



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

DNR Forest Enhancement Phase III
Laws of Minnesota 2023 Accomplishment Plan

General Information

Date: 07/20/2023

Project Title: DNR Forest Enhancement Phase III

Funds Recommended: \$1,496,000

Legislative Citation: ML 2023, Ch. 40, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd. 3(d)

Appropriation Language: \$1,496,000 the first year is to the commissioner of natural resources to restore and enhance forest wildlife habitats on public lands throughout Minnesota. A list of proposed land restorations and enhancements must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Ted Dick

Title: Forest Habitat Supervisor

Organization: DNR

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Location Information

County Location(s): Lake of the Woods, Becker, Roseau, Mahnomen, Aitkin, Crow Wing, St. Louis, Carlton, Pine, Todd, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Winona, Olmsted, Rice, Fillmore, Scott, Goodhue, Wabasha, Hubbard, Clearwater, Cook, Dakota, Hennepin and Isanti.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Northern Forest
- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Metro / Urban
- Southeast Forest
- Prairie

Activity types:

- Restore
- Enhance

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Forest
- Habitat

Narrative**Abstract**

Minnesota's iconic forests and brushland habitats require enhancement beyond DNR timber harvest practices. Enhancements, such as brushland shearing provide critical wildlife habitat but are not achieved through timber harvest practices. These additional habitat benefits improve the quality of the forests for wildlife, water quality and outdoor recreation. DNR's Conservation Agenda, Wildlife Action Plan, Forest Action Plan, SNA Strategic Land Protection, Fish Habitat Plan, will guide habitat enhancements in this proposal to meet the objectives put forth in these plans.

Design and Scope of Work

Minnesota's forest habitats include many different native plant communities in different growth stages. Forests also includes rivers, lakes, sedge meadows, bogs, and brushland. Each of these habitats are home to a wide array with game and non-game species, including multiple Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). Forests provide outdoor recreation, timber products, and support local communities. Forests protect water quality and sequester carbon. However, forests face increasing stress from invasive species, climate change, critical habitat loss, forest conversion, and fragmentation. While timber harvest is an important tool providing habitats in the forest, additional or different enhancements are needed to maximize the diversity for fish and wildlife. For example timber harvest can create a wildlife opening, however other management such as periodic mowing is needed to maintain the opening.

We will accomplish strategic and targeted enhancements through contractors to conduct activities which support healthy, diverse and resilient habitats. Activities may include:

- 1) control invasive species
- 2) enhance riparian buffers and forest for water quality and fish habitat protection
- 3) firebreak development and maintenance as well as prescribed burns in fire-dependent forests, brushlands and wetlands
- 4) remove trees, mow and shear brush
- 5) maintain/restore open lands and brushland habitats
- 6) regenerate forests through site preparation, seed procurement/harvest, seeding, and planting.
- 7) plant trees to reforest and restore habitats, add conifer to the landscape, provide thermal cover, diversify forests, and address ash stand management

DNR managers collaborate with other State, Federal, County agencies and many conservation organizations to take a landscape view of forests and manage across administrative units. For example, DNR managers are working together with USFS managers to maintain and enhance rock outcrops that provide spring forage and mast for a variety of wildlife.

This request seeks funding to restore 15 acres and enhance over 12,917 acres of habitat on public lands open to hunting, primarily but not limited to, WMA, AMA, SNA and State Forests. Strategic and targeted work will be accomplished through the added capacity of contractors hired to conduct activities that support healthy, diverse and resilient habitats.

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?

Both young forests and mature forests require management other than DNR timber harvest methods to maximize habitat benefits for wildlife. Prescribed fire in mature forests helps clear underbrush and open up the understory. Fire is especially important in oak and pine forests. Shearing brushlands creates open lands that provide critical habitat for American woodcock, yellow rails and sharp-tailed grouse that are SGCN species. Planting conifers along north shore trout streams provides shade and infiltration of ground water to native brook trout streams that are threatened by climate change. Young forests and small forest openings are critical to many species of birds, including golden-winged warblers. Young forests provide critical habitat for moose to maintain and enhance the existing population.

