

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Agenda Item Memo

DATE: August 1, 2012

SUBJECT: Green Corridor , Ph. III, Accomplishment Plan Amendment , M.L. 2011, Special Session,
Ch. 6, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2(i)

Background:

This accomplishment plan amendment is brought in for Council consideration of an advance. The Redwood Area Development Corporation (RADC) requests an advance of \$xxxxx for cash flow reasons.

M.L. 2011, First Special Session, Chapter 6, Article 1, Section 2, Subdivision 10. Payment Conditions and Capital Equipment Expenditures says "Reasonable amounts may be advanced to projects to accommodate cash flow needs, support future management of acquired lands, or match federal share. The advances must be approved as part of the accomplishment plan." RADC claims they have insufficient funds to cover contract payments. Terms of OHF advances are they are against actual invoiced expenses, and no additional money can be advanced until proof of payment of invoices supporting the outstanding advance is provided DNR. RADC requests authority to receive up to \$xxxxx. DNR's pass-through management requires proof of payment within 21 days for invoices for which funds are advanced.

Suggested Motion:

In favor of advance: I move to amend the accomplishment plan for Green Corridors Phase III, M.L. 2011, First Special Session, Chap. 6, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd 2(i) to allow an advance of up to \$xxxxx.

Suggested Procedure:

Place a motion to approve the accomplishment plan before the Council and discuss the advance with the RCDC representative and motion.

For advance: Vote Yes

Against advance: Vote No

Agenda Item # 6



A GOOD PLACE TO START***

200 South Mill Street
P.O. Box 481
Redwood Falls, MN 56283
Phone: 507-637-4004
Fax: 507-637-4082
E-Mail: pat@redwoodfalls.org

July 9, 2012

To: Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC)

Subject: ML 2011 Outdoor Heritage Fund Green Corridor Legacy Program Grant

LSOHC;

This letter is in regards to our request for advancement of invoiced reimbursements which are specific and direct to activities associated to our ML 2011 Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) grant due to unexpected cash flow challenges. We are not requesting any Accomplishment Plan changes to previously approved Budget items.

These "advancements" will only be for actual work and/or services performed and invoiced (not for future activities which are yet to be invoiced) and which are allowable reimbursements as specified in our state grant agreements based on approved Accomplishment Plans. Proof of payments will be submitted to our DNR Grant Specialist within 21 days of payment.

Green Corridor is requesting permission of advancement up to \$50,000. This is the maximum needed for any 30 day period during the grant period.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Dingels". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "P" and "D".

Patricia Dingels
Community Development Specialist

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brad Cobb". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Brad Cobb
Program Manager

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

2012 Accomplishment Plan

Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program – Phase III

Manager's Name: Bradley H. Cobb

Title: Program Manager

Organization: Redwood Area Development Corporation

Telephone: 320-493-4695

Email: [@charter.](#)

Fax: 507-637-4082

Date: ~~June 17, 2011~~ June 14, 2012

Funds Recommended: \$1,771,000

Legislative Citation: ML 2011, Special Session, Ch. 6, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2 (i)

Green Corridor Legacy Program Phase III - \$1,771,000 the first year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Redwood Area Development Corporation to acquire land for wildlife management area purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8, or aquatic management areas under Minnesota Statutes, sections 86A.05, subdivision 14, and 97C.02. A list of proposed land acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

Abstract:

This program proposal will help create a legacy of habitat connectivity, public access, and economic vitality based on increased outdoor recreational opportunities in the mid-Minnesota River Watershed.

Program Narrative

The Green Corridor Legacy Program – Phase III would be a continuation of previous Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) appropriations from the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF). This regional initiative focuses on the concept of protecting and restoration of high quality fish, game, and wildlife habitats using best practices and will target unique landscapes along the mid-Minnesota River watershed that have historical value to fish and game by helping to create new and/or expansions of Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and/or Aquatic Management Areas (AMA) complexes or “corridors”.

