

# Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

## Laws of Minnesota 2016 Accomplishment Plan



**Date:** April 10, 2017

**Program or Project Title:** Jack Pine Forest/Crow Wing River Watershed Habitat Acquisition

**Funds Recommended:** \$ 3,570,000

**Manager's Name:** Craig Engwall

**Title:** Executive Director

**Organization:** MN Deer Hunters Association

**Address:** 460 Peterson Road

**City:** Grand Rapids, MN 55744

**Office Number:** 218-327-1103

**Fax Number:** 218-327-1349

**Email:** craig.engwall@mndeerhunters.com

**Website:** www.mndeerhunters.com

**Legislative Citation:** ML 2016, Ch. 172, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 3(b)

**Appropriation Language:** \$3,570,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association to acquire in fee and restore and enhance forest habitat lands in Cass and Hubbard Counties for county forest purposes. A list of proposed land acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

**County Locations:** Cass, and Hubbard.

**Regions in which work will take place:**

- Northern Forest

**Activity types:**

- Protect in Fee
- Restore

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

- Forest
- Habitat

### Abstract:

This project will protect in fee approximately 2,260 acres of forest habitat that are at significant risk of conversion to row crop agriculture. It will also restore jack pine, an increasingly rare tree species, in the project area.

### Design and scope of work:

Problem to be Addressed

The past decade has seen a significant loss of forest habitat within the Crow Wing River Watershed due to the conversion of that habitat to row crop agriculture and other development. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) estimates that about 42 square miles of pine forest have been cleared or are at elevated risk of being cleared and converted to croplands.

These forest lands provide critical habitat for many game and non-game animals, including rare and threatened species. Species that rely on this habitat include white-tailed deer, black bear, ruffed grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, woodcock, wild turkey, bobcats, grey wolves and numerous others. Jack pine stands are interspersed throughout the project area, but are becoming increasingly rare. These jack pine stands are home to a number of unique species including the Northern Goshawk, a species of special concern in Minnesota,

and Blanding's turtle, a state listed threatened species.

The forests in the Crow Wing River Watershed also protect rivers, streams, lakes and ground water by acting as a buffer and a filter of pollutants and chemicals that degrade water quality. A map of the Crow Wing River Watershed is attached (Attachment A).

## Goals and Scope of Work

To slow the loss of forest lands and the habitat provided by them, the project will protect by acquisition in fee approximately 2,260 acres of high priority habitat within the Crow Wing River Watershed.

The lands to be protected are currently owned by Potlatch Corporation (Potlatch). The Minnesota Deer Hunters Association (MDHA) and Potlatch have identified over 37,000 acres of Potlatch land within the project area that fulfill the habitat protection goals of the project. See project map attached (Attachment B). Please note that all depicted acres are included within the parcel list so as to make available the best habitat parcels for inclusion in the negotiated purchase list, which should total approximately 2,260 acres.

This Request for Funding seeks an amount sufficient to purchase a portion of the Potlatch lands identified as fulfilling the project goals. The remaining Potlatch parcels that do not receive funding under this application are well-suited to being the focus of a future Request for Funding by MDHA.

MDHA, in evaluating the parcels for selection, will use the following criteria to prioritize those parcels to be included in the project:

- 1) Habitat quality;
- 2) Specific habitat cover-type with an emphasis on jack pine and mixed-age forest lands;
- 3) Immediacy of threat of conversion; and
- 4) Adjacency to other large forest blocks to maximize habitat benefits.

MDHA believes that acquired lands should be managed pursuant to the forest management standards established in previous forest habitat projects funded through the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

To achieve the goals of this project, the acquired fee parcels will be transferred to Cass and Hubbard Counties to hold in fee and manage.

