



HA02 – Metro Big Rivers (MBR) Phase 11 will protect, restore and enhance 2,322 acres of priority wildlife habitat in the Metro Urbanizing Area, with an emphasis on the Mississippi, Minnesota and St. Croix Rivers and their tributaries.

By expanding, connecting and improving conservation lands in the metropolitan urbanizing area, Metro Big Rivers benefits migrating and resident wildlife and species in greatest need of conservation (SGCN).

MBR increases public access to wildlife-based recreation in the metro urbanizing area, thereby building a conservation ethic among new and younger residents.

Metro Big Rivers Habitat Phase 11 = 2,322 acres protected, restored and/or enhanced

**Outdoor Heritage Fund Request – \$13,273,500
Anticipated Leverage – \$2,603,400 (20%)**

The Metro Big Rivers (MBR) partnership exceeds goals and aggressively leverages OHF funds. Results to-date:

- 6,459 acres completed + 2,171 acres in progress = MBR will exceed its goals by at least 110%
- Leveraged OHF to-date with \$10.6 million of other funds (59%), exceeding our goal almost 3 times

Why Invest in the Metro Urbanizing Area?

- Protect critical habitat and improve degraded habitat within the migratory flyways and tributaries.
- Protect significant habitat in the metro area from development, then restore/enhance it and open it up to the public for outdoors, wildlife-based recreation.
- Introduce new and younger residents to hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography and more -- building a conservation ethic.

Why Invest OHF funds in Metro Big Rivers Phase 11?

- MBR achieves the LSOHC's goals for habitat protection, restoration and enhancement in the Metro Urbanizing Area.
- As of July 2021 -- MBR Phases 1-6 will be complete, Phases 7-8 almost done, and Phases 9-10 well underway.
- MBR has spent \$18 million and obligated \$3.6 million in OHF grants to-date.
- MBR aggressively leverages OHF funds -- \$10.6 million to-date!

Metro Big Rivers partnership works with public partners and landowners committed to conservation to achieve the priorities of the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council for Outdoor Heritage Funds in the Metropolitan Urbanizing Area.



**For more information:
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Minnesota Valley Trust
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DLoon@mnvalleytrust.org**



Metro Big Rivers Selected Accomplishments September 2019



The project summaries that follow highlight some accomplishments of the Metro Big Rivers partnership with Outdoor Heritage Fund grants.

These are examples of the work of this partnership and the impact achieved with the grants recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council.

For more information, please contact Deborah Loon, project lead for the Metro Big Rivers partnership, or any partner listed below:

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W.H. Houlton Conservation Area Metro Big Rivers – Phases 5, 7 & 8

ML2014, ML2016 & ML2018



The W.H. Houlton Conservation Area is 335 acres at the confluence of the Mississippi and Elk Rivers. It was acquired by the Trust for Public Land with Outdoor Heritage Funds through Metro Big Rivers Phases 2 and 3 (ML2011 & 2012).

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) is restoring and enhancing the site's forest and prairie habitat. Since 2015, FMR has worked closely with the City of Elk River, Friends of the WHHCA, Elk River High School students and community volunteers. In addition, FMR is conducting research on the effectiveness of restoration methods and the return of the site's wildlife populations. Work through three OHF grants includes:

- MBR5 / ML2014 (\$160,000): The first phase enhanced 90 acres of floodplain forest. Techniques included hand cutting woody invasive species, forestry mowing, herbicide treatments and seeding with native vegetation. Volunteers helped remove fenceline, cut woody invasives, and pull garlic mustard.
- MBR7 / ML2016 (\$430,000): The second phase of work is restoring a 180-acre agricultural field to native prairie. Techniques include broadcast and drill seeding with three different diverse seed mixes, establishment mows, spot sprays, and prescribed burning. Volunteers help remove invasive plants, collect seed and monitor for weeds.
- MBR8 / ML2018 (\$168,000): The third phase of work is enhancing 85 acres of altered floodplain forest. Techniques include hand cutting woody invasive species, forestry mowing, herbicide treatments, seeding with native vegetation and prescribed burning. Volunteers help remove invasive plants, collect seed and monitor for weeds.

