



Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program - Phase XIV

ML 2025 Request for Funding

General Information

Date: 06/03/2024

Proposal Title: Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program - Phase XIV

Funds Requested: \$4,326,500

Confirmed Leverage Funds: \$120,000

Is this proposal Scalable?: Yes

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Courtney Phillips

Title: Program and Project Manager

Organization: Shell Rock River Watershed District

Address: 305 S 1st Ave.

City: Albert Lea, MN 56007

Email: courtney.phillips@co.freeborn.mn.us

Office Number: 507-379-8782

Mobile Number: 507-402-4824

Fax Number:

Website: www.shellrock.org

Location Information

County Location(s): Freeborn.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Prairie

Activity types:

- Protect in Fee
- Enhance
- Restore

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Habitat

Narrative

Abstract

The Shell Rock River Watershed District (SRRWD) is seeking funding for their Habitat Restoration Program to restore, enhance, and protect 657 acres of essential prairie upland, wetland and streambank habitat across the watershed. As a result, key biological functioning parcels will be permanently protected, streambank habitat will be enhanced, vegetation and feeding sources will be restored for migratory fowl habitat and wetlands and oak savannas will be restored. These projects are critical for the benefit of fish, waterfowl, and wildlife populations, reversing the trend of wetland loss and habitat degradation in the prairie ecoregion.

Design and Scope of Work

The SRRWD created the Habitat Restoration Program to restore, protect, and enhance degraded habitat conditions by implementing projects on a lake-shed basis. Specifically, Phase XIV will contribute to the District's goals by:

- Restore 112 acres of oak savanna landscape on Upper Twin Lake Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and Ann & Leo Donahue WMA by conducting buckthorn removal.
- Restore 20 acres of streambank habitat to improve floodplain connectivity, over-winter open water conditions, and to prevent further sedimentation into the watercourse.
- Installing 250 acres of in-lake habitat features, creating more productive, self-sustaining fisheries in Fountain Lake and benefiting BIPOC and underserved communities.
- Acquire 9 acres from a willing landowner to expand an adjacent ICE Waterfowl Production Area (WPA).
- Habitat enhancement on a 34-acre site adjacent to Juglans Woods Aquatic Management Area (AMA). This is an abandoned gravel pit that is intended to be donated to the AMA as fishing ponds and surrounding upland prairie plantings, however, current conditions of the site are not safe for public use.
- Reestablish 152 acres of vegetation into upland prairie to improve pollinator species success with native plant diversity, targeting the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee.
- Restore 80 acres of wetland basins, reversing the trend of wetland loss and habitat degradation while improving nesting habitat and waterfowl food sources.

This proposal uses a programmatic approach to achieve protection, restoration, and enhancement of lakes, wetlands, streams, and native prairie landscapes. The program includes projects that are prioritized on the significance of the benefits to aquatic habitat, urgency of the work, availability of leveraged funds, location of projects, and agreements with relevant planning documents. All projects listed above have landowner support, who are eager to get funding. The SRRWD has a proven track record with the LSOHC in implementing projects that protect, restore and enhance natural resources. The SRRWD continues to receive strong support for these projects from landowners, local governments, and sporting organizations.

The program will also interconnect and reestablish important flyway habitats within Minnesota. Once completed, the program will establish waterfowl and fish populations, increase habitat for wetland dependent wildlife, and recreate the wildlife mecca in southern Minnesota. Finally, this program will preserve an outdoor legacy for Minnesotans to use and enjoy for generations.

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

When critical habitats are lost due to land use changes and other factors, restoring the habitat is imperative to the protection of species and their ecological processes. Important species are disappearing at an alarming rate and the SRRWD has an opportunity to protect their specific habitats. Many of the proposed projects are turning

landscapes into multi-native species plantings that offer food, shelter, and breeding habitat for a wide array of species.

All restoration and enhancement projects will have vegetation management in low grounds that include bulrush, smartweed, and marsh milkweed species to provide habitat and food sources for migratory birds. Upland prairie mix will be established to promote pollinator success. Enhancement efforts of this large scale provide habitat for both spring and fall migration of waterfowl, overall increase the use days by migratory birds, and provide nesting habitat.

