



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Sauk River Watershed Habitat Protection & Restoration, Phase 3 Laws of Minnesota 2021 Accomplishment Plan

General Information

Date: 01/24/2023

Project Title: Sauk River Watershed Habitat Protection & Restoration, Phase 3

Funds Recommended: \$4,034,000

Legislative Citation: ML 2021, First Sp. Session, Ch. 1, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd. 5(o)

Appropriation Language: \$4,034,000 the first year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire land in fee and permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance wildlife habitat in the Sauk River watershed as follows: \$1,034,000 to Sauk River Watershed District; \$1,618,000 to Pheasants Forever; and \$1,382,000 to Minnesota Land Trust. Up to \$168,000 to Minnesota Land Trust is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. A list of acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

Amendment Description: Updating with new program managers information from Jon Roeschlein, SRWD Administrator to Steve Zeece, SRWD Water Resource Manager

PF requests an amendment to add specifics to the accomplishment plan to allow for the acquisition and donation of a property to the Stearns Co. Parks Dept. This parcel was already on the parcel list as it was originally intended to be a WMA acquisition, however after discussion with DNR and Stearns Co. it was decided that it would make a better County owned property. Additionally, funds are being moved from fee acquisition w/pilt to fee acquisition without pilt to facilitate acquisition of this property.

MLT requests the addition of five parcels to its parcel list. All are Easement Acquisition projects: Sauk River (Ba), Sauk River (DM), Ashley Creek (Eg), Sauk River (Sc), and Sauk River (We).

Retroactivity Requested back to: 2023-01-18 18:00:00+00:00

Retroactivity Explanation: MLT needs to do work on the parcel additions prior to Council approval of the AP for PF additions.

CF / MN Heritage Forest parcel addition: No

Manager Information

Manager's Name: ~~Jon Roeschlein~~ Steve Zeece III

Title: ~~Administrator~~ Water Resource Manager

Organization: Sauk River Watershed District

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Location Information

County Location(s): Douglas, Pope, Stearns and Todd.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Prairie

Activity types:

- Protect in Easement
- Protect in Fee
- Restore
- Enhance

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Prairie
- Forest
- Habitat

Narrative

Abstract

This program will permanently protect, restore and enhance critical habitat within the Sauk River Watershed, which has experienced considerable habitat loss and is at high risk for more land conversion. Using conservation easements and fee land acquisition, we will protect approximately 660 acres of priority habitat in Minnesota's Prairie and Forest-Prairie Transition Area. We will restore/enhance approximately 224 acres of wetlands and accompanying uplands to create habitat for waterfowl and populations of Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). Properties selected will be strategically targeted using an innovative site prioritization model that maximizes conservation benefit and financial leverage.

Design and Scope of Work

Sauk River Watershed District (SRWD), Minnesota Land Trust (MLT), and Pheasants Forever (PF) – with technical assistance from Stearns, Douglas and Meeker Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) – will partner to implement habitat protection and restoration within the Sauk River Watershed (SRW). Site prioritization will focus on protecting and restoring habitat in key locations, such as existing high quality or easily restorable wetland complexes, upland forests, floodplain forests, and prairies. Prioritized sites will be protected to preserve and enhance critical habitat for waterfowl and other important wildlife species.

The SRW is in a rapidly growing region that has also experienced some of the most intense conversion from perennial cover to cropland in the past decade. Furthermore, public access for recreation, including hunting and fishing, is lacking. Landowner interest in conservation land protection and restoration is strong in the SRW. Since July 2019, the Partnership has protected 212 acres through fee title acquisition, 310 acres through conservation easements, and has restored 65 acres, while leveraging \$1,276,805 through landowner donation of easement value and non-state funding sources. Landowners owning approximately 2,400 acres are interested in a conservation easement, in addition to 460 acres that are interested in fee acquisition. Protecting and restoring these strategic parcels will far exceed funding available through the Partnership's first two OHF grants. We anticipate significantly more interested and qualified properties for this program as outreach efforts grow following COVID-19 restrictions.

