



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Protecting Critical Habitat in Northeastern Minnesota while Balancing Sustainable Public Land Use
and Permanent Public Access Through a Community Land Trust Model
ML 2025 Request for Funding

General Information

Date: 06/03/2024

Proposal Title: Protecting Critical Habitat in Northeastern Minnesota while Balancing Sustainable Public Land Use and Permanent Public Access Through a Community Land Trust Model

Funds Requested: \$810,500

Confirmed Leverage Funds: \$30,000

Is this proposal Scalable?: No

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Rumbidzai Faith Masawi

Title: Executive Director

Organization: Land Access Alliance

Address: 6145 Lax Lake Road

City: Finland, MN 55603

Email: info@landaccessalliance.org

Office Number: 218-606-2831

Mobile Number: 218-606-2831

Fax Number:

Website: www.landaccessalliance.org

Location Information

County Location(s): Lake.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Northern Forest

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Forest
- Wetlands

Narrative

Abstract

Land Access Alliance, a public land access-focused non-profit, proposes the purchase of a 110-acre parcel of North Shore Highlands, located in a rapidly developing area in Northern Lake County. LAA proposes the protection of this parcel via a toolkit of fee acquisition and easements that would uphold the parcel as publicly accessible land, managed through community control, as a protected resource enshrining the critical waterways and forests that define the land as conserved indefinitely. Land Access Alliance anticipates the purchase of these lands in July 2025, with conservation easements and other protections in place by June 2026.

Design and Scope of Work

Northeastern Minnesota (Cook and Lake Counties) is experiencing rapid development of forest lands due to increasing demand for short-term vacation rentals. A 2023 article from the Cook County Assessor describes the magnitude of development that residents know is happening: “The average sale price is up 59.87% from transactions affecting the 2023 assessment, compared to the 2021 assessment; The median sale price is up 25.33% from transactions affecting the 2023 assessment, compared to the 2021 assessment; residential transactions over a million dollars is exponentially higher, there were 14 transactions [...] in 2021, 2022 and the early part of 2023, there were only eight in the ten years prior.”

With almost no methods of direct public control of land conservation, the small population of long-term residents must resort to creative solutions for land acquisition that preserve public access to Northern forests, wetlands, lakes, and waterways. Land Access Alliance (LAA) is a public non-profit working at the nexus of the land development and conservation quandary in Northeastern Minnesota. Formed by a group of Northeastern Minnesota residents coming from a diverse background of farmers, foragers, land sovereignty advocates, and proponents of conservation, LAA holds a collective goal of holding large parcels of land in trust using conservation easements as a tool to enshrine public access and conservation of land in perpetuity. LAA builds on the momentum of the larger land access movement nationwide. There is a cultural shift in the land, history, and race narrative. The 2017 USDA Census of Agriculture shows a distinct lack of diversity in who is stewarding land in America: 64% of our country's food producers are men, and 95.4% of landowners are white. Racial and gender representation is lacking in this sector of American society, and without diversity, we lose practices and relationships with the land that protects natural resources. LAA seeks to provide access for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People Of Color) foragers and farmers who experience systemic barriers to land access and leverage land access to facilitate food sovereignty, restore the human relationship to the land, and conserve existing habitats.

Beyond access to farmland, Northeastern Minnesota's development pressure has critical implications for our natural resources of fish, game, wildlife, and their diverse habitats. The area of North Shore Highlands that covers our project area is one of the most important hubs of biodiversity, migratory bird habitat, and overall critical habitat in Minnesota. The Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan identifies the area as highly sensitive and of the highest priority for conservation. The same plan indicates that generative solutions collaboratively led by nonprofits, governments, and townships will help protect these critical habitats by acquiring and protecting lands through fee acquisition and/or conservation easements. Understanding the multilayered challenges of conservation and sustainable land use for food sovereignty, Land Access Alliance proposes to purchase a 120-acre parcel, with 110 acres protected via conservation easement for mixed recreational and minimal agricultural use. The purchase and protection process will occur from 2024 to 2026.