Using the Minnesota DNR Rare Species Guide, the SRRWD has identified species of importance for the oak savanna landscape. These species include the Loggerhead Shrike for birds, mussels such as the Round Pigtoe, and amphibians including the Blanding's Turtle.

Citing the Minnesota Wildlife Action Plan, Blanding's turtles suffer from low reproductive rates and high nest predation, exacerbated by habitat loss and degradation. The proposal area has a known hotspot for Blanding's turtles identified in the Wildlife Action Network. Projects like the wetland enhancements and streambank restorations provide the needed wetland and upland habitat to complete the Blanding's turtle life cycle.

The Loggerhead Shrike is listed as endangered and can be attributed to the loss of suitable shelterbelts and grasslands. With the projects identified, prairie creation and tree management on current grasslands can provide better habitat.

The Federally endangered Rusty Patched Bumble Bee has recently been documented on the Goose Creek WPA. Following the Implementation Guidance document developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 152 acres of vegetation restoration will be conducted on the surrounding WPAs to better colony establishment and growth.

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

For acquisition projects, landowner willingness is a large factor in determining the urgency to be completed. Securing properties, while having a willing landowner, is imperative to its success. Landowners often get frustrated if funding isn't available when they want to sell. The acquisition in this proposal has an eager landowner who came to the District for first right to purchase.

For the restoration and enhancement projects, with the extent of wetland, streambank, and in-lake habitat loss in Minnesota, restoration efforts are an issue that need immediate attention. Science and resource-based planning has been utilized to strategically select projects that will advance restoration goals specified in the SRRWD's Restoration Program.

Projects selected in the program contribute to the success of long-term management plans. Key biological functioning parcels will be permanently protected, streambanks will be enhanced, there will be improved access to public lands, and vegetation will be restored.

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

This proposal is specifically requesting funds for the acquisition of 9 acres, known as the Ohm property, to expand the adjacent ICE WPA. The ICE WPA is a 253-acre site that was drained for farming. Over the years, conservation easements and acquisitions have secured lands to restore the native prairie. The Ohm property is currently an island of private ground surrounded by federal ownership. Acquiring this property will directly expand habitat

corridors and the size of the WPA.

Additionally, 3 of the 7 proposed projects are located within a 3-mile radius of each other. This reduces habitat fragmentation and improves the overall habitat carrying capacity of the corridor.

For parcels that are not directly adjacent to current protected areas, the SRRWD utilizes precision conservation modeling with monitoring to identify Property Management Zones (PMZs) on a sub-watershed basis. The PMZs is a watershed wide parcel review where habitat areas were ranked on a 1 to 3 scale. This scale incorporated a variety of measures including size of the habitat complex to be protected, proximity to existing protection, and distance to a water source. Remaining parcels either ranked as a 1 or 2, which are high value locations. Implementing site specific habitat restorations projects are progressively improving populations of native fish, waterfowl and wildlife habitat to once again create a wildlife mecca.

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

- Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Strategic Habitat Conservation Model

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.

In many prairie plantings, five different species types including wildflowers, legumes, warm-season grasses, cool-season grasses and sedges/rushes are planted to mimic a native plant community. To address the anticipated warmer temperatures, hardy species resistant to pests and diseases, that can be found in southern regions, are selected. Doing so ensures that habitat needs such as nesting, shelter, and food sources, including pollen and seeds, will be available in changing climate conditions.

For streambank restorations, natural channel design that includes restoring a floodplain bench to accommodate higher flows reduces the likelihood of scour, severe undercutting, and erosion along streambanks and allows base flow to be maintained in a primary channel when water is low. By doing so, fish, mussel, and invertebrate habitats are more able to withstand extreme variability in water flow. Additionally, creating riffles and pools provides areas of refuge and maintains critical oxygen levels.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal?

Prairie

- Restore or enhance habitat on public lands

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:

All proposed projects included in this proposal will lead to permanent conservation by being installed on public waters, existing WMAs, WPAs or involve acquisitions that will be permanent in public ownership. Permanent habitat will result from the numerous proposed projects and native plantings.