Conservation Easements:

MLT, with assistance from partners, will conduct outreach to landowners within priority areas. Interested landowners will submit proposals to MLT using a competitive, market-based Request for Proposal (RFP) process. MLT, with project partners, will rank properties based on ecological value and cost, prioritizing projects that provide the best ecological value and acquiring them at the lowest cost to the state. MLT will secure approximately 400 acres of permanent conservation easements and develop restoration and habitat management plans for eased acres.

Fee Acquisition:

PF will coordinate with agency partners on all potential fee simple acquisitions. PF will work with willing sellers to protect approximately 260 acres of strategically identified parcels within the SRW and then donate the parcels to the MN DNR as a Wildlife or Aquatic Management Area or to USFWS as a Waterfowl Production Area or to Stearns Co. Parks Department. Protected tracts will be managed as habitat and provide public access in perpetuity within an area of our state where public land for recreational use is lacking.

Restoration and Enhancement:

SRWD will restore/enhance approximately 224 acres of wetland, riparian and associated upland habitat in cooperation with county SWCDs, MLT, USFWS, and TNC. This work will be on permanently protected land and will include at least one large wetland restoration. Specific activities/scope will vary based on selected project sites but may include performing hydrologic restoration, invasive species management, and planting vegetation to increase site biodiversity. PF will manage all needed restoration activities on fee simple acquisitions.

How does the plan address habitats that have significant value for wildlife species of greatest conservation need, and/or threatened or endangered species, and list targeted species?

This program will utilize a prioritization framework that uses SGCN and quality habitat as major weighting factors for both protection and restoration/enhancement project selection. The SRW region is an important migratory corridor for forest birds and waterfowl.

This program targets the protection and restoration/enhancement of wetlands. This will create excellent habitat for hundreds of migratory waterfowl who will use these basins to refuel and rest. Many species require wetland basins with open water areas and emergent aquatic vegetation to provide nesting habitat and many other use wetlands during their life cycle. This program offers the opportunity to restore a large wetland and protect and enhance smaller wetlands, which will benefit SGCN and can expand a habitat core or corridor. This program will

also protect and restore/enhance upland forests, prairies, and shorelands, which are also essential habitats to Minnesota's wildlife diversity and health.

A variety of SGCN will benefit from this program including Blanding's turtle, bobolink, veery, a species of caddisfly, smooth green snake, Dakota skipper, western harvest mouse, and a species of jumping spider (*M. grata*). Other species that will benefit from improved habitat as part of this program include trumpeter swan, sandhill crane, eastern and western meadowlark, bald eagle, Swainson's hawk, and dickcissel.

Describe how the plan uses science-based targeting that leverages or expands corridors and complexes, reduces fragmentation or protects areas identified in the MN County Biological Survey:

The program utilizes TNC's Multiple Benefits Analysis, a science-based process completed in 2017 for the Upper Mississippi River Basin, which prioritized protection sites for the SRW and other parts of this region. TNC's Multiple Benefits Analysis developed and scored priorities according to specific but multiple cross-cutting needs and looks for the "sweet spot" where multiple benefits overlap. It includes four modules: fish and wildlife habitat, drinking water/source water, flooding and erosion control, and groundwater benefits. Each module contains numerous data layers. Sites are prioritized in each module as well as holistically by combining scores from all modules. The size of parcels and proximity to other protected lands are also considered in this analysis.

The vast majority (97%) of the SRW landscape is in private ownership. Therefore, once priority parcels are identified, working with private owners on land protection strategies is key to successful conservation in this region. We will also work closely with partners in the region to identify those habitat complexes where private land protection can make a significant contribution to existing conservation investments. Specific parcels available for acquisition of easements will be further reviewed relative to each other to identify priorities among the pool of applicants. This relative ranking is based on amount of habitat on the parcel (size), the quality or condition of habitat, the parcel's context relative to other natural habitats and protected areas, and cost. MBS data will be used to evaluate potential conservation easements and fee simple acquisitions. Field visits to further identify and assess condition of habitats prior to easement acquisition will also occur, as many private lands were not formally assessed through MBS.

The program will also work to build on initial conservation investments in the program area, expanding and buffering the footprint of existing protected areas, such as WMAs, WPAs, and AMAs facilitating the protection of habitat corridors and reducing the potential for fragmentation of existing habitats.