This project also seeks funding (\$150,000) to restore jack pine to the landscape. The total amount of acreage restored will depend upon the number of parcels where jack pine is the native cover type of acquired parcels as well as the appropriate prescription to best restore jack pine to each parcel. The amount of jack pine within the project area has been significantly reduced through a combination of conversion to row crop agriculture or replacement with other forest cover types such as red pine plantation. This loss is depicted by the jack pine distribution map attached (Attachment C). Jack pine is a relatively rare forest type in Minnesota and provides habitat for a number of unique species. It is well-suited to the sandy soil types in the Crow Wing River Watershed. This project will use a number of tools to restore jack pine that may include planting seedlings and aerial seeding as well as prescribed burns for jack pine regeneration.

The acquisition of these parcels and the restoration of jack pine forest will provide significant value beyond the protection of key forest habitat. The project will also benefit water quality by preserving forest cover that helps to filter pollutants from percolating through the sandy soils that are prevalent in the Crow Wing River Watershed. It will provide public access for hunting and recreational activities that currently does not exist. It will enable land managers of adjacent state and county lands to easily access those lands for forest management. And it will provide wood fiber from the land to supply the local mill in Bemidji.

In developing this proposal, MDHA actively engaged the county boards for Cass and Hubbard Counties and sought their support. Each of the County Boards has expressed its endorsement of the project by unanimously passing a resolution supporting it and urging full funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund. See county support resolutions attached (Attachments D1, D2, D3).

Project partners include The Conservation Fund (TCF) and the Ruffed Grouse Society. MDHA, along with its conservation partners, will seek private contributions for the project at a national scale to leverage the funding provided from the Outdoor Heritage Fund. TCF will assist MDHA in the land acquisition process. MDHA will continue to work with the counties and other conservation partners to continuously improve this project as it progresses.

## **How does the request address MN habitats that have: historical value to fish and wildlife, wildlife species of greatest conservation need, MN County Biological Survey data, and/or rare, threatened and endangered species inventories:**

Jack pine has been identified by DNR as a high priority for conservation. A portion of the project area is within the Chippewa Plains Important Bird Area (IBA) as designated by Minnesota Audubon. This project will protect habitat for a number of species of concern including the Northern Goshawk, Golden-winged Warbler and Blanding's turtle. Minnesota County Biological Survey data as well as rare species will be a component of the site selection process as MDHA and partners develop the final acquisition plan.

## Describe the science based planning and evaluation model used:

MDHA is using the best scientific data available from the MN DNR, USFWS and other sources to make informed decisions as to which parcels are the highest priority. Only those that are evaluated to make the largest impact to habitat conservation will be selected for acquisition.

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

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- LU8 Protect large blocks of forest land

## Which other plans are addressed in this program:

- Minnesota Forest Resource Council Landscape Plans
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

## Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this program:

### Northern Forest:

- Provide access to manage habitat on landlocked public properties or protect forest land from parcelization and fragmentation through fee acquisition, conservation or access easement

## Relationship to other funds:

- Not Listed

## Describe the relationship of the funds:

Not Listed

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

This project complements, but does not duplicate, funded DNR projects (Protecting Pinelands Sands Forest and Aquatic Habitat) and greatly expands upon six smaller habitat projects undertaken by MDHA in the project area through the Conservation Partners Legacy (CPL) program. Projects are described further in MDHA habitat efforts attachment (Attachment E).

## Describe the source and amount of non-OHF money spent for this work in the past:

Not Listed

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

The Cass and Hubbard County Land Departments have extensive experience in forest management. Both departments will manage project lands.

## Explain the things you will do in the future to maintain project outcomes:

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2018 and ongoing	Cass and Hubbard County	Manage and monitor lands consistent with forest certification and management plans		

## Activity Details:

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

Will there be planting of corn or any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program - **No**

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

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

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

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

State of MN regulations will apply to these lands.

Are there currently trails or roads on any of the acquisitions on the parcel list - **Yes**

Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:

There are existing routes on potential project parcels that were developed for timber harvest and management purposes. In addition to forestry related activities, these routes have been used by hunters and others for recreation, and some of that use has included ATV travel. In the Council Memo these routes were referred to as tote roads.

Will the trails or roads remain and uses continue to be allowed after OHF acquisition - **Yes**

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished:

The counties will do this pursuant to their forest management plans.