Habitat degradation of wetlands, streams, and shallow lakes is an issue of importance that requires accelerated

investment in permanent projects to reverse this degradation. Protection and restoration of this critical habitat is the highest priority of the SRRWD and is directly affected by invasive vegetation, land use changes, increased water demands, populations of invasive fish species such as common carp, and artificial drainage. Degradation in habitat is influencing available food sources for game fish populations that include Northern Pike, Bluegill, Yellow Perch and Walleye, and duck populations including Northern Pintail, Redhead, Canvasback and Lesser Scaup.

The streambank restoration project will create spawning habitat, cover, and refuge for fish, habitat for wildlife, and will restore the growth of healthy aquatic vegetation. Oak savanna management includes removing buckthorn, poison hemlock and honeysuckle treatment. Projects in this proposal also demonstrates a permanent conservation legacy by restoring habitat on public lands, increasing public access to fishing, improving native fish reproduction, and providing protection from long term endangerment from invasive plant species by incorporating vegetation management.

Outcomes

Programs in prairie region:

- Remnant native prairies are part of large complexes of restored prairies, grasslands, and large and small wetlands ~ *Restored and enhanced parcels that include wetland restorations will be measured by the increased number of use days for migrating waterfowl as well as increased species biodiversity survey (pre and post restoration) that supports waterfowl. Upland prairie restorations will be monitored for increased usage, such as Pheasant Roadside surveys. Additionally, the number of prairie acres restored, and wetland acres created will be reported in the SRRWD’s reporting framework. These measures will be evaluated against the Minnesota’s Wildlife Management Area Acquisition – The Next 50 Years.*

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

- N/A

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 funding or substituting from any previous funding.

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

The SRRWD has multiple funding sources including a citizen driven local option sales tax, local levy, and multiple public and private funding sources to assist in the District’s restoration efforts. Following this LSOHC appropriation timeline, the District will use their general fund dollars for maintenance implementations.

Additionally, the SRRWD is authorized by Minnesota state statute 103D and operates under a series of 10 year Water Management Plans that are approved by the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR). These plans include a comprehensive list detailing natural resource restoration, enhancement, along with protection and management strategies, that can be used for funding in the future for maintenance.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2026-2029	Sales Tax and LSOHC	Construction	Vegetation Maintenance	-
2030+	Sales Tax	Maintenance Inspections	Maintenance Implementation	-

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

The SRRWD annually utilizes the Understanding Environmental Justice in Minnesota tool developed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, to understand where BIPOC, diverse, and unserved communities are present in the planning area by using the socioeconomic indicators layers. Projects identified in this proposal, specifically the in-lake habitat project, are targeted to improve public lands that are located in, and used by, BIPOC and underserved communities. This tool is ran annually to help determine project locations, along with the Priority Management Zone mapping. The District will include the assessment outcomes in each of the project's operation and maintenance forms.

Additionally, the SRRWD has a digital option to view all completed work. Digital options give diverse community members an option to engage regardless of color, transportation, and gender.

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

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
- Public Waters
- AMA
- WPA

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?

No

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?

Yes

Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:

Public waters are open to state fishing regulations. Private lands are currently not open to public hunting but will be once acquired and restored.

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

Yes

Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:

All lands will follow state regulations.

Who will eventually own the fee title land?

- Federal

Land acquired in fee will be designated as a:

- WPA

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

No

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?

Yes

Are any of these past appropriations still OPEN?

Yes

Approp Year	Funding Amount Received	Amount Spent to Date	Funding Remaining	% Spent to Date
2024	\$2,072,000	-	-	-
2023	\$2,198,000	\$8,250	\$2,189,750	0.38%
2022	\$1,438,000	\$526,610	\$911,390	36.62%
2021	\$1,547,000	\$1,371,647	\$175,353	88.66%
2020	\$1,918,000	\$1,104,000	\$814,000	57.56%
2019	\$2,046,000	\$2,046,000	-	100.0%
2018	\$1,421,000	\$1,421,000	-	100.0%
2017	\$1,779,000	\$1,779,000	-	100.0%
2016	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	-	100.0%
2015	\$2,414,000	\$2,405,200	\$8,800	99.64%
2013	\$1,827,000	\$1,827,000	-	100.0%
2011	\$2,577,000	\$2,577,000	-	100.0%
2010	\$655,000	\$655,000	-	100.0%
Totals	\$23,092,000	\$16,920,707	\$6,171,293	73.28%