Throughout this work, FMR leveraged additional funding (\$58,595) and connections to establish research and monitoring plots at the site, evaluating everything from how different native seeding and planting combinations can effectively compete with buckthorn (MITPPC-funded "Cover It Up" project) to how well newly-restored areas are supporting native wildlife (non-LSHOC funded herp and pollinator surveys).





Phase 1 floodplain forest areas during and after significant invasive plant removal, followed by additional seeding, spot treatments and volunteer work.



Phase 2 prairie during and two years after seeding. FMR followed seeding with maintenance mows and spot sprays. The first prescribed burn on 1/3 of these acres will be in 2020.



The wildlife habitat benefits of the project so far are obvious, as prairie skinks (left) and yellow bumblebees (*Bombus fervidus*; state threatened species) have begun to colonize the site.



Trout Brook Nature Sanctuary Metro Big Rivers - Phases 4, 5

ML2013 & ML2014



Trout Brook Nature Sanctuary

Trout Brook (Trillium) Nature Sanctuary is an approximately 42-acre site protected by the City of Saint Paul west of I-35E. Conversion of this industrial area into a nature sanctuary is part of the larger Trout Brook Greenway Plan.

The residential area to the west was at one time perched on a bluff that overlooked the Trout Brook valley. The Trout Brook ran from McCarron's Lake in Roseville to the Mississippi River. With railroad and industrial development, the creek was filled and put underground in the storm sewer. As the natural valley was lost, so too was the neighborhood connection to the natural environment.

This habitat project has recreated an ecologically important wildlife corridor by:

- (1) daylighting Trout Brook and restoring associated riparian areas (completed with other funds) and
- (2) restoring and enhancing this 37-acre railroad yard back to the pre-settlement ecosystems present in the area, including prairie and savanna (with OHF funds through Metro Big Rivers phases 4 and 5).

PROJECT INFORMATION

Restored & Enhanced:
37 Acres

Location:
Ramsey County

Project Budget:
\$274,181

Outdoor Heritage Fund:
\$93,000 ML2013
\$44,000 ML2014

Leverage Funds:

City of St. Paul	\$ 74,825
Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$45,565
Major League Baseball	\$ 8,291
3M Foundation	\$ 4,000
St. Paul Garden Club	\$ 4,500



Thanks to funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund and partners, Trout Brook Nature Sanctuary one again is a refuge for wildlife and natural space for residents in an otherwise under-served part of St. Paul.



