

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

Date: Revised January 20, 2010

Project or Program Title: Green Corridor Legacy Program – Phase II

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	Council Recommendation Funding	Out-Year Projections of Needs		
		FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Funds Recommended (\$000s)	FY 2011			
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$1,651,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000

Appropriation Language

Abstract

The Green Corridor Legacy Program – Phase II FY2011 appropriation will be a continuation of the Phase I FY2010 appropriations by LSOHC. The Green Corridor Legacy Program fiscal agent is the Redwood Area Communities Foundation (RACF) dba Green Corridor Inc with oversight/management responsibilities by the Green Corridor Inc. Board of Directors.

Publicly owned natural resource infrastructure (e.g. WMA, AMA, etc) invigorates local and regional economies by providing outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities. New business concepts are likely to arise as a direct result of the recreational/ tourism opportunities that will be advanced and promoted by the Green Corridor Legacy Program.

The Green Corridor Legacy Program - Phase II will protect and restore/enhance high quality fish, game, and wildlife habitats by developing complexes or corridors of new and/or expansions of MN DNR Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and/or Aquatic Management Areas (AMA) in the Program area. 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. All properties will be acquired from willing and supportive landowners. All projects have the support of the local DNR offices.

Other program activities will include continuing community/citizen/regional support of the program, partnership involvement in program development, and continue to promote local/state government cooperation. Fiduciary responsibility for the program activities including all processes associated to the land transactions, financial oversight, transparency and accountability to all program activities and outcomes, and development of a strategy to monitor the outcomes with partners and agencies.

Narrative

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 of greatest need. Traditional game & aquatic species are also affected by the decline in habitat.

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 only found along the valley and its primary tributaries. 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 in the program area.

The program will succeed because numerous partnerships have been developed from a wide variety of disciplines (e.g. U of M, DNR, local SWCD, USFWS, PF, MDHA, NWTF, community/civic groups, regional business leaders, and supportive landowners) that will assist in monitoring outcomes, provide long range management of the acquired lands, provide technical support, and ensure that program activities will advance the goals, objectives, and strategies of the various state-wide conservation plans and provide public transparency and input. Green Corridor Inc. is in the process of securing additional financial support of program activities with a number of local/regional wildlife, conservation, and sportsmen's groups.

Through the Green Corridor Board of Directors, we have gain the support for this program from community/civic organizations like the MN River Scenic By-way Alliance, local government agencies like the Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the program area, documented letter of support from the MN DNR Region 4 director, and documented letters of support from the local county(s) government. Once purchase agreements are secured, formal notifications to the Board of County Commissioners (in the counties were properties will be acquired) will be completed, as is the normal protocol.

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

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.

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:

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 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 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. To accomplish this objective the plan calls for an additional 21,000 acres of grasslands to be protected through acquisitions of WMA’s.

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.

Project Design and Evaluation

Describe the scope of the project in appropriate measures (i.e. ,acreage numbers of lakes, miles of shoreline)

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		53 acres or more		
Protect	33 acres or more	275 acres or more	8 acres or more	Fish/Aquatic Habitat:27 acres or more-Our highest priority tract (Granite Prairie WMA) has 1.1 mile of MN River shoreline and over 10 acres of high quality remnant prairie to name just several of the key features of this particular project.
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		Brown, Renville, Cottonwood, Redwood		
Protect		Brown, Renville, Cottonwood, Redwood		
Enhance				

Acres Within Each Ecological Section	Metropolitan-Urbanizing Area	Forest-Prairie Transition	Southeast Forest	Prairie Region	Northern Forest
Restore				54 acres or more	
Protect				343 acres or more	
Enhance					

Funding Per Ecological Section	Metropolitan-Urbanizing Area	Forest-Prairie Transition	Southeast Forest	Prairie Region	Northern Forest
Restore				\$27,000	
Protect				\$1,624,000	
Enhance					

Indicate what is being funded

Funding Resource Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Restore		\$27,000		
Protect		\$1,542,700		
Enhance				

Acquisition and Tax Data	Wetlands	Prairies	Forests	Habitats for Fish, Game and Wildlife
Acquired in Fee with State PILT Liability		343 acres or more		
Acquired in Fee without State PILT Liability				
Permanent Easement				

Budget

Please describe how you intend to spend the recommended funds

Budget Item	Fiscal Year 11	Fiscal Year 12	Fiscal Year 13
Personnel	\$43,000	\$2,000	
Contracts – Private Habitat Restoration Co. to	0	\$27,000	

include materials and labor			
Equipment/Tools			
Materials/Supplies			
Fee Acquisition	\$1,542,700	0	
Easement Acquisition			
Easement Stewardship			
Travel	\$1,000	\$250	
Additional Budget Items			
Fiscal Agent/RACF Oversight	\$9,000	\$1,000	
DNR Professional Services – Title Transfer to state	\$4,500	0	
DNR Initial WMA/AMA development (signage, fencing, parking, misc)	0	\$9,000	
Professional Services – Appraisals by Green Corridor Inc.	\$9,000	0	
Professional Services – Legal Fees for acquisitions by Green Corridor Inc	\$2,550	0	
TOTAL	\$1,611,750	\$39,250	

Budget Details/Explanations:

The Personal section is for Program Manager to carry out activities directly related to the accomplishments of this Program appropriation.