Which two sections of the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan are most applicable to this project?

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds

Which two other plans are addressed in this program?

- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda

- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program?

Forest / Prairie Transition

- Protect, enhance, and restore wild rice wetlands, shallow lakes, wetland/grassland complexes, aspen parklands, and shoreland that provide critical habitat for game and nongame wildlife

Prairie

- Protect, enhance, or restore existing wetland/upland complexes, or convert agricultural lands to new wetland/upland habitat complexes

Does this program include leveraged funding?

Yes

Explain the leverage:

MLT encourages private landowners to fully or partially donate the appraised value of their conservation easement, thereby receiving less than the appraised value might otherwise allow. This donated value is shown as leveraged funds in the proposal and is expected to be 20% of the acquisition cost, or \$180,000. MLT has a long track record in incentivizing landowners to participate in this fashion. Pheasants Forever anticipated leverage in the amount of \$118,300 through its fee acquisition work.

To date, our program has leveraged \$1,276,805 through landowner donation and other non-state funding sources. An additional \$180,700 in non-state match is anticipated when an expected acquisition project closes this summer.

Per MS 97A.056, Subd. 24, Please explain whether the request is supplanting or is a substitution for any previous funding that was not from a legacy fund and was used for the same purpose.

This proposal does not substitute or supplant previous funding that was not from a Legacy fund.

How will you sustain and/or maintain this work after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended?

MLT will sustain the land protected through conservation easements using state-of-the-art easement stewardship standards and practices. MLT is a nationally accredited and insured land trust with a successful easement stewardship program that conducts annual property monitoring, maintains effective records management, addresses inquiries and interpretations, tracks changes in ownership, investigates potential violations, and defends the easement in case of a true violation. Funding for these easement stewardship activities is included in the project budget. In addition, MLT encourages landowners to undertake active ecological management of their properties, provides them with habitat management plans, and works with them to secure resources (expertise and funding) to undertake these activities over time.

Acquisition projects will abut or be within proximity to existing protected lands, including state-owned lands and lands under conservation easement. This will allow for the expansion of maintenance and restoration activities currently taking place on those protected lands and adjacent private lands. Habitats cleared of invasive species will be maintained with prescribed fire and other practices.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2026 and in perpetuity	MLT Long-Term Stewardship and Enforcement Fund	Annual monitoring of conservation easements in perpetuity.	Enforcement as necessary.	-
Every 4-6 years	MN DNR, USFWS, Landowners	Prescribed fire, tree control, invasive species control.	-	-

Activity Details

Requirements

If funded, this program will meet all applicable criteria set forth in MS 97A.056?

Yes

Will county board or other local government approval be formally sought prior to acquisition, per 97A.056 subd 13(j)?**

No

Describe any measures to inform local governments of land acquisition under their jurisdiction:

At a minimum, we will notify local government in writing of the intent to acquire and donate lands to the MNDNR/USFWS and follow up with questions prior to acquisition. In cases where there is interest, we will also indicate our willingness to attend or ask to attend county or township meetings to communicate our interest in the projects and seek support.

Is the land you plan to acquire (fee title) free of any other permanent protection?

No

Describe the permanent protection and justification for additional protection:

A limited number of the parcels may have a federal or state easement on a portion of the tract, which provides permanent protection for wetlands or grasslands. If a parcel has one of these encumbrances and is still deemed a high priority by our agency partners, we will follow guidance established by the LSOHC to proceed or use non-state funding to acquire the residual value of the protected portion of the property.

Is the land you plan to acquire (easement) free of any other permanent protection?

Yes

Who will manage the easement?

Minnesota Land Trust will manage the easements.

Who will be the easement holder?

Minnesota Land Trust will hold the easements.

What is the anticipated number of easements (range is fine) you plan to accomplish with this appropriation?

Minnesota Land Trust expects to close 3-6 conservation easements through this grant, depending on size and cost of the easements and the level of landowner donation entering the program.

Will restoration and enhancement work follow best management practices including MS 84.973 Pollinator Habitat Program?

Yes

Is the restoration and enhancement activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, Subd 13(f), tribal lands, and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15 or on lands to be acquired in this program?

