this list, MNDNR and our partners are proposing six passage projects and three channel restorations, leveraging \$1,510,000.

Access to different habitats is critical for fish and other aquatic organisms to complete various life stages. The habitats they use to spawn, live as juveniles, over-winter, and feed as adults may all be different. These habitats can be fairly unique, such as high-gradient riffles favored by many spawning fish and may be miles apart. When dams or other obstructions prevent aquatic life from reaching ideal habitat, they are forced to use less optimal locations that can reduce their success. In some cases, this leads to the complete loss of sensitive species upstream of a barrier. Modifying or removing barriers through our six proposed fish passage projects would only have a one-acre footprint however, restores upstream access to 30,283 acres of lake and river habitat while restoring ecological processes that have ecosystem wide benefits. This will benefit fish species such as Walleye, Northern Pike, and Lake Sturgeon present in these rivers, as well as five mussel species classified as threatened or special concern.

Streams naturally form habitat through the meandering of the river. Deeper, slower habitat is created by scour into the bed of the river around the outside of bends, while faster water and a rockier bottom is found in the straight sections in between. Wood, overhanging vegetation, and boulders serve as important habitat. In degraded sections of river, these natural processes are disrupted. Degraded habitat affects all life stages of river fishes. Working with partners, we will restore over 11 miles of habitat on three streams. These restored reaches also will connect reaches of quality habitat.

We propose to enhance 872 acres and restore 6 acres of riparian and upland habitats on 29 Aquatic Management Areas (AMA). The DNR manages these river adjacent lands to protect critical shoreline habitat used by spawning fish, waterfowl, wading birds, reptiles and amphibians and species of special concern. Upland parcels in river corridors provide a buffer to protect water quality, and habitat for more terrestrial species. Our enhancement work

includes shoreline plantings, invasive species control, and prescribed burns. Projects are selected based on management guidance documents that have been written for each AMA.

Department resources for stream habitat work falls short of the need; funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund has been critical to an acceleration of stream habitat work by the department and partners. Funding includes salary for a stream habitat consultant and coordinator positions that are key to implementing these projects. These positions provide critical technical assistance, and construction oversight to partners working on Legacy-funded restoration and enhancement projects. These positions improve coordination efficiency by providing single points of contact and enhance outcomes of aquatic habitat.

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

The Necktie and Elizabeth Dam projects are key components to Lake Sturgeon restoration efforts in the Red River basin. Lake Sturgeon are an important game species and also listed as a species of Special Concern in Minnesota. Dams that blocked migrations to spawning habitat, overharvest, and poor water quality contributed to the extirpation of Lake Sturgeon from the Red River basin in the early 1900's. Lake Sturgeon reintroduction in the Red River basin has been ongoing for 20 years and mature fish are being captured during spring surveys now. However, barriers such as these projects, block upstream migrations of mature Lake Sturgeon on the Otter Tail River. Removing these barriers to fish passage is key to restoring a naturally reproducing population of Lake Sturgeon in the Red River basin.

Endangered and threatened species often rely on migratory corridors. Our AMA riparian parcels serve as important habitat corridors for threatened and endangered species. Restoring and enhancing these parcels provides the optimal habitat for these species to recover and reach other critical habitat. In North America riparian habitat has the most diverse and rich array of bird, amphibian, and mammal species. Maintaining this habitat is critical for biodiversity as well as threatened and endangered species.

There are 68 species of greatest conservation need that utilize headwaters to large streams, including birds, turtles, frogs, fish, and insects. Stream habitat projects are not designed with one species in mind but instead are intended to benefit multiple functions and habitats within the stream and riparian area which in turn benefit rare species. Completion of proposed stream restoration projects will include habitat features that will directly benefit many of the species in greatest conservation needs.

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

The projects on our list have local support that may not be present in the future if public sentiment were given time to change, which can happen with dam removal or modification projects.

Matching funds are currently available for \$1,510,000 of our projects. Completing these projects would take advantage of those funds while they are available.

