



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Minnesota River Watershed Habitat Conservation Program  
Laws of Minnesota 2025 Accomplishment Plan

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### General Information

**Date:** 12/17/2024

**Project Title:** Minnesota River Watershed Habitat Conservation Program

**Funds Recommended:** \$3,148,000

**Legislative Citation:** ML 2025, Ch. XXX, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd. 5(j)

**Appropriation Language:**

### Manager Information

**Manager's Name:** Brad Gordon

**Title:** Associate Conservation Director

**Organization:** Great River Greening

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### Location Information

**County Location(s):** Le Sueur, Brown, Redwood and Nicollet.

**Eco regions in which work will take place:**

- Metro / Urban
- Prairie

**Activity types:**

- Enhance
- Protect in Easement
- Restore
- Protect in Fee

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

- Forest
- Habitat
- Prairie

**Narrative****Abstract**

Funding for conservation in the Minnesota River watershed has been applied unevenly to date, with some priorities receiving significant funding resulting in enormous conservation outcomes; others far less. The Minnesota River Watershed Habitat Conservation Program brings a holistic approach to conservation action within the watershed, targeting resources/actions where they are needed most – priorities insufficiently funded. Great River Greening and Minnesota Land Trust will target action within priority areas identified in Minnesota’s Wildlife Action Network, emphasizing Species in Greatest Conservation Need, protecting 205 acres through conservation easements and in fee, and enhancing 259 acres of priority habitat.

**Design and Scope of Work**

The Minnesota River watershed covers 20% of the state’s land area, stretching from the South Dakota and Iowa borders to the Twin Cities Metro area. Historically, the watershed traversed a great variety of ecosystems ranging from prairies and prairie pothole regions of western and southern portions to Big Woods and oak savanna in the east. Scattered throughout these major systems were over three million acres of wetlands and lakes.

That historic natural landscape is greatly diminished. While prairie once covered one-third of Minnesota, only 1% remains. Over 90% of wetlands have been drained, 80-85% of the historic Big Woods are lost, and rock outcrops in the region were targeted for mineral extraction. This loss of habitat has had profound impacts on Minnesota’s native species. More than 140 Species in Greatest Conservation Need are known or expected to occur within the watershed.

Protecting these habitats, improving the condition of what remains, and rebuilding connectivity between remnants is key for ensuring the long-term viability of these systems and Minnesota’s SGCN. This is the goal of our program.

To date, significant investment through the Outdoor Heritage Fund has been delivered to portions of the Minnesota River watershed. The Metro Big Rivers partnership has achieved significant outcomes in the lower reaches of the Minnesota River near the Twin Cities. A variety of funded programs – led by Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Minnesota Land Trust and others – have been successful in delivering conservation in the western portions of the watershed. Program partners Great River Greening (GRG) and Minnesota Land Trust (MLT) will bring their respective expertise to bear in elevating conservation impact across the watershed, but focusing primarily in the central portion of the watershed where conservation investment through the Outdoor Heritage Fund (and other sources) has been minor relative to upstream and downstream areas, and overall insufficient relative to the need.

Greening will work with the DNR, counties, Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to undertake targeted habitat improvement projects on existing protected lands. Greening was approached by state and county land managers to address the greatest present threats to protected lands within the watershed - cedar and invasives encroachment and a lack of diversity to support SGCN. Greening

will enhance 259 acres on 3 state Wildlife Management Areas and 1 county park Le Sueur, Redwood, and Nicollet counties.

The Land Trust will protect 176 acres of wetlands, rock outcrops, riparian forest, prairies, prairie streams and associated upland habitat through conservation easements, and 29 acres through fee acquisition. Using MLT's uniquely flexible conservation easement, priority parcels within Minnesota's State Wildlife Action Network or that build off prior conservation investments. The Land Trust will use its market-based approach to conservation easements that incentivizes landowner contributions of easement value as leverage to funding through the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

### **Explain how the plan addresses habitat protection, restoration, and/or enhancement for fish, game & wildlife, including threatened or endangered species conservation**

The Minnesota River Watershed Habitat Conservation Program directly benefits SGCN and other important game and non-game species by minimizing the potential threats to their habitat caused by agricultural practices, residential or commercial development, mining, and other land management activities. Habitat complexes targeted through this proposal will include prairies, wetlands, woodlands, and rock outcrops. Priority projects will include high- or outstanding-quality habitat as identified in Minnesota Biological Survey data or otherwise located within priority areas of Minnesota's Wildlife Action Network. We will seek to build off prior conservation investments, prioritizing projects located near other protected lands to create larger habitat complexes to the benefit of SGCN.

