



# RIM Conservation Easements

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# Reinvest in Minnesota

- Overview of Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Conservation Easements
- Current BWSR led Programs
  - Restoration Programs
  - Protection Programs
- Partner Programs funded by LSOHC
- RIM Easement Process



# Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Resources Law

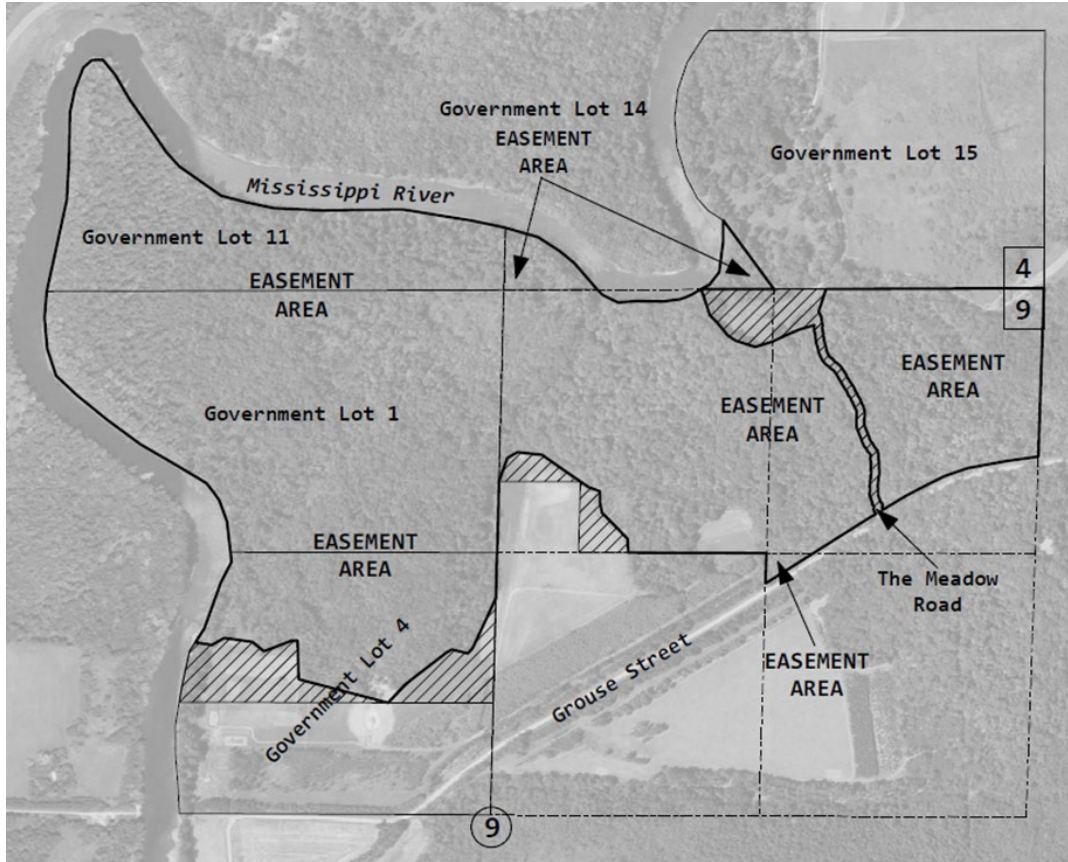
Minnesota Statute: 103F.505 to 103F.531

Purpose of RIM is to **restore** certain marginal ag land and **protect** environmentally sensitive areas to:

1. enhance soil and **water quality**
2. minimize damage to **flood-prone areas**
3. **sequester carbon**
4. **support** native plant, fish, and wildlife **habitats**
5. establish **perennial vegetation**

Environmentally sensitive areas include wellhead protection areas, grasslands, peatlands, shorelands, karst geology, and forest lands in priority areas

# RIM Easement Basics



- RIM is voluntary
- Easement programs vary by funding language that determines resource, landscape, priority areas & ranking
- Landowner completes application with local SWCD
- BWSR confirms eligibility and researches property title/history
- Landowner is paid for granting easement
- Most easements are perpetual



# RIM Easement Basics



- Easement goes with the land; as ownership changes, the easement terms apply to future owners
- Property remains privately owned and landowner retains title to property and obligations of ownership
- RIM easements do not require that land be accessible to the public
- SWCDs monitor to ensure easement terms upheld

