

Request for Funding

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Fiscal Year 2016 / ML 2015

Program or Project Title: Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management (Phase II)

Funds Requested: \$2,863,300

Manager's Name: George Fenwick

Title:

Organization: American Bird Conservancy

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Organization Web Site: www.abcbirds.org

County Locations: Aitkin, Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Itasca, Lake of the Woods, Marshall, Mille Lacs, and Roseau.

Ecological Planning Regions:

- Northern Forest
- Forest / Prairie Transition

Activity Type:

- Restore
- Protect in Fee

Priority Resources Addressed by Activity:

- Wetlands
- Forest
- Prairie

Abstract:

Create, restore, and manage 3,000+ acres of critically needed, highly productive forest for wildlife to help meet goals within six Minnesota conservation plans, keep Golden-winged warbler off ESA list; leverage outside funding; and create new recreational opportunities (hunting/birdwatching).

Design and Scope of Work:

Over the years, forestland management has created forests with a limited age class distribution; dominated by trees of the same age. As a result, there has been a decline of many forest dependent wildlife species that require multiple age class forests throughout their annual life cycle. One of those species, the Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA) has suffered a precipitous population decline, falling 60% across its historic range since 1966. Due to this alarming decline, it is presently being considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Minnesota is a key state for the conservation of this species as it holds the largest remaining breeding population of any US state or Canadian province. The GWWA is deemed a Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) in the Minnesota State Wildlife Action Plan and a Minnesota Stewardship Species by Minnesota Audubon. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) deems the conservation of GWWA habitat in Minnesota one of their most important activities. While the population of GWWA in Minnesota is stable, maintaining and increasing this state's population is critical to keeping the species off the endangered species list, and key to an international effort to recover the species global population.

According to scientists, to restore GWWA populations – and other species dependent on this forest stage – we must modify planned treatments of public forestlands to increase the quality for the greatest number of wildlife.

The GWWA's optimal breeding habitat is forest openings called young forest created through natural events such as fire or storm events within larger forested landscapes. Through years of applied conservation research and collaboration, biologists, foresters, wildlife managers and conservationists have succeeded in developing Young Forest Best Management Practices (BMPs) that effectively produce this critical first stage of forest life. These BMPs result in habitat that is the most productive for wildlife.

American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and its partners in Minnesota's Young Forest Partnership are grateful to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) recommending critically needed funding in 2013 for Phase I of a determined effort to use these BMPs to optimize the productivity of MN young forest to measurably increase GWWA populations – as well as populations of more than 20 other SGCN, game and non-game species – and to create greater recreational and economic benefits for Minnesotans to hunt, bird watch, and improve the value of their forests. We are on track to meet or exceed all of the Phase I outcomes of the Young Forest Conservation project by the summer of 2016. On public lands, we are implementing habitat management with the support and participation of the Minnesota DNR, USFWS, County Land Commissioners and The Conservation Fund.

To launch Phase II, ABC will build upon and expand existing successful wildlife habitat protection and restoration efforts in Minnesota. Through our Phase I work supported by LSOHC, ABC has secured growing support for this project from public land managers to use these scientifically-proven forestry Best Management Practices to restore the high quality dynamic forests required by priority game and non-game species. This local enthusiasm for expanding the breadth of our successful work provides a unique opportunity for conservation in strategically identified focal areas. As part of a larger statewide effort to carefully manage forest age class distribution, OHF funds will leverage non-OHF resources to implement the same best management practices on private and corporate lands. As such, ABC is able to provide at least \$1,070,458 from non-state funding sources to leverage OHF funding because of the strong national and statewide interests in assisting Minnesota achieve its conservation goals.

In Phase II, we will continue to work with local land managers to implement the most appropriate forest management strategies for each focal area by looking at both site and landscape level ecological factors and ensure integration into long-term forest management. We will help coordinate integrated wildlife management at a landscape level by organizing and leading working groups and around strategic focal areas including; Tamarac and Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuges, Four Brooks WMA, and Thief Lake WMA. These areas fall within Important Bird Areas (IBA's), a designation given to a handful of sites in Minnesota, by Minnesota Audubon, that are essential for birds and where immediate and long-term conservation action is needed. ABC is also dedicated to working with our partners, beyond the scope of this proposal, to monitor the effectiveness of our efforts and adapt strategies accordingly.

Specifically, we will:

1. Purchase approximately 1,340 acres of forested wetlands to enlarge the size of Four Brooks Wildlife Management Area (WMA) by purchasing land adjacent to the 480-acre addition purchased in Phase I, as well as land improving the integrity of Tamarac NWR and Thief Lake WMA. ABC partner, The Conservation Fund, will negotiate the land protection; ultimate ownership and long-term management will be the responsibility of the MN DNR or USFWS. This work will help MN DNR to meet its outcome goals to protect at least 12,250 acres a year to "...sustain a variety of species and provide different kinds of outdoor recreation opportunities to people throughout the state."