Each of the practices mentioned in the design and scope will benefit a wide range of game and non-game species, including mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, as well as pollinating insects.

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:

DNR's Conservation Agenda, Wildlife Action Plan, Forest Action Plan, SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan (along with specific site management plans), Fish Habitat Plan, which will guide activities, were developed using the best information and science to identify goals and strategies. DNR habitat management is always based on science. Restoring and enhancing habitat expands corridors and complexes reduces fragmentation, and directly applies research to on the ground projects. Habitat projects that occur on SNA will enhance critical habitats identified by MCBS.

The habitat needs of many forest species, including mature forest species such as marten and fisher, and young forest species like woodcock and golden-winged warblers are well documented. Many wildlife species require mature forests during some point in their lives. Research conducted in Minnesota will be used to apply these funds to enhance and restore habitats in the forested areas of the state.

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

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- LU10 Support and expand sustainable practices on working forested lands

Which two other plans are addressed in this program?

- Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan 2015-2025
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program?

Forest / Prairie Transition

- Protect, restore, and enhance habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need

Metro / Urban

- Protect from long-term or permanent endangerment from invasive species

Northern Forest

- Restore forest-based wildlife habitat that has experienced substantial decline in area in recent decades

Prairie

- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna

Southeast Forest

- Restore forest-based wildlife habitat that has experienced substantial decline in area in recent decades

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 ~ *A number of species are tied to brushland and young aspen forests in these region, including elk, golden-winged warblers, and sharp-tailed grouse. Ongoing surveys and research on these species will allow the DNR to track local and regional responses to these and related efforts.*

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- A forest land base that contributes to the habitat picture ~ *These efforts will help manage forests in this region to benefit a range of wildlife species, both game and non-game. Ongoing surveys, especially among songbirds, will track long-term changes in bird populations in this region.*

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Healthy populations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species as well as more common species ~ *The DNR and partner agencies conduct a number of wildlife surveys, including moose, deer, ruffed grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, woodcock, and songbird surveys.*

Programs in prairie region:

- Improved condition of habitat on public lands ~ *These efforts will help manage forested locations in this region to benefit a range of wildlife species, both game and non-game. Ongoing surveys, especially among songbirds, will track long-term changes in bird populations in this region.*

Programs in southeast forest region:

- Large corridors and complexes of biologically diverse wildlife habitat typical of the unglaciated region are restored and protected ~ *The non-game program is very active in this region with projects assessing wildlife populations. And there are the same ongoing wildlife surveys as in the other regions of the state.*

Does this program include leveraged funding?

-

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.

These funds are for additional enhance/restoration work beyond what the DNR is already conducting. These funds are not supplanting or substituting any funds.

Non-OHF Appropriations

Year	Source	Amount
2019	Heritage Enhancement	\$3,466,000
2019	Dedicated Accounts	\$3,919,000
2019	Game and Fish	\$24,196,000

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

We will select and implement projects to achieve high quality and enduring benefits. Projects have variable lifespans depending on project type, weather and other environmental conditions. Many of the projects are meant to endure for decades, at which point, regular forest management activity through harvest. DNR staff and staff from partner agencies/NGOs will monitor them to if and when additional enhancement are needed. Work will be sustained through internal DNR funds, DNR timber harvest practices, and future requests from the OHF and related external funding.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2026 and beyond	listed above and future OHF requests	continue monitoring	adapt results	seek additional funding
2024	listed above and future OHF requests	monitor results	document results	develop budget for additional work with internal and external funds

Provide an assessment of how your program celebrates cultural diversity or reaches diverse communities in Minnesota, including reaching low- and moderate-income households:

We have in the past and will continue to consult and coordinate with diverse communities and tribal partners into the project planning and work we do to enhance fish and wildlife habitats for all citizens of the state of Minnesota.

Activity Details

Requirements

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

Yes

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

- SNA
- AMA
- State Forests
- Other : national forest, Con-Con lands, school trust lands.

