



Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

David Stein | CPL Coordinator

Rob Rabasco | CPL Administrator

Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program (CPL)

- Clean Water, Land and Legacy Constitutional Amendment
- Legislation requires a conservation partners program to encourage and support local conservation efforts.
 - To provide matching grants for restoration, protection, and enhancement of wetlands, prairies, forest and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife



Statewide and Metro Cycles

- Grant requests \$5,000- \$500,000
- Total project cost cannot exceed \$1 Million
- \$2.5 Million available for each; 1 Round
- Restoration, enhancement, or acquisition projects
- Projects on public land or land protected under a permanent conservation easement
- Metro projects must occur within the 7-county metro area (Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott & Washington) or within the city limits of Duluth, St. Cloud or Rochester



NEW FOR FY2024: New Applicant Round

- Grant requests \$5,000- \$500,000
- Total project cost cannot exceed \$1 Million
- \$3 Million available; 1 round
- Restoration, enhancement, or acquisition projects
- Projects on public land or land protected under a permanent conservation easement
- Only applicants who have never received CPL or OHF funds are eligible.
- Can occur anywhere in Minnesota



Expedited Conservation Projects (ECP)

- Grant requests \$5,000- \$50,000
 - Restoration or Enhancement projects only
 - Work can be done only on public land
 - List of eligible activities (www.mndnr.gov/ecp)
- \$1 Million available
- Continuous application cycle, funding awarded up to 5 times per fiscal year



Expedited Conservation Projects: Forests

- Expedited Conservation Projects

Forest habitat:

- Winter (thermal) cover
- Tree planting
- Promotion of natural regeneration
- Bud capping
- Rx burning within BMP prescription, including aerial support



Expedited Conservation Projects: Prairies

- Expedited Conservation Projects

Prairie habitat:

- Establish new prairie/grassland
- Seed purchase of *native* species
- Rx burning within BMP prescription
- Mowing/herbicide for invasive species control
- Tree removal/woody encroachment management
- Interseeding of monoculture/low biodiversity sites



Expedited Conservation Projects: Wetlands

- Expedited Conservation Projects

Wetland/water habitat:

- Water level control structures
- Fish Barriers
- Upland vegetation enhancement
- Tile breaks/ditch blocks



Expedited Conservation Projects: Fish, Game, and Wildlife

- Expedited Conservation Projects

Fish, Game, and Wildlife habitat:

- Brushland shearing
- Dam removal/modification
- In-stream habitat modification
- Trout stream restoration/habitat improvement
- Site prep for habitat enhancement



Match & Eligibility

- 10% match required, non-state
- Grant funds cannot supplant/replace budgets
- Grant funds cannot be used for overhead costs or to hire new staff
- Only nonprofit organizations and government agencies may apply
- Projects must be on permanently protected lands
- Partnerships are encouraged!



- Online Application System
 - System opens August 1st
- Traditional, Metro, and New Applicant
 - Awards announced in late December
 - Contracts set up January
- ECP
 - Open continuously, funds awarded every other month, up to 5 rounds
 - Awards announced 4 weeks after round closes
- Up to 3 years to complete projects



Statewide, Metro, and New Applicant Review

Technical Review Committee

DNR Division Directors

DNR Commissioner

ECP Review

DNR Habitat Team

FAW Division Director



Evaluation Criteria

- Overall Project Value- habitat quality/quantity
- Applicant Performance- Statewide and Metro Rounds Only
- Project Benefits- habitat benefits
- Public Benefits- public access
- Financial Assessment- cost effectiveness, budget
- Urgency

CPL 2024 Results (So Far)

- New Applicant Round:

- \$3 Million Available

- 12 Applicants; \$3,165,747 in requests
- 8 Grantees Funded; \$2,190,302 awarded

- Metro Round:

- \$2.5 Million Available

- 12 Applicants; \$4,196,230 in requests
- 8 Grantees Funded, all funds awarded

- Statewide Round:

- \$2.5 Million Available

- 10 Applicants; \$3,396,605 in requests
- 8 Grantees Funded, all funds awarded

- Expedited Conservation Projects (ECP):

- \$1 Million Available

- 23 Applicants (3 New); \$923,393 in requests after 2 rounds.
- 14 Grantees Funded; \$552,141 awarded after 2 rounds.

What about Unused Funds?

- Unused funds from CPL Program
 - Re-open for applicants.
 - Used over the next 2 years for short-term projects or amendments.
- Unused funds from applicants
 - Re-open for future applicants or return to LSOHC
- Acquisitions fell through
- Cost of acquisitions lower than anticipated.
- Contract bids lower than expected
- Covid-19
- Severe weather and drought
- Contractor/CCMI cancellation

What's new for this year? (CPL R&D)

- Publication of CPL applicant best practices document.
- Publication of updated ECP guidelines.
- New application questions directly related to wildlife.
- Direct outreach to unserved and underserved entities.
- Direct outreach to the general public.



