

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Laws of Minnesota 2012 Accomplishment Plan



Date: June 13, 2017

Program or Project Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program, Phase IV

Funds Recommended: \$ 1,730,000

Manager's Name: Brad Cobb

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Legislative Citation: ML 2012, Ch. 264, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 2(g)

Appropriation Language: \$1,730,000 in the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Redwood Area Development Corporation to acquire land in fee for wildlife management area purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8, and for aquatic management areas under Minnesota Statutes, sections 86A.05, subdivision 5.1 14, and 97C.02. A list of proposed land acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

County Locations: Brown, Cottonwood, Murray, Nicollet, Redwood, Renville, and Yellow Medicine.

Regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee
- Restore

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Prairie

Abstract:

This program proposal will help create a legacy of habitat connectivity, public access, and economic vitality based on increased outdoor recreational opportunities in the mid-Minnesota River Watershed.

Design and scope of work:

Program Narrative

The Green Corridor Legacy Program – Phase IV would be a continuation of previous Lessard-Sam's Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) appropriations from the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF). This regional initiative focuses on the concept of protection and restoration of high quality fish, game, and wildlife habitats using best practices and will target unique landscapes along the mid-Minnesota River watershed that have historical value to fish and game by helping to create new and/or expansions of Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and/or Aquatic Management Areas (AMA) complexes or "corridors". This program proposal is in alignment with the DNR Region 4 Focus Area priorities.

Design and Scope of Work

The Glacial River Warren created the Minnesota River Valley as it drained Lake Agassiz 10,000+ years ago. The bluff to bluff wall of water carved out one of Minnesota's most scenic landscapes, creating unique geological features, and unique plant communities along the valley

and its primary tributaries.

This program incorporates the basic concepts of sustainability and ecosystem management. Minnesota has lost 99% of the original prairie and has seen dramatic declines in grassland dependent wildlife. Examples of the species showing the greatest conservation need in the Program area; the American Badger, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Bobolink to name just a few. Traditional game species are also affected by the decline in habitat such as pheasants, deer, wild turkey, and a variety of dabbling ducks which are associated to prairie wetland complexes.

Efforts to restore, protect, and enhance our wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife are timely as escalating development pressures threaten remaining natural lands and water resources on both public and private lands. The Green Corridor Legacy Program approach will be based on sound science concepts of plan development, setting conservation priorities, developing short and long term strategies to achieve conservation priorities, implement the strategies, and then continue monitoring the outcomes. All of these concepts and practices will follow existing state wildlife and conservation plans and natural resource management practices in conjunction with agency partners.

Publicly owned natural resource infrastructures (WMA, AMA, SNA, parks/trails, waterways) invigorates local and regional economies by providing outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities supported by hunting, fishing, wildlife observation areas, and other forms of outdoor recreation. New business concepts are likely to arise as a direct result of the recreational and tourism opportunities that will be advanced by this Green Corridor Legacy Program. Because of this concept there is wide support from many stakeholders who will assist the Program activities to achieve the desired outcomes.

The proposed fee title acquisitions will be considered from a priority list of properties based on several key factors of which show the most urgent need and/or opportunities from willing and supportive landowners. All selected projects will have the support and cooperation of the DNR for acceptance into the WMA/AMA inventory system. All proposed projects will provide county notifications and will seek their approval.

The primary work area of the Green Corridor Legacy Program will be Redwood, Renville, Yellow Medicine, Chippewa, Brown, Nicollet, Murray, Lyon, and Cottonwood Counties with an emphasis along the Minnesota River, its tributaries, associated watersheds, and creating/expanding corridor or complexes of habitat. Connecting existing fragments of habitat along and near the Minnesota River and tributaries in the Program area will generate an ecological synergism that will allow game, wildlife, and aquatic species to flourish, while creating multiple outdoor recreational opportunities and improving public access through a series (phases) of funded activities within the nine (9) county Program area.

This Program is directly consistent with the uses of the Outdoor Heritage Fund, as specified in Article XI of the Minnesota Constitution and Minnesota Statute 97A.056: to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife. Furthermore, it will produce multiple conservation benefits across a large targeted and planned geographic area.

Planning

The Green Corridor Legacy Program in consultation with area DNR managers will ensure program activities conform to the various state conservation and resources plan objectives and outcomes. This program also conforms to the FY13 Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) eleven (11) proposal requirements and the statewide priority criteria for the Prairie Section and Outcomes specifically towards the Minnesota River, associated tributaries, and watersheds.

