



Memo

The Trust for Public Land

To: Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
From: Bob McGillivray
Date: 1-12-22
Re: Fee Title Acquisition of The Conservation Fund/Former Potlatch Property for Hubbard County

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) has been working with Hubbard County to identify priority forest lands for protection. We have identified two groups of parcels that Hubbard County would like to be the permanent steward of. TPL would like to add these two parcels to its ML 18 and ML 20 Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Partnership grants. One parcel group in Schoolcraft Township is 160 acres of forest land, and the other near Emmaville is approximately 560 acres of forest land.

The properties are currently owned by The Conservation Fund (TCF). TCF purchased approximately 72,000 acres of land including these parcels from PotlatchDeltic in the fall of 2020. Their intention is to keep these Potlatch lands from being further divided and to retain working forests in northern Minnesota. Their goal is to have these lands transferred into public ownership within ten years.

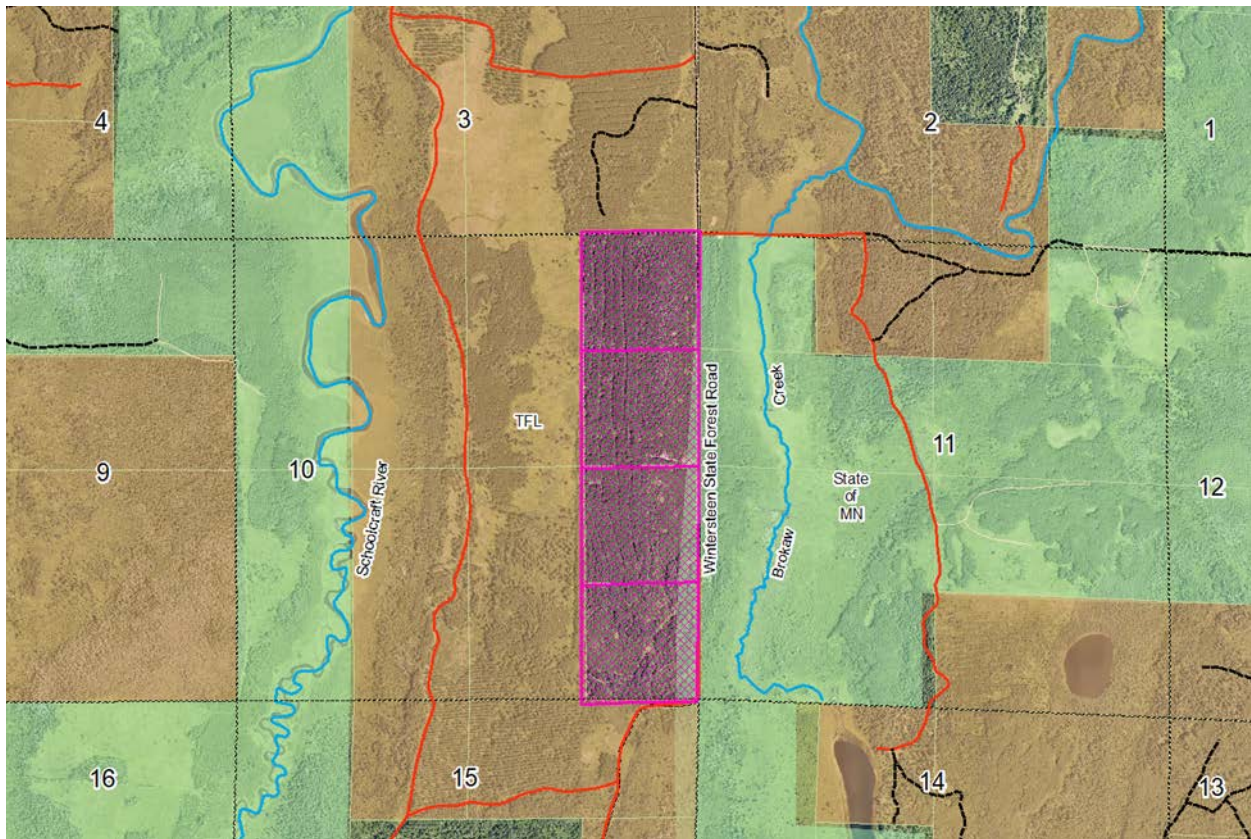
Hubbard County Natural Resources Management Department manages approximately 138,000 acres of tax forfeited land. These lands are managed for social, environmental, and economic benefit of the people of Minnesota. These lands provide wildlife habitat for game and non-games species, water/wetland protection, public recreation, production of natural resources such as timber products and aggregate, all while providing a sustainable economic return to local taxing districts. See [Hubbard County website](#) for more information. Trail use on Hubbard County Forest Lands is managed similar to the DNR State Forest “Limited” classification—trails are closed to motorized use unless posted open (subject to the hunter/trapper exception).

Hubbard County would similarly manage the parcels proposed to be acquired for multiple uses such as, wildlife habitat, sustainable timber production, recreation and water quality protection. Hubbard County has no plans to expand any designated trails onto these parcels.

