



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

DNR Accelerated Native Prairie Bank Protection-Phase IX  
ML 2027 Request for Funding

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### General Information

**Date:** 06/22/2026

**Proposal Title:** DNR Accelerated Native Prairie Bank Protection-Phase IX

**Funds Requested:** \$3,575,000

**Confirmed Leverage Funds:** -

**Is this proposal Scalable?:** Yes

### Manager Information

**Manager's Name:** Judy Elbert

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**Organization:** MN-DNR

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### Location Information

**County Location(s):** .

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

Forest / Prairie Transition

Southeast Forest

Prairie

**Activity types:**

Protect in Easement

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

Prairie

## Narrative

### **Abstract**

Native Prairie Bank will work with willing landowners to permanently protect 500 acres of native prairie and supporting habitat through perpetual conservation easements. Easement acquisition will focus on the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan and Wildlife Action Plan identified landscapes and target Minnesota Biological Survey-identified threatened and endangered plant and animal species, high-quality native plant communities, and key habitats for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and other wildlife species.

### **Design and Scope of Work**

Prairies are recognized as one of the most threatened ecosystems in North America and temperate grasslands as one of the most endangered in the world. Tallgrass prairie, savanna, and barren communities have declined by more than 98% nationwide. This proposal aims to permanently protect 500 acres of native prairie habitat through the acquisition of Native Prairie Bank conservation easements.

Native prairie is a fragile, unique natural ecosystem consisting of thousands of different organisms, plants, animals, bacteria, and soil fungi developed over thousands of years. These complex systems serve as critical habitat for a disproportionate number of rare species. In Minnesota, 41% of the state's rare species are associated with native prairie, even though native prairie comprises less than 0.5% of the land area. Native prairies provide a multitude of benefits to the people of the state, such as water filtration and recharge, carbon sequestration, soil health, erosion control, and outdoor recreation. High-quality native prairies offer the highest tier of habitat for grassland-dependent pollinators, birds, and animals. Despite decades of advancement, contemporary grassland restoration efforts still fall short of the diversity and habitat quality provided by native prairies.

Approximately 250,000 acres (1.3%) of Minnesota's original native prairie still exists, with nearly half remaining unprotected, with the vast majority occurring on privately-owned land. Threats to native prairie continue to be widespread, including cropland conversion, industrial activity, development, invasive/woody encroachment, and non-prairie-focused land use.

To recognize that grassland and wetland protection is one of the most critical conservation actions needed, leading conservation organizations came together to develop the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan (Prairie Plan). Several outcomes are identified in the plan, one being the protection of all remaining native prairie, largely through conservation easements. One of the primary easement tools for native prairie protection in Minnesota is the DNR-administered Native Prairie Bank easement.

Native Prairie Bank, established by the 1987 legislature as a tool to protect native prairie in a long-term "bank", authorizes the state to acquire conservation easements from willing landowners. To date, 183 Native Prairie Banks protect more than 15,700 acres. Native Prairie Bank targets the protection of native prairie tracts and can also include adjoining lands as buffers and additional habitat.

Tracts eligible for Native Prairie Bank are prioritized based on several scientific factors, including:

- 1) Size and quality of habitat, focusing on diverse native prairie documented by the Minnesota Biological Survey.
- 2) Occurrence of endangered, threatened, or special concern species, or suitability of habitat for Species in Greatest Conservation Need.

### 3) Lands that are part of the Prairie Plan and Wildlife Action Plan-identified landscapes

Native Prairie Banks provide permanent protection to native prairies by placing restrictions on future land use and granting the DNR the right to monitor and implement prairie enhancement projects. The Native Prairie Bank program coordinates with Prairie Plan partners and utilizes the network of established Local Technical Teams (local staff from SWCDs, NRCS, USFWS, The Nature Conservancy, Pheasants Forever, etc.) to reach out to landowners and increase enrollment.