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

The project proposes purchasing 110 acres of North Shore Highlands ecological subsection of Minnesota, classified as an outstanding biodiversity site. The use of land proposed by the project, principally conservation easements, will serve as habitat protection for the 84 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) that occur in the North Shore Highlands, including mammals, birds, amphibians, fish, insects, mammals, mollusks, and reptiles. This ecological subsection and the town of Finland (where the parcel is located) is one of the most important and visible migratory corridors for songbirds and raptors in the entire Midwest as birds pass along the North Shore and over Hawk Ridge every fall. Seventy-three percent of Species of Greatest Conservation Need that inhabit the North Shore Highlands are experiencing habitat loss, and eighty-three percent are experiencing habitat degradation. Thus, the preservation of any private lands makes a critical difference in a habitat that is only 25 miles wide. This parcel proposed for purchase also contains two critical forest habitats that sustain SGCN populations; Upland and Lowland Coniferous Forests are the primary forests on the land. In addition to critical forest habitats, this parcel proposed for purchase and protection contains an important body of water that serves as a habitat for aquatic species, Sawmill Creek. The Sawmill Creek is a designated trout stream that runs parallel to County Road 6 and is an important tributary of the Baptism River. It is an important habitat for Brook Trout, which use these waters as spawning grounds and cooler refuge under shaded banks in the summer months. According to the One Watershed One Plan, the Baptism River Watershed is an area of high conservation priority as it includes high-quality natural areas, areas of high biological significance, Tettegouche State Park, is susceptible to groundwater contamination, and vulnerable catchments. Overall, the forest and aquatic habitats would be protected through conservation easements to ensure the continuation of SGCN populations, with sustainable public use still available.

What are the elements of this proposal that are critical from a timing perspective?

Lake County experiences high development pressure, and real estate transactions signify this pressure. From 2008 through 2016, 126 warranty deeds were recorded in the Lake County Records. From 2016 through the today, 237 warranty deeds were recorded, showing an 88 percent increase. Properties sell quickly and above the asking price. Residents have surmised the pressure of development, and the evidence in land use permit issuance reflects this belief; in 2021, 429 land use permits were issued in Lake County compared to 298 in the previous year, the highest number recorded since the record system was created in 1976. Considering this pressure, the next two years are a critical time to acquire land to ensure that these lands remain critical habitats open for public access in perpetuity. The owner has indicated that they are receiving multiple offers to subdivide the parcel; however, they would prefer to keep the parcel whole.

Describe how the proposal expands habitat corridors or complexes and/or addresses habitat fragmentation:

The proposed property is currently privately owned and is not encumbered by any conservation easements or public access requirements. Supporting the conversation goals of this project is the adjoining property to the southwest of the parcel to be purchased. The adjoining 2,000 acres are owned and managed by Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center, a non-profit whose mission is to “Develop a citizenry that has the knowledge, skills, motivation, and commitment to work together for a quality environment.” The connectedness of the Wolf Ridge campus and the purchase of the parcel would allow for habitat continuity of 66 total species of Insectivores, Bats, Carnivores, Toads and frogs, Salamanders, and Snakes, many of which are species of greatest conservation need. Additionally, the Minnesota Land Trust is actively pursuing conservation easements on Sawmill Creek with neighboring landowners, signifying the potential for continuously preserving the stream habitat through private land ownership. According to Wolf Ridge naturalist Joe Waleski, the parcel would expand a habitat corridor present in the Sawmill Creek Valley that is home to rare Canada Plums, Carolina Spring Beauties, and Blue Cohosh.

The valley is a micro-region that is home to many species that inhabit Wolf Ridge land including Golden-wing warbler, Peregrine Falcon, Ghost Pipe, Yellow-Banded Bumblebee, Moose, Grouse, Yellow Warbler, Red-winged Blackbird, Swamp Sparrow, Robin, White-throated Sparrow, Chestnut-sided warbler, Ovenbird, American Redstart, Sandpiper, and Brown Thrasher. Many of these species are rare or threatened. The northern slope of the highland area is ecologically important for rare species of lichen. The cleared fields that occupy the front 10 acres of the parcel are a rare habitat for Northern Minnesota; this habitat is important for Sandhill Cranes, Geese, and Bluebirds. The parcel would expand an expansive habitat for wild edibles at Wolf Ridge, including a 30-acre wild leek patch, abundant mushrooms, ferns, medicinal plants, and trout fishing. Further, the swamp and creek area has the potential to expand the habitat for trout, particularly with cedar tree plantings, restoring the ecosystem to conditions that have become rare since the logging and settling of this area.

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

- Minnesota Statewide Conservation & Preservation Plan
- Superior National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan

Explain how this proposal 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.

Biodiversity is critical to climate change resiliency. In repeatable studies, biodiversity is a keystone to habitat resiliency in the face of climate change; without species diversity, habitats cannot withstand the extreme effects of climate change. Fortunately, Northeastern Minnesota and the North Shore Highlands we seek to protect through this proposal have immense biodiversity; it is simply up to the humans who manage the land to preserve this biodiversity. Land Access Alliance works from a unique environmental justice framework, seeking justice for the wildlife and humans targeted by environmental degradation and pollution. LAA seeks to build a co-resiliency of humans and habitat in the face of climate change by holding land in conservation protection to maintain biodiversity while also allowing public use of lands for food sovereignty under the guidance of covenants that ensure coexistence and conservation of the natural habitat.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal?