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Begin project planning, design, and permitting work for restorations and enhancements. Complete survey and appraisals for acquisitions.	Late 2025-2026
Begin restoration and enhancement projects during the 2026-2027 construction season following completion of design and permitting.	2026-2027 Construction Season
Finalize acquisitions and start seeding the sites for restoration.	May 2028
Implement vegetation enhancement on restoration projects, complete final project construction.	July 2029
Conduct maintenance and monitoring of all restoration and habitat improvement projects.	Ongoing

Budget

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$80,000	\$20,000	Local Option Sales Tax	\$100,000
Contracts	\$3,312,800	-	-	\$3,312,800
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$89,700	-	-	\$89,700
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	\$844,000	\$100,000	Local Option Sales Tax	\$944,000
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	\$4,326,500	\$120,000	-	\$4,446,500

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Total Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Program Assistant	0.43	5.0	\$35,000	\$10,000	Local Option Sales Tax	\$45,000
Program Manager	0.43	5.0	\$45,000	\$10,000	Local Option Sales Tax	\$55,000

Amount of Request: \$4,326,500

Amount of Leverage: \$120,000

Leverage as a percent of the Request: 2.77%

DSS + Personnel: \$80,000

As a % of the total request: 1.85%

Easement Stewardship: -

As a % of the Easement Acquisition: -

Total Leverage (from above)	Amount Confirmed	% of Total Leverage	Amount Anticipated	% of Total Leverage
\$120,000	\$120,000	100.0%	-	0.0%

Detail leverage sources and confirmation of funds:

Leverage sources include the District's local option sales tax.

Does this proposal 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?

The District submits this proposal with the capability and intentions to complete all projects if fully funded. A 50% reduction would mean the in-lake habitat project would have to be removed, while all other projects would stay.

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

The District does not use DSS. Personnel would be reduced from \$100,000 down to \$60,000, similar to a proportionate reduction.

If the project received 30% of the requested funding

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

Although not ideal, funding would be centered on the one acquisition, the oak savanna management, WPA restoration, and the Juglans enhancement project. The remaining funds would be broken down into phases of the larger projects, which could lead to higher costs later on.

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

The District does not use DSS. The grant funded personnel costs would be reduced to \$45,000 but the in-kind staff dollar amounts would be moved from personnel to professional expenses, creating a near proportionate reduction.

Personnel

Has funding for these positions been requested in the past?

Yes

Please explain the overlap of past and future staffing and position levels previously received and how that is coordinated over multiple years?

The SRRWD has an extensive time-tracking system that allows staff members to track time for each project within each grant. Each year, this system is updated to reflect current active grants.

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?

All the work in the contracts line is centered on enhancement and restoration construction costs minus professional services and staff time.

Professional Services

What is included in the Professional Services line?

- Appraisals
- Design/Engineering
- Surveys
- Title Insurance and Legal Fees

Fee Acquisition

What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?

There is one fee title acquisition transaction planned.

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	422	422
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	9	9
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	226	226
Total	0	0	0	657	657

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	\$2,444,000	\$2,444,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$105,500	\$105,500
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	\$1,777,000	\$1,777,000
Total	-	-	-	\$4,326,500	\$4,326,500

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	422	0	422
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	9	0	9
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	226	0	226
Total	0	0	0	657	0	657

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	\$2,444,000	-	\$2,444,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$105,500	-	\$105,500
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	\$1,777,000	-	\$1,777,000
Total	-	-	-	\$4,326,500	-	\$4,326,500

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	\$5,791
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$11,722
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	\$7,862

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	-	-	\$5,791	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	\$11,722	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	\$7,862	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

45,750 feet

Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?

No

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

Parcels are selected using the Property Management Zones (PMZs). The PMZs are identified using precision conservation modeling, along with monitoring, and science-based targeting. Parcels are then prioritized and ranked based on the degree of habitat degradation, restoration potential, and landowner interest and support. All parcels listed below have willing landowners ready to initiate the projects if funding allows.

