



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

RIM Buffers for Wildlife and Water - Phase XIII

ML 2027 Request for Funding

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### General Information

**Date:** 06/24/2026

**Proposal Title:** RIM Buffers for Wildlife and Water - Phase XIII

**Funds Requested:** \$5,000,000

**Confirmed Leverage Funds:** -

**Is this proposal Scalable?:** Yes

### Manager Information

**Manager's Name:** Dusty Van Thuyne

**Title:** Easement Programs Coordinator

**Organization:** Board of Water and Soil Resources

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### Location Information

**County Location(s):**

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

Forest / Prairie Transition

Southeast Forest

Prairie

Metro / Urban

Northern Forest

**Activity types:**

Protect in Easement

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

Prairie

Wetlands

**Narrative****Abstract**

The Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Buffers program will restore and protect riparian and floodplain areas across the state to improve and enhance water quality and wildlife habitat, permanently protecting approximately 360 acres on 6 easements. The focus of this funding will be land with crop history within a mapped floodplain or a riparian area. Hydrology will be restored to the extent possible. This program will continue utilizing a science-based ranking and selection process and be implemented locally, working with Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) staff in targeted areas in the state.

**Design and Scope of Work**

Riparian corridors containing healthy buffer and floodplain areas contribute to clean water and provide critical wildlife habitat and travel corridors. By focusing on the floodplain scale, we can create significantly better wildlife habitat while achieving multiple benefits, such as accommodating flooding issues. This partnership program between Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF), Clean Water Fund (CWF), and potentially the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), would establish permanent riparian areas that provide both critical water quality improvements and improved habitat.

Criteria used to evaluate and prioritize parcels funded under this program include frequency of inundation or crop loss, proximity to lands open to public access, existing CRP contracts, proximity to other permanently protected habitat, prioritization of One Watershed, One Plans or other comprehensive water plans, type of water resource being buffered, proximity to threatened and endangered species, and overall size. A competitive application process for landowners will be used. The goal for this project will be funding from both OHF and CWF as well as United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), when possible, under existing or new CRP enrollment. Wider riparian areas provide long-term water quality treatment and increased habitat. Buffers that are established in proximity to other grasslands also function at a higher level within the landscape for grassland nesting birds and other wildlife.

The RIM Buffers program delivery will be supported by SWCDs and administered by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR).

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

Buffers are commonly viewed as simply a water quality practice, but buffers have positive impacts on wildlife due to their unique upland and riverine habitat interaction. This is especially true for expanded width buffers enrolled through this program. Not only are grasslands protected or restored, detrimental impacts to stream-reliant biota are reduced. Many species of amphibians, such as the Northern Cricket Frog (endangered) rely on aquatic habitat during the breeding season and then spend most of their lives in upland habitat. In southeastern MN, reptiles such as the Blanding's Turtle (threatened) rely on meandering streams, rivers, and adjacent lands.

The Sedge Wren, a Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) most commonly associated with grassland habitat, is encountered in buffer areas. Bird use is influenced by buffer width with greater widths experiencing greater abundance and diversity of birds and grassland species. However, bird use is negatively associated by the amount of edge exposure. In an effort to limit edge exposure, sites that may serve as corridors or expand current complexes receive higher weight using this program's scoring and ranking process.

Diverse vegetation, access to a water resource, and protection from pesticides are important to Minnesota's native pollinator species. BWSR's native vegetation guidelines and pollinator initiative have outlined the RIM program's commitment to protecting native pollinators. Complexes and corridors targeted through RIM Buffers provide areas that are safe from pesticides and are natural passageways for pollinators. Targeted pollinator species include the Monarch Butterfly and solitary bee species including Leafcutter Bees, Mason Bees, and Yellow-faced Bees.

SGCN in the RIM Buffers area include the Common Five-lined Skink (state status = species of special concern), Two-spotted Skipper, Northern Pintail, American Black Duck, Grasshopper Sparrow, Upland Sandpiper, Sedge Wren, Dickcissel, and Western Grebe. In addition to the SGCN, the threatened or endangered species targeted in this proposal include the Dakota Skipper (state status = endangered; federal status = threatened), Poweshiek Skipper (state and federal status = endangered), and Rusty Patched Bumble Bee (federal status = endangered).

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

Minnesota continues to see a loss of grasslands and CRP acres each year. This exodus is being driven by high land prices and increased pressure for alternative uses. CRP contracts continue to expire (275,672 acres with a contract expiring in Minnesota during federal fiscal years 2027 - 2030) and farming pressure leads to more habitat fragmentation and agricultural fields within the floodplain. It is critical to retain as many acres of habitat in the most important locations. A combination of permanent protection with RIM and re-enrollment of CRP, when possible, will reduce this impact from habitat loss. Additionally, CRP is nearing the national acreage cap within the federal farm bill, which may limit CRP enrollment opportunities for landowners interested in restoring marginal agricultural lands. RIM Buffers provides another opportunity for landowners interested in restoring and permanently protecting these riparian acres should CRP enrollment become limited.

