

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Fiscal Year 2020 / ML 2019 Request for Funding

PRE 03



Date: May 31, 2018

Program or Project Title: Fairmont Chain of Lakes Habitat Restoration Plan, Phase 1

Funds Requested: \$1,390,000

Manager's Name: Troy Nemmers

Title: Director of Public Works / City Engineer

Organization: City of Fairmont

Address: 100 Downtown Plaza

City: Fairmont, MN 56031

Office Number: 507-238-3942

Email: tnemmers@fairmont.org

County Locations: Martin

Regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

Activity types:

- Restore
- Enhance

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Wetlands
- Prairie
- Habitat

Abstract:

The City of Fairmont, and its numerous partners, are proposing to begin the first phase of the Fairmont Chain of Lakes Habitat Restoration Plan. This multi-phase plan will restore and enhance a 1,200+ acre fishery, including lakes (1,141 acres), stream, floodplain, wetland and upland habitat restorations. The plan will benefit fish, waterfowl and other wildlife species as well as provide educational and recreational opportunities for the community.

Design and scope of work:

The Fairmont Chain of Lakes are positioned within the heart of the City of Fairmont, appropriately nicknamed The City of Lakes. The five lakes flow from South to North and are all connected by streams and channels. Fairmont has a population of 10,000 and is the County Seat of Martin County which has a population of 20,000. Martin County has 49 named lakes and 20 + unnamed lakes. The lakes are used recreationally, with the most popular activities being hunting and fishing. The Fairmont Chain of Lakes are the most popular lakes for recreation and are critical to the local economy.

The City of Fairmont is partnering with Martin Soil and Water Conservation District, The Fairmont Lakes Foundation, DNR Fish and Wildlife, and the Martin County Conservation Alliance, Fairmont Economic Development Authority and Martin County to restore and reconnect two floodplain wetlands along Dutch Creek, which flows into the Fairmont Chain of Lakes. The basins will be restored with adjustable wetland hydrology and seeding with native wetland vegetation. The upland areas will be seeded with native prairie plant species, including local source ecotype, to benefit pollinator species. A diversion weir and cross vanes allowing for fish passage will be installed in the Creek to divert flow into the wetland basins. This will allow for adjustable water levels within the wetland to ensure Northern Pike are able to spawn and to exclude Carp access and spawning.

The project will provide the largest, highest quality spawning habitat within the Fairmont Chain of Lakes Watershed. Previously usable spawning habitat has been degraded due to development, drainage and loss of connectivity of the floodplain wetlands to the Chain of Lakes. Due to loss and degradation of suitable spawning habitat, the Fairmont Chain of Lakes has had a significant decrease in the Northern Pike (Apex Predator) population. This has allowed the Invasive Carp and Yellow Bass populations to grow rapidly. This shallow

lake system, located in Southern Minnesota, is a critical part of the Fairmont economy and is a place where many in Martin County, and the region, go to recreate. The fishery has been in decline as it has lost its balance without a healthy Northern Pike population. The DNR would like to improve habitat for native species, and the Northern Pike.

By restoring and reconnecting the floodplain wetlands with the stream and lake, the primary benefit will be the restoration of critical Northern Pike spawning habitat. Intentionally, there will be a host of secondary benefits to restoring these wetlands. Martin County has a heavily studied population of the Blanding's Turtle, which is on the State's Rare and Threatened Species Lists. Additionally, this area will benefit other amphibious species, waterfowl and other local wildlife species. We look forward to using the site for public outreach and education as well as a youth education and involvement area due to its proximity to the City of Fairmont and its existing park system.

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

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds

Which other plans are addressed in this proposal:

- Long Range Plan for Fisheries Management
- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda

Describe how your program will advance the indicators identified in the plans selected:

The broad goals of the Fisheries Management Plan include: To make recreational fishing as good as it can be in Minnesota for the present and future; To conserve, maintain, enhance, or rehabilitate Minnesota's aquatic resources to serve environmental, social, and commercial purposes; To foster an ethic of natural resource stewardship among all Minnesotans. Our program advances this Plan by conserving and improving aquatic habitat, both in the spawning habitat provided by the wetland restoration and improving the water quality of the Fairmont Chain of Lakes resulting in a healthier fishery. Through the use of an adjustable and removable fish gate, we will allow Northern Pike in and out to spawn and exclude the Invasive Carp which has disrupted the fishery greatly.