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

Describe how this project/program will produce and demonstrate a significant and permanent conservation legacy and/or outcomes for fish, game, and wildlife, and if not permanent outcomes, why it is important to undertake at this time:

The area proposed for purchase by LAA encompasses a range of critical Land Habitats and has many highly sensitive habitats of greatest concern. As defined in the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, a primary driver of habitat degradation is the purchase of lands by private parties, segmenting once continuous habitats into fragments or islands that inhibit thriving ecosystems. The Haveri Homestead is a large parcel in the area and thus highly subject to fragmentation by private party purchases. The planned conservation easement(s) and fee acquisition of the parcel will restrict the land from commercial development, ensuring that the land cannot be fragmented or subdivided, negatively impacting habitat continuity. The acquisition will allow for sustainable public use of the land for self-sufficiency, foraging, hunting, and fishing, restricted to specific uses and regulations

that ensure the protection of SGCN and the protection of the stream and critical forest habitat that constitutes the land. The easements will allow for agricultural use of the cleared, former pasture land on the property. Agricultural use will be restricted to evidence-based methods of small-scale farming that focus on biodiversity, regenerative practices, and low-impact methods. LAA plans to protect 110 acres using OHC funds and separately funding 10 acres on the parcel for agricultural use. Though LAA is not pursuing LSOHC funding for the agricultural portion of this project, LAA feels that the maintenance of some edge and early successional habitat, along with sustainable agricultural activities, will benefit the conservation values of the project.

Outcomes

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation ~ *Land Access Alliance will measure the success of this outcome based on the number of acres of the parcel protected by fee acquisition and conservation easements that specify land use that prevents habitat fragmentation. The outcome will be a success if 100 percent of the 110 acres proposed for permanent conservation are successfully protected through conservation easements and fee acquisition.*

What other dedicated funds may collaborate with or contribute to this proposal?

- Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund
- Parks and Trails Fund
- Clean Water Fund

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.

The request does not supplant or substitute 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 Access Alliance has dedicated staff and board members who will maintain the work after Outdoor Heritage funds are expended. Currently, LAA has funds set aside for a grant writer to continue to build a budget that will support the work beyond the lifetime of the grant, which will be put in place well before the expiration of Outdoor Heritage Funds. Through a combination of government and foundation grants, as well as public donations, Land Access Alliance has a diversity of funds that contribute to the long-term sustainability of the project. The Land Access Alliance (LAA) is committed to sustaining this effort for multiple generations. When we conceived of this idea, it stemmed from problems we noticed globally yet still recognized in our community. The current mindset that land needs to be colonized is outdated and detrimental to the land. We seek to address the lack of diversity, in both race and gender, of current landowners. We carry these founding values as a torch that will continue our work for many future generations.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2025	Federal, state and foundation grants, private donations, and rental income.	Hire a consultant to create a development and grants management plan to ensure long-term funding	Work with area land manager, 1854 treaty authority, and community of finland to develop collaborative land use plan	Hire a land manager to oversee easement stewardship, maintain landuse plan, and over public land use
2026	Federal, state and foundation grants, private donations, and rental income.	Continue fundraising and development work to achieve financial stability.	Continue to follow management plans	Conduct ongoing monitoring of the land & outreach and education regarding land use
2027	Federal, state and foundation grants, private donations, and rental income.	Continue fundraising and development work to achieve financial stability.	Continue to follow management plans	Conduct ongoing monitoring of the land & outreach and education regarding land use
2028	Federal, state and foundation grants, private donations, and rental income.	Continue fundraising and development work to achieve financial stability.	Continue to follow management plans	Conduct ongoing monitoring of the land & outreach and education regarding land use
2029	Federal, state and foundation grants, private donations, and rental income.	Continue fundraising and development work to achieve financial stability.	Continue to follow management plans	Conduct ongoing monitoring of the land & outreach and education regarding land use

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

Land Access Alliance started in 2020 with a group of women interested in transforming how communities relate to land, building community resilience, sharing wealth, and providing access to land for farming and foraging for people who have been traditionally marginalized - women, black, indigenous, people of color and low-income people. The Land Access Alliance is committed to reconciling land, people, and food for a climate-resilient future. We’re building a community-based food access land trust that actualizes social and environmental justice principles by incorporating them into our organization’s daily operating structures. The Alliance is prioritizing the creation of access for women, BIPOC, and other landless farmers and foragers. LAA’s long-term goal is to have a replicable model for land access while rebuilding humanity’s relationship with the planet and its elements. This critical life-sustaining work starts in the northeast region of Minnesota, where the LAA’s founding team is from. We celebrate the diversity of cultures and experiences to create a future vision of land management that sustains natural resources for generations to come. LAA is BIPOC-led and understands that collective land use outside of municipalities, yet still in the public sector, offers more access opportunities for Women & BIPOC and other landless farmers & foragers than private land markets. This is because of the community infrastructure support brought together by a formally incorporated organization with the resources and capacity to assist with land management and property taxes for farmers and foragers producing food. By implementing and holding long-term responsibility for regenerative agriculture and honorable foraging easements on lands, we know the future of food production will be upheld healthily. We also understand that public access to land for recreation like hiking, birding, canoeing, hunting, and fishing has been inaccessible to BIPOC and low-income people for far too long. As a tourist destination on the North Shore, the purchases and protection of land through conservation easement and