The vast majority of this landscape is in private ownership. For that reason, working with private landowners on land protection strategies is key to successful conservation in this region. We will work closely with conservation partners in the region to identify those habitat complexes where private land protection can make a significant contribution to existing conservation investments.

We will work to improve lower-quality habitats on state, county, and permanent easement parcels to the benefit of SGCN. Some examples:

- While protected, some public lands are in need of cedar or buckthorn control, and lack the diversity of vegetation needed for SGCNs, including skipper butterflies, grasshopper and Henslow's sparrow, western meadowlarks, and more.
- Reintroductions of regal fritillary are underway on state lands, but the supporting vegetation must be reestablished for these efforts to succeed. Great River Greening will plant 8,000 prairie violets on an 89-acre Wildlife Management Area (WMA) along with tree removal and prairie plantings on adjacent permanent easements in preparation for reintroduction by the DNR.
- Near the Lower Minnesota River Valley Conservation Focus Area, one county parcel and a wildlife management area will receive buckthorn removal and understory enhancement of big woods and oak savanna habitat. These efforts will enhance habitat for species like the Acadian flycatcher, cerulean warbler, hooded warbler, prothonotary warbler, wood thrush, Blanchard's cricket frog, and others.

### **What are the elements of this plan that are critical from a timing perspective?**

Land prices have skyrocketed in recent years, and along with that an increasing demand for agricultural land, mineral deposits, and housing sites. With natural habitat within the Minnesota River watershed already minimized through historic land uses, these demands are placing an inordinate pressure on those that remain. It is more important than ever to protect what remains of the prairies, wetlands, savannas, and forests in the Minnesota River watershed. A short window of opportunity exists to permanently protect previously unavailable parcels as current landownership is transitioning from one generation to the next.

Insufficient financial investment into some priority areas for restoration and enhancement is also having an impact. Cedar coverage is increasing by 200-300% in just ten years on many rock outcrops and prairies with costs to remove them correlating with the coverage; their expansion continues to reduce habitat quality for SGCNs.

### **Describe how the plan expands habitat corridors or complexes and/or addresses habitat fragmentation:**

This program is focused on procuring conservation easements and restoring prairie, woodland, rock outcrop, and wetland habitats within priority complexes of habitat as guided by Minnesota's State Wildlife Action Plan and Prairie Plan.

The Land Trust's protection work will build upon past conservation investments in the program area, expand the footprint of existing protected areas (WMAs, WPAs, etc.), facilitate the protection of habitat corridors, and reduce the potential for fragmentation of existing habitats by providing landowners with alternatives to land uses that degrade or destroy habitat. Specific parcels available for easement acquisition are evaluated relative to each other, with priorities given to those that are adjacent or in close proximity to existing protected lands (among other factors).

Many of the remaining native prairies, forests, and wetlands of the watershed where GRG will perform restoration and enhancement activities are concentrated around unique landforms and steep slopes in the river valleys such as on rock outcrops and ridges making these habitats priority protection and enhancement areas within an existing corridor. Fragmentation created by invasive and woody species like reed canary grass and red cedar further leads to an urgent need for enhancement and natural disturbance management to restore those corridors. Great River Greening also utilizes the Wildlife Action Network and Minnesota County Biological Survey data and proximity to known populations of SGCN to identify priorities for enhancement and restoration work. Within the watershed are 6 of the 36 Conservation Focus Areas identified by Minnesota's Wildlife Action Network in Minnesota, and 6 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) identified by Audubon. Activities on the prioritized sites will improve and expand high-value habitat.

### **Which top 2 Conservation Plans referenced in MS97A.056, subd. 3a are most applicable to this project?**

- Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan
- Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan 2015-2025

### **Explain how this plan will uniquely address habitat resilience to climate change and its anticipated effects on game, fish & wildlife species utilizing the protected or restored/enhanced habitat this proposal targets.**

We work in climate-resilient areas, prioritize lands that increase connectivity and build habitat complexes, and select vegetation for plantings taking into account current climate adaptation models. This approach provides the best opportunities to reverse the decline in biodiversity caused by habitat loss and degradation, maintain biodiversity over the long-term, and provide high-quality natural areas that support the ability of wildlife to move and adapt to stressors, including those accelerated by a changing climate.