The goals identified in the DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda will be advanced by protecting acres of prairie wetlands and grasslands and by increasing nongame wildlife populations.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal:

Prairie:

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

Describe how your program will produce and demonstrate a significant and permanent conservation legacy and/or outcomes for fish, game, and wildlife as indicated in the LSOHC priorities:

Native prairie will be protected and expanded into cropped areas to provide a permanent buffer for the project wetlands adjacent to Dutch Creek. Northern Pike spawning is expected to be developed to re-populate a large predator fish for the chain of lakes. Restored wetland and adjacent areas will add habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds and other wildlife species. Local source plants will be used in habitat restoration areas and native habitats will be permanently protected. An expectation of high quality habitat and species diversity will guide plans to maximize the establishment of pollinator habitat and meet the needs of at-risk species and species in greatest conservation need.

The agencies and conservation groups in Martin County have established a great cooperative working relationship over the years completing habitat projects together. This project will continue to increase our participation in habitat projects and create new opportunities for Martin County, and Southern Minnesota, residents to appreciate and enjoy species in the Prairie Section. The City of Fairmont has a restored local ecotype native prairie, wetland restoration and pollinator plot within one half mile of the proposed project area. The Dutch Creek floodplain wetlands will help establish a 300+ acre corridor including, prairie, oak savanna, woodland, stream, wetland, floodplain and lake habitats. There is also an established walking and bike path as well as a frisbee golf course, which allows a great community education and outreach opportunity.

Describe how the proposal uses science-based targeting that leverages or expands corridors and complexes, reduces fragmentation or protects areas identified in the MN County Biological Survey:

Just downstream of the site is a designated Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS) site with moderate biodiversity significance, Hall Lake Woods. This woodland park was identified as a Basswood – Bur Oak – Green Ash forest by MCBS in 2008. This native riparian forest extends south along the west shore of Hall lake and Budd Lake for over a mile and is included in the 260-acre City of Fairmont Cedar Park. The restored wetlands will expand the habitat corridor along the west side of the Fairmont Chain of Lakes. The five lakes in the City of Fairmont are part of a habitat corridor that expands from the south edge of the Martin County, into Iowa, and to the north edge of Martin County, into Watonwan County. It is in the Northern part of the habitat complex that the largest population of Blanding’s Turtles are being studied. We hope to expand their range with the addition of high quality habitat projects such as this. This would provide a 25+ mile corridor, with the proposed project area being a high priority area within the habitat corridor.

How does the proposal address habitats that have significant value for wildlife species of greatest conservation need, and/or threatened or endangered species, and list targeted species:

Restoring floodplain wetlands and improving upland habitat will benefit Blanding’s Turtles, a State of Minnesota Threatened Species. While no Blanding’s Turtles have been identified at the Dutch Creek site, this species has been found on the north part of the lake chain habitat corridor and the south part of the lake chain habitat corridor. This site will provide suitable habitat for the introduction of listed plant species and has the potential to support species like the Monarch, pollinator species and other insects in need of habitat. Martin SWCD has been working with the Fairmont School District, growing local source rare and declining prairie species in the School’s greenhouse. This would provide another high quality, permanently protected, site for the SWCD and the students to establish populations of the rare and declining local sourced plants. Burrowing Owl, Trumpeter Swan, Horned Grebe, American Bittern, Sandhill Crane, Wilson’s Phalarope are species that have been identified in Martin County, utilizing similar habitats to the habitat planned for the proposed project area.

Identify indicator species and associated quantities this habitat will typically support:

The wetland basins and buffers can be expected to hold four pairs of mallards, produce three harvestable rooster pheasants, hold six pairs of bobolink, and five pairs of grasshopper sparrows. With several species of milkweed established, the area should add 50 monarchs to the population. Serving as a spawning area for Northern Pike, the wetlands are expected to produce enough fry to the Fairmont Chain of Lakes to support a population of 200 adult Pike.

Outcomes:

Programs in prairie region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced shallow lakes and wetlands *The diversity of the restored and expanded native prairie habitat. The number of people who learn about habitat and Species is Greatest Conservation Need. Improved habitat quality, water quality, and the health of the fishery in the Fairmont Chain of Lakes.*

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

The City of Fairmont and its partners will act as ongoing stewards of the Lakes and will work to maintain this site after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended. Project partners have already committed funds to monitor the water quality of Dutch Creek and the five lakes, multiple members of the Fairmont Lakes Foundation are already Citizen Stream and Lake Monitors. The City and Martin SWCD already have experience maintaining restoration sites on numerous other project sites.