The proposed fee title acquisitions will be considered from a priority list of properties based on several key factors of which show the most urgent need and/or opportunities. All properties will be acquired from willing and supportive landowners. All selected projects will have the support and cooperation of the DNR for acceptance into the WMA/AMA inventory system. All proposed projects will provide county notifications and will seek their approval.

Advance of funds from the Contract, Travel, and Other –Supplies/Materials portion of the Budget per the terms and conditions of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources grant agreement to the Redwood Area Development Corporation (RADC) upon request and receipt of vendor/subcontractor invoices to assist in organizational cash flow.

Some properties on our Parcel list if indicated “Yes” of having protection may have a portion of those acres in a conservation easement but we are not asking to acquire in fee those acres using Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars, we will be seeking a landowner donation of those acres and the appraisal will indicate those values separately.

Design and Scope of Work

This program incorporates the basic concepts of sustainability and ecosystem management. Minnesota has lost 99% of the original prairie and has seen dramatic declines in grassland dependent wildlife. Examples of the species showing the greatest conservation need in the Program area; the American Badger, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Bobolink to name just a few. Traditional game species are also affected by the decline in habitat such as pheasants, deer, wild turkey, and a variety of dabbling ducks which are associated to prairie wetland complexes.

Publicly owned natural resource infrastructures (WMA, AMA, SNA, parks/trails, waterways) invigorates local and regional economies by providing outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities supported by hunting, fishing, wildlife observation areas, and other forms of outdoor recreation. New business concepts are likely to arise as a direct result of the recreational and tourism opportunities that will be advanced by this Green Corridor Legacy Program. Because of this concept there is wide support from many stakeholders who will assist the Program activities to achieve the desired outcomes.

The Glacial River Warren created the Minnesota River Valley as it drained Lake Agassiz 10,000+ years ago. The bluff to bluff wall of water carved out one of Minnesota’s most scenic landscapes, creating unique geological features, and unique plant communities along the valley and its primary tributaries.

Efforts to restore, protect, and enhance our wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife are timely as escalating development pressures threaten remaining natural lands and water resources on both public and private lands. The Green Corridor Legacy Program approach will be based on sound science concepts of plan development, setting conservation priorities, developing short and long term strategies to achieve conservation priorities, implement the strategies, and then continue monitoring the outcomes. All of these concepts and practices will follow existing state wildlife and conservation plans and natural resource management practices in conjunction with agency partners.

The primary work area of the Green Corridor Legacy Program will be Redwood, Renville, Yellow Medicine, Chippewa, Brown, Nicollet, Murray, Lyon, and Cottonwood Counties with an emphasis along the Minnesota River, its tributaries, associated watersheds, and creating/expanding corridor or complexes of habitat. Connecting existing fragments of habitat along and near the Minnesota River and tributaries in the Program area will generate an ecological synergism that will allow game, wildlife, and aquatic species to flourish, while creating multiple recreational opportunities and improving public access through a series (phases) of funded activities within the nine (9) county Program area.

This Program is directly consistent with the uses of the Outdoor Heritage Fund, as specified in Article XI of the Minnesota Constitution and Minnesota Statute 97A.056: to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife. Furthermore, it will produce multiple conservation benefits across a large targeted and planned geographic area.

Planning

The Green Corridor Legacy Program in consultation with area DNR managers will ensure program activities conform to the various state conservation and resources plan objectives and outcomes. Some of those state and/or regional plans are:

Conservation in the Middle Minnesota Valley: A Blueprint and Action Plan This was a LCCMR funded conservation plan awarded to the Green Corridor Initiative and specific to the mid - section of the Minnesota River Valley.

Native Plant Communities and Rare Species of The Minnesota River Valley Counties This document was created by DNR Ecological Resources and will be another document used to evaluate and/or prioritize potential acquisition for consideration. This document is in conjunction with the Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS).

Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan identifies habitat loss and degradation as the number one driver of change for wildlife in Minnesota and further states that the prairie regions have experienced the greatest amount of habitat loss of any region.

Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for species in greatest conservation need has identified significant loss and degradation of habitat as the number one management challenge and one of the primary strategies is to provide protection through selective acquisition of key habitats in the prairie regions.

Minnesota's Long Range Duck Recovery Plan lists the objective of restoring a breeding population of one (1) million ducks by 2056. The primary strategy to reach this objective is the protection and restoration of two (2) million acres of habitat of which 70% will be grassland habitat in the prairie eco-region.

Minnesota's Long Range Plan for the Ring-neck Pheasant lists the objective of increasing pheasant populations to 1.8 million birds. Numerous strategies were identified to accomplish this objective; one of which calls for an additional 74,000 acres of grasslands to be protected through acquisitions of WMA's in the primary pheasant range.

Citizens report Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition – The Next 50 Years recommends acquisition goals of an additional 494,000 in the prairie and transitional region over the next 50 years.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – Strategic Habitat Conservation (SHC) model outlines several key elements; Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation which the Green Corridor Legacy Program has been using as a basis for program development. The Green Corridor Legacy Program will continue to use existing state-wide wildlife conservation and strategic plans in partnership with our local and regional natural resource managers and conservation professionals to best achieve desired outcomes. These plans were developed through the most currently available science and the professional expertise of a broad range of wildlife professionals. These plans, along with use of GIS technology, will be used to identify potential projects based on existing and potential habitat resources in the program area. This will allow for selection of acquisition tracts that maximize population responses for both game and nongame wildlife.

Finally, this Green Corridor Legacy Program proposal will address many of the visions and priority action items established by the LSOHC for the Prairie Section. The continued emphasis will be on the Minnesota

River, associated tributaries, and watersheds within the program area will also protect and restore these unique landscapes that have historical value to fish and wildlife.

Relationship to Other Constitutional Funds

The Green Corridor Legacy Program focuses on preserving and restoring natural resources infrastructures while emphasizing habitat connectivity (corridors), viability, and public access to these habitats. Besides funding requests to the Environmental & Natural Resource Trust Fund (ENRTF) by Green Corridor Inc., several SWCD’s in the Green Corridor Program area are planning future Clean Water Legacy Fund program proposals and Green Corridor Inc will be participating in those planning discussions. Green Corridor Inc. will coordinate Program area submissions to the Outdoor Heritage Fund – Conservation Legacy Program (small grants) with our conservation group partners like the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, Minnesota Waterfowl Association, National Wild Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and Pheasants Forever. Many other regional initiatives are currently being planned that are in line with Parks & Trails and Arts & Cultural Legacy Funds funding strategies.

Relationship to Current Organizational Budget

Current Fiscal Year Budget: \$4,268,000

Source of Funding	Amount	Percentage to Budget
LCCMR FY2008	\$1,000,000	23%
LSOHC FY2010	\$1,617,000	38%
LSOHC FY2011	\$1,651,000	39%

Appropriation Balances as of July 1, 2011:

LCCMR FY2008	\$0 – Grant completed 6/30/10
LSOHC FY2010	\$0 – Final Report submitted
LSOHC FY2011	\$725,000 – 1 tract left to acquire
<u>Report approved</u>	<u>\$0 – Final</u>

Note: Green Corridor Inc. was **recommended appropriated** for funding of \$2 million by the LCCMR for FY12 for SNA acquisitions and restorations projects along the Minnesota River Valley. ~~This appropriation is waiting legislative approval.~~

Sustainability and Maintenance

First, initial site restoration and development (signage, parking lots, fencing) will be accomplished by this appropriation. The DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife will then permanently manage these properties. Routine maintenance will be managed by area DNR staff funded by their traditional sources like the Game & Fish Fund. Periodic enhancements or improvements will be funded by special funding requests. The DNR requires management or stewardship plans for each project which identify periodic inspections and continuing management of the property site. These management practices include such things as; prescribed fire, weed control, and invasive tree removal as needed or required. Regional partners/stakeholders in conjunction with the Green Corridor Legacy Program will also support these management activities/practices by applying for state funding/grants for on-going maintenance as needed. This appropriation will also fund restoration on approximately 54 acres at an estimated cost of

\$27,000 for projects acquired with the Green Corridor Legacy Program Phase II (FY11 OHF) appropriation.

