

**Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council  
FY 2011 Recommendation  
Accomplishment Plan**

**Date:** ~~May 28, 2010~~ November 18, 2010

**Project or Program Title:** Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

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Funds Recommended (\$000s)	Council Recommendation Funding	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Outdoor Heritage Fund	<b>4,386</b>	0	0	0

**Appropriation Language**

2010 MN Law Chapter 361, Article 1, Section 2, Subdivision 5(i)

**Abstract**

The Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program (CPL) will be managed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to provide competitive matching grants of up to \$400,000 to local, regional, state, and national non-profit organizations, including governments. Grant activities include the enhancement, restoration, or protection of forests, wetlands, prairies, and habitat for fish, game, or wildlife in Minnesota. A match of at least 10% from nonstate sources is required for grants of \$100,000 or less, and a match of at least 15% from nonstate sources is required for grants over \$100,000. Up to one-third of the match may be in-kind resources. All match must be identified at the time of application.

CPL Program Staff will develop a Request for Proposal and Program Manual, solicit applications and oversee the grant selection process, prepare and execute grant documents, review expenditure documentation, ensure recipients are only reimbursed for allowable expenses, monitor grant work, and assist recipients with closing out their agreements. Up to 4% of the appropriation may be used for administering the grant program.

## **Narrative**

Applicants may apply for grants under this program to enhance, restore, or protect forests, wetlands, prairies and habitat for fish, game, or wildlife in Minnesota.

### *For projects that will restore and/or enhance*

1. Projects will be only on lands under permanent protection of public fee ownership, or conservation easement as defined in MS 84C.01 or public ownership or in public waters as defined in MS 103G.005, subd. 15. Projects may be done on tribal lands under federal trust arrangements.
2. A conservation easement must be placed on any private land impacted before work may begin. Funding for the easement/deed restriction and associated costs may be paid for with in-kind match or grant funds.
3. Proposed projects on public lands will be approved by and coordinated with public land managers. Projects proposed for lands under permanent conservation easement will be reviewed by the easement holder. Proof of review or approval must be submitted to grant staff before the application deadline. The private landowner must agree to the project as well.
4. Grantees will be responsible for all administrative requirements such as Historic Property Review, Wetland Conservation Act, Stormwater Permits, DNR Waters Permits, and others as appropriate. Costs for any reviews or permits should be included in the grant application, either as in-kind match or requested from grant dollars. As specified in the grant agreement, grantees may, by letter, assign duties and associated funds back to DNR, with DNR consent.
5. A Natural Heritage Review is required for each project site. This must be completed by the Land Manager or Easement Holder, or appropriate DNR staff, and submitted on the Land Manager Approval form. This form must be uploaded to the CPL Application System.
6. The Commissioner of Natural Resources must approve all projects.
7. All projects must meet requirements in the 2010 MN Session Law, Chapter 361, and follow the principles and criteria outlined in the L-SOHC FY 2011 Call for Funding Request.

### *For projects that will protect*

1. Lands acquired in fee title will be open to the public for hunting and fishing during open seasons unless otherwise provided by law.
2. All easements must be permanent. Easements must include stewardship provisions to perpetually monitor and enforce the conditions of the easements.
3. Projects to acquire land in fee simple title or a permanent conservation easement must be associated with established land acquisition programs that use explicit criteria for evaluating a parcel's habitat potential.
4. Grantees must agree to abide by all L-SOHC requirements for long-term management of any lands acquired with Outdoor Heritage Funds (OHF).
5. For fee acquisition, the final title holder and land manager must be specified. Lands that will be conveyed to a public agency must be donated.
6. Some State programs have specific statutory guidelines for determining the value of easements acquired under that program. If the easement will become part of that State program and the easement will be held by the State, any entity acquiring the easement may use that program's statutory method for the easement valuation.
7. All acquisition selection processes and related transactions costs for all parties involved in the acquisition must be reported to the L-SOHC,
8. A Notice of Funding Restriction must be recorded for each acquisition.