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

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2022	Non-Profit Partners	Monitor	Vegetation Management	Structural Management
2023 & Annually	City & Partners	Monitor Vegetation and Diversity	Monitor Structural Integrity	Maintenance as Needed
2026 & Ongoing	City & Partners	Monitor for Sedimentation	Cleanout as Needed	Revegetate as Needed

What is the degree of timing/opportunistic urgency and why it is necessary to spend public money for this work as soon as possible:

This project will require a significant amount of excavation. If done now, the timeline will match that of a project less than a mile away that will require enough fill to accept all of the fill created by the excavations on this project. If not done now, disposing of fill will make this project extremely costly as well as the other project of decommissioning the City’s lime pits.

How does this proposal include leverage in funds or other effort to supplement any OHF appropriation:

The City of Fairmont purchased the 35 acres for this project in 2003. The land is included as match for this project.

Upstream water quality treatment practices will continue to be a priority for this watershed. A separate Clean Water Fund application will be submitted to further reduce downstream impacts including the project area. These practices will include soil health initiatives and structural practices to reduce the amount of sediment and nutrients in Dutch Creek. Permanent water storage has been installed upstream, but additional storage is still being planned. Martin SWCD has targeted this watershed as a priority watershed for Conservation Reserve Program and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program outreach.

Relationship to other funds:

- Not Listed

Describe the relationship of the funds:

Not Listed

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:

Appropriation from LSOHC would not be supplanting or a substitution for any other previous funds and this project can't happen without funds from LSOHC.

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

Not Listed

Activity Details

Requirements:

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

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

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

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

Land Use:

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

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Final the engineering plans for the project	2020
Construct the wetlands	2020
Install cross vanes and diversion to the wetlands	2020
Restore wetland vegetation	2020
Restore/enhance prairie vegetation	2021

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount of Request: \$1,390,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$0	\$20,000	Local Funds	\$20,000
Contracts	\$1,090,000	\$10,000	Local Funds	\$1,100,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$77,000	City of Fairmont Property	\$77,000
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0		\$0
Professional Services	\$300,000	\$0		\$300,000
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$1,390,000	\$107,000	-	\$1,497,000

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Manager	0.40	0.00	\$0	\$20,000	Local Funds	\$20,000
Total	0.40	0.00	\$0	\$20,000	-	\$20,000

Amount of Request: \$1,390,000

Amount of Leverage: \$107,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 7.70%

DSS + Personnel: \$0

As a % of the total request: 0.00%

Easement Stewardship: \$0

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: -%

Does the amount in the contract line include R/E work?

Yes, the entire amount is for restoration and enhancement work.

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:

The parcel has already been acquired by the City of Fairmont, which is listed under Fee Acquisition leveraged funds. The personnel funds will be paid for by the City of Fairmont.

Does this proposal have the ability to be scalable? - No

Output Tables

Table 1a. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	5	28	0	0	33
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	2	0	0	2
Total	5	30	0	0	35

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	2
Total	2

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$1,308,400	\$61,600	\$0	\$0	\$1,370,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000
Total	\$1,308,400	\$81,600	\$0	\$0	\$1,390,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	33	0	33
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	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	2	0	2
Total	0	0	0	35	0	35

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,370,000	\$0	\$1,370,000
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	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,000	\$0	\$20,000
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,390,000	\$0	\$1,390,000

Table 5. Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats
Restore	\$261,680	\$2,200	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$10,000	\$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	\$41,515	\$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	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,000	\$0

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

0

I have read and understand Section 15 of the Constitution of the State of Minnesota, Minnesota Statute 97A.056, and the Call for Funding Request. I certify I am authorized to submit this proposal and to the best of my knowledge the information provided is true and accurate.

Parcel List

Explain the process used to select, rank and prioritize the parcels:

Not Listed

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

Martin

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
City of Fairmont Parcel	10230219	35	\$0	Yes

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type protect.