There are multiple one-time federal funding opportunities for aquatic habitat restoration and enhancement. We have been aggressively pursuing these funding sources using Outdoor Heritage Fund appropriations as leverage. Working out the timing between federal funding and Outdoor Heritage Fund appropriations is always challenging so we only include federal funding that has already been committed as leverage. However, we will continue to aggressively pursue all federal funding opportunities with these appropriations.

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

Science-based targeting was used to identify, design, and prioritize restoration and enhancement projects included in this proposal. Projects were prioritized based on multiple criteria, including scale-of-impact, critical habitat, technical feasibility, and compatibility with other resource initiatives. Projects that benefit or reconnect areas of high or outstanding biological significance or lakes of biological significance were targeted and prioritized.

Our proposal features projects intended to reduce fragmentation. Dams and other obstructions in rivers fragment areas of suitable habitat, similar to when pieces of prairie are separated by large areas of row-crop farmland. By removing or modifying barriers in streams, we will allow fish and other aquatic life to move between different patches of habitat that may be critical for their life-processes, such as spawning. Connectivity also expands fishing opportunities by acting as a conduit for recolonization after catastrophic events such as drought happen in one portion of a watershed. We have prioritized fish passage projects that connect large areas of high-quality habitat.

Similarly, our stream channel restoration projects and AMA enhancement projects target reaches of river where habitat is poor due to past alterations. Lengths of poor habitat can themselves act as barriers to animal movement, where a fish may choose not to migrate through a reach without adequate depth or cover to reach more suitable habitat upstream. Restoring the stream channel removes that "barrier" of poor habitat that fragments the stream. In the process, we also create high-quality habitat within the formerly degraded reach.

This accomplishment plan also includes survey, design, and permitting for the Grindstone Dam Removal. No acres will be claimed on this appropriation but will follow with request for construction funding.

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

- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda
- Red River of the North Fisheries Management Plan

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

**Forest / Prairie Transition**

Protect, enhance, and restore wild rice wetlands, shallow lakes, wetland/grassland complexes, aspen parklands, and shoreland that provide critical habitat for game and nongame wildlife

**Metro / Urban**

Enhance and restore coldwater fisheries systems

**Northern Forest**

Protect shoreland and restore or enhance critical habitat on wild rice lakes, shallow lakes, cold water lakes, streams and rivers, and spawning areas

**Prairie**

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

## Southeast Forest

Protect, enhance, and restore habitat for fish, game, and nongame wildlife in rivers, cold-water streams, and associated upland habitat

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

Restoring longitudinal connectivity is the single most important restoration strategy in aquatic environments. Once a barrier is removed (dam or undersized culvert) connection to important habitats is restored and natural river processes can begin to permanently heal a river system. Once dams are removed, we see an average of 68% of missing aquatic species return to above barrier habitats and generally and overall increase in aquatic biodiversity. Our projects are designed to use natural river processes to maintain their function indefinitely.

The AMA habitat work conducted under this proposal will be done on land under permanent conservation protection. However, by the very nature of habitat management, these enhancements will not be permanent. Grasslands, wetlands, and many forest types rely on periodic disturbances. To maintain the health and diversity of grasslands, they need burning, grazing, or other ecological disturbances, every few years. Early successional forests and brushland need frequent management to maintain their structural characteristics, short, young, and dense, to benefit wildlife that depend on these habitats. Prescribed fire is even necessary in mature forests, especially those dominated by oak and pine.

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

While most large projects in this proposal have permanent outcomes, AMA habitats are always changing and little is permanent due to the science of plant succession. The best example would be fire and prairie. With periodic fires, we can keep trees under control and the prairies open for grassland dependent wildlife. Multiple prescribed fires are also more cost effective than waiting 20 yrs and funding a major tree removal project. To quote Leopold's Game Management "Cover is controlled by controlling the plant succession in the right direction at the right time and place. Cow, plow, axe, and fire reverse the succession. Fencing, fire prevention, and planting advance it." In other cases, we can approach most enhancement projects when they are still small and manageable. Waiting another decade will degrade the habitat and cost much more once we finally get to it.