Yes

Where does the activity take place?

- WMA
- WPA
- Permanently Protected Conservation Easements
- County/Municipal

Land Use

Will there be planting of any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program?

Yes

Explain what will be planted:

For fee acquisitions, the primary purposes of WMAs are to develop and manage for the production of wildlife and for compatible outdoor recreation. To fulfill those goals, the DNR may use limited farming specifically to enhance or benefit the management of state lands for wildlife. This proposal may include initial development plans or restoration plans to utilize farming to prepare previously farmed sites for native plant seeding. This is a standard practice across the Midwest to prepare the seedbed for native seed planting. In restorations, non-neonicotinoid treated seed and no herbicides other than glyphosate will be used. On a small percentage of WMAs (less than 2.5%), DNR uses farming to provide a winter food source for a variety of wildlife species in agriculture-dominated landscapes largely devoid of winter food sources. There are no immediate plans to use farming for winter food on any of the parcels in this proposal.

On conservation easements, we may incorporate the short-term use of agricultural crops, which is an accepted best practice in some instances for preparing a site for restoration. For example, short-term use of soybeans could be used for restorations to control weed seedbeds prior to prairie planting. In some cases, this necessitates the use of GMO-treated products to facilitate herbicide use to control weeds present in the seedbank. However, neonicotinoids will not be used.

The purpose of MLT's conservation easements is to protect existing high-quality natural habitat and to preserve opportunities for future restoration. As such, we restrict any agricultural lands and use on the properties. In cases where there are agricultural lands associated with the larger property, we will either carve the agricultural area out of the conservation easement, or in some limited cases, we may include a small percentage of agricultural lands if it is not feasible to carve those areas out. In such cases, however, we will not use OHF funds to pay the landowners for that portion of the conservation easement.

Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing?

No

Will the land be open for hunting and fishing after completion?

Yes

Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:

Fee-title acquisition land secured as part of this project will be open for hunting and fishing. A parcel to be acquired and donated to Stearns County may be closed to firearms deer hunting due to its proximity to the city of Cold Spring.

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

- State of MN
- Federal
- County

Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:

- WMA
- WPA
- Other

What is the anticipated number of closed acquisitions (range is fine) you plan to accomplish with this appropriation?

Pheasants Forever expects to close 2 fee acquisitions through this program.

Will the eased land be open for public use?

No

Are there currently trails or roads on any of the proposed acquisitions?

Yes

Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:

Most conservation easements are established on private lands, many of which have driveways, field roads, and trails located on them. Often, these established trails and roads are permitted in the terms of the easement and can be maintained for personal use if their use does not significantly impact the conservation values of the property. Creation of new roads/trails or expansion of existing ones is typically not allowed. The property that is to be donated to Stearns Co. has an existing access road/trail that will be maintained for use by the county in maintenance. Additionally, there will be a few mowed (not paved) hunter walking trails. These trails will allow hunters and hikers to move around the property more easily and may also be used to facilitate handicap accessible hunting.

Will the trails or roads remain and uses continue to be allowed after OHF acquisition?

Yes

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?

Existing trails and roads are identified in the project baseline report and will be monitored annually as part of the MLT's stewardship and enforcement protocols. Maintenance of permitted roads/trails in line with the terms of the easement will be the responsibility of the landowner.

Will new trails or roads be developed or improved as a result of the OHF acquisition?

No

Will the acquired parcels be restored or enhanced within this appropriation?

Yes

Depending on R/E need and funding availability, parcels will be restored/enhance through this or a subsequent appropriation.

Will the land that you acquire (fee or easement) be restored or enhanced within this program's funding and availability?