On applicable tree removal sites, GRG will utilize biochar kilns to dispose of woody material. These kilns store 50% of carbon for centuries on the site rather than releasing that carbon. Following the removal of woody material, GRG will ensure the ground is covered with diverse native communities adapted to the local climate based on current and emerging climate models.

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

### Metro / Urban

- Protect habitat corridors, with emphasis on the Minnesota, Mississippi, and St. Croix rivers (bluff to floodplain)

### Prairie

- Protect, enhance, and restore remnant native prairie, Big Woods forests, and oak savanna

## Outcomes

### Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- Core areas protected with highly biologically diverse wetlands and plant communities, including native prairie, Big Woods, and oak savanna ~ *Success will be determined based on the acreage of lands protected, restored, and enhanced.*

### Programs in prairie region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced habitat for migratory and unique Minnesota species ~ *Parcels are prioritized relative to their benefit to SGCN (among other factors). Success will be determined based on the acreage of lands protected, restored, and enhanced.*

## Per MS 97A.056, Subd. 24, Please explain 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.

This request is not supplanting or substituting for any previous funding that was not from a legacy fund and was used for the same purpose.

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

Land protected through MLT conservation easements will be sustained through state-of-the-art standards and practices for conservation easement stewardship that includes annual property monitoring, effective records management, addressing inquiries and interpretations, tracking changes in ownership, investigating potential violations and defending the easement in case of a true violation. Funding for these easement stewardship activities is included in the project budget.

In addition, MLT will complete habitat management plans to guide landowners in the management of habitat to the benefit of wildlife and water quality benefits. MLT (as easement holder) will work with landowners on an ongoing basis to provide habitat restoration plans, resources and technical expertise to undertake restoration, enhancement and ongoing management of these properties.

For Restoration and Enhancement (R/E) on protected land, site-specific resource management plans will be developed/adopted to guide effective long-term management. All land managers benefitting from R/E must commit to the long-term maintenance of these sites. A principal goal for each site is to elevate its ecological condition so that on-going management is financially feasible after a grant closes. For the sites and programs that use volunteers, community volunteer engagement promotes an increase in community stakeholders.

## Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2030 and in perpetuity	MLT Long-Term Stewardship and Enforcement Fund	Annual monitoring of easements in perpetuity	Enforcement as necessary	-
2028	GRG - OHF	Continue R/E and begin stewardship. Target actions to maintain habitat.	Restorative action to correct damage as needed	Evaluate progress and determine if additional actions are needed
2027	GRG - OHF	Initiate R/E work	Continue R/E depending on appropriate methods and time of year	Continue R/E and begin stewardship as needed using appropriate methods and dependent on time of year
2026	GRG-OHF	Perform site evaluation and assessment in collaboration with DNR	Develop R/E plan for property. Begin monitoring	Initiate site preparation from R/E work. Continue monitoring

### Provide an assessment of how your program celebrates cultural diversity or reaches diverse communities in Minnesota, including reaching low- and moderate-income households:

Protecting, restoring, and enhancing diverse and resilient habitat benefits all Minnesotans. It keeps our air and water cleaner, mitigates the impacts of climate change, and conserves the biological diversity that belongs to everyone. Public land provides an opportunity for recreation and health to those who do not have access to private natural lands, whether that be for hunting, fishing, hiking, or other outdoor pursuits.

Great River Greening involves, engages, and seeks to benefit diverse communities through focused events that leverage Outdoor Heritage Funds in their programs. Our partners actively encourage residents who live near habitat restoration sites and create programs specifically for people from diverse backgrounds opening up opportunities such as GRG's Engaging a Diverse Population Program.

One of the MLT's core public values is a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We have been engaged in a multi-year-long process to assess how the conservation community—and the Minnesota Land Trust in particular—can better address these issues. To date, we have demonstrated this commitment, when possible, given the funding parameters and our unique role in working with private landowners, including numerous projects to protect the camps and nature centers that serve a diversity of Minnesota youth and a long-term partnership with the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa on wild rice restoration. Recently, we responded to a request from the Yankton Sioux Tribe and the National Park Service to assist with providing increased protection to Pipestone National Monument, and its unparalleled natural and sacred features. We will explore and seek opportunities

Going forward, GRG and MLT intend to build on this engagement using diversity, equity, and inclusion as a lens to seek out new partnerships, listening to those partners, and collaborating on actions that advance the goals of conserving the best of Minnesota's remaining habitats. We are eager to expand this important work in a way that more directly, and authentically, engages diverse communities and partners in an equitable and just manner.

