Wednesday, August 28 AM Hearing Handouts



Minnesota Forests for the Future Program Project and Funding Update

Overview: Minnesota Forests for the Future Program was established by the Minnesota Legislature and utilizes funding made available from a variety of sources to Minnesota DNR to protect environmentally important private forests, primarily through the purchase of permanent conservation easements. Projects conserve private working forests throughout Minneosta that contain fish and wildlife habitat, threatened and endangered species, timber, scenic, recreation, and other cultural and environmental values. Forty-four percent of Minnesota's forests, or approximately 7.5 million acres, are at risk of fragmentation or conversion to non-forest uses. The MN Forests for the Future Program is a complementary program to the MN Forest Legacy Program, a federally-funded national program which serves as an important partner and funding source for MN DNR's forest conservation efforts.

There are thirteen conservation easement programs in DNR; only four are currently active. Of the four active programs in DNR, two of those are in Forestry: Forest Legacy and Forests for the Future. Of all of the acres in DNR conservation easements, ninety two percent (92%) are in Forest Legacy or Forests for the Future conservation easements. See chart below.

DNR Easement Type	Number	Acres
ACUB	6	814
Aquatic Management	19	1,378
Cave	2	219
Forest Legacy*	37	136,479
Forests for the Future*	35	224,491
Metro Greenways	16	662
Northern Pike Spawning	8	87
Other Conservation	45	2,989
Native Prairie Bank*	171	14,785
Scientific Natural Areas	13	816
Trout Stream*	735	5,664
Water Bank	20	1,154
Wild and Scenic River	136	3,958
Total	1,243	393,496

92% of all acres in DNR conservation easements are in Forest Legacy or Forests for the Future

Forests for the Future and Forest Legacy Program guidelines have been developed and implemented for over 15 years ensuring protection work is strategically located and stewardship sound and efficient. A forest stewardship plan is included with each conservation easement and updates required regularly; the plans make the land eligible for DNR forest stewardship including technical assistance and cost-sharing for forest BMPs and many conservation easement landowners choose to participate in these programs to better conserve and manage their privately-owned forested habitat. Ongoing stewardship includes annual landowner meetings and on-site monitoring.

^{*}active DNR programs: Forest Legacy, Forests for the Future, Native Prairie Bank, and Trout Stream



Current proposal: Minnesota Forests for the Future Phase X (10) requests \$13,988,700 to permanently protect 12,000 acres of high conservation value forested habitat in eight counties across the state with the acquisition of working forest conservation easements. We have \$2,025,000 in confirmed leverage funds.

Protection work achieves multiple benefits by conserving critical habitat, maintaining forested land cover essential for high water quality/quantity, building climate resilience and by sustaining the forested landscape critical for recreation and local jobs in tourism and timber. This work is crucial to conserving wildlife that require large intact forests and provides perpetual protection for fish, game and wildlife that inhabit these forested landscapes. Conservation easements are an efficient and effective tool – DNR acquires and stewards the conservation easement in perpetuity while the land continues to be privately owned and remains on the property tax rolls. Forest stewardship plans are required to be in place and kept updated.

Work is strategically focused to build on existing protection, address private in-holdings, address regional conservation and management goals and meet private landowner demand. Of the proposed tracts:

- 6 of 19 parcels are >1,000 ac. in size for a total of 9,775 ac. (of 12,000 total proposed);
- 5 of 19 are adjacent to conservation easements purchased within the last 5 years for a total of 3,400 acres (of 12,000 total proposed);
- nearly all remaining parcels adjacent to publicly owned land; and
- public access will be protected in perpetuity on 3 of the largest tracts for a total of 5,100 ac.

Current funding and project updates:

	ML Year	Program Title	Appropriation Amount	Original AP Acres	Current Acres Complete	Current Dollars Spent
(a)	2021	MN Forests for the Future Phase VIII (8)	\$2,971,000	1,966	960	\$1,533,100
(b)	2022	MN Forests for the Future Phase IX (9)	\$2,501,000	3,329	410	\$733,200

- (a) MN Forests for the Future Phase VIII (8) is in progress with three conservation easements complete; all pre-appraisal work complete for remaining parcels; appraisals in progress.
- **(b)** MN Forests for the Future Phase IX (9) is in progress with one conservation easement acquisition complete of 410 acres; all pre-appraisal work complete for remaining parcels; appraisals in progress.