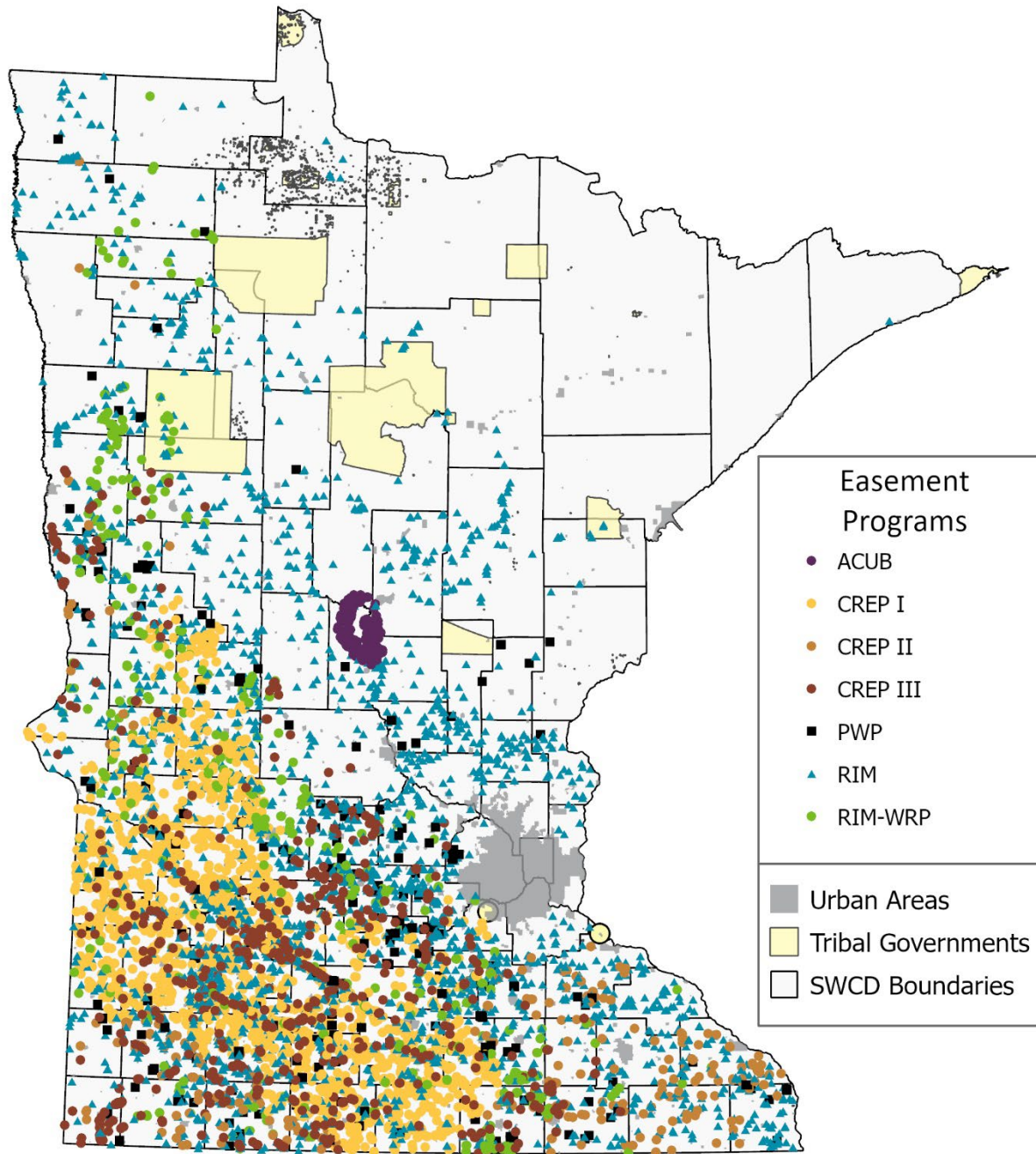
# Uses not allowed on state funded easements (examples)

## Activities that alter vegetative cover, hydrology, or wildlife habitat

- **Permanent cabin, home, storage facility or any other structure**
- **Row crops**
- Roads or driveways
- Haying, grazing or timber harvest without an approved plan
- Wells, septic systems
- Dumping of solid wastes
- Cell towers
- Wind and solar facilities

# RIM Numbers

- 7,900 active recorded easements
- 350,000 acres protected statewide



# RIM Funding Sources

- Outdoor Heritage Fund
- Clean Water Fund
- Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund
- Bonding
- General Fund
- Federal Partnerships





# RIM Restoration Programs

- **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)**
- **RIM Wetlands**
- RIM Wetlands – Peatland Emphasis
- **RIM Riparian and Floodplain Restoration**