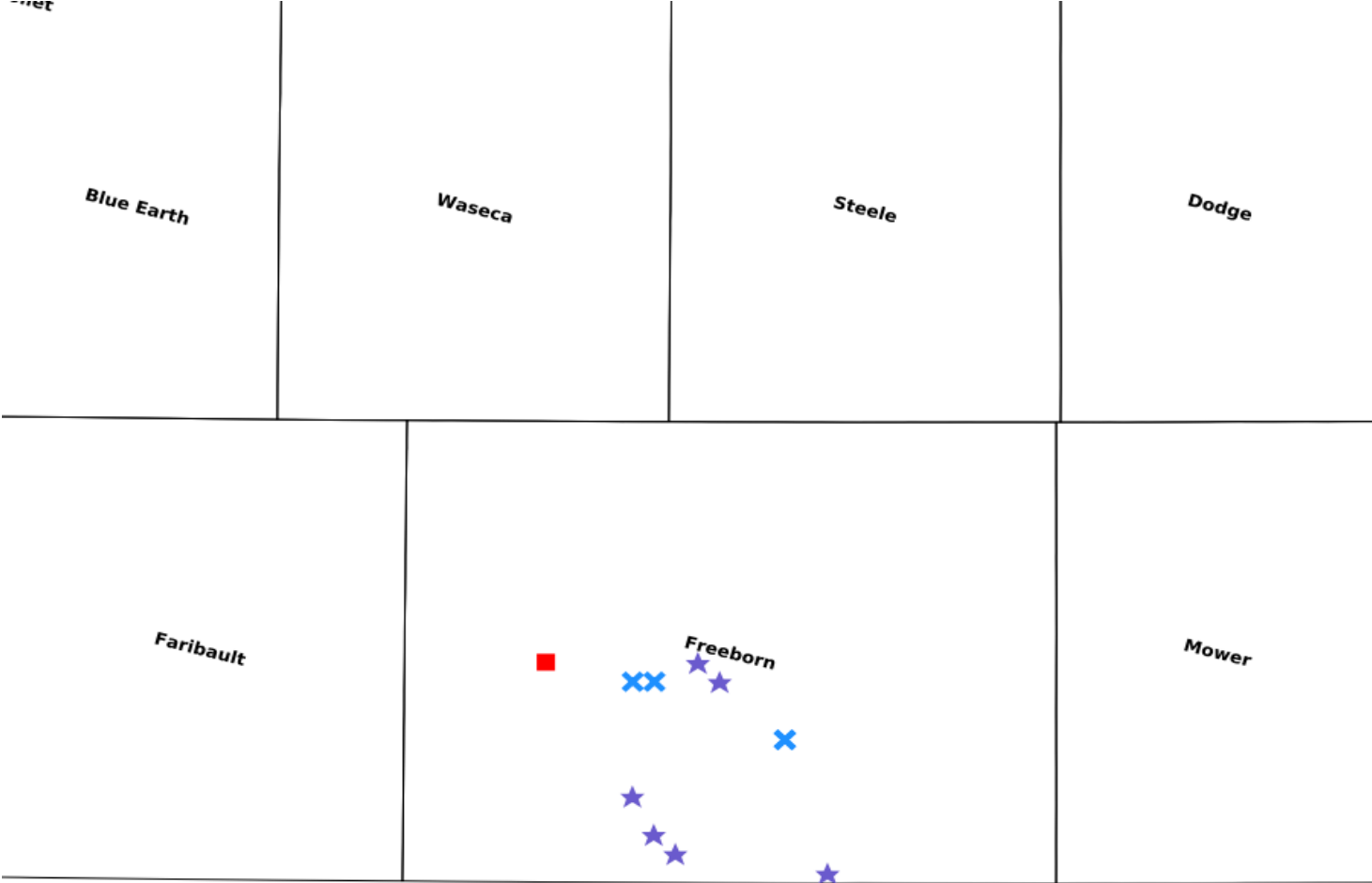
Restore / Enhance Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Description
Twin Lakes WPA Restoration	Freeborn	10122211	62	\$66,000	Yes	Oak savanna restoration through buckthorn removal and grassland management.
Goose Creek WPA Restoration	Freeborn	10122224	80	\$45,000	Yes	Tree and brush removal and oak savanna restoration by removal of undesirable woody species.
Bhagyam WPA Restoration	Freeborn	10121230	10	\$30,000	Yes	Wetland restoration with dike installation and poison hemlock removal.
Shell Rock River Streambank Restoration	Freeborn	10120232	20	\$150,000	Yes	Stabilize failed streambanks and incorporate habitat features such as toe wood.
Juglans Woods AMA Wetland Enhancement	Freeborn	10221225	80	\$550,000	Yes	Wetland restoration and connection of river floodplain.
Juglans Habitat Enhancement	Freeborn	10221225	34	\$1,100,000	Yes	Enhancements of an abandoned gravel pit for habitat and fishponds to be donated to the adjacent AMA.
Oak Savanna Mangement	Freeborn	10222212	12	\$10,700	Yes	Magaksica WMA oak savanna restoration through buckthorn removal.
Oak Savanna Management	Freeborn	10222211	100	\$89,300	Yes	Ann & Leo Donahue oak savanna restoration through buckthorn removal.
East Main Bay In-Lake Habitat	Freeborn	10221209	120	\$1,050,000	Yes	In-lake habitat including spawning gravel, boulder clusters, and fish cribs
Edgewater In-Lake Habitat	Freeborn	10221205	130	\$1,050,000	Yes	In-lake habitat including spawning gravel, boulder clusters, and fish cribs