Questions? Please contact:

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Land Access Alliance (LAA) - Proposal Number FA 03



- ❖ The Haveri Homestead property spans the Sawmill Creek Valley and is located in the rapidly developing corridor along Hwy 6 in Crystal Bay Township in southern Lake County.
- LAA seeks to acquire this 120 acre parcel for multiple purposes including: (1) conservation and restoration of critical habitat, (2) preservation of public access to hunting and foraging, and (3) demonstration of regenerative agriculture coexistence with wilderness conservation.
 - (1) Sawmill Creek is a trout stream that flows through the property. Moose, wolves and other wildlife use this corridor, and it contains rich bird habitat. Neotropical migrants, waterfowl, and other birds, including woodcocks and cranes are found in the surrounding forest and marshland. Previously logged and dredged areas on this parcel will be restored to improve the integrity of this valuable habitat.
 - (2) As land in the area has been increasingly subdivided and sold to developers and nonresidents, local access has diminished. This property is part of a giant 30 acre wild leek patch, well known to traditional foragers. Enabling the community to maintain its relationship with these and other resources on this parcel will encourage interest and involvement in conservation activities.
 - (3) Signs of a turn-of-the-century homestead and sawmill are evident in the 10 acre portion of the property nearest the county highway. The fields and hedgerows provide an important ecological transition niche as climate projections predict a shift to an oak-savannah ecosystem in this area. Regenerative agricultural practices and prairie plantings on these acres will help sustain this diversity.

In collaboration with local and regional entities, LAA plans to steward this unique parcel as a whole system, integrating community and ecological values to create a model of sustainable conservation using a community land trust model. Agricultural portions of our project will be funded separately from this proposal.

❖ In March 2024, LAA began discussions with the current landowner who is eager to sell quickly. We have based our budget on market price as we await a certified appraisal. Other costs are estimates, as we continue to engage community members and experts in the details of manifesting this vision.

FA04: Hardwood Hills Habitat Conservation Program

Phase 2





Completed Projects



- Three conservation easements have closed with our current program funding.
- These projects protect over 134 acres of high quality habitat and over 10,000 feet of shoreline.
- Our leverage deliverable has been exceeded.







Budget					Output										
Total					Protection										
- Total			Protection Leverage Acres Protected Shoreline (mi) Protected Projects				Projects								
								% of			% of				
Grant Phase		Award	Spent	Committed	Remaining	Proposed	Actual	Goal	Proposed	Outcome	Goal	Proposed	Actual	% of Goal	
2023 Hardwood Hills 1	In Progress	\$ 1,894,000	\$ 479,333	\$ 715,000	\$ 699,667	\$ 227,000	\$ 300,403	132%	450	347	77%	0.00	2.72		6
2025 Hardwood Hills 2	Proposed	\$ 5,145,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,145,000	\$ 525,000	\$ -	0%	1,150	0	0%	0.00	0.00		0

Progressing Projects — Four additional projects have been identified, ranked, and prioritized for action. These projects will utilize our remaining funding under our existing grant. We continue to inspire local landowners to learn about and consider conservation easements. We have a long list of interested landowners if more funding is awarded.







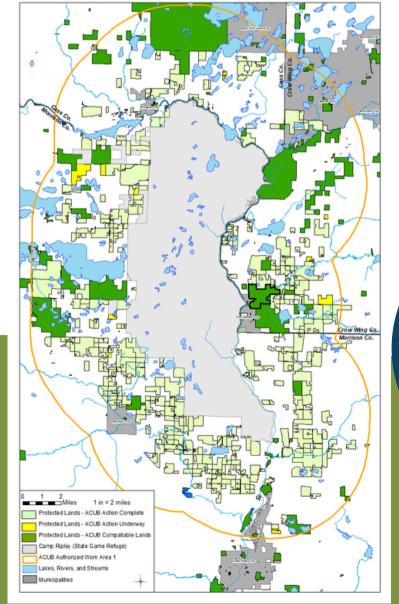


Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) Protection Summary

FA05 - Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Protection Program - Phase XIII

Public Lands Protection (Creating and Enhancing habitat corridors) ML 2025

Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape (Protection) - ACUB 4/11/2024



End-State Protection Goal within the 5 mile Work Area (252,637 acres):

65% or 164.215 acres

Protected Lands include: Public/NGO. SFIA. easements, and Public Waters.