## Activity Details

### Requirements

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

Yes

**Will county board or other local government approval be formally sought\*\* prior to acquisition, per 97A.056 subd 13(j)?**

No

**Describe any measures to inform local governments of land acquisition under their jurisdiction:**

We will follow the county/township board notification processes as directed by current statutory language.

**Is the land you plan to acquire (fee title) free of any other permanent protection?**

Yes

**Is the land you plan to acquire (easement) free of any other permanent protection?**

Yes

**Who will manage the easement?**

Minnesota Land Trust

**Who will be the easement holder?**

Minnesota Land Trust

**What is the anticipated number of easements (range is fine) you plan to accomplish with this appropriation?**

3-6

**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 or on lands to be acquired in this program?**

Yes

**Where does the activity take place?**

- WMA
- Permanently Protected Conservation Easements
- County/Municipal

### Land Use

**Will there be planting of any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program, either by the proposer or the end owner of the property, outside of the initial restoration of the land?**

Yes

**Explain what will be planted and include the maximum percentage of any acquired parcel that would be planted into foodplots by the proposer or the end owner of the property:**

The purpose of the Minnesota Land Trust's conservation easements is to protect and restore/enhance



existing high quality natural habitat and to preserve opportunities for future restoration. We restrict agricultural lands and use on the properties. In cases where there are agricultural lands associated with the larger property, we will either exclude the agricultural area from the conservation easement, or in some limited cases, we may target agricultural lands for restoration purposes. In these limited cases, crops may be planted to prepare for restoration activities.

**Will insecticides or fungicides (including neonicotinoid and fungicide treated seed) be used within any activities of this program either in the process of restoration or use as food plots?**

No

**Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing?**

No

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

Yes

**Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:**

No variation from state regulations.

**Who will eventually own the fee title land?**

- State of MN
- County

**Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:**

- WMA
- AMA
- Other

**What is the anticipated number of closed acquisitions (range is fine) you plan to accomplish with this appropriation?**

1

**Will the eased land be open for public use?**

No

**Are there currently trails or roads on any of the proposed acquisitions?**

Yes

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

Most conservation easements are established on private lands, many of which have driveways, field roads, and trails located on them. Often, the conservation easement permits the continued usage of established trails and roads so long as their use does not significantly impact the conservation values of the property. Creation of new roads/trails or expansion of existing ones is typically not allowed.

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

Yes



**How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?**

Existing trails and roads are identified in the project baseline report and will be monitored annually as part of the MLT's stewardship and enforcement protocols. Maintenance of permitted roads/trails in accordance with the terms of the easement will be the responsibility of the landowner.

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

No

**Will the acquired parcels be restored or enhanced within this appropriation?**

No

The Land Trust will assess the R/E needs of each parcel protected through this appropriation. Should R/E needs exist, funding for those projects will be built into a forthcoming proposal.

**Will the land that you acquire (fee or easement) be restored or enhanced within this program's funding and availability?**

No

**Explain how, when, and source of the R/E work:**

The Land Trust will assess the R/E needs of each parcel protected through this appropriation. Should R/E needs exist, funding for those projects will be built into a forthcoming proposal.

**Timeline**

<b>Activity Name</b>	<b>Estimated Completion Date</b>
Restoration and enhancement completed	June 30, 2030
Conservation easements completed	June 30, 2029
Finalize restoration and enhancement plans	June 30, 2026

**Date of Final Report Submission:** 11/01/2030

**Availability of Appropriation:** Subd. 7. Availability of Appropriation

(a) Money appropriated in this section may not be spent on activities unless they are directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation and are specified in the accomplishment plan approved by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. Money appropriated in this section must not be spent on indirect costs or other institutional overhead charges that are not directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation. Money appropriated for fee title acquisition of land may be used to restore, enhance, and provide for public use of the land acquired with the appropriation. Public-use facilities must have a minimal impact on habitat in acquired lands.