Yes

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Site Prioritization and Targeted Outreach	December 2022
Conservation Easement & Fee-Title Acquisition Completed	June 2025
Restoration	June 2026

Date of Final Report Submission: 11/01/2026

Availability of Appropriation: Subd. 7. Availability of Appropriation

Money appropriated in this section may not be spent on activities unless they are directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation and are specified in the accomplishment plan approved by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. Money appropriated in this section must not be spent on indirect costs or other institutional overhead charges that are not directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation. For acquiring real property, the amounts in this section are available until June 30, 2025. Money for restoration or enhancement is available until June 30, 2026. Money for restoration and enhancement of land acquired with an appropriation in this article is available for four years after the acquisition date with a maximum end date of June 30, 2029. If a project receives at least 15 percent of its funding from federal funds, the time of the appropriation may be extended to equal the availability of federal funding to a maximum of six years if the federal funding was confirmed and included in the original approved draft accomplishment plan. Money appropriated for acquiring land in fee title may be used to restore, enhance, and provide for public use of the land acquired with the appropriation. Public-use facilities must have a minimal impact on habitat in acquired lands.

Budget

Budget reallocations up to 10% do not require an amendment to the Accomplishment Plan.

Grand Totals Across All Partnerships

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$214,200	-	-	\$214,200
Contracts	\$1,173,800	-	-	\$1,173,800
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$878,000 <u>\$433,000</u>	\$71,000	-, PF, Federal, Private	\$949,000 <u>\$504,000</u>
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$425,000 <u>\$870,000</u>	\$47,300	-, PF, Federal, Private	\$472,300 <u>\$917,300</u>
Easement Acquisition	\$900,000	\$180,000	-, Landowner Donation Value	\$1,080,000
Easement Stewardship	\$168,000	-	-	\$168,000
Travel	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Professional Services	\$180,400	-	-	\$180,400
Direct Support Services	\$38,600	-	-	\$38,600
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$21,000	-	-	\$21,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000
Supplies/Materials	\$12,000	-	-	\$12,000
DNR IDP	\$12,000	-	-	\$12,000
Grand Total	\$4,034,000	\$298,300	-	\$4,332,300

Partner: Minnesota Land Trust (MLT)**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$115,000	-	-	\$115,000
Contracts	\$36,000	-	-	\$36,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$900,000	\$180,000	Landowner Donation Value	\$1,080,000
Easement Stewardship	\$168,000	-	-	\$168,000
Travel	\$7,000	-	-	\$7,000
Professional Services	\$123,000	-	-	\$123,000
Direct Support Services	\$32,000	-	-	\$32,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$1,382,000	\$180,000	-	\$1,562,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Land Protection Staff	0.3	4.0	\$115,000	-	-	\$115,000

Partner: Pheasants Forever (PF)**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$16,000	-	-	\$16,000
Contracts	\$187,000	-	-	\$187,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$878,000 <u>\$433,000</u>	\$71,000	PF, Federal, Private	\$949,000 <u>\$504,000</u>
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$425,000 <u>\$870,000</u>	\$47,300	PF, Federal, Private	\$472,300 <u>\$917,300</u>
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$3,000	-	-	\$3,000
Professional Services	\$57,400	-	-	\$57,400
Direct Support Services	\$6,600	-	-	\$6,600
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$21,000	-	-	\$21,000
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	\$12,000	-	-	\$12,000
DNR IDP	\$12,000	-	-	\$12,000
Grand Total	\$1,618,000	\$118,300	-	\$1,736,300

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Grants Staff	0.02	3.0	\$5,800	-	-	\$5,800
Field Staff	0.02	3.0	\$5,800	-	-	\$5,800
State Coordinator	0.02	3.0	\$4,400	-	-	\$4,400

Partner: Sauk River Watershed District (SRWD)**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$83,200	-	-	\$83,200
Contracts	\$950,800	-	-	\$950,800
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$1,034,000	-	-	\$1,034,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Water Resource Manager	0.2	4.0	\$83,200	-	-	\$83,200

Amount of Request: \$4,034,000

Amount of Leverage: \$298,300

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 7.39%

DSS + Personnel: \$252,800

As a % of the total request: 6.27%

Easement Stewardship: \$168,000

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: 18.67%

How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount?

The reduced appropriation will result in reduced amount of acreage deliverables; however, the partnership is confident that we will still be able to achieve quality protection and restoration goals within the Sauk River Watershed with this allotment.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

The leverage source will be the value of land donated by the landowners entering an easement or land acquisition project.

Personnel

Has funding for these positions been requested in the past?

Yes

Please explain the overlap of past and future staffing and position levels previously received and how that is coordinated over multiple years?