Land Use

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

No

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
continued monitoring and follow-up management and enhancements	ongoing
implement enhancements	summer 2028

Date of Final Report Submission: 11/01/2028

Availability of Appropriation: Subd. 7. Availability of Appropriation

(a) 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. Money appropriated to acquire land in fee 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.

(b) Money appropriated in this section is available as follows:

- (1) money appropriated for acquiring real property is available until June 30, 2027;
- (2) money appropriated for restoring and enhancing land acquired with an appropriation in this act is available for four years after the acquisition date with a maximum end date of June 30, 2031;
- (3) money appropriated for restoring or enhancing other land is available until June 30, 2028;
- (4) notwithstanding clauses (1) to (3), money appropriated for a project that receives at least 15 percent of its funding from federal funds is available until a date sufficient to match 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; and
- (5) money appropriated for other projects is available until the end of the fiscal year in which it is appropriated.

Budget

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

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$40,400	-	-	\$40,400
Contracts	\$1,250,000	-	-	\$1,250,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$13,700	-	-	\$13,700
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$32,200	-	-	\$32,200
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$1,200	-	-	\$1,200
Supplies/Materials	\$158,500	-	-	\$158,500
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$1,496,000	-	-	\$1,496,000

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
EWR spec and techs	0.12	4.0	\$34,900	-	-	\$34,900
EWR coordinator	0.01	4.0	\$5,500	-	-	\$5,500

Amount of Request: \$1,496,000

Amount of Leverage: -

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 0.0%

DSS + Personnel: \$72,600

As a % of the total request: 4.85%

Easement Stewardship: -

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: -

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

Some scalable projects were reduced in scope and some projects were eliminated completely.

Personnel

Has funding for these positions been requested in the past?

No

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?

Contract include funds to hire small businesses that have equipment the DNR doesn't have or where it's more efficient to hire local businesses instead of using DNR 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

There is the potential for some equipment rental, but it's a low probability. Most equipment will belong to the contractor who is doing the work

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?

We used the standard DNR Direct and Necessary calculator.

Other Equipment/Tools

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

Hand saws, small power tools ect.

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?

We will match these funds with P-R dollars per standard DNR process.

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

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	-	-	15	-	15
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	12,917	-	12,917
Total	-	-	12,932	-	12,932

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	\$61,100	-	\$61,100
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	\$1,434,900	-	\$1,434,900
Total	-	-	\$1,496,000	-	\$1,496,000

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	6	0	5	0	4	15
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	17	344	181	120	12,255	12,917
Total	23	344	186	120	12,259	12,932

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	\$31,200	-	\$26,500	-	\$3,400	\$61,100
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$22,800	\$285,200	\$547,600	\$62,300	\$517,000	\$1,434,900
Total	\$54,000	\$285,200	\$574,100	\$62,300	\$520,400	\$1,496,000

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	\$4,073	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	\$111	-

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	\$5,200	-	\$5,300	-	\$850
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-

Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$1,341	\$829	\$3,025	\$519	\$42

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

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.

Parcel Information

Sign-up Criteria?