(b) Money appropriated in this section is available as follows:

- (1) money appropriated for acquiring real property is available until June 30, 2029;
- (2) money appropriated for restoring and enhancing land acquired with an appropriation in this section is available for four years after the acquisition date with a maximum end date of June 30, 2033;
- (3) money appropriated for restoring or enhancing other land is available until June 30, 2030;
- (4) notwithstanding clauses (1) to (3), money appropriated for a project that receives at least 15 percent of its funding from federal funds is available until a date sufficient to match the availability of federal funding to a maximum of six years if the federal funding was confirmed and included in the original approved draft accomplishment plan; and
- (5) money appropriated for other projects is available until the end of the fiscal year in which it is appropriated.

**Budget**

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

**Grand Totals Across All Partnerships**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Funding Request</b>	<b>Leverage</b>	<b>Leverage Source</b>	<b>Total</b>
Personnel	\$385,000	-	-	\$385,000
Contracts	\$1,003,000	-	-	\$1,003,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$283,000	-	-	\$283,000
Easement Acquisition	\$839,000	\$80,000	Landowners	\$919,000
Easement Stewardship	\$168,000	-	-	\$168,000
Travel	\$31,000	-	-	\$31,000
Professional Services	\$171,000	-	-	\$171,000
Direct Support Services	\$117,000	\$70,000	-, Private	\$187,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$6,500	-	-	\$6,500
Supplies/Materials	\$144,500	-	-	\$144,500
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$3,148,000</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	-	<b>\$3,298,000</b>

**Partner: Great River Greening**

**Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$205,000	-	-	\$205,000
Contracts	\$951,000	-	-	\$951,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	\$21,000	-	-	\$21,000
Professional Services	-	-	-	-
Direct Support Services	\$68,000	\$70,000	Private	\$138,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$6,000	-	-	\$6,000
Supplies/Materials	\$144,000	-	-	\$144,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,395,000</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>	-	<b>\$1,465,000</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
GRG Staff (Ecologist, technicians, etc.)	0.42	5.0	\$205,000	-	-	\$205,000

**Partner: Minnesota Land Trust****Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$180,000	-	-	\$180,000
Contracts	\$52,000	-	-	\$52,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$283,000	-	-	\$283,000
Easement Acquisition	\$839,000	\$80,000	Landowners	\$919,000
Easement Stewardship	\$168,000	-	-	\$168,000
Travel	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Professional Services	\$171,000	-	-	\$171,000
Direct Support Services	\$49,000	-	-	\$49,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$500	-	-	\$500
Supplies/Materials	\$500	-	-	\$500
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,753,000</b>	<b>\$80,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,833,000</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
MLT Protection Staff	0.45	4.0	\$180,000	-	-	\$180,000

**Amount of Request:** \$3,148,000

**Amount of Leverage:** \$150,000

**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 4.76%

**DSS + Personnel:** \$502,000

**As a % of the total request:** 15.95%

**Easement Stewardship:** \$168,000

**As a % of the Easement Acquisition:** 20.02%

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

The number of projects and acres have been reduced moderately greater than proportional due to fixed costs and other factors. Activities have been curtailed, but greater than proportional, as some activities are fixed and necessary for program success.

**Detail leverage sources and confirmation of funds:**

Leverage includes anticipated donated easement value by landowners (MLT) along with committed and anticipated partner and other private funds (GRG).

**Does this project have the ability to be scalable?**

Yes

## If the project received 50% of the requested funding

### **Describe how the scaling would affect acres/activities and if not proportionately reduced, why?**

Acre scaling will be reduced moderately greater than proportional due to fixed costs and other factors. Activities will be curtailed, but greater than proportional, as some activities are fixed and necessary for program success.

### **Describe how personnel and DSS expenses would be adjusted and if not proportionately reduced, why?**

Personnel and DSS will be scaled, but moderately less than proportional. Some costs are fixed (landowner recruitment; grant management) and must occur regardless of grant amount. Projects can fail midstream after investment of time. Donation of easement value (high in this program) can inflate the number of projects pursued/completed.

## Personnel

### **Has funding for these positions been requested in the past?**

Yes

## Contracts

### **What is included in the contracts line?**

GRG- Enhancement contracts with service providers.