2. Use Best Management Practices to restore and maintain an additional 3,000 acres of multi-aged young forest on public lands. ABC will continue to work with local land managers to determine and implement the most appropriate forest management strategies for each focal area as part of an integrated wildlife management strategy by organizing and leading working groups around key focal areas including Tamarac and Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuges, Four Brooks WMA, and Thief Lake WMA.

The high quality young forest being created or restored through this project grows into high performing mid-successional and ultimately mature forest for additional suites of Minnesota SGCN associated with those forest stages, making the LSOHC investment in this project extremely highly leveraged in terms of conservation outcomes and dollars spent for conservation.

How the request addresses MN habitats:

This project optimizes forest productivity in Northern Forests and Forest/Prairie ecological sections for the greatest number of MN Species in Conservation Need, including the Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA), by protecting key forest blocks as Wildlife Management Areas, and managing young forest using forestry Best Management Practices that most closely resemble the structure and diverse age-class of forest created through natural forces.

In Minnesota, the GWWA is deemed a Species in Greatest Conservation Need within the Minnesota State Wildlife Action Plan and is a Minnesota Stewardship Species as identified by Minnesota Audubon.

The GWWA uses young forests for nesting, with greatest nesting success in structurally diverse, natural young forest in close proximity to older forest with a structurally diverse understory for foraging and rearing young. This diversity of high quality habitat GWWA needs benefits a wide range of wildlife species including 20+ Species in Greatest Conservation Need. Implementing science based best management forestry practices for the GWWA benefits other priority Minnesota wildlife including American Woodcock, Ruffed Grouse, moose, Canada lynx, northern long-eared bat, white-tailed deer and Black-billed Cuckoo.

This conservation work addresses population declines of the global population of GWWAs documented in biological surveys by a national/international consortium of scientists.

Please explain the nature of urgency:

The GWWA is being considered for federal protection under the Endangered Species Act. As Minnesota has the largest GWWA breeding population of any state, to avoid listing its urgent to optimize and improve productivity of GWWA habitat in Minnesota.

Planning

MN State-wide Conservation Plan Priorities:

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- LU10 Support and expand sustainable practices on working forested lands

Plans Addressed:

- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda
- Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare

Please describe the science based planning and evaluation model used:

ABC uses the science-based planning and evaluation model developed by scientists from federal, state, academic, and conservation organizations over the last six years to improve the productivity of forests for the greatest diversity of wildlife through Best Management Practices that produce high quality forests of different ages.

LSOHC Forest Prairie Transition Section Priorities:

- Protect, enhance, and restore migratory habitat for waterfowl and related species, so as to increase migratory and breeding success

LSOHC Northern Forest Section Priorities:

- Restore forest-based wildlife habitat that has experienced substantial decline in area in recent decades

Accelerates or Supplements Current Efforts:

ABC and its partners are on track to successfully complete all of the outcomes in the current LSOHC Accomplishment Plan for Phase I of the Young Forest Conservation project by July 2015 and are seeking funding to launch Phase II of the project immediately that July. ABC has identified key focal areas and has secured growing support for this project from public land managers to create the high quality dynamic forests required by priority game and non-game species. On private lands, with dollars leveraged by the support of LSOHC, ABC has worked closely with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to utilize the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) to assist landowners who have expressed interest in enrolling their own properties in NRCS conservation programs to benefit forest-dependent wildlife. With LSOHC funding for Phase II of the Young Forest Conservation project, ABC can leverage additional funds for this project of at least \$1,000,000 from other sources for complementary work on private forest lands in GWWA Minnesota focal

areas. ABC is also dedicated to working with our partners, beyond the scope of this proposal, to monitor the effectiveness of our efforts, adapt conservation strategies.

Non-OHF Money Spent in the Past:

Appropriation Year	Source	Amount
2013	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	\$250,000
2013	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	\$200,000

Sustainability and Maintenance:

Public and private foresters in MN have demonstrated a growing interest in using the young forest Best Management Practices being implemented through the Young Forest Conservation project beyond the timeframe of this grant because of the greater demonstrated wildlife benefits, and recreational opportunities created. ABC, as a member of the MN Young Forest Partnership is committed to supporting their efforts to manage the highest performing young forest - the first critical stage of forest life that sets the stage for the health of following stages as needed and appropriate. ABC is working with Sustainable Forestry companies and USDA NRCS staff to continue this work on a parallel track on private lands.