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

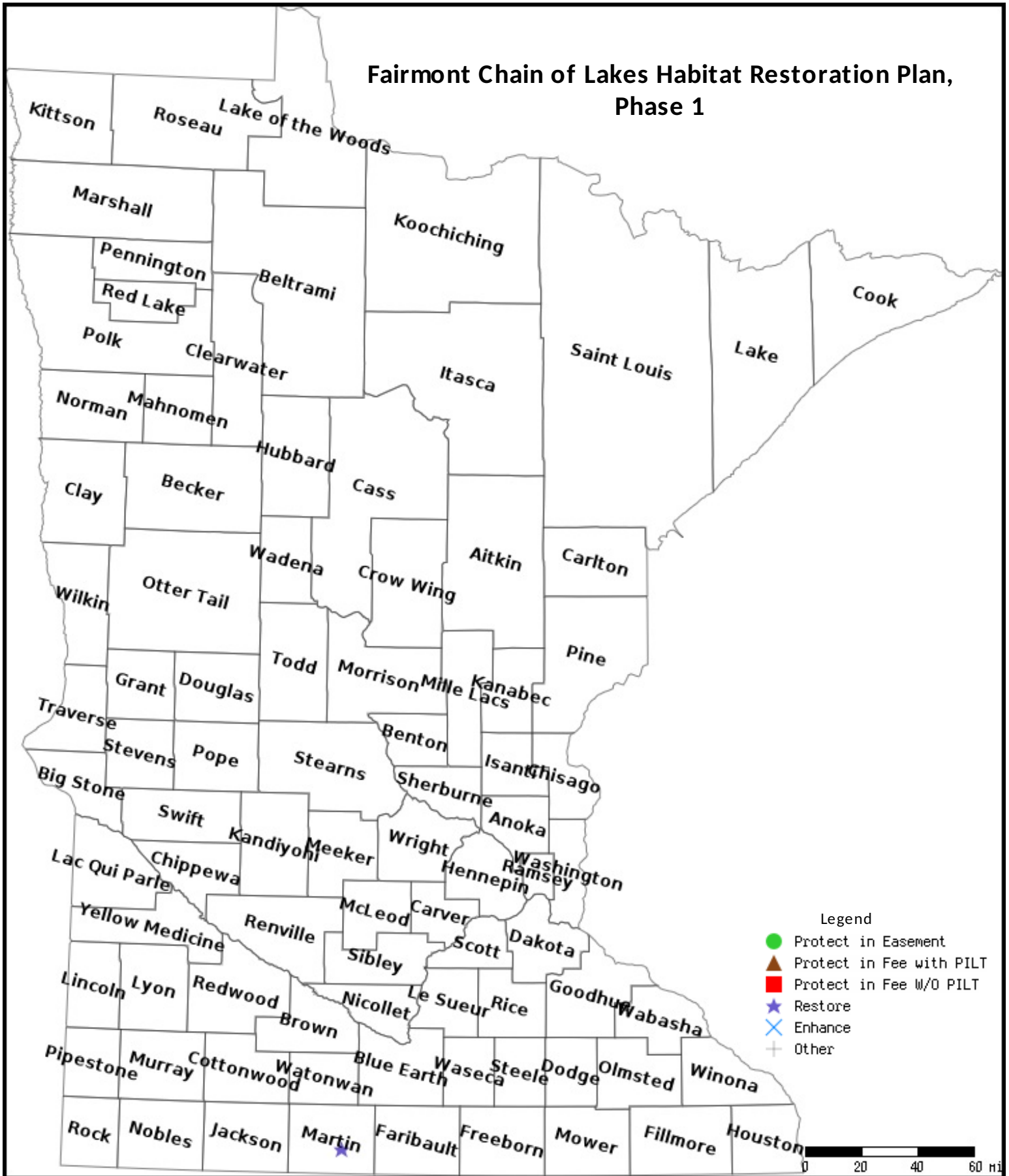
No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