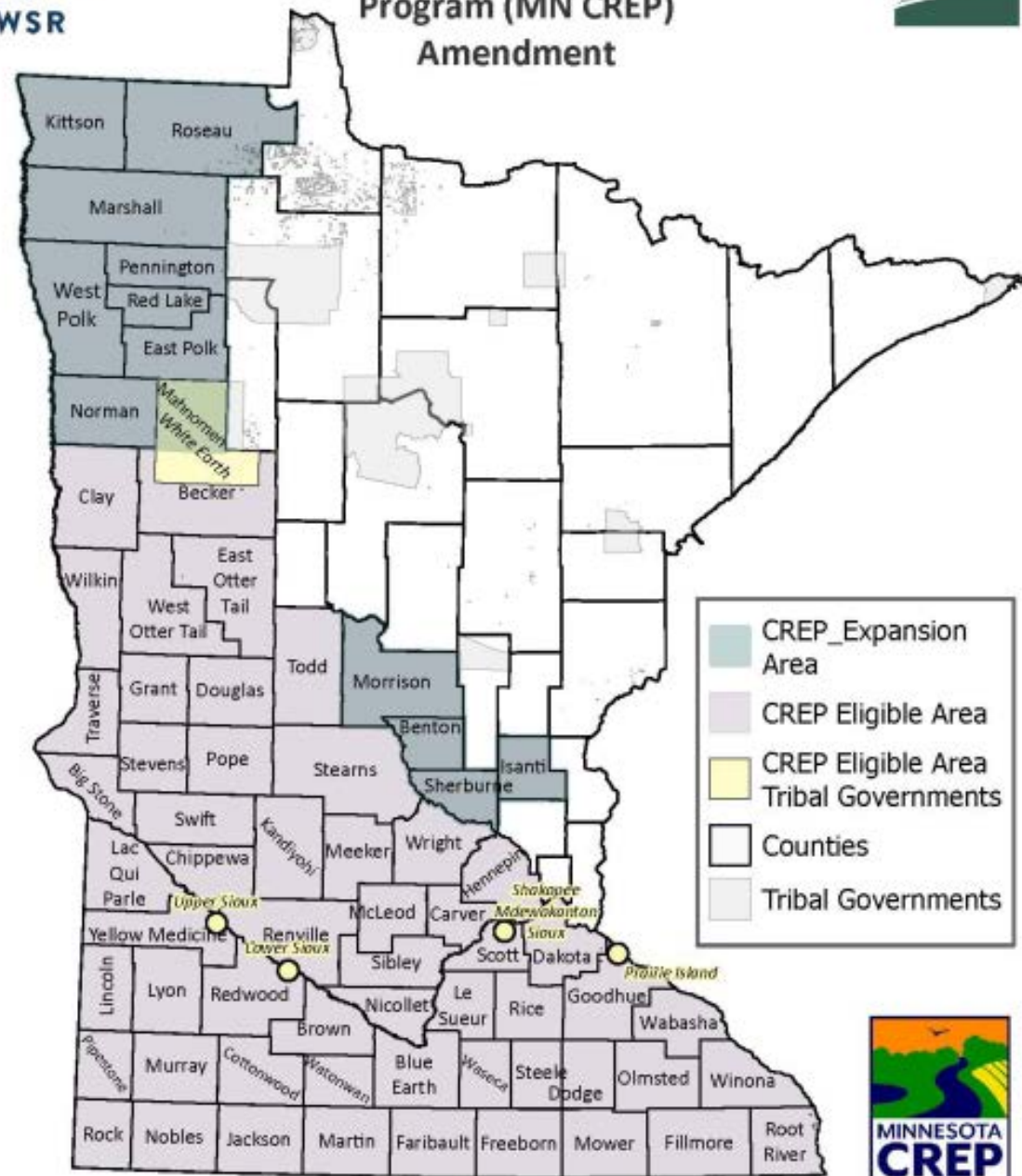


# Restoration - CREP

- Federal partnership
- Landowners enroll in the federally funded Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for 14-15 years, repurposing agricultural land for conservation
- The same land is also enrolled in a RIM easement
- Must meet CRP and RIM eligibility
- Focus on wetlands, buffers, wellhead, and grasslands
- Goals are : enhancing habitat for wildlife, pollinators, and non-game species; restoring riparian areas and marginal agricultural land; restoring hydrology, improving water infiltration, and mitigating flood risks; reducing nitrate contamination in drinking water supplies.
- 66 county CREP area
- 780 easements; 42,000 acres (in-process and recorded)



## Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (MN CREP) Amendment



# Restoration - RIM Wetlands



- Restorable wetlands and upland complexes
- Statewide
- Land NOT eligible for CREP (doesn't meet CRP eligibility, outside of 66 county area, mid-CRP contract)



# Restoration – Riparian and Floodplain

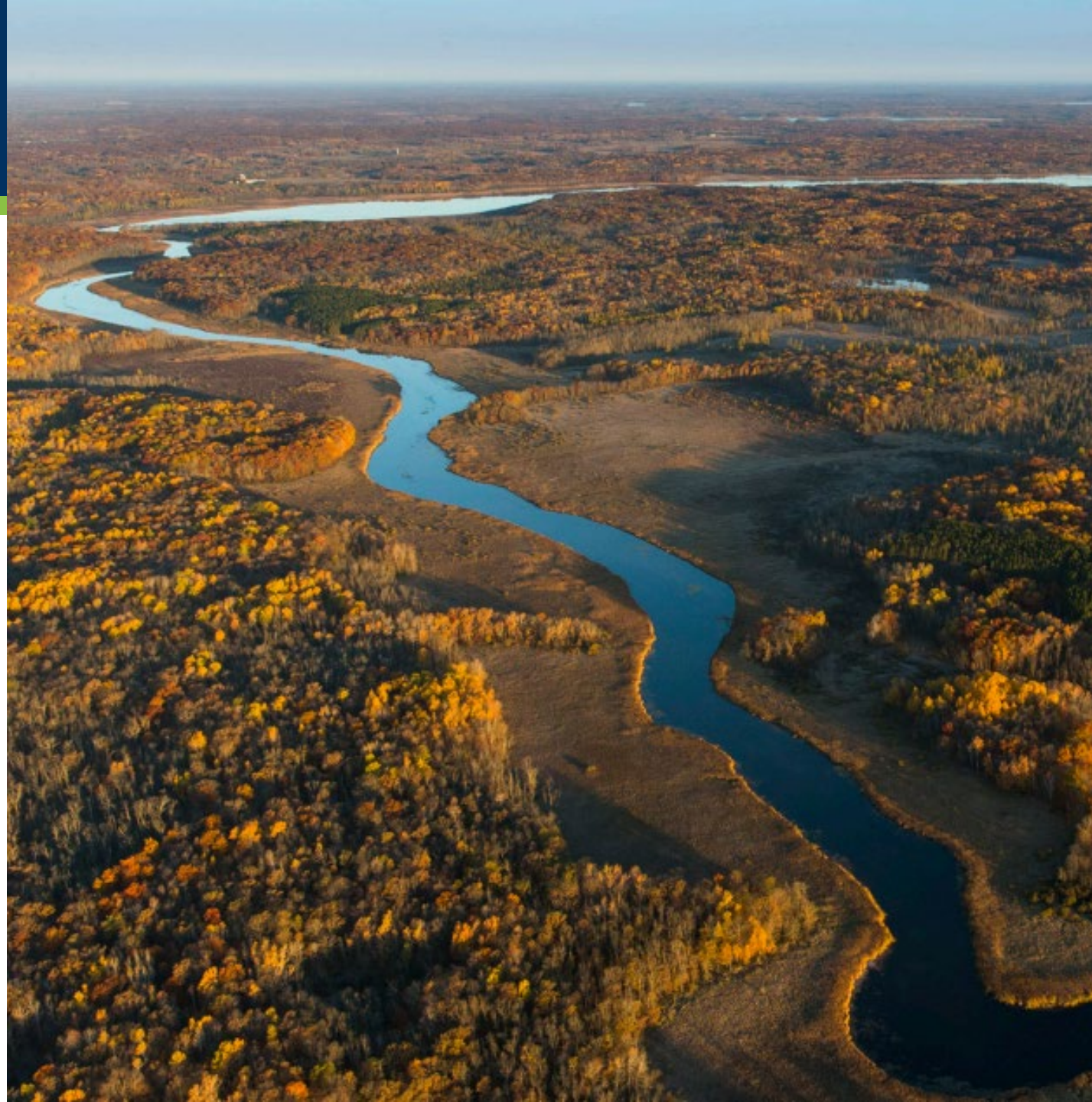
- Protect, restore, and enhance habitat and water quality adjacent to public waters
- Statewide
- Land NOT eligible for CREP (doesn't meet CRP eligibility, outside of 66 county area, mid-CRP contract)
- Can be traditional RIM, Working Lands, Limited-Term (30 years) or Working Lands AND Limited-Term (CWF only)