Will new trails or roads be developed or improved as a result of the OHF acquisition - **Yes**

Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:

Temporary tote roads may be developed pursuant to county forest management plans.

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished:

Maintenance and monitoring will be done according to the County Land Departments certification and management plans.

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

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 (Private Land, County/Municipal)**

### Accomplishment Timeline:

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Negotiate with land owner and enter in to purchase agreement.	August 2016
Conduct due diligence for acquisition of the properties (appraisal, title work etc.).	November 2016
Acquire fee title to the properties.	June 2017
Restoration of lands.	June 2018

Date of Final Report Submission: 11/1/2019

### Federal Funding:

Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program - **No**

### Outcomes:

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation *These forest lands will be permanently protected from conversion to non-forest uses and will be managed pursuant to an approved forest management plan.*

# 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**

The amount of acres acquired and restored will be decreased proportionate to the decrease in the recommended appropriation.

**Total Amount of Request: \$ 3570000**

## Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$89,300	\$0		\$89,300
Contracts	\$148,100	\$58,000	Private	\$206,100
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$3,258,000	\$116,000	Private	\$3,374,000
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0		\$0
Professional Services	\$52,200	\$0		\$52,200
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$5,000	\$0		\$5,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$17,400	\$0		\$17,400
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$3,570,000	\$174,000		\$3,744,000

## Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Grant Manager	0.17	3.00	\$62,300	\$0		\$62,300
Fiscal Agent	0.07	3.00	\$14,600	\$0		\$14,600
Project Manager	0.07	3.00	\$12,400	\$0		\$12,400
Total	0.31	9.00	\$89,300	\$0		\$89,300

Amount of Request: \$3,570,000

Amount of Leverage: \$174,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 4.87%

DSS + Personnel: \$89,300

As a % of the total request: 2.50%

## 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	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	2,260	0	2,260
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	2,260	0	2,260

**Table 2. Total Funding by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$150,000	\$0	\$150,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$3,420,000	\$0	\$3,420,000
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$3,570,000	\$0	\$3,570,000

**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	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	2,260	2,260
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	2,260	2,260

**Table 4. Total Funding within each Ecological Section**

Type	Metro Urban	ForestPrairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,420,000	\$3,420,000
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,570,000	\$3,570,000

**Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$1513	\$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	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1513
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**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

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

### Section 2 - Protect Parcel List



## Cass

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Cass105	13632229	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass106	13632229	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass107	13632229	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass108	13632229	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass109	13632229	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass110	13632229	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass111	13632229	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass112	13632230	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass113	13632230	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass114	13632230	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass115	13632230	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass116	13632230	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass117	13632230	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass118	13632230	28	\$49,878	No	No	not applicable
Cass119	13632230	27	\$49,392	No	No	not applicable
Cass120	13632230	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass121	13632230	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass122	13632231	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass123	13632231	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass124	13632231	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass125	13632231	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass126	13632231	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass127	13632232	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass128	13632232	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass129	13632232	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass130	13632232	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass131	13632232	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass132	13632232	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass133	13632232	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass134	13632232	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass135	13632232	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass59	13532205	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass60	13532205	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass70	13532220	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass72	13532220	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass73	13532220	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass74	13532220	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass75	13532220	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass76	13532220	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass81	13532229	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass82	13532229	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass83	13532229	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass84	13532229	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass85	13532230	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass88	13532232	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass89	13532232	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass90	13532232	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass91	13532232	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Cass94	13632229	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable

## Hubbard

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Hubbard111	13932231	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Hubbard112	13932231	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Hubbard113	13932231	43	\$76,626	No	No	not applicable
Hubbard114	13932231	42	\$76,302	No	No	not applicable
Hubbard115	13932231	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Hubbard116	13932231	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Hubbard117	14334234	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable
Hubbard118	14334234	40	\$72,000	No	No	not applicable

## Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

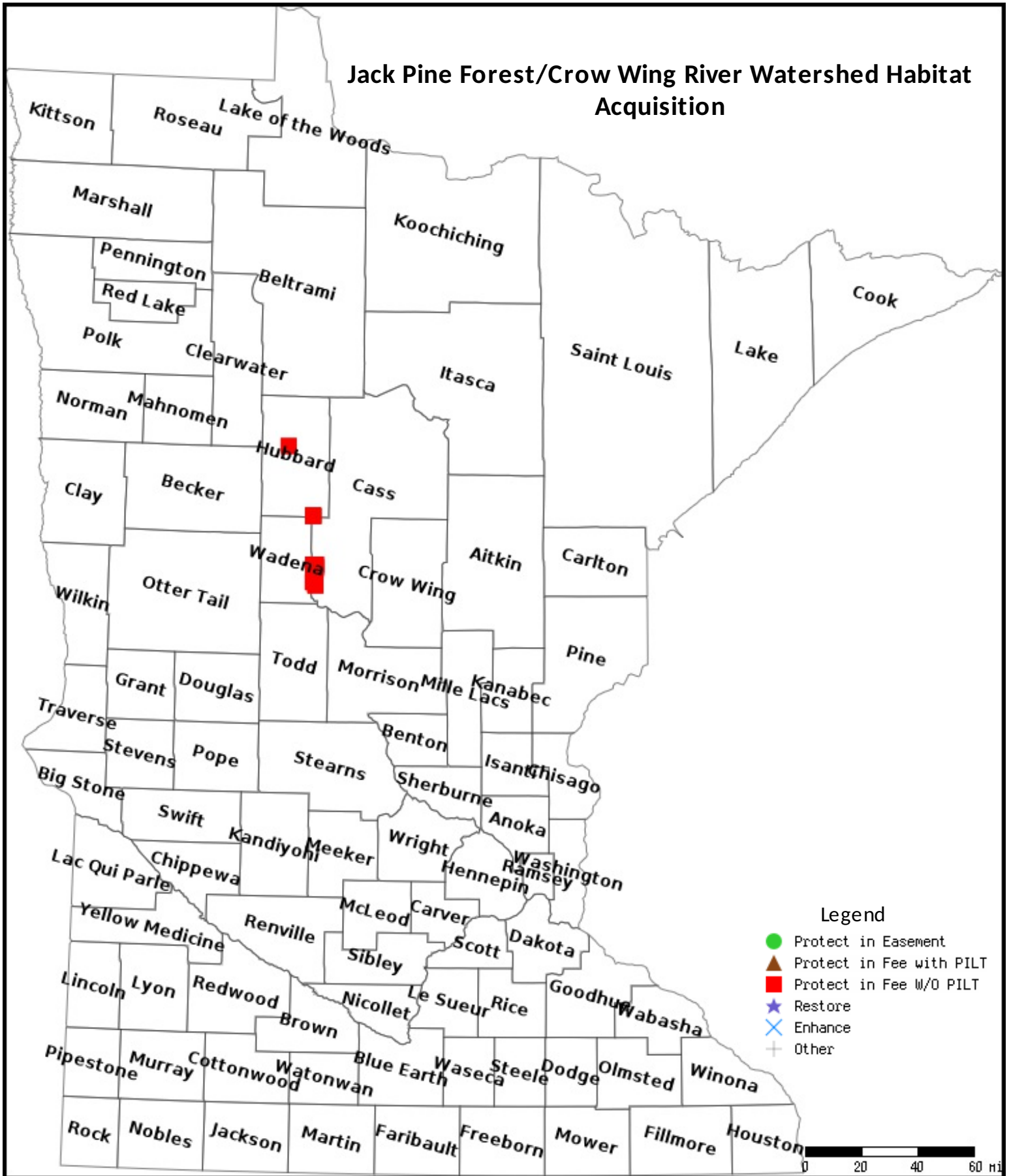
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

## Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

# Parcel Map

## Jack Pine Forest/Crow Wing River Watershed Habitat Acquisition



Data Generated From Parcel List