Some of those state and/or regional plans are:

Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25- Year Framework: Minnesota's conservation estate, historic conservation investments and future opportunities

dated December 15, 2010.

Conservation in the Middle Minnesota Valley: A Blueprint and Action Plan This was a LCCMR funded conservation plan awarded to the Green Corridor Initiative and specific to the mid - section of the Minnesota River Valley.

Native Plant Communities and Rare Species of The Minnesota River Valley Counties This document was created by DNR Ecological Resources and will be another document used to evaluate and/or prioritize potential acquisition for consideration. This document is in conjunction with the Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS).

Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan 2010 This plan is a 25 year strategy for accelerating conservation due to loss/degradation of prairies, grasslands, wetlands, and associated habitat along with the fish and wildlife populations dependent upon them.

Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan identifies habitat loss and degradation as the number one driver of change for wildlife in Minnesota and further states that the prairie regions have experienced the greatest amount of habitat loss of any region. Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy

Minnesota's for species in greatest conservation need has identified significant loss and degradation of habitat as the number one management challenge and one of the primary strategies is to provide protection through selective acquisition of key habitats in the prairie regions.

Minnesota's Long Range Duck Recovery Plan Minnesota's lists the objective of restoring a breeding population of one (1) million ducks by 2056. The primary strategy to reach this objective is the protection and restoration of two (2) million acres of habitat of which 70% will be grassland habitat in the prairie eco-region.

Minnesota's Long Range Plan for the Ring-neck Pheasant lists the objective of increasing pheasant populations to 1.8 million birds. Numerous strategies were identified to accomplish this objective; one of which calls for an additional 74,000 acres of grasslands to be protected through acquisitions of WMA's in the primary pheasant range.

Citizens report Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition - The Next 50 Years recommends acquisition goals of an additional 494,000 in the prairie and transitional region over the next 50 years.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) - Strategic Habitat Conservation (SHC) model outlines several key elements; Planning, implementation, and evaluation which the Green Corridor Legacy Program has been using as a basis for program development. The Green Corridor Legacy Program will continue to use existing state-wide wildlife conservation and strategic plans in partnership with our local and regional natural resource managers and conservation professionals to best achieve desired outcomes. These plans were developed through the most currently available science and the professional expertise of a broad range of wildlife professionals. These plans, along with use of GIS technology, will be used to identify potential projects based on existing and potential habitat resources in the program area. This will allow for selection of acquisition tracts that maximize population responses for both aquatic and game/nongame wildlife.

Finally, this Green Corridor Legacy Program proposal will address many of the visions and priority action items established by the LSOHC for the Prairie Section. The continued emphasis will be on the Minnesota River, associated tributaries, and watersheds within the program area and will protect and restore these unique landscapes that have historical value to fish, game, and wildlife

Which sections of the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan are applicable to this program:

- H1 Protect priority land habitats

Which other plans are addressed in this program:

- Long Range Duck Recovery Plan
- Long Range Plan for the Ring-Necked Pheasant in MN
- Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan
- Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition - The Next 50 Years
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Strategic Habitat Conservation Model
- Native Plant Communities and Rare Species of The Minnesota River Valley Counties

Which LSOHC state-wide priorities are addressed in this program:

- Not Listed

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program:

Prairie:

- Protect, enhance, or restore existing wetland/upland complexes, or convert agricultural lands to new wetland/upland habitat complexes

Relationship to other funds:

- Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund

Describe the relationship of the funds:

The Green Corridor Legacy Program focuses on preserving and restoring natural resources infrastructures while emphasizing habitat connectivity (corridors), viability, and public access to these habitats. Besides funding requests to the Environmental & Natural Resource Trust Fund (ENRTF) by Green Corridor Legacy Program; several SWCD's in the Green Corridor Program area are planning future Clean Water Legacy Fund program proposals. The Green Corridor Legacy Program will assist when asked with submissions to the Outdoor Heritage Fund – Conservation Legacy Program (small grants) from our conservation and wildlife group partners like the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, Minnesota Waterfowl Association, National Wild Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited, and Pheasants Forever. Many other regional initiatives are currently being planned that are in line with Parks & Trails and Arts & Cultural Legacy Funds funding strategies.

How does this program accelerate or supplement your current efforts in this area:

This program proposal will supplement other traditional forms of funding (past, current, and future) that the Green Corridor Legacy Program has received such as the Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund.

