



Memo

Date: December 22, 2022

To: Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

From: Wayne Ostlie, Director of Land Protection

Subject: Extension Request, Protecting Coldwater Fisheries on Minnesota's North Shore grant - ML 2020, Ch. 104, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd 5(a)

Project Background

The Minnesota Land Trust's North Shore Coldwater Fisheries project is designed to ensure the resiliency of Minnesota's North Shore coldwater streams through the protection and restoration of shaded shorelines and headwaters wetlands. Through this Phase 1 grant, the Land Trust proposed to protect 288 acres and 1 mile of shoreline and restore 70 acres of habitat by targeting high quality, priority parcels that will protect habitats for coldwater species.

Despite the typical challenges associated with the building of a new program, the Land Trust is on pace to meet its land protection goals, and grossly exceed its leverage target of \$240,000 by the end of the grant. We are currently working toward closing 5 conservation easement projects totaling 356 acres, four of which are likely to be full donations of easement value totaling approximately \$650,000.

The Land Trust has been fortunate to receive this level of interest in donative conservation easements through this grant. The predicament we are in is that despite meeting our land protection goals, we will have spent only nominal amounts of the land acquisition dollars available through the grant. At present, we expect approximately \$1M remaining in our easement acquisition budget line after the closing of these 5 easements.

Our Request

Therefore, the Minnesota Land Trust requests a 2-year extension to this grant to complete additional projects beyond the five currently slated for closing. As part of this extension, the Land Trust proposes to shift an additional \$96,000 to the easement stewardship budget line beyond what is currently available in the grant (for a grant total of \$240,000). This funding will enable the Land Trust to effectively monitor and enforce up to 5 additional projects that may close under this grant.

The Land Trust will shortly embark upon a full RFP campaign associated with our Phase 2 grant and will have a new slate of projects before us in short order.