Pre-ACUB: 33.8% or 85,382 acres protected



Current: 50.4% or 127,960 acres protected

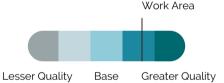
Forestland makes up 35.5% of the larger CRSL with only 0.5% of those forests being located on public lands. Easements and private land restorations are critical in protecting the larger percentage of the landscapes forested habitat.



Working with willing landowners, this partnership will utilize permanent conservation easements (BWSR RIM) to acquire and restore 1,900 acres of highpriority parcels to accomplish:

- Creation of high-quality habitat corridors critical to the long term health and recovery of area wildlife species.
- Restorations and enhancements that permanently protect habitat corridors. and soil and water resources, while actioning goals of the State Wildlife Action Plan, CRSL Strategic Plan, and local Landscape Stewardship Plan.

Habitat Quality Meter



- High terrestrial biodiversity
- High Wildlife Action Network score Wild rice lakes
- Trout streams
- Stream confluences
- Lakes of high/outstanding biodiversity
- High fisheries habitat

Federal T&E

Currently listed:



Gray wolf



eared bat

Proposed:



Monarch butterfly



Tricolored bat



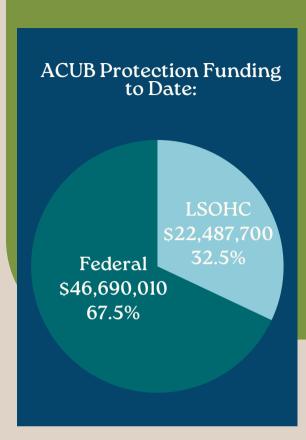
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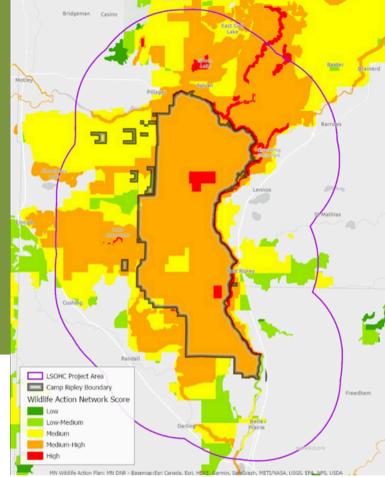
FA05 - Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape ACUB Protection Program - Phase XIII

Public Lands Protection (Creating and Enhancing habitat corridors) ML 2025

Benefits of continued funding include:

- The Minnesota National Guard competes for Federal funding to acquire RIM conservation easements that prevent incompatible development
- Federal dollars infused into the local economy
- Funding from LSOHC is critical in leveraging access to these competitive Federal funds
- Many State agencies train at Camp Ripley
- Camp Ripley is the largest employer in Morrison County





Pictured above is the DNR Wildlife Action Network score for this project boundary.

Protection of these targeted high-priority lands, this project will:

- Secure approximately 25 RIM easements
- Protect 1,900 acres of high-priority, resilient parcels
- Buffer rivers, lakes, wetlands, and public lands
- Prevent habitat fragmentation
- Create a connected network of perpetual, resilient habitat corridors essential for the adaptation of area wildlife species to changing climates.