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

Through a combination of targeted outreach, eligibility screening, and a scoring and ranking process, each site is considered on its benefits to the surrounding landscape, as well as the site-specific features.

During the application process, a review of adjacent permanent habitat and easement size is conducted to evaluate a site's importance as a corridor or extension to an existing habitat complex. Applications are awarded points based on the adjacency of permanently protected land, including publicly accessible land, or another RIM easement; with the highest number of points being awarded to an application that has permanently protected land, including publicly accessible land, or another RIM easement on both ends of the land offered in an application. Zero points are awarded if permanently protected land, including publicly accessible land, or another RIM easement is not within a half mile on the same watercourse/water body as the land offered in an application.

As we implement this project, we will utilize similar science-based considerations that have been historically used by the RIM Buffers program.

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

Long Range Plan for the Ring-Necked Pheasant in MN

Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

**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**

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

**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 expiring CRP lands

**Southeast Forest**

Restore forest-based wildlife habitat that has experienced substantial decline in area in recent decades

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

Southeast Forest and Northern Forest Sections - protection and restoration of riparian buffers provides habitat for both game and nongame wildlife.

Forest/Prairie Transition Section - this program targets and restores existing corridors and complexes, as well as those areas where complexes exist but the addition of a buffer provides a needed connection. This reflects the outcome of diverse and productive grasslands and wetlands that are connected by corridors, providing multiple benefits in the face of major stressors.

Metro Section - the focus is on corridors, as sites are analyzed for their function as habitat linkages.

Prairie Section - this program prioritizes expiring CRP acres.

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

## Outcomes

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

Protected, restored, and enhanced aspen parklands and riparian areas ~ *A summary of the total acres acquired through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure maintained outcomes. An increase of native grassland habitat is expected to increase the carrying capacity of grassland-dependent wildlife. This would have a positive impact on both game and non-game species. We expect more abundant populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as these areas are restored.*

### **Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:**

A network of natural land and riparian habitats will connect corridors for wildlife and species in greatest conservation need ~ *A summary of the total acres acquired through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure maintained outcomes. An increase of native grassland habitat is expected to increase the carrying capacity of grassland-dependent wildlife. This would have a positive impact on both game and non-game species. We expect more abundant populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as these areas are restored.*

### **Programs in the northern forest region:**

Increased availability and improved condition of riparian forests and other habitat corridors ~ *A summary of the total acres acquired through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure maintained outcomes. An increase of native grassland habitat is expected to increase the carrying capacity of grassland-dependent wildlife. This would have a positive impact on both game and non-game species. We expect more abundant populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as these areas are restored.*

### **Programs in prairie region:**

Expiring CRP lands are permanently protected ~ *A summary of the total acres acquired through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure maintained outcomes. An increase of native grassland habitat is expected to increase the carrying capacity of grassland-dependent wildlife. This would have a positive impact on both game and non-game species. We expect more abundant populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as these areas are restored.*

### **Programs in southeast forest region:**

Rivers, streams, and surrounding vegetation provide corridors of habitat ~ *A summary of the total acres acquired through this appropriation will be reported. On-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years to ensure maintained outcomes. An increase of native grassland habitat is expected to increase the carrying capacity of grassland-dependent wildlife. This would have a positive impact on both game and non-game species. We expect more abundant populations of endangered, threatened, special concern and game species as these areas are restored.*

### **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 funding request is not supplanting existing funding or a substitution for any previous funding.

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

BWSR is responsible for monitoring and enforcement of RIM easements. BWSR partners with local SWCDs to carry out oversight, monitoring and inspection of conservation easements. Easements are inspected every year for the first five years beginning the year after the easement is recorded. Thereafter, on-site inspections are performed every three years and compliance checks are performed in the other two years. SWCDs document findings and report to BWSR on each site inspection conducted. A non-compliance procedure is implemented when potential violations or problems are identified.

Perpetual monitoring and enforcement costs are \$10,000 per easement. This value is based on using local SWCD staff for monitoring and existing enforcement authorities. The amount listed for Easement Stewardship includes costs of BWSR and local government unit staff time, travel costs, and other costs for easement monitoring, encouraging voluntary compliance, addressing potential violations, and legal enforcement.

**Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes**

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2027-Ongoing	Stewardship Account	Inspections every year for the first five years; then every third year.	Corrective actions of any violations.	Enforcement action taken by MN Attorney General's office.
2027-Ongoing	Landowner Responsibility	Maintain compliance with easement terms.	-	-

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

Generally, RIM priority areas are focused on rural communities across the state due to the nature of the program and payment rates. Review of the Environmental Justice map produced by the MPCA shows RIM easement programs overlap with many identified environmental justice areas across the state, particularly those areas that are identified by lower than state median incomes. Lower annual income areas of the state benefit from RIM in several ways, including financial benefits for landowners through easement payments. The individual program may also require seeding and wetland restoration work by local contractors. The work by SWCD staff also includes outreach, monitoring and maintenance which helps maintain and grow rural jobs and economies.

**Activity Details**

**Requirements**

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

Yes

**Land Use**

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

Yes

**Explain what will be planted and include the maximum percentage of any acquired parcel that would be planted into foodplots by the proposer or the end owner of the property:**

In certain circumstances, wildlife food plots are an allowable use on RIM easements as part of an approved Conservation Plan. Annual or perennial food plots may be allowed at the owner's expense. Food plots must be maintained annually. If a food plot is discontinued, it must be immediately replanted to appropriate high-quality, permanent native vegetative cover and the associated establishment cost is the responsibility

of the landowner(s). Food plot size and the number of food plots allowed are based on the size of the easement. Food plots will not exceed more than 10% of the easement area or will not exceed a maximum acreage depending on the size of the easement.

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

No

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

Yes

**Describe the expected public use:**

RIM easements do not require that private land is open for public use; however, this question is also evaluated on public benefit and RIM easements do provide a significant public benefit; often expanding wildlife habitat near public lands; and do not limit the potential for the land to be open to the public through other programs. SWCD and other partner staff who work with landowners on RIM easements are also usually the staff who enroll landowners into the DNR Walk-In Access (WIA) program. The WIA program is available in 54 counties, all of which are eligible for RIM. Conversations about WIA between the SWCDs and interested landowners occur at the time the landowner submits an easement application. BWSR’s Conservation Easement Application includes a question for a landowner to indicate if they are interested in enrolling in WIA if eligible.

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

Criteria in RIM program scoresheets used to evaluate and prioritize parcels funded include proximity of the easement land to lands that are in public ownership and/or open to public hunting. Parcels immediately adjacent to public land or that would connect or expand larger existing habitat areas receive additional points in the scoring and ranking process than a parcel that does not provide that benefit. Wildlife do not follow property lines; therefore protected private lands adjacent to and near public lands create complexes of public and private land that provide high quality habitat supporting wildlife, including recreationally hunted species, allowing them to thrive on and off public lands. Protected private lands also add visual and noise buffers that allow users of public land to better enjoy their experiences.

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

Yes

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

Though uncommon, new trails may be developed if they contribute to easement maintenance or benefit the easement site (e.g., fire breaks, berm maintenance, forest stewardship) and are noted on the conservation

plan. Narrow mowed trails for personal use are allowed for landowner access on RIM easements. Unauthorized trails are a violation of the easement.

**How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?**

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

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

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.**

ML 2022 - All easement payment funding expended or encumbered; remaining funds for conservation plan implementation.

ML 2025 - \$130,000 available to contribute to 1 new application; \$3.4 million in easement payment funding expended, encumbered, or committed to approved applications.

ML 2026 - Funding not yet appropriated.

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

Project	Funding Amount Received	Amount Spent to Date	Funding Remaining	% Spent to Date
ML 2026 - RIM Buffers for Wildlife and Water	\$3,694,000	-	\$3,694,000	0.0%
ML 2025 - RIM Buffers for Wildlife and Water - Phase XI	\$4,000,000	\$1,674,300	\$2,325,700	41.86%
ML 2022 - RIM Buffers for Wildlife and Water - Phase X	\$4,392,000	\$3,964,200	\$427,800	90.26%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$12,086,000</b>	<b>\$5,638,500</b>	<b>\$6,447,500</b>	<b>46.65%</b>

**Timeline**

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Activity 1 – easements recorded	June 30, 2031
Activity 2 – restorations completed, and final report submitted	June 30, 2035

**Budget**

**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$329,200	-	-	\$329,200
Contracts	\$22,500	-	-	\$22,500
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$4,477,300	-	-	\$4,477,300
Easement Stewardship	\$60,000	-	-	\$60,000
Travel	\$8,800	-	-	\$8,800
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$85,900	-	-	\$85,900
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$12,500	-	-	\$12,500
Supplies/Materials	\$3,800	-	-	\$3,800
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$5,000,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$5,000,000</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Easements	0.46	4.0	\$260,200	-	-	\$260,200
Engineering	0.11	4.0	\$69,000	-	-	\$69,000

**Amount of Request:** \$5,000,000

**Amount of Leverage:** -

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

**DSS + Personnel:** \$415,100

**As a % of the total request:** 8.3%

**Easement Stewardship:** \$60,000

**As a % of the Easement Acquisition:** 1.34%

**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?**

A 50% reduction in funding would reduce outputs proportionally.

