

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

MEMO: **Agenda Item #7**
DATE: January 19, 2022
SUBJECT: Parcel List Additions with Heritage Forest Parcels
 Conservation Fund Purchase Price Transparency
 Trails – Hubbard County
PRESENTER: Melissa Barrick – Crow Wing SWCD
 Bob McGillvary – Trust for Public Land
 Mark “Chip” Lohmeier – Hubbard County Land Commissioner
 Kim Burns – The Conservation Fund
 Emilee Nelson – The Conservation Fund

Background:

There are three amendment requests before the Council within this agenda item. All three amendments are asking permission to add TCF Heritage Forest land (Potlatch) parcels to their parcel lists. All three amendments seek to acquire from The Conservation Fund (TCF) these parcels that will be then handed over to Hubbard County for future ownership and management as working County Forest lands.

Previously, the Council had asked for assurance from TCF confirming and detailing that they would pass on savings for OHF acquisitions of Potlatch parcels such that TCF would not be enriched by the OHF purchases beyond their actual costs for the original land acquisition, holding costs, etc. TCF is prepared to provide that detail and confirmation to the Council at this meeting.

Program Managers for the three appropriations are in attendance to provide detail and answer questions regarding the amendments and proposed acquisitions.

Hubbard County Land Commissioner Mark “Chip” Lohmeier is in attendance to answer Council questions and provide assurance of the County’s interest in the lands and future plans for their management as County Forests.

On December 6, 2021, LSOHC received a message from Susan Damon, DNR Assistant Director, Division of Lands & Minerals, stating that DNR was not in opposition to these acquisitions for County ownership. Assistant Director Damon’s message conveyed the following:

“We believe that decisions about structuring acquisitions of TCF Heritage Forest lands that will not come into DNR ownership should be made by the entity that will ultimately own the land—in this case, the county—in consultation with LSOHC and the grant recipients. We don’t believe that acquisitions made by other entities will be detrimental to DNR’s review and prioritization process to identify lands that DNR is interested in acquiring.”

Suggested Motion:

Motion by Member XX to:

1. Approve/deny the presented land acquisition purchases from Conservation Fund that are part of the [MN Heritage Forest](#) as outlined in the accomplishment plans and amendments.
2. Direct LSOHC staff to review future such amendments in the normal course of business, to approve them if deemed appropriate, and to disapprove if not appropriate.

3. Require that The Conservation Fund provide a detailed accounting of costs vs. purchase price prior to closing on all acquisitions of Minnesota Forest Heritage parcels (Potlatch).
- ML 2021, First Sp. Session, Ch. 1, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd. 5(i) – Targeted RIM Easement and Acquisition to the Parcel Level Pine and Leech Watersheds, Phase II
 - Leech 1 – Hubbard County – 35 acres - \$61,700
 - Leech 2 – Hubbard County – 36 acres - \$71,100
 - Leech 3 – Hubbard County – 238 acres - \$343,100
 - ML 2018, Ch. 208, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5(b) - Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project - Phase IV
 - Hubbard County Forest Addition – Emmaville – 560 acres - \$840,000
 - Hubbard County Forest Addition – Schoolcraft – 160 acres - \$240,000
 - ML 2020, Ch. 104, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5(g) - Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project- Phase V
 - Hubbard County Forest Addition – Emmaville – 560 acres - \$840,000
 - Hubbard County Forest Addition – Schoolcraft – 160 acres - \$240,000

Suggested Procedure:

1. Council to hear testimony from The Conservation Fund regarding detail and assurance of acquisition savings via OHF acquisition of TCF's Heritage Forest lands.
2. Council to hear from Crow Wing County SWCD and Trust for Public Land program managers as to their amendment requests.
3. Council to ask questions of program managers, TCF, and/or Hubbard County as desired.

Attachments:

- Memo from Crow Wing SWCD dated December 21, 2021
- Memo from Trust for Public Land dated January 12, 2022
- Accomplishment Plans