9. An analysis of future operations and maintenance costs for any acquired lands must be provided to the L-SOHC, commissioner of finance, and appropriate public agency.
10. The grantee must submit an annual report on the status of property acquired with grant funds to the L-SOHC by December 1 of each year.
11. Grantees acquiring land that will be conveyed to DNR will be required to follow DNR's *Land Acquisition Procedures for Lands to be Conveyed to DNR*.
12. Grantees acquiring land that will NOT be conveyed to DNR will be required to follow DNR's *Land Acquisition Procedures for Lands NOT to be Conveyed to DNR*.
13. A Natural Heritage Review is required for each project site. This must be completed by the Land Manager or Easement Holder, or appropriate DNR staff and submitted on the Land Manager Approval form. This form must be, uploaded to the CPL Application System.
14. All projects must meet requirements in the 2010 MN Session Law, Chapter 361, and follow the principles and criteria outlined in the L-SOHC FY 2011 Call for Funding Request.

### *General Program Requirements*

Funds for this program are available until June 30, 2014. If a project receives federal funds, the time period of the appropriation is extended to equal the availability of federal funding.

All grant projects must meet requirements of the 2010 MN Session Law, Chapter 361, and the *L-SOHC's 2010 Call for Funding Requests*. In addition, projects must address the priorities in the *Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan*, and *Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare*. Capital expenditures and indirect costs will not be allowed. In administering this program the DNR will comply with the Department of Administration - Office of Grants Management policies.

### *Grantee Match*

A match of at least 10% from nonstate sources is required for grants of \$100,000 or less, and a match of at least 15% from nonstate sources is required for grants over \$100,000. Up to one-third of the match may be in-kind resources. All match must be identified at the time of application.

### *Grantee Payment*

Grantees will be paid on a reimbursement basis unless other arrangements are specified and approved in a grantee's application and work program. Reasonable amounts may be advanced to projects to accommodate cash flow needs, to match federal share, or for acquisitions. Advances must be specified in the grantee's application and final grant agreement or work program. Partial payments will be allowed. 5% of each grant will be held back until a grant accomplishment report has been completed by the grantee.

### *Grant Process*

A Request for Proposal (RFP) will be posted on the CPL website in early August, 2010. The RFP will contain grant program information, application criteria, application requirements, state agency contacts and grant reporting requirements. The RFP, Program Manual, and all grant agreements will incorporate appropriate principles and criteria from the *L-SOHC's 2010 Call for Funding Requests* and associated legislation.

Applications will be accepted electronically, with grants selected for funding up to twice a year. Any ungranted funds from the first cycle will be available for use in a following cycle.

Applications must be submitted electronically using CPL's Online Grant Application System (OLGA). All project sites must be mapped using OLGA's mapping tool. OLGA will accept applications beginning in August, 2010 until the deadline for the first round of grants in mid-September, 2010. The application system will not accept applications during the review process. If all funds are not awarded, OLGA will be re-activated in ~~December, 2010~~ mid-February, 2011 to accept applications for a second round of grants.

CPL Grant Program Staff will review applications to make sure they are complete and meet grant program requirements. Technical Review Committee(s), selected by the Commissioner of Natural Resources will review and score applications based on criteria established by the L-SOHC, MN State Legislature and DNR. These committees may include representatives from DNR, BWSR, the University of MN, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and other appropriate members from both government and non-profit organizations. A final ranking committee made up of the Chief Financial Officer, and Directors of the DNR Divisions of Fish and Wildlife, Ecological Resources/Waters, and Forestry will recommend projects and funding levels to the Commissioner of Natural Resources. The Commissioner will make the final decision on the projects funded and funding levels. Projects may be fully or partially funded.