## Outcomes

### Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

Rivers and streams provide corridors of habitat including intact areas of forest cover in the east and large wetland/upland complexes in the west ~ *The Lost River Dry Dam project aligns with "Reconnect the Red" efforts (Goal #3, Red River Fisheries Management plan; Phase 2 Lake Sturgeon Restoration Plan), and the Otter Tail River 1W1P ("enhancing aquatic connectivity" goal). This multi-phase collaboration builds on 30 years of Red River connectivity progress to date, 47 of 79 major barriers on the Red River and Minnesota tributaries have been removed or modified to allow fish passage. For this project, we will compare warmwater fish communities before and after project completion. We will also compare catch rates for critical species before and after project completion.*

### Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

Other ~ *Rivers and streams, and surrounding vegetation provide corridors of habitat. For the Deer Lake Outlet we will compare fish communities before and after project completion.*

**Programs in the northern forest region:**

Improved aquatic habitat indicators ~ *Improved aquatic habitat indicators will include geomorphic monitoring on the Necktie Rive, Bieg Rice Lake, Mayo Brook Culverts restoration projects. For the Mayo Brook Culverts, fish communities will be assessed before and after project completion.*

**Programs in prairie region:**

Other ~ *The Valleau WMA channel restoration projects in this region will improve in-channel and riparian habitat. We will use metrics that evaluate instream and floodplain habitat to assess our success. For the Elizabeth Dam and Le Sueur Dam fish passage projects, we will use routine fish surveys to gauge changes to the fish community and compare with pre-project data.*

**Programs in southeast forest region:**

Rivers, streams, and surrounding vegetation provide corridors of habitat ~ *Southeast forest will be stream riparian focused restoration of valuable corridors of habitat. It will monitored with AMA staff and local Area Fisheries Staff during routine fish surveys and AMA monitoring. Large corridors and complexes of biologically diverse wildlife habitat typical of the unglaciated region are restored and protected ~ The non-game program is very active in this region with projects assessing wildlife populations. And there are the same ongoing wildlife surveys as in the other regions of the state.*

**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 an acceleration of DNR aquatic habitat work to a level not attainable but for the appropriation.

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

MNDNR has multiple potential avenues that could be used for ongoing maintenance of projects, including the Game and Fish Fund which is supported by license sales, the Heritage Enhancement account funded by taxes on lottery tickets, funds raised through the sale of Trout Stamps, the General Fund, and people who volunteer to help the department with projects.

**Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes**

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Annual	Game and Fish	Inspect project	Control Invasives	Make instream adjustments as needed

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

The DNR Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement proposal has the following specific ties to BIPOC and diverse communities: Projects included in this proposal provide benefits at the watershed scale. These benefits extend well beyond the footprint of each individual project and benefit all Minnesotans. Tribal partners have been significant partners in efforts to restore Lake Sturgeon in the Red River basin. Multiple projects included in this proposal contribute to these efforts. DNR’s OHF projects aim to serve all Minnesotans. At the same time, we are bringing more focus in all our work to BIPOC and diverse communities. The Minnesota DNR has adopted advancing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) as a key priority in its strategic plan. The plan focuses on increasing the cultural competence of our staff, creating a workforce that is reflective of Minnesota, continuing to strengthen tribal consultation and building partnerships with diverse communities. The OHF funds high quality habitat

projects that provide ecosystem services like clean water and carbon sequestration that support environmental justice. OHF also supports public access and recreational opportunities on these lands. OHF projects and outcomes benefit BIPOC and diverse communities through recreational opportunities that are close-to-home, culturally responsive and accessible to Minnesotans with disabilities. The DNR has diversity, equity and inclusion strategies that benefit all OHF projects: Multilingual and culturally specific hunting and fishing education programs take place on public lands. All hiring is equal opportunity, affirmative action, and veteran friendly. Contracting seeks out Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged and Veteran-Owned businesses. Public engagement seeks out BIPOC voices and involves diverse communities. Outreach and marketing of projects has this focus as well. Partnerships are at the center of all projects. Tribes in particular are consulted in all pertinent areas of the DNR's work, under EO 19-24.