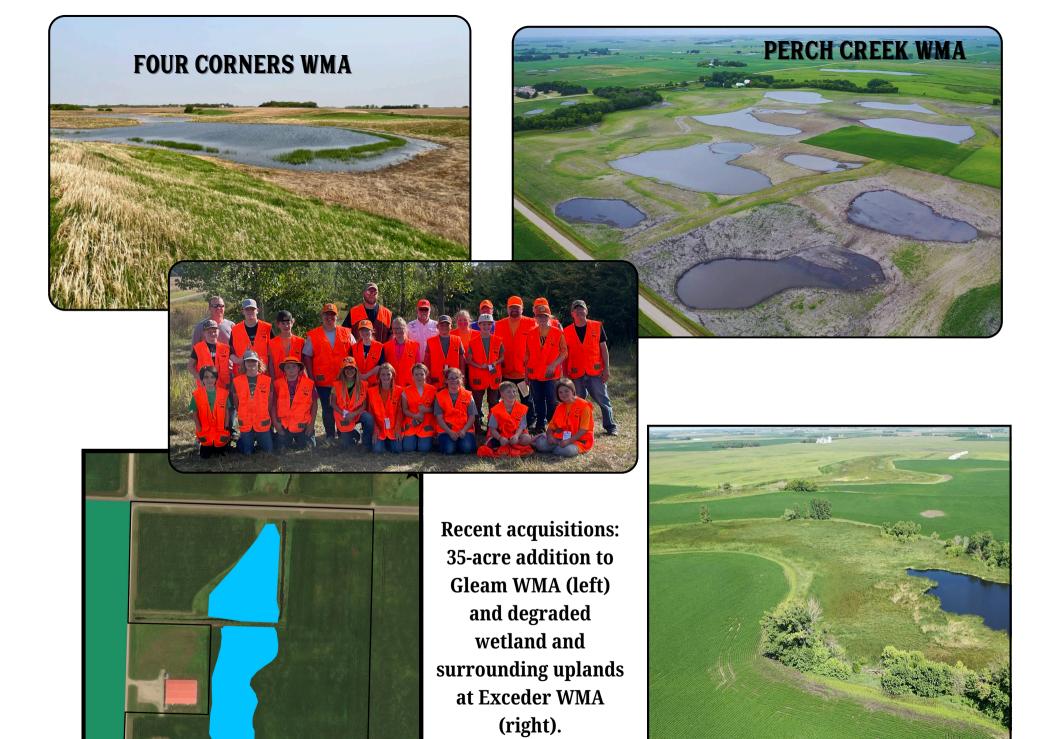


MISSION













Prairie Chicken Habitat Partnership of the Southern Red River Valley Phase XI- PA02





Appropriation Year	Total OHF Appropriation Amount	Amount OHF Spent to Date	% OHF Spent to Date	Amount OHF Funding Le- gally Obligat- ed	% of OHF Funding Legally Obligat- ed	OHF Funding Remaining	Match Spent	Acres Acq. Pro- posed	Acres Acq. Com- pleted	NOTES
Phase 1 (ML 2015)	\$1,800,000.00	\$1,762,041.00	98%	\$0.00	0%	\$37,959.00	\$420,947.00	500.00	614.00	CLOSED
Phase 2 (ML 2016)	\$2,269,000.00	\$2,108,000.00	93%	\$0.00	0%	\$161,000.00	\$50,173.00	650.00	702.00	CLOSED
Phase 3 (ML 2017)	\$1,908,000.00	\$1,619,485.00	85%	\$0.00	0%	\$288,515.00	\$161,793.00	586.00	622.00	CLOSED
Phase 4 (ML 2018)	\$1,162,000.00	\$1,109,182.79	95%	\$0.00	0%	\$52,817.21	\$25,430.97	303.00	324.00	Final Restoration fall 2024. Final report winter 2024/2025
Phase 5 (ML2019)	\$2,558,000.00	\$2,490,858.07	97%	\$0.00	0%	\$67,141.93	\$369,507.00	667.00	1,076.00	CLOSED
Phase 6 (ML2020)	\$1,736,000.00	\$1,164,014.14	67%	\$0.00	0%	\$571,985.86	\$489,616.53	408.00	487.00	Acquisitions done. Restoration work in progress.
Phase 7 (ML2021)	\$2,264,000.00	\$1,966,348.95	87%	\$0.00	0%	\$297,651.05	\$569,458.58	400.00	470.00	Acquisitions done. Restoration work in progress.
Phase 8 (ML2022)	\$4,440,000.00	\$3,719,969.73	84%	\$0.00	0%	\$720,030.27	\$10,181.95	760.00	305.00	Acquisitions done. Restoration work in progress.
Phase 9 (ML2023)	\$4,400,000.00	\$2,311,339.89	53%	\$1,366,000.00	31%	\$2,088,660.11	\$424.57	651.00	401.00	\$1.36m legally obligated. Seeking more acquisitions to finish
Phase 10 (ML2024)	\$3,794,000.00	\$0.00	\$0		0%	\$3,794,000.00	\$0.00	586.00		Started 7/1/2024
Totals	\$26,331,000.00	\$18,251,239.57		\$1,366,000.00		\$3,731,144.50	\$2,097,532.61	5,511.00	5,001.00	