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Milestone	Date completed
Fee Title Acquisition = 275 acres	3-5 Party Appraisals	September
	3-5 Signed Purchase Agreements	December
	3-5 Property Closings/Transfer to State/DNR	April <u>2013</u>
Restoration = 275 acres	Solicit Bids/Contracts/CCM letter	May 2012 <u>Fall 2012</u>
	Award Contractor	June 2012 <u>Fall 2012</u>
	Restoration Completed (tentative)	August 2013 (tentative)

** Milestones and completion dates will be pending final legislative approval of this appropriation **

Table B-2. Other Outcome Table

N/A

Attachments (*on spreadsheet workbook – 3 separate tabs*):

- A. Budget
- B. Proposed Outcome Tables
- C. Parcel List

No Map is needed for the accomplishment plan

Name of Proposal:	Green Corridor Legacy Program - Phase III
Date:	Revised 6-14-12
Legal Citation / Proposal Number:	ML 2011, 1st Special Session, Ch. 6, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2 (i)

[Link Here to definitions of the budget items below.](#)

Total Amount of Request \$ **1,771,000** *From page 1 on the funding form.*

Personnel

Position breakdown here	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Cash		Total
				Leverage	Cash Leverage Source	
<i>Manager of Programs</i>					\$	-
<i>Admin Asst</i>					\$	-
<i>position 3</i>					\$	-
<i>position 4</i>					\$	-
<i>position 5</i>					\$	-
<i>position 6</i>					\$	-
<i>position 7</i>					\$	-
Total	0		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

Budget and Cash Leverage *(All your LSOHC Request Funds must be direct to and necessary for program outcomes.)*

Please describe how you intend to spend the requested funds.

Budget Item	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Cash		Total
		Leverage	Cash Leverage Source	
Personnel - auto entered from above	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Contracts	\$ 101,000			\$ 101,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT (breakout in table 6 & 7)	\$ 1,551,000			\$ 1,551,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT (breakout in table 6 & 7)				\$ -
Easement Acquisition				\$ -
Easement Stewardship				\$ -
Travel (in-state)	\$ 1,000			\$ 1,000
Professional Services				\$ -
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$ 9,000			\$ 9,000
Other				\$ 109,000
Capital Equipment (<i>auto entered from below</i>)	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -
Other Equipment/Tools				\$ -
Supplies/Materials	\$ 109,000			\$ 109,000
	\$ 1,771,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,771,000

Capital Equipment *(single items over \$10,000 - auto entered into table above)*

Item Name	LSOHC Request	Leverage
<i>Item 1 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 2 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 3 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 4 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 5 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 6 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 7 enter here</i>		
<i>Item 8 enter here</i>		
Total	0	0

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Table 1 and Table 3 column totals should be the same AND Table 2 and Table 4 column totals should be the same

If your project has lakes or shoreline miles instead of land acres, convert miles to acres for Tables 1 and 3 using the following conversion:

Lakeshore = 6 acres per lakeshore mile / Stream & River Shore = 12 acres per linear mile, if both sides

Table 1. Acres by Resource Type

Describe the scope of the project in acres (use conversion above if needed)

	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore		275			275
Protect		275			275
Enhance					0
Total	0	550	0	0	0

Total Acres (sum of Total column) 550 *These two cells should be the same figure.*
 Total Acres (sum of Total row) 550

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore		\$ 165,000			\$ 165,000
Protect		\$ 1,606,000			\$ 1,606,000
Enhance					\$ -
Total	\$ -	\$ 1,771,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

Total Dollars (sum of Total column) \$ 1,771,000 *These two cells should be the same figure.*
 Total Dollars (sum of Total row) \$ 1,771,000

Check to make sure this amount is the same as the Funding Request Amount on page 1 of Main Funding Form.