## Activity Details

### Requirements

**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

AMA

County/Municipal

Public Waters

### 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?**

No

**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

### 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.**

Most of our appropriations costs are for project construction. Construction usually does not occur until

year 4 or 5, due to the length of doing a large project. A project Gantt chart showing the steps needed for a large project shows there are over 80 steps to complete a project, and construction usually doesn't start until steps 65 to 70. Therefore, the vast proportion of appropriation occurs with construction in year 4 to 5. All our appropriations are currently on track to be completed in time and fully expend project appropriation funds within the 5-year timeline. Most projects will be completed in 4.5 to 5 years from project funding. Since 2010 our programmatic aquatic habitat appropriations have always met timeline for spending down projects. Once again, the unspent money is mostly due to timeline of large project not being able to spend the majority of the funding until year 4 to 5.

**Open OHF Appropriations - Data from Most Recent Status Update**

Project	Funding Amount Received	Amount Spent to Date	Funding Remaining	% Spent to Date
ML 2026 - DNR Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, Phase 9	\$6,429,000	-	\$6,429,000	0.0%
ML 2025 - DNR Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement - Phase 8	\$3,800,000	-	\$3,800,000	0.0%
ML 2024 - DNR Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement - Phase 7	\$4,206,000	\$524,300	\$3,681,700	12.47%
ML 2023 - DNR Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement - Phase 11	\$4,122,000	\$932,200	\$3,189,800	22.62%
ML 2022 - DNR Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement - Phase 5	\$5,177,000	\$2,105,900	\$3,071,100	40.68%
ML 2021 - DNR Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement - Phase 4	\$2,790,000	\$1,841,000	\$949,000	65.99%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$26,524,000</b>	<b>\$5,403,400</b>	<b>\$21,120,600</b>	<b>20.37%</b>

**Timeline**

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Design of fish passage and channel restoration projects	March 2028
Permitting and environmental review of fish passage and channel restoration projects	December 2028
Construction of fish passage and channel restoration projects	September 2030
Vegetation maintenance on fish passage and channel restoration projects	June 2030

**Budget**

**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$2,055,000	-	-	\$2,055,000
Contracts	\$10,718,800	\$1,510,000	EPA 319, Lambert Township, Federal Off-system Bridge, Local Option Sales tax	\$12,228,800
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Professional Services	\$3,110,000	-	-	\$3,110,000
Direct Support Services	\$317,900	-	-	\$317,900
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$116,600	-	-	\$116,600
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$16,328,300</b>	<b>\$1,510,000</b>	-	<b>\$17,838,300</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Fish Passage Specialist	1.0	4.0	\$360,000	-	-	\$360,000
Interns	4.0	4.0	\$120,000	-	-	\$120,000
River Specialist	1.0	3.5	\$375,000	-	-	\$375,000
Restoration Coordinator	1.0	3.5	\$570,000	-	-	\$570,000
Restoration Consultant	1.0	3.5	\$630,000	-	-	\$630,000

**Amount of Request:** \$16,328,300

**Amount of Leverage:** \$1,510,000

**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 9.25%

**DSS + Personnel:** \$2,372,900

**As a % of the total request:** 14.53%

**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:	\$1,510,000	\$20,000	-	\$1,510,000
% of Total Leverage:	100.0%	1.32%	0.0%	

### Detail leverage sources and confirmation of funds:

\$290,000 from EPA 319 grant, \$20K from (what) Township, \$900,000 Federal Off-System Bridge Fund, \$300 Local Option Sales Tax

### 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?

Projects come from a prioritized list. With partial funding, we would fund only the top projects from our list that fit within the amount allocated. At 50% funding, we estimate that we would still be able to achieve approximately 40-50% of enhancement and restoration acres.