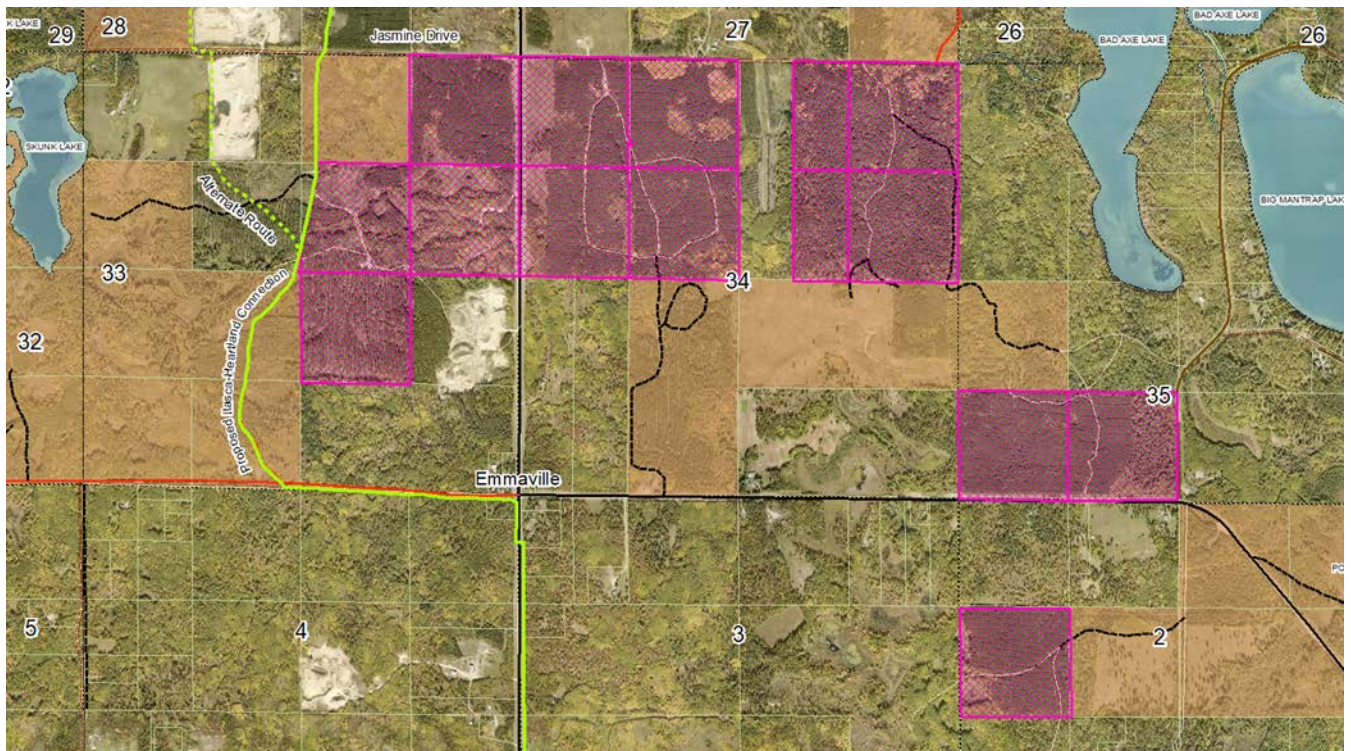
The protection of this land through forest management would expand habitat and recreational opportunities in Hubbard County. It would not only connect existing public lands ensuring

wildlife connectivity, but also provide the opportunity to “round out” existing county lands reducing management costs and logistical challenges of noncontiguous properties.

Schoolcraft Township. This land contains the East One-Half of the Northeast One-Quarter and the East One-Half of the Southeast One-Quarter, all in Section 10, of Township 144 North, Range 34 West of the fifth principal meridian (approximately 160 acres). These parcels (four 40s) are completely surrounded by both MN-DNR Forestry and Tax Forfeited land and sit neatly tucked between Brokaw Creek to the east and the Schoolcraft River to the west. There is an extensive wetland associated with Brokaw Lake and Brokaw Creek which extends into the extreme southeasterly corner of the parcel and borders the eastern border of the property. There is a much more extensive wetland to the west associated with the Schoolcraft River. This wetland is over a quarter mile to the west. The majority of the parcel is upland, sandy soils planted to Norway pine. The Wintersteen State Forest Road (Quill Road) runs along the entire eastern edge of the property. The Wintersteen Forest Road is a designated snowmobile and OHV trail. There are three forest access trails within the parcels that will be classified as non-motorized.



Emmaville. This land near Emmaville is approximately 560 acres in Sections 33, 34, and 35 in Clay Township (142-34) and in Section 2 of Lake Emma Township (141-34). These parcels consolidate public ownership to improve efficiencies of management, preserves large blocks of working forests, and enhance wildlife habitat by providing contiguous forests and connectivity to other public forestlands. These parcels are predominantly planted to Norway pine, but also contain some immature aspen/birch as well. These parcels are bracketed by Skunk Lake to the west, Bad Axe and Big Mantrap Lake to the east, and Stocking Lake to the south. There are a number of existing forest access trails on these parcels that have been used for various management activities. Some of these trails extend onto private lands and will be classified as non-motorized. Trails that originate from the adjoining tax forfeited lands will be evaluated and classified to match the existing classification on tax forfeited lands.



The Trust for Public Land requests that the Council approve these acquisitions and the addition of them to its ML 18 and ML 20 Mississippi Headwaters parcel lists.