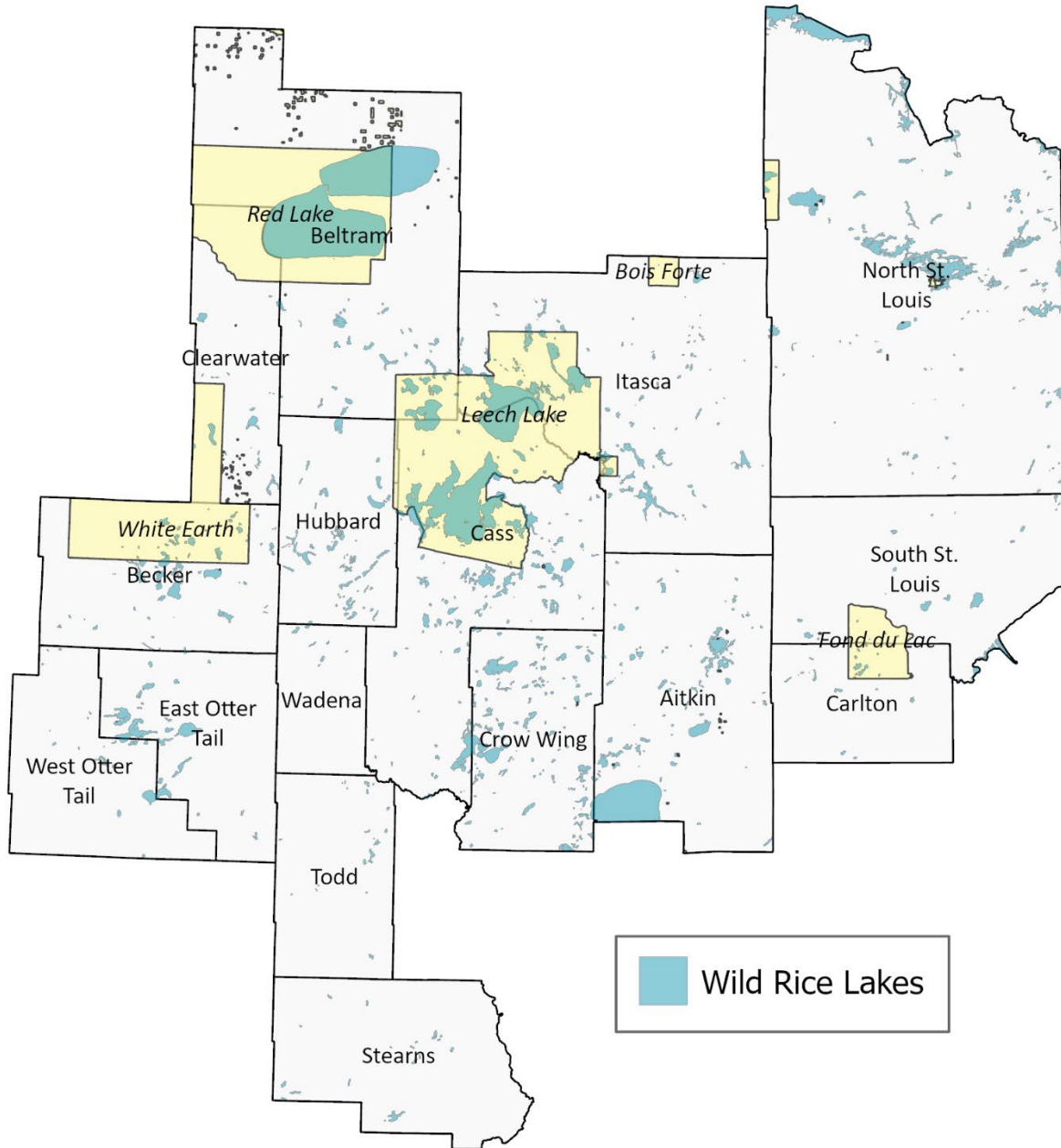


# RIM Protection Programs

- **Wild Rice Shoreland**
- **Grasslands**
- **Grazing Lands**
- **Critical Shorelands**



# Protection – Wild Rice Shoreland

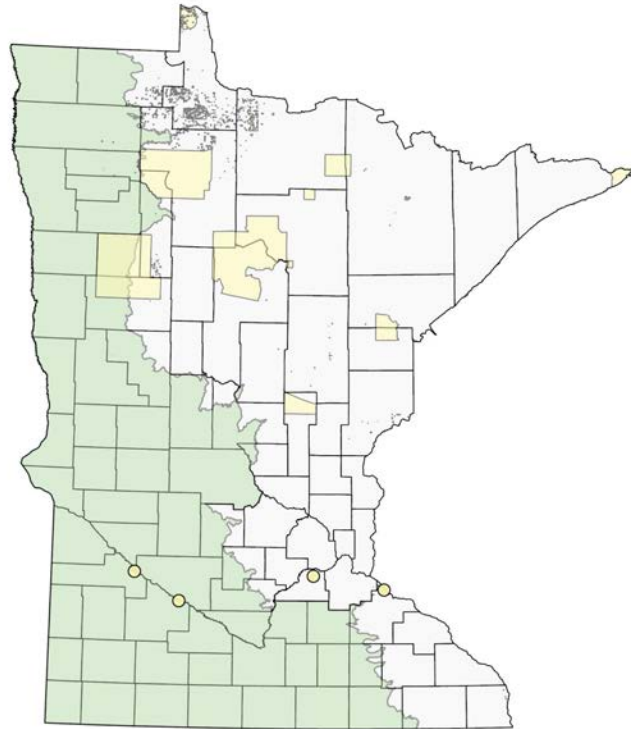


- Protect shoreland habitat of wild rice lakes to protect native wild rice beds
- 14 counties
- 97 easements; 6,700 acres



