

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

MEMO: **Agenda Item #6**
DATE: July 28, 2022
SUBJECT: Accomplishment Plan Amendment: ML 2019, 1st Sp. Session, Ch. 2, Art. 1, Subd. 5(c)
 Dakota County Habitat Protection/Restoration, Phase VII
PRESENTER: Lisa West, Dakota County
 Al Singer, Dakota County

Suggested Motion:

Motion by Member XX to approve/deny the accomplishment plan amendment reducing the total acre outputs from 894 to 401 to accommodate the purchase of a permanent natural area conservation easement on the McMenemy property as a priority parcel for Dakota County.

Background:

As has been past practice, accomplishment plans with substantive changes come before the Council for approval. Dakota County is requesting to purchase an easement on the McMenemy parcel in Rosemount, and as a result, would significantly reduce the acre outputs originally promised.

The McMenemy parcel includes high-quality forest and 14 diverse wetland basins identified in the 1989 County Biological Survey. This property has been on Dakota County's list of priority protection areas since the Land Conservation Program began as the Farmland and Natural Areas Program in 2002, and is included in the Lebanon Hills East Conservation Focus Area identified within the 2020 Land Conservation Plan for Dakota County.

The McMenemy property is valuable for residential development, which is rapidly occurring in the area, with land values exceeding \$100,000/acre. The easement value is over \$2 million; so, the anticipated expense of several parcels that will not be moving forward before the funding deadline of June 30, 2022, were shifted to the McMenemy project. The County is separately acquiring a 5.7-acre Regional Greenway corridor easement on the property. The City of Rosemount identified this property as a potential passive park in 1991 and will acquire fee title to the entire 69.4-acre property, subject to the permanent County easements.

Dakota County confirmed that the purchase agreement was signed by the seven owners on June 30, 2022, to allow closing on the easement within the availability of the appropriation.

The amendment requests:

- Budget shifts from Contracts, Fee Title and Professional Services to allow money to be shifted into Easement Acquisition and DNR Land Acquisition costs for due diligence on the appraisal review.
- Acre reductions in Restoration by 212 (from 514 to 302).
- Acre reductions in Fee title by 166 (from 204 to 38).
- Acre reductions in Easement by 115 (from 176 to 61).
- Acre reductions in all activities with the overall reductions of total program acres being reduced over 50% from 894 to 401.
- Dakota County has a signed purchase agreement on the property by the June 30, 2022, deadline.

Attachments:

- Dakota County Habitat Protection Restoration Phase VII Accomplishment Plan
- McMenemy Natural Area Easement Map
- Lebanon Hills East Unit Map
- McMenemy Property Photos