Protect Parcels with Buildings

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection	Buildings	Value of Buildings
Ohm Property	Freeborn	10222206	9	\$105,500	No	3	\$0

Parcel Map



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





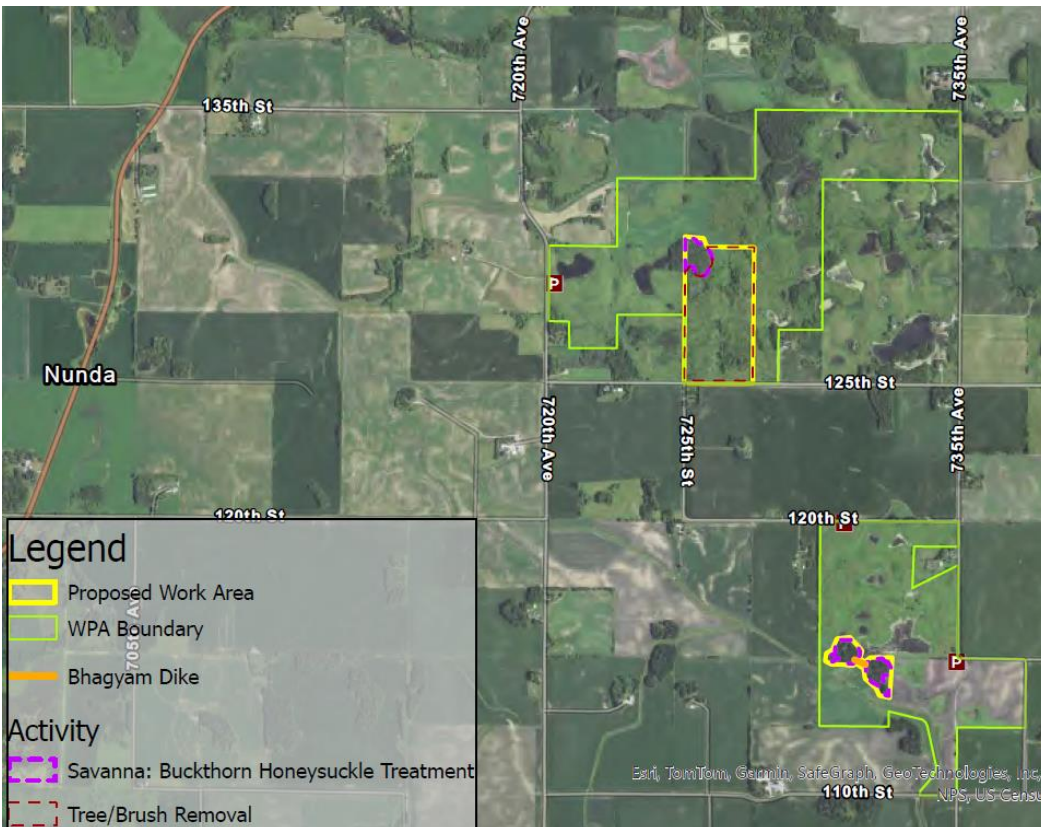
Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program, Phase XIV