Maintain Project Outcomes:

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2018	USFWS	Provide support to MN DNR and USFWS staff to create dynamic forests on public lands that maximize the productivity of the lands for the greatest number of SGCN		
2018	USDA NRCS	Work with NRCS staff, forest companies, and private landowners to create young forest that supports the greatest number of wildlife dependent on that habitat stage.		
2019	USFWS	Provide support to MN DNR and USFWS Refuge staff to manage dynamic forests on public lands that maximize the productivity of those lands for the greatest number of SGCN		
2019	USDA NRCS	Work with NRCS staff, private landowners and forest companies to produce high performing young forest that supports the greatest number of wildlife dependent on that habitat stage.		
2020	USFWS	Provide support to MN DNR staff and USFWS Refuge staff to		
2020	USDA NRCS	Work with NRCS staff, private landowners and forest companies to produce and manage high performing young forest that supports the greatest number of wildlife .		
2018	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	Work with public land managers and private landowners to produce high performing young forest that supports		

	the greatest number of wildlife dependent on that habitat stage.	
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Applicable Criteria:

If funded, this proposal will meet all applicable criteria set forth in MS 97A.056? - **Yes**

Government Approval:

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

Permanent Protection:

Is the land you plan to acquire free of any other permanent protection? - **Yes**

Current Hunting and Fishing Plan:

Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing? - **No**

Future Hunting and Fishing Plan:

Will the land be open for hunting and fishing after completion? - **Yes**

Hunting and Fishing Regulations Not Listed

Best Management Practice:

Will restoration and enhancement work follow best management practices including MS 84.973 Pollinator Habitat Program? - **Yes**

Permanent Protection:

Is the activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, subd 13(f), tribal lands, and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15? - **Yes (WMA, County/Municipal, Refuge Lands, State Forests, no)**

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Purchase Mille Lacs Property	January 2016
Purchase Tamarac Property	January 2016
Purchase Thief Lake property	June 2016
Restore 3,000 acres using forestry Best Management Practices on public lands planned for treatment	June 2018

Outcomes

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Healthy populations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species as well as more common species *Outcomes will be measured by number of acres protected/restored/managed as high performing young forest within multi-age forests to measurably increase local populations of more than 20 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (game and non-game) in Northern Forest and forest-prairie transition ecological sections.*

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced nesting and migratory habitat for waterfowl, upland birds, and species of greatest conservation need *utcomes will be measured by number of acres protected/restored/managed as high performing young forest within multi-age forests to measurably increase local populations of more than 20 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (game and non-game) in Northern Forest and forest-prairie transition ecological sections.*

Relationship to Other Funds:

- No Relationships Listed

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$2,863,300

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$280,300	\$260,300	Private, Private and Federal, Private and Federal, Private	\$540,600
Contracts	\$397,500	\$688,000	Private and Federal	\$1,085,500
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$2,020,000	\$0		\$2,020,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$15,500	\$38,000	Private	\$53,500
Professional Services	\$30,000	\$12,500	Private	\$42,500
Direct Support Services	\$25,000	\$47,000	Private	\$72,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$15,000	\$0		\$15,000
Capital Equipment	\$75,000	\$0		\$75,000
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$5,000	\$24,000	Private	\$29,000
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$2,863,300	\$1,069,800	-	\$3,933,100

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
MN Coordinator	1.00	3.00	\$195,000	\$30,000	Private	\$225,000
ABC Mig Bird Director	0.20	3.00	\$50,300	\$15,300	Private and Federal	\$65,600
ABC VP Conservation	5.00	3.00	\$0	\$20,000	Private and Federal	\$20,000
MN Private Lands Coordinator	0.00	0.00	\$0	\$195,000	Private	\$195,000
State Director	0.10	3.00	\$35,000	\$0		\$35,000
Total	6.30	12.00	\$280,300	\$260,300	-	\$540,600

Capital Equipment

Item Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
SWIFT Fleet Charges for MN DNR 1500 acres x \$50/acre x 3 yrs	\$75,000	\$0		\$75,000
Total	\$75,000	\$0	-	\$75,000

Budget and Cash Leverage by Partnership

Budget Name	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	ABC	\$245,300	\$260,300	Private, Private and Federal, Private and Federal, Private	\$505,600
Contracts	ABC	\$397,500	\$688,000	Private and Federal	\$1,085,500
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	ABC	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	ABC	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	ABC	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	ABC	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	ABC	\$13,500	\$38,000	Private	\$51,500
Professional Services	ABC	\$0	\$12,500	Private	\$12,500
Direct Support Services	ABC	\$15,000	\$47,000	Private	\$62,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	ABC	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	ABC	\$75,000	\$0		\$75,000
Other Equipment/Tools	ABC	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	ABC	\$5,000	\$24,000	Private	\$29,000
DNR IDP	ABC	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	-	\$751,300	\$1,069,800	-	\$1,821,100

Personnel - ABC

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
MN Coordinator	1.00	3.00	\$195,000	\$30,000	Private	\$225,000
ABC Mig Bird Director	0.20	3.00	\$50,300	\$15,300	Private and Federal	\$65,600
ABC VP Conservation	5.00	3.00	\$0	\$20,000	Private and Federal	\$20,000
MN Private Lands Coordinator	0.00	0.00	\$0	\$195,000	Private	\$195,000
Total	6.20	9.00	\$245,300	\$260,300	-	\$505,600