Every effort will be made to evenly distribute the selected grants by geographic location, activity, and funding level, with an objective of granting 50% of the funds to projects above \$125,000, and 50% of the funds to projects below \$125,000.

CPL Grant Program staff will work with grantees to ensure financial reviews, grant agreements, and any other necessary paperwork are completed. Work may not begin until the grant is executed.

#### *Project Reviews and Reporting*

Project reviews will be completed as required by Office of Grants Management Policy 08-10, [Monitoring](#).

Grantees will report accomplishments on a CPL Report Form by September 1 of each year. Reports must account for the use of grant and match funds, and outcomes in measures of wetlands, prairies, forests, and fish, game, and wildlife habitat restored, enhanced, and protected. The report must include an evaluation of these results. A final report will be required by all grantees 30 days after the project is complete.

CPL Grant Program staff will compile grantee reports and submit an annual accomplishment report to the L-SOHC by ~~January 15~~ February 1 and ~~October 15~~ August 1 of each year. This report will contain information on the number of agreements made, amount of reimbursement paid to grantees, accomplishments by grantees, number and status of remaining open agreements, and administrative costs. Accomplishment information will also be posted on L-SOHC and DNR websites.

#### **Relationship to *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan* and other published resource management plans.**

This program will provide additional funds to enhance, restore, and protect habitat in Minnesota. All published resource management and species plans—including the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan*—recognize that habitat is critical for the success of Minnesota's fish and wildlife species. Lack of funding is consistently listed in many plans as one of the largest issues limiting the amount of habitat work and protection that is completed each year.

In the *Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan*, habitat restoration and enhancement is specified in the following priorities:

H1: Protect priority land habitats (pg 63)

H2: Protect critical shorelands of streams and lakes (pg 67)

H4: Restore and protect shallow lakes (pg 78)

H5: Restore land, wetlands, and associated wetlands (pg 80)

H7: Keep water on the landscape (pg 84)

LU 8: Protect large blocks of forested land (pg 130)

L10: Support and expand sustainable practices on working forested lands (pg 131)

Other plans that list habitat restoration, enhancement and protection as priorities include:

- *Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare* (Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy), which identifies habitat loss and degradation as the primary problem facing species in greatest conservation need in Minnesota.
- The *State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* Strategies #1 and 2.
- The DNR's Division of Fish and Wildlife has several key plans identifying acquisition and habitat goals for fish and wildlife populations. Habitat goals are also addressed through more focused plans and programs that can be found on the DNR's website.
- National plans include the *North American Wetland Management Plan*, various Joint Venture Plans, *National Fish Habitat Initiative*, and all the *Bird Conservation Plans*.
- Non-governmental conservation agencies such as Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and Audubon Minnesota have developed their own conservation plans that list habitat restoration, enhancement and protection as a priority.

## Project Design and Evaluation

*Specific accomplishments are dependent upon projects submitted by grantees.*

Project Scope	Wetlands and Wetland Systems	Prairies and Prairie Systems	Forests and Forest Systems	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife (Include Description in Footnote)
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Counties in which activities will take place	Wetlands and Wetland Systems	Prairies and Prairie Systems	Forests and Forest Systems	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Acres Within Each Ecological Section	Metropolitan-Urbanizing Area	Forest-Prairie Transition	Southeast Forest	Prairie Region	Northern Forest
Restore					
Protect					
Enhance					

Funding Per Ecological Section	Metropolitan-Urbanizing Area	Forest-Prairie Transition	Southeast Forest	Prairie Region	Northern Forest
Restore					
Protect					
Enhance					

Funding Resource Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore				
Protect				
Enhance				

Acquisition and Tax Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability				
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

## Budget

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	175,440 20,500	134,000	
Contracts	3,000	7,000	
Equipment/Tools			
Materials/Supplies	940	1,000	
Fee Acquisition			

<b>Easement Acquisition</b>			
<b>Easement Stewardship</b>			
<b>Travel</b>	<u>2,000</u>	<u>7,000</u>	
<b>Additional Budget Items</b>			
<b>Grants</b>	4,210,560	<u>0</u>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>4,386,000</u> <u>4,237,000</u>	<u>149,000</u>	

### Relationship to Current Budget

In FY 10, DNR received \$4 million for grants and administration of this program. These were new funds for a new program and did not supplement existing funds.