Funding Request: \$4,326,500



Ohm Property

This 9-acre property acquisition, with historic oak woodlands, will be permanently protected. Restoration plans for this property include removing buckthorn and other undesirable woody vegetation. The property will then be donated to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to combine with the ICE Waterfowl Production Area. This builds on previous LSOHC funding that was used to restore wetlands at the ICE WPA.



Oak Savanna Management

152 acres of oak savanna management is planned for Bhagyam, Twin Lakes, and Goose Creek Waterfowl Production Areas. Work includes buckthorn and honeysuckle removal as well as wild parsnip and poison hemlock removal. Diversity seeding will also be completed as this site has a known Rusty Patch Bumble Bee sighting. Wetland enhancements will be conducted on Bhagyam WPA by replacing a dike with a rock outlet or weir.



RESTORE. PROTECT. ENHANCE.



SRR Streambank

A streambank enhancement project will be completed to connect the Shell Rock River to its historic floodplain while reducing sedimentation. This project will also incorporate habitat features for fish and amphibians that includes toe-wood installation.



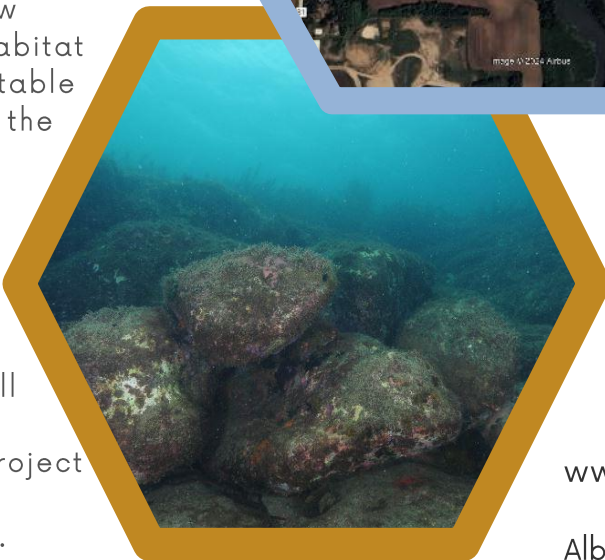
Juglans Restoration

During the creation of the Juglans Woods AMA, a gravel pit had to be parceled out as there was still a lease on the site. Now finished, this proposal is requesting habitat restoration of the site to be made suitable for public use and donated back into the AMA.



In-Lake Habitat

250 acres of additional in-lake habitat structures are planned for Edgewater and East Main Bay. This will complement the first phase of in-lake habitat structures already installed. Project scope will include rock reefs, walleye spawning gravel, and boulder clusters.



CONTACT US
+507-377-5785
www.shellrock.org
305 S 1st Ave.
Albert Lea, MN 56007



Albert Lea Anglers

408 Garden Rd, Albert Lea, MN 56007

May 17, 2024

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
658 Cedar St. Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Council Members,

The Shell Rock River Watershed District has a strong history of success and cooperation with many partners, including the Albert Lea Anglers; with this I am pleased to write this letter of support for the Habitat Restoration Program.

We appreciate the effort the SRRWD has put into developing this program to transform our lake and wildlife habitat. This proposal includes projects for protecting key biological functioning parcels, restoring lakeshore and lake habitat, and restoring vegetation for migratory fowl. All of these things the Albert Lea Anglers deems important.

Residents and visitors are continuously commenting on the water quality changes that have been increasingly noticeable in the last several years. We strongly believe that a continued commitment to completing these projects will present the best possible outcomes for all creatures that wish to call our waterways home.