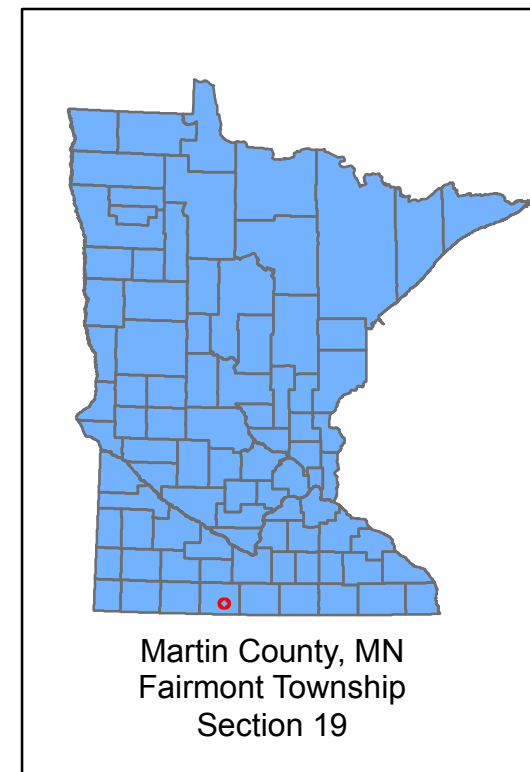
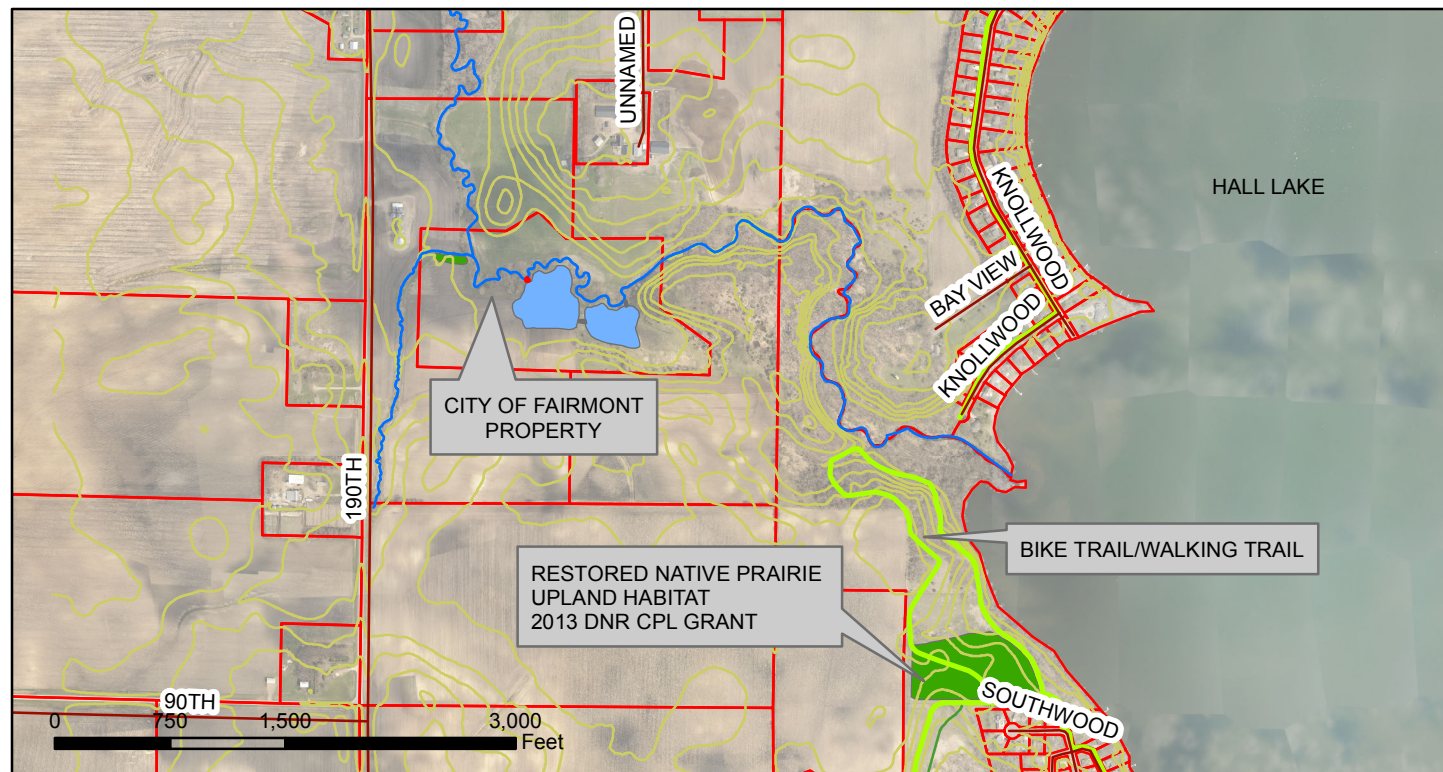
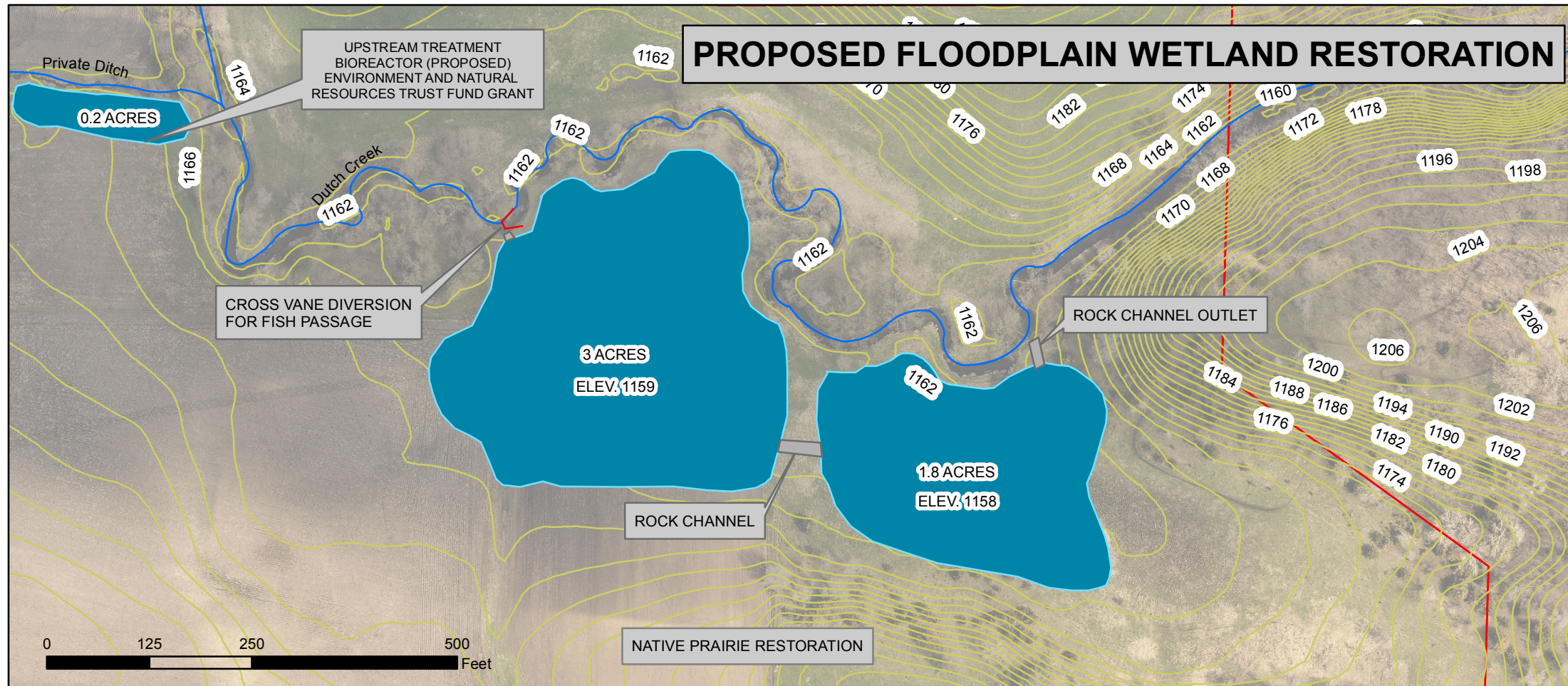
Parcel Map