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore				275		275
Protect				275		275
Enhance						0
Total	0	0	0	550	0	0

Total Acres (sum of Total column) 550 *These three cells should be the same figure.*
 Total Acres (sum of Total row) 550
 Total Acres from Table 1. 550

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore				\$ 165,000		\$ 165,000
Protect				\$ 1,606,000		\$ 1,606,000
Enhance						\$ -
Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,771,000	\$ -	

Total Dollars (sum of Total column) \$ 1,771,000 *These two cells should be the same figure.*
 Total Dollars (sum of Total row) \$ 1,771,000
 Check to make sure these amounts are the same as the Funding Request Amount on page 1 of Main Funding Form.

Table 5. Target Lake/Stream/River Miles

miles of Lakes / Streams / Rivers Shoreline

Table 6. Acquisition by PILT Status (enter information in acres)

	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats	Total
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability		275			275
Acquired in Fee w/o State PILT Liability					0
Permanent Easement NO State PILT Liability					0
	0	275	0	0	

Table 7. Estimated Value of Acquisition by PILT Status (enter information in dollars)

	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats	Total
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability		\$ 1,551,000			\$ 1,551,000
Acquired in Fee w/o State PILT Liability					\$ -
Permanent Easement NO State PILT Liability					\$ -
	\$ -	\$ 1,551,000	\$ -	\$ -	

Name of Proposal: Green Corridor Legacy Program - Phase III
Date: Revised 6-14-12
Legal Citation / Proposal Number: ML 2011, 1st Special Session, Ch. 6, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2 (i)

County	Township	Range	Direction	Section	TRDS	# of acres	Budgetary Estimate (includes administrative, restoration or other related costs and do not include matching money contributed or earned by the transaction)	Description	Activity R=Restore P=Protect E=Enhance	Any existing protection? (yes/no)	Open to hunting and fishing? (yes/no)	
Parcel Name												
Dutch Charley's Creek WMA	Redwood	109	36	2	30	10936230	79	<u>\$209,000</u>	donation of RIM acres 39 ac.	P & R	yes	yes
Badger Tract WMA	Brown	109	35	2	29	10935229	160	<u>\$900,000</u>	Next to Cottonwood Priairie SNA	P & R	no	yes
Coal Mine Creek WMA	Brown	109	35	2	7	10935207	145	<u>\$510,000</u>	Close to Lambertton WMA	P & R	no	yes
Whispering Ridge AMA additio	Renville	114	36	2	32	11436232	40	<u>\$160,000</u>	Expands existing AMA	P	no	yes
Cold Spring WMA addition	Cottonwood	114	36	2	11	11436211	151	<u>\$775,000</u>	Expands existing WMA	P & R	no	yes
Arnold's Lake WMA addition	Cottonwood	106	36	2	10	10636210	22	<u>\$100,000</u>	Expands existing WMA	P & R	no	yes
Expandere WMA addition	Cottonwood	105	37	2	6	10537206	40	<u>\$190,000</u>	Expands existing WMA	P	no	yes
<u>Gora Prairie WMA (new)</u>	<u>Redwood</u>	<u>109</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>10937229</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>\$1,000,000</u>	<u>next to Pell Creek</u>	<u>P & R</u>	<u>no</u>	<u>yes</u>
<u>Lamberton WMA tract 23</u>	<u>Redwood</u>	<u>109</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>10937212</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>	<u>Expands existing WMA</u>	<u>P & R</u>	<u>yes</u>	<u>yes</u>