No

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

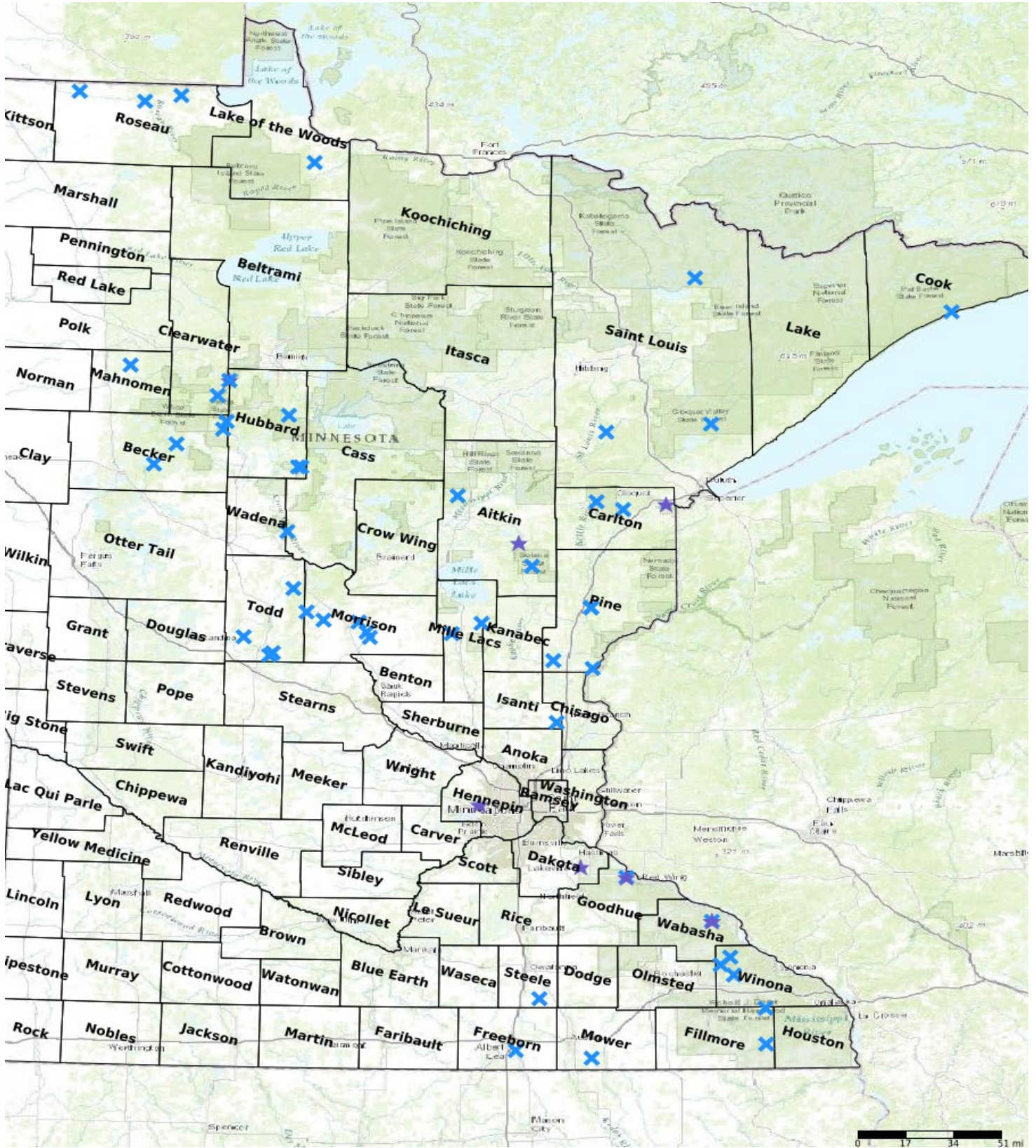
Parcels were solicited from staff and partnering divisions, prioritized by regional staff, selected and scaled for available funding.