Source of Funding Amount Status

ENRTF FY2008 \$1,000,000 Completed 2010

OHF FY2010 \$1,617,000 Final Report Submitted

OHF FY2011 \$1,651,000 Final Report Submitted

OHF FY2012 \$1,771,000 Funding started 7/20/11

ENRTF FY2012 \$2,000,000 Funding started 7/20/11

Per MS 97A.056, Subd. 24, Any state agency or organization requesting a direct appropriation from the OHF must inform the LSOHC at the time of the request for funding is made, whether the request is supplanting or is a substitution for any previous funding that was not from a legacy fund and was used for the same purpose:

Not Listed

How will you sustain and/or maintain this work after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended:

First, initial site restoration (bare ground with native vegetation) and development (signage, parking lots, fencing) will be accomplished by this appropriation. The DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife will manage these properties into perpetuity. Routine maintenance will be managed and determined by area DNR staff funded by their traditional sources like the Game & Fish Fund. Periodic enhancements or improvements will be funded by special funding requests. The DNR requires management or stewardship plans for each project which identify periodic inspections and continuing management of the property site. These management practices include such things as; prescribed fire, weed control, and invasive tree removal as needed or required and are usually spelled out in the Initial Development Plan (IDP) for each parcel. Regional partners/stakeholders in conjunction with the Green Corridor Legacy Program will also support these management activities/practices by applying for state funding/grants for on-going maintenance as needed.

Activity Details:

Will there be planting of corn or any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program - **Not Listed**

Will local government approval be sought prior to acquisition - **Yes**

Is the land you plan to acquire (fee title) free of any other permanent protection - **No**

OHF was used only for the purchase of lands w/o protections. Easements on the land were donated by the land owner.

Is this land open for hunting and fishing - **Yes**

Not Listed

Is the activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, subd 13(f) and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15 - **Yes (WMA, AMA)**

Accomplishment Timeline:

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Property reviews & Appraisals 2-4 appraisals	June 30, 2015
Purchase Agreements 2-4 agreements	June 30, 2015
Closing & property transfer 2-4 fee title acquisitions 270 (change to 227 final) acres	June 30, 2015
Restoration as needed 1-2 properties - 140 acres	Fall of 2017

Date of Final Report Submission: 11/30/2017

Federal Funding:

Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program - **Not Listed**

Outcomes:

Programs in prairie region:

- The Green Corridor Legacy Program Phase IV is a continuation and expansion of previous OHF appropriations. With previous OHF appropriations (FY10 & FY11) we have permanently protected through fee title 820 acres along the Minnesota River Valley, associated watersheds, and tributaries as WMA's and AMA's which are open to public use. These newly acquired properties from willing and supportive landowners have protected remnant native prairies, rock outcrops, provided nearly 2-3 miles of river/stream shoreline protection, expanded existing public infrastructures, and increase the outdoor recreational system within the Green Corridor program area.

With the increase of these public infrastructures of WMA's and AMA's the Green Corridor Legacy Program has protected critical wildlife and aquatic habitats for fish, game and wildlife and has increased the opportunity for public enjoyment and use of these newly acquired outdoor recreational systems that are in alignment with many of the state's conservation plans previously mentioned. These new or expanded public outdoor recreational systems will provide greater public access to these natural resources and will help enhance an outdoor recreational economy for this region.

Citizens, landowners, stakeholders, state/federal agencies, and local units of government involvement and support will play a critical role in the Green Corridor Legacy Program continuing development and success.

Finally the Green Corridor Legacy Program Phase IV will continue its focus in the Prairie region and will use various state conservation plans to include the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan 2010 and will tailor activities to help achieve the stated strategic priorities and outcomes from these various plans.

Budget Spreadsheet

Budget reallocations up to 10% do not require an amendment to the Accomplishment Plan

How will this program accommodate the reduced appropriation recommendation from the original proposed requested amount

May 28, 2015: This AP revision is transferring \$20,600 from the acquisition budget to our restoration or IDP budget item. There will be a balance that will be un-spent in our acquisition budget after this request of \$152,500. This IDP increase will address a budgeted shortfall.