GREAT RIVER GREENING

251 Starkey Street, Suite 2200
Saint Paul, MN 55107
(651) 665-9500





Legend

-  Property Boundary
-  Restoration Area



Trout Brook Nature Sanctuary

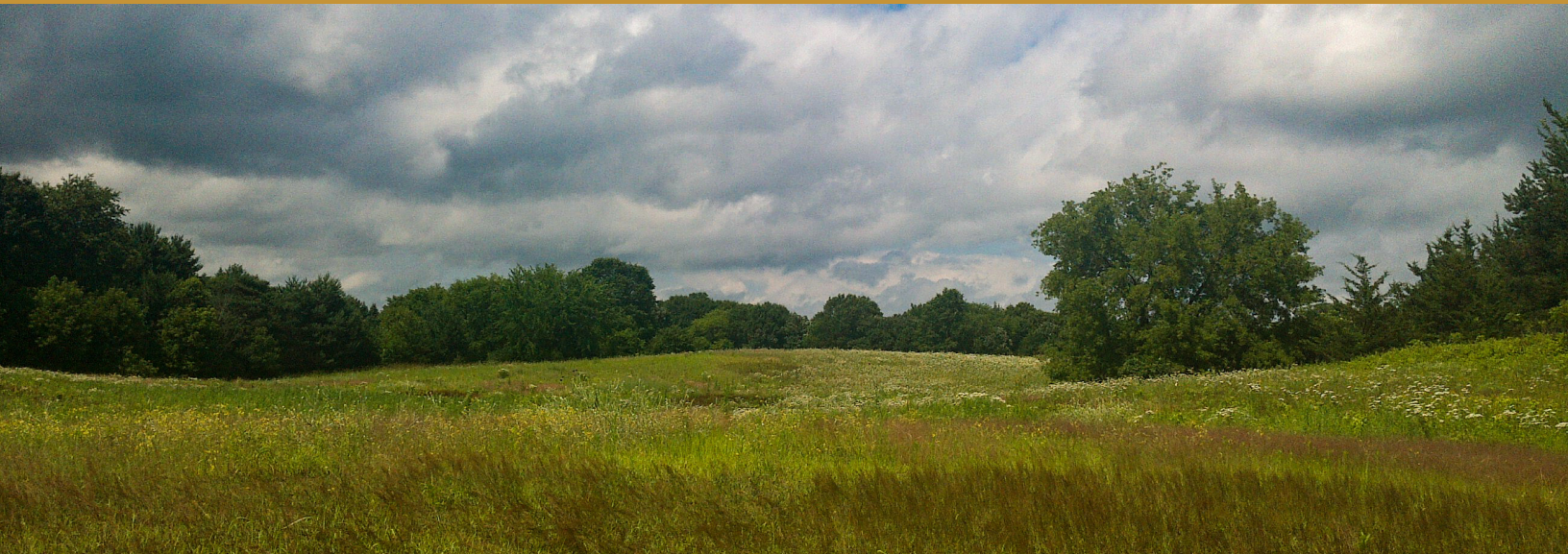
Ramsey County - Twp. 29 Rng. 22 Sec. 30





Metro Big Rivers – Phase 8

ML 2018, Ch. 208, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5(a)



Silver Creek (Goodwin)

This 46-acre property consists of rolling grasslands and forested bluffs that slope to the wetlands and meandering stream of Silver Creek. South of the property Silver Creek flows over federally-protected Fairy Falls to the St. Croix River. One of the last remaining large parcels in Washington County’s Silver-Twin Lakes high priority conservation area, the property’s undeveloped shoreline and natural habitat help protect rare and threatened species including the critically imperiled butternut tree and freshwater mussels.

The property contains former agricultural fields that, with funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund and in partnership with the landowner, Washington Conservation District and Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District, the Land Trust is restoring to prairie and oak savanna, further enhancing the ecological integrity of the Twin Cities big rivers.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Protected
46 acres

Location
Washington County

Easement Acquisition Date
June 25, 2020



Acquisition Amount
Funding Sources:

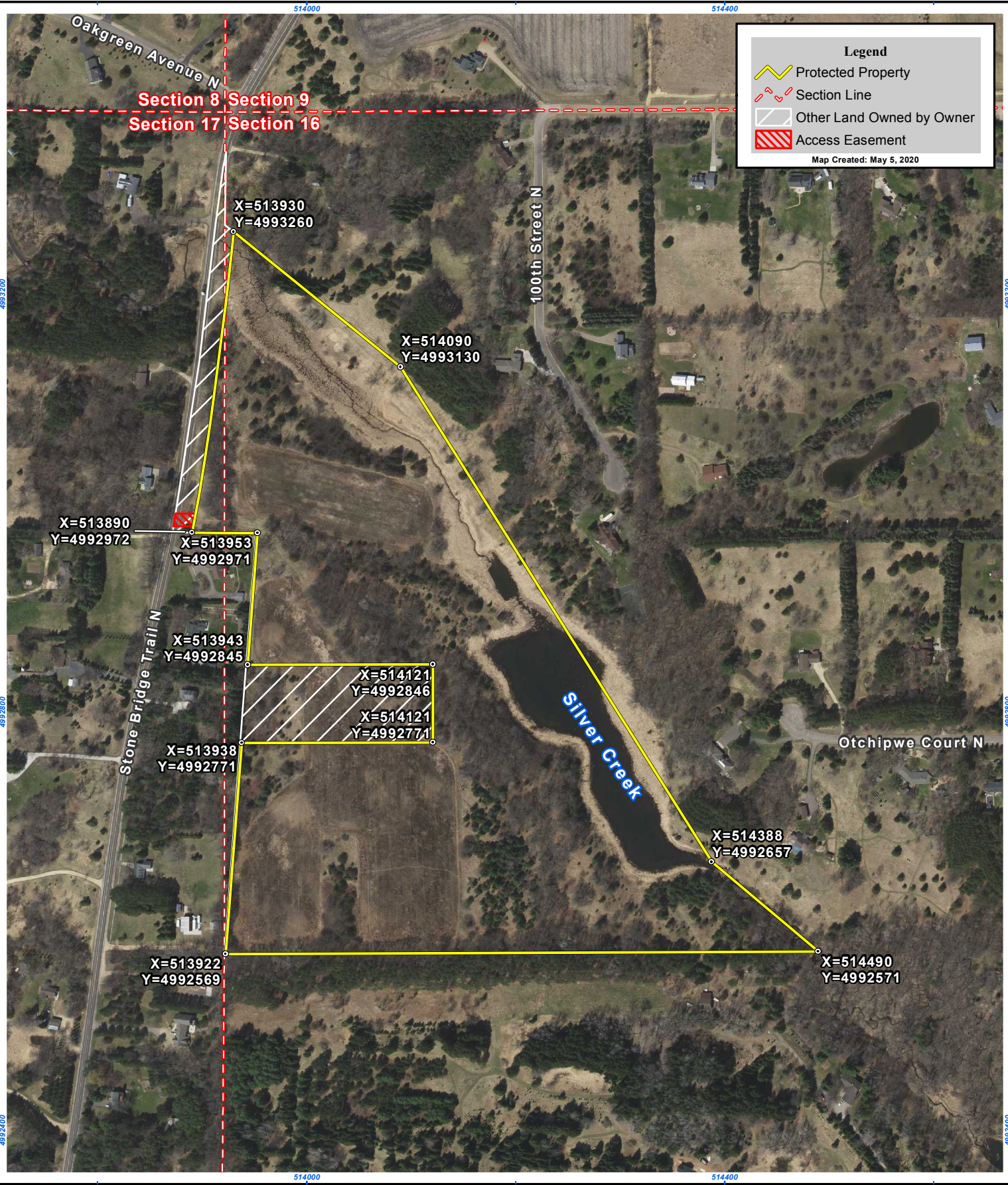
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$247,560
Washington County Land & Water Legacy Program	\$165,040
Donative Value from Landowner.....	\$0



MINNESOTA LAND TRUST
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Saint Paul MN, 55114
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Aerial Photography Map



Legend

- Protected Property
- Section Line
- Other Land Owned by Owner
- Access Easement

Map Created: May 5, 2020

Section 8 Section 9
Section 17 Section 16

X=513930
Y=4993260

X=514090
Y=4993130

X=513890
Y=4992972

X=513953
Y=4992971

X=513943
Y=4992845

X=514121
Y=4992846

X=514121
Y=4992771

X=513938
Y=4992771

X=513922
Y=4992569

X=514388
Y=4992657

X=514490
Y=4992571

Map Resource Information

Protected Property & Section Lines created by Community GIS Services Inc. All data overlaid 2016 7 County Aerial Photography. Map & labeled coordinates use projection of: UTM, Zone 15, Datum NAD83

Users of this map agree and acknowledge that Community GIS Services Inc. and the Minnesota Land Trust cannot be held liable for accuracy of GIS material provided. GIS materials should not be relied upon to establish legal title, boundary lines, or locations of improvements.