Restore / Enhance Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Hay Point WMA	Aitkin	046230219	11	\$10,000	Yes
Little River WMA: Main Unit	Aitkin	049260219	75	\$30,000	Yes
Aitkin WMA	Aitkin	044230202	150	\$30,000	Yes
Little Mantrap Lake	Becker	142360213	1	\$10,000	Yes
Greenwater Lake SNA	Becker	141380233	1	\$10,000	Yes
Callaway WMA	Becker	139390208	30	\$10,000	Yes
Dinner Creek SNA	Becker	142360235	1	\$10,000	Yes
Sawyer WMA	Carlton	048180216	43	\$20,000	Yes
Hemlock Ravine SNA	Carlton	048160203	2	\$10,000	Yes
Blackhoof River Valley WMA	Carlton	038220210	2,700	\$5,000	Yes
Iron Springs Bog SNA	Clearwater	144360228	1	\$10,000	Yes
Butterwort Cliffs SNA	Cook	061010232	15	\$30,000	Yes
Farnham Lake WMA	Crow Wing	135320218	100	\$50,000	Yes
Chimney Rock SNA	Dakota	114170231	6	\$30,000	Yes
Choice WMA	Fillmore	102080215	500	\$500,000	Yes
Schueler WMA:West Subunit	Fillmore	104080203	50	\$30,000	Yes
RJ Dorer SF--Collischan Bottoms Unit	Goodhue	113150221	16	\$80,000	Yes
RJ Dorer SF--Collischan Bottoms Unit	Goodhue	113150221	10	\$50,000	Yes
Wood-Rill SNA	Hennepin	118230236	11	\$80,000	Yes
Badoura Jack Pine Woodland SNA	Hubbard	139320210	1	\$10,000	Yes
Lester Lake SNA	Hubbard	143320231	1	\$10,000	Yes
LaSalle Lake SNA	Hubbard	145350230	10	\$30,000	Yes
Badoura Jack Pine Woodland SNA	Hubbard	139320211	20	\$30,000	Yes
LaSalle Lake SNA	Hubbard	145350230	2	\$20,000	Yes
Twin Lakes SNA	Isanti	034220211	3	\$20,000	Yes
Lake of the Woods SF	Lake of the Woods	159310220	250	\$70,000	Yes
Vanose WMA	Mahnomen	146410236	2	\$5,000	Yes
Mille Lacs WMA	Mille Lacs	041250229	10,000	\$30,000	Yes
Four Brooks WMA:Main Unit	Mille Lacs	040270221	300	\$80,000	Yes
Little Elk WMA	Morrison	130310219	231	\$100,000	Yes
Mud Lake WMA:Morrison County Unit	Morrison	129310201	66	\$120,000	Yes
Rice-Skunk WMA:Skunk Lake West Unit	Morrison	040310232	70	\$80,000	Yes
Rice-Skunk WMA:Rice Lake Unit	Morrison	040310219	42	\$30,000	Yes
Ereaux WMA	Morrison	041310230	86	\$70,000	Yes
Whitewater WMA	Olmsted	107100236	400	\$380,000	Yes

Rock Marsh WMA	Pine	038200227	50	\$10,000	Yes
Sandstone WMA	Pine	042200226	60	\$10,000	Yes
Sandstone WMA	Pine	042200226	115	\$68,100	Yes
Sandstone WMA	Pine	042200226	252	\$80,000	Yes
Boyd Sartell WMA:Main Unit	Rice	101170211	600	\$20,000	Yes
Boyd Sartell WMA:Main Unit	Rice	105190218	200	\$140,000	Yes
Lost River SF	Roseau	163380216	300	\$60,000	Yes
Sprague Creek SNA	Roseau	163400234	1	\$10,000	Yes
Roseau River WMA	Roseau	163430217	885	\$150,000	Yes
Eagle Creek AMA	Scott	102210225	50	\$50,000	Yes
Cloquet Valley SF	St. Louis	049190231	19	\$10,000	Yes
Bear Island SF	St. Louis	054140236	400	\$40,000	Yes
Burntside SF	St. Louis	063140217	400	\$100,000	Yes
Whiteface River State Forest	St. Louis	053190215	11	\$10,000	Yes
Elgin Woods WMA	Todd	127330217	192	\$80,000	Yes
Kobliska WMA:Main Unit	Todd	131320204	32	\$10,000	Yes
Grey Eagle WMA	Todd	127330209	482	\$320,000	Yes
Owen-Hinz WMA	Todd	128350212	27	\$20,000	Yes
RJ Dorer SF--Zumbro Bottoms Unit	Wabasha	110110214	72	\$380,000	Yes
RJ Dorer SF--Zumbro Bottoms Unit	Wabasha	110110214	9	\$50,000	Yes
RJ Dorer SF--Zumbro Bottoms Unit	Wabasha	110110214	80	\$70,000	Yes
Whitewater WMA:Main Branch	Winona	108100226	108	\$100,000	Yes
Whitewater WMA:North Branch	Winona	107100208	50	\$50,000	Yes

Parcel Map



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