fee acquisition will allow for increased public use and enjoyment of North Shore Habitat, particularly for marginalized groups when managed by a BIPOC-serving organization like Land Access Alliance.

Activity Details

Requirements

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

Yes

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

Yes

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 area designated for agricultural use is approximately 10 of the 120 total acres within the parcel. Approximately 5 of these 10 acres are available for agricultural use and will be protected in the separate agricultural easement that defines specific regenerative agricultural practices with ecosystem benefits that can be used. The designated food plots will be mixed vegetable and fruit plots that use minimal tillage and follow regenerative agricultural principles of supporting biodiversity, soil reparation and enhancement, limited inputs, and farming practices that mimic natural ecosystems to limit the impact as much as possible. We anticipate that farmers using this small percentage of the parcel for agricultural use will provide ecosystem benefits such as buffer strip habitat for migratory birds, increased soil biodiversity, increased forage for pollinators, and natural rainwater filtration and improved water quality.

Will insecticides or fungicides (including neonicotinoid and fungicide treated seed) be used within any activities of this proposal 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:

The expected public use for hunting, and fishing will follow the sustainable harvest guidelines of State citizens by State regulations and Tribal citizens by Tribal regulations.

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

- NGO

Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:

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

Yes

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

There is currently a trail to access the back 40 acres of the parcel that constitutes the highland area of the property. There is no defined current use of the trail, but if the parcel is acquired by LAA it will be open for hikers, hunters, fisherman and foragers to use.

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

Yes

How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?

Land Access Alliance will hire a land manager who will oversee the monitoring and annual maintenance of the trail under the guidance of Land Access Alliance Executive Director.

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

No

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

Yes

Other OHF Appropriation Awards

Have you received OHF dollars through LSOHC in the past?

No

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Acquire Haveri Homestead parcel.	August 2025
Meet with the area wildlife manager to develop a management and land use plan for wildlife.	January 2026
Meet with the 1854 treaty authority to develop a management plan/land use for wildlife.	January 2026
Meet with Finland community members who forage/farm regeneratively and community and large for community input on management plan and land use plan.	January 2025
Survey land for necessary land/conservation improvements, including trash removal and soil remediation, as needed.	January 2026
Create comprehensive land use and land management plans for parcels using input from collaborative partners in state and tribal governments and Finland Community residents.	May 2026
Carry out soil testing for heavy metals and other potential hazards. Develop remediation plan if needed.	May 2026
Develop model easement templates, working with Lawyer Doug Thompson.	May 2026
Implement Conservation Easements on 110 acres of the parcel.	August 2026
Explore Potential for spur trail from Superior Hiking Trail to encourage public recreation and land use.	August 2026
Develop and implement a climate-adapted forestry plan for the second growth area of the back 40 acres of the parcel. Hire a forest stewardship plan to help with this restoration work.	December 2026
Conduct environmental hazard review and develop remediation plans depending on the results of the review	December 2026
Hire land manager to oversee ongoing land use and management	December 2026

Budget

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$50,000	\$30,000	Blandin Foundation	\$80,000
Contracts	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$751,500	\$300,000	Margaret Cargill Philanthropies	\$1,051,500
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	\$9,000	-	-	\$9,000
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$810,500	\$330,000	-	\$1,140,500

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Executive Director	1.0	1.0	\$50,000	\$30,000	Blandin Foundation	\$80,000

Amount of Request: \$810,500

Amount of Leverage: \$330,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 40.72%

DSS + Personnel: \$50,000

As a % of the total request: 6.17%

Easement Stewardship: -

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: -

Total Leverage (from above)	Amount Confirmed	% of Total Leverage	Amount Anticipated	% of Total Leverage
\$330,000	\$30,000	9.09%	\$300,000	90.91%

Detail leverage sources and confirmation of funds:

The confirmed leverage source is a multi-year personnel grant from the Blandin Foundation. Margaret Cargill Philanthropies will provide the planned additional \$300,000 in leveraged funds, but this funding has not been confirmed. LAA is still in discussion with the foundation and anticipates securing the funding by May 2025.

Does this proposal have the ability to be scalable?