Capital Equipment - ABC

Item Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
SWIFT Fleet Charges for MN DNR 1500 acres x \$50/acre x 3 yrs	\$75,000	\$0		\$75,000
Total	\$75,000	\$0	-	\$75,000

Budget Name	Partnership	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	The Conservation Fund	\$35,000	\$0		\$35,000
Contracts	The Conservation Fund	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	The Conservation Fund	\$2,020,000	\$0		\$2,020,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	The Conservation Fund	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	The Conservation Fund	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	The Conservation Fund	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	The Conservation Fund	\$2,000	\$0		\$2,000
Professional Services	The Conservation Fund	\$30,000	\$0		\$30,000
Direct Support Services	The Conservation Fund	\$10,000	\$0		\$10,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	The Conservation Fund	\$15,000	\$0		\$15,000
Capital Equipment	The Conservation Fund	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	The Conservation Fund	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	The Conservation Fund	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR IDP	The Conservation Fund	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	-	\$2,112,000	\$0	-	\$2,112,000

Personnel - The Conservation Fund

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
State Director	0.10	3.00	\$35,000	\$0		\$35,000
Total	0.10	3.00	\$35,000	\$0	-	\$35,000

Amount of Request: \$2,863,300
Amount of Leverage: \$1,069,800
Leverage as a percent of the Request: 37.36%

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	0	3,000	0	3,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	200	250	890	0	1,340
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	200	250	3,890	0	4,340

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 Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$843,300	\$0	\$843,300
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$100,000	\$900,000	\$1,020,000	\$0	\$2,020,000
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	\$100,000	\$900,000	\$1,863,300	\$0	\$2,863,300

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	1,500	0	0	1,500	3,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	540	0	0	800	1,340
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	2,040	0	0	2,300	4,340

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$843,300	\$843,300
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$1,120,000	\$0	\$0	\$900,000	\$2,020,000
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	\$1,120,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,743,300	\$2,863,300

Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$281	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$500	\$3,600	\$1,146	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Table 6. Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$562
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$2,074	\$0	\$0	\$1,125
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

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

0

Parcel List

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

Aitkin

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Rice Lake NWF #2	04724236	250	\$63,800	Yes
Rice Lake NWR #1	04724230	50	\$12,800	Yes

Becker

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Beltrami Co. #2	14935229	40	\$10,200	Yes
Tamarac NWF#2	14139236	100	\$25,500	Yes
Tamarac NWF #3	14139213	50	\$12,800	Yes
Tamarac NWF #4	14139211	100	\$25,500	Yes
Tamarac NWF #5	14039202	75	\$19,100	Yes
Tamarac NWR#1	14139230	100	\$25,500	Yes

Beltrami

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Beltrami Co. #1	14832205	60	\$15,300	Yes
Long Lake WMA	14834204	30	\$7,700	Yes
Thief Lake WMA #1	15838210	300	\$76,500	Yes
Thief Lake WMA #2	15838220	150	\$38,300	Yes
Thief Lake WMA #3	15838229	150	\$38,300	Yes
Thief Lake WMA #4	15738210	150	\$38,300	Yes
Thief Lake WMA #5	15738221	200	\$51,000	Yes
Thief Lake WMA #6	15738228	200	\$51,000	Yes
Thief Lake WMA #7	15738231	300	\$76,500	Yes

Cass

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Cass Co. #1	14031235	75	\$19,100	Yes
Cass Co. #2	13928219	50	\$12,800	Yes

Clearwater

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Old Red Lake Trail WMA	14837224	75	\$19,100	Yes
Perch Lake WMA	14538219	25	\$6,400	Yes

Itasca

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Dishpan WMA #1	15027228	100	\$25,500	Yes

Lake of the Woods

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Carp Swamp WMA #1	15931227	200	\$51,000	Yes
Carp Swamp WMA #2	15931234	200	\$51,000	Yes
DNR: Forestry #1	15831223	200	\$51,000	Yes
DNR: Forestry #2	15831226	200	\$51,000	Yes
DNR: Forestry #3	15831236	200	\$51,000	Yes
Red Lake WMA #3	16034215	225	\$57,400	Yes
Red lake WMA #4	16034223	250	\$63,800	Yes

Mille Lacs

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Mille Lacs WMA #1	04026213	75	\$19,100	Yes
Mille Lacs WMA #2	04025206	50	\$12,800	Yes
Mille Lacs WMA #3	04125225	75	\$19,100	Yes
Mille Lacs WMA #4	04225232	50	\$12,800	Yes
Mille Lacs WMA #5	04226236	75	\$19,100	Yes
Mille Lacs WMA #6	04125216	50	\$12,800	Yes

Roseau

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Beltami Island State Forest #1	15937213	150	\$38,300	Yes
Red Lake WMA #1	15937203	200	\$51,000	Yes
Red Lake WMA #2	15937202	175	\$44,600	Yes