Contract section is for vendor services (material and labor) towards the restoration of the newly acquired acres that require restoration.

Travel section is for Program Manager travel expenses directly related to the accomplishments of this Program appropriation.

Additional Budget Items Section:

Fiscal Agent/RACF Oversight is for fiscal agent (RACF) expenses – staff (Executive Director), insurance, auditing services, and legal support – to facilitate this entire appropriation.

DNR Professional Services directly related to the fee title acquisitions for title review, transfer, and preparation of closing documents needed by the state/DNR.

DNR Initial WMA/AMA development is for the initial WMA/AMA development costs (e.g. signage, parking lot, and fencing) by the DNR.

Professional Services - Appraisals are for the required appraisal to determine “fair market value” with will be certified by the state/DNR as Third Party Agreements hired by Green Corridor Inc.

Professional Services – Legal Fees are for review of legal documents (purchase agreements and title review) hired by Green Corridor Inc. directly related to the fee title acquisition of properties.

Relationship to Current Budget

Green Corridor Inc. Current Fiscal Year Budget: **\$2,617,000**

Source of Funding	Amount	Percentage to Budget
LCCMR FY2008-2010	\$1,000,000	38%
LSOHC FY2010	\$1,617,000	62%

Un-spent/un-programmed State Dollars

LCCMR FY2008-2010 \$40,000 (approx.)
 LSOHC FY2010 \$1,617,000 (final accomplishment due June 2011. Of the 4 proposed projects, we currently have 3 purchase agreements pending with anticipated closing dates in March 2010. Final project is still pending an issuance of a purchase agreement)

Personnel

Position	Name	Amount
Fiscal Manager/Exec. Director	Pat Dingels	\$10,000
Program Manager	Bradley H. Cobb	\$45,000

Leverage

List the sources and amounts of leverage you have in hand or anticipate by fiscal year.

SOURCE	FY 11		FY 12		FY 13	
	In hand	Anticipated	In hand	Anticipated	In hand	Anticipated
State						
Non state						
Renville Cty PF		\$10,000				
In-kind/Volunteer						
TOTAL		\$10,000				

Leverage Comments: The Green Corridor Legacy Program will continue to seek regional financial support of this program. Several other local wildlife conservation groups have pending commitments for these Program activity/accomplishments. We will provide a revised Leverage Commitment statement once additional funds are secured to include possible landowner donations of property.

Indicate how the leverage will be used

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
Restore								
Protect						\$10,000		
Enhance								

Accomplishment Timeline

Milestone	Date	Measure
Acquisition/Restoration		
Complete final landowner/DNR documentations	July 2010	6 projects – 840 acres
Contract appraisals ordered	August 2010	2-6 projects – 840 acres
Purchase Agreements	Nov. 2010	2-3 projects – 343 acres or more
Closing/Title Transfer to State/DNR	June 2011	2-3 projects – 343 acres or more
Complete initial restoration –private contractors	June 2012	2-3 projects – 54 acres or more
Initial DNR WMA/AMA site development	June 2012	2-3 projects - 343 acres or more

Milestones	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Budgetary Expenditure
Order 2-6 appraisals	July 2010			\$9,000
Secure 2-3 Purchase Agreements & title/abstract review	Feb. 2010			\$7,050
Closed on 2-3 properties totaling 343 acres or more	June 2011 or sooner			\$1,542,700
Restoration of 54 acres or more by private contractor/vendor		June 2012 or sooner		\$27,000
DNR Initial WMA/AMA Development on 2-3 properties		June 2012 or sooner		\$9,000