No

Please explain why this project can NOT be scaled:

The project has identified a parcel for purchase that has a set purchase price. The project as proposed is not scalable because the parcel price and associated fees of purchasing and establishing easements for the parcel cannot be covered by other leveraged sources of funds.

Personnel

Has funding for these positions been requested in the past?

No

Professional Services

What is included in the Professional Services line?

- Appraisals
- Surveys
- Title Insurance and Legal Fees

Fee Acquisition

What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?

One transaction is anticipated. The 120-acre parcel will be purchased in full. Land Access Alliance will fund the purchase of the front 10 acres of the parcel with leveraged funds, as this part of the parcel will be set aside for regenerative agricultural use and enshrined as such through an agricultural easement. However, the parcel will still be purchased in one transaction.

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	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	50	0	60	0	110
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	50	0	60	0	110

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$368,400	-	\$442,100	-	\$810,500
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$368,400	-	\$442,100	-	\$810,500

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	110	110
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	110	110

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	-	-	-	-	\$810,500	\$810,500
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	\$810,500	\$810,500

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$7,368	-	\$7,368	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-

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	-	-	-	-	\$7,368
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

1320 feet

Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?

No

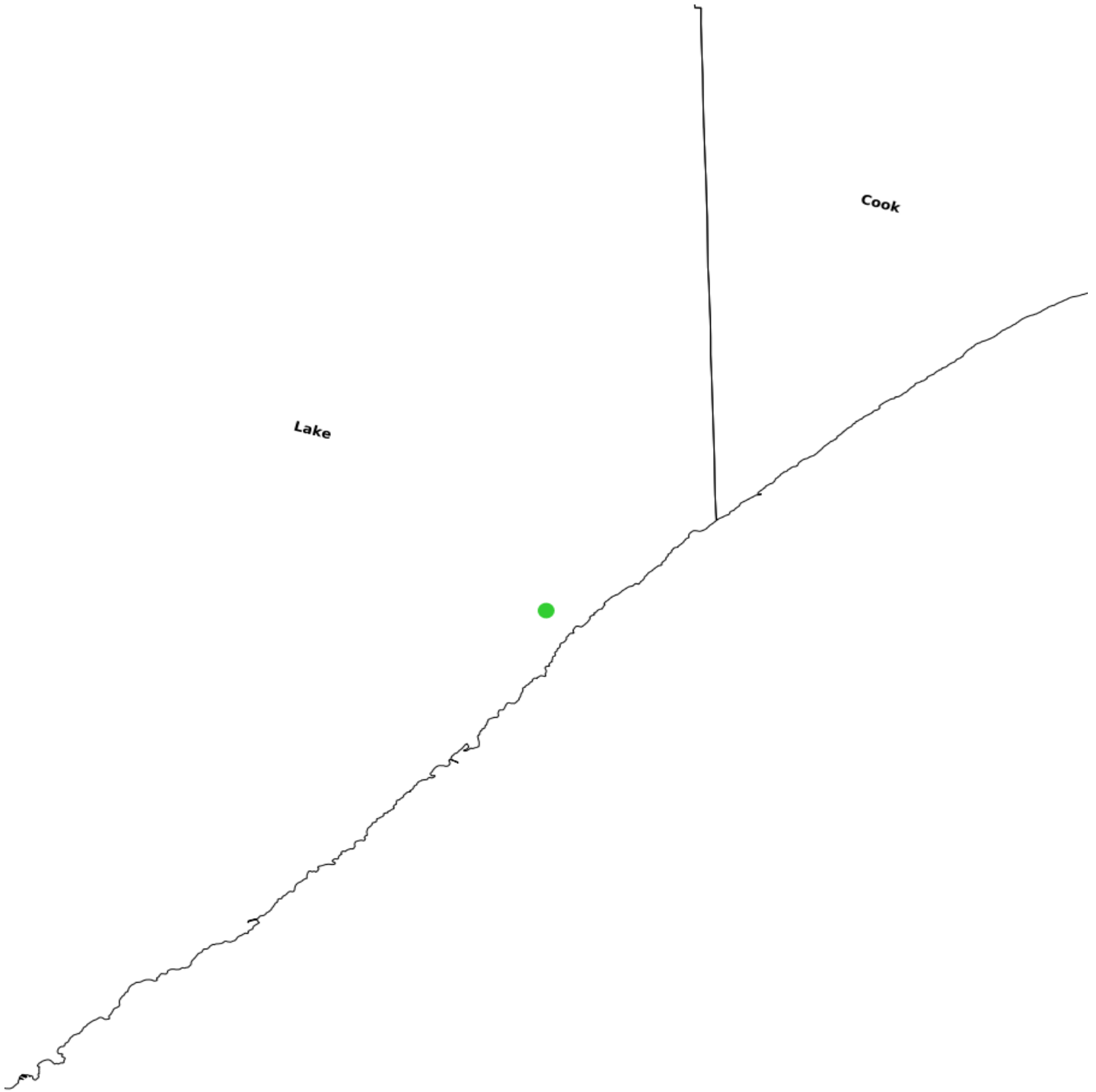
Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:

The only parcel on the list was identified for purchase for several reasons. First, it is in a culturally significant area for its high density of early 20th-century homesteads and proximity to the Finland Historic Site. LAA recognizes the importance of preserving this heritage as these parcels face significant development pressure. Second, the Sawmill Creek Valley where the parcel is located, already has significant conservation momentum; MN Land Trust, a collaborator of Land Access Alliance, has identified this area as important for conservation preservation, and Wolf Ridge ELC already holds 2,000 acres adjacent to the property as largely conservation area. The area is rapidly developing as previously mentioned in the proposal; as prices and demand for land increase, it is imperative to quickly acquire lands to be held in trust and protected with conservation easements. This parcel is 120 acres, needs protection rather than enhancement or restoration, and has a small amount of cleared land that can be utilized to meet the food sovereignty mission of Land Access Alliance. Since the formation of LAA, there have been very few properties that meet these criteria and are large enough to hold significant conservation impact.

Protect Parcels with Buildings

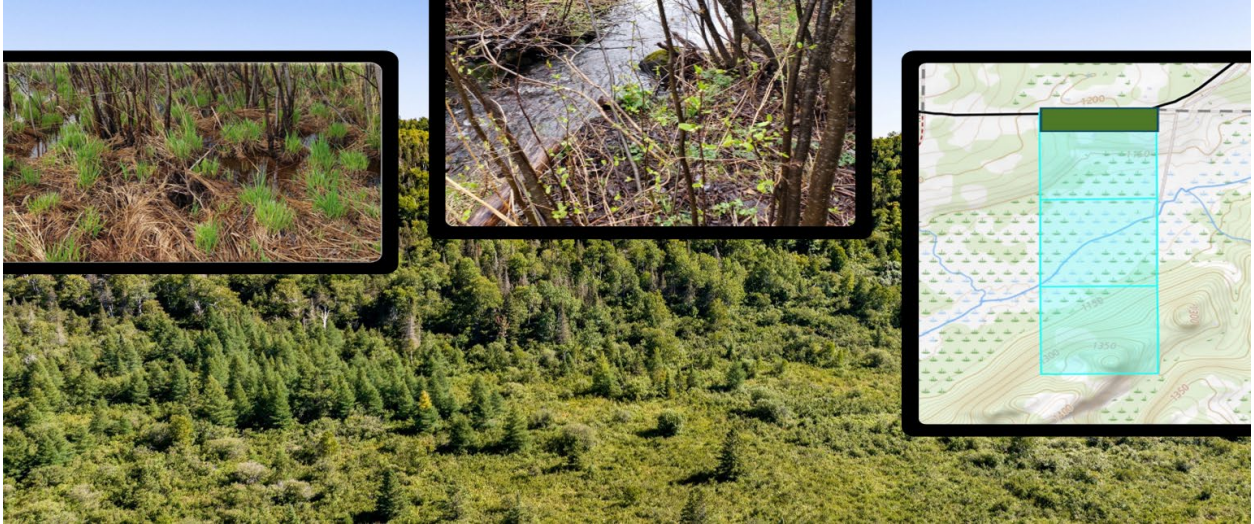
Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Buildings	Value of Buildings
The Haveri Homestead	Lake	05707SE-NW26	120	\$751,500	No	4	\$236,400