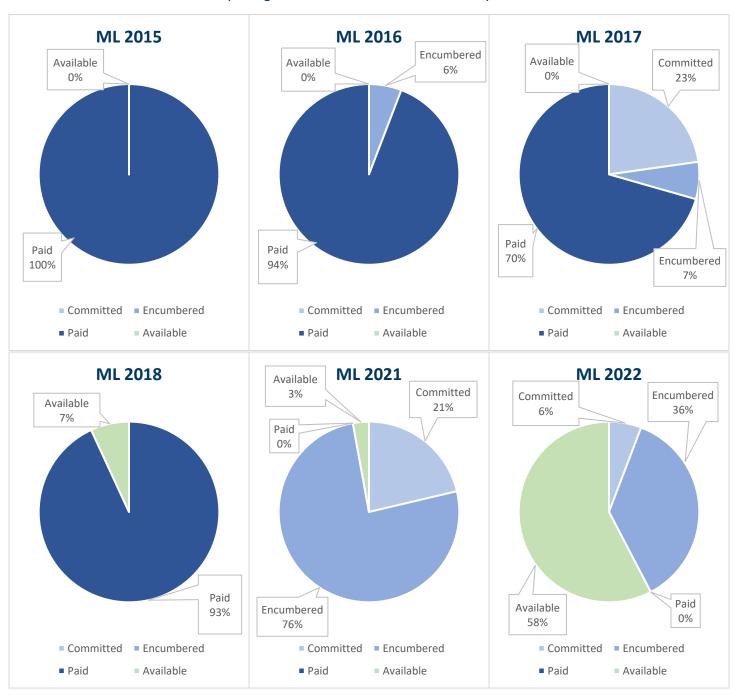


RIM Buffers for Wildlife and Water – Phase XI

Proposal: PA 04

August 12, 2024

ML 2015 - ML 2022 Pie Charts Depicting Status of Funds for Easement Payments



The available funds for easement payments from ML 2021 (3%) and ML 2022 (58%) are expected to be committed by November 2024 with applications received July & October 2024.



ML Year	Total OHF Appropriation Amount	Easement Payment Cap	Easement Payment \$ Committed	Easement Payment \$ Encumbered	Easement Payment \$ Paid	Easement Payment \$ Available	Acres Proposed	Acres Completed	Notes
2011	\$2,249,000	\$1,744,600	\$0 (0%)	\$0 (0%)	\$1,715,998 (98%)	\$26,602 (2%)	470	430.3 (92%)	Closed
2012	\$2,090,000	\$1,755,275	\$0 (0%)	\$0 (0%)	\$1,755,275 (100%)	\$0 (0%)	400	374.7 (94%)	Closed
2013	\$3,520,000	\$3,121,554	\$0 (0%)	\$0 (0%)	\$3,082,154 (99%)	\$39,400 (1%)	700	533.0 (76%)	Closed
2014	\$2,200,000	\$1,942,154	\$0 (0%)	\$0 (0%)	\$1,942,154 (100%)	\$0 (0%)	375	303.1 (81%)	Closed
2015*	\$4,544,000	\$3,392,012	\$0 (0%)	\$0 (0%)	\$3,392,012 (100%)	\$0 (0%)	1,036	1,083.9 (105%)	Preparing for final
2016*	\$6,708,000	\$5,487,920	\$0 (0%)	\$319,672 (6%)	\$5,168,248 (94%)	\$0 (0%)	1,390	1,441.0 (104%)	Preparing for final
2017*	\$5,333,000	\$4,375,542	\$996,172 (23%)	\$291,197 (7%)	\$3,088,173 (71%)	\$0 (0%)	1,335	1,151.5 (86%)	Extended to 2025
2018*	\$5,000,000	\$2,953,000	\$0 (0%)	\$0 (0%)	\$2,749,736 (93%)	\$203,264 (7%)	1,900	672.1 (35%)	Preparing for final
2021	\$4,170,000	\$3,831,200	\$816,573 (21%)	\$2,904,924 (76%)	\$0 (0%)	\$109,703 (3%)	900	376 (42%)	Expect to be committed by Nov. 2024**
2022	\$4,392,000	\$3,728,000	\$215,839 (6%)	\$1,362,861 (37%)	\$0 (0%)	\$2,149,300 (58%)	600	196 (33%)	Expect to be committed by Nov. 2024**
Total	\$40,206,000	\$32,331,257	\$2,028,584 (6%)	\$4,878,654 (15%)	\$22,893,750 (71%)	\$2,528,269 (8%)	9,106	6,561.6 (72%)	

Numbers current as of August 12, 2024.