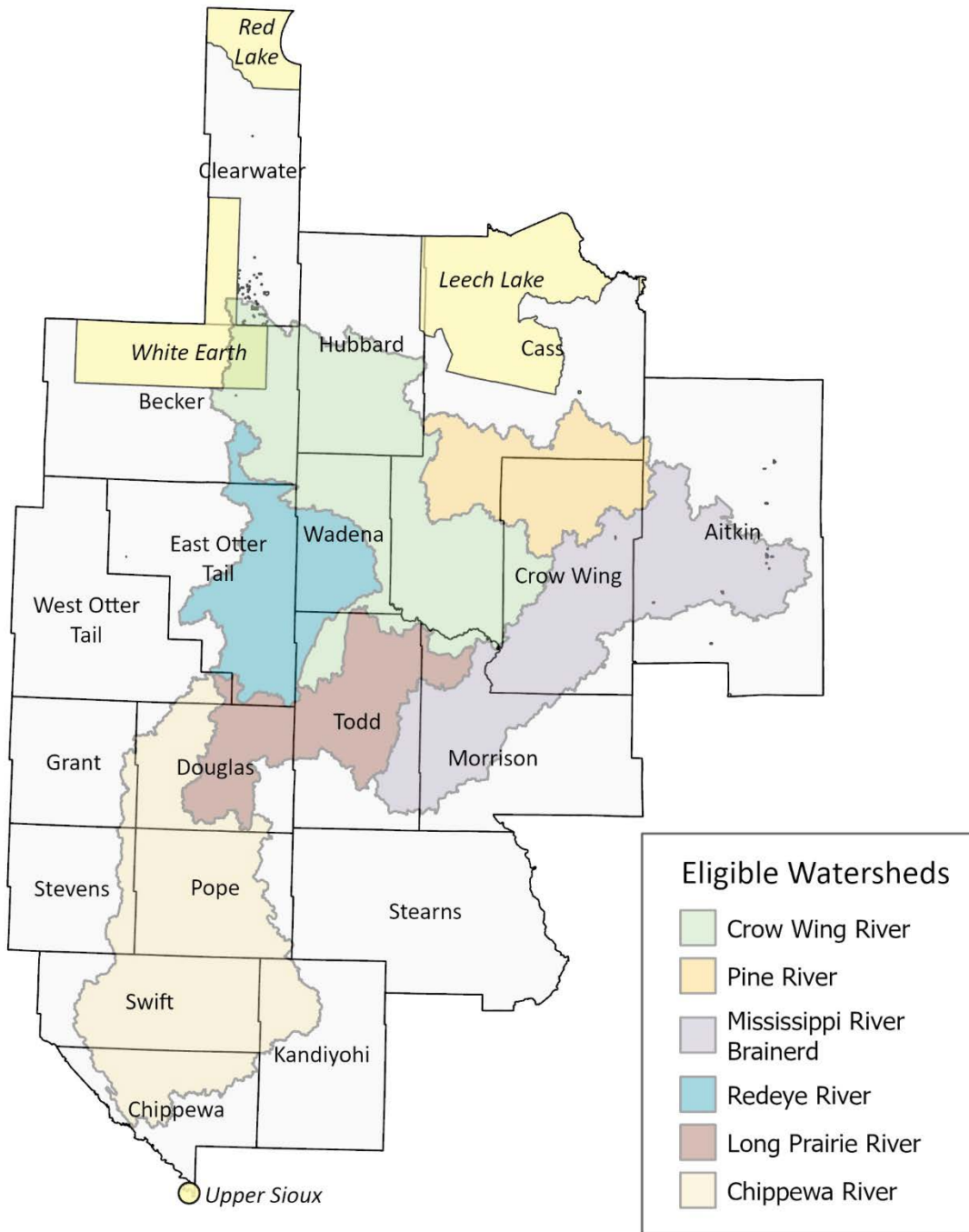
# Protection - Grasslands

- Protect, restore and enhance grassland habitat of moderate quality
- Eligibility based on MN Prairie Plan (DNR)
- 50 easements; 3,200 acres



# Protection - Grazing Lands

- Protect and promote perennial vegetation land cover through “working lands” (haying and grazing) easements
- Redeye, Crow Wing, Pine River, Long Prairie, Chippewa and Mississippi River - Brainerd watersheds currently
- 6 easements; 1,400 acres



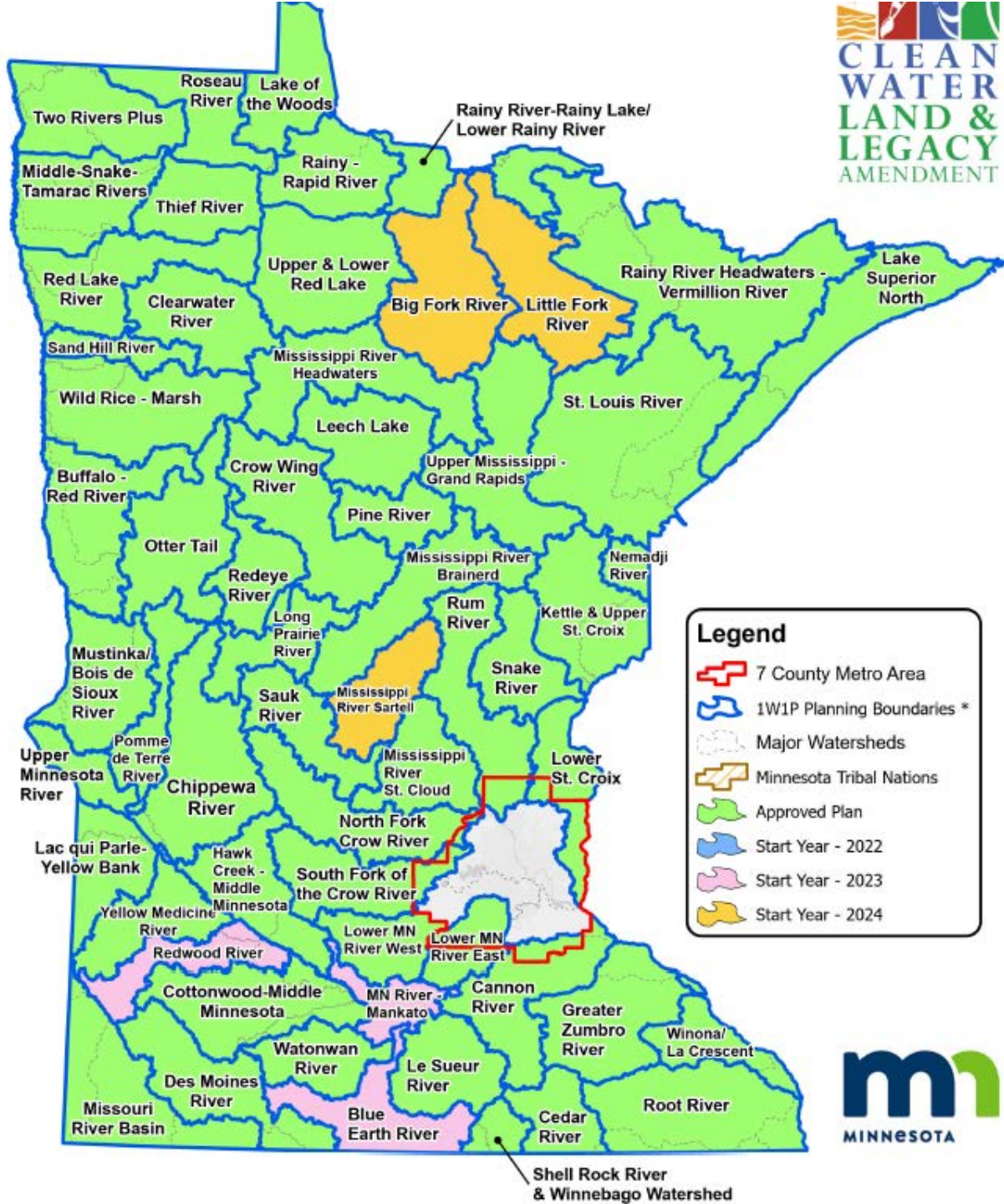
# Restoration and/or Protection Easements