CPL Best Practices

- Highlight clear project goal(s).
- List a seed/species list.
- Highlight benefits to specific species of wildlife.
- Justify high costs/acre.
- Make a detailed budget.
- DNR contact lists for subject experts.



Grant Monitoring Requirements

- All projects above \$50,000 need to be monitored
 - \$50,000-250,000: Projects Monitored Once
 - \$250,000-\$500,000: Projects Monitored Annually
- Monitoring conducted on-site or virtually by CPL/DNR staff.
 - Questionnaire
 - Site photos

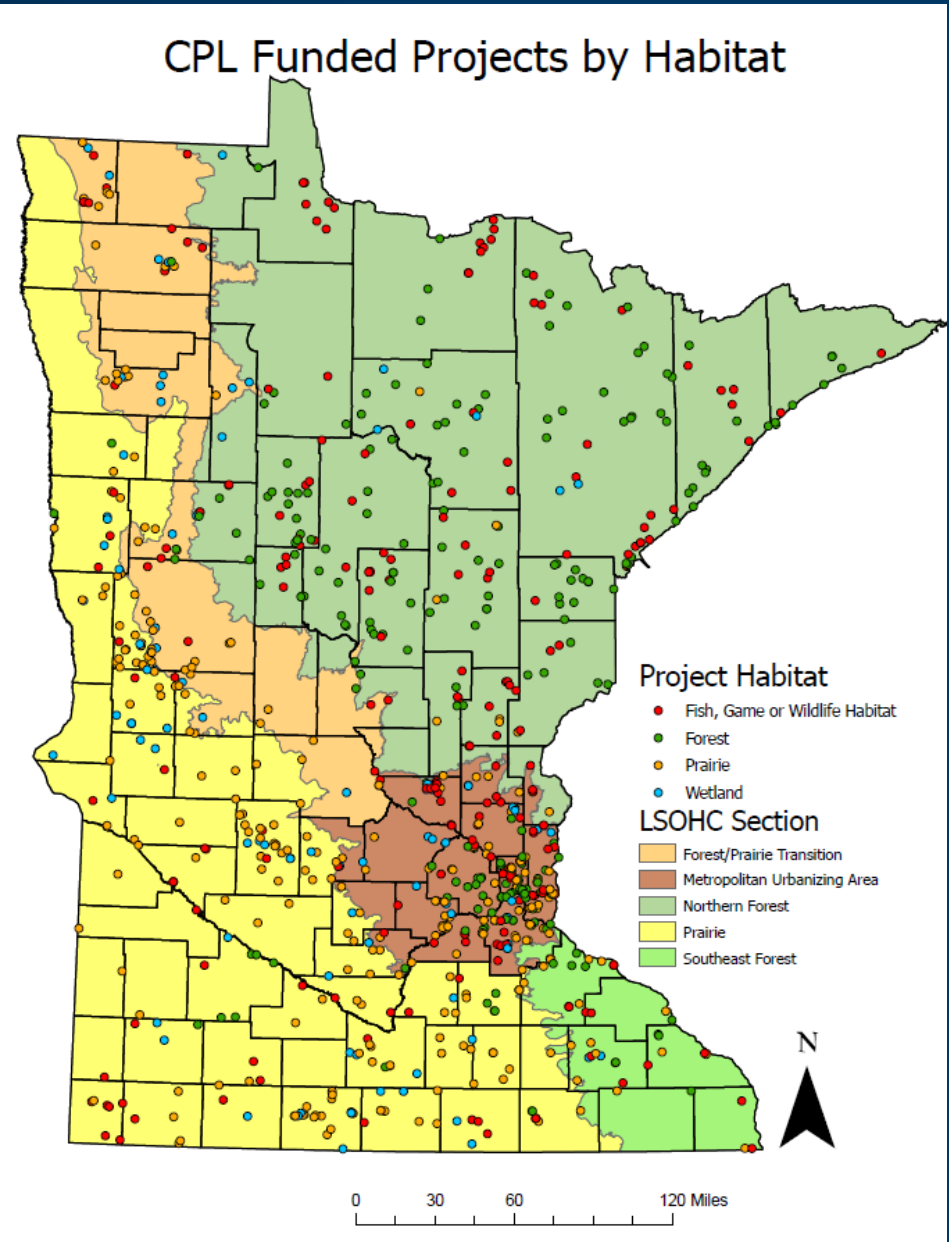


Looking Ahead at FY 2025

- \$15,000,000 allocation from LSOHC
 - \$4,400,000 for Traditional Statewide Applicants
 - \$4,000,000 for New Applicants
 - \$4,000,000 for Metro Applicants
 - \$2,000,000 for Expedited Conservation Projects (ECP)
 - \$600,000 for Administrative Costs (including increased staffing)
- Goal for 2025: At least 90 applications

CPL projects 2010-2024

- Over 1000 projects funded from 2010-2024
- Through more than 250 government and non-profit organizations



Thank You!

David Stein

David.stein@state.mn.us

651-259-5375

Rob Rabasco

Rob.rabasco@state.mn.us

651-259-5216