Total Amount of Request: \$ 1730000

Budget and Cash Leverage

BudgetName	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$10,000	\$0		\$10,000
Contracts	\$54,300	\$0		\$54,300
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$1,428,200	\$0		\$1,428,200
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$1,200	\$0		\$1,200
Professional Services	\$3,900	\$0		\$3,900
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$14,000	\$0		\$14,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR IDP	\$218,400	\$0		\$218,400
Total	\$1,730,000	\$0		\$1,730,000

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
RADC Administration	0.07	3.00	\$10,000	\$0		\$10,000
Total	0.07	3.00	\$10,000	\$0		\$10,000

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	227	0	0	227
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	227	0	0	227

Table 1b. How many of these Prairie acres are Native Prairie?

Type	Native Prairie
Restore	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Easement	0
Enhance	0
Total	0

Table 2. Total Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$218,400	\$0	\$0	\$218,400
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$1,511,600	\$0	\$0	\$1,511,600
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$1,730,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,730,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	227	0	227
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	227	0	227

Table 4. Total Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$218,400	\$0	\$218,400
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,511,600	\$0	\$1,511,600
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,730,000	\$0	\$1,730,000

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

0

Parcel List

For restoration and enhancement programs ONLY: Managers may add, delete, and substitute projects on this parcel list based upon need, readiness, cost, opportunity, and/or urgency so long as the substitute parcel/project forwards the constitutional objectives of this program in the Project Scope table of this accomplishment plan. The final accomplishment plan report will include the final parcel list.

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

Nicollet

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Cactus Rock WMA	11133215	240	\$1,200,000	

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Brown

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Banshaw WMA	10834216	160	\$250,000			
Banshaw WMA add.	10834216	220	\$0	No	Yes	

Cottonwood

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Arno lds Lake WMA add.	10636210	22	\$0	No	Yes	
Pats Pasture WMA add.	10537229	182	\$0	No	Yes	

Murray

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Devils Run WMA	10639206	150	\$0	No	Yes	
Devils Run WMA	10741235	40	\$0	No	Yes	
Irruption WMA	10639220	80	\$0	No	Yes	
Irruption WMA	10739232	75	\$0	No	Yes	

Redwood

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Delhi WMA add.	11336225	67	\$450,000			
Gora Prairie WMA	10937229	140	\$60,000			
Lamberton WMA 1	10937214	45	\$360,000			
Lamberton WMA 6	10936218	160	\$1,280,000			
Lamberton WMA tract #18	10937213	196	\$0	No	Yes	

Renville

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Cold Spring WMA add.	11336201	80	\$0	Yes	Yes	
Hilltop WMA (new)	11234203	104	\$0	No	Yes	

Yellow Medicine

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Beaver Creek WMA	11543208	7	\$0	No	Yes	
St. Leo WMA complex	11543208	91	\$0	No	Yes	

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Completed Parcel: Delhi WMA add.

# of Total Acres:	67
County:	Redwood
Township:	113
Range:	36
Direction:	2
Section:	25
# of Acres: Wetlands/Upland:	
# of Acres: Forest:	
# of Acres: Prairie/Grassland:	67
Amount of Shoreline:	(Linear Feet)
Name of Adjacent Body of Water (if applicable):	
Has there been signage erected at the site:	
Total cost of Restoration/Enhancement:	\$450,000
Annual Reporting Organization Name:	DNR
Purchase Date:	June 17, 2015
Purchase Price:	\$215,000
Appraised Value:	\$215,000
Professional Service Costs:	\$4,298
Assessed Value:	\$215,000
Total Project Cost:	\$219,298
Fees Received:	\$0
Donations:	\$0
Property Managed By:	DNR - Wildlife Management Area -
Name of the unit area or location government unit or land manager:	DNR

Completed Parcel: Lamberton WMA 6

# of Total Acres:	160
County:	Redwood
Township:	109
Range:	36
Direction:	2
Section:	18
# of Acres: Wetlands/Upland:	
# of Acres: Forest:	
# of Acres: Prairie/Grassland:	160
Amount of Shoreline:	(Linear Feet)
Name of Adjacent Body of Water (if applicable):	
Has there been signage erected at the site:	Yes
Total cost of Restoration/Enhancement:	\$1,280,000
Annual Reporting Organization Name:	DNR
Purchase Date:	July 14, 2014
Purchase Price:	\$1,198,500
Appraised Value:	\$1,198,500
Professional Service Costs:	\$3,823
Assessed Value:	\$1,198,500
Total Project Cost:	\$1,202,323
Donations:	\$0
Property Managed By:	DNR - Wildlife Management Area -
Name of the unit area or location government unit or land manager:	DNR

Parcel Map

Green Corridor Legacy Program, Phase IV