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

This proposal will result in the permanent protection of 500 acres of land containing high-quality native prairie using Native Prairie Bank easements. The Native Prairie Bank program prioritizes outreach to landowners of sites identified as native prairie by the Minnesota Biological Survey. The program also prioritizes lands that contain documented occurrences of endangered, threatened, and special concern species as well as Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), and other rare plant and animal species associated with prairie habitats. Native prairies support a disproportionately high number of rare species in Minnesota. Approximately 41% of Minnesota's rare species are associated with native prairie, even though native prairie comprises less than one-half of one percent of the state's land area. Additionally, according to the Minnesota Wildlife Action Plan (formally known as Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare), there are 89 Species of Greatest Conservation Need that occur in the prairie region of the state.

Each native prairie protected through this proposal will typically support several Species in Greatest Conservation Need. SGCNs found on native prairies include but are not limited to white-tailed jackrabbit, American badger, northern pintail, short-eared owl, Henslow's sparrow, upland sandpiper, sedge wren, marbled godwit, western meadowlark, greater-prairie chicken, Blanding's turtle, Great Plains toad, plains hog-nosed snake, gophersnake, common five-lined skink, and many other species of spiders, dragonflies, butterflies, moths, beetles, and bees.

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

Only a small fraction of Minnesota's original 18 million acres of native prairie still exist. These remaining native prairies are critically imperiled and at high risk of significant degradation and loss due to invasive species, woody encroachment, development, mineral extraction, cropland conversion, and lack of prairie-oriented management.

Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan indicates that habitat-related stressors are a predominant stressor for 70% of Species in Greatest Conservation Need (241 of the 346 species), with habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation being top concerns. Multiple research studies show a direct correlation between declining grassland habitat and declining grassland wildlife populations further indicating that the current trajectory of grassland and prairie loss will increase the pressure and stress we are placing on grassland-dependent wildlife.

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

The Native Prairie Bank program scores and selects easement projects based on criteria including: 1) the diversity and quality of native prairie habitat as ranked by the Minnesota Biological Survey, 2) size of the prairie, 3) the occurrence of or suitable habitat for threatened and endangered species and Species in Greatest Conservation Need, 4) location relative to other native prairie or protected lands (including Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan and Minnesota Wildlife Action Plan priority areas), 5) potential for long-term management and enhancement, and 6) other factors that would ensure long-term benefits and sustainability for Minnesota's critical wildlife species.

Native Prairie Bank’s numerical scoring and selection process prioritizes parcels that build on existing habitat complexes, avoids fragmentation, and targets Minnesota Biological Survey priority plant communities and areas of biodiversity significance. Please see the Native Prairie Bank scoring criteria uploaded as part of this proposal.

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

Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan

Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan 2015-2025

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

**Forest / Prairie Transition**

Protect, enhance, and restore rare native remnant prairie

**Prairie**

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

**Southeast Forest**

Protect, enhance, and restore remnant goat prairies

**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 inception in 1987, Native Prairie Bank has been the premier conservation easement option in Minnesota for the perpetual protection of high-quality native prairie. This proposal will accelerate the protection of native prairie in Minnesota by funding the permanent protection of an additional 500 acres via Native Prairie Bank easements within priority areas and large habitat complexes identified in the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan. The Native Prairie Bank program gives priority to remnant prairie sites identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey and targets rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species, high-quality native plant communities, and key habitats for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). The high-quality native prairie protected through this proposal is not only home to many Species in Greatest Conservation Need but also to other species such as pheasants, deer, grasshopper sparrows, bobolink, gray partridge, sharp-tailed grouse, etc.

For nearly 40 years, the Native Prairie Bank program has proven it can successfully protect and manage these unique wildlife habitats. The program also takes great pride in the positive working relationships it maintains with easement landowners. A parcel enrolled in Native Prairie Bank is not just a number in a database or a folder in a filing cabinet, it’s an integral piece of the state’s natural heritage, protected and managed to ensure future generations of Minnesotans can experience the wonders of native prairie.

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

This proposal includes the acquisition of perpetual Native Prairie Bank conservation easements. Native Prairie Banks provide permanent protection to native prairies by placing restrictions on future land use and granting the DNR the right to monitor and implement prairie enhancement projects.