Parcel Map



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



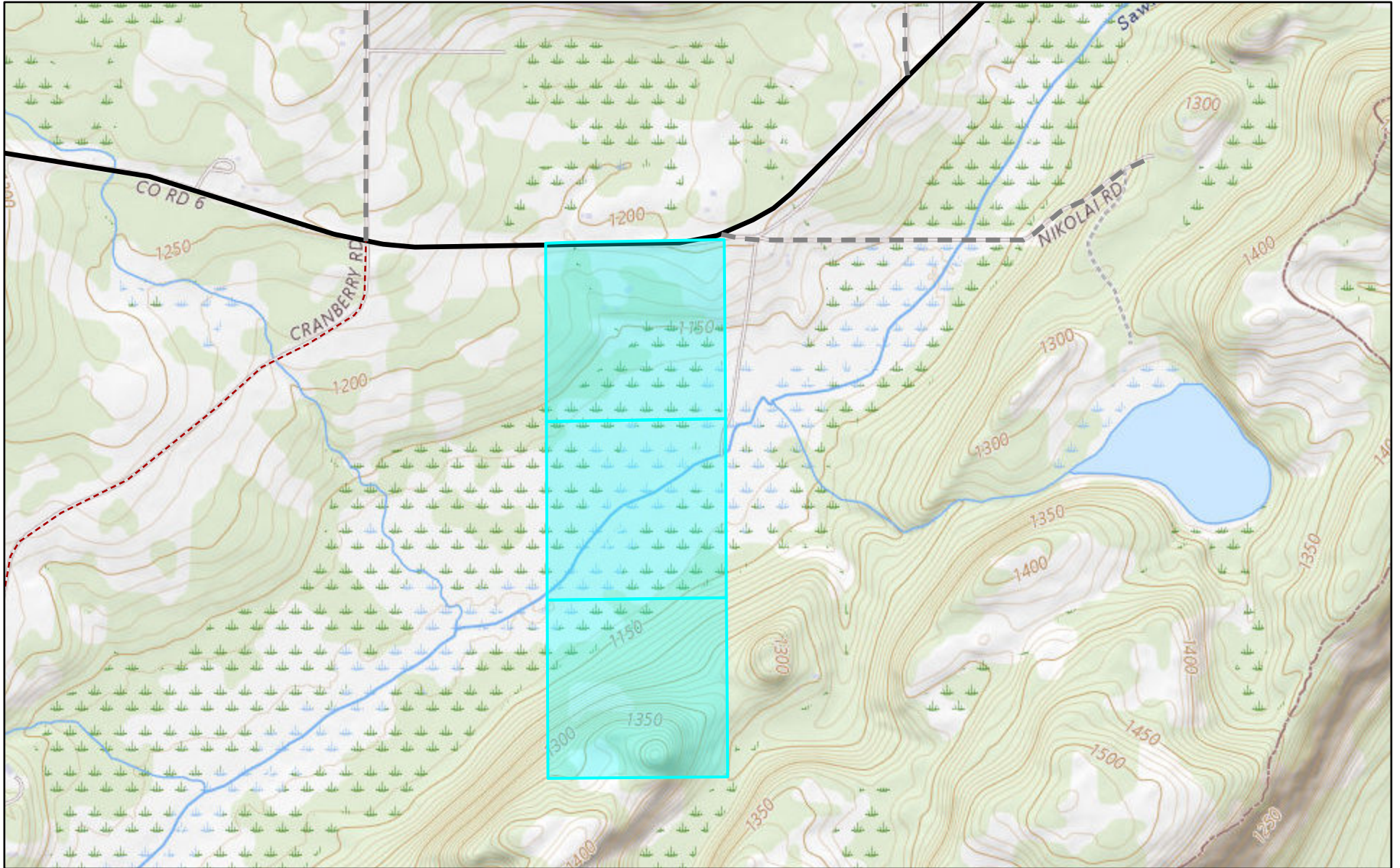


Protecting Critical Habitat in Northeastern Minnesota while Balancing Sustainable Public Land Use Through a Community Land Trust Model

Land Access ALLIANCE(LAA) is an organization based in Northeastern Minnesota that seeks to improve land access for underserved people. Via Outdoor Heritage Council Funds, LAA proposes the purchase of a 120-acre parcel of land in Lake County, Minnesota, an area that is both critical habitat and prime development land. LAA plans to permanently protect the 110-acre parcel with conservation easements, with public recreation and food gathering allowed under conservation-centered land use plans. Photos demonstrate berry patches, the trout stream, wetlands, the forest, and north shore highland habitats that would be protected through this proposal. LAA proposes the permanent protection of the back 110 acres of this parcel through conservation easements. Some of the back 40 acres of the parcel, primarily forest land, will be restored and enhanced with a climate-update forestry management plan. The map shows the three 40-acre parcels proposed for purchase; the front 10 acres (highlighted in green) on the parcel containing pasture, a house, and several outbuildings will be purchased through leveraged funds and held in agricultural easement for regenerative farming.



Lake County Atlas | Parcel Map



5/19/2024, 5:57:52 PM

Override 1

Roads

Other Paved, County-State Aid Highway; Other Paved, County Road

Other Unpaved, Township Road; Other Unpaved, Unorganized Territory Road

Other Unpaved, Other Road; Other Unpaved, Private Road-Restricted Access

Townships

1:18,056

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 mi

0 0.15 0.3 0.6 km

USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3DEP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography

Lake County GIS

Lake County Atlas disclaimer applies to any exported or printed resource

Katee ristuccia
6762 highway 1
Finland Minnesota 55603
Kristuccia003@gmail.com
5857046500
May 22,2024

Dear Lessard-Sams Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Finland Food Chain, to express our organization's full support for the acquisition of the Haveri Homestead by the Land Access Alliance in Northeastern Minnesota. This piece of property has a unique history and is home to a rich habitat. As members of this community, we believe that holding this land in trust would provide invaluable benefits for our region both now and for generations to come.

