



ACCELERATING THE USFWS HABITAT CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM PHASE IV

Ducks Unlimited & Pheasants Forever propose to continue accelerating the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's working lands habitat conservation easement program on private lands in western Minnesota by strategically restoring and enhancing 4,000 prairie and wetland acres.

- Phase 4 of a successful, ongoing existing partnership among DU, PF, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service working with private landowners to restore and protect private working lands (e.g., delayed haying and grazing).
- Focus = Strategically focus on private land in western Minnesota near state WMAs, federal WPAs, and other protected private lands (e.g., RIM easements).
- Approach = DU and PF will restore conservation easements purchased and held by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.
- USFWS will provide \$1 million in Leverage to buy easements, and will monitor/enforce easement terms in perpetuity.

Primary Goals:

- ◆ Restore 4,000 acres of habitat, including 2,800 acres prairie grasslands and 1,200 acres wetlands.
- ◆ Keep prairie and wetlands habitat intact for breeding ducks, pheasants, non-game while remaining private land.
- ◆ Help USFWS protect private “working lands” via grazing and delayed-haying after July 15 (also manages habitat too!).

Focus Location: Prairie and Transition Sections of the Prairie Pothole Region in western of Minnesota.

Habitat Outputs: 1,400 acres of prairie grasslands restored and 1,400 acres of prairie grasslands enhanced; along with 600 acres of wetlands restored and 600 acres of wetlands enhanced on habitat easements purchased/protected directly by USFWS.

Wildlife Outcomes: Based on DNR guidance and best available science, we estimate this habitat will support 486 pairs of mallards and 8 pairs of trumpeter swans, 1,647 pairs of bobolinks, 1,333 pairs of grasshopper sparrows, 8,400 – 22,400 monarch butterflies, and will result in 933 harvested rooster pheasants.

BUDGET:	\$10,440,000 TOTAL REQUEST
Personnel:	\$ 900,000 for DU & PF biologists and engineers over five years
Contracts:	\$ 9,000,000 for prairie upland and wetland restoration contracts
In-state Travel:	\$ 114,000 for DU & PF biologists and engineers over five years
Professional Services:	\$ 15,000 for boundary surveys, environmental, closings costs
Direct Support Services:	\$ 111,000 for DU & PF support costs (legal, admin, and office)
Other Equipment/Tools:	\$ 130,000 for GPS survey field equipment (purchase/lease)
Capital Equipment:	\$ 30,000 for an ATV and trailer
Supplies/Materials:	\$ 140,000 for native seed materials and restoration supplies

PRIOR DU/PF OHF USFWS EASEMENT APPROPRIATION SPENDING AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ML2018 OHF Phase I Grant Update: 83% spent (\$2,470,200 of \$2,960,000) and 162% of grant acre goal (1,170 acres protected of 720-acre goal)
- ML2020 OHF Phase II Grant Update: 29% spent (\$931,600 of \$3,187,000) and 89% of grant acre goal (505 acres protected of 775 acre-goal plus 223 acres restored of 50 acre-goal)
- ML2021 OHF Phase III Grant Update: 1% spent, but work is underway now