**Outcomes**

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

Remnant native prairies are part of large complexes of restored prairies, grasslands, and large and small wetlands ~ *Acres of native prairie protected ensuring grassland habitat for upland birds*  
*Acres protected within Prairie Plan Core, Corridors, and Strategic Habitat Complexes*  
*Average size of protected complex*

**Programs in prairie region:**

Remnant native prairies and wetlands are perpetually protected and adequately buffered ~ *Acres of native prairie protected ensuring grassland habitat for upland birds*  
*Acres protected within Prairie Plan Core, Corridors, and Strategic Habitat Complexes*  
*Average size of protected complex*

**Programs in southeast forest region:**

Remnant goat prairies are perpetually protected ~ *Acres of native prairie protected*

**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 accelerates Native Prairie Bank protection to a level not attainable but for the appropriation. Prior to receiving OHF, Native Prairie Bank protected an average of 328 acres/year. Since receiving OHF, Native Prairie Bank protects an average of 523 acres/year, almost doubling the rate of acquisition.

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

DNR's Conservation Easement Stewardship policy is to protect both the conservation values of the protected property and the state's investment in those interests. Stewardship elements include baseline property report creation, enforcement protocols, regular compliance monitoring, effective record keeping and reporting, and maintaining good working relationships with the easement landowners. Native Prairie Bank implements this policy by following DNR Operational Order 128 "Conservation Easement Stewardship" along with the "Ecological and Water Resources Division Conservation Easement Stewardship Plan and Guidelines", which call for annual landowner contact as well as on-the-ground monitoring once every three years. If a violation is found, annual site visits (or more frequently) are conducted until the violation is rectified. Budgeted into this proposal is funding to deposit into an account dedicated to the perpetual monitoring and enforcement of Native Prairie Bank easements acquired under this proposal.

Native Prairie Bank staff in partnership with the landowner will actively seek funding to execute the best on-going prairie management activities. These management activities, such as prescribed burning, invasive species control, woody control, etc., will be completed when feasible through a variety of funding sources.

**Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes**

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
FY28-31	OHF	Develop Baseline Property Report to be signed by both the landowner and DNR at time of closing.	Once easement closes, transfer funds to dedicated Conservation Easement Stewardship Account	-

			per OHF appropriation and accomplishment plan for long-term easement stewardship.	
FY28-35	OHF	As needed, restore any cropped acres present at time of acquisition to local-ecotype native prairie seed (estimated 15 acres).	-	-
Perpetually/Annually	Interest derived from dedicated Conservation Easement Stewardship Account established with this appropriation.	Ongoing landowner partnership, monitoring, reporting and easement stewardship as laid out in DNR Operational Order 128 and the Division of Ecological and Water Resources Conservation Easement Stewardship Division Guidelines.	-	-
On-Going	Variety of Funding Sources (Landowner, ENRTF, OHF, Game & Fish, USDA Programs, etc.)	Native Prairie Bank staff in partnership with the landowner will actively seek funding to execute the best on-going prairie management activities. These management activities, such as prescribed burning, invasive species control, woody control, etc., will be completed when feasible.	-	-

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

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. This project will benefit all communities throughout the entire state of Minnesota by permanently protecting ecosystem services that provide clean drinking water, productive habitat, clean air, carbon sequestration, and sedimentation/erosion control.

**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?**

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?**

Yes

**Please Explain:**

Native Prairie Bank occasionally acquires a few acres of cropland (estimated at less than 15 acres) to properly buffer the native prairie acres or create more manageable boundaries. Limited farming of these acres may occur until the area is restored to a diverse local-ecotype prairie. In these limited circumstances, the landowner/producer is allowed to utilize the same seed that is being used in the field adjacent to the conservation easement. It is possible that insecticides or fungicides (including neonicotinoid and fungicide-treated seed) could be used. Restoration of all cropland acres will occur prior to the end of this appropriation. No food plots will be allowed on the acquired parcel.

