



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

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07/31/2023 Status Update

**Project Title:** Resilient Habitat for Heritage Brook Trout

**Funds Recommended:** \$2,266,000

**Money Spent:** 40.83%

**Acres Accomplished:** 41.15%

**Manager's Name:** John Lenczewski

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**Legislative Citation:** ML 2020, Ch. 104, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd 5(c )

**Appropriation Language:** \$2,266,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire land in fee and permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance habitat in targeted watersheds of southeast Minnesota to improve heritage brook trout and coldwater communities. Of this amount, \$350,000 is to The Nature Conservancy, \$258,000 is to Trout Unlimited, \$857,000 is to The Trust for Public Land, and \$801,000 is to Minnesota Land Trust. Up to \$96,000 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 proposed land acquisitions and permanent conservation easements must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

### **Describe progress-to date in this reporting period, including successes and challenges:**

Trout Unlimited:

The design for enhancement of habitat in and along a 3,500' reach of Maple Creek is more or less complete, but permitting is complicated by the likely presence of rusty patch bumblebees. Due to the extra caution needed to avoid impacts to rusty patch bumblebees we now plan to begin construction this winter and phase work in 2024. We previously completed enhancement of 3 acres of habitat on East Indian Creek. We remain on track to accomplish all habitat goals and outcomes within the grant period. To ensure more grant funds are available for the large-scale work on Maple Creek, we utilized other funds for the habitat enhancements on the South Fork Root River.

Minnesota Land Trust:

During the past reporting period, the Land Trust completed option agreements for the East Indian Creek 1 and East Indian Creek 5 conservation easement projects. The East Indian Creek 1 project has all major work completed and is expected to close in Q3 of calendar year 2023. During the past reporting period the Land Trust resolved a title issue relating to a utility confinement which temporarily delayed closing. The East Indian 5 project has also progressed, with a Q4 of calendar year 2023 closing expected.

With the closing of these conservation easements, the Land Trust's land protection work associated with this grant

will conclude. We expect to achieve protection of 287 acres of property relative to the 335 acres proposed through the grant. As a side note, the existing 408-acre goal in the accomplishment plan was errantly not reduced to the 335-acre target during the reduction in projected tax revenue at the onset of Covid.

On the R/E front, 40 acres of invasive removal on a conservation easement in Olmstead County (Evergreen Acres) is in progress. A first phase of mechanical invasive removal activities was initiated in winter 2022/2023. A first year of prescribed goat grazing is currently in progress. This work is in high-quality oak woodlands and mesic hardwood forests bordering the South Fork of the Zumbro River, a designated Heritage Brook Trout river.

The Nature Conservancy:

TNC is in the permitting process on a stream restoration and floodplain reconnection project on Vesta Creek in Fillmore County. The contractor doing the project design is also assisting with permitting. We hope to have approval this summer or early fall to begin construction next spring. TNC staff are also working on project plans for riparian vegetation enhancement along several other streams to improve habitat both in and near the water.

Trust for Public Land:

Restoration work was successfully completed on approximately 25 acres of degraded habitat on Yucatan WMA adjacent to Girl Scout Camp Creek, a designated trout stream with a viable population of heritage brook trout present. This restoration work removed woody invasives, such as common buckthorn and boxelder, along the stream corridor and adjacent grasslands in preparation for seeding with native tallgrass prairie species. The invasive removal was completed in March 2023. Seeding is planned for Fall 2023.

Unfortunately, despite a targeted outreach effort and several potential projects moving through the early stages of the acquisition process, no acquisitions were secured within the allotted funding time frame.

**If your program has IDP budget money, please describe the amounts transferred to DNR, for what, and the expiration date of those monies:**

Trust for Public Land: \$25,000 in IDP funds have been released to the DNR for project acquisitions associated with this appropriation.

## Budget

Item	AP Amount	Spent to Date	% Spent	OHF \$ Left to Spend
Personnel	\$330,300	\$137,000	41.48%	\$193,300
Contracts	\$571,200	\$217,000	37.99%	\$354,200
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$604,700	-	0.0%	\$604,700
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	\$312,000	\$363,600	116.54%	-\$51,600
Easement Stewardship	\$96,000	\$48,000	50.0%	\$48,000
Travel	\$15,500	\$4,900	31.61%	\$10,600
Professional Services	\$129,500	\$64,400	49.73%	\$65,100
Direct Support Services	\$97,800	\$38,700	39.57%	\$59,100
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$15,000	\$15,000	100.0%	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$2,000	-	0.0%	\$2,000
Supplies/Materials	\$67,000	\$11,500	17.16%	\$55,500
DNR IDP	\$25,000	\$25,000	100.0%	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$2,266,000</b>	<b>\$925,100</b>	<b>40.83%</b>	<b>\$1,340,900</b>

## Output Tables

**41.15% Accomplished**

### Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland		Prairie		Forest		Habitat		Total	
	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date
Protectw/ PILT	0	-	73	0	73	0	0	-	146	0
Protect w/o PILT	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Easement	0	-	0	-	0	-	408	287	408	287
Restore	0	-	10	0	50	4	0	-	60	4
Enhance	0	-	30	15	60	0	47	3	137	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>309</b>

### Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland		Prairie		Forest		Habitat		Total	
	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date
Protectw/ PILT	-	-	\$428,500	\$48,700	\$428,500	\$48,700	-	-	\$857,000	\$97,400
Protect w/o PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$596,400	\$518,000	\$596,400	\$518,000
Restore	-	-	\$70,000	-	\$80,000	\$30,000	\$7,900	\$22,500	\$157,900	\$52,500
Enhance	-	-	\$120,000	\$39,000	\$80,000	-	\$454,700	\$218,200	\$654,700	\$257,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$618,500</b>	<b>\$87,700</b>	<b>\$588,500</b>	<b>\$78,700</b>	<b>\$1,059,000</b>	<b>\$758,700</b>	<b>\$2,266,000</b>	<b>\$925,100</b>

### Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro / Urban		Forest / Prairie		SE Forest		Prairie		N. Forest		Total	
	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date
Protectw/ PILT	0	-	0	-	146	0	0	-	0	-	146	0
Protect w/o PILT	0	-	0	-	0	0	0	-	0	-	0	0
Easement	0	-	0	-	408	287	0	-	0	-	408	287
Restore	0	-	0	-	60	4	0	-	0	-	60	4
Enhance	0	-	0	-	137	18	0	-	0	-	137	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>309</b>

### Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro / Urban		Forest / Prairie		SE Forest		Prairie		N. Forest		Total	
	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date	AP	To Date
Protectw/ PILT	-	-	-	-	\$857,000	\$97,400	-	-	-	-	\$857,000	\$97,400
Protect w/o PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easement	-	-	-	-	\$596,400	\$518,000	-	-	-	-	\$596,400	\$518,000
Restore	-	-	-	-	\$157,900	\$52,500	-	-	-	-	\$157,900	\$52,500
Enhance	-	-	-	-	\$654,700	\$257,200	-	-	-	-	\$654,700	\$257,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$2,266,000</b>	<b>\$925,100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$2,266,000</b>	<b>\$925,100</b>