Site: Silver Creek - Tract: Goodwin

Washington County - Twp. 30 N Rng. 20 W Sec. 16 & 17



Scale: 1" = 400'



Rapids Lake Unit, MVNWR Metro Big Rivers - Phases 5-7

ML2014, ML2015, ML2016



Rapids Lake Unit Additions, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Outdoor Heritage Funds helped the Minnesota Valley Trust complete three high-priority fee title acquisitions that add 109 acres to the Rapids Lake Unit of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge in Carver County.

These acquisitions protect significant oak savanna, remnant prairie, oak basswood forest, seasonal ephemeral wetlands and lake shoreline from residential development. An initial BioBlitz identified more than 200 species, including the endangered Henslow's Sparrow, Bloodroot, Pasqueflower, Kittentail (a state threatened species), Buffalo Bean, Bergamot, Common Milkweed, Whorled Milkweed, and Green Milkweed. Bur Oaks with wide branching limbs are indicative of historic oak savanna.

OHF grant funds of \$1,315,000 through Metro Big Rivers Phases 5, 6 and 7 were leveraged with \$1,923,670 in other, private funds.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Protected:
109 acres

Location:
Carver County

Purchase Dates:
April & Nov. 2017, Sept. 2018



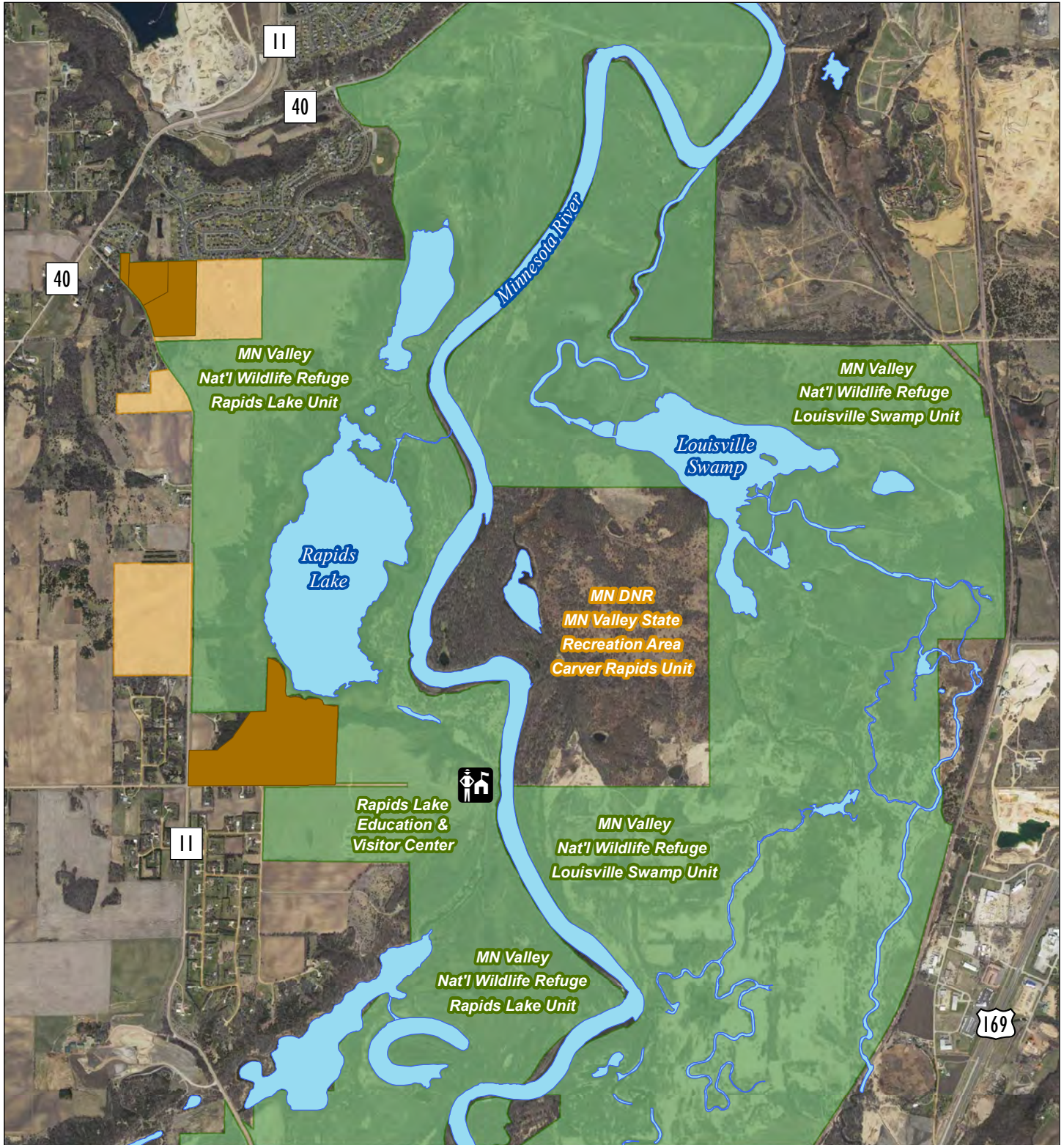
Total Acquisition Costs: \$3,238,670

Funding Sources:

Outdoor Heritage Fund \$1,315,000
Private funds \$1,923,670

Habitat restoration and enhancement plans include building demolition, seeding, invasive woody species removal, wetland and prairie restoration of the agricultural field and prescribed fire. R/E funding is through MBR Phases 6 and 7, a Metro Conservation Partners Legacy grant and private funds.