**Will the eased land be open for public use?**

No

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

No

**Will the 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?**

-

**Timeline**

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Enroll 500 acres of Native Prairie Bank Easements	06/30/2031
Restore approximately 15 acres of prairie (inclusion cropped acres acquired with these funds)	06/30/2035

**Budget**

**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$400,000	-	-	\$400,000
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$2,500,000	-	-	\$2,500,000
Easement Stewardship	\$250,000	-	-	\$250,000
Travel	\$63,200	-	-	\$63,200
Professional Services	\$300,000	-	-	\$300,000
Direct Support Services	\$51,800	-	-	\$51,800
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$3,575,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$3,575,000</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Natural Resource Laborers/Student Workers	0.17	4.0	\$50,000	-	-	\$50,000
Natural Resource Specialist/Technician	0.86	4.0	\$300,000	-	-	\$300,000
Project/Acquisition Coordinators	0.11	4.0	\$50,000	-	-	\$50,000

**Amount of Request:** \$3,575,000

**Amount of Leverage:** -

**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 0.0%

**DSS + Personnel:** \$451,800

**As a % of the total request:** 12.64%

**Easement Stewardship:** \$250,000

**As a % of the Easement Acquisition:** 10.0%

**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?**

This project is scalable and can be proportionately cut in most circumstances. Essentially, less funding allocated would mean less native prairie acres protected. There are efficiencies with acquiring more acres

at one time, especially if neighboring sites can be coordinated together for landowner meetings, site visits, survey activities, etc.

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

Personnel could be proportionately adjusted. DSS would be recalculated using DNR's Direct and Necessary Calculator to take into account the overall reduction in the budget, at 50% budget reduction, it appears DSS would recalculate to an approximately 46% reduction.

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

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

This project is scalable and can be proportionately cut in most circumstances. Essentially, less funding allocated would mean less native prairie acres protected. There are efficiencies with acquiring more acres at one time, especially if neighboring sites can be coordinated together for landowner meetings, site visits, survey activities, etc.

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

Personnel could be proportionately adjusted. DSS would be recalculated using DNR's Direct and Necessary Calculator to take into account the overall reduction in the budget, at 70% budget reduction, it appears DSS would recalculate to an approximately 65% reduction.

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

Environment and Natural Resource Trust 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?**

This funding will be used to pay project-associated costs for staff paid almost exclusively with special project funds. These positions would not exist, but for special project funding received through the OHF and other funds. Each year these staff code time working on OHF-related acquisition activities using specific funding string codes.

**Professional Services**

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

Surveys

Title Insurance and Legal Fees

**Easement Stewardship**

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

Budgeted into this work plan is funding to be deposited into the DNR's Conservation Easement Stewardship

Account dedicated to the perpetual monitoring and enforcement of conservation easements. For each specific Native Prairie Bank easement, initial investment dollars are determined by using a DNR approved Conservation Easement Stewardship Calculator, which estimates the annual expenses and the investment needed to generate annual income sufficient to cover these expenses in perpetuity. The calculator takes into account many factors, such as travel costs and monitoring time needed for site visits, size of the easement, complexity of the easement in relation to potential future enforcement costs, etc. Currently, the calculator averages \$20,000 to \$28,000 per easement. Due to the fragmentation of Minnesota's remaining unprotected native prairie, Native Prairie Bank anticipates each acquired easement to be approximately 50-60 acres in size. Factored into the budget is the estimate for 10 easements at \$25,000 each, however the project manager will only enroll the actually amount calculated using the DNR approved calculator for the specific easements acquired.

**Travel**

**Does the amount in the travel line include equipment/vehicle rental?**

Yes

**Explain the amount in the travel line outside of traditional travel costs of mileage, food, and lodging**

Most DNR activities tied to this proposal would be traditional travel costs, some activities such as boundary posting, seed harvest, planting, weed control, etc. will require the use of larger DNR fleet equipment which has standard costs tied to the amount of usage needed.

**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?**

The DNR Direct & Necessary Cost Calculator was used to determine Direct Support Service costs. DNR's Direct & Necessary Costs (\$51,816) pay for activities that are directly related to and necessary for accomplishing appropriated projects and calculated based on the specific demands of this project. Direct and necessary costs cover HR support (~\$11,061), Safety Support (~\$1,450), Financial Support (~\$5,689), Communication support (~\$2,086), IT Support (~\$29,987) and Planning Support (~\$1,543).