- **Integrating Habitat and Clean Water (1W1P/RIM)**
- Drinking Water
- Watershed and Forest Restoration





# Integrating Habitat and Clean Water (1W1P/RIM)

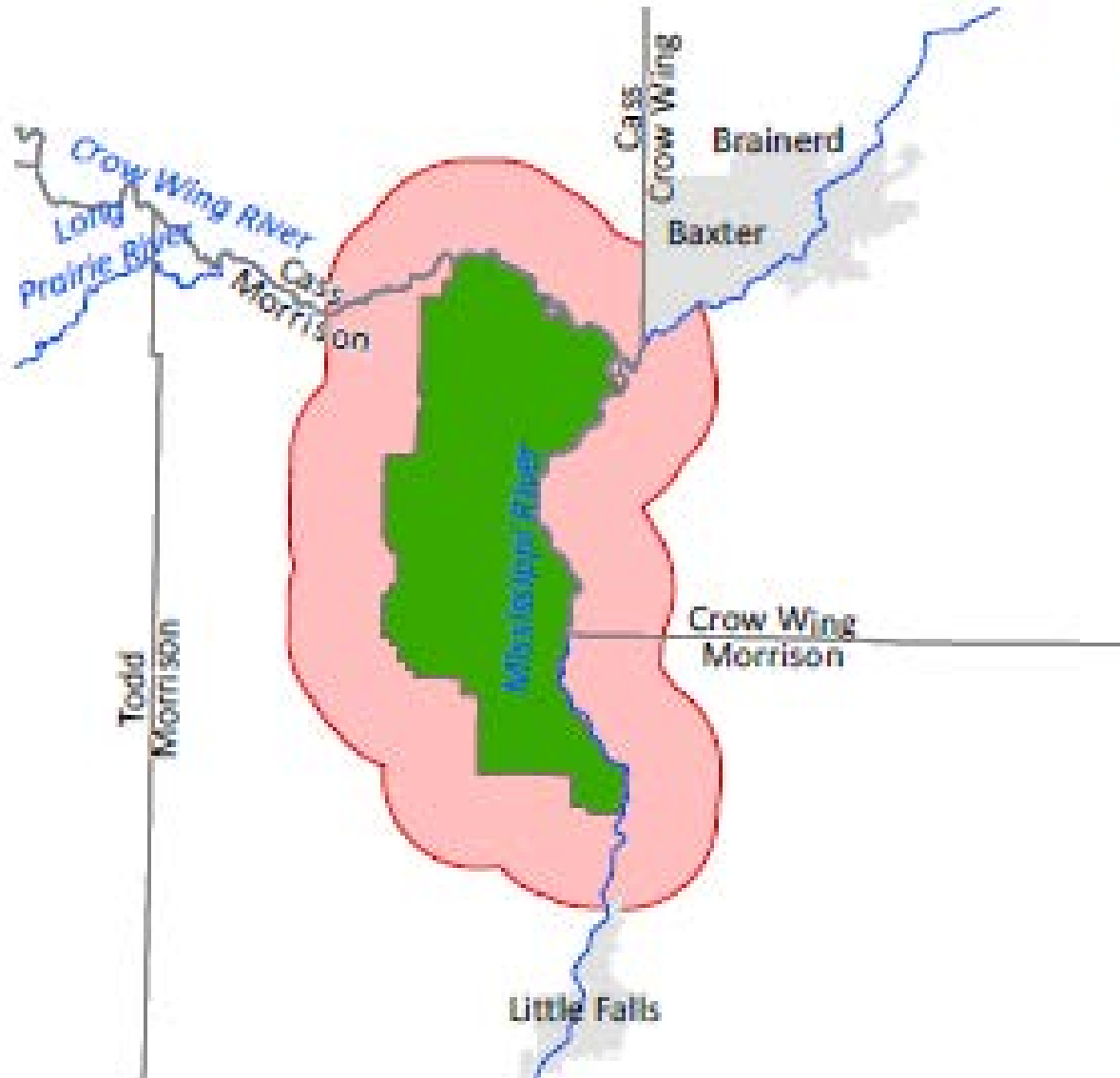


- Protection or restoration
- Targeted resource concern identified through the local One Watershed One Plan process
- Requires: An approved plan (green), easements/permanent protection listed as a priority, wildlife listed as a priority
- 27 easements, 1,600 acres

# Partner led Protection Programs

- **Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) – Morrison SWCD**
- **Mississippi Headwaters – Mississippi Headwaters Board**
- **Pine & Leech Watersheds – Crow Wing SWCD**
- **Kettle & Snake Watersheds – Pine SWCD**