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

Personnel would reduce to 50 to 60% of the requested amount. Staff time would focus on project coordination, administration, and project development.

Direct Support Services is determined by a standard DNR process taking into account the amount of funding and the number of allocations made with that funding.

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

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

Top ranked projects are watershed-scale connectivity projects; at 30% funding we will achieve approximate 30-40% of our initial proposed acres for enhancement and 11% of our initial restoration acres.

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

Personnel would reduce to 30 to 40% of the requested amount. Staff time would focus on project coordination, administration, and project development.

Direct Support Services is determined by a standard DNR process taking into account the amount of funding and the number of allocations made with that funding.

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

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?**

Previous funded positions from past appropriations were the Restoration Coordinator, River Specialist, and Interns. Funding for the positions of Restoration Coordinator and Interns were funded in the ML22, ML23, ML25 appropriations (one of the Restoration Coordinator positions has been upgraded to Restoration Consultant, the second restoration coordinator has never been funded in past appropriations but is being requested this appropriation in order to meet workload in this proposal) and River Specialist was funded in the ML23 and ML25 appropriations. Once the personnel funds from those appropriations are extinguished, we will shift to charging salary to this appropriation. New positions of Restoration Coordinator and Fish passage specialist are being requested to handle the increase in workload opportunities.

**Contracts**

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

100% of contracts are for Restoration and Enhancement work.

**Professional Services**

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

Design/Engineering

**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**

All travel line costs will be used for mileage, food, and lodging.

**I understand and agree that lodging, meals, and mileage must comply with the current MMB Commissioner Plan:**

Yes

**Direct Support Services**

**How did you determine which portions of the Direct Support Services of your shared support services is direct to this program?**

DNR calculates the program's fair share to pay for support costs directly related to and necessary for the appropriation, and an internal Service Level Agreement (contract) guarantees each program will receive the services for the calculated amount.

**Federal Funds**

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

Yes

**Are the funds confirmed?**

No

**What is the approximate date you anticipate receiving confirmation of the federal funds?**

There are multiple federal funds being applied for, however, it is expected we will know by December 2026 for most

## Output Tables

### Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	77	77
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	872	872
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>949</b>	<b>949</b>

### 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.)	-	0	-	817
Non-DNR Lands (city, state, federal, etc.)	-	77	-	55
Easements	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>872</b>

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

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	\$5,821,000	\$5,821,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	\$10,507,300	\$10,507,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$16,328,300</b>	<b>\$16,328,300</b>

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

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	20	57	77
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	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	71	6	97	364	334	872
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>949</b>

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

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	\$1,092,500	\$4,728,500	\$5,821,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$299,300	\$1,325,800	\$57,200	\$4,571,200	\$4,253,800	\$10,507,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$299,300</b>	<b>\$1,325,800</b>	<b>\$57,200</b>	<b>\$5,663,700</b>	<b>\$8,982,300</b>	<b>\$16,328,300</b>

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

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	\$75,597
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	\$12,049

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

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	-	-	\$54,625	\$82,956
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$4,215	\$220,966	\$589	\$12,558	\$12,735

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

11 river miles

## Parcels

### Sign-up Criteria?

No

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

MN DNR uses a prioritized list to select stream habitat projects for submission. Project submissions are solicited from MN DNR staff as well as partner organizations. Criteria used to rank projects includes the scale of impact, critical habitat for rare species, the urgency of completing the project, feasibility, and local support. From that list we select the highest-ranked projects that we feel could be completed during the life of the OHF appropriation.