MLT- Habitat management plan preparation and landowner outreach by county SWCD offices

## Professional Services

### **What is included in the Professional Services line?**

- Appraisals
- Design/Engineering
- Other : Phase 1 Environmental Review, Minerals Reports, and Mapping
- Surveys
- Title Insurance and Legal Fees

## Fee Acquisition

### **What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?**

1

## Easement Stewardship

### **What is the number of easements anticipated, cost per easement for stewardship, and explain how that amount is calculated?**

Minnesota Land Trust's budget is based on the closing of 3-6 conservation easements based on size and cost. The average cost per easement to fund the Minnesota Land Trust's perpetual monitoring and enforcement obligations is \$28,000. This figure is derived from MLT's detailed stewardship funding "cost analysis" which is consistent with Land Trust Accreditation standards. MLT shares periodic updates to this cost analysis with LSOHC staff

## Travel

**Does the amount in the travel line include equipment/vehicle rental?**

Yes

**Explain the amount in the travel line outside of traditional travel costs of mileage, food, and lodging**

N/A

**I understand and agree that lodging, meals, and mileage must comply with the current MMB Commissioner Plan:**

Yes

## Direct Support Services

**How did you determine which portions of the Direct Support Services of your shared support services is direct to this program?**

GRG – As approved by the DNR in September 2023, GRG's DSS rate includes the allowable direct and necessary expenditures that are not captured in other line items in the budget. A portion not exceeding 50% of these costs are requested from the grant and the balance is contributed as leverage.

MLT - In a process approved by the DNR on March 17, 2017, MLT's DSS rate includes the allowable direct and necessary expenditures that are not captured in other line items in the budget. This is similar to the MLT's proposed federal indirect rate. MLT will apply this DNR-approved rate only to personnel expenses.

## Other Equipment/Tools

**Give examples of the types of Equipment and Tools that will be purchased?**

Hand tools, saws, brush cutters, GPS devices, safety gear and other necessary equipment to complete restoration and enhancement activities.

## Federal Funds

**Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program?**

No

Output Tables**Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	29	29
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	176	176
Enhance	-	235	24	-	259
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>235</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>464</b>

**How many of these Prairie acres are Native Prairie? (Table 1b)**

Type	Native Prairie (acres)
Restore	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-
Protect in Easement	-
Enhance	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

**Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$283,000	\$283,000
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	\$1,470,000	\$1,470,000
Enhance	-	\$1,130,000	\$265,000	-	\$1,395,000
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>\$1,130,000</b>	<b>\$265,000</b>	<b>\$1,753,000</b>	<b>\$3,148,000</b>

**Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	29	-	29
Protect in Easement	35	-	-	141	-	176
Enhance	-	-	-	259	-	259
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	-	-	<b>429</b>	-	<b>464</b>

**Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$283,000	-	\$283,000
Protect in Easement	\$300,000	-	-	\$1,170,000	-	\$1,470,000
Enhance	-	-	-	\$1,395,000	-	\$1,395,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>	-	-	<b>\$2,848,000</b>	-	<b>\$3,148,000</b>



**Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$9,758
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	\$8,352
Enhance	-	\$4,808	\$11,041	-

**Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$9,758	-
Protect in Easement	\$8,571	-	-	\$8,297	-
Enhance	-	-	-	\$5,386	-

**Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles**

0

## Parcels

### Parcel Information

#### Sign-up Criteria?

[Yes - Sign up criteria is attached](#)

#### Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:

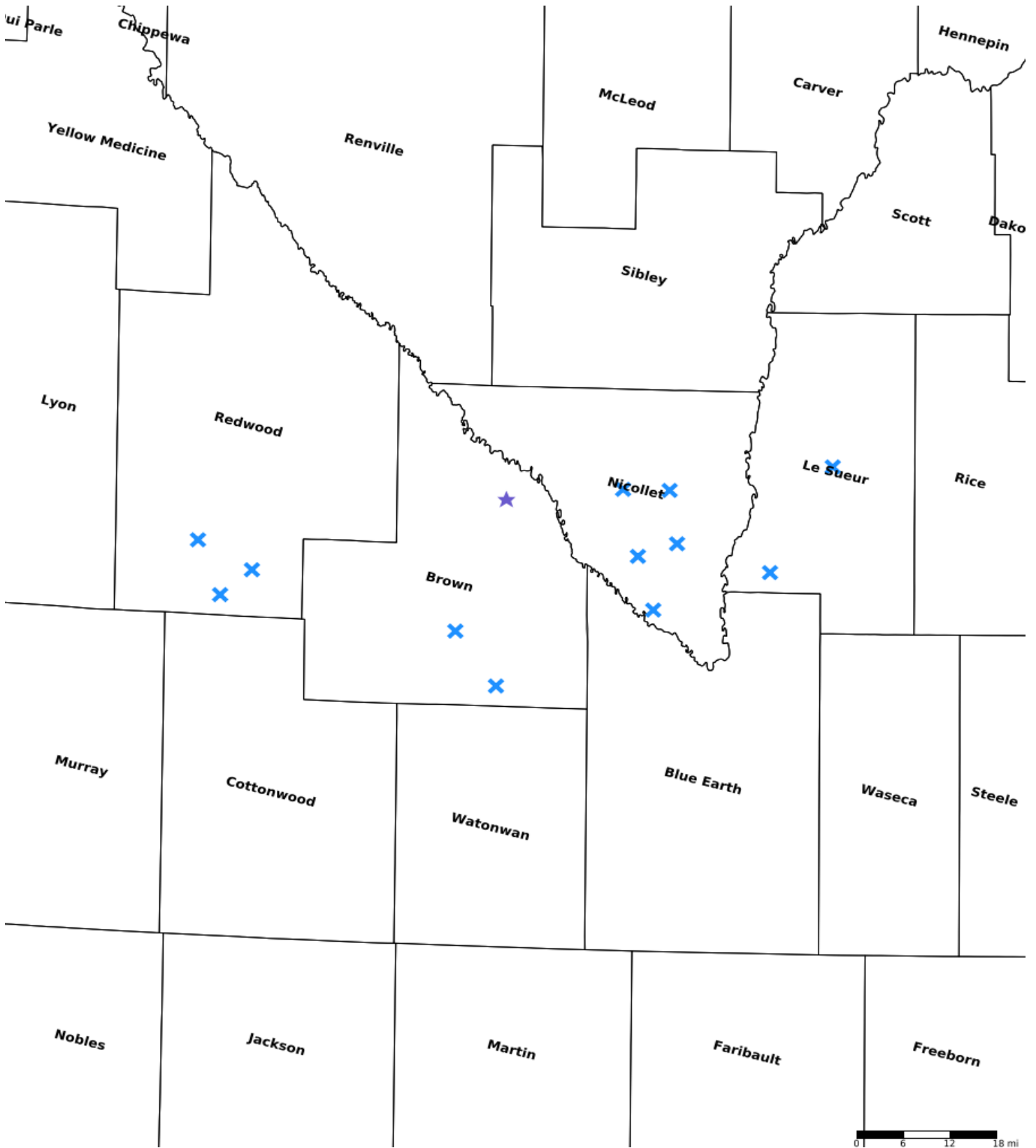
Great River Greening works with land owning entities (public and protected private) and interested stakeholders to identify parcels where there is a need for restoration or enhancement of lands and water resources. Parcels are selected using the following criteria: permanently protected status (WMA, AMA, SNA, Forestry, County Conservation, etc.), ecological and habitat value and potential (biodiversity, SGCN, size, and location), congruence with existing plans and priority areas, willing and committed landowners (demonstrated through leveraged match), and leveraging opportunities. The following table includes state WMA and county parcels.

The Land Trust uses a competitive, market-based approach through an RFP process to identify interested landowners and prioritize parcels for conservation easement acquisition. All proposals submitted by landowners are evaluated and ranked relative to their ecological significance based on three primary factors: 1) size of habitat on the parcel; 2) condition of habitat on the parcel; and 3) the context (both in terms of amount/quality of remaining habitat and protected areas) within which the parcel lies. We also ask the landowner to consider contributing all or a portion of fair market value to enable our funds to make a larger conservation impact (see attached sign-up criteria). Priority parcels will be added after the RFP process has concluded.