Phase III is a component of the larger Sauk River Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Program. Continuity of funding across multiple phases allows us flexibility when prioritizing parcels for protection, or restoration and enhancement. Further, it ensures stability in the partnership staffing model and provides the ability to plan and prioritize projects over multiple years. As a general rule, the staffing for each entity is existing and only partially funded by OHF and specifically this request. Billing to any appropriation would only be for time spent on direct and necessary costs incurred as outlined in an Accomplishment Plan.

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?

PF: Restoration, enhancement, and initial development of the protected areas. Could include but not limited to wetland/grassland restoration, tree removal, prescribed fire, building removal, posts, signs, other development activities.

MLT: Complete habitat management plans on new easement acquisitions; restoration plans and projects on existing easements; outreach.

SRWD: Restoration/enhancement.

Fee Acquisition

What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?

Pheasants Forever expects to close on 2 parcels through fee title acquisition.

Easement Stewardship

What is the number of easements anticipated, cost per easement for stewardship, and explain how that amount is calculated?

The Land Trust expects to close 3-6 conservation easements through this appropriation. The average cost per easement to fund the Minnesota Land Trust's perpetual monitoring and enforcement obligations is \$24,000. This figure is derived from MLT's detailed stewardship funding "cost analysis" which is consistent with Land Trust Accreditation standards. MLT shares periodic updates to this cost analysis with LSOHC staff.

Travel

Does the amount in the travel line include equipment/vehicle rental?

Yes

Explain the amount in the travel line outside of traditional travel costs of mileage, food, and lodging

MLT staff regularly rent vehicles for grant-related purposes, which is a significant cost savings over use of personal vehicles.

I understand and agree that lodging, meals, and mileage must comply with the current MMB Commissioner Plan:

Yes

Direct Support Services

How did you determine which portions of the Direct Support Services of your shared support services is direct to this program?

PF utilizes the Total Modified Direct Cost method. This methodology is annually approved by the U.S. Department of Interior's National Business Center as the basis for the organization's Indirect Cost Rate agreement. PF's allowable direct support services cost is 5.09% . In this proposal, PF has discounted its rate to 2.5% of the sum of personnel, contracts, professional services, and travel. We are donating the difference-in-kind.

MLT: In a process that was approved by the DNR on March 17, 2017, Minnesota Land Trust determined our direct support services rate to include all of the allowable direct and necessary expenditures that are not captured in other line items in the budget, which is similar to the Land Trust's proposed federal indirect rate. We will apply this DNR approved rate only to personnel expenses to determine the total amount of the direct support services.

Other Equipment/Tools

Give examples of the types of Equipment and Tools that will be purchased?

GPS units, fencepost pounders, other R/E-related tools/equipment as needed.

Federal Funds

Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program?

Yes

Are the funds confirmed?

No

What is the approximate date you anticipate receiving confirmation of the federal funds?

07/01/2021

Output Tables**Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	54	-	-	170	224
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	35	140	-	-	175
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	17	68	-	-	85
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	400	400
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	106	208	-	570	884

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	\$706,800	-	-	\$327,200	\$1,034,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$218,100	\$872,200	-	-	\$1,090,300
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	\$105,500	\$422,200	-	-	\$527,700
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	\$1,382,000	\$1,382,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$1,030,400	\$1,294,400	-	\$1,709,200	\$4,034,000

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	-	139	-	85	-	224
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	88	-	87	-	175
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	85	-	85
Protect in Easement	-	200	-	200	-	400
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	427	-	457	-	884

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	\$865,200	-	\$168,800	-	\$1,034,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	\$545,200	-	\$545,100	-	\$1,090,300
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$527,700	-	\$527,700
Protect in Easement	-	\$691,000	-	\$691,000	-	\$1,382,000
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	\$2,101,400	-	\$1,932,600	-	\$4,034,000

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	\$13,088	-	-	\$1,924
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$6,231	\$6,230	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	\$6,205	\$6,208	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	\$3,455
Enhance	-	-	-	-

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	\$6,224	-	\$1,985	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	\$6,195	-	\$6,265	-

Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$6,208	-
Protect in Easement	-	\$3,455	-	\$3,455	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