### Restore / Enhance Parcels

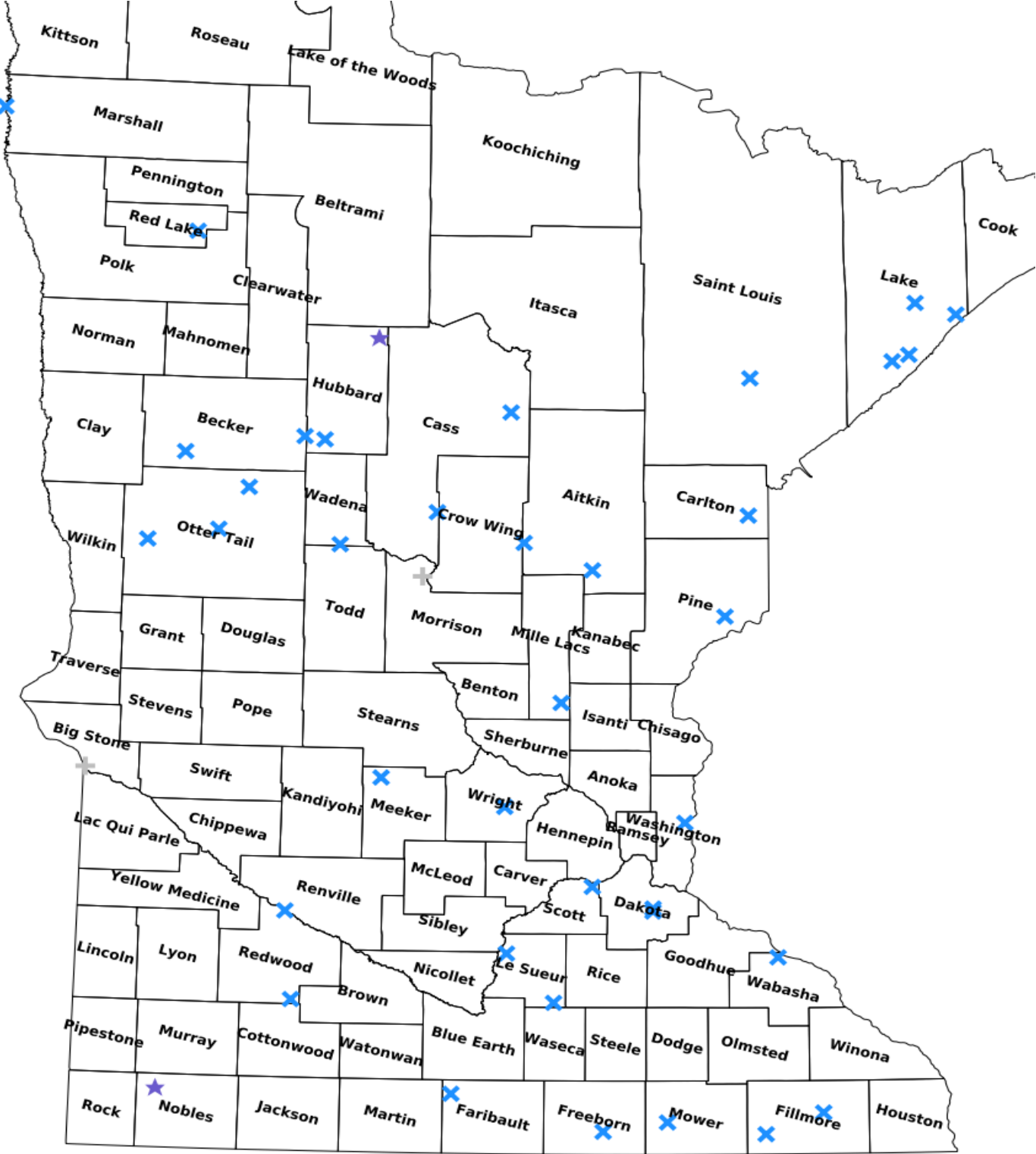
Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Description
Le Seuer Creek Dam	-	11125206	1	\$920,000	Yes	Dam modification
Mud River AMA	Aitkin	04527207	9	\$10,000	Yes	Ash Stand Planting Maintenance
Monson Lake AMA	Becker	13841206	5	\$10,000	Yes	Buckthorn Control
Straight River AMA	Becker	13936201	3	\$5,000	Yes	Prescribed burn
Blackhoof River	Carlton	04716230	10	\$10,000	Yes	Tree planting maintenance
Big Rice Lake Outlet/Willow River Restoration (4 miles channel resto)	Cass	14125219	48	\$2,100,000	Yes	Dam Removal and channel restoration DNR
Mayo Brook Culverts	Cass	13529204	2	\$1,000,000	Yes	Connectivity through Culvert Replacements
South Branch of Vermillion River AMA	Dakota	11418229	30	\$7,250	Yes	prairie invasive control
Vermillion River AMA	Dakota	11418220	20	\$7,150	Yes	prairie invasive control
Blue Earth AMA	Faribault	10428228	56	\$43,000	Yes	prescribed burn and tree control
Etna Creek AMA	Fillmore	10213236	45	\$15,000	Yes	prescribed burn
Lanesboro Hatchery AMA	Fillmore	10310226	6	\$7,000	Yes	buckthorn control
Juglans Woods	Freeborn	10221225	22	\$6,100	Yes	Inter-seeding riparian area where buckthorn removed (5ac)
Gemini AMA	Goodhue	10217207	49	\$28,000	Yes	prescribed burn and tree/vetch control
Necktie River Phase II	Hubbard	14532222	57	\$4,000,000	Yes	Stream channel restoration
Straight River	Hubbard	13935212	20	\$11,000	Yes	invasives species control
Valleau WMA	Jackson	10443225	20	\$650,000	Yes	Stream channel restoration DNR
Little Knife AMA	Kanabec	04424228	27	\$10,000	Yes	Rx burn
Beaver River AMA	Lake	05508206	4	\$10,000	Yes	tree cage maintenance
East Beaver River AMA	Lake	05808209	45	\$10,000	Yes	tree planting/protection
Manitou River AMA	Lake	05806233	30	\$5,000	Yes	Riparian planting followed harvest or burn
Split Rock River AMA	Lake	05509217	95	\$10,000	Yes	ash diversification; tree planting
Waterville Hatchery AMA	Le Sueur	10923228	12	\$7,000	Yes	prescribed burn
Frank Rose	Marshall	15750230	60	\$30,000	Yes	Rx burn and Prairie enhancement; woody control, invasives
North Fork Crow River AMA	Meeker	12132224	28	\$36,000	Yes	riparian buckthorn control
Chuck Davis AMA	Mille Lacs	03626203	8	\$40,000	Yes	invasive control and tree planting