One of the most compelling aspects of this initiative is its potential for conservation and restoration of the land to protect habitats important for hunting and fishing as well as preserve land with a rich cultural history in our community. The acquisition of this piece of land presents a unique opportunity to protect a trout stream, implement climate adaptive forestry practices, and promote biodiversity in our region. Through thoughtful land management practices such as reforestation, wetland restoration, and native species conservation, we can enhance the resilience of our natural landscapes and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Furthermore, Land Access Alliance's principles of sustainable land use and conservation demonstrate their commitment to environmental stewardship. This includes telling the story of the land and community, providing people access to this unique spot and preserving habitat to ensure that the land remains healthy and productive for future generations.

Land this close to Lake Superior is highly sought after for development. Land Access Alliance has a unique opportunity to preserve and protect this land for the community and all those who wish to recreate on this land.

The Finland Food Chain strongly supports the acquisition of this piece of land by the Land Access Alliance. The opportunity to conserve and restore this land for the benefit of present and future generations is truly inspiring. Thank you for considering LAA's application, and please know that you have our full support in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Katee Ristuccia
Finland Food Chain

Honor Schauland
5539 Little Marais Road
Finland, MN 55603
homeralice@yahoo.com
218-353-7326
May 22, 2024

Dear Lessard-Sams Committee,

I am writing to express my full support for the acquisition of the Haveri Homestead by the Land Access Alliance in Northeastern Minnesota. This piece of property has a unique history and is home to a rich habitat, including a trout stream. As a member of the Finland community, and a close neighbor of the property along Little Marais Road, I believe that holding this land in trust would provide invaluable benefits for our region both now and for generations to come.

I knew Darwyn and Janet Haveri personally. They were my neighbors and friends. I know that they would prefer their land to remain a small farm and homestead rather than be divided up and developed for vacation homes, which is what is likely to happen if the land is sold on the real estate market. Both Darwyn and Janet were very dedicated community members, giving time to their church, serving on the Finland Co-op Board, and helping their friends and neighbors in many ways. They knew that a sustainable community needs families and children, with folks who live and work here, and give their time and energy toward their community. Preserving the land and the homestead through the Land Access Alliance is also a way to preserve that pathway for a more sustainable community into the future, rather than allowing the erosion of community through outside development.

Land this close to Lake Superior is highly sought after for development. Subdivision and development of this property would irrevocably change the neighborhood of Little Marais Road specifically. Right now, there is a great network of neighbors who know each other, who adopt new people moving in, and work together when common problems arise. Most of the homes on the Little Marais Road are occupied and homesteaded. Land Access Alliance has a unique opportunity to preserve and protect this land for the community, this home for housing for a community member (or someone who could become a community member) and all those who wish to recreate on this land.

I strongly support the acquisition of this piece of land by the Land Access Alliance. The opportunity to conserve and restore this land for the benefit of present and future generations is truly inspiring. Thank you for considering LAA's application, and please know that you have my full support in this endeavor.

Sincerely,



Honor Schauland

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

University of Minnesota Extension

*Regional Sustainable Development
Partnerships
Northeast Region*

*University of Minnesota Duluth
114 Chester Park
31 W. College Street
Duluth, MN 55812
218-726-6146
Fax: 218-726-7566
www.rsdpmn.edu*

May 21, 2024

Dear Lessard-Sams Committee,

The University of Minnesota Extension - Northeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships (NERSDP) has been serving our region for over two and a half decades by advancing environmental, economic, and social sustainability through authentic community-University partnerships that co-create innovative solutions and fulfill the University's land-grant mission. One of our partners over the years, the Land Access Alliance's principles and work around sustainable land use and conservation demonstrate their commitment to environmental stewardship and land ethics we fully support.

The Haveri Homestead site, just over the ridge from Lake Superior is an important ecological land that will greatly benefit all of us in our region. This land, nestled on both sides of the Sawmill valley, drains into the Baptism River and out into Lake Superior. It is a unique and special parcel, with a diversity of wildlife, which holds an important history in this valley. We believe that holding this land in trust would provide invaluable benefits for our region both now and for generations to come.

The acquisition of this piece of land by the Land Access Alliance presents a compelling opportunity to protect a trout stream, implement climate adaptive forestry practices, and promote ecological biodiversity in our region. Through thoughtful land management practices such as reforestation, wetland restoration, and native species conservation, I trust the Land Access Alliance will enhance the resilience of our natural landscapes and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

The Northeast RSDP strongly supports the acquisition of this piece of land by the Land Access Alliance. The opportunity to conserve and restore this land for the benefit of present and future generations is truly inspiring. Thank you for considering the Land Access Alliance's application, and please know that you have our full support in this endeavor.

Sincerely,



David Abazs
Executive Director