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Becker

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Tamarac 1	14039213	380	\$800,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Marshall

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Thief Lake 1	15841202	160	\$320,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Mille Lacs

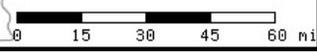
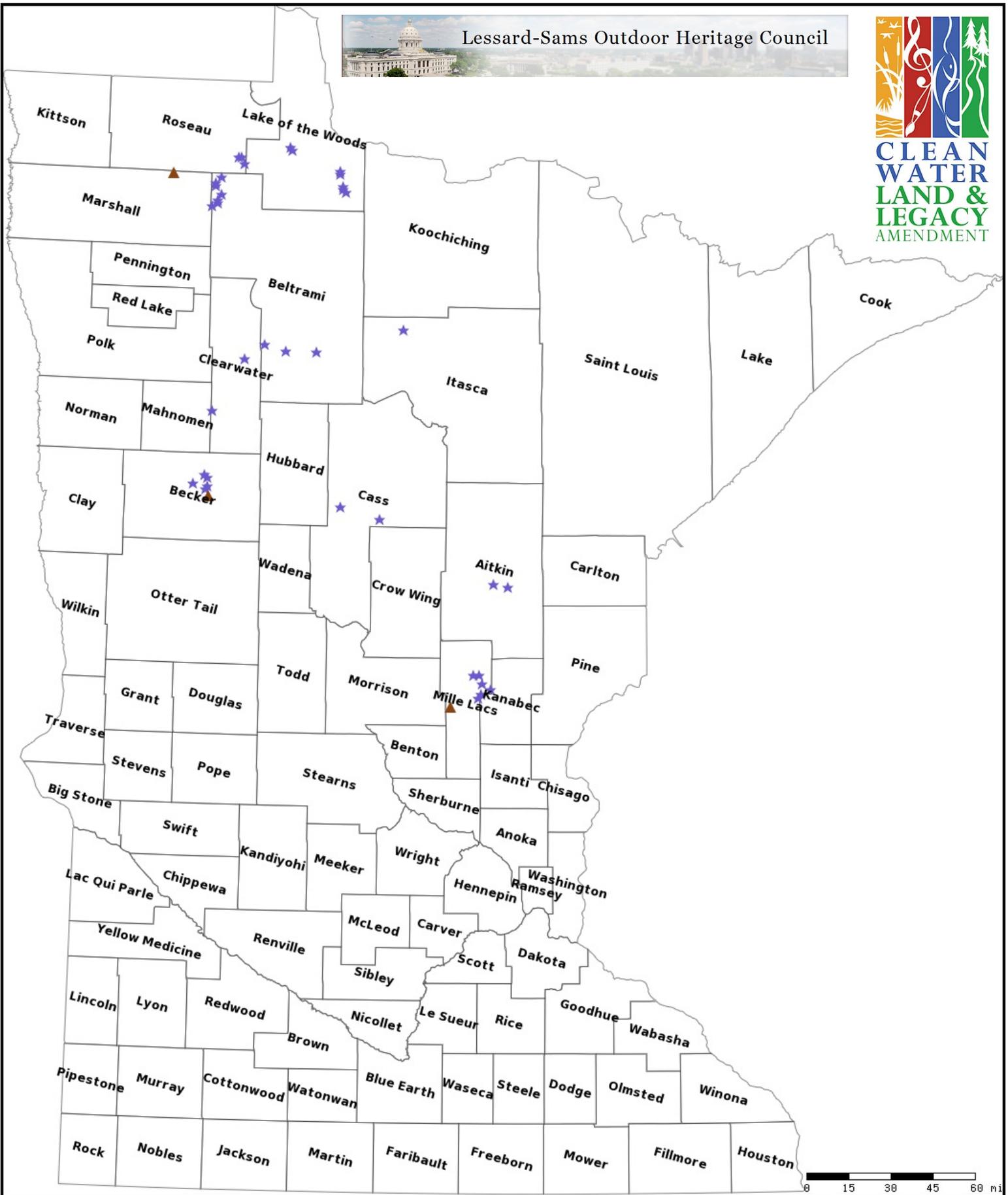
Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Mille Lacs 1	04027232	800	\$900,000	No	Full	Not Applicable