Dead River Walker AMA	Otter Tail	13440211	12	\$10,000	Yes	Prescribed burn and native seeding
Elizabeth Dam Pelican River	Otter Tail	13443232	1	\$2,600,000	Yes	Dam Modifications
Toad River AMA	Otter Tail	13738232	5	\$10,000	Yes	spray invasive species
Barnes Spring AMA	Pine	04118212	15	\$10,000	Yes	Rx Burn
Lost River Dry Dam	Red Lake	15041203	1	\$1,000,000	Yes	Connectivity through Culvert Replacement
Sanborn AMA	Redwood	10936227	35	\$50,000	Yes	spray and interseed
Whispering Ridge AMA	Redwood	11436232	100	\$150,000	Yes	control of woody invasives on outcrops
Eagle Creek AMA	Scott	11521217	15	\$35,600	Yes	prescribed burn and invasive control
Whiteface River	St. Louis	05416208	20	\$10,000	Yes	Riparian Planting. Protect/Add Conifer in upland.
Miller Creek AMA	Wabasha	11112209	46	\$26,400	Yes	buckthorn and prairie tree control
Aldrich Dam	Wadena	13434235	1	\$350,000	Yes	Dam modification DNR
Brown's Creek AMA	Washington	03020221	5	\$3,300	Yes	woody invasive control
Deer Lake Outlet on Mill Creek	Wright	11926201	171	\$200,000	Yes	Dam Modification/lake habitat

**Other Parcels**

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
MN River Headwaters	Big Stone	12146216	0	\$275,000	Yes
Cold Spring Dam Feasibility Study	Stearns	13230223	0	\$112,000	Yes