**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	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	0	500	0	0	500
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>500</b>

**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	15	0	15	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</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.)	-	-	-	-
Non-DNR Lands (city, state, federal, etc.)	-	-	-	-
Easements	0	0	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

**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	420
Enhance	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>420</b>

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

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	\$3,575,000	-	-	\$3,575,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$3,575,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$3,575,000</b>

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

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	100	5	395	0	500
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>500</b>

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

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	\$715,000	\$35,800	\$2,824,200	-	\$3,575,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$715,000</b>	<b>\$35,800</b>	<b>\$2,824,200</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$3,575,000</b>

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

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	\$7,150	-	-
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	-	\$7,150	\$7,160	\$7,149	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

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

0

**Parcels**

**Sign-up Criteria?**

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

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

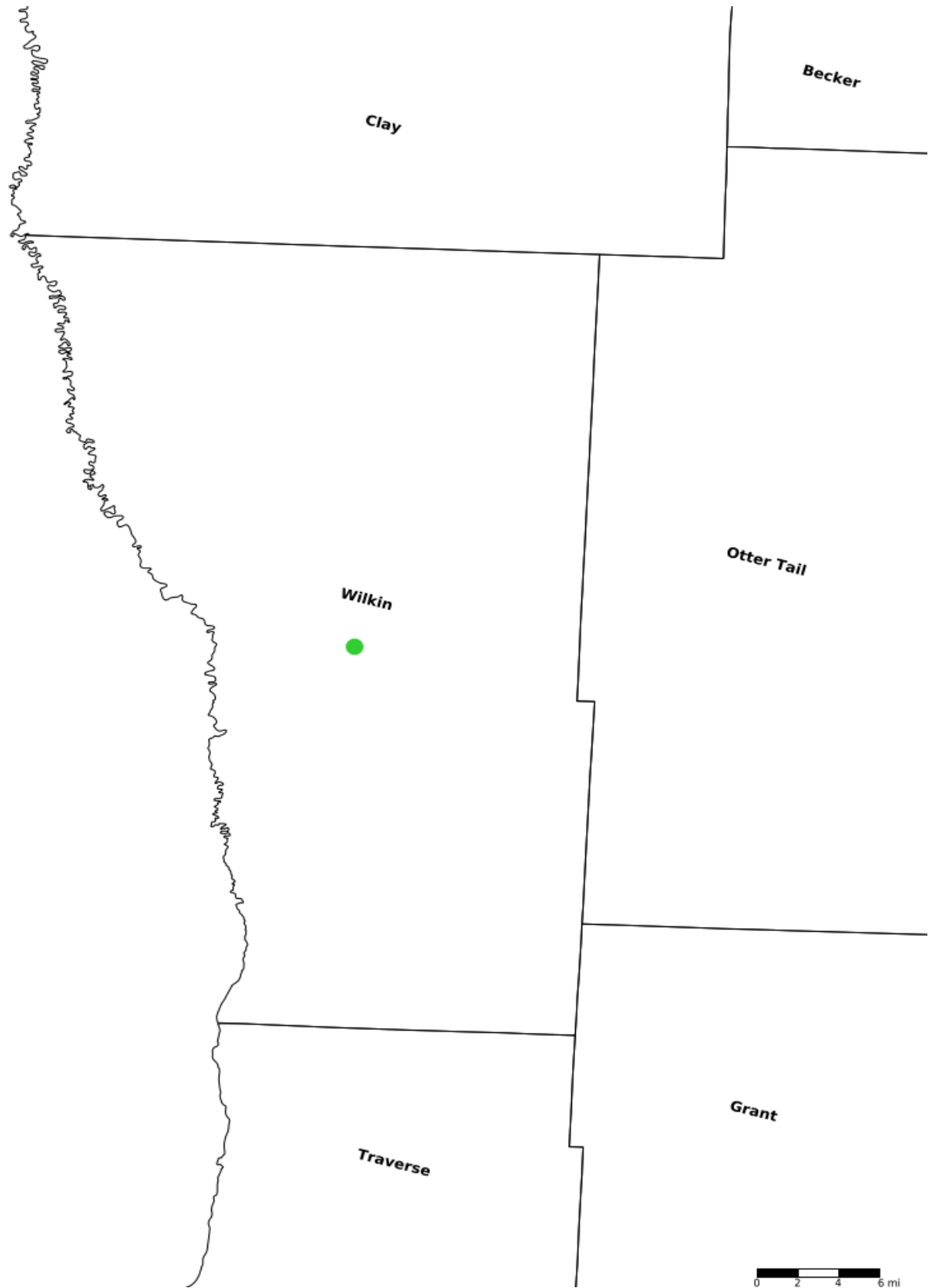
Native Prairie Bank easements acquired through this proposal will be ranked and prioritized through the Native Prairie Bank acquisition evaluation process, which includes emphasis given to parcels within Minnesota’s Prairie Conservation Plan and Minnesota Wildlife Action Plan identified landscapes.