Outcomes

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need ~ *Large corridors and complexes of biologically diverse wildlife habitat, providing nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and SGCN will be restored and protected. Partners will work together to identify priority lands using existing data and public plans, and then coordinate protection, restoration and enhancement activities in those priority areas. Success within each priority area will be determined based on the percentage of area protected, restored, and/or enhanced.*

Programs in prairie region:

- Restored and enhanced upland habitats ~ *Large corridors and complexes of biologically diverse wildlife habitat, providing nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and Species in Greatest Conservation Need will be restored and protected. Partners will work together to identify priority lands using existing data and public plans, then coordinate protection, restoration and enhancement activities in those priority areas. Success within each priority area will be determined based on the percentage of area protected, restored and/or enhanced.*

Parcels

For restoration and enhancement programs ONLY: Managers may add, delete, and substitute projects on this parcel list based upon need, readiness, cost, opportunity, and/or urgency so long as the substitute parcel/project forwards the constitutional objectives of this program in the Project Scope table of this accomplishment plan. The final accomplishment plan report will include the final parcel list.

Sign-up Criteria?

[Yes](#)

Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:

Parcels are identified through TNC's Multiple Benefits Analysis. The size of parcels and proximity to other protected lands are also considered in this analysis. Specific parcels available for acquisition of easements will be further reviewed relative to each other to identify priorities among the pool of applicants. This relative ranking is based on: amount of habitat on the parcel (size), abundance of SG CN, the quality or condition of habitat, the parcel's context relative to other natural habitats and protected areas, and cost. MBS data will be another important component of potential conservation easements and fee simple acquisitions. Field visits to further identify and assess condition of habitats prior to easement acquisition will also occur, as many private lands were not formally assessed through MBS.