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

A small portion of easement staff time specifically for appropriation and program management and reporting remains relatively consistent regardless of appropriation amount.

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

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

A 30% reduction in funding would reduce outputs proportionally.

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

A small portion of easement staff time specifically for appropriation and program management and reporting remains relatively consistent regardless of appropriation amount.

**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?**

These funds will pay for staff time spent on new easements associated with this project.

**Contracts**

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

The contracts line is used for payments to SWCD staff for easement acquisition and technical assistance, as appropriate. Estimated restoration costs are included in the easement acquisition line.

**Easement Stewardship**

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

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

**Travel**

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

No

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

The travel line will only be used for traditional travel costs.

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

Yes

## **Direct Support Services**

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

BWSR annually reviews and updates direct support services costs that are directly related to and necessary for each request based on the type of work being done and the program staff time involved.

## **Other Equipment/Tools**

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

Steel posts and signs to mark the easement boundaries.

## **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	90	270	0	0	360
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>360</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	360	0	360	-	-	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</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	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</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	\$1,250,000	\$3,750,000	-	-	\$5,000,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,250,000</b>	<b>\$3,750,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$5,000,000</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	18	18	36	270	18	360
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>360</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	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$3,750,000	\$250,000	\$5,000,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>	<b>\$3,750,000</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$5,000,000</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	\$13,888	\$13,888	-	-
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	\$13,888	\$13,888	\$13,888	\$13,888	\$13,888
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

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

1 mile

## Parcels

### **Sign-up Criteria?**

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

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

Through a combination of eligibility screening followed by a scoring and ranking process, the RIM Buffers program evaluates each application on the potential to restore ecological functions and values; optimizing wildlife habitat benefits and providing other benefits including water quality. Each site is evaluated on its benefits to the surrounding landscape and any site-specific features that are important for permanent protection of habitat.

During the application process, a review of adjacent permanent habitat and easement size is conducted to indicate a site's usefulness as a corridor or as an extension of an existing habitat complex.

BWSR will continue to utilize similar science-based considerations as have been historically used by the RIM Buffers Program.

## RIM Buffers for Wildlife and Water

### ML 2027 / FY 2028 Request

Corridors for wildlife are critical to linking larger habitat complexes while maintaining agricultural landscapes. RIM Buffers targets parcels where landowners are experiencing flooding, erosion, and sedimentation resulting in marginal agricultural production.

- \$5 million request;
- Permanent protection and restoration of 360 acres;
- Permanently protects, restores, and manages resources while private ownership continues;
- Clean Water Fund dollars contribute;
- Opportunity to leverage federal funds through the MN Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (MN CREP).



### Funding History and Accomplishments

Since 2012, BWSR’s RIM Buffers program has secured 340 easements, protecting and restoring 14,400 acres across all funding sources.

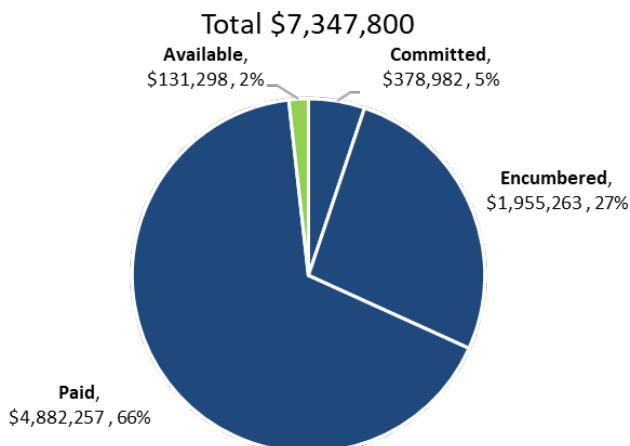


### Outcomes: Benefits to Minnesotans

- Restores and permanently protects wildlife habitat that supports healthy wildlife populations;
- Improves hunting and fishing by building permanent wildlife complexes and improving water quality;
- Creates and sustains Minnesota jobs.

### ML 2022 and 2025 Landowner Payments

(Open Appropriations)



**Available:** easement funds available to fund new easement(s)

**Committed:** easement funds assigned to specific easement(s) – RIM application funded

**Encumbered:** easement funds encumbered for specific easement(s) – RIM agreement signed

**Paid:** easement payments made to landowners