Grant applicants will be asked to document the impact of L-SOHC grant funds to their current budget, and if these funds will supplement or supplant existing funds, in their grant application

### Personnel

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Grant Management staff	1.4 FTEs	\$175,440
	<u>Leslie Tannahill, Jamie</u>	<u>154,500</u>
	<u>Gangaware</u>	

Grant management staff administration costs will be billed using a ~~professional services rate of \$60.00/hour~~ actual costs.

Contract costs are for internal DNR agreements with Management Information Systems (MIS) staff to manage and update the grant application system. Travel costs are expected to increase in late spring 2011 as CPL staff conduct field reviews and monitoring visits.

DNR Real Estate Management Services will be billed on a professional services basis for acquisitions by grantees, and for costs for activities necessary for DNR to receive donated land. These costs will be covered by the grant recipient.

### Leverage

<b>SOURCE</b>	<b>FY 11</b>		<b>FY 12</b>		<b>FY 13</b>	
	<b>In hand</b>	<b>Anticipated</b>	<b>In hand</b>	<b>Anticipated</b>	<b>In hand</b>	<b>Anticipated</b>
<b>State</b>						
Existing state funds	70,000			70,000		
<b>Non state</b>						
Estimated Grantee match (over the life of the grants)	520,000					

<b>In-kind/Volunteer</b>						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>590,000</b>			<b>70,000</b>		
	<b>520,000</b>					

This accomplishment plan does not include costs for activities necessary for DNR's field staff to provide technical guidance. These costs will be ~~leveraged~~ funded with DNR operating funds.

Grantee leverage is an estimate. This will vary depending on projects submitted, and number and size of grants.

Leverage	State				Non-State			
	Wetlands and Wetland Systems	Prairies and Prairie Systems	Forests and Forest Systems	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife	Wetlands and Wetland Systems	Prairies and Prairie Systems	Forests and Forest Systems	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
<b>Restore</b>								
<b>Protect</b>								
<b>Enhance</b>								

### Accomplishment Timeline

Milestones	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	Budgetary Expenditure
FY 11 RFP issued	Aug 2010					
First round FY 11 grant applications due	Mid-Sept 2010					
First round FY 11 grantees announced	Mid-Nov 2010					
First round FY 11 grants encumbered	Feb 2011					Up to \$4,210,560 in grants encumbered
Second round FY 11 grant applications due (if necessary)	Feb <u>Late</u> Mar 2011					
Second round FY 11 grantees announced (if necessary)	May 2011					
Second round FY 11 grants encumbered (if necessary)	June 2011	<u>July 2011</u>				Remaining grant funds encumbered
Annual grantee reports due		Sept 1, 2011				

Annual program report to Council		<del>Oct 15, Aug 1, 2011 &amp; Jan 15, Feb 1, 2012</del>				
Annual grantee reports due			Sept 1, 2012			
Annual program report to Council			<del>Oct 15, Aug 1, 2012 &amp; Jan 15, Feb 1, 2013</del>			
Annual grantee reports due				Sept 1, 2013		
Annual program report to Council				<del>Oct 15, Aug 1, 2013 &amp; Jan 15, Feb 1, 2014</del>		
Grant work ends				June 30, 2014		
Final grantee reports due					Sept 1, 2014	
Final program report to Council					October 15, 2014	

**Maintenance and Sustainability**

Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application.

**Map**

Grantees will be required to provide a map with their application.

**Stewardship Plan for Easements**

Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application.

**Explanation of Parcel Selection**

Grantees will be required to provide this information in their application.

