

July 23, 2026

Kristina Smitten
Executive Director
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

Ms. Smitten,

As required by MN Statute 97A.056, Subd. 9, BWSR is requesting LSOHC approval to place a RIM easement over land with existing limited protection via a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) easement. BWSR has received a RIM Grasslands application from a landowner in Otter Tail County for protection of 19.6 acres of moderate quality grassland adjacent to Reger WPA and several other RIM and USFWS easements. BWSR is proposing to fund the easement from the legislative year 2025/fiscal year 2026 Grasslands appropriation (language below).

(c) RIM Grasslands Reserve, Phase 6

\$3,375,000 the first year is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources to acquire permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance grassland habitat under Minnesota Statutes, sections 103F.501 to 103F.531. Of this amount, up to \$70,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. Subdivision 8, paragraph (b), does not apply to this project. A list of permanent conservation easements must be provided as part of the final report.

3.1 acres of the proposed RIM easement have an existing USFWS “no drain/fill/burn” easement encompassing the wetland areas. None of the upland on the property is included in the USFWS easement (see attached map).

Per BWSR administrative policy, the easement payment will be reduced based on the original payment for those acres. Because RIM is a higher level of protection than the USFWS easement terms, it is appropriate to provide compensation to the landowner for the additional rights secured under a RIM easement.

The US Fish & Wildlife easement payment was \$8,375 in 1991 for 44.0 acres of wetland. BWSR staff determined the acreage overlap based on elevation and mapping to be 3.1 acres. Based on the full payment of \$8,375 for the USFWS easement and an acreage of 44.0 acres, USFWS paid \$190.34 per acre for their easement.

BWSR payment will be reduced by the amount that was originally received for the USFWS easement ($\$190.34 \times 3.1 \text{ ac} = \590.05). BWSR policy dictates that we provide the remaining payment based on current RIM rates for the 3.1 acres because the USFWS is significantly less restrictive than RIM easement terms.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon Doucette". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Sharon Doucette

Easement Section Manager

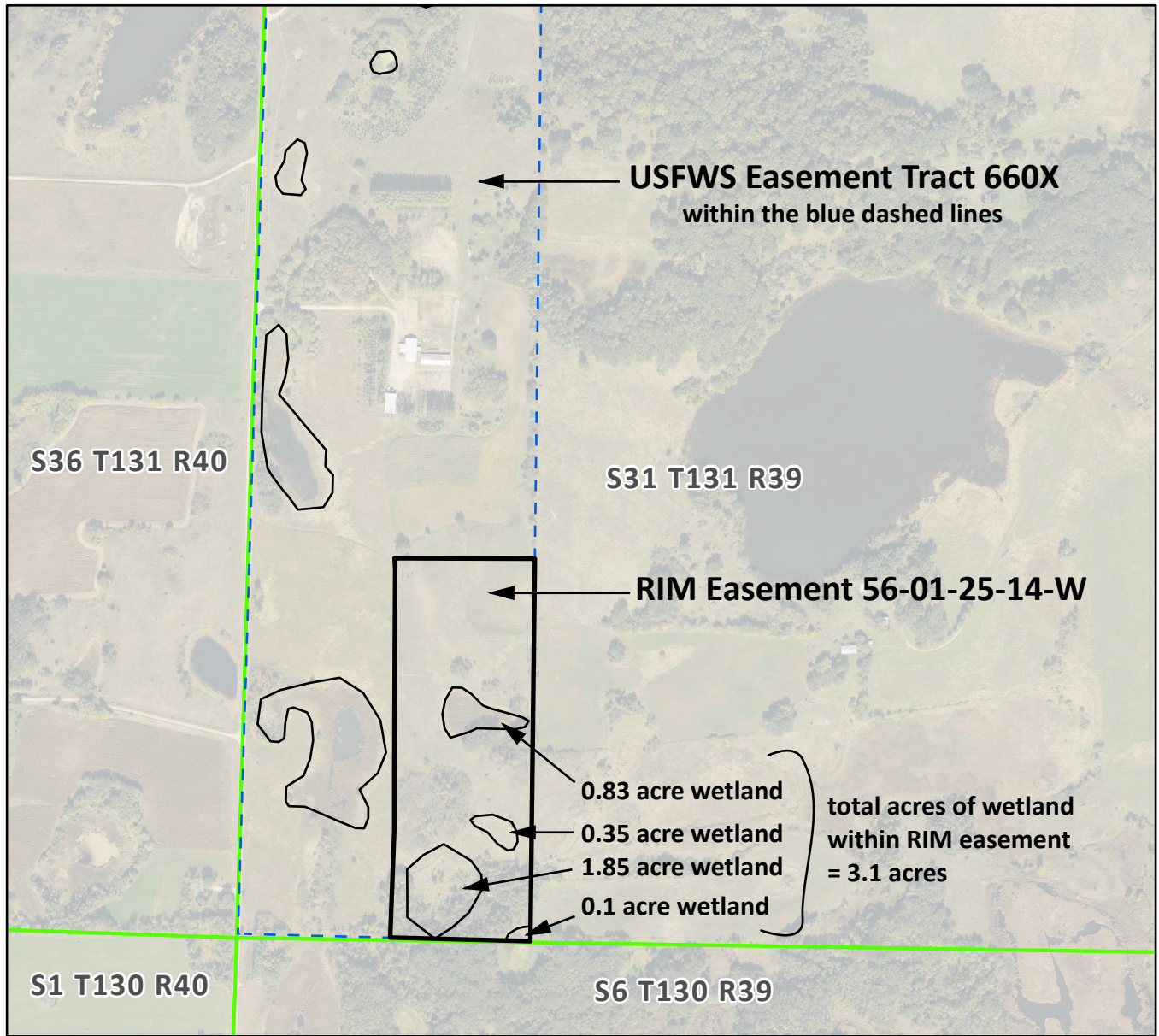
RIM Easement Overview

Conservation Easement Map

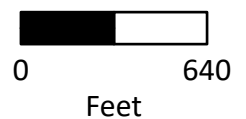
State of Minnesota | Board of Water & Soil Resources