Protect Parcels

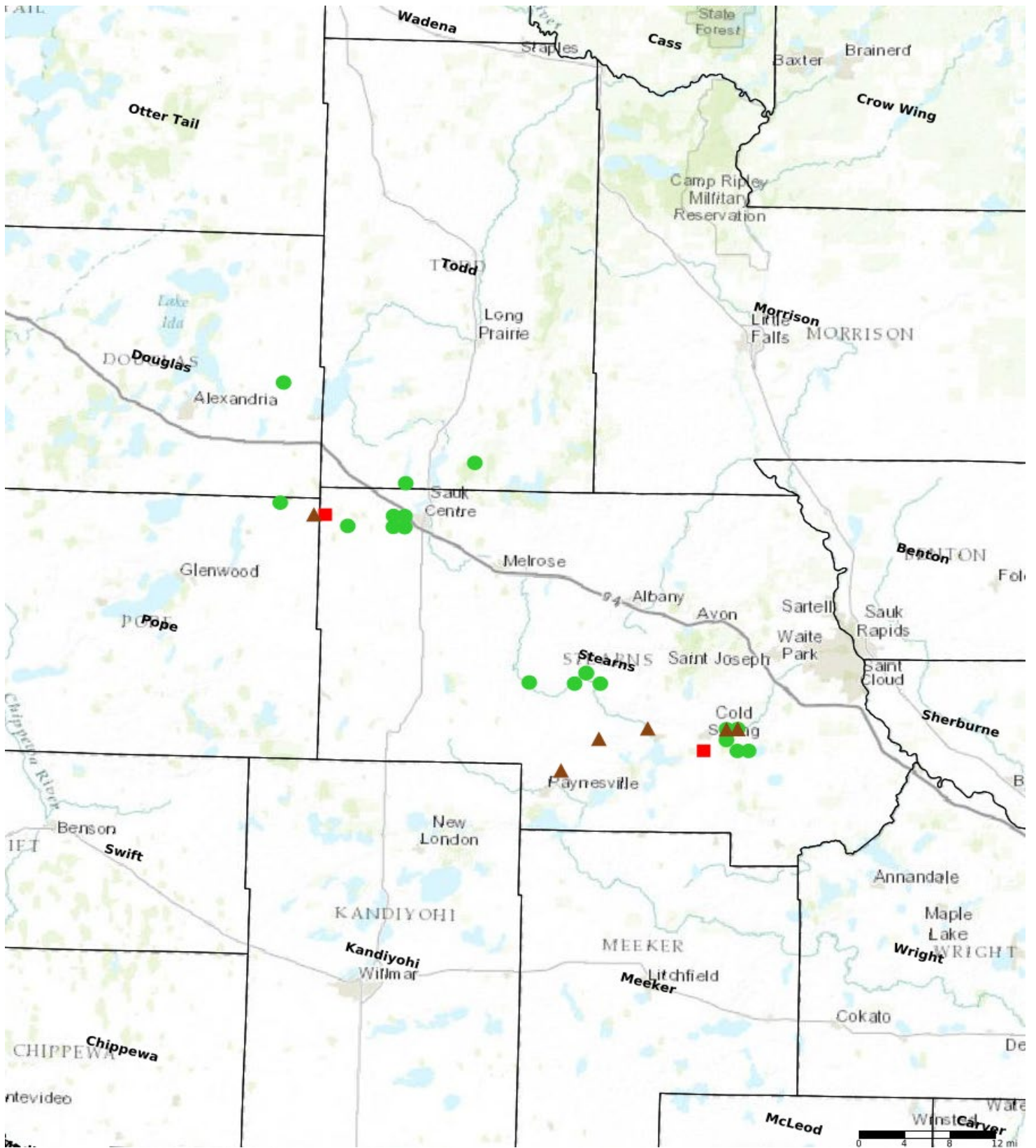
Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Crooked Lake	Douglas	12836209	37	\$90,000	No
Ellen Lake	Pope	12636204	50	\$84,000	No
<u>Ashley Creek (Eg)</u>	<u>Stearns</u>	<u>12635216</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>\$115,200</u>	<u>No</u>
Byer Lake (Co)	Stearns	12330224	25	\$37,500	No
Grand Lake (Br)	Stearns	12329230	134	\$208,000	No
Grand Lake (Jo)	Stearns	12329229	108	\$140,400	No
Hoboken Creek (An)	Stearns	12634217	80	\$184,000	No
Hoboken Creek (Br)	Stearns	12634218	64	\$147,200	No
Hoboken Creek (Gr)	Stearns	12634208	15	\$34,500	No
Hoboken Creek (Mei)	Stearns	12634217	160	\$368,000	No
Hoboken Creek (Mes)	Stearns	12634207	15	\$34,500	No
Partners WMA	Stearns	12232203	40	\$180,000	No
<u>Sauk River (Ba)</u>	<u>Stearns</u>	<u>12330213</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>\$60,000</u>	<u>No</u>
<u>Sauk River (DM)</u>	<u>Stearns</u>	<u>12432230</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>\$324,000</u>	<u>No</u>
Sauk River (Ge)	Stearns	12432224	71	\$237,000	No
Sauk River (Lo)	Stearns	12432224	108	\$348,000	No
<u>Sauk River (Sc)</u>	<u>Stearns</u>	<u>12432226</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>\$141,000</u>	<u>No</u>
Sauk River (Ti)	Stearns	12329218	179	\$840,000	No
<u>Sauk River (We)</u>	<u>Stearns</u>	<u>12431230</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>\$63,000</u>	<u>No</u>
TBD WMA	Stearns	12636212	400	\$1,800,000	Yes
TBD WMA/AMA	Stearns	12329218	40	\$100,000	No
TBD WMA/AMA	Stearns	12330213	20	\$40,000	No
TBD WMA/AMA	Stearns	12331214	85	\$3,000,000	No
TBD WMA/AMA	Stearns	12329218	20	\$40,000	No
TBD WPA	Stearns	12635207	388	\$1,350,000	Yes
Fairy Lake	Todd	12734229	6	\$24,000	No
Grey Eagle (DC)	Todd	12733217	80	\$120,000	No

Protect Parcels with Buildings

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Buildings	Value of Buildings
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Kinzer Creek	Stearns	12330227	298	\$4,200,000	No	1	\$50,000
TBD WMA	Stearns	12331219	300	\$1,200,000	No	13	\$40,000

Parcel Map



- Protect in Easement
- ▲ Protect in Fee with PILT
- Protect in Fee W/O PILT
- ★ Restore
- ✕ Enhance
- ⊕ Other