We appreciate your consideration of this proposal and ask for your support.

Sincerely,

Julia Thompson

Director
Albert Lea Anglers
507-438-2622



Environmental Services Department - Courthouse
411 So. Broadway, P.O. Box 1147 507/377-5186
Albert Lea, MN 56007-1147 Fax 507/377-4688

May 3, 2024

David Hartwell
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
658 Cedar St. Centennial Office Building
St Paul, MN 55155

Re: Shell Rock River Watershed District Habitat Restoration Program

Mr. Hartwell:

Freeborn County Environmental Services is pleased to write this letter in support of the Shell Rock River Watershed District's Habitat Restoration Program. This program aligns with the goals within the Freeborn County Comprehensive Water Plan, as well as the Shell Rock-Winnebago Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

The Shell Rock River Watershed District continues to complete projects that show measureable and lasting results, offering improvements to our natural resources and water quality. Freeborn County Environmental Services strongly supports these endeavors and we kindly request the support of the continued habitat restoration projects within the watershed.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Goskeson". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Mark Goskeson
Freeborn County Environmental Services



221 East Clark Street
Albert Lea, Minnesota 56007-2496
507-377-4300

May 13, 2024

Mr. David Hartwell, Chairman
Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program

Dear Mr. Hartwell;

The City of Albert Lea is pleased to write this letter in support of the Shell Rock River Watershed Districts proposal for the Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program – to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. The Shell Rock River Watershed District is a small, local agency that has and continues to accomplish measurable and lasting results with the installation of successful projects. The District has a history of collaboration with many partners, including the City of Albert Lea, in enhancing, restoring, and protecting essential lake, wetland, and stream bank habitat.

We appreciate the efforts the Shell Rock River Watershed has put into developing this habitat restoration program to transform our lakes and wildlife habitat. Known as “The Land Between the Lakes” Albert Lea prides ourselves in our water resources. Projects implemented upstream including wetland restorations, habitat improvements, enhancements to upland game and waterfowl nesting, land acquisitions for habitat protection, and fish management all play a role in our community. Projects in this proposal will build upon previous requests, and will increase wildlife areas, reduce invasive species, and protect fish and wildlife within the Shell Rock River Watershed.

We look forward to seeing the progress made by the Shell Rock River Watershed District because it aligns with the goals and priorities of the City of Albert Lea. One of the largest assets in Albert Lea is its lakes. The opportunity to restore, enhance and protect the channel is a welcomed project. This project is highly prioritized by the City of Albert Lea.

In closing, the City of Albert Lea asks for the Council’s support of the continued habitat restoration projects within the Shell Rock River Watershed.

Sincerely,

Rich Murray,
Mayor

cc: Andy Henschel, Shell Rock River Watershed Manager
Steven Jahnke, City Engineer and Director of Public Works
Ian Rigg, City Manager

Resolution 2024-12
Shell Rock River Watershed District
L-SOHC Grant Application

BE IT RESOLVED that the Shell Rock River Watershed District, hereinafter referred to as “Applicant” acts as legal sponsor for the Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program - Phase XIV contained in the **Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (L-SOHC) Application** to be submitted on May 24, 2024, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Applicant is hereby authorized to apply to the LSOHC, hereinafter referred to as “State,” for funding of intended projects on behalf of the Applicant.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Applicant has the legal authority to apply for financial assistance, and the institutional, managerial and financial capability to ensure adequate acquisition, maintenance and protection of the intended projects.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Applicant has not incurred any construction costs or has not entered into any written agreements to purchase property for intended projects.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Applicant has not violated any Federal, State, or local laws pertaining to fraud bribery, graft, kickbacks, collusion, conflict of interest or other unlawful or corrupt practice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon approval of the application by the State, the Applicant may enter into an agreement with the State for the above-referenced projects, and that the Applicant certifies that it will comply with all applicable laws and regulations as stated in the contract agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Andy Henschel, District Administrator for the Shell Rock River Watershed District, is hereby authorized to execute such Agreements as are necessary to implement the intended projects on behalf of the Applicant.

Date: May 14, 2024



Mitchel Delger
SRRWD Chairman



Mike Hanson
SRRWD Secretary