The Native Prairie Bank acquisition evaluation process requires that each potential site be scored and selected based on criteria including, the diversity and quality of native prairie habitat as ranked by the Minnesota Biological Survey, size of the prairie, occurrence of or suitable habitat for threatened and endangered species and Species in Greatest Conservation Need, location relative to other native prairie or protected lands (includes Prairie Plan and Wildlife Action Plan target landscapes), potential for long-term management and other factors that would insure long-term benefits and sustainability for Minnesota’s critical wildlife species. Native Prairie Bank’s numerical scoring and prioritization process ensures that only the top-ranked prairie parcels are acquired. Please see the Native Prairie Bank scoring criteria uploaded as part of this proposal for detailed scoring information.

**Protect in Easement Parcels**

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Conservation easement acquisition will target protection of the last of Minnesota's high-quality remnant prairies with priority given to parcels in MN Prairie Conservation Plan and Wildlife Action Plan priority areas (please see attached map for more details). Specific parcels will be added to the parcel list as selected through the evaluation and ranking process described above.	-	13346221	500	\$3,575,000	No

Parcel Map



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

## Accelerated Native Prairie Bank Protection: Phase IX

Since its inception in 1987, the state's leading prairie experts have driven high expectations and tight standards to make Native Prairie Bank a top choice for native prairie conservation. This proposal aims to permanently protect 500 acres of native prairie habitat utilizing Native Prairie Bank conservation easements that allow the land to stay in private ownership.

### Threats to Native Prairie

Tallgrass prairie, savanna, and barren communities have declined by more than 98% nationwide. In Minnesota, 41% of the state's rare species are associated with native prairie, even though native prairie comprises less than 0.5% of the land area. Prairies continue to be lost and degraded due to many factors. Below are a few examples. Additional threats include cropland conversion, property development, mineral extraction, harsh use, etc.



Rock Removal



Broadcast Spray



Invasive Species



Woody Encroachment

### This Proposal Strategically Protects High-Quality Native Prairie through:

- **Targeted** protection of Minnesota's best remaining native prairie
- **Selection** based on size, quality, and diversity of native prairie habitat, as well as occurrences of endangered, threatened, and special concern species, and suitable habitat for Species in Greatest Conservation Need
- **Focus** on Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan priority areas and building onto larger habitat complexes
- **Partnering** with the network of Prairie Plan Local Technical Teams and prairie landowners to protect and improve native prairie management and long-term habitat health.

### Past OHF Project Highlights

Native Prairie Bank has received funding through 9 past appropriations of Outdoor Heritage Funding, protecting 40 native prairie parcels. In total for these appropriations, Native Prairie Bank aimed to protect 3,695 acres and came in exceeding that goal by protecting 4,706 acres. Though Native Prairie Bank does, at times, add in some additional buffer habitat for management and ecological purposes, 90% of these protected acres were remnant native prairie.

**Below are a few pictures of previously acquired OHF Native Prairie Banks:**



**ML13 – Appleton 19-1 NPB  
Lac qui Parle Prairie Plan Core Area**



**ML14 – Swedes Forest 22-2 NPB  
Upper Minnesota River Prairie Core Area**



**ML15 – Godfrey 7-1 NPB  
Glacial Ridge Prairie Plan Core Area**



**ML15– Swedes Forest 21-1 NPB  
Upper Minnesota River Prairie Core Area**



**ML16 – Gentilly 27-1 NPB  
Glacial Ridge Prairie Core Area**



**ML21 – Excel 5-1 NPB  
New Solum Prairie Plan Core Area**