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

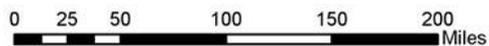
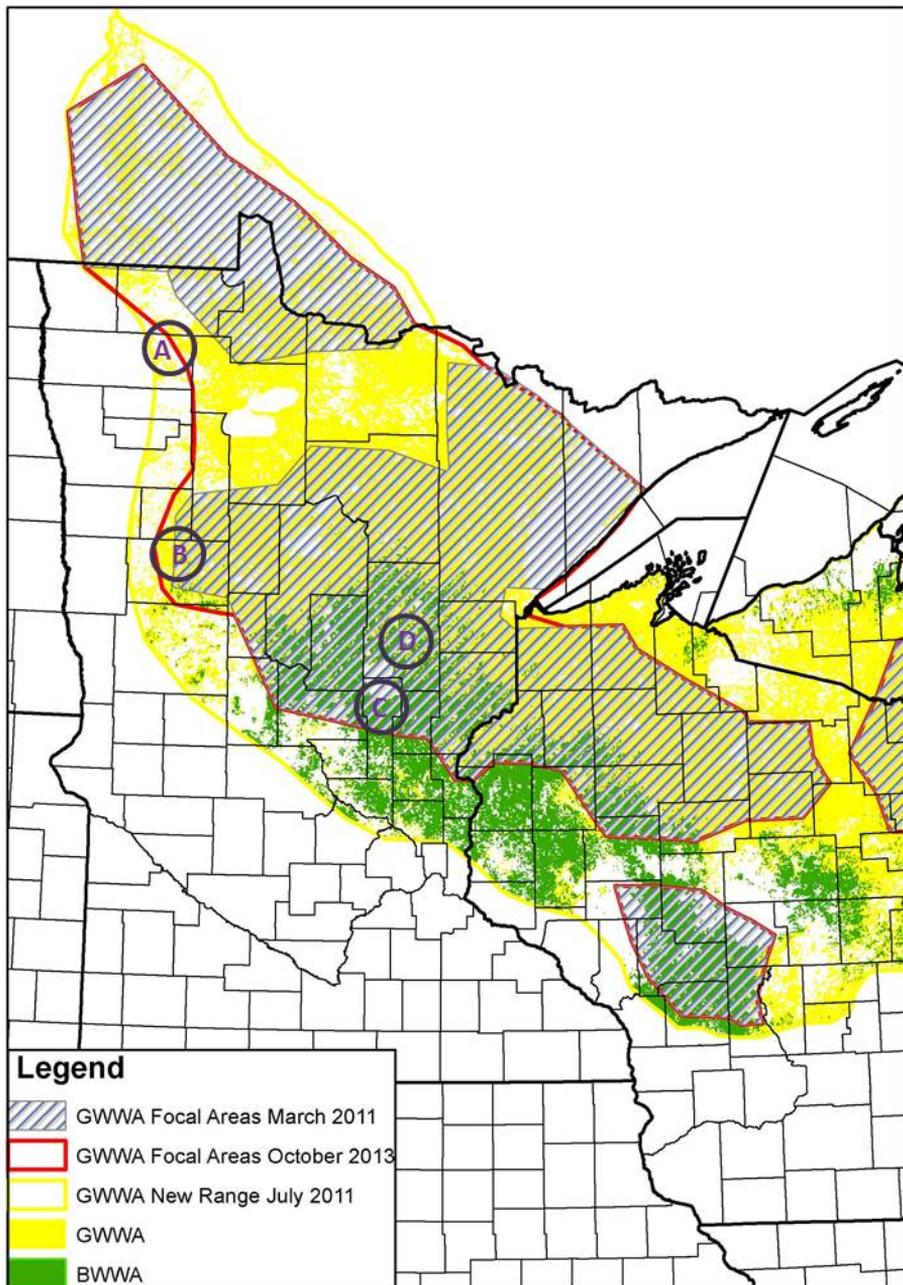
No parcels with an other activity type.



Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management (Phase II)

Legend

- Protect in Easement
- ▲ Protect in Fee with PILT
- Protect in Fee W/O PILT
- ★ Restore
- ✕ Enhance
- + Other



- A: Thief Lake WMA**
- B: Tamarac NWR**
- C: Mille Lacs and Four Brooks WMA**
- D: Rice Lake NWR**



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
5600 American Blvd West — Suite 990
Bloomington, MN 55437-1458



IN REPLY REFER TO: MBSP

612-713-5362
email: tom_will@fws.gov

10 June 2014

TO: Mr. George Fenwick, President
American Bird Conservancy
P. O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

I am indeed pleased to be writing to you in support of American Bird Conservancy's (ABC's) 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council: *Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management—Phase II (YFC:IWM-2)*. For a number of reasons, I view this project as paradigm-busting game changer, as fundamental to the evolving future of ecosystem conservation as it is to the conservation of a rapidly declining Minnesota flagship species, Golden-winged Warbler.

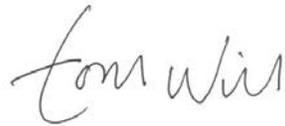
I have chaired working groups and authored publications on Golden-winged Warbler since the inception of the Golden-winged Warbler Working Group in 2003. ABC has been an active conservation partner from the outset, helping to sponsor workshops and contributing to the science foundation on both the breeding and wintering grounds of this long-distance Neotropical migrant. Solid evidence-based research replicated across the breeding range underlies the management recommendations which have served as the guidelines for ABC's current *Phase I* habitat implementation work in Minnesota, supported in large part by the Outdoor Heritage Council. That underlying research has demonstrated that young forest habitat created or enhanced for Golden-winged Warbler also increases reproductive success for an entire suite of forested landscape species—not just those that have been often associated with early successional habitat, but also species like Ovenbird, Wood Thrush, and Scarlet Tanager that have been conventionally associated with more mature interior forest.