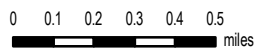
After restoration, the properties will be transferred to the USFWS and opened to the public for hunting and other wildlife-dependent recreation.



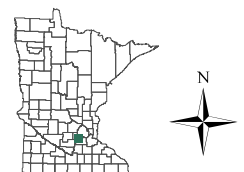
- MN Valley Trust OHF Acquisitions
- MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge
- MN DNR Carver Highlands WMA (managed by USFWS)

Anderson, Lenzen & Lundquist Tracts (109.1 acres)

Dahlgren Twp., Carver Co., Twp. 115N, Rng. 24W, Secs. 25 & 36
 San Francisco Twp., Carver Co., Twp. 115N, Rng. 23W, Sec. 31



MATT MILLETT • 9/3/2019 • UTM ZONE 15N (NAD83)
 SOURCES: MNWR, MVT, MNDOT, MET COUNCIL, CARVER COUNTY





Janet Johnson Memorial WMA Metro Big Rivers - Phase 7

ML 2016, Ch. 172, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5(b)



Janet Johnson Memorial WMA Addition

The Trust for Public Land recently protected 118 acres as an addition to the Janet Johnson Memorial Wildlife Management Area located in Chisago County. The protected property consists of wetland and forested habitat, and also contains about 35 acres of agricultural land that will be restored to prairie. It will be primarily managed for migratory waterfowl, deer, and turkey habitat. Located within the city limits of North Branch, this new publicly-accessible property will provide quality outdoor recreation and hunting opportunities for both nearby residents and for millions of Twin Cities’ residents. This addition was a high priority of the MN Department of Natural Resources. It expands the WMA to over 750 acres.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Protected
119 acres