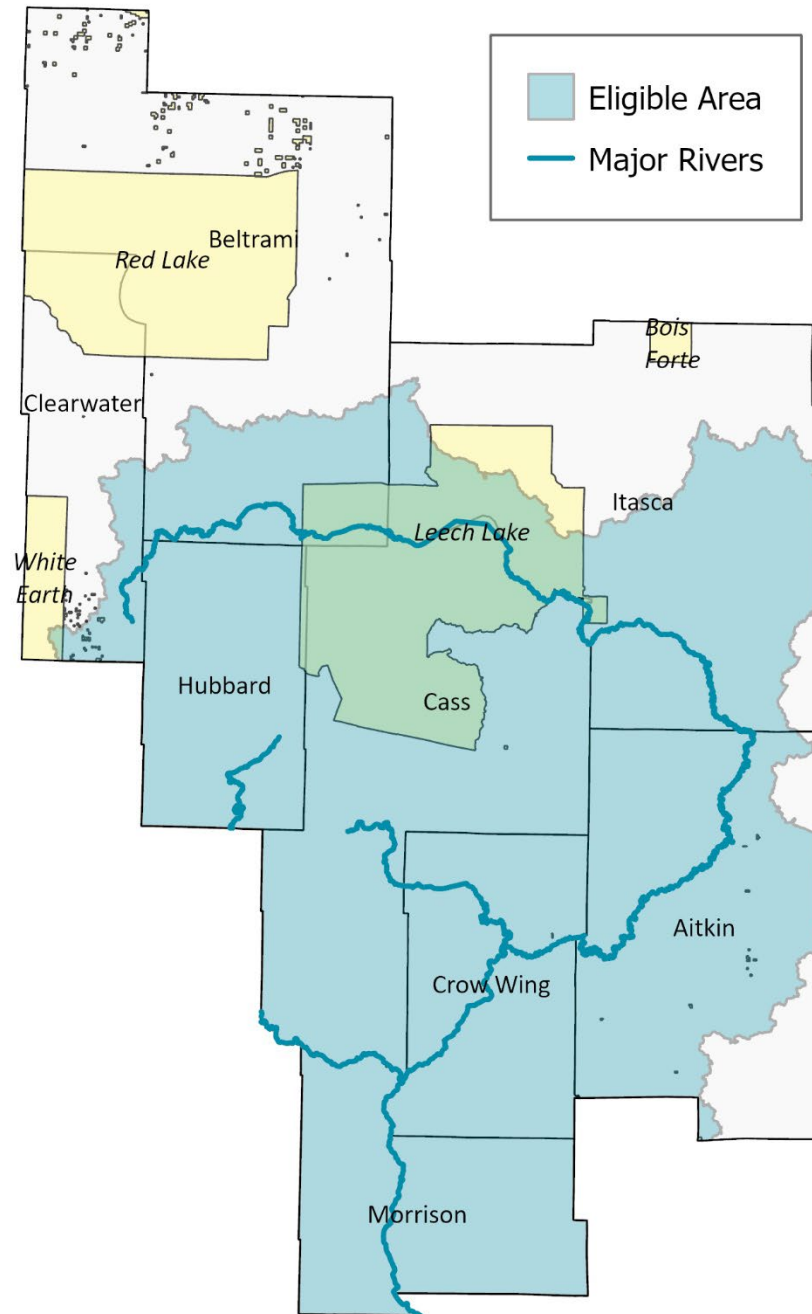
# Protection - Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB)



- Federal/state partnership to protect military mission and natural resources within a 5-mile buffer around Camp Ripley
- Partnership with Morrison SWCD/Camp Ripley
  - Morrison
  - Cass
  - Crow Wing
- 390 easements; 39,000 acres (federal and state funded)