^{*}Used for MN CREP; **Funding decisions to be made on applications received July 2024 and applications that are received October 2024.

ACCELERATING THE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA PROGRAM PHASE XVII— PA05





Appr Year (ML)	Total OHF Appropriation Amount	Amount OHF Spent to Date	%OHF Spent to Date	Amount OHF Funding Legally Obligated	% of OHF Funding Legally Obligated	OHF Funding Remaining	Match Spent	•	Acres Acq. Completed	NOTES
2009	\$3,000,000.00	\$2,969,680.00	99%	\$0.00	0%	\$30,320.00	\$862,492.00	1,051.00	1,051.00	Closed
2010	\$3,015,000.00	\$3,014,821.00	100%	\$0.00	0%	\$179.00	\$501,000.00	900.00	1,020.00	Closed
2011	\$5,500,000.00	\$5,439,768.00	99%	\$0.00	0%	\$60,232.00	\$684,867.00	1,275.00	1,498.00	Closed
2012	\$3,300,000.00	\$3,237,672.00	98%	\$0.00	0%	\$62,328.00	\$534,136.00	550.00	638.00	Closed
2013	\$7,960,000.00	\$7,907,201.00	99%	\$0.00	0%	\$52,799.00	\$550,369.00	1,220.00	1,484.00	Closed
2014	\$10,350,000.00	\$10,143,078.00	98%	\$0.00	0%	\$206,922.00	\$1,329,604.00	1,362.00	1,773.00	Closed
2015	\$7,452,000.00	\$7,421,400.00	100%	\$0.00	0%	\$30,600.00	\$1,518,500.00	900.00	2,100.00	Closed
2016	\$5,229,000.00	\$5,179,800.00	99%	\$0.00	0%	\$49,200.00	\$1,442,625.00	680.00	1,102.00	Closed
2017	\$5,603,000.00	\$5,582,300.00	100%	\$0.00	0%	\$20,700.00	\$972,175.00	1,012.00	1,182.00	Closed
2018	\$5,740,000.00	\$5,736,779.84	100%	\$0.00	0%	\$3,220.16	\$1,402,866.55	1,030.00	1,260.00	Closed
2019	\$6,060,000.00	\$5,699,658.13	94%	\$0.00	0%	\$360,341.87	\$2,210,631.40	1,073.00	1,382.00	Acquisitions done. Restoration work in progress.
2020	\$3,322,000.00	\$3,104,698.40	93%	\$0.00	0%	\$217,301.60	\$2,099,360.03	540.00	1,042.00	Acquisitions done. Restoration work in progress.
2021	\$4,715,000.00	\$4,372,070.76	93%	\$0.00	0%	\$342,929.24	\$2,051,777.50	792.00	892.00	Acquisitions done. Restoration work in progress.
2022	\$5,660,000.00	\$4,945,817.03	87%	\$0.00	0%	\$714,182.97	\$371,526.97	911.00	637.00	Acquisitions done. Restoration work in progress.
2023	\$5,216,000.00	\$1,011,865.71	19%	\$216,018.00	4%	\$4,204,134.2 9	\$1,205.02	679.00	80.00	Closed on one property. Six additional tracts (2 with purchase agreements) are in progress that will to spend out remaining fee title dollars.
2024	\$5,315,000.00	\$0.00	\$0	\$0.00	\$0	\$5,315,000.0 0		654.00		We have four acquisitions in progress (no purchase agreements) that will spend out the fee title dollars if successful.
To- tals	\$87,437,000.00	\$75,766,609.86		\$216,018.00		\$10,793,548 .11	\$16,533,135. 48	14,629.00	17,141.00	

Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge - Phase 15

Funding Requested: \$8,981,500 Proposal ID: PA07 ML 2025



NTP Active Combined (All Active Phases: XII, XIII, XIV Fee + Easement)





The Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge, managed by the US FWS, has protected more than 14,199 acres of native prairie & associated habitats, including 8,578 acres with OHF funding through prior rounds of this Program

NTP ML 2025 Proposal Summary

2,250 acres permanently protected, including:

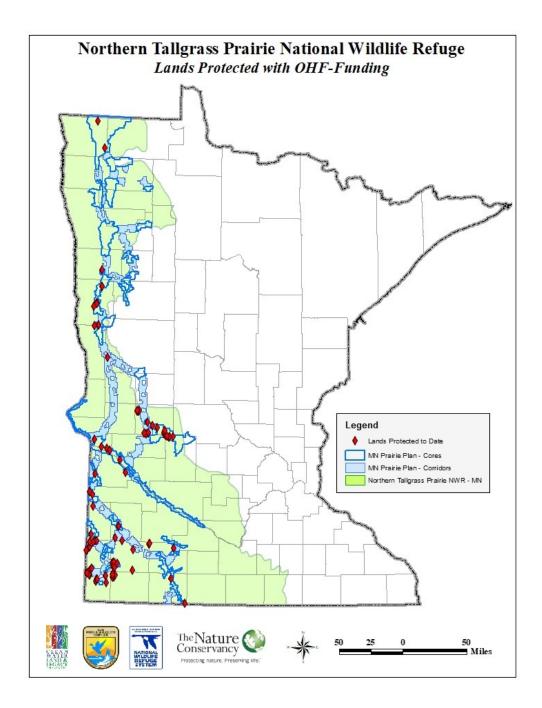
- 1.400 acres of Native Prairie
- 2,100 acres of conservation easements
- 150 acres of fee acquisitions

Restoration and enhancement of 750 acres \$350,000 in Federal funds leverage

Acquisitions focused on priority areas identified by the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan with significant biodiversity

Current Situation

- Over the past 18 months we have experienced an unprecedented, exponential increase in conservation easement acquisitions and we expect that trend to continue based on the long list of interested landowners we're working with.
- The combination of closed (\$980,925), signed (\$2,536,245) & proposed (\$5,904,125) conservation easement & fee acquisitions exceeds the \$8,839,500 available acquisition funds for all remaining appropriations (ML2021, ML2022 & ML2024) by \$581,795.
- Given that we close approximately 68% of proposed acquisition projects, the projected available conservation easement & fee acquisition funding for all remaining appropriations is \$1.3m. Comparing this to the \$2,015,634 we've closed over the past 12 months, at an average burn rate of \$167,970 per month, \$1.3m will be consumed in less than 8 months, long before the 2028 acquisition spending deadline for our most recent appropriation (ML 2024).
- The Council's approval of ML2025's proposal will provide us with the ability to continue our demonstrated success in permanently protecting native prairie and restoring grasslands
- Historically we've spent 99% of the available funding for appropriations that have closed (ML2010-ML2017) and we're continuing our spend-down of appropriations with funding available for restoration & enhancement (ML2018, 19, 20) and appropriations with funding available for acquisitions, restoration & enhancement (ML2021, 22, 24).



Program Accomplishments through May 2024

- 8,578 acres of habitat permanently protected
- 5,258 acres of untilled native prairie protected
- 691 acres of wetlands and 28 miles of stream and 2.5 miles of lakefront protected
- 87% of projects completed are in MN Prairie Plan priority areas
- Protected habitat for endangered and threatened species, species of concern, and other wildlife, including:
 Wilson's phalarope, short-eared owl, Dakota skipper,
 Topeka Shiner, Blanding's turtle, small white lady's slipper, prairie bush clover, and sandhill cranes.

Prioritizing Projects

Each project is reviewed using the following criteria:

- 1) Is there native prairie on the tract? If not, is it adjacent to native prairie?
- 2) Is the property in a priority area identified in the MN Prairie Plan?
- 3) Is it adjacent to an existing complex of permanently protected habitat?
- 4) Was it identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey as having concentrations of threatened and endangered species, species of concern, and rare communities?
- 5) Is it suitable for public recreation?