Which brings me to my second point: ABC's project is ground-breaking and forward-thinking in its effort, not just to advocate for, but also to implement the concept of a dynamic forested landscape comprised of a mosaic of habitats and age classes that support many species throughout the different phases of their respective breeding cycles. Last month, I visited sites at Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge which had implemented Public Lands Coordinator Peter Dieser's forest enhancement prescriptions. I was impressed by the attention to detail in the diversity of treatments that were artfully integrated with surrounding habitats, both in lowland shrub and upland contexts. Forests are increasingly fragmented, parcels are smaller, and the number and types of landowners, both public and private, keep increasing. Creating healthy and dynamic forested *landscapes* capable of sustaining a diversity of wildlife species, including priority focal species, thus becomes a huge conservation challenge—both biologically and sociologically. With its innovative vision of managing for dynamic forested landscapes and its emphasis on educational workshops, ABC's *YFC:IWM* project meets the challenge head-on and creates a standard that I believe future projects will seek to emulate. The USFWS Division of Migratory Bird Management fully supports the importance for birds of carefully managed young forest and attention to the overall health of a dynamic, diverse, and potentially resilient forested landscape.

Third, the Minnesota Golden-winged Warbler project is one of the best examples there is of stewardship conservation. From the outset, Golden-winged Warbler conservation was largely focused in regions where the species was rare, and initiatives such as FWS/NRCS Working Lands for Wildlife targeted portions of the range in the East where the species was disappearing. From a strategic, rangewide

perspective, it makes good business sense to manage creatively where populations are still relatively abundant and capable of increasing. ABC was one of the first conservation actors to recognize and promote the stewardship perspective and to actively champion conservation implementation in the core of the species range in Minnesota. The *YFC/IWM* project is a wise investment; it is far more likely to result in significant population-level impacts than is work underway or targeted in any other portion of the species' range.

In summary, I am enthusiastically supportive of ABC's visionary and paradigm-setting Minnesota forest project. It creatively incorporates a strong science base, acknowledgement of the diversity of habitats needed by suites of species throughout the full breeding cycle from nesting to post-fledging, dynamic and healthy forest landscapes emphasis, innovation in working educationally with diverse partners, and a strategic stewardship focus.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Will". The signature is written in a dark ink and is centered on the page.

Dr. Tom Will
Midwest Regional Wildlife Biologist, USFWS Division of Migratory Birds
& Midwest Regional Coordinator, Partners in Flight



3 June 2014

Mr. George Fenwick, President
American Bird Conservancy
P.O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. Fenwick,

I write to offer Woodcock Minnesota's (WCMN) support to the American Bird Conservancy's 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council titled, Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management (Phase II).

The Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA) is Minnesota's premiere Stewardship Species. Although this state encompasses only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, Minnesota presently supports 47% of the entire global population! Any decline in MN's population could be devastating to the future of GWWA. Recent Minnesota research further demonstrates the importance of adjacent mature forest stands to both adults and young Golden-wings, thus WC MN appreciates the emphasis of this LSOHC application incorporating "Integrated Habitat Management".

As a species that requires intricate management prescriptions that include young forest and adjacent mature deciduous forest, the GWWA is a habitat specialist whose best management practices also benefit a wide range of young forest and forest interior wildlife species, including: American Woodcock, Veery, Oven Bird, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Eastern Towhee, Ruffed Grouse, Bobcat, Canada Lynx, Moose, Northern Long-eared Bat and White-tailed Deer. Our American Woodcock population, another important Stewardship Species in Minnesota, is a priority breeding species in all four of Minnesota's ecological provinces with MN Ornithologist Union nesting records in all 87 counties of the state.

Furthermore, American Bird Conservancy has continued to apply forest treatments that focus on forest health. ABC and the GWWA Public Lands Coordinator, Peter Dieser have continually promoted an educated approach that includes identifying potential project sites by considering the distribution of cover types across the landscape, while being able to cross administrative boundaries.

WC MN supports the work outlined in ABC's proposal to create and restore a dynamic mosaic of forest habitat. This proposal recognizes that both the American Woodcock and Golden-winged Warbler depend not only on young upland forest, but also on quality shrub wetlands and forest interfaces with all ages of forest growth. This project recognizes that the creation of young forest habitat needs to be done in the broader context of sustainable forest management plans that embrace the importance of sustaining a complex patchwork of upland and lowland forest types, as well as a broad mix of forest age classes within close proximity.