### Parcel Map



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



# Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement—Phase 10

## Summary

Diverse habitat is critical to sustaining quality fish populations in lakes and rivers. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) will complete 9 river projects including 6 fish passage projects to restore habitat connectivity and 3 channel restoration projects for fish and other aquatic life. Though the actual footprint of fish passage projects is relatively small, these projects will reconnect approximately 30,000 acres of lake and river habitat. River restoration projects were selected from a statewide list, prioritized by factors such as ecological benefit, scale of impact, urgency of completion, and local support. We will also enhance 817 acres of riparian habitat and associated uplands on 29 Aquatic Management Areas. The DNR manages these lands to protect critical shoreline habitat used by spawning fish, waterfowl, wading birds, reptiles and amphibians and species of special concern. Aquatic habitat projects were selected from a statewide list, prioritized by factors such as ecological benefit, scale of impact, urgency of completion, and local support.

## Project Partners

- Cass County
- Cass SWCD
- Chippewa National Forest
- City of Aldrich
- City of Cold Spring
- Conservation Fund
- East Otter Tail SWCD
- Hubbard SWCD
- Jackson SWCD
- Lambert Township
- Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
- Le Sueur SWCD
- Lower MN River East Partnership
- MNDOT
- Red Lake County
- Red Lake Watershed District
- Stearns SWCD
- Upper MN River Watershed District
- Wright County

**Requested Amount:** \$16,328,300  
**Leverage Amount:** \$1,510,000

## Projects



### Elizabeth Dam

- Modification of a 15 ft dam
- 1<sup>st</sup> Barrier on the Pelican River watershed
- Identified as a major causal factor in Pelican River biotic impairment
- Reconnect 79 mainstem river miles for 40 species of fish



### Necktie River

- Restores dimension, pattern and profiles in a ditched channel and will restore portions of the historic channel

# Projects-continued

## Necktie River (continued)

- Improves habitat for 18 species of fish and is a designated trout stream upstream of the project
- Partnership with Hubbard County SWCD



## LeSueur Dam

- Dam failed in 2024
- Dam removal will reconnect 30 miles of habitat for 67 species of fish
- Partnership with Le Sueur SWCD, Le Sueur County and MN River East Watershed Partnership



## Aldrich Dam

- Dam removal project
- Reconnect 35 miles for 45 species of fish
- Partnership with East Otter Tail SWCD and City of Aldrich



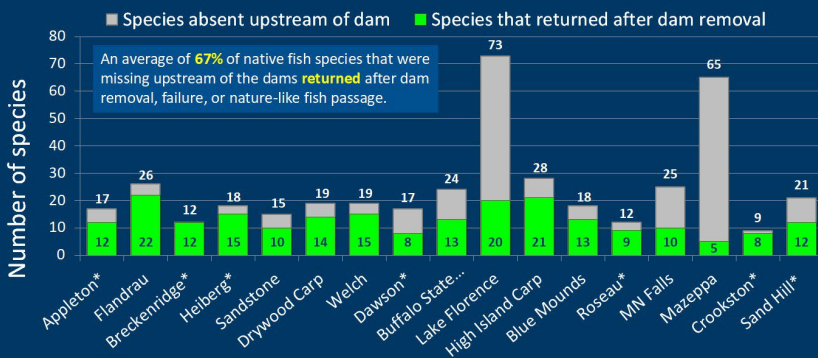
## Additional projects include:

- Valleau WMA Channel Restoration
- Deer Lake Outlet
- Mayo Brook Culverts – Phase I
- Big Rice Lake Outlet/Willow River Channel Restorat
- Riparian Aquatic Management Area Enhancement

## Lost River Culvert

- Replacing a culvert that acts like a dam
- Reconnect 96 miles of river for 39 species of fish
- Partnership with Red Lake Watershed District, Red Lake County, Lambert Township, MNDOT

## Fish Community Response to Barrier Removal



## Questions?

Dean Paron  
 Fisheries Habitat Program Manager  
 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
 dean.paron@state.mn.us