Fairmont Chain of Lakes Habitat Restoration Plan, Phase 1



Data Generated From Parcel List

Fairmont Chain of Lakes Habitat Restoration Plan, Phase 1



Rock Cross Vane with Diversion



**MINNESOTA
SOIL and WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

May 30, 2018

Troy Nemmers
City of Fairmont
100 Downtown Plaza
Fairmont, MN 56031

Dear Troy,

Martin Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) would like to express its support for the City of Fairmont's Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council application. Martin SWCD has a long history of working with the City of Fairmont and we hope to continue that partnership under this project.

The proposed enhancement will not only provide additional fish, game, and wildlife habitat in Martin County, but will also provide educational opportunities for Martin County residents. This proposal is a true example of conservation implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Judy Beckman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judy Beckman
Chair
Martin Soil and Water Conservation District



To: Whom It May Concern

From: Michael J. Katzenmeyer
Chair
Fairmont Lakes Foundation, Inc.

Date: May 29, 2018

Re: Grant Application/ Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

I am writing to you as one of the organizations in support of, and in partnership with the City of Fairmont in their effort to attain funding to support restoring and reconnecting two flood plain wetlands along Dutch Creek, which flows into the Fairmont Chain of Lakes reservoir.

Our organization was chartered as an advocate voice for the Fairmont Chain of Lakes. We have seen the deterioration of spawning beds for our native fish. We have witnessed the harmful destruction of adjacent wetlands and the subsequent pollution which has had devastating effects on our fish populations and recreational use of our lakes.

We, the Board of Directors for Fairmont Lakes Foundation, Inc., humbly request your support in granting us the requested funding so collectively we may began our direly needed restoration project for Dutch Creek.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Katzenmeyer