This is not a legal survey, and not intended for use as a survey plat.

Section: 31, T. 131 N., R. 39 W., Otter Tail W County



-  Easement Boundary
-  Boundary of Described Lands
-  Lands not Included in this Easement
-  Section/Quarter/Sixteenth Line



USFWS Easement Overview

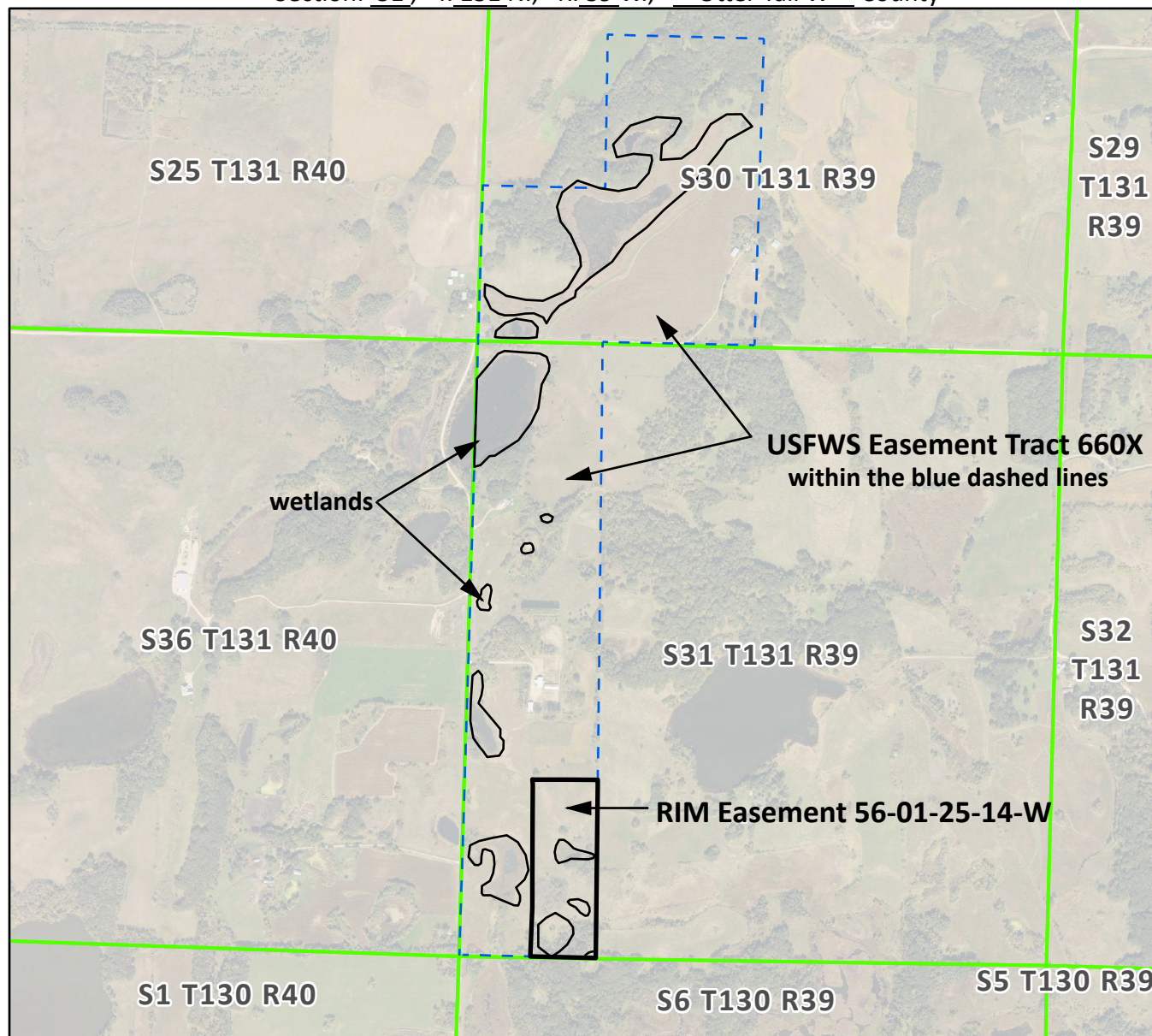
Conservation Easement Map

State of Minnesota | Board of Water & Soil Resources

This is not a legal survey, and not intended for use as a survey plat.

Section: 30, T. 131 N., R. 39 W., Otter Tail W County

Section: 31, T. 131 N., R. 39 W., Otter Tail W County



-  Easement Boundary
-  Boundary of Described Lands
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-  Section/Quarter/Sixteenth Line