### Restore / Enhance Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Description
Rosenau-Lambrecht WMA	Brown	11031217	0	\$0	Yes	-
Southeast Hanska WMA	Brown	10831230	0	\$0	Yes	-
William A Groebner WMA	Brown	10832205	0	\$0	Yes	-
Bradshaw Woods	Le Sueur	11124232	24	\$265,000	Yes	Buckthorn removal and control in 24 acres of forest
Lake Washington Regional Park	Le Sueur	10926212	0	\$0	Yes	-
Swan Lake WMA - Duck Lake N	Nicollet	11028211	0	\$0	Yes	-
Swan Lake WMA - Little Lake	Nicollet	11028236	0	\$0	Yes	-
Swan Lake WMA - Nicollet Bay	Nicollet	10928206	0	\$0	Yes	-
Swan Lake WMA - North Star	Nicollet	10928228	50	\$368,000	Yes	Tree, shrub, and invasives removal across 50 acres of forest/oak savanna including cedar and Siberian elm removal, a small prescribed hillside burn, and reseeding
Swan Lake WMA - Peterson Lake	Nicollet	11029211	0	\$0	Yes	-
Gora Prairie WMA	Redwood	10937229	48	\$288,000	Yes	Siberian elm and other woody species removal on 48 acres of prairie
Lamberton WMA	Redwood	10937213	137	\$474,000	Yes	Planting 8,000 prairie violets and other diversity enhancement to prepare for regal fritillary on 89 acres; scattered tree removal and prairie seeding on 48 acres
Two Rivers WMA	Redwood	10938202	0	\$0	Yes	-

### Parcel Map





## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

### Minnesota River Watershed Habitat Conservation Program

#### Comparison Report

**Program Title:** ML 2025 - Minnesota River Watershed Habitat Conservation Program

**Organization:** Great River Greening

**Manager:** Brad Gordon

### Budget

**Requested Amount:** \$10,955,000

**Appropriated Amount:** \$3,148,000

**Percentage:** 28.74%

Item	Requested Proposal	Leverage Proposal	Appropriated AP	Leverage AP	Percent of Request	Percent of Leverage
Personnel	\$1,075,000	-	\$385,000	-	35.81%	-
Contracts	\$3,907,000	-	\$1,003,000	-	25.67%	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$300,000	-	\$283,000	-	94.33%	-
Easement Acquisition	\$4,000,000	\$400,000	\$839,000	\$80,000	20.97%	20.0%
Easement Stewardship	\$364,000	-	\$168,000	-	46.15%	-
Travel	\$101,000	-	\$31,000	-	30.69%	-
Professional Services	\$371,000	-	\$171,000	-	46.09%	-
Direct Support Services	\$231,000	\$357,000	\$117,000	\$70,000	50.65%	19.61%
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	\$25,000	-	\$6,500	-	26.0%	-
Supplies/Materials	\$581,000	-	\$144,500	-	24.87%	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$10,955,000</b>	<b>\$757,000</b>	<b>\$3,148,000</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>28.74%</b>	<b>19.82%</b>

#### **If the project received 70% of the requested funding**

**Describe how the scaling would affect acres/activities and if not proportionately reduced, why?**

Acre scaling will be reduced moderately greater than proportional due to fixed costs and other factors. Activities will be curtailed, but greater than proportional, as some activities are fixed and necessary for program success.

**Describe how personnel and DSS expenses would be adjusted and if not proportionately reduced, why?**

Personnel and DSS will be scaled, but moderately less than proportional. Some costs are fixed (landowner recruitment; grant management) and must occur regardless of grant amount. Projects can fail midstream after investment of time. Donation of easement value (high in this program) can inflate the number of projects pursued/completed.

**If the project received 50% of the requested funding**

**Describe how the scaling would affect acres/activities and if not proportionately reduced, why?**

Acre scaling will be moderately greater than proportional due to fixed costs and other factors. Activities will be curtailed, but greater than proportional, as some activities are fixed and necessary for program success.

**Describe how personnel and DSS expenses would be adjusted and if not proportionately reduced, why?**

Personnel and DSS will be scaled, but moderately less than proportional. Some costs are fixed (landowner recruitment; grant management) and must occur regardless of grant amount. Projects can fail midstream after investment of time. Donation of easement value (high in this program) can inflate the number of projects pursued/completed.

## Output

### Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	148	-	0.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	30	29	96.67%
Protect in Easement	880	176	20.0%
Enhance	859	259	30.15%

### Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	\$716,000	-	0.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	\$300,000	\$283,000	94.33%
Protect in Easement	\$5,244,000	\$1,470,000	28.03%
Enhance	\$4,695,000	\$1,395,000	29.71%

### Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	148	-	0.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	30	29	96.67%
Protect in Easement	880	176	20.0%
Enhance	859	259	30.15%

### Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Total Proposed	Total in AP	Percentage of Proposed
Restore	\$716,000	-	0.0%
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	\$300,000	\$283,000	94.33%
Protect in Easement	\$5,244,000	\$1,470,000	28.03%
Enhance	\$4,695,000	\$1,395,000	29.71%