Sincerely,

Jim Koehler, President
Woodcock Minnesota

Beltrami County

Natural Resource Management

701 Minnesota Ave NW, Suite 234 – Bemidji MN 56601-3178

May 29, 2014

Mr. George Fenwick
President
American Bird Conservancy
P.O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. Fenwick,

I am writing to you in support of the American Bird Conservancy's (ABC) 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council titled Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management (Phase II). In my position as the Natural Resource Management Department Director for Beltrami County, Minnesota, we were privileged to partner with the ABC on a wildlife habitat project in 2014.

As Land Commissioner, my staff and I are responsible for the natural resource management of 146,500 acres of tax-forfeited lands in Beltrami County in a sustainable manner. The department is committed to multiple use management of its lands including forest management, wildlife habitat management, and recreation. Our goal for the recent habitat project was the same as the American Bird Conservancy's goal of providing young forests and wetland shrubs to benefit a wide variety of wildlife species. An avenue such as the ABC and its programs provide are vital to the regeneration of wetland shrubs. These species have little or no commercial value and, without financial support, the regeneration of these species and habitat would be difficult.

Dependent on young forests and wetland shrubs is the Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA) which is one of Minnesota's premiere Stewardship Species. Although Minnesota provides only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, it supports 47% of the entire global population. A decline in the Minnesota population would be a huge blow for the future of the species. During Audubon Minnesota's recent work to develop a Conservation Blueprint for Minnesota Birds, it identified the Golden-winged Warbler as one of the priority breeding species in the Laurentian Mixed Forest ecological province, which is where Beltrami County is located. The GWWA is also included on the global International Union for Conservation of Nature list of species in need of immediate conservation action.

As a species that requires intricate management prescriptions that include young forest and adjacent deciduous forest, the GWWA is a habitat specialist whose best management practices also benefit a wide range of wildlife species, including: American Woodcock, Veery, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Ruffed Grouse, Bobcat, Canada Lynx, Moose, Northern Long-eared Bat, and White-tailed Deer. Our American Woodcock population, another important Stewardship Species in Minnesota, is a priority breeding species in all of Minnesota's ecological provinces.

Furthermore, American Bird Conservancy has continued to apply forest treatments that focus on forest health. ABC and the GWWA Public Lands Coordinator, Peter Dieser have continually promoted an educated approach that includes identifying potential project sites by considering the distribution of cover types across the landscape, while being able to cross administrative boundaries. It was in this context that Beltrami County was able to coordinate with Peter and partner with ABC on a wildlife habitat project and hope to partner on similar projects in the future.

I support the work outlined in ABC's proposal to create and restore a dynamic mosaic of forest habitat. This proposal recognizes that many wildlife species depend not only on young upland forest, but also on quality shrub wetlands. This project recognizes that the creation of young forest habitat needs to be done in the broader context of sustainable forest management plans that embrace the importance of sustaining a complex patchwork of upland and lowland forest types, as well as a broad mix of forest age classes and seral stages.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Richard A. Moore". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R".

Richard A. Moore
Beltrami County
Natural Resource Management Director/Land Commissioner



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge
35704 County Highway 26
Rochert, Minnesota 56578-9638
Phone: 218/847-2641 Fax: 218/847-9141

June 2, 2014

Mr. George Fenwick
President
American Bird Conservancy
P.O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198-2237

Dear Mr. Fenwick,

I am writing in support of the American Bird Conservancy's 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council entitled, Young Forest Conservation: Integrated Wildlife Management (Phase II).

The Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA) is Minnesota's premiere forest Stewardships Species. Although the state encompasses only 12% of the species' North American breeding range, Minnesota is the summer home to 47% of the entire global population! A decline in the MN population would be detrimental for the future of the species. More importantly, a decline in Golden-winged Warblers would certainly signal declines in other bird and mammal populations important to Minnesotans. During Audubon Minnesota's recent work to develop a Conservation Blueprint for Minnesota Birds, the Golden-winged Warbler was identified as one of the priority breeding species across Northern Minnesota. Clearly, robust populations of Golden-winged Warblers are indicative of healthy, diverse forests and this proposal strives to address forest management needs that will help support and sustain this species.

As a species that requires intricate management prescriptions that include forest with diverse age structure, the GWWA is a habitat specialist whose best management practices also benefit a wide range of wildlife species, including: American Woodcock, Wood Duck, Ruffed Grouse, Veery, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Bobcat, Canada Lynx, and White-tailed Deer.

Furthermore, American Bird Conservancy has successfully applied forest management strategies that focus on forest health and diversity. ABC's Public Lands Coordinator, Peter Dierker has continually promoted a strategic approach that includes working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as well as other State and County partners to identify potential project sites that will accomplish these objectives.

Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge supports the work outlined in ABC's proposal to create and restore diverse forest habitat that will benefit the Golden-winged Warbler as well as other important wildlife species. This proposal recognizes that many species depend on a diverse and healthy forest landscape and takes the necessary steps to accomplish this goal.

Sincerely,

Neil J. Powers
Project Leader