Location
Chisago County

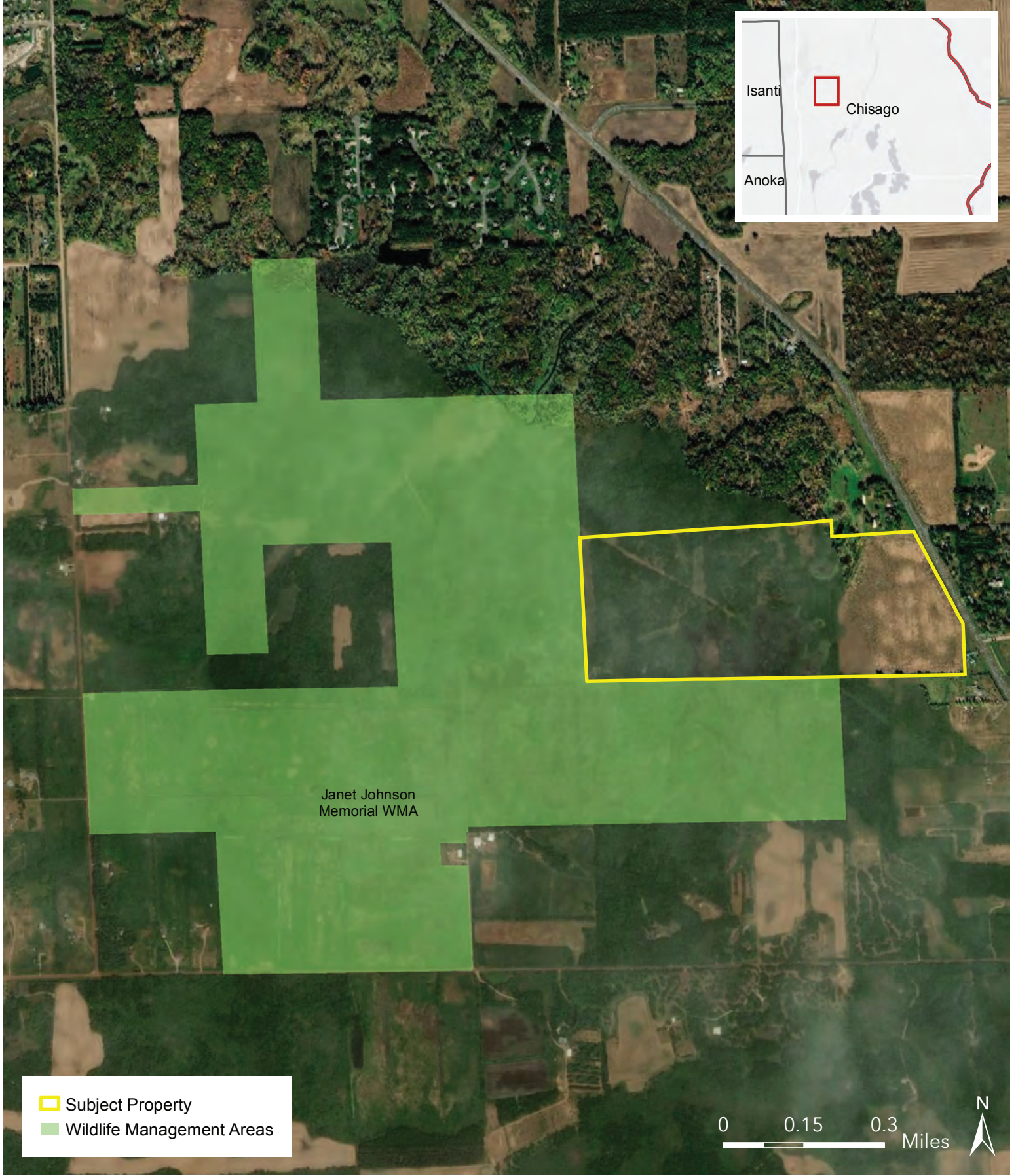
Acquisition Date
January 24, 2019

Conveyance Date
July 11, 2019



Project Budget
Outdoor Heritage Fund \$570,000




THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND
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Janet Johnson
Memorial WMA

 Subject Property
 Wildlife Management Areas

0 0.15 0.3 Miles 

Janet Johnson Memorial WMA Addition

Chisago County, MN

