

WRE01 Additional Information Email

From: Lien, Ricky (DNR)
To: Mark Johnson
Cc: Wilder, Kelly (DNR); Gangaware, Jamie (DNR)
Subject: RE: ML24 LSOHC Rationale Memo
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 3:35:46 PM

Hi Mark,

My past message did not say anything about the OHF-funded positions being dedicated to only OHF work because it isn't the case. I'd be glad to contact you to talk about this or I could put together another memo to explain it.

I currently have 10 people in the Wetland Habitat Team (including staff in both the Shallow Lakes Program and Wetlands Management Program) funded through OHF. Five positions make up the Wetland Management Program and were most recently brought on-board using OHF money. These were all new positions to the Section of Wildlife Management. There were no previous positions funded with other funds that were supplanted with OHF funds. We first asked for these positions because we conducted a formal survey of Area Wildlife staff and that survey indicated that Area staff believed there was a need for wetland enhancement on WMAs, but they didn't have time or expertise to do such work. These positions were created with funding from the ML19 and ML21 appropriations to address the need for wetland work on state Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). Our initial goal was to obtain enough money for salary and support funds (travel, equipment, supplies, etc.) to get the people out on the landscape to identify specific needed habitat enhancement projects. Minimal money was sought for projects at this stage. The plan was to get people hired and they could start assessing wetlands, establishing protocols, and identifying needed work, meanwhile we'd find the money needed to do the actual projects. And it worked. While some work is done on projects funded with OHF money obtained by the DNR, they are also working on projects funded by a variety of other DNR sources, OHF money from other partners, and federal money. I am confident in saying that the Wetland Specialists are doing wetland enhancement work that would not otherwise be done.

In the Proposals and Accomplishment Plans I prepare we are asked if there are leveraged funds being used and I answer that a variety of funding sources have been leveraged in the past and that while we can't anticipate the source and amount of future funds that could be available for leveraging, we anticipate that they will in fact be used. Just this year, two major funding sources became available to the DNR – federal Inflation Reduction Act funds from the USFWS for grassland/wetland work on state properties to the tune of almost \$1 million and state legislature appropriated Climate Resiliency funds totaling \$10 million meant for small wetland and grassland work on WMAs. Because we had the Wetland Management Program in place, we have been able to quickly identify potential wetland enhancement projects for these funds. Without the Wetland Management Program being in place, it is uncertain how and where the funds would be spent.

Ricky

Ricky Lien

Wetland Habitat Team Supervisor | Division of Fish and Wildlife

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

500 Lafayette Road

St. Paul, MN 55155

Phone: 651-259-5227

Email: Ricky.lien@state.mn.us

mndnr.gov



From: Mark Johnson <mark.johnson@lsohc.mn.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 4:05 PM

To: Lien, Ricky (DNR) <ricky.lien@state.mn.us>

Subject: RE: ML24 LSOHC Rationale Memo

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Ricky:

I didn't notice any emphasis on the positions being dedicated to only OHF work. Perhaps I missed it.

If I missed it, my apology and perhaps you could point me to it.

If not, please let me know if I am of the incorrect opinion that these positions work exclusively on OHF work.

Thanks for any clarity you can provide.

Regards,

Mark

Mark Wm. Johnson

Executive Director

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

651-296-6397