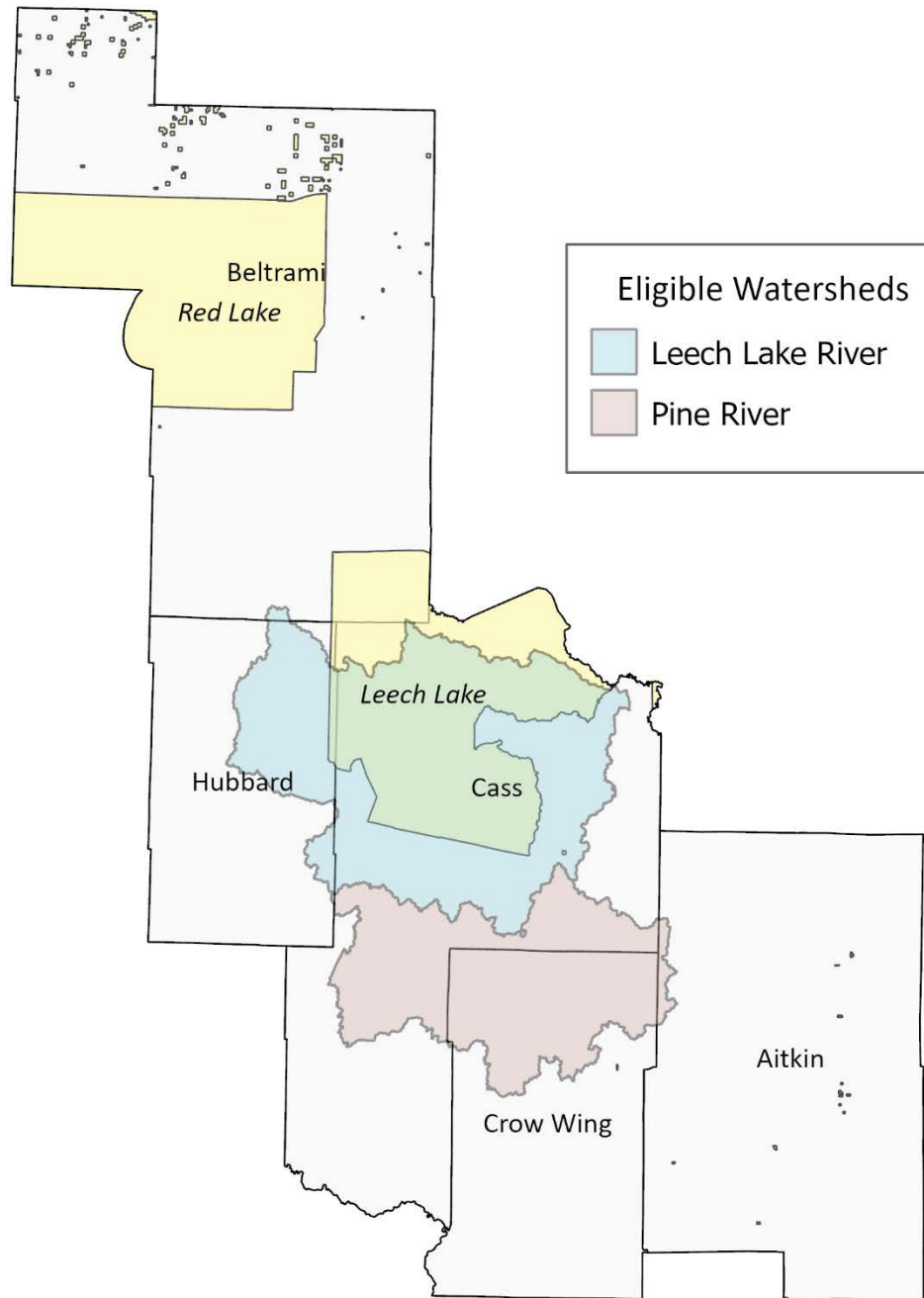


# Protection – Mississippi Headwaters



- Protect wildlife habitat in the Mississippi headwaters – Mississippi and its tributaries
- Partnership with Mississippi Headwaters Board – Mississippi River counties from Lake Itasca through Morrison County
- 66 easements; 5,700 acres

# Protection - Pine and Leech Watersheds



- Protect undeveloped shorelines (forest, wetland and shoreland habitat focus)
- Pine and Leech Watersheds – Cass, Crow Wing and Hubbard
- Partnership with Crow Wing SWCD
- 26 easements; 1,300 acres

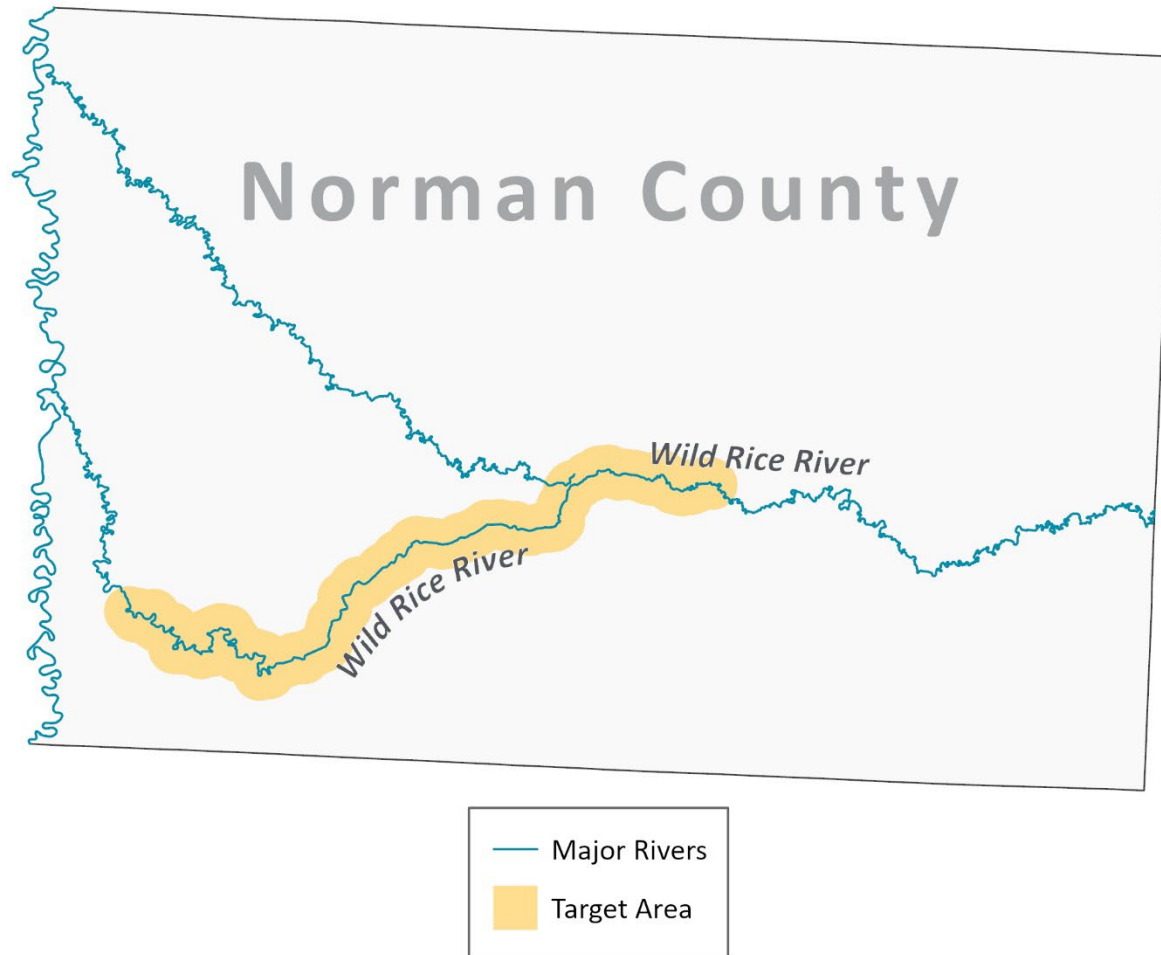
# Protection - Kettle and Snake Watersheds



- Protect high-quality forest, wetland, and shoreline habitat in the Kettle and Snake River watersheds
- Partnership with Pine SWCD
- Parts of 5 counties: Aitkin, Carlton, Pine, Kanabec and Mille Lacs
- 18 easements; 1,100 acres



# Protection and Restoration – Stream Corridors



- Red River Basin Riparian Habitat Program – Red River Watershed Management Board in partnership with WRWD, BdSWD and MSTRWD
  - Lower Wild Rice River (WRWD), Doran Creek (BdSWD), Swift Coulee (MSTRWD)
- Buffalo-Red River Watershed District Stream Habitat Program– BRRWD
  - Buffalo River, Upper Buffalo River, Stony Creek, Whisky Creek and Whiskey's Creek southern tributary

## Process Milestones:

Application

10 - 16 Months

Payment

Application  
Reviewed &  
Agreement  
Prepared

2-4+ months

Agreement  
Signed & Title  
Insurance  
Initiated

2-4 months

Title Reviewed,  
Cleared &  
Approved by  
AGO

3-4+ months

Easement  
Signed &  
Recorded; Title  
Policy Prepared

3-4 months

Easement  
Approved  
& Paid

# RIM Easement Acquisition Framework