From: Wayne Ostlie

Sent: Monday, August 31, 2026

To: Heron Lake Watershed District

CC: LSOHC Staff

Subject: Status of Heron Lake Watershed Grant through Outdoor Heritage Fund

Wayne Raschke, Board Chairman

Heron Lake Watershed District Board

Chair Raschke and Members:

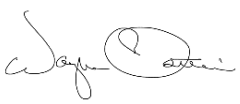
In 2020, Heron Lake Watershed District (HLWD), in partnership with Ducks Unlimited (DU), Pheasants Forever (PF), and Minnesota Land Trust (Land Trust), received funding through Minnesota's Outdoor Heritage Fund to protect and restore important habitat projects within the Heron Lake watershed. Through that grant, DU and PF pursued fee acquisition of lands while the Land Trust pursued the protection of private lands through conservation easements. HLWD took on the responsibilities of grant management and restoration of projects protected by DU, PF, and the Land Trust.

At this point in time, all portions of that grant have closed with the exception of one restoration project at the Land Trust's South Heron Lake (Thompson) conservation project. This restoration is currently led by HLWD. With turnover of staff at HLWD, management of the grant and the completion of this restoration project to appropriate standards have been a challenge. As such, we have a proposal for your consideration.

Minnesota Land Trust is proposing to take on oversight and management of the South Heron Lake (Thompson) restoration project through to project completion on November 27, 2028. As the holder of the conservation easement on the property, we have a vested interest in ensuring a high-quality outcome for that project. In addition, we would assume grant reporting responsibilities for remaining status reports and final report. That doesn't mean HLWD won't have a role to play in providing financial and other information for those reports, but it will diminish the lift required on your part. Moreover, this will allow the remaining partners to formally conclude their obligations under the grant and allow the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council to redirect the nearly $4M in unspent funds associated with the grant to other priority projects across the state of Minnesota.

We thank you for your partnership on this grant and await your response. Please confirm in writing your acceptance of this arrangement.

Best,



Wayne Ostlie

Director of Land Protection