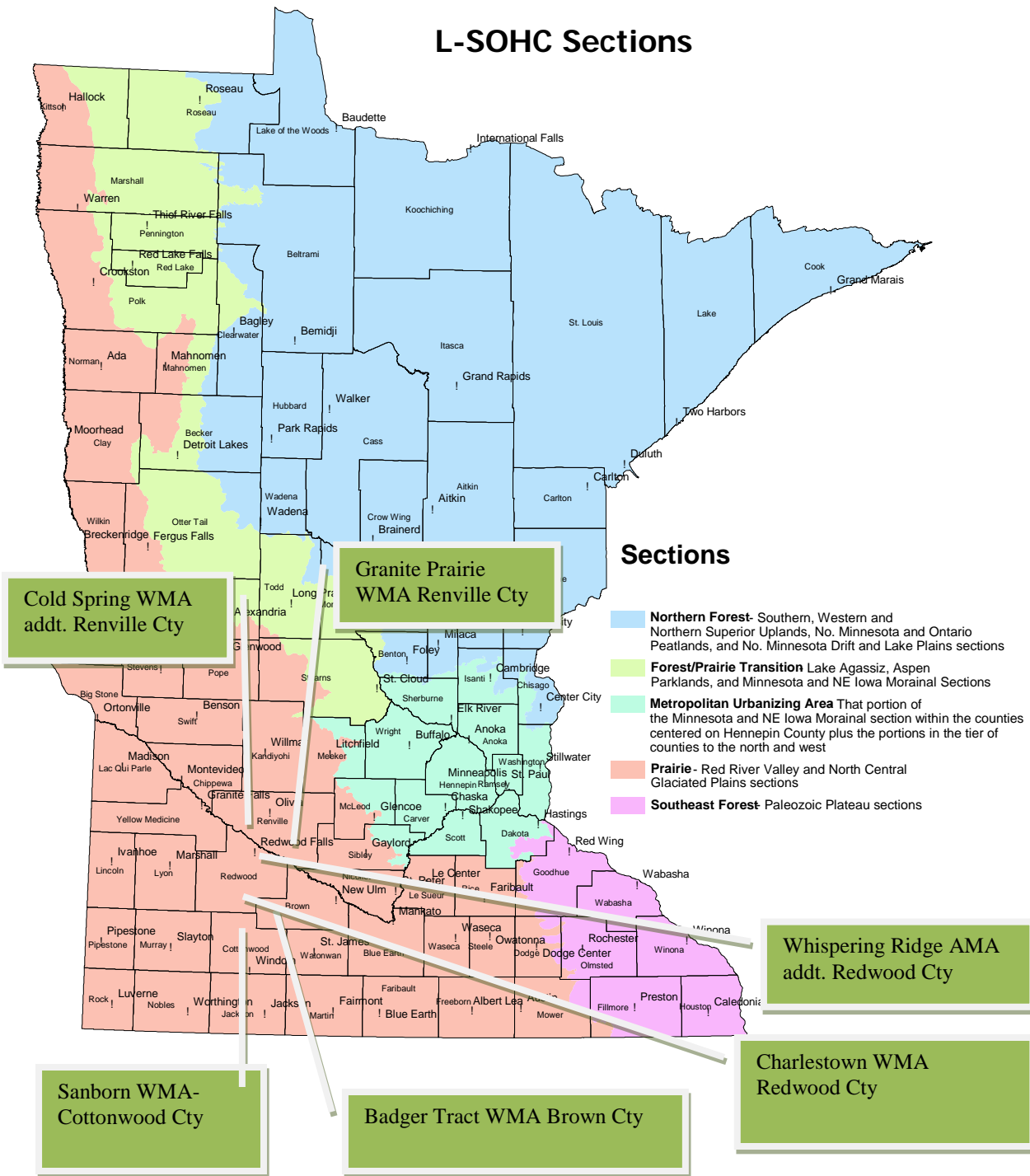
Accomplishments/Milestone Details: Due to the nature of landowner negotiations, appraisal reviews, title/abstract reviews, and weather effecting restoration efforts accomplishment/milestone dates are subject to change. Some proposed projects may change and others may need to be added. We will continue to inform LSOHC staff as accomplishments and milestones change or are reached with prescribed Accomplishment Plan updates (status reports) as required.

+++ Please note that this revised Accomplishment Plan does NOT include funding for the Native Prairie Seed Propagation Project as determined by the LSOHC ++++

Maintenance and Sustainability

First, initial site restoration and development (signage, parking lots, fencing) will be accomplished by this appropriation. The DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife will then permanently manage these properties. Routine maintenance will be managed by area DNR staff funded by their traditional sources like the Game & Fish Fund. Due to the proximity to other DNR properties will help keep maintenance costs less than average due to shared resources. Periodic enhancements or improvements will be funded by special funding requests. The DNR requires management 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. Regional partners may also support these management activities/practices by applying for state funding/grants for maintenance as needed.

L-SOHC Sections



These proposed projects listed above will be consider from the original Green Corridor Legacy Program submission list. Other proposed projects may need to be added considering the final appropriations